

Cadernos Junguianos

No. 19 - 2025

Anual Journal of Associação
Junguiana do Brasil

Member of International
Association for Analytical
Psychology



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Commemorative Edition for the 20th
Anniversary of Cadernos Junguianos and the
150th Anniversary of the Birth of C. G. Jung

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**Cadernos Junguianos – Publication of the
Associação Junguiana do Brasil – No. 19 – 2025**

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Signature of Carl Gustav Jung

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Dados Internacionais de Catalogação na Publicação (CIP)

Cadernos Junguianos / Associação Junguiana do Brasil.

No. 1 (2005). São Paulo, SP: AJB, 2005.

No. 19 (2025)

Anual

Edição bilíngue: Português/Inglês. Tradução: Maria Elisabete F. Dias

ISSN 1808-5342

1. Psicologia Analítica – Periódicos. 2. Psicologia Junguiana – Periódicos.

I. Associação Junguiana do Brasil.

CDU – 159.018.4 (05)

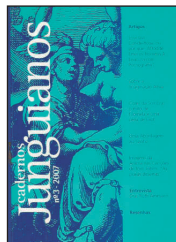
Timeline of ^{Cadernos}Junguianos



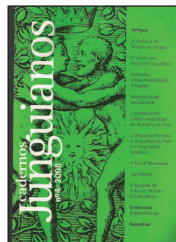
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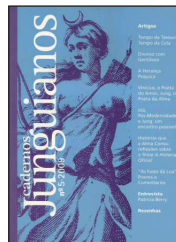
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n. 5 – 2009



n. 6 – 2010



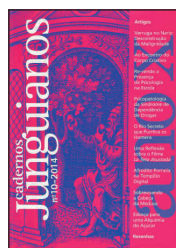
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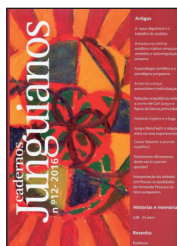
n. 9 – 2013



n. 10 – 2014



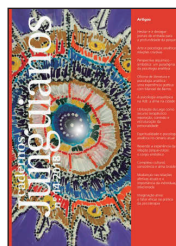
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n. 12 – 2016



n. 13 – 2017



n. 14 – 2018



n. 15 – 2019



n. 16 – 2022



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n. 18 – 2024



n. 18 (Eng.) – 2024

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.....Associação Junguiana do Brasil.....

EDITORIAL

***Cadernos Junguianos* - Issue 19 - 2025**

The year 2025 is particularly significant for *Cadernos Junguianos*, as it commemorates twenty years of publication and the 150th anniversary of Carl Gustav Jung's birth (1875-2025).

We intend for this celebration to resonate throughout the pages of the present issue, beginning with its cover. For the first time, we present the signature of C. G. Jung, with authorization from the *Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung*, in Zurich, to whom we extend our gratitude, represented by Annkathrin Wollert and the Jungian analyst Idalina Aparecida de Souza. To celebrate our 20th anniversary, Acací de Alcantara invites us to revisit our origins and watch the commemorative video celebrating 20 years of *Cadernos Junguianos*, accessible via the QR Code found on page 12.

Faithful to the paradigmatic ideal that has guided the journal since its first issue, this 19th volume renews our commitment to expanding the “debate of Jungian ideas around psychological practice and theory in the Brazilian context, as a renewed source for deepening the most relevant questions of the cultural and psychological adventure of humankind.”

Guided by the theme “Tribute to the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth,” we dedicate this volume to celebrating the occasion by highlighting the Jungian

legacy for understanding contemporaneity, deepening and expanding analytical thought in Brazil and internationally, fostering transversal dialogues between Analytical Psychology and other fields of knowledge, and reaffirming the relevance of Jungian psychology as a forward-looking scientific approach.

This special volume is presented in an expanded format, consistent with the commemorative nature of the occasion. The collection of articles reflects the richness and diversity of contemporary analytical thought. Its scope expresses the intention to honor this milestone with depth, offering readers a plurality of perspectives and reflections that invite an expansive journey of reading and engagement until the next issue.

In this context, we recognize Jung's pioneering role in the treatment of psychoses; the triple formative framework of analytical psychology – didactic analysis, clinical supervision, and the continuous study of the mythologies of Indigenous peoples; and his tireless search for intersections between science, religion, the arts, and the humanities, always aimed at deepening human experience.

From the prelude in Kesswil (1875) to the postlude in Küsnacht (1961), Jung lived the tension between imagination and reality: “The journey from the castle in the clouds to reality took quite a long time. In my case, the ‘pilgrim’s progress’ consisted of having to descend a thousand steps to reach the little clod of earth that is myself” (JUNG, 1959/2002, p. 35, note 8). His refusal to turn sexual theory into dogma led him away from unilateralism and kept him faithful to the investigation of the psyche.

The publication of this nineteenth volume invites us to revisit the images and relationships that shape the Jungian trajectory – his biographical history, his significance for the contemporary world, and his contributions to enduring sociocultural themes that permeate the spirit of our time.

We open the issue with works that address fundamental figures in Jung's life: “Emma Jung – Her (almost) Invisible Role in the Development of Carl Gustav Jung's Psychology,” by Idalina A. de Souza; “Toni Wolff: Recoveries, Translations, and the Cultural Legacy of Complex Psychology,” by Armando Oliveira e Silva and Pedro Henrique Alberton Perússolo; “The Unconscious Made Audi-

ble: Freud, Jung, and Musical Imagination,” by Michael R. Mollura; and “The Inseparable Mystery of the Psyche: The Letters of C. G. Jung and Wolfgang Pauli,” by Pedro Henrique Alberton Perússolo.

The historical-biographical section continues with: “Answer to Job – The Mythical Dimension of Affect,” by Sigrid Haikel and Humbertho Oliveira; “The Soul and the *Mundus Imaginalis*: The Surprising Encounter between Jung and Corbin,” by Marluce Renz; “‘Save the Phenomena’: 150 Years Later and the Errant Paths of Archetypal Psychology,” by Luciana Ximenez; “Developmental Aspects of the Creative: A Contribution to Analytical Psychology,” by Roseli D. Ribeiro; “The Subversive and Healing Force of Imagination in Nise da Silveira: Dialogues with Jung and his Work,” by Ana Maria de Oliveira Urpia; “Jung’s Contributions to a New *Aion*,” by Alexandre Fontoura dos Santos; “Images of the Souls: An Encounter between Hilma af Klint and Carl G. Jung,” by Mônica Andriago Moreira de Ulhoa Coelho; and “The Late Metanoia of Carl Gustav Jung,” by Roque Tadeu Gui and Rubens Bragarnich.

In the axis of contemporaneity, we present: “*Persona*, Shadow, and the Digital World: Jungian Reflections on Contemporary Life,” by Magno da Silva Parmagnani; “Artificial Intelligence: Prometheus and the Silicon Fire,” by Paulo Priori; “*Unus Mundus*, Scenarios of Crisis and Symbolic Reintegration: From the Climate Crisis to Reconnection with the Living Earth; From Social Inequality to Solidarity-based Equity; From Technological Disruption to Symbolic Reintegration: an Ethics of Totality,” by Claudio Mele and Monica Martinez; “The Enjoyment of the Symbol,” by Daniel Françoli Yago; and “Wolfgang Giegerich and the Soul in Modernity,” by Sonia Maria Marchi de Carvalho.

In the field of sociocultural themes – privileged expressions of the constellations of the collective unconscious – we bring together: “Psychopolitics: The Intersection between Carl Gustav Jung and Byung-Chul Han on Contemporary Subjectivity,” by Rebeca Moreira Nalia; “The Last Color: Mandalas and Reflections on Human Finitude,” by Mayke Pereira Disner and Mariana Shulze; “The Symbolic Cultural Space of the *Quilombo* as Resistance in the Black Psyche,” by Bruno Correia da Mota; “*Quilombamento* of the Psyche: Contributions of Afro-diasporic Technologies to a Racialized Jungian Clinical Practice,” by Ariadne Gabriel and Pablo Assis; “Analytical Psychology and Whiteness: Complicity or

Confrontation?” by Raíssa Völker; “Considerations on Jung’s Alleged Racism,” by Chiara Giubellini; “Between Walls and Listening: Jungian Clinical Practice with Youth in Conflict with the Law,” by Ezequiel Nogueira Braga; and “Ancient Philosophy in the Work of Carl Gustav Jung,” by Daniel Pires Cardozo.

This volume also includes contributions from the departments of the AJB, which promptly responded to our invitation and presented reflections representative of their research areas: from the Department of Cultural Complexes, Politics, and Individuation, “Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives”; from the Department of Art and Analytical Psychology, “Art and Jung”; from the Department of Sexual and Gender Diversity, “All Bodies Matter: A Dialogue between Gender Studies and Complex Psychology”; from the Department of Body and Psyche in Analytical Psychology, “The Body-Psyche Unity from the Perspective of Carl Gustav Jung”; from the Department of Ecopsychology of the AJB, “From Spear to Basket: from Hero to Community”; from the Department of Epistemology and Research in Analytical Psychology, “The Eternal and the Ephemeral”; from the Department of Studies and Research on Creative Aging, “Jungian Reflections on the Process of Creative Aging”; from the Department of Analytical Psychology and Spirituality, “C. G. Jung and Altered States of Consciousness: Mediumship”; and from the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination, “The Technique of Active Imagination Enters the 21st Century.” Finally, the Observatory of Analytical Psychology (OPA) presents “The Ethical-Political Implications of Jungians in the Current Sociopolitical Scenario.”

This issue also offers invitations to reading through reviews of the following titles: “The Inner World Made Visible: a Reading of The Book of Images – Treasures from the Archives of the C. G. Jung Institute Zurich” – Ruth Ammann, Verena Kast, Ingrid Riedel (Eds.), reviewed by Markus A. Hediger; “Kast, Verena: The Word Association Experiment in Therapeutic Practice: C. G. Jung’s Revolutionary Method for Exploring the Unconscious: Theory and Practice,” reviewed by Idalina A. de Souza and Francisco Mauricio Araujo dos Santos; and “Jung, a Journey Toward the *Self*” – Frédéric Lenoir, reviewed by Renato Bittencourt Gomes and Sílvio Lopes Peres.

This edition reflects a deep engagement with the diversity of reflections emerging from contemporary Brazilian and international dialogues, at an emblematic moment marking the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth. Throughout the reading, dialogues with our cultural, mythological, social, and spiritual roots become increasingly evident, serving as pathways for expanding consciousness, enriching clinical and academic knowledge, and addressing the challenges of personal and institutional individuation.

Thus, we renew Jung's own request: "Do not turn me into a legend" (JUNG, *apud* SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 15).

At the end of this issue, all previous editions are available via QR code, which further consolidates this nineteenth volume as a celebration of twenty years of *Cadernos Junguianos* and the 150th anniversary of C. G. Jung.

The Editors

Fabiana Pithon, Patrícia Eugênio, Rita Pinotti, Roque Tadeu Gui and Sílvia Lopes Peres.



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SHAMDASANI, S. (2005). **Jung e a construção da psicologia moderna**: O sonho de uma ciência. Aparecida: Ideias & Letras.

Editors' Note: In the articles included in this issue, quotations and bibliographic references are presented in the original language of the sources consulted.

Associação Junguiana do Brasil

CADERNOS JUNGUIANOS - REVISITING THEIR ORIGINS

Acací de Alcantara

In the same year we commemorate the 150th anniversary of C. G. Jung's birth, we are pleased to celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Cadernos Junguianos*, the journal of the Associação Junguiana do Brasil (AJB).

The purpose of this short essay is to share my participation in the history of the creation of *Cadernos Junguianos*. The Associação Junguiana do Brasil (AJB) had been affiliated with the International Association for Analytical Psychology (IAAP) for nine years, seven of them as a full member, that is, authorized to train new analysts, organize annual conferences, and produce a regular journal to disseminate Jungian thought, especially through the work of its members. However, until 2004, we still did not have such a journal.

The Association was small, consisting of a few training institutes, with a few certified analysts and others still in training. However, there were no financial conditions to take this step to create a magazine for the AJB. Although limited, these funds were only made available due to the extra

funds generated by the 2000 Latin American Congress held in Rio de Janeiro, corresponding to the AJB's share. Thus, through the initiative of Gustavo Barcellos and Ângela Cosac Nacácio, the resources were allocated to the creation of the journal that later became *Cadernos Junguianos*.

It was the moment to step out from the interior of our home and present the work and thinking of our analyst members and those in training to the Jungian community outside the Association. We left behind the warmth of our internal fellowship and adopted a more careful approach to communication and paths, blessed by Exu, the *orixá* of paths in the African spiritual tradition, present in Brazilian history and imagination.

The creation of the journal was coordinated by Gustavo Barcellos, with the participation of Ângela Cosac Nacácio, both from the Jungian Institute of São Paulo (IJUSP). The team was completed by Silvia Graubart, who, in addition to being a psychologist, was a journalist who had worked as an editor in various private media outlets, by Rubens Bragarnich, and by myself, still in training as an analyst at IJUSP.

We also counted on the collaboration of Nelson Graubart, a renowned designer who developed the entire conception and graphic aspects of the journal with excellence. We invited prominent Jungian analysts from Brazil and the international community, and leading figures from fields related to Analytical Psychology, to form the Editorial Board of *Cadernos Junguianos*.

After a year of work, we completed the first issue (No. 1) in 2004, a historic milestone for the Association, which was launched at the 2005 annual congress in Canela (RS). Since then, subsequent issues have been presented at each annual congress. The meetings to prepare *Cadernos* took place in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect, always accompanied by good wine and food. We felt that we were embarking on a historic and meaningful journey.

The assistant editors, coordinated by Gustavo Barcellos, established a standard of excellence in the consensual selection of texts, and together with Nelson Graubart, selected the alchemical motifs for the covers, a standard maintained throughout our ten-year tenure.



In this first issue, articles and reviews were selected from some founding analysts, didactic members, and internationally renowned Jungian authors. The initial issue included contributions from prominent analysts such as Luigi Zoja and John Beebe, an interview with Wolfgang Giegerich, and contributions from the founders of the AJB: Glauco Ulson, Priscila Caviglia, Walter Boechat, Paula Boechat, Carlos Alberto

Corrêa Salles, Elisabeth Zimmermann, and, of course, the editor Gustavo Barcellos.

The launch was a complete success, becoming a source of pride for the team, the Association, and its members.

We then moved on to preparing the second issue. In addition to dissemination and the selection of texts, we faced the challenges of securing funding for future editions and ensuring the continuity of the publication. For that, a quota system was established, in which each institute purchased a certain number of copies and assumed financial responsibility, while I visited bookstores presenting the journal and, whenever possible, placed some volumes on consignment.

We also sent copies to the university and psychology department libraries so that the journal could gain recognition and become a reference for academic research.

In addition to promoting Jungian thought through the work of members and analysts in training, the journal maintained an editorial line that was open and receptive to all theoretical currents and internal movements within Analytical Psychology, welcoming articles, essays, and reviews from both institutionalized Jungians and the broader Jungian community.

The founding team coordinated the editions for ten years, with the only change during this period being the addition of analyst Letícia Capriotti, who joined to contribute her efforts.

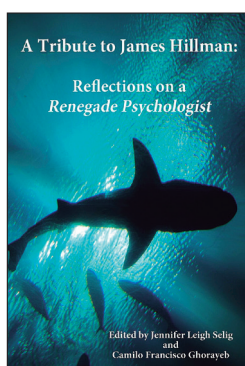
The group was highly cohesive: producing the journal was always a

pleasure, an engaging task that involved reading numerous articles to decide which would be included in each issue. We have always enjoyed the freedom to make our own choices, and although the journal belonged to the AJB, the team retained full autonomy over editorial decisions.

The decision to maintain the journal without concern for indexing was particularly important to us, allowing the articles to develop freely, without rigid templates. Although this approach could limit academic recognition, it enhanced the quality of the content.

The journal's excellence was recognized both by colleagues within the AJB and externally, even being reviewed in *Cahiers Jungiens de Psychanalyse*, a French Jungian journal, which encouraged the continuation of our work. Another deeply moving moment for the team was receiving, via fax, James Hillman's authorization to publish his essay *A Loucura Cor de Rosa* (Volume III, 2007).

We dedicated Volume IX to include the texts presented at the tribute to James Hillman, who passed away in 2011, an event organized by Camilo F. Ghorayeb in Campinas (SP) in 2012, with the participation of friends and colleagues from the *Pacifica Graduate Institute* as well as Brazilian collaborators. This issue was edited in English by Jennifer L. Selig and Camilo F. Ghorayeb and published by Mandorla Books.



Upon reaching ten years of publication, with the journal already well established, we recognized that it was time to hand over editorial leadership to a new team. The new editors, Humbertho de Oliveira (IJRJ), Joyce Weres (IJRS), and Jorge Zacharias (IPAC), coordinated

the *Cadernos* for five years, maintaining the graphic design of the covers while incorporating images from the *Museum of the Unconscious*. They also introduced a new system for evaluating submissions: the double-blind method, with volunteer reviewers drawn from analysts within the Association.

The third editorial team, composed of Ricardo Barreto (IJBSB), Virginia Sant'Anna (IJUSP), Denise Amorelli (IPAC), Pricilla Buzzachera (IJUSC), and Simone Rodrigues (IPAC), adopted a digital format, with the necessary adjustments to ABNT standards, and included an English version of the journal.

Today, *Cadernos* is under its fourth editorial administration, with the editorial board composed of Sílvio Lopes Peres (IPABAHIA), Roque Tadeu Gui (IJBSB), Fabiana Piton (IPABAHIA), Patrícia Eugênio (IJUSP), and Rita Pinotti (IJPR), who began their work starting with issue XVIII.

Acací de Alcantara

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.....Associação Junguiana do Brasil.....

EMMA JUNG - HER (ALMOST) INVISIBLE ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG'S PSYCHOLOGY

Idalina A. de Souza

Abstract

This article offers a historical overview and reflections on the life and work of Emma Jung (1882-1955). She played a crucial, though often (almost) invisible, role in consolidating the analytical psychology developed by Carl Gustav Jung. Emma's invisibility is partly due to the extremely limited bibliography about Jung's life partner. This article presents a review of the few sources that mention Emma, while also advocating for the recognition and understanding of women's roles in a predominantly male and patriarchal world, even within the development of a science that emphasizes the individuation process for all individuals.

Keywords: Emma Jung; analytical psychology; individuation process; father complex; Grail.

Introduction

Upon accepting the invitation to write about Emma Jung, I felt a profound sense of satisfaction, accompanied by a deep understanding of responsibility. To think of her without allowing the powerful figure of her husband, Carl Gustav Jung, to diminish her strength and brilliance is a challenge and a search for a treasure that has largely remained hidden, yet certainly leads to a deeper understanding of her personality.

Much of her legacy was submerged in the social dynamics of a time marked by patriarchal and male-dominated structures. Even today, little attention has been given to Emma's role in the history of analytical psychology and in Jung's life, including within the Jungian community.

More recently, Gaudissart (2018) provided a detailed and thoughtful view of this woman, who was challenged to develop paths and potentials that were almost unimaginable, often dormant under the spirit of her era. The male authoritarianism characteristic of that society, combined with the expected acceptance and submission of women, created conditions in which her importance was rarely acknowledged and often underestimated. There is no record of Emma ever showing rebellion, something that was likely silenced both by the men and the women surrounding Jung.

Emma maintained a friendly relationship with Freud, to whom she even confided the discomfort she felt regarding the attention Jung received from other women. Jung regarded her as his “queen,” and on her tombstone, he had inscribed: *“Oh, outstanding vessel of devotion and obedience.”* These words, which reveal Jung's intimate and profound view of his wife, suggest Emma's conduct throughout their marital life. It is possible to suppose that, upon mourning her death, Jung experienced remorse or regret.

One can also imagine how Jung's life might have been shaped without Emma, who represented for him a resilient ego rooted in a solid familial foundation, something Jung himself had lacked. Unlike her, Jung bore deep marks from the paternal and maternal complexes, as he described in *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões* (1961, 1988).

Jung's relationship with his father, Paul Jung, was significant and problematic. As a Protestant pastor, Paul was described by his son as a kind man, yet intellectually rigid and spiritually frustrated. This figure contributed to the formation of Jung's paternal complex, representing someone who had lost contact with spiritual vitality, trapped in religious dogma, and emotionally shallow, which led Jung to an intense search for deeper and more authentic meanings.

Paul was emotionally absent and unable to respond to his son's questions, generating ambivalent feelings of admiration and disappointment, which were later projected onto Freud. Correspondence with the psychoanalyst is revealing: "Let me enjoy your friendship not as that of equals but as that of father and son," Jung wrote. This projective bond, painfully broken, was experienced as a "separation from the father," causing suffering but also driving him to construct his own theoretical path.

In turn, Jung's relationship with his mother, Emilie Preiswerk Jung, played a decisive role in the formation of his maternal complex. Emilie, a woman with spiritual and mediumistic tendencies, influenced Jung from an early age, but she suffered from emotional instability and periods of seclusion, provoking in him feelings of abandonment and confusion. Jung described his mother as having two personalities: one warm and present, the other cold and distant, traits he later identified in the maternal archetype.

Maternal ambivalence had a profound impact on Jung, awakening in him a particular sensitivity to the unconscious and to archetypes, especially that of the Great Mother. He not only experienced the maternal complex but also transformed it into a central concept in analytical psychology, conceiving complexes as living cores of the psyche capable of influencing behavior and human relationships.

Emilie's influence also had an indirect effect on Jung's relationship with Emma. There was, to the best of our knowledge, no opposition or open conflict between the two women; however, Emilie's strong personality and spirituality shaped Jung's vision of the feminine and influenced the

type of wife he sought, someone who combined strength, stability, and symbolic depth.

Jung grew up under the influence of a mother whose remarkable presence shaped his perception of the feminine. This experience influenced his search for a companion who would embody both strength and stability, associated with an aura of mystery and depth. Emma fully represented this combination. As a structurally formative figure, endowed with intelligence, maturity, and unconditional support, she became a strong maternal reference for Jung – a factor that was likely decisive in his marital choice. She provided him with a secure and stable environment in which he could freely dedicate himself to his research and the work he would go on to develop.

Emma Jung, born Emma Rauschenbach, was the daughter of Johannes Rauschenbach, a wealthy Swiss industrialist and owner of *IWC Schaffhausen*, a prestigious watch manufacturer. Although there are no extensive records of the emotional relationship between Emma and her father, there is evidence that he exerted a significant influence, particularly regarding her education and female autonomy, which were notable for the culture and society of the time.

Intellectually capable, Emma was unable to attend university because her father adhered to conservative customs that did not allow women to pursue higher education, restricting them to training considered appropriate for their social status. This limitation likely generated an internal conflict between admiration and frustration, a dynamic typical of a paternal complex.

Despite the lack of detailed records regarding her education, Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century was a vibrant cultural and intellectual center, particularly in philosophy, psychology, and the arts. Emma was likely exposed to emerging psychoanalytic ideas, including those of Freud, with whom she corresponded between 1910 and 1911. This exposure contributed to her later work as a psychoanalyst and as a collaborator of Carl Gustav Jung.

Seeking Autonomy

After marrying Jung, Emma immersed herself in the study of analytical psychology and became a respected analyst, although without the same public prominence as her husband. This dedication can be seen as an attempt at psychic liberation from the paternal shadow, which was only partially realized. On the contrary, the transference of this figure onto Jung appears to have preserved her creativity from complete stagnation, within certain limits.

Her training and interest in analytical psychology were fundamental for her later work, particularly in her research on the myth of the Holy Grail, a subject she explored in depth. Her dedication to this study also reveals a search for spiritual meaning and transformation, possibly due to the rigid structure inherited from her paternal figure. It is no coincidence that Emma wrote about the *animus*, the masculine archetype in the female psyche, a theme likely rooted in her experiences with her father.

From a psychological perspective, Emma can be understood as a deeply reflective and resilient woman, engaged in her own process of individuation, a central concept in analytical psychology that describes the development of one's essential *self*.

Intellectual Legacy

Emma was not merely the wife of C. G. Jung; she was his intellectual partner, editor, and an accomplished analyst in her own right. Her solid cultural background and sensitivity helped shape important aspects of Jungian psychology, particularly in the field of feminine psychology and the study of archetypes.

She worked as a clinical analyst, director of the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich, researcher, and writer, always guided by a psyche oriented toward self-knowledge and work with the personal and collective unconscious. Her clinical practice began at the Burghölzli Psychiatric Hospital, where she received thorough training through study, observation, and hands-on work with Jung's patients. She is the author of significant works, such as

Animus and Anima (1967, 1991), which solidify her position as an independent and influential voice within analytical psychology.

Emotional Complexity and Inner Strength

Emma's marriage presented challenges from the very beginning, with the move to an apartment within the Burghölzli Psychiatric Hospital. At the time, the hospital was one of the most advanced psychiatric centers in Europe, under the direction of Eugen Bleuler, and it was there that Jung developed the famous Word Association Test^[1], attracting the attention of Sigmund Freud.

Although she did not work as a physician, Emma was immersed in the hospital's clinical and intellectual environment, closely observing Jung's early research on the unconscious. This exposure, combined with the observation of patients, study, and participation in debates, was fundamental to her training, which would be formally consolidated when she became a Jungian analyst in 1910.

At Burghölzli, Emma fulfilled multiple roles: translator, stenographer, research collaborator, experimental subject, and even direct support in patient care. This experience planted the seeds for her later practice and contributed to the development of her sensitive listening skills, a competence that would define her clinical work throughout her career.

Throughout their marriage, the training and practice she acquired enabled Emma to become an analyst and be elected the first president of the Zurich Psychology Club.

The hospital also served as the setting for decisive encounters for the couple, such as Jung's meeting with Sabina Spielrein, which was profoundly influential on both their personal lives and professional trajectories.

[1] The association test, still little known in Brazil, is taught at the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich as part of its training program. Verena Kast has written a work on this subject, recently translated into Portuguese by the author of this article: *KAST, V. O Experimento de Associação na Prática Terapêutica: o método revolucionário de C. G. Jung para explorar o inconsciente – teoria e prática*. JUNGIANEUM/Books, 2025.

Emma and Freud

The relationship between Emma Jung and Sigmund Freud was brief and respectful, occurring between 1910 and 1911, but it was not as close as the intense bond Freud had with Carl Gustav Jung during a period when Jung was still considered the successor in the Freudian psychoanalytic lineage.

Freud even interpreted dreams of Jung that involved Emma, suggesting that their marriage was motivated by financial interests, a reading that caused some discomfort. Despite this, Emma showed genuine interest in Freudian ideas, especially during the early stages of Jung's career, when he was still closely aligned with psychoanalysis.

With the rupture between Freud and Jung in 1913, driven by theoretical and personal disagreements, Emma naturally distanced herself from Freud. She devoted herself to analytical psychology, developing her own approach, more symbolic and focused on the feminine, which further set her apart from Freudian ideas centered on sexuality.

Although she did not have a deep personal relationship with Freud, Emma served as a discreet bridge between the two giants of psychology, helping Jung maintain emotional balance during the years of tension with Freud.

Another significant episode in Emma's life occurred with the hospitalization of Sabina Spielrein at Burghölzli. The relationship between Jung and Sabina was intense, complex, and profoundly influential, both personally and in the development of psychoanalysis.

Sabina was hospitalized in 1904 at the Burghölzli Hospital in Zurich, diagnosed with hysteria. Jung, then a young psychiatrist, became her physician. The treatment followed Freudian methods, and Sabina showed significant improvement. Over time, she progressed from patient to Jung's assistant, collaborating on studies and publications, eventually establishing a romantic and intellectual relationship with him.

The relationship between Emma Jung and Sabina Spielrein was

characterized more by tension and silence than by closeness or direct collaboration. Their interaction was indirect and complex. Although there are no records about confrontations between the two women, it is known that Emma was aware of Jung's involvement with Sabina, which caused her emotional distress and internal conflict. Emma maintained a resilient and discreet stance, without breaking off her marriage, even in this delicate situation. This attitude is widely regarded as an example of her emotional strength and commitment to both family and Jung's work.

Sabina and Emma shared intellectual interests, particularly concerning the depth psychology and symbolism, but they never directly collaborated on projects or publications.

Emma's experience with Sabina, as well as with other women close to Jung, such as Toni Wolff, influenced her reflections on the feminine, love, and sacrifice, central themes in her later work.

Between 1904 and 1911, Jung and Sabina maintained a secret romantic relationship, marked by emotional intensity and intellectual exchange. Sabina influenced Jung with original ideas, such as the concept of the destructive drive, which later inspired Freud to formulate the death drive.

Sabina developed her own theory of the psyche, integrating elements from Freud and Jung with her own hypotheses about symbolism and the unconscious. Her letters to Jung between 1917 and 1918 revealed profound and pioneering reflections on mental functioning. However, these letters remained unpublished and unacknowledged for decades, neither mentioned by Jung nor by Freud. For many years, her significance was overlooked until her letters and writings were rediscovered in the 1970s, revealing her influence on both giants of psychoanalysis.

The relationship ended painfully, with Jung gradually distancing himself. Sabina pursued an independent career, becoming a respected psychoanalyst, particularly in child psychology and the theory of language.

In turn, Emma's intellectual qualities were highly appreciated by Freud. He was impressed by her intellectual standing and her active

involvement in her husband's professional life. Freud sent her flowers, praised her refined manners, and enjoyed asking for her opinions on his work. For a brief period, Freud acted as Emma's analyst, an experience that undoubtedly fostered very positive feelings between them, without any conflict.

Emma frequently wrote to Freud, suggesting that she could serve as a "solver of enigmas." Freud did not hesitate to express his admiration for Emma. On one occasion, he wrote to Jung: "Give your charming, intelligent, and ambitious wife the pleasure of not being lost in matters of money."

Emma has not been completely overlooked in the studies and efforts dedicated to preserving Jung's legacy after he died in 1961. The description for the *Fundação das Obras de C. G. Jung* established by his heirs in 2007, states that it "is dedicated to the literary and creative maintenance and development of Carl Gustav Jung and his wife, Emma Jung-Rauschenbach." The mission of the Haus C. G. Jung, the family home located on the shore of Lake Zurich in Küsnacht, Switzerland, which today functions as a public museum and is still occupied by family members, is "to keep alive the memory of the physician and explorer of the human soul, Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), and of his wife and collaborator, Emma Jung-R."

The family was aware of all the work Emma performed to support her husband or help him develop his ideas, but they did not know that she also worked privately.

At present, six letters from Emma to Freud have been preserved. Freud kept Jung's letters to him separate from Emma's. Upon Freud's death, Emma requested that the letters be returned to her family.

Emma's involvement was particularly significant during the disagreement between Freud and Jung regarding the definition of the concept of libido. In a conciliatory yet courageous letter, Emma expressed her support for her husband's position. Her wish was that both should find a way to reconcile their divergent positions so that, in some way, the shadow could not interfere in their good relationship.

Everything changed when the family discovered a series of articles written by Emma, marking the beginning of Thomas Fischer's research. His interest in Emma and the other women surrounding Jung intensified in the 1990s and, especially, in the early 2000s.

Thomas Fischer's Role in Preserving Emma Jung's Legacy

Thomas Fischer, great-grandson of Carl Gustav Jung and Emma Jung, is a member of the board of directors and editor of the C. G. Jung Works Foundation, playing an important role in preserving and disseminating the family's intellectual legacy.

It was in this context that, around 2010, the French author Gaudissart (2018) began research for a biography of Emma. When requesting publication rights for some of her articles from the family, the request was denied. Fischer explained that there were two reasons for this: the desire to honor Emma's memory through their own work and the lack of clarity regarding what was held in the family archives. It was believed that Emma had destroyed much of her personal documentation in the months preceding her death in 1955. Additionally, the Jung children had other priorities and had not explored the material.

Gaudissart's interest (2018) prompted Fischer to examine the archive more thoroughly, leading to the discovery of a true treasure, which resulted in the book *Dedicated to the Soul*, co-edited and recently published. The work brings together lectures, poems, letters, and drawings, revealing the depth of Emma's private investigations, her creativity, and the strength of her analytical work. For Fischer, it was like finding pieces of a mosaic that allowed a better understanding of who she was and how she was remembered at the end of her life.

He describes Emma as a woman who reconciled herself with her situation, particularly her married life, which was certainly not easy. Without Jung's originality, Emma was extremely curious and worked for years on her own psychological material, exploring it at profound levels.

Emma understood Freud's perspective on Jung's success. In a letter

from November 1911, she noted aspects of this relationship, mentioning Freud's concern over the growing influence of Jung, particularly considering Toni Wolff's presence, whom he referred to as Jung's "other wife." Despite this, Emma remained steadfast, demonstrating a resilient psychic structure capable of containing pain without fragmenting.

Her process of individuation was shaped both by the shadows of her husband's extramarital relationship and by the tension between her social role as a wife and her inner vocation as a connoisseur of the human soul. It required great inner strength, strict ethics, and firm purpose for her future, leading her to minimize social contact and live a reserved life. Even so, she maintained close relationships with the Bleuler family during her time at Burghölzli.

Emma wrote extensively about the Grail myth, as previously mentioned, using it as a metaphor for the journey of individuation and the quest for the *Self*. For her, the trajectory of the knights represented the inner path toward the wholeness of the soul – the same wholeness she sought for herself and helped others to find. Her writing combined symbolic thought with intellectual rigor, unusual for the time, particularly among women in psychology.

Emma's work emphasized the feminine, myths, and the integration of opposites as a path to wholeness, highlighting that individuation is not merely rational, but also symbolic, emotional, and spiritual.

On a personal level, Emma experienced periods of complex interaction with Toni Wolff, which over time resulted in a cordial accommodation. By the late 1940s, Toni began visiting the Jung household, where the three of them, despite underlying tensions, shared moments of coexistence. According to Dr. Joseph Henderson, this triangular relationship was only possible thanks to a form of consciousness that transcended the conventional social model.

In the final years of her life, Emma faced cancer with stoicism, concealing the seriousness of her condition even from her children. The disease was diagnosed at the end of 1952 and kept secret, with only Jung fully

aware. Emma was able to participate in the celebrations of her husband's eightieth birthday in 1955, demonstrating resilience and dedication despite her pain and limitations.

Emma Jung's legacy as an intellectual partner, analyst, and researcher is today more widely recognized thanks to the work of Thomas Fischer, who helped recover and bring visibility to this woman's unique contribution to analytical psychology.

BBC Interview with John Freeman, 1959 – HQ

There were three gatherings, all held at the Dolder Grand Hotel: a morning reception, open to anyone who had previously attended a lecture by Jung, whether abroad, at the ETH, at the Psychological Club, or at Eranos; a large midday lunch, intended for civic leaders, psychologists, friends, and also those who, despite having little personal contact with Jung, wished to attend (and there were many); and a smaller, more exclusive dinner for leaders of Jungian groups and institutes, institute members, and speakers.

At the dinner, Jung and Emma sat at the head of the table, with Bennet to Jung's left and Michael Fordham, who was already a renowned British analyst, to Emma's right. Also present were Professor L. Michaud; Elisabeth, wife of Franz Riklin Jr.; Dr. A. L. Vischer, representative of the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences; lawyer Emil Landolt; Frances G. Wickes, who had come from New York; and the eldest Jung daughter, Agathe Niehus-Jung.

Jung made jokes in several languages and delivered a graceful speech of gratitude when he received, from Rascher Verlag, an advance and elegantly bound copy of the first volume of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. He accepted the honorary title from ETH with deep emotion. In their speeches, several professors expressed not only great admiration for his life's work but also a remarkable understanding of the essence of his thought.

Jung laughed heartily when Elsie Attenhofer, known as the "grand

dame of Swiss cabaret,” sang a serenade for him. He was less enthusiastic, however, when the mayor of Zurich presented Emma with a large bouquet, remarking that she also deserved recognition for having contributed five children to the Jung family.

If there were any signs of decline in Jung’s faculties, no one noticed. Nor did anyone suspect that there was anything wrong with Emma, who greeted everyone with her customary elegance.

During the week after the official celebrations, the house remained full of visitors, as Emma welcomed all who had come from afar to pay tribute to her husband. Ruth Bailey was of great help, though no one imagined that her visits would become so frequent, for Emma was carefully tending to Jung’s life, preparing everything for the period that would follow her own impending death.

Ruth Bailey

Ruth Bailey had lived all her life in a rural village in Cheshire, in northern England. Until the beginning of the war, she used to spend her summers with the Jung family, and as soon as she was able, she resumed her visits. Between Ruth and Jung’s family, there was a constant exchange of visits: the friendship, which had begun in Africa, deepened over time and became increasingly close, especially with Emma.

Ruth made Emma laugh every Wednesday, when Jung met with Toni, by taking her to see amusing British films. She also looked after Jung’s four daughters during the long summer holidays when they were studying English.

Years earlier, Emma had asked Ruth to promise that she would come to Küsnacht as a “professional caretaker” for the surviving family, no matter who died first, Emma or Carl. Emma called Ruth for her first such stay in 1949, after tripping on a rug in the upstairs hallway and fracturing her shoulder. Her recovery was slow, and Ruth remained in the house to take care of Jung while Emma was at the Klinik Hirslanden.

Ruth’s life had always been devoted to caring for her family. After the

death of her last brother and her mother, she found herself alone, thus free to travel. After Emma's accident, she began visiting several times a year, each time staying for longer periods.

The family regarded Ruth as a refuge and a breath of fresh air, because, like Agathe, she was more interested in people than in the theories they defended. With her around, there was never any *professional talk*. Ruth had a light and spontaneous sense of humor, and they never knew what to expect, for she always found a way to make them laugh.

A conversation with Jung in Africa illustrates this quality well. Ruth recalled how, once, while they were killing time on the veranda of a hotel, she spontaneously sang a silly little rhyme. Jung replied, "Really, Ruth, your brain is like a terrine, bits of meat held together by jelly." She shot back, "Maybe so, but it's entertaining." He agreed: "You're right, it certainly is."

Final Considerations

I consider Emma Jung a true victim of her time. Like many other women of that society, Emma was not granted the consideration, respect, and recognition she deserved.

The shadow cast by her husband's brilliance usurped her own light, even though she fought bravely and resiliently to leave her legacy, her writings, and valuable insights, which could have provided rich material for study for future generations, as occurred with Freud and Jung.

Patriarchy, of which her husband was also a part, imposed limitations and confined her to the roles of mother and wife, denying her recognition as an active participant in the history of analytical psychology.

Challenged to nearly inhuman levels of emotional endurance, Emma revealed remarkable resilience: she achieved much, yet was aware that there was still more to be conquered. Her strength, so often overlooked, arose from the clash between masculine authoritarianism and feminine submission.

I believe Emma lacked rebellion, daring, and utopian thought.

When I defended my thesis at the Jung Institute for the title of analyst, one of the examiners remarked that my arguments were utopian. Yet I came from the guidance of my own analyst, who taught me that utopias are necessary, and so I dared.

Emma did not possess that good masculine force that could have propelled her forward. On the contrary, the men and women around her preferred to maintain the status quo, faced with the immense difficulty of taking any opposing stance. They lacked the vitality of the Eve archetype, who did not see the serpent as a symbol of sin but as a liberator from the yoke of an all-powerful masculine figure, who was God himself, and from the shapeless husband, settled into the complacent bliss of paradise.

The inscription on her tomb, written by Jung, expresses this matter succinctly: “Oh, outstanding vessel, sign of devotion and obedience.” That was what her husband desired and expected of her, and what, for the most part, she gave him. But was that inscription born of a special love finally devoted to his wife, or of guilt, remorse, perhaps even pity for all he had made her endure?

Emma projected the father complex onto Jung. It is striking that, as an analyst, Jung did not recognize this projection and may even have taken advantage of it. Emma was fully capable of turning inward, of accessing both her personal and collective unconscious, just as Jung did. Yet she did not have the freedom he enjoyed for self-analysis, nor could she devote herself to art or to interpreting the images arising from her descent into the unconscious. For her, it was impossible. There was no space.

Through her observation of patients at Burghölzli, Emma wrote *Animus* and *Anima* and found the fertile ground for the concepts of *animus* and *anima*, later incorporated by Jung.

In her attitude toward the women with whom Jung became involved, Emma displayed remarkable stoicism. I often wonder what truly and deeply moved her to possess such strength: was it the social circumstances of her time as a woman, the kind of love that bears all things and re-

nounces all, or perhaps the vengeance of endurance itself? Or are all these possibilities true at once?

Historical records and biographical analyses indicate that Emma Jung, wife of Carl Gustav Jung, may have written anonymously to Sabina Spielrein's family, denouncing the intimate relationship between Sabina and Jung. Several sources have mentioned this episode, exploring the complex web of personal and professional relationships surrounding Jung, Emma, Sabina Spielrein, and other women close to him.

The anonymous letter has been interpreted by some scholars as an attempt to protect both Jung's marriage and his reputation, while also expressing Emma's own suffering in the face of the extramarital affair. One aspect of this story is particularly disturbing: Emma died of stomach cancer. From a psychosomatic perspective, the stomach is seen as the guardian of what we assimilate, not only food, but also experiences, emotions, and relationships. When gastritis or ulcers arise, they may point to the difficulty of accepting or "digesting" situations, people, or feelings. The stomach, then, becomes the body's way of expressing what the psyche cannot process: stress, anxiety, repressed anger, and other emotions that corrode physical well-being.

In the face of intense emotions, anxiety, or stress, not only the stomach but the entire digestive system – from the mouth to the rectum – feels the impact. This can be explained by the fact that the intestines possess their own nervous system, closely connected to the brain.

Emma lived for many years marked by sadness, deep anger, fierce jealousy, dissatisfaction, and countless provocations. Like every human being, she carried within herself powerful inner shadows.

These are conjectures that cannot be verified. Even so, they allow us to honor Emma's memory as that of a woman of remarkable character, an exemplar of devotion and self-renunciation. And self-renunciation, in turn, is a virtue reserved only for strong souls.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

THE UNCONSCIOUS MADE AUDIBLE: FREUD, JUNG, AND MUSICAL IMAGINATION

Michael R. Mollura

Abstract

The psychological theories of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung continue to provide profound insight into the operations of the unconscious as a dynamic, creative force. Through their early collaboration and eventual divergence, traced poignantly in their extensive correspondence, a rich dialectic emerges concerning the nature of the unconscious and its relationship to the arts. This paper examines Freud's model of sublimation and dream interpretation alongside Jung's concept of the autonomous image, treating their exchanges as an historical and theoretical foundation for understanding creativity. Expanding upon their work, I introduce the method developed in my dissertation, *The Music of Images*, which proposes musical composition as an expressive amplification of dream images, allowing the unconscious to be rendered audibly. In dialogue with Jungian amplification and Freud's notion of symbolic compromise

formations, I argue that music offers a privileged medium through which the affective and imaginal dimensions of the unconscious are more fully embodied than verbal interpretation alone permits. Section I explores Jung's redefinition of the unconscious as an imaginal realm generating autonomous symbolic material. Section II examines the aesthetic tensions in the Freud-Jung correspondence and the theoretical implications for creativity. Section III offers an extension of these ideas through the musicalization of dream material, and Section IV addresses the clinical application of auditory dream amplification as a depth psychological practice. By tracing these intertwined traditions, this paper proposes a model of listening, composing, and healing that situates creativity at the heart of depth psychological work with dreams.

Keywords: unconscious processes; Freud and Jung; dream analysis; musical amplification; creativity and depth psychology; imaginal psychology; sound and psyche; clinical aesthetics; archetypal image; poetic listening.

Introduction

The correspondence between Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, stretching from 1906 to 1913, represents not merely a dialogue between two men but an encounter between two distinct visions of the unconscious. In their letters (MCGUIRE, 1974), one senses the vital energy of a shared quest – and the inevitable tensions that would tear them apart. Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, oriented his vision toward the uncovering of repressed sexual and aggressive drives; Jung, the heir apparent turned apostate, would insist on a broader, mythopoetic vision: the unconscious as a living, creative principle extending beyond personal history into collective memory and symbolic life. This divergence, while often framed in terms of theoretical dispute, can also be seen as an aesthetic rupture. It concerns not only what the unconscious contains, but how it expresses itself – through symptom or symbol, through pathology or art.

The early letters reveal a mutual fascination with the capacity of dreams to produce not mere wish-fulfillments but deeply resonant images. Freud,

always wary of metaphysical speculation, preferred to see dreams as expressions of repressed instinctual energies, disguised through mechanisms of distortion (FREUD, 1900/1953). Jung, increasingly dissatisfied with this reductive model, came to see dreams as autonomous, purposive communications from the unconscious, laden with meaning that could not be reduced to personal biography alone (JUNG, 1966). Dreams, for Jung, were imaginal events, as deserving of contemplation as a painting or a poem.

In my own work, *The Music of Images*, I extend this imaginal understanding by treating dreams not only as visual or narrative symbols but as potential musical events. If dreams are productions of the unconscious, then they are not only seen but heard; they resonate with affects, rhythms, and tonalities that elude verbal capture. By composing music in response to dream imagery, I sought to amplify the dream's emotional and symbolic fields, engaging the unconscious in a dialogue not confined to language but open to the full range of aesthetic expression. In this, I follow not only Jung's invitation to "amplify" the image (JUNG, 1936/1969), but also Freud's often-overlooked recognition that unconscious processes operate according to principles – such as condensation, displacement, and symbolization – that are fundamentally artistic.

This paper, then, seeks to weave together these threads: the tensions and affinities in Freud's and Jung's models of the unconscious, the implications for the arts, and the clinical and creative possibilities opened by an auditory approach to dreamwork. In what follows, Section I explores Jung's reconceptualization of dreams as autonomous works of art; Section II examines the aesthetic and theoretical divergences revealed in Freud and Jung's correspondence; Section III presents the musicalization of dream material as an extension of depth psychological practice; and Section IV addresses the clinical application of these insights. Together, these inquiries converge on a conclusion that envisions a poetics of listening: a way of engaging the unconscious that honors its musical, imaginal, and transformative powers.

Jung's Imaginal Turn: Dreams as Autonomous Works of Art

The shift from Freud's view of the unconscious as a repository of repressed wishes to Jung's understanding of the unconscious as a self-generating field of symbolic activity marks one of the most profound developments in the history of depth psychology. In this imaginal turn, dreams are not merely distortions of forbidden desires but autonomous works of art, embodying psychic truths that transcend personal biography. Jung's model opens a pathway to understanding the creative psyche not as a derivative or defensive mechanism, but as an innate and vital activity of the soul. It is within this framework that the dream assumes its rightful place alongside poetry, painting, and music: a manifestation of the psyche's natural capacity to symbolize its own depths. The unconscious, in Jung's vision, does not merely "express" the individual but participates in a broader, collective process of meaning-making, offering images that belong both to the dreamer and to the timeless wellsprings of human imagination.

In a letter to Freud dated June 6, 1910, Jung hints at the autonomy of unconscious productions: "The unconscious, it seems to me, is not only reactive but creative; it does not merely preserve traces of the past, but also shapes possibilities for the future" (MCGUIRE, 1974, p. 242). Here, Jung foreshadows his eventual departure from Freud's energetic model of repression and sublimation. Where Freud's unconscious is structured largely by history – by the repressed sediments of childhood conflict – Jung's unconscious is prospective, teleological, oriented toward growth and individuation. Dreams, in this model, are not puzzles to be solved but expressions of a living inner drama seeking to unfold within consciousness. They are events in the psyche, governed not by rational causality but by symbolic necessity, and as such they resemble works of art: multivalent, self-contained, irreducible to mere diagnosis.

The radical implications of this imaginal turn are most clearly articulated in Jung's *Symbols of Transformation* (1912/1956), where he proposes that libido – rather than being strictly sexual – is a general psychic

energy capable of creative manifestation. The symbols arising in dreams are not defensive masks but the soul's genuine attempt to speak its own reality. "The dream is a spontaneous self-portrayal, in symbolic form, of the actual situation in the unconscious" (JUNG, 1953, p. 17). In other words, the dream is already a finished image; it does not require interpretation so much as amplification, resonance, and aesthetic contemplation. In this, Jung diverges sharply from Freud's interpretive reductionism. For Jung, to interpret a dream merely as a disguised wish-fulfillment is to flatten its dimensions, to impoverish its richness.

The notion of dreams as autonomous works of art finds deeper elaboration in Jung's later writings on active imagination. The boundary between dreaming and creating becomes even more porous. In active imagination, one does not analyze the image but enters into dialogue with it, allowing it to unfold its own narrative, its own logic, its own transformations (JUNG, 1969). This practice mirrors the artistic process itself, where the creator does not impose meaning upon the material but listens, responds, and collaborates with the emerging form. In the context of *The Music of Images*, this understanding becomes foundational: the dream's musicalization is not an act of translation but of amplification. The dream image is not dissected or explained; it is sounded out, allowed to become audible through the composer's attentive collaboration.

Thus, when composing music in response to dream images, one honors the dream as an aesthetic event. The goal is not to "decode" the dream but to extend its resonances into the auditory domain, to create a sonic field in which the dream's affective and symbolic content can continue to unfold. Music, by its very nature, refuses the rigid certainties of discursive language. It moves in the fluid, ambiguous space of feeling, intuition, and temporal becoming – the very space from which the dream itself arises. As Jung notes in *Psychological Types* (1921/1971), "The images of the unconscious place a great responsibility upon the conscious mind to understand them properly and to fulfill them" (p. 229). Fulfillment, here,

is not interpretation but realization: allowing the images to live, breathe, and sing through acts of creative participation.

In this sense, the dream is already a form of music, awaiting its amplification. Its rhythms, its tonal moods, its dissonances and resolutions, are latent within its imaginal textures. The task of the artist-therapist is to listen for these hidden melodies and bring them into audible form, not as representations but as reverberations of the soul's own music. This act of musicalization does not reduce the dream to a fixed meaning but opens it to a deeper experience, one that engages the listener at levels far beneath the rational mind. In composing for dreams, one enters the same imaginal stream that Jung identified as the source of myth, art, and religious experience: a stream that flows from the deep unconscious into the creative life of the individual and the culture.

Moreover, this approach restores to dreams their dignity as aesthetic phenomena. Too often in clinical contexts, dreams are treated as mere diagnostic tools, their symbols flattened into pre-existing schemas. Jung's imaginal turn demands a different attitude: one of reverence, curiosity, and artistic engagement. The dream is not a symptom to be cured but a song to be heard, a painting to be contemplated, a drama to be enacted. When we compose music for dreams, we step into this imaginal attitude, allowing ourselves to become instruments through which the dream's latent song can be heard anew (MOLLURA, 2013).

Correspondence and Divergence: Freud, Jung, and the Aesthetic Unconscious

The correspondence between Freud and Jung, spanning from 1906 to 1913, offers an unparalleled glimpse into the birth – and fracturing – of depth psychology itself. More than a mere historical curiosity, these letters reveal the living struggle between two visions of the psyche: one seeking containment through rational structures, the other yearning toward imaginal autonomy. Nowhere is this tension more palpable than

in their competing conceptions of creativity, dreams, and the aesthetic nature of the unconscious. Their dialogue, initially marked by mutual idealization, soon gave way to profound philosophical divergence, a rupture that mirrors the unconscious conflicts they sought to understand.

In the early years of their correspondence, Jung expressed deep admiration for Freud's theoretical achievements. In a letter dated October 11, 1906, Jung praised *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a work of "incomparable depth" (MCGUIRE, 1974, p. 7). Freud, in turn, hailed Jung as the crown prince of psychoanalysis, the one who would carry the torch forward. Yet even within these affirmations, undercurrents of difference are detectable. Jung's language already strains toward a broader, more mythopoetic vision of the unconscious, one that Freud, grounded in the empirical rigor of Viennese medical science, could neither wholly endorse nor comfortably inhabit.

The crux of their divergence, particularly as it pertains to creativity and the arts, centers on the status of the symbol. For Freud, symbols were secondary formations: distortions of repressed wishes necessitated by the censoring operations of the ego and the superego (FREUD, 1900/1953). They are to be unraveled, decoded, their latent content exposed and thus rendered harmless. In contrast, Jung came to see symbols as expressions of a reality irreducible to personal history. In his letter to Freud dated January 3, 1910, Jung wrote, "A symbol is not a disguise but the best possible expression for something unknown" (MCGUIRE, 1974, p. 218). This seemingly subtle distinction carries immense consequences. Where Freud's method tends toward the past, seeking the forgotten trauma or wish, Jung's symbolic imagination points toward the future: to the unfolding of new psychic structures, to the individuation of the *self*.

The aesthetic implications of this split are profound. Freud's unconscious is a site of conflict, a battleground between instinct and civilization. Art, in this view, is a compromise formation: a socially sanctioned outlet for forbidden desires. Sublimation allows the libido to be diverted into higher, non-sexual aims, but always under the shadow of loss. The artist

sacrifices direct gratification for cultural achievement, a bargain Freud explores poignantly in his essay on Dostoevsky and Parricide (FREUD, 1928/1961). Jung's unconscious, by contrast, is a living sea of symbols, myths, and images that seek realization. Creativity is not a compromise but a necessity, the natural flowering of the psyche's deep patterns. In this sense, art is not merely a defense against neurosis; it is the soul's articulation of its own wholeness.

The correspondence reveals that Freud could never entirely grasp Jung's vision without feeling threatened by it. In a letter dated June 1911, Freud warns Jung against "mysticism" and "loss of scientific rigor" (MCGUIRE, 1974, p. 356). Freud's fear was not unfounded. Jung was indeed moving into territory that could not be contained within the scientific paradigms of his time. Yet what Freud perceived as mysticism was, in fact, the recognition that the unconscious is not merely a storehouse of repressed memories but a generative source of new meanings, new worlds. It is, in essence, an aesthetic reality.

Nowhere does this aesthetic divergence become clearer than in their differing attitudes toward myth. Freud's use of Oedipus, for example, is allegorical: the myth serves to illustrate the universal dynamics of infantile sexuality. Jung, however, treats myth as a living, autonomous reality: the expression of archetypal patterns that shape not only individual psychology but the very fabric of human culture. Myth, in Jung's vision, is not to be explained away but entered into; it is not merely content but form, not merely symptom but summons.

This distinction undergirds the very possibility of what I developed in *The Music of Images*: the idea that dream images – and, by extension, unconscious material – are not problems to be solved but realities to be sounded, embodied, and lived. If one follows Freud's logic, dream music would serve primarily to sublimate forbidden wishes, to displace them into culturally acceptable forms. If one follows Jung, however, composing music from dream images becomes an act of amplification, a bringing-to-being of something new, something not yet realized. It is a form of aes-

thetic individuation, a movement toward wholeness through resonance rather than repression.

In this light, the divergence between Freud and Jung was not merely theoretical; it was imaginal. Freud's unconscious whispers in the clinical setting, coded and disguised. Jung's unconscious sings, resounding through images, myths, and music. Their correspondence, when read carefully, reveals the tension between these two modes of listening: the clinical ear that deciphers symptoms and the artistic ear that listens for soul. To compose music from dreams, as I have done, is to take sides – gently but decisively – with the imaginal, to treat the dream not as a riddle to be solved but as a song seeking its voice.

Thus, while the break between Freud and Jung has often been lamented as a personal tragedy, it can also be seen as a necessary bifurcation in the evolution of psychological thought. Freud's achievement was to ground the unconscious in the realities of repression, sexuality, and conflict. Jung's was to liberate the unconscious as a creative field, rich with symbols and possibilities. In the space between them, the modern understanding of the artistic psyche was born: a psyche that dreams, suffers, remembers, but also composes, paints, writes, and sings its own becoming.

Musicalizing the Dream: Toward an Auditory Model of Dream Amplification

If Jung's imaginal turn invites us to regard dreams as autonomous works of art, and if his divergence from Freud's repressive model liberates the unconscious as a creative field rather than a pathological repository, then it follows that the work of the dreamer, the clinician, and the artist must shift accordingly. No longer is the task merely one of decoding; rather, it is one of deep listening and resonant response. It is precisely in this spirit that I developed the model articulated in *The Music of Images*: a practice of composing music directly from dream material, not as a translation, but as an amplification, a sounding of the soul's hidden melodies. This auditory model of dream amplification acknowledges what both Freud

and Jung intuited in different ways: that the unconscious speaks not only in images but in affects, rhythms, tensions, and releases – in short, in musical forms.

The musicalization of dream imagery responds to a fundamental truth about the unconscious: its affinity for non-verbal expression. Freud, even in his most linguistic models, recognized the role of primary process thinking, governed by the principles of condensation and displacement, producing a “dream-work” that is associative, non-linear, and profoundly affective (FREUD, 1900/1953). Jung, for his part, emphasized the symbolic and mythopoetic qualities of unconscious products, understanding that images operate on levels that words alone cannot fully capture (JUNG, 1953). Music, perhaps more than any other art form, shares this logic. It communicates without proposition, narrates without plot, evokes without explaining. It is therefore uniquely suited to the amplification of dream material.

When a dream image is approached musically, one is not concerned with its “meaning” in a reductive sense but with its emotional tonality, its energetic movement, its implicit dramatic arc. For example, a dream of standing alone on a vast, icy plain under a gray sky might invite a composition marked by sparse textures, minor modalities, slow, glacial harmonic changes – a sonic landscape that resonates with the dream’s atmosphere. The act of composing such music is itself a process of amplification: the dream’s implicit mood is not explained but sounded, allowing its emotional truth to unfold in time. This act bypasses the ego’s tendency to rationalize and instead invites a somatic, affective engagement with the dream.

Moreover, musicalizing the dream situates the dreamer not merely as a passive recipient of unconscious content but as an active participant in its unfolding. Jung’s concept of active imagination (JUNG, 1969) finds a profound analogue here: just as the imaginal dialogue with dream figures invites psychic transformation, so too does the musical engagement with

dream images foster a deeper integration of unconscious material. In composing music from a dream, the dreamer becomes a co-creator with the unconscious, participating in a living process of individuation through aesthetic practice.

This approach also honors the complexity of the dream's temporal structure. Dreams often collapse past, present, and future into a single scene, a single image charged with multiple temporalities. Music, by its very nature, unfolds in time; it is temporality made audible. Thus, composing music for a dream allows the dream's multiple timescales to find expression, to breathe and evolve in ways that static analysis cannot accommodate. A motif introduced early in the composition may return later in transformed guise, mirroring the way a dream's meaning may shift over time as it is lived and reflected upon.

In clinical settings, the auditory amplification of dreams can open new avenues for therapeutic engagement. Rather than asking a patient to “interpret” a dream in cognitive terms, the therapist might invite the patient to describe the dream's mood, its sonic textures, its imagined soundtrack. Even simple questions – “What does this dream sound like?” “If this image had a song, what would it be?” – can open pathways to the unconscious that bypass defensive intellectualization. In some cases, patients may even be invited to co-create music with the therapist, improvising sounds or selecting instruments that resonate with dream material. This musical amplification transforms the therapeutic space into a site of creative collaboration, where the unconscious is not merely spoken about but made audible, felt, and lived.

The auditory model also resonates with what Jung referred to as the “feeling-tone” of complexes (JUNG, 1934/1960). Complexes are not merely clusters of repressed content; they are affectively charged nodes within the psyche, organized around specific emotional tonalities. By engaging these feeling-tones musically, one can enter into a more direct relationship with the complex, allowing its energies to be felt, expressed,

and potentially transformed without the distortions imposed by premature intellectualization. In this way, musical amplification serves not only as an aesthetic practice but as a profoundly therapeutic one.

Thus, musicalizing the dream is not an ancillary or decorative practice; it is a depth psychological method grounded in the very nature of the unconscious itself. It honors the psyche's inherent musicality – its rhythms, its dissonances, its harmonies – and allows the dream's latent emotional and symbolic potentials to be more fully realized. In doing so, it extends the work of Freud and Jung into new territory, bridging the imaginal and the auditory, the symbolic and the somatic, the unconscious and the emergent work of art.

The Clinical Application: Sounding the Soul in Depth Psychological Practice

The musicalization of dreams, while an aesthetic practice, is not confined to the artistic sphere; it carries profound clinical implications for depth psychological work. To engage the unconscious musically is to acknowledge the psyche's modes of expression that predate language and exceed it. In clinical practice, the amplification of dream images through music offers a powerful tool for facilitating the integration of unconscious material, deepening emotional processing, and opening new avenues for therapeutic transformation. As Jung (1966) observed, “The dream is a spontaneous self-portrayal, in symbolic form, of the actual situation in the unconscious” (p. 17); by extending this portrayal into the auditory domain, we create opportunities for the unconscious to be not merely interpreted but embodied, lived, and ultimately transformed.

Traditional dream analysis, even in its most depth-oriented forms, often risks privileging interpretation over experience. The dream is brought into the daylight of consciousness, translated into rational concepts, and thus, inevitably, subjected to the ego's frameworks. While interpretation can be illuminating, it can also – if premature or overly

reductive – strip the dream of its vitality, its mystery, its capacity to move the dreamer at a deep, affective level. Musical amplification seeks to counterbalance this tendency by returning the dream to its experiential roots. It does not ask, “What does this dream mean?” so much as, “What does this dream sound like? What does it feel like in the body? What world does it call into being?”

In clinical practice, this auditory approach can be introduced gently and creatively. After working with a patient’s dream content verbally, the therapist might invite the patient to imagine a soundscape that fits the dream’s atmosphere. Patients might be asked to describe imagined instruments, rhythms, and tonalities. Is the dream bright or dark? Heavy or light? Fast or slow? Does it pulse like a drumbeat, hover like a drone, erupt like a thunderclap? These questions bypass the defensive operations of the rational mind and allow affective and sensory experience to surface more directly. In some cases, patients might be encouraged to hum, sing, or even create simple musical phrases associated with dream images, thereby entering an embodied dialogue with their own unconscious material.

The act of sounding the dream – whether through description, vocalization, or musical composition – reconfigures the analytic space itself. The therapy room becomes not merely a site of intellectual understanding but a resonant field, a space where unconscious contents can unfold according to their own affective and aesthetic logics. This process mirrors what Jung (1969) described in his work on active imagination: “The images themselves are pregnant with meaning, and one must allow them to develop according to their own inner necessity” (p. 181). Musical amplification respects this necessity, allowing the dream’s feeling-tone to evolve organically rather than being pinned prematurely to fixed interpretations.

Moreover, sounding the soul in this way activates what Jung called the transcendent function: the symbolic process that mediates between consciousness and the unconscious, facilitating psychological transfor-

mation (JUNG, 1953). The music generated from dream imagery serves as a vessel for this mediating function. It bridges the known and the unknown, the personal and the collective, the conscious ego and the archetypal depths. The resulting musical piece – whether elaborate or minimal, composed or improvised – becomes a living symbol, an artifact of the dialogue between the *self* and the soul.

This method also addresses a particular clinical challenge that Freud, Jung, and many of their successors have observed: the phenomenon of resistance. Patients often resist dream material because it threatens the ego's stability, revealing aspects of the *self* that are disowned, feared, or repressed. Verbal interpretation can sometimes exacerbate this resistance by engaging the patient in intellectual defenses. By contrast, music, operating below the level of discursive thought, can bypass these defenses and allow the patient to experience the forbidden or forgotten affects directly. A melody may weep where words cannot; a harmonic dissonance may express an internal conflict that the patient cannot yet name. In this way, musical amplification offers a path through resistance, opening channels for emotional truth to emerge and be witnessed.

Clinically, the therapist's role shifts subtly but significantly in this model. The therapist becomes not merely an interpreter but a listener in the deepest sense: a resonator, a participant in the dream's unfolding soundscape. This demands a sensitivity not only to verbal content but to affective undercurrents, tonal shifts, and rhythmic patterns in the patient's narrative and emotional presentation. It requires what Romanyszyn (2007) beautifully termed a "psychology with soul" – a psychology attuned to the imaginal, the poetic, the musical dimensions of human experience.

Incorporating musical amplification into clinical practice does not require that either therapist or patient be trained musicians. Rather, it requires a willingness to enter the aesthetic field of the dream, to listen with the inner ear, to sense the emergent melodies of the soul. Even simple acts – listening for emotional resonance, imagining the

soundtrack of a dream, inviting spontaneous vocal or instrumental expression – can deepen the work immeasurably. Through such practices, therapy moves beyond interpretation toward participation, beyond explanation toward experience. Ultimately, sounding the soul in clinical practice reaffirms the central insight that has animated depth psychology from the beginning: that healing arises not merely from understanding but from transformation; not merely from decoding but from creative engagement. By allowing the dream’s music to be heard, we allow the soul’s hidden song to resound once again in consciousness, carrying with it the possibility of renewed meaning, renewed life.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

THE INSEPARABLE MYSTERY OF THE PSYCHE: THE LETTERS OF C. G. JUNG AND WOLFGANG PAULI

Pedro Henrique Alberton Perússolo

Abstract

This article seeks to provide a brief commentary on the correspondence exchanged between C. G. Jung and Wolfgang Pauli from 1932 to 1958. This paradigmatic epistolary exchange holds great historical significance for understanding certain conceptual shortcuts within complex psychological thought, yet it remains in an unfortunate state of obscurity. It is worth noting that Pauli was a prominent physicist and played a crucial role in shaping several of Jung's conceptual developments, such as the idea of synchronicity and the correlation between spirit and matter. The purpose of this text is to pay respectful homage to the thought of these two authors and to revisit their proposals, which are all too often read superficially or misunderstood.

Keywords: Carl Gustav Jung; Wolfgang Pauli; historiography; complex psychology.

Short Historical Overview

To begin this exploration, it is necessary to establish its historical starting point. The paradigmatic correspondence presented here refers to the epistolary exchange between C. G. Jung and a figure of great significance to the complex psychology: Wolfgang Pauli^[1]. Recognized as one of the greatest physicists of the twentieth century, Wolfgang Pauli played a fundamental role in the development of several key conceptual bridges within Jungian thought, such as the notion of synchronicity and the correlation between spirit and matter (JUNG; PAULI, 1955).

As noted in the introduction written by Suzanne Gieser (2019) in the book *Dream Symbols of the Individuation Process: Notes of C. G. Jung's Seminars on Wolfgang Pauli's Dreams*, the content addresses the seminars given by Jung in Bailey and New York^[2], Pauli sought out Jung at the beginning of 1932, complaining of an erotic withdrawal from life resulting from an excessively rational and one-sided existence, aggravated by his mother's death, a failed marriage to his first wife, and outbursts of anger fueled by alcohol use and abuse. At first, Jung recommended that Pauli undergo analysis with Erna Rosenbaum, a woman newly qualified to practice analytical psychology. He advised Miss Rosenbaum not to make major interventions or interpretations of Pauli's dreams and fantasies, thereby allowing the unconscious to reveal itself in the purest possible form. Below is the letter that Pauli sent to Erna Rosenbaum to arrange their first meeting:

I do not know who you are – old or young, physician or amateur psychoanalyst, completely unknown or very famous, or something in between. I only know that Dr. Jung gave me your address after one of his lectures and mentioned that I should write to you, without leaving me an opportunity to ask for further details.

[1] This correspondence was published, edited by C. A. Meier, by Princeton University Press in 2001 under the title *Átomo and Archetype*.

[2] Occurring, respectively, in 1936 and 1937.

The background is that I consulted Dr. Jung a week ago because of certain neurotic symptoms, which, among other things, have to do with the fact that it is easier for me to achieve success in academia than with women. Since, for Dr. Jung, the opposite seems to be the case, he appeared to me the right person from whom to seek medical advice. My surprise was not small when Dr. Jung explained that this was not so, and that it would be imperative for me to undergo treatment with a woman. For I am very sensitive and easily distrustful toward women, and therefore I am somewhat doubtful about the matter. In any case, I do not wish to leave anything unresolved, and for that reason, I am writing you this letter. It would be very kind of you to call me so that we might arrange a time to meet.

P.S. I am usually at home in the mornings (GIESER, 2019, p. 26; free translation).

Two days after sending the letter, on February 5, 1932^[3], Pauli began systematically recording his dreams. From February until early July of that year, Pauli transferred notes on approximately 250 dreams to Erna Rosenbaum. When the young analyst returned to Berlin, Pauli sent her the complete record of his dreams, totaling 400 dream materials by the end of October.

According to Gieser (2019), in addition to recording his dreams, Pauli was asked to complement them with his own reflections and intuitions so that, through amplification, they would become more accessible to analytic treatment and would facilitate the dialectical relationship between consciousness and the unconscious. The pragmatic and perspectival method characteristic of Jung's approach becomes evident in the excerpt quoted below:

I go even further, for I do not grant the opportunity for insights into dreams solely to the patient; I grant it to myself as well. My own ideas and opinions are also presented to the patient. If they prove effective merely by suggestion, so much the better – for, as we know, we can only be influenced by that which we are already, in some way, prepared to receive.

[3] This is the dream recorded in *Psicologia e Alquimia*: "The dreamer is at a social gathering. When taking leave, he puts on a hat that does not belong to him" (JUNG, 1944/2018, OC XII, § 52).

In this guessing game, we sometimes make mistakes, but that does not matter. At the first opportunity, the error will be rejected like a foreign body. It is not necessary to prove that my way of interpreting the dream is correct; that would make no sense. What must be done is to seek, together with the patient, the effective factor – one might almost say, the true thing.

For this reason, it is of the utmost importance for me to have as much information as possible about primitive psychology, mythology, archaeology, and the history of comparative religions, since these fields provide me with priceless analogies that enrich the inspirations of my patients. Together, we can help what seems meaningless draw closer to the realm of meaning, greatly increasing the chances of producing something truly effective. Indeed, for the layperson – who has done everything within reach on the personal and rational level, yet still failed to find any meaning or satisfaction – the opportunity to enter the irrational sphere of life and experience acquires incalculable importance. As a result, their ordinary daily life may change and even take on new interest. After all, most things depend far more on how we look at them than on what they are in themselves. It is far more worthwhile to live the small things with meaning than the great ones without it.

I do not believe I underestimate the risk of this undertaking. It is as though we were beginning to build a bridge toward heaven. One could even object, ironically – as has often been done – that in proceeding thus, doctor and patient are, in the end, merely fantasizing together (JUNG, 1929/2011, OC XV/1, §95-97).

Beyond indicating the tone of the clinical method proposed by Jung, this account also provides a brief description of how the sessions between these two remarkable minds unfolded. Pauli's analytic process can be divided into three stages. The first consisted of a few months of analysis conducted by Erna Rosenbaum. The second corresponded to about three months of self-analysis, during which Pauli carefully recorded his dreams, accompanied by his own reflections on them. The third stage took place in a series of consultations with Jung, over approximately two years, beginning on October 10, 1932, always at the "usual Monday hour" (MEIER, 2001, p. 3; free translation). At the end of October 1934, Pauli eventually ended his consultations with Jung; however, his interest in dreams remained strong until the end of his life. Below is the passage from the letter in which Pauli

expresses his wish to end the analytic process with Jung and to shift their relationship to another level:

As for my own personal destiny, one or two unresolved problems indeed remain. Even so, I feel a certain need to step back from dream interpretation and analysis, and I would like to see what life has to bring me from the outside. The development of my feeling function is, evidently, very important to me, but it seems to me that this may unfold gradually, through life itself, over time, and not only as a result of dream analyses. After much reflection, I have concluded that, for now, I will not continue with my visits to you, unless something unexpected happens (MEIER, 2001, p. 6, free translation).

A selection of Pauli's dreams was later used by Jung in his dream seminars, although the vast majority – approximately one thousand dreams – remain under medical confidentiality to this day. The dreams analyzed by Jung all took place between 1932 and 1934 and were presented on several occasions: first at Eranos in 1935, under the title *Traumsymbole des Individuationsprozesses. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der in den Träumen Sich Kundgebenden Vorgänge des Unbewußten* (FRÖBE-KAPTEYN, 1936); then in 1936 and 1937, during the Bailey and New York seminars, in a series entitled *Dream Symbols of the Individuation Process* (GIESER, 2019); and later, as the second chapter of *Psicologia e Alquimia* (JUNG, OC XII, 1944).

The Beginning of a Theoretical Contribution and the First Disagreements

We are now on October 29, 1934, when C. G. Jung sends a letter in response to Pauli's request to end the analytic process. This document marks an important transition in their correspondence: the beginning of a theoretical collaboration and the emergence of their first disagreements.

In the cited letter, Jung responds to Pauli's remarks concerning the work of P. Jordan:

As you can see, my point of view as a psychologist is that of the perceiving subject, whereas the physicist speaks from the standpoint of the common space in which two or more observers meet (MEIER, 2001, p. 7; free translation).

After several letters, we encounter a curious moment in the exchange of ideas between these two authors. It occurs when Pauli allows himself to disagree with some of Jung's interpretations and readings of his unconscious material. This first took place on October 2, 1935, in the passage transcribed below:

Your interesting letter reached me only yesterday; I had already left Zurich when it arrived. What you propose to do is by no means unacceptable to me, provided that my anonymity is fully guaranteed (and it should also not be apparent that the dreamer is a physicist). I am very pleased that my dreams may serve some scientific purpose, and I am curious to learn what you will have to say. I wonder whether I shall always agree with your interpretations. When I began working with Mrs. Rosenbaum, I was thirty-two years old; to be precise, I was born in Vienna on 25 April 1900, and my work with Mrs. Rosenbaum began in February 1932. Concerning the physical facts that appeared in my dreams, I encountered them in a concrete yet indirect manner. At first, in the dreams, a Physics Congress had been convened, and, depending on the situation, certain specific colleagues were invited to participate. First, I tried to connect the dream analysis to my personal relationships with these colleagues, but it made no sense at all. Then, quite suddenly, I realized that they always represented analogies to the topics those colleagues had addressed in their papers, and that their personalities themselves were entirely irrelevant. This eventually led me to attempt the creation of a table (or lexicon) for translating physical expressions (interpreted symbolically) into their psychological language.

Since these facts are objective, I take the liberty of enclosing a small sample and ask you, when you have the time, to share your opinion and reaction. I do not, in fact, have the precise translation in all cases, and at times there seems to be more in the analogy than I can formulate conceptually (MEIER, 2001, pp. 10-11; free translation).

This same letter includes a long appendix in which Pauli ventures to make his first correlations between physics and psychology, a theme that would occupy him for the rest of his life. Let us now see how the physicist presents these comparative readings between physical symbolism and constructive psychological interpretation:

1.) Mapping

1.) "Mystical participation."

Note: Mapping always appears through a polar field of force, transmitted in such a way that the mapped individuals are related to one another. A special case of this is: Small dipoles arranged in parallel.

2.) Many people have an unconscious sense of identity, as in the case of a hypnotic experiment (analogous to what occurs physically in a magnetized solid body).

3.) The suspension of mapping occurs when a dipole begins to rotate due to its inherent heat (In physics, this corresponds to elements in the periodic table that can only be separated by extremely difficult methods).

3.) Suspension of mystical participation through individual differentiation.

4.) A similar symbolic image is the splitting of spectral lines in a magnetic field: Without field | With field – | – corresponding groups of lines, the so-called doublets, triplets, or multiplets, frequently appear as images.

4.) Process of differentiation: But what does the polar field mean in psychological terms? It must be something essential as the cause of differentiation. All I know is that the same polarity is also represented by dominoes, playing cards, or other games (in pairs or in quartets!). The polar field must express a kind of dynamic regularity of the collective unconscious.

5.) Radioactive Core.

5.) Center (*Self*).

Naturally, "core" means the same as the individual center. But what does "radioactivity" mean in psychological terms? On the one hand, it seems to indicate a gradual transformation of the center; on the other, an effect that radiates outward (rays!).

6.) Resonances: Every engineer knows the potentially catastrophic effects of the coincidence of two frequencies of vibration. But the average worker usually does not know that one can escape resonance by increasing the speed of rotation.

6.) Archetypes = being seized by the archetype through identification.

I could develop these examples in greater depth, but for now, I would like to have your general impressions.

In another image, the same idea is represented by the separation of isotopes (that is, chemical elements occupying the same position in the periodic table) (MEIER, 2001, pp. 11–12; free translation).

Jung's response is impeccable. It arrived on October 14, 1935 – only twelve days after Pauli's letter. At this point, we clearly see how the ex-

change between these two formidable thinkers grew increasingly dynamic following the completion of the analytic process. Jung's reply highlights a uroboric motif that would resurface as a recurring corollary throughout their entire correspondence: unlike physics, psychology is a field of knowledge that lacks an external Archimedean point from which to observe itself; it must therefore proceed from a logic of radical interiority^[4]. Let us now see how Jung responds to the letter reproduced above:

(...) In general, the unconscious is regarded as psychic matter within an individual.

However, the self-representation that the unconscious gives of its central structure does not correspond to this view, for everything points to the fact that the central structure of the collective unconscious cannot be fixed locally; rather, it is an omnipresent existence identical with itself. It must not be conceived in spatial terms and, consequently, when projected into space, it can be found throughout that space.

I even have the impression that this peculiarity applies to both time and space. The representation of the collective unconscious usually takes the form of the so-called quaternary – the medieval term meaning the fourfold emanation or radiation – which was described by a medieval philosopher as the 'exterior of the nucleus.'

A biological analogy would be the functional structure of a termite colony, which possesses only unconscious organs of performance, while the center, to which all the functions of the parts are related, is invisible and not empirically demonstrable (MEIER, 2001, pp. 12–13; free translation).

[4] "It belongs to the inviolable rules of the game of natural science to presuppose its object as known only to the extent that research can declare something scientifically valid about it. In this sense, however, only what can be proven by facts is acceptable. The object of research is the natural phenomenon. In psychology, one of the most important phenomena is the psyche itself, and in particular its form and content, the latter being the more significant in view of the nature of the psyche. The first task proposed is the description and ordering of events, followed by the more precise examination of the laws governing their living behavior. The question of the substance of the observed thing is only possible in natural science, where an external Archimedean point exists. For the psyche, such a point of support is lacking, because only the psyche can observe the psyche. Consequently, knowledge of the psychic substance is impossible, at least according to the means currently at our disposal. This in no way excludes the possibility that the atomic physics of the future may yet provide us with the Archimedean point referred to. For now, our most subtle speculations cannot establish more than is expressed in the following statement thus does the psyche behave" (JUNG, 1946/2011, OC, VIII/2).

This marks one of the first and most significant disagreements between Jung and Pauli. Jung recognized that the phenomenology of the psyche operates within an eminently speculative register, even though it is grounded in an empirical orientation (JUNG, 1946^[5] /2011, OC, VIII/2). Pauli, on the other hand, sought to systematize and measure psychological processes, aiming to understand how such movements actually occur (JUNG; PAULI, 1955). It is worth noting that, by the end of their correspondence, both acknowledged their limitations and their failures.

The Resumption after a Long Hiatus and the Development of the Notion of Synchronicity

“If the same set of problems is viewed from such different angles as those of psychology and physics, there will certainly be differences of opinion on certain details” (MEIER, 2001, p. 34; free translation).

Given the limited space for reflection in this article and the virtually inexhaustible body of epistolary and theoretical material available, certain temporal delimitations are necessary. Thus, we present both a historical note and a methodological choice, justified as follows: according to Meier (2001), between June 3, 1940, and October 25, 1946, Pauli and Jung exchanged no correspondence. In light of this, we have chosen to adopt the following framework: the previous subsection covered events up to October 14, 1935, and we will now resume the analysis with Jung’s letter to Pauli dated June 22, 1949, when their theoretical exchange once again intensified. It was at this stage that the two thinkers turned to synchronicity with greater conceptual rigor, in a dialogue that would culminate in a work of exceptional originality (JUNG; PAULI, 1955).

For Jung (1952/2018, OC VIII/3), physicists were the professionals most capable of engaging with the problem of the indiscernibility between psyche and matter, as well as of reflecting on the antinomic and synchronistic character of the psyche.

[5] The text corresponds to *Considerações teóricas sobre a natureza do psíquico* (OC VIII/2).

Let us see how this is expressed in Jung's own words (MEIER, 2001, p. 36; free translation):

June 22, 1949

Dear Mr. Pauli,

Some time ago, you encouraged me to write down my thoughts on synchronicity.

I have at last been able to devote myself to the task and have, more or less, gathered my ideas on the subject. (...) At present, physicists remain the primary group still engaging seriously with such ideas.

This letter from Jung reveals two fundamental points: first, that his work on synchronicity would not have existed without Pauli's influence; and second, that physics could restore an essential methodological link to complex psychology^[6]. Let us now see how Pauli responds to Jung on June 28, 1949:

According to your interpretation of the "synchronistic" phenomenon, it occurs through the duplication or multiplication of an abstract organizing factor, whose external manifestation is indeed duplicated or multiple. In this sense, the organizing factor could also be described as the cause of the synchronistic phenomenon. This cause, however, could not be conceived within time and space. On the other hand, if only objects situated in time and space can be described as causal, then synchronistic phenomena do indeed appear to be "acausal." Just as in microphysics, the fundamental characteristic of the situation is the impossibility of applying the principle of causality and the classification of phenomena in time and space. What seems to me much more difficult than the question of defining "acausal" is the introduction of the concept of time into the word "synchronistic." Initially, it expressly refers to phenomena that are supposedly simultaneous according to the usual physical definitions. (...) The word "*synchron*," therefore, seems to me somewhat illogical, unless one wishes to relate it to a *chronos* essentially different from ordinary time.

[6] It is worth noting that, in the chapter on psychic energy in her seminal methodological text on complex psychology, Toni Wolff (1935) chooses as her interlocutors Werner Heisenberg and Pascual Jordan – both physicists preoccupied with the mercurial, paradoxical interplay between subject and object. Jung would later describe this same correlation in terms of the psychoid aspect of archetypes (JUNG, OC VIII/3).

This appears to me to be a difficulty that is not only logical but also factual. For it is by no means easy to understand why events that “express the presence of the same image or meaning” must be simultaneous: the term time presents greater difficulties to me than the term meaning (MEIER, 2001, pp. 36-37; free translation).

Pauli (1955) argues that the problem with the psychological notion of synchronicity lies in the exclusion of a fundamental element necessary to characterize what would constitute a synchronistic phenomenon in both psychology and physics, which would, in turn, enable a union between psyche and matter. Because of these disagreements, the Swiss physicist proposed a terminological change up until around 1955: for him, psychological synchronicity should instead be called *meaningful correspondence*. His critique is expressed as follows:

It seems to me, in fact, to be a general and essential characteristic of synchronistic phenomena – something I would even like to incorporate into the very definition of the term “synchronicity.” In other words, whenever the application of statistical methods, without considering the psychic state of the persons involved in the experiment, fails to show such a “pernicious influence,” then something quite different from synchronicity is taking place. (...) That place is the observation itself, which is unique (or an act of creation, if you prefer), because it is impossible to eliminate the observer’s influence through determinable corrections. The kind of statistical law that thus arises – one that cannot be reproduced through statements about individual cases, acting as a mediator between the *discontinuum* of individual cases and the *continuum* that can only be realized (approximately) in a large statistical framework – may be described as “statistical correspondence.” (...) As a physicist, I have the impression that the “statistical correspondence” of quantum physics, viewed from the standpoint of synchronicity, is a very weak generalization of the old notion of causality. This also becomes evident in the fact that, although microphysics allows for an acausal form of observation, it is, in fact, of no use for the concept of “meaning.” Thus, I have serious reservations about placing physical discontinuities and synchronicity on the same level. (...) Naturally, I cannot claim that the entire quaternity I once proposed is a genuinely adequate expression of “synchronicity.” Yet an additional feature of that schema, which seems important to me, is that space and time are not set in opposition to one another – something that a modern physicist would find particularly unacceptable (MEIER, 2001, pp. 55-56; free translation).

At this point, in late 1950, the epistolary material shows that Jung was directly relying on Pauli's critical appraisal of the notion of synchronicity, with Pauli making constant revisions to the manuscript, as seen in the letter dated November 24, 1950 (MEIER, 2001, pp. 54–58). Jung responded promptly to the physicist's criticisms, defending his view of the psychic phenomenon as a negative borderline concept and postulating that the concepts^[7] of causality and acausality were psychologems, conceptual shortcuts used to describe an archetypal mode of operation of the objective psyche. According to Jung,

Your opinions are very important to me, not only because of their content but also due to our different points of view. (...) What you so aptly describe as “statistical correspondence” characterizes radioactivity, for example, but not, as you correctly say, synchronicity; in the first case, the regularity of the half-life period can only be verified when there is a great number of individual cases, whereas in the second, the synchronistic effect occurs with a small number and disappears when the number becomes greater. In fact, there is no connection between the phenomenon of the half-life period and synchronicity. If I bring them together, it is based on another analogy that seems crucial to me: synchronicity could be understood as a system of order by which “similar” things coincide without any apparent “cause.” I now wonder whether it might not be the case that every state of being which has no conceivable cause (and therefore no potentially verifiable cause) falls within the category of synchronicity. In other words, I see no reason why synchronicity should always be only a coincidence of two psychic states, or of a psychic state and a non-psychic event. There could also be coincidences of this kind among non-psychic events. A purely synchronistic effect would be equally conceivable with a small number of data as with a larger one. But does not the positive result with a larger number indicate an additional synchronistic factor among the data themselves? Could there not be a similar harmony among a great number of *radium* atoms, which would not exist with a smaller number? Since synchronicity represents, for me, above all, a simple state of being, I am inclined to include any instance of a state of being that is causally inconceivable under the category of synchronicity.

[7] The unconscious is a negative borderline concept (JUNG, 1938/2011, OC XI/1); that is, it cannot be transformed into a *res extensa* nor understood solely as a *res cogitans*.

The psychic and semi-psychic cases of synchronicity would form one sub-category, while the non-psychic cases would form another. (...) “Causality” is a psychologem (and originally a *virtus magica*) that formulates the connection between events and illustrates it as cause and effect. Another (incommensurable) approach that accomplishes the same thing in a different way is synchronicity. Both are identical in the highest sense of the term “connection” or “bond.” But on an empirical and practical level (that is, in the real world), they are incommensurable and antithetical, like space and time. (...) You have replaced the space – time connection by the conservation of energy and by the space – time *continuum*, and I would now like to propose that, instead of “causality,” we have a “(relatively) constant connection through effect,” and instead of synchronicity, a “(relatively) constant connection through contingency, equivalence, or “meaning” (MEIER, 2001, pp. 59–60; free translation).

As we can see in Bernardini’s (2011) competent work, Jung’s later line of thought sought to construct a complex system defined by a network of diverse enterprises concerned with psychological manifestations in their many aspects. This profusion of Jung’s interests became a major stumbling block for Pauli’s scientific mindset, as the physicist continued to insist on a measurable and practically applicable treatment of synchronistic phenomena. The physicist’s comment on this issue is as follows:

In my last letter, I suggested that synchronicity should be defined more narrowly, to encompass effects that appear only when there is a small number of individual cases but disappear when the number is greater; you, however, have done the opposite, with a broader definition of synchronicity that includes every acausal and – I would like to add – holistic system. You do this so that the non-psychic systems among them – namely, the compiled facts of “statistical correspondence” in quantum physics – also fall under the same general category.

What has so far prevented me from adopting the broader term is the fear that, with such a general definition, much of what is specific to psychic synchronicity and that occurs in the intermediate realm would be lost. In quantum physics, there are not only effects that appear with large numbers instead of small ones, but also the term “meaning” is not the most suitable here (about which you have written extensively), but also the concept of archetype (psychic or psychoid) cannot be applied so lightly to the acausalities of

microphysics. Thus, if one wishes to use the broader definition of synchronicity, one must deal with the question of what is the more general case that includes, as a special instance, the archetype as an ordering factor. (...) What is relevant here is that several other important concepts can be applied both in psychology and in physics, without this having been specifically intended: similarity, acausality, order, correspondence, pairs of opposites, and totality (MEIER, 2001, pp. 64–67; free translation).

Therefore, according to Pauli's perspective, it would only be possible to speak of a synchronicity that is both material and psychic if one starts from the assumption that the psyche is inherently paradoxical and antinomic, which makes it elusive and inexpressible in the terminology of the natural sciences. A change of method would thus be required to encompass both physical and psychological synchronicity; it would be necessary to build a home for this notion^[8].

Canis panem somniat, piscator pisces^[9]

Your dreams are physical because that is your natural language; in the beginning *canis panem somniat, piscator pisces*, but in truth the dream means something different" (MEIER, 2001, p. 113; free translation).

The year 1951 marks a decisive moment in the formulation of the concept of synchronicity. Jung delivered his last lecture at Eranos, entitled *Über Synchronizität* (FRÖBE-KAPTEYN, 1952), and this brief lecture was later expanded in two contexts: first, in a volume co-authored with Pauli in 1952, titled *The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche* (JUNG; PAULI, 1955), and later in the *Obras Coletadas*, Volume VIII/3, under the title *Synchronicity* (JUNG, 1952/2018, OC VIII/3).

In a letter to Pauli dated January 13, 1951, Jung offers an extended reflection on synchronicity, but he begins by thanking the physicist for

[8]"Just as physics seeks completeness, its analytical psychology seeks a home" (MEIER, 2001, p. 122).

[9] The famous Latin saying, meaning: "The dog dreams of bread, the fisherman of fish."

him to continue his research on the subject, an area in which Jung repeatedly experienced hesitation and uncertainty. The letter addressing this theme is transcribed below.

Dear Professor,

I am particularly indebted to you for having given me new encouragement. Whenever I enter the field of physical or mathematical thought in the strict sense, I lose all understanding of what the term synchronicity means; I feel as if I were groping through a dense fog. This feeling is, of course, because I do not understand the mathematical or physical implications of the word, which you certainly do. (...) Regarding the narrower and broader meanings of the term synchronicity, which you have explained so clearly, it seems to me that X (the abbreviation for synchronicity) in its narrower sense is characterized not only by the aspect of the archetypal situation but also by acausality. The archetype certainly characterizes the psychic and semi-psychic cases, but I wonder whether the “anomaly” of what is called causal – that is, acausality – would not be a more general feature and a “superordinate” condition than the archetypal foundation that can be traced in the psychic and semi-psychic cases. The latter can only be recognized as present through introspection, but it remains hidden from the external observer unless I inform him of my observation. If I keep my observations to myself, the external observer can only perceive a “simple being-thus” [*So-sein*], (...) In this case, the only distinctive feature is the presence of acausality, and in such situations – and similar ones – it was precisely this that gave me the idea that acausality is the most general definition, whereas the archetype is a characteristic that may occasionally be observed only where, almost by chance, perception becomes possible. Now, if there are “non-transparent” cases of synchronicity even within the psychic sphere, they are still more likely within the semi-psychic or physical sphere. (...) Given the merely psychoid (transcendental) nature of the archetype, its purely physical occurrence is by no means excluded. Thus, it may serve as the basis both for purely psychic and psychoid synchronicity, as well as for physical acausality in general. The ancient precept of *creatio continua* and *correspondentia* applied to nature, and not merely to the psyche (MEIER, 2001, pp. 61–63; free translation).

Pauli’s response to the theme of continuous creation within the reality of the psyche unfolds at length around the relationship between alchemy and imprinting, following Jung’s discussion in *Aion* (JUNG, 1951/2011, OC IX/2), a topic to be explored elsewhere. Here, however, I bring forth

a passage dated February 27, 1953, from an extensive letter bearing the epigraph: “*Ser ou não ser, eis a questão*” or “*Reflexões de um Incrédulo sobre Psicologia, Religião e sua Resposta a Jó*” (MEIER, 2001, p. 84, free translation). The following excerpt is the result of a considerable effort of synthesis, capturing the essential tone and thought of Pauli’s letter:

“Physics is the description of reality, as opposed to the description of what is merely imagined. Being and non-being are not unequivocal characterizations of properties that can be verified only through statistical series of experiments conducted with various experimental setups, which, under certain circumstances, are mutually exclusive. In this way, the confrontation between being and non-being, which began in ancient philosophy, finds its continuation. In antiquity, non-being did not simply mean ‘not being present’; rather, it always pointed to a problem of thought. Non-being is that which cannot be thought, which cannot be grasped by rational understanding, which cannot be reduced to notions and concepts, and cannot be defined. It was in this sense, as I see it, that the ancient philosophers discussed the question of being or not being. And it was precisely along this line that the process of becoming and the mutable, and therefore also matter, appeared within a certain form of psychology as non-being – a mere *privatio* of the ‘Ideas’.” In contrast, Aristotle, by avoiding the question, created the important concept of potential being and applied it to *hyle*. Although *hyle* was indeed “non-being” and merely a *privatio* of “form” (which was his substitute for the “Ideas”), it was potentially being, and not simply a privation. It was at this point that an important differentiation in scientific thought first emerged. Aristotle’s later statements about matter (he remained firmly attached to the Platonic notion of matter as something passive and receptive) cannot really be applied in physics, and it seems to me that much of the confusion in Aristotle stems from the fact that, being a far less capable thinker, he was completely dominated by Plato. He was unable to fully realize his intention of grasping the potential, and his efforts became mired in their initial stages. It is upon Aristotle that the Peripatetic tradition and, to a great extent, alchemy (see Fludd) are founded. Science today, I believe, has reached a stage at which it can move forward – though not yet in a fully clear manner – along the path established by Aristotle. The complementary characteristics of the electron (and of the atom) – wave and particle – are, in fact, “potential being,” yet one of them is always “not actual being.” That is why it can be said that science, no longer classical, has for the first time become a genuine theory of becoming, and is no longer Platonic. This fits perfectly with the fact that the man who, to me,

is the most outstanding representative of modern physics, Mr. Niels Bohr, is, in my opinion, the only truly non-Platonic thinker: already in the early 1920s (before the establishment of current wave mechanics), he showed me the pair of opposites “Clarity – Truth,” and taught me that all true philosophy must indeed begin with a paradox. He was, and still is (in contrast to Plato), a *dekranos kat’ ἐξοχήν* [sic], a master of antinomic thinking. As a physicist familiar with this course of development and this way of thinking, I find the concepts of those gentlemen with their stationary spheres just as suspect as the notions of metaphysical spaces or “heavens” (whether Christian or Platonic), and “the Supreme” or “the Absolute.” With all these entities, there exists an essential paradox of human cognition – the subject – object relationship – which is not expressed, but sooner or later, when the authors least expect it, will come to light!

For these reasons, I would also like to suggest applying Aristotle’s resolution of the conflict between “being” and “non-being” to the concept of the unconscious. Many people still claim that the unconscious is “non-being,” that it is merely a *privatio* of consciousness – probably including all those who reproach it with “psychologism.” The opposing view places the unconscious and the archetypes, like the Ideas in general, in supracelestial realms and metaphysical spaces. This view, to me, seems equally questionable and contrary to the law of *Kairós*. That is why I have chosen a third way in my schema of analogy: to interpret the unconscious (as well as the characteristics of the electron and the atom) as “potential being.” It is a legitimate description by humankind of potential occurrences within consciousness and, as such, belongs to the genuine symbolic reality of the “thing-in-itself.” Like all ideas, the unconscious exists both in man and in nature; ideas have no fixed dwelling place – not even a celestial one. To some extent, one may say of all ideas: “*cuiuslibet rei centrum, cuius circumferentia est nullibi*” (“the center of all things – a center whose circumference is nowhere”), which, according to ancient alchemical texts, was what Fludd said of God; see my article on Kepler, p. 174 [trans. p. 219]. As long as quaternities are kept “up in the heavens,” far from human beings (however pleasant and fascinating such undertakings, seen as omens, may be), no fish will be caught, the *hieros gamos* will be absent, and the psychophysical problem will remain unsolved.

The psychophysical problem is the conceptual understanding of the possibilities of the irrational reality of the unique (individual) living creature.

We can only come closer to solving this problem when we can synthesize the pair of opposites “matter – psyche” within natural philosophy. When I say “psychism,” I do not mean “psychologism” nor something peculiar to psychology, but simply the opposite of materialism. I could also have said

“idealism,” but that would have confined it historically to the well-known philosophical movements that prevailed in the nineteenth century after Kant. These currents (including Schopenhauer), as well as all of Indian philosophy, fall within this category of psychism. But, as the alchemists rightly assumed, matter goes as deep as spirit, and I doubt that the goal of any development could ever be absolute spiritualization. The sciences created by humankind – whether we like it or not, and even when they are natural sciences – will always contain statements about man (MEIER, 2001, pp. 84–87; free translation).

The response from Jung to Pauli’s concerns came on March 7, 1953, addressing several particularly sharp and fascinating questions, including a curious confession: Jung admitted that he had originally wished for *Sincronicidade* (JUNG, 1951/2018, OC VIII/3) to be published together with *Resposta a Jó* (JUNG, 1952/2011, OC XI/4), since, to him, these works were contiguous, both dealing with the tension and problem between the visible and the invisible. Below is the passage of greatest relevance:

In my opinion, the discussion of Matter must rest upon a scientific foundation. That is why I insisted that Job and Synchronizität [Synchronicity] be published simultaneously, for in the latter I attempted to open a new path toward the “state of spiritualization” of Matter, assuming that “being is endowed with meaning” (that is, the extension of the archetype into the object).

(...) Your compilation of physical and psychological statements is interesting and enlightening. I would just like to add: The smallest particle of mass consists of the archetype (as a structural and formal element of the objective unconscious), which in turn manifests in a static form on the one hand, and a dynamic form on the other. (...) Metaphysical judgment, however, always places an element of the psychic in an external location, thus preventing a union of Idea and Matter. (...) I see metaphysical judgments – pardon this heresy – as a remnant of primitive *participation mystique*, which forms the main obstacle to achieving individual consciousness. Moreover, metaphysical judgments lead to one-sidedness, such as spiritualization or materialization, because they take a large or significant part of the psyche and situate it in Heaven or earthly things, and can then drag the whole person along, thus depriving them of their intermediate position. (...) The psyche as a medium

participates in both Spirit and Matter. I am convinced that it (the psyche) is partly material in nature. Archetypes, for example, are Ideas (in the Platonic sense) on the one hand, and yet are directly connected with physiological processes on the other; and in cases of synchronicity, they organize physical circumstances, so they can also be considered a feature of Matter (as the characteristic that imbues it with meaning). It is part of the unverifiability of their being that they cannot be in space. This is particularly true for the archetype of wholeness – that is, of the *Self*. It is the One and the Many. As you rightly say, the totality of man occupies the intermediate position, namely between the *mundus archetypus*, which is real because it acts, and physis, which is equally real because it acts. The principle of both, however, is unknown and therefore unverifiable. Furthermore, there are reasons to suppose that both are merely different aspects of the same principle; hence, the possibility of establishing identical or parallel physical and psychological propositions on the one hand, and, on the other, the psychological interpretability of religious revelations. (Theologians resist psychologists just as physicists do, except the former believe in Spirit and the latter in Matter.) The fact that, overall, our opinions coincide is very gratifying to me, and I am very grateful to you for presenting your views in such detail (MEIER, 2001, pp. 98–99, free translation).

Pauli's idea that the reunion between spirit and matter could occur through the religious function of the psyche is something deeply explored within Jungian thought, a perspective already reported in the first edition of *A Função Transcendente*, written in 1916 (JUNG, 1916/2011, OC VIII/2). Through this third element introduced into their correspondence, namely, the religious problem, Jung and Pauli continued to debate the possibility of establishing a dialogue that could be empirically grounded within the realm of acausal thought. Jung's response to Pauli on May 4, 1953, is as follows:

Real-life knowledge and understanding unfold at the boundary between the verifiable and the unverifiable. Under these circumstances, it is quite difficult to see where I should be "positivist" and, consequently, "eliminate thought processes." Since I describe physics as a science of ideas with a material label, the material origin of these ideas is no more denied than the origin of "intellectual" ideas. All this observation aims to provide an epistemological, not a practical definition. There will continue to be speculation and intuition

about the realm of the unverifiable, and verifiable elements will continue to be extracted from it as before. But it must always be kept in mind that the area between the perceived and the unverifiable *hic et nunc* is the realm of the psyche. The fact that I, as a psychologist, am more concerned with archetypes is as natural as the physicist's concern with atoms. I do not extend the concept of the psychic to include the unverifiable, because here I use the speculative concept of the psychoid, which represents an approach to a neutral language insofar as it suggests the presence of a non-psychic essence. (...) Insofar as the psyche introduces the two metaphysical essences – that is, not immediately verifiable – as concepts, it unites these two opposing essences, endowing them both with a psychic form of existence and thus elevating them to a conscious level. (...) You are perfectly correct in saying that my observation about the material nature of the psyche is a metaphysical judgment. It was not, of course, intended as such and should not be taken literally. The observation simply aims to indicate that the nature of the psyche is involved in both hypothetical conceptions – spirit and matter – and, like them, is not verifiable. The purpose of the observation is to show that wherever something material exists, the psyche is also partially involved. Concerning the general judgment, the following phrase should be added: wherever the spiritual exists, the psyche has a role to play. This participation is verifiable insofar as there are conceptions labeled partly as spiritual and partly as of material origin. But the form this participation takes cannot be verified, because matter, psyche, and spirit are, in themselves, of unknown nature and are therefore metaphysical or postulated. (...) We can say of an object that it is psychic when it is verifiable only as a concept. But if it has characteristics indicating its autonomous non-psychic existence, we naturally tend to accept it as non-psychic. (...) So far, I believe we are basically in agreement. When you raise the matter of overloaded psychology and take as a starting point the non-psychological tendency of your dreams, it should be noted that this is a subjective situation that can be explained in many ways. (...) The unconscious indeed produces psychology, but the more it does, the more it is against it, which is the case for both you and me. Psychological tendencies in the unconscious are found only where psychological insight is urgently needed. The process of developing consciousness is very demanding and by no means a popular phenomenon in nature. Therefore, physics or metaphysics are generally preferred, although in both cases, the *fascinosum* consists of the constellated archetypes. These archetypes free us from psychology in the sense that psychology is “relieved of its burden.” As important and interesting as it is to deal with the non-psychic – especially

in its archetypal stage – there is, however, the risk of getting lost in the very notion itself. But then the creative tension disappears since it arises only when the recognition of the non-psychic is related to the observer. What I mean by this is, for example, that the product is studied critically, not only from the standpoint of its objective associations but also subjective ones. (...) Thus, I have to set aside psychology and wait to see whether the unconscious itself produces something (MEIER, 2001, pp. 112-114, free translation).

Jung's response is marked by remarkable sobriety, setting the tone for the fundamental difference that runs through this Babelian correspondence, and giving rise to the title of this subsection: *The dog dreams of bread, the fisherman of fish*. In this context, the psychologist contemplates the *logos* of the psyche, while the physicist reflects on the *dynamis* of atoms. Both, however, are bound by something singular: the fact that both the psyche and the atom are sustained by an invisible nucleus, a center of tension that allows these disparate structures to self-regulate and remain in dynamic equilibrium.

The Indissociable Mystery of the Psyche and its Mercurial Logic

“I must practice patience, and thus compel others to acquire the same virtue” (MEIER, 2001, p. 101).

The final years of correspondence between these two brilliant minds, whose exchange we have explored here in a necessarily panoramic and limited way, could not have concluded otherwise: with mutual respect amid disagreement and a reverent silence before the inexplicable. Only a few letters were exchanged between 1953 and 1958, the year of Pauli's death. These bear the tone of restraint and humility characteristic of those who knew that there was no way to systematize what ultimately escaped their grasp. Let us read Pauli's reflection on this very failure, from his letter dated May 27, 1953:

(...) your clarification of the approach to neutral language through your concept of the psychoid, which suggests the presence of a non-psychic essence; your agreement with my statement that “psyche and matter are governed by common, neutral ordering principles, not in themselves verifiable,” to which you added “spirit” at the end of p. 2 [*ibid.*]; your opposition of the psychic to

the transcendental (in the quaternity on p. 5), which was quite new to me. All this now seems clear to me, and I feel no need to revisit these issues. (...) In this case, your psychoid archetype would probably be a special aspect of the mother archetype – that is, the unconscious, corporeal, practical, or symbolic being (life). (...) The linguistic use of physical and mathematical terms in my dreams initially seemed to me the exact opposite of natural; what was most familiar seemed most strange, and for years, I tried to explain the physical part of dreams as something unreal. But the reactions of my unconscious were unfavorable and insistent, so that I ultimately had to set aside all my reductive explanations and accept that there really is a connection to physics in dreams. That said, dreams do not simply refer to modern and traditional physics, but synthetically construct for me a kind of *correspondentia* between psychological and physical facts. In this process, physical and mathematical terms are symbolically extended to the unconscious in general and to the individual psyche. I maintain my view that this is an objective situation, even if presented subjectively. Regarding your second statement, everything then depends on the reasons that make “psychology inadequate.” To begin with, this second statement is so general that it also encompasses my own view, according to which the reasons are: the conceptual system for mathematics and physics is broader, more differentiated, and has a wider capacity compared to that of psychology; on the other hand, my connection with the latter must remain alive and active in terms of feeling and not degenerate into the merely intellectual. (...) The same objective situation is represented subjectively in different ways – quite fitting, given that you are a psychologist, and I am a physicist. Of course, I would never have dared to conclude from this. (...) Unlike modern physics and complementary to it, the standpoint of the unconscious sacrifices the traditional requirements of objectivity mentioned (which it considers disturbing) and instead selects completeness (according to nature!). (...) It is the inevitable destiny of physics, which operates with statistical natural laws, that it must seek completeness. But in doing so, it will necessarily encounter the psychology of the unconscious, since this is precisely what it lacks: the unconscious and the psyche of the observer.

Just as physics seeks completeness, your analytical psychology seeks a home. For one cannot deny the fact that psychology, as an illegitimate child of the spirit, leads an esoteric, special existence, at the margin of what is generally recognized as the academic world (MEIER, 2001, pp. 117-124, free translation).

I confess that the phrase “your analytical psychology is seeking a home”

is my favorite in the entire Jung – Pauli correspondence, as it captures with aphoristic precision the melancholic trajectory of complex psychological thought, which to this day remains poor in interlocutors and surrounded by reflections that are both sterilized and sterilizing. Let us see how Jung writes about this very theme in his letter to Pauli dated October 24, 1953:

Please forgive my long silence in response to your very substantial letter of May 27 [Letter 62]. In addition to a whole series of external reasons – lack of time, fatigue, and poor health – the main reason for my delay in replying was the sheer abundance of issues raised in your letter. I did not feel up to the task of giving you an adequate response. I doubt I can do so even now. Here we are hovering at the boundaries of what is conceivable and perceptible. Your letter touched on things in me that are vaguely unsettling, yet I have made a great effort to understand them. I returned repeatedly to your letter, considering its content from every angle, and did so again today. I now have the sense that perhaps I can attempt a response. That said, it is still not very clear to me which method I should adopt. Should I follow the thread of your letter, step by step, or should I describe the entire convolution of problems as I see it?

Be that as it may, I must begin by addressing some points from your letter, particularly the question of psyche and spirit. Psyche, as you know, is for me a general term indicating the “substance” of all phenomena of the inner world. Spirit, however, characterizes a specific category of this substance – that is, all those contents that cannot be derived from either the body or the external world. (...) Spirit (*pneuma*), since time immemorial, has been in opposition to the body. It is turbulent air, in contrast to the earth (matter or *hyle*). The “soul,” however, is considered the *ligamentum corporis et spiritus*. In this ancient trichotomy, the elevation of spirit to a divinity introduced a certain disorder, thus disturbing the balance. An additional complication arose from identifying the pneumatic divinity with the *summum bonum*, which forcibly caused matter to slip into proximity with evil. (...) Psyche and matter, as a “matrix,” are both an X – that is, a transcendental unknown quantity and therefore conceptually indistinguishable, which makes them virtually identical; only on a secondary level are they different, as different aspects of Being. Among the elements that constitute the substance of the psyche are the psychoid archetypes. What is peculiar about the archetype is that it manifests itself both subjectively, within the psyche, and objectively, in physical phenomena. Thus, it may be evidenced as an internal psychological event or as an external physical occurrence. I view this dual manifestation as an indication

that the physical and the psychic arise from the same underlying matrix (...). As a consequence of the indispensability of psychic processes, there cannot be only one way to access the secret of Being; there must be at least two – namely, the material occurrence on the one hand, and its psychic reflection on the other (although it is difficult to determine what is reflecting what!). (...) I am therefore inclined to consider the connection between psychology and physics from the perspective of two initially incommensurable fields, even though physical viewpoints can undoubtedly be applied to the psychic sphere. Any attempt to classify psychology into a general theoretical form of physics, as happened with chemistry, is, in my opinion, out of the question, since psychic processes cannot be measured independently of the epistemological difficulty mentioned above. (...) Synchronicity, alongside numbers, is an additional point of contact between physics and psychology. In this case, the meaning of what they share seems to be (relatively) simultaneous events. It also appears that there is frequently (or regularly?) an archetypal prerequisite for meaningful parallelism.

Insofar as the two bridges linking psychology and physics are of such a singular and elusive nature – with the result that no one dares to tread them – the psyche and its science have been suspended in a room without a floor and, as you so aptly say, are “homeless” (MEIER, 2001, pp. 124–129, free translation).

Jung’s words reveal that complex psychology had become deterritorialized, much like Pauli’s own physical propositions. Accordingly, Pauli concurred with Jung that the psychoid dimension of the archetypes constituted the speculative locus in which psyche and matter might converge, even though such convergence could never be quantified or calculated. Let us now examine how the physicist reflects on this realization, in a tone of lucid resignation:

In doing so, I would like to emphasize my basic agreement with your insistence on an intermediate or superior position for the psyche in relation to the body and the spirit, as well as with your adoption of two paths toward the secret of existence. (...) Just as the natural sciences currently derive their *dynamis* from the archetype of quaternity, so too is the ethical problem of evil constellated, which has become particularly evident through the atomic bomb. It now seems to me that, as a compensation arising from the unconscious, a tendency is emerging to bring physics much closer to the roots and sources of life, so that what is ultimately occurring is an assimilation of the psychoid archetypes into an extended form of physics (MEIER, 2001, pp. 130–131).

It is remarkable how, over the years, Pauli gradually adopts a psychological vocabulary to reflect on problems of physics, a tendency clearly visible in his 1952 essay on Kepler's physical system and Fludd's astrological system (JUNG; PAULI, 1955). Something in him seems to recognize that the psyche, in its negative mode of functioning, is what comes closest to witnessing the ineffable, a task that demands profound humility.

Jung, in turn, acknowledges his own limitations and deficiencies in understanding theoretical physics, offering a beautiful synthesis of his incapacity to grasp certain matters. The Swiss psychologist remains faithful to his reverent attitude toward the mysterious conjunctions of the psyche, as he writes in one of his final letters, dated October 10, 1955:

I would not know what consequences I could add to what you have written, except perhaps for the secret of numbers – but I feel so incompetent in this subject that I fear I could not present anything that would make sense. (...) However enlightening the similarity or identity of the physical and psychological conceptual formation may be, it is based more on the epistemological difficulties involved in dealing with a non-visual object than on any perceived identity or similarity of a factual background, or even one that could be postulated. (...) Psychology, at the moment, is so far behind that not much of value can be expected from it for quite some time. I have reached my upper limits and, consequently, am hardly able to make any notable contribution. Your courage in tackling the problem of my psychology is a great source of pleasure to me and fills me with gratitude (MEIER, 2001, pp. 131–133, free translation).

Looking back on the end of Jung and Pauli's exchange, one may hazard a tentative hypothesis: whether spoken in atomic or archetypal idioms, the matter – psyche interface remains inassimilable. What remains is modesty – and reverence – before the psyche's irreducible mystery.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

ANSWER TO JOB - THE MYTHICAL DIMENSION OF AFFECT

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Abstract

On this journey, we meet Jung in his restlessness, in dialogue with Job, guiding us to understand silence as a means of affirming life, as a voice that can reveal solitude and an ethic of care for the community, turning affection into a potent force within the interaction of opposites. His words invite us to draw closer to the fragile fabric of life, revealing a revolutionary vision of new ways to exist in the face of awe. Hospitality toward the Other reinvents a pact with life, no longer separating the high from the low, turning silence into a source of renewed hope, where even damnation can be reintegrated. This call, rooted in complex psychology, celebrates the radiance of Wisdom-Mary, sowing in us the seeds of love.

Keywords: Answer to Job; Jung and the hospitality of opposites; affirmation of life; ethics of care; cultivation of love.

The purpose of incarnation lies in the exaltation of Job and its outcome, marked by the differentiation experienced by Yahweh's consciousness. For this, an extremely critical situation was necessary, a peripeteia full of affective experience, without which a higher level of consciousness could not be attained (JUNG, 1952/2011, OC XI, § 642)

Introduction

Jung desired to understand the mixed elements in Job, the mixture of his accents abundantly placed in the mirrored figure of the Devil/God. Jung wanted to look at Job from the perspective of complex psychology, from his living water, creating, in a wide variety of scenes and shots, the discovery of his own crossroads, activated by the flow of the unconscious and its restlessness.

What is reflected in the tragic image of God and Job? From Job onwards, the divinity shares in evil, and the boundary of this nature is violated. The devastated and present body: a body that speaks and a soul that silences.

An archetypal vessel emerges from the *shadows of God's* clothing and the creation of consciousness, representing an interchangeable relationship between the knowledge-consciousness-world of the living and the darkness-unconscious-world of the dead.

Consciousness in Job-enchanted is silenced. The demonic part translates the violence of the infinite depth of evil suffered in the body, through a search and a sense of experience. In Jung's words:

An individual should acknowledge the existence of affection and submit to its force, rather than attempt to eliminate it through abstract mental operations or through escapist emotional states. Although affection may lead a person to imitate all the negative qualities inherent in acts of violence, thereby sharing in the same fault, the purpose of this experience is precisely to penetrate the depths of the individual, compelling him to yield to its effect. It is therefore necessary for one to be affected; otherwise, this influence cannot reach him. It is also important for the individual to recognize what has affected him, thus transforming into knowledge the blindness inherent not only in violence but also in affection (JUNG, 1952/2011, OC XI, § 562).

Jung presents a paradoxical Job, ritualistically open to the world of the dead, pushing to the limit the path of rapture and affirmation of life, as he observes, regarding God's contradictory actions, that He is perplexed by His own curls.

The book *Resposta a Jó* reveals the metamorphoses of evil, separated from the divine. It portrays the tragic epiphany of creation, which unearths and unleashes evil from the earth, with life and death appearing as antagonistic forces in a spiral of emptiness and perdition.

The drama of Job, as a process of vertigo and psychic signification, by directly addressing the soaring and fiery threshing of God's wrath, brings us close to the gaps in the divine and its voracities. According to Jung: "Could Yahweh have conceived the suspicion that man possesses an infinitely small light, yet more concentrated than his own? A jealousy of this nature might explain Yahweh's behavior"(JUNG, 1952/2011, OC XI, § 579).

God breaks through the border zone of hell in Job – who remains in his own land – and is also the sole witness to his katabasis. Everything seems to reveal the theme of collectivity, the teaching of affection, gentleness, sweetness, and the psychic nature. Job longs to yield to the action of affection.

When Jung speaks of Yahweh, he adopts a perspective of suspicion toward the divine nature itself. God's disorderly actions reveal his pact with the Devil. "Obscure is the problem of knowing how God could make a wager with Satan," Jung asserts (1952/2011, OC XI, § 585).

The theme of Yahweh's dual nature and the inverted action of the divine, projecting onto Job anger, fear, violence, omnipotence, and self-interest, leads us to reflect on God's harsh necessity to oppose his intelligence, present from the beginning to eternity. Did Yahweh trust Job by leaving him in Satan's hands? Did He trust this Other who works and survives within us each night?

God's wandering in Job is among the most complex, as it equates to contemplating the ignorance of self-knowledge. Yahweh sometimes

hides, sometimes reveals himself across the many worlds through which he allows himself to be known ambiguously and obscurely, attempting to undermine Job's unwavering knowledge.

According to Edward Edinger,

Marie-Louise von Franz reports that, "once, [when] Jung was asked how he managed to live with the knowledge he had recorded in *Answer to Job*, he replied: I live in my deepest hell, and, from there, there is nowhere further I could fall" (EDINGER, 1993, p. 63).

The disfiguration of Yahweh appears through the mirror, and His haunting is revealed in Job's innermost being. From this moment, a new field of possibilities opens. Yahweh faces a reality, seeks to understand His own nature, and perceives the fragile fabric of life.

God encounters in Job an experience difficult to confront. Divine insecurity arises along with the vicissitudes of power. The divinity fears being swayed by Job's affection.

In the first encounter between the Lord and Satan in the biblical Book of Job (Job 1:6-12), the divinity and its opposite discuss the transience of Job's love. "Then Satan answered the Lord: Does Job fear God for nothing? (...) Stretch out your hand and touch all that he has and see if he does not blaspheme against you to your face."

The attempt to understand the opposites between God and Job, their ruminations and resonances, reveals that the archetypal theme of evil is a psychic reality unfolding in the collective unconscious.

Thus, Jung presents us with visions of engaging with the activated collective unconscious. His outpouring in *Resposta a Jó* calls us to contemplate the presence of evil within us. This book is among the most complex, both outside and within the *Obras Completas*. This shared, original reading by Jung invites us to confront the terrible and the unknown within ourselves. Delving into the realms of what is vulnerable and marginalized in the psyche actualizes the myth of Job. This real and symbolic dimension brings the *self* and creation closer together:

Yahweh is compelled to remember that He embodies an absolute nature, for if Job knows God, then God must also know Himself. God's dual nature couldn't become evident to everyone while remaining hidden from Himself alone. Whoever knows God acts upon Him. The failed attempt to destroy Job led to a transformation in God (JUNG, 1952/2011, OC XI, § 617).

Did Job provoke a divine transformation and alter God's nature? What followed from this? An excessive God who needed human consciousness to exist in its fullness? Was His origin and likeness called into question? Did He require Job to incorporate His fragmented parts and bring them back as the consciousness of evil itself? Does the God of creation play with His image, circumscribed in man? "The Book of Job and the security code of Thomism: God possesses, in His own way, an inefficacious will" (LUCCHESI, 2025, p. 91).

The rigidity of Yahweh's attributes does not harmonize satisfactorily; all His actions are contradictory, establishing an open confrontation between Job's knowledge and God's lack of self-knowledge.

The encounter between Job and Yahweh brings an increasing awareness of life's antinomies, breaking through God's shell and restoring, through the return to interiority, the symbol of damnations and psychic realities.

Through Job, Yahweh allows Himself to be invaded by doubt; His emphasis on omnipotence and omniscience gradually quiets through the very dialectic between them. Jung brings forth the new in Job, a revolutionary perception of new ways of existing in the face of all that is obscure and certain.

As Jung has already told us, "we are nature." From this perspective, it is equivalent to Job's effort to lead God beyond Himself, expecting that He, formed in His shadows, would feel threatened in the face of the dangers of His own choices.

Yahweh no longer remains in the same place within the story. To speak of Job and to grasp the thread of the images narrated by Jung is an attempt to unravel them in our practice. When faced with significant life changes,

a patient speaks of immense fear; it becomes crucial to understand and accompany the arduous journey that these transformations impose.

In the desire to seek knowledge of what has been lost, and thus to trace what seems meaningful within the therapeutic bond, themes of emptiness, abandonment, nothingness, and the absence of love arise, opening themselves to the poetic experience lived in that moment. Then, an act of care and hospitality toward the Other, which reinvents a pact with life, presents itself. According to Jung (2021, p. 395), “(...) but to accept the Other means a descent into contradiction, from seriousness to the ridiculous, from sadness to joy, from beauty to ugliness, from purity to impurity.”

Job harbors no doubt about Yahweh’s sinuous movements. Yahweh’s curls constitute the nuanced aesthetics of evil and the visceral, urgent experience of accepting evil as part of the divine archetype.

Jungian clinical practice speaks to us of the itineraries of crossroads and afflictions that manifest in relationships, losses, being and non-being, in reveries, in the innocence and the malice of acting in the world.

The differentiation through which Yahweh passed – achieved by one born of the earth, Job, the root of the soul standing against the very attempts of God to corrupt him – transformed His torrents of lava into the humus of consciousness. We now enter the images and vertigos that inhabit and unsettle human nature in all its suffering, moving in a slow, deliberate rhythm, as in Job. In many moments, we confront the irreversible duality of life: the light of divinity and the abyss of hell.

The archaic emerges in the clinical setting, just as in *Resposta a Jó*, and it must be confronted. We are forced to leave the twilight zone and the absence of eros to live a full life, whose central animating force is the *Adversary*, who almost always entangles us in tensions we cannot anticipate. Jung (1952/2011, OC XI, § 740) immerses the divinity in the darkest realms. The potential entity of the Devil figures as the central point of cosmic and psychic dynamics: “This God acts through the unconscious of man (...) The unconscious intends both things: to separate and to unite.”

It is precisely this paradoxical aspect of Job's silence that brings awareness and nourishes the divine hands' wrath with love. By transforming anger into reparation, Yahweh was transmuted into Christ, and God found Himself called to empty His former form.

Regarding the solitude of God, there exists a loneliness yearning for love, which Job's imagination, in wakefulness, could not accept. This occurs because they are both different yet close, made from the inverted mirror of the hospitable Other, freed from the enclosure of shadows, where they come to see themselves in the image of silence. By pouring forth the presence of silence, Job nourishes the idea that we inhabit another eternity, another matter-word that prepares the unfolding of events, where the Creator humbles Himself and plays at dreaming. As Jorge Luis Borges (1999, p. 11) says: "The other dreamed me but did not dream me rigorously."

Yahweh's movement into the human interior aims at the highest realization: the transmutation of Christ as the convergence points of all antagonisms. The purpose of incarnation appears in Job as the full presence of affects, culminating in the *hidden center of the soul*, whose nature is inextricably linked to the opposing dimensions of divinity. A God who no longer excludes the high and the low, but transforms into a *place of rest*, where a new hope may be gathered.

Final Considerations

The text *Resposta a Jó* confronts us with the luminous figure of *Wisdom-Mary*. Yahweh metamorphosed, acquiring the qualities of the living Job as a means of accessing His own archaic imagination. The *Mediator-Mary*, the one who sustains the divine in its full dimension, operates near the center and shares what she possesses – a mythical space—that establishes in Christ the cultivation of love.

Jung's narrative gives rise to a Job from the margins, who, through his existence intertwined with poetry and affection, points to another world anchored in self-knowledge.

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THE SOUL AND THE *MUNDUS IMAGINALIS*: THE SURPRISING ENCOUNTER OF JUNG AND CORBIN

Marluce Renz

Abstract

To speak of Jung and Corbin is to talk about the soul. On the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth, it feels especially meaningful to give space to Henry Corbin, whom Jung regarded as the person who truly understood him in his depths. Corbin proposes the existence of the *mundus imaginalis*, highlighting the condition of exile experienced by the soul as a result of losing its reference to an intermediate world, particularly in the West. Jung, in turn, argues that our greatest suffering arises from the loss of existential meaning. This article aims to recover the significance of the encounter between these two thinkers by connecting Jung's experiences in *Os Livros Negros* with concepts developed by Corbin, drawing from Islamic mysticism, such as individuation, exile, and *ta'wil*. This study uses a narrative review methodology guided by comparative analysis. Rather than following a systematic protocol for selecting and evaluating sources,

the focus was placed on conceptual and interpretive articulation between the authors. Through the reading of representative works and a dialogue between philosophical, mystical, and psychological perspectives, the study seeks to highlight convergences, symbolic resonances, and distinctions between Jung's and Corbin's thought.

Keywords: soul; *mundus imaginalis*; *Os Livros Negros*; individuation; sufism.

Introdução

"To understand the other, I do not need to annex them,
but rather to become their guest."

Louis Massignon

To speak of Jung and Corbin is to talk about the soul. These two thinkers, each with their own distinctive way of looking at and understanding reality, remind us of the fundamental place the soul occupies. Corbin refers to Jung as "the psychologist who dared to speak of the soul" (CORBIN, 2016). Yet it is worth mentioning that Corbin did not intend to offer a psychological perspective on the soul, as Jung did. Still, even without that purpose, he brought us ideas and a worldview whose value, for us psychologists, is still impossible to measure.

When Corbin speaks of the soul, he brings forth the entire problem of the exile it suffers due to the loss of a reference to an intermediate world. Especially in the West, where we take the material world in its physical dimension as the foundational basis of reality and disregard the intermediate realm, we become estranged from the realms of light and the infinite spiritual spheres described by the philosophers of Islamic mysticism – the Sufis. For Corbin, this estrangement is the root of our suffering.

This idea resonates with Jung's notion that our greatest suffering is the loss of existential meaning, thus devoting his entire life to the search for his personal myth, which is precisely the myth of meaning.

As excellent hosts when it comes to matters of the soul/psyche, Jung and Corbin were men who possessed a profound openness and receptivity to the new, to the other, to the foreign. Their perspective is inherently pluralistic; in this sense, Massignon helps us understand when he states that one must become a guest. To become a guest is to dwell, even if temporarily, in another's home; it is also to be welcomed; it is a "pausing" along the way.

Etymologically, guest comes from the Latin *hospes*. Today, the term refers to the one who arrives, but in the past, it carried a broader meaning: it denoted both the one who hosts and the one who is hosted. In the East, guests are considered messengers of God. Louis Massignon describes having experienced among the Arabs what he called *ḍiyāfa*, a form of disinterested hospitality, one that asks for nothing in return. In the Arab context, especially in more remote regions, those who arrive are most often travelers passing through, pilgrims who rarely return to the same place (ELMARSAFY, 2021).

In this sense, being a guest also means being receptive to receiving. *Os Livros Negros* show us how deeply Jung welcomed all the guests – the personifications of his soul – who appeared before him and with whom he gradually established relationships. Henry Corbin, in turn, reveals his tireless effort to bring the *mundus imaginalis* to Western readers in an extraordinary text that bears the same name. Corbin becomes a devoted guest of a culture, a philosophy, and a way of inhabiting the world that he embraces as a lifelong project.

On the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth, it is highly meaningful to give space also to Henry Corbin, who – according to Jung's words in a letter to Corbin – was the person who truly understood him. And that is no small thing.

Jung was heavily criticized for his book *Resposta a Jô*, which Corbin read with great care and depth. At this moment, Jung, already 77 years old, wrote to Corbin a letter dated May 4th, 1953:

It was an unusual joy, and a rare experience – truly unique – to be fully understood. I am accustomed to living in a more or less complete intellectual vacuum, and my Answer to Job has done nothing to lessen this. You say that you read my book as an oratorio. The book came to me during a febrile illness [...] everything was an adventure that seized me, and I hurried to write it down (JUNG, 2002, p. 286).

To recognize the importance and centrality Corbin held in Jung's life and work, it is essential to recall that it was precisely during a period of intense criticism surrounding Answer to Job that Jung felt genuinely understood. He wrote *Resposta a Jó* in 1951, at the age of 75, not as a routine scholarly exercise but as a creative outpouring born from a feverish state. And it was Corbin who grasped its meaning in a way Jung described as a "rare experience," revealing the depth of connection that grew between them.

Corbin appears to have been deeply moved by *Resposta a Jó*, and in response, he wrote a text titled *The Eternal Sophia*. When Jung read it, he sent Corbin a letter expressing his joy at having been understood. Perhaps, in that moment, Jung felt at home as a guest of someone who welcomed him with genuine openness and offered something truly valuable: a deep comprehension of his complex inner world. Yet Henry Corbin, in turn, was equally touched by Jung's reaction and wrote back to him on August 14, 1953:

Dear Professor Jung, you kindly wished to write me a letter that moved me deeply – so deeply that I may have been even more touched by it than you were by my small essay on the Sophia éternelle! It was a great encounter that took place between us; our previous meetings had been nothing more than a prelude. Thank you with all my heart! (CORBIN, *apud* BERNARDINI, [2013-], p. 15).

In a later letter to Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, also written in 1953, and revealing what appears to have been a strong friendship, Corbin recounted that he and his wife, Stella, had met Jung and Emma in person in Küsnacht. Corbin reiterated that Jung was an extraordinary man. After the publication of *The Eternal Sophia*, their relationship grew even

closer, and their dialogue, in Corbin's words, became "marvelously fruitful" (CORBIN, *apud* BERNARDINI, [2013-], p. 16).

Who was Henry Corbin

Henry Arthur Corbin was born in Paris on April 14, 1903, and died on October 7, 1978. His mother passed away six days after his birth. Corbin appears to have been a physically fragile and extremely sensitive child, with an early and profound interest in music (CHEETHAM, 2015).

Corbin studied philosophy, and in 1926 (at the age of 23), he obtained the *licence de philosophie* at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris, with the thesis "*O Avicennismo Latino na Idade Média*" (CHEETHAM, 2015, free translation). Avicenna, or Ibn Sina, was not only a prominent physician and philosopher of the eleventh century but a true polymath who wrote numerous works on philosophy and medicine. He is regarded as one of the major thinkers of Islamic mysticism (NARS, 1997). We can infer that, even at the very beginning of his academic career, the young Corbin was already seeking connections between East and West, which would become a central theme in his life.

Corbin possessed an extraordinary command of languages. He was fluent in French (his mother tongue), German (he was the first to translate Heidegger from German into French), Sanskrit, Arabic, Latin, and Greek, as well as English, Turkish, Farsi, and Russian. These skills were fundamental in allowing him to become one of the first translators of Eastern philosophers who had been virtually unknown in the West until then (CHEETHAM, 2015). Corbin was, without a doubt, a remarkable scholar.

Despite his early interest in Islamic mysticism, at age 23, he wrote his undergraduate thesis on Avicenna. Corbin was a Christian, born into a Protestant family and educated in Christian religious schools. The influence of Islamic mysticism in his life did not lead him to convert to Islam, although he remained deeply open to the new, sustaining a continual dialogical effort (CHEETHAM, 2015). He had wide-ranging interests and was described by Cheetham as a "brilliant and eclectic Protestant theologian" (CHEETHAM, 2015, free translation).

Corbin's profound engagement with Islamic mysticism began when he encountered a Persian manuscript given to him by his professor, Louis Massignon. One of the key aspects of Corbin's legacy lies in recovering a philosophy that affirms the sacredness of existence, which had been lost due to the dominance of materialism and rationalism in the West. For Corbin, this loss constituted a great catastrophe for humanity. This would become the leitmotiv of his work and his life.

The theme of the sacredness of existence is also central in Jung's life and work. Through the concept of archetypes, Jung revived the significance of the imago dei in the psyche as an organizing and foundational aspect of the individuation process. It conveys the idea of a central archetype – the *Self* – that brings coherence, meaning, and direction to our experiences. This is an important point of convergence between Jung and Corbin, even though Jung did not anchor his ideas in metaphysics as Corbin did.

Corbin and Jung were translators, both literally and imaginably, of a reality that continues to astonish us: the reality of an ensouled world, a world of images with a reality of their own. For Jung, image and imagining formed the central axis of the psyche. He states:

[...] the psyche is essentially made up of images. The psyche consists of a series of images in the broadest sense of the term; it is not, however, a mere juxtaposition or a succession, but a structure rich in meaning and an objectification of vital activities, expressed through images (JUNG, 1947/1954/2013, OC XVIII/1, § 279).

There is, it seems, a deep resonance in the way Corbin also presents the image as the very essence of the *mundus imaginalis*. He speaks of revelations, of visionary forms of knowing, images that reveal themselves to those who enter this intermediate realm where matter and spirit touch.

Because this imaginal reality is so fundamental, Henry Corbin took great care to find a term that would not be confused with the merely imaginary. Thus, he coined *mundus imaginalis*. As a gifted translator, he understood the weight of words. Corbin explains:

I was absolutely compelled to find another term because, for many years, I was, by vocation and profession, an interpreter of Arabic and Persian texts, whose intentions I certainly would have betrayed had I been entirely and simply satisfied – even with all possible precautions – with the term imaginary (CORBIN, 1995, free translation).

He was aware that, especially in the West, people tend to interpret imagination and fantasy as something of little significance, a product of the ego, which we commonly refer to as the “imaginary”. It was precisely from this interpretation that he sought to distance himself. The imaginal is a reality proper to the soul, one that manifests itself through image-visions.

And just as Jung’s soul begins to reveal its own reality, described in detail in his journal, now accessible in *Os Livros Negros*, the soul, in the imaginal cosmology recovered by Corbin, also occupies its own place: a reality as consistent as what we ordinarily recognize as concrete, material reality. But how does Corbin present the *mundus imaginalis*, the world of the soul?

The *mundus imaginalis* that Corbin reveals is an intermediate reality between matter (the Sensible world) and spirit (the Intelligible world), which he identifies through his recovery of Eastern philosophers whose ideas had never been translated into Western culture. Corbin thus becomes a kind of bridge between East and West (CORBIN, 1976).

Corbin explains that in the Sufi conception that he retrieves from Sohrawardi, the world is composed of atmospheres. Up to the seventh atmosphere, we remain in the Sensible world; from the ninth and above, we are in the Intelligible world. But there is one atmosphere – the eighth – that constitutes the intermediate world between the realm of intelligences and the domain of sensible things, which Corbin called *mundus imaginalis*. It is a world accessible only through the creative imagination (CORBIN, 1976); a world that serves as a source of knowledge, revealed through the heart, understood by Corbin as an organ of cognition. This idea would later influence James Hillman, who speaks of the thought

of the heart. It is worth mentioning that Corbin was one of the major thinkers who shaped Hillman's work.

Although Corbin's oeuvre is highly significant, especially for us Jungians, access to it remains limited since much of it has not yet been translated into Portuguese. Thus, creating space to present this thinker's ideas and his relationship with Jung is an attempt to bring visibility to the content of great importance for the Jungian world. Jung and Corbin both recover a cosmology grounded in the Imaginal, which underlies the entirety of Jung's work, made available to us through the publication of *O Livro Vermelho* and *Os Livros Negros*.

The Recovery of the Soul

The concept of "soul" is exceedingly complex for us. Jung's dialogues with his soul and with the various personifications that arose in his encounters with all the beings who presented themselves to him are recorded in *Os Livros Negros* and *O Livro Vermelho*.

In a report dated January 23, 1914 (*Os Livros Negros* 4, *apud* SHAMDASANI, 2021, p. 222), Jung, conversing with his soul, asks: "Have we gone beyond the intermediate world? Or are we only now entering it?" In this account, he meets the theme of magic, bringing to the surface a reflection on another mode of thinking that seems to be emerging when Jung was still deeply immersed in the scientific logic and rationality of his time.

He then asks his soul: "What am I to do with magic?", and the soul replies: "Magic will do much for you" (SHAMDASANI, 2021, p. 223). This exchange takes place not long after he begins his recordings. The first entry dates from November 12, 1913, and here he is on January 23, 1914.

It is important to highlight that the time of the soul is not chronological or historical time. For Corbin, "[...] time and space are not outside the soul as objects," nor "attributes of external things, but of the soul itself" (CORBIN, *apud* CROMBERG, 2015, p. 97). This idea resonates in a particularly meaningful way with Jung. Throughout the immersive pro-

cess he undergoes and later recounts in *Os Livros Negros*, chronological time is not what matters most. What takes precedence are the profound and transformative encounters that shape him from within, encounters that later become the very foundation of the theoretical work we know through the *Obras Completas*. For instance, he writes in his entry from December 30, 1913:

All these things take me so far from my science, to which I believed I had a firm commitment. Through it, I wanted to serve humanity, and now, my soul, you lead me toward these new things. Yes, it is the intermediate world, the pathless world, the world shimmering in countless ways. I have forgotten; I have reached a new world that was once unfamiliar to me. I see no path without a bridge. What I believed about the soul must become true here, namely, that it knows its own way better, and that no intention can dictate a better path to it. I feel that a great part is being cut off from science. I believe this is necessary for the good of the soul and for its life (JUNG, *Os Livros Negros* 3, *apud* SHAMDASANI, 2021, p. 99).

In this report, Jung indicates that the soul leads him along paths unimaginable to the ego. One might think that Jung's encounter with his soul grants him access to what Corbin would later call revealed knowledge, for the world of the soul is a place of epiphany, producing a profound sense of understanding at another level, far beyond the rational. In this intermediate realm, knowledge is not the result of a rational, ego-driven, chronological construction in which one gradually appropriates, understands, and elaborates concepts in a temporal and logical process, which we typically call knowledge. Instead, truth is revealed through image-visions. Could this be what Jung's soul was signaling when it responded: "Magic will do much for you"?

Through his contact with Islamic mysticism, Corbin comes to understand that, in fact, everything is revelation, and that the capacity to perceive this subtle reality is incomprehensible to our rational minds. These revelations are not accessible merely by our desire to perceive them; similarly, the landscapes of the *mundus imaginalis* – the *locus* of epiphanies and spiritual revelations – cannot be perceived by just anyone (CORBIN, 1995).

In the *mundus imaginalis*, knowledge arises as the individual opens to “not knowing,” a kind of ego-emptying from which, out of this “void,” the divine, or knowledge itself, can appear (CHEETHAM, 2015). This closely mirrors Jung’s experience with his soul in *Os Livros Negros*, where he allows himself to encounter the realities that present themselves to him.

Another important aspect is that, in Corbin’s view, knowledge of the *mundus imaginalis* is accessed through the heart. The heart is an organ of perception, an idea resonant with the *Gnosis Kardia* of the Gnostics. *Gnosis* refers to a knowledge that comes from the heart, in a way that is mysterious to reason, for the one who accesses this knowledge is guided entirely by intuition (HOELLER, 1995). Jung also drew from this source, for he was deeply influenced by gnosis.

We find this idea in a reflection (JUNG, 2017) presented in *O Livro Vermelho*, when, tired of a misguided search, he finally encounters his soul. Jung (2017) reflects on the world of dreams and adopts a posture of humility, questioning how one might learn and teach the language of dreams, the language of the soul. And he writes:

For erudition alone is not enough; there is a knowledge of the heart that offers deeper insight. The knowledge of the heart cannot be found in any book or in any teacher’s words but is born within you like the green shoot from the dark earth. Erudition belongs to the spirit of this age, but this spirit in no way encompasses the dream, for the soul is present everywhere that taught knowledge is not. But how can one attain the knowledge of the heart? You can only attain this knowledge by living your life to its fullest (JUNG, 2017, p. 121).

Jung, in his encounter with the soul through his relationship with the spirit of the depths, and Corbin, in the *mundus imaginalis* through Islamic mysticism, both point toward the same place: the knowledge of the heart.

But what heart is this? For the Sufis, the heart is not merely a biological organ, but a psycho-spiritual organ, a receptacle in which God reveals Himself, a space of interior knowing. It is through the heart, whose corporeality is not material, that one can enter what Corbin calls True Re-

ality (CHEETHAM, 2015). It is therefore not a metaphor, but a precise order of reality, linked to an equally precise mode of perception.

The Early Encounters between Jung and Corbin

Eranos would become the meeting point for Jung and Corbin. Corbin began participating in the Eranos Circle in 1949, with the central theme *O Homem e o Mundo Mítico*. On that occasion, Corbin delivered a lecture entitled *A História da Iniciação e do Hermetismo no Irã*, which was divided into two topics: “*A História do Exílio Ocidental*” and “*O Mito de Hermes e a Natureza Perfeita*.” It seems that Jung attended as a listener that year (BERNARDINI, [2013]).

A few days after the conclusion of the Circle, Corbin wrote to Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, the founder of Eranos, noting that during his first encounter with Jung, Jung “had shared with him a series of alchemical images and some texts by Pico della Mirandola” (BERNARDINI, [2013], p. 10). According to Corbin, this was the best gift he had ever received. Corbin appears to have found Jung to be very cordial, and this first meeting left a very positive impression on him. In this way, he described his relationship with Jung:

My encounters with Jung were unforgettable [...]. I was a metaphysician, not a psychologist. Jung was a psychologist, not a metaphysician, although he often approached metaphysical territory. Our backgrounds and respective intentions were entirely different; yet we understood each other in every discourse [...]. The path Jung pursued was that of discovering the inner Imago. To recognize in the face the resources and splendor of this Imago is no longer to agitate oneself in a vain external search for the inaccessible, but to understand that this Imago is present first within me, and it is precisely this inner presence that allows me to recognize the exterior. Later, I had to be absorbed – and still am – by the metaphysics of active imagination [...], by the pure imaginary world, the imaginal world, the world of imaginal forms [...]. But I truly needed to see this. Everything that the psychologist says about the Imago takes on, for the metaphysician, a metaphysical meaning. Everything the latter affirms is interpreted by the psychologist in psychological terms. Hence, all possible misunderstandings [...] (CORBIN, *apud* BERNARDINI, [2013-], p. 5).

Corbin draws a clear line between his own perspective and Jung's. He identifies himself as a metaphysician and emphasizes Jung's effort to approach the phenomena he studied through a psychological lens. While Jung devoted himself to building theoretical frameworks, Corbin did not follow that route; his quest was to recover a spiritual reality, a dimension that shaped much of his life. For Corbin, truth and knowledge were inner, spiritual realities. Unlike Jung, who feared being misunderstood and was often criticized for supposed mysticism, Corbin felt no need to guard against such risks. Spirituality, for him, was a lived experience, the deepest expression of the soul.

It was Massignon, Corbin's professor at the Sorbonne and one of the great thinkers associated with the Eranos Circle, who introduced him to the richness of Islamic mysticism. He gave Corbin a manuscript by Sohrevardi, a 12th-century Persian philosopher, titled *Hikmat al'Israq* or *The Oriental Theosophy* (CHEETHAM, 2015). Corbin recalls:

I have always been a Platonist (in the broad sense of the term); I believe one is born a Platonist just as one is born an atheist, a materialist, etc. An unfathomable mystery of preexistent choices. The young Platonist I then was was set aflame only in contact with the one who was the "Imam of the Platonists of Persia" [...] Through my encounter with Sohrevardi, my spiritual destiny for passing through this world was sealed. Platonism, expressed through the Zoroastrian angelology of ancient Persia, illuminated the path I was seeking (CORBIN, *apud* CHEETHAM, 2015, p. 11, free translation).

This theme that Sohrevardi develops – the Philosophy of Illumination, in which light is considered a fundamental ontological principle – would guide Corbin throughout his life. For Sohrevardi (2002), knowledge can be attained through spiritual intuition, inner vision, or direct mystical experience. It is precisely this kind of knowledge that is accessed by those capable of entering the *mundus imaginalis*.

Corbin devoted himself to understanding these traditions and shared much of that knowledge through lectures, books, courses, and translations, sustaining a long-term effort to bring to the West the wisdom that had so profoundly shaped him. Reading various biographies of Corbin,

one gets the impression that he and Jung both underwent transformative personal experiences that later found expression in their work. Corbin does not leave us a documented account of such experiences as Jung does in *Os Livros Negros*. Yet the intensity and depth of Corbin's writings suggest that, for him, life and theory were inseparable. Jung, at 83, reflecting on himself at the beginning of *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, writes: "[...] only the events of my life through which the eternal world broke into the ephemeral world seem worthy of being recounted" (JUNG, 1961/1986), revealing the profound universe he entered over the course of his life.

Final Considerations: Exile and the Recovery of the Soul

Jung stated that "the world is immense and there is no single theory that can explain everything" (JUNG, 1935/2020, OC XVIII/1, § 279). Corbin, in turn, finds in Sohrevardi not merely a theory, but a worldview that is radically different and surprising. For Sohrevardi (2002), all creation and all beings in the universe arise from light and are governed by a spiritual principle. This light is organized hierarchically, descending from celestial spheres – the Intelligible World – to lower levels, ultimately reaching what we call the material reality – the Sensible World – which, in Sohrevardi's conception, represents the hierarchy most distant from spiritual reality.

Reflecting on Sohrevardi's cosmology, one of the central questions posed by Corbin is that our greatest tragedy lies in our ignorance of how exiled we are from true reality. In the Western conception of the world, we no longer have the perspective of divine filiation, of a world of light. Our "real" world pertains to materiality. Our gaze and our presence in the world are no longer spiritual or symbolic, but scientific, impersonal, and literal. Corbin emphasizes this when he writes:

We, in the West, are at this very moment attempting, through various approaches (phenomenology, depth psychology, and so on), to reclaim the soul, which – just as in Avicenna's Narration of the Birds – has been trapped in the web of determinism and positivism (CORBIN, *apud* CROMBERG, 2015, p. 52).

Corbin presents phenomenology and depth psychology as means of reclaiming the soul. Yet, if we remain unaware of the exile of our soul, how can we return to our origin, to the “place” where our soul truly belongs and resides? Jung asks: “My soul, where are you?” Could this question be the recognition of her exile? When Jung reconnects with his soul, his world appears to enrich itself with the knowledge revealed through images from this intermediate realm, generating profound transformations that, in Jung’s case, manifest throughout his life and work.

However, Sohrevardi’s worldview, as recovered by Corbin, shows an important aspect: the atmospheres correspond to different levels of understanding reality, organized hierarchically. The closer we are to material reality, the more limited our capacity for comprehension. Only by returning to higher realities – through a process the Sufis call *ta’wil* – can we access our very essence. It is in this movement that true knowledge is revealed, as being and knowing are equivalent from this perspective. Corbin called this the process of *spiritual individuation*, or “the progressive approach to one’s own authenticity, to one’s own essence” (CROMBERG, 2015, p. 83).

Here we find another point of convergence between Corbin and Jung. After their meeting at Eranos in 1949, Corbin began to adopt several terms from analytical psychology, particularly in his book *Avicenne et le Récit Visionnaire* (1954), which reflects his intense contact with Jung (CROMBERG, 2015). Among these concepts is individuation.

For Jung, individuation means becoming what one truly is. He captures this idea in a frequently cited remark: “Only what you are has the power to heal you.” *Ta’wil*, in turn, is the spiritual process of returning to our origin, where we encounter the *Self*, which we are in essence. It does not consist in appropriating objective knowledge, but in “accessing Being,” once *ta’wil* “knows what cannot be known” (CROMBERG, 2015, p. 89). The notion of unknowability lies in the limits of our analytical and cognitive comprehension of reality. This recalls many Sufi poems, such as Rumi’s, which conclude with the word “Silence” referring to that which cannot be named or known, but only experienced.

This perception of profound knowledge emerges during the process of individuation. Major shifts in personality, brought about through the integration of previously unknown aspects of the ego, often unfold in ways that pass unnoticed by ego-consciousness. We may have extensive knowledge of the psyche's structure and dynamics, yet without a genuine encounter with our greater essence, the *Self*, as Jung called it, such knowledge does not become transformative. It is a great mystery, deeply and sensitively described in Islamic mysticism.

In this worldview, everything has life, meaning, and significance. There are no dead things, no objects to be observed objectively from a distance, as some schools of psychology assume regarding the psyche (that it can be objectively understood and transformed through knowledge). But “[...] the path opened by *ta’wil* clearly leads from the outside to the inside, from a world full of entities, objects, and facts, an objective world, to an interiority full of meaning and significance” (CROMBERG, 2015, p. 90). This is the process of individuation: becoming or realizing what we truly are, which occurs when we can return to the essential.

It is important to note that we are not suggesting that Corbin and Jung understood individuation in the same way. Corbin approached it from a spiritual perspective, while Jung sought a psychological one. Even so, we can see how sensitively both engaged with a worldview in which the human presence is at once complex and, paradoxically, simple.

As guests of the imaginal, Jung and Corbin were men ahead of their time. This was not only due to their erudition, but above all to their pluralism and their capacity to imagine. Through imagination, they found meaning in their own lives, and this is the greatest legacy they left us. They offered not just a theory, but the testimony of lives lived in their deepest sense.

We learn from these thinkers that nothing is ever complete, because the imaginal is alive. Our greatest challenge is to create space to access this worldview, which, according to Corbin, the West has lost. In this sense, Jung appears as a breath of fresh air, an oasis in a landscape we are only beginning to explore, a vast terrain still largely unknown. In these journeys

through the unexplored geographies of the soul, in the search for Being, we begin to know. And in this movement, there is no need to annex anything or anyone; it is enough to remain as guests.

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"SAVE THE PHENOMENA" – 150 YEARS LATER AND THE ERRANT PATHS OF ARCHETYPAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

The history of archetypal psychology began 150 years ago, with the birth of Jung. Without any doubt, its primary lineage lies in the concepts developed by Jung's analytical psychology. From this initial milestone, several thinkers emerged, in a necessary adaptation to culture and to the evolution of the times. It is within this context that James Hillman's archetypal psychology arises, tracing an errant path – much like the history of its founder – delving into themes such as war, depression, betrayal, pornography, suicide, panic, failure, alchemy, *anima*, *puer*, and *senex*, power, among others. Errant in its creation and in the themes, it addresses, yet always following the guiding principle of remaining with the image that phenomena bring in themselves, with a single aim: "soul-making."

Keywords: image; Hillman; imagination; *puer*; soul.

The Birth of Archetypal Psychology

“James Hillman is an artist of psychology.” This is how Thomas Moore begins the prologue to the book *A Blue Fire* (HILLMAN, 1990). Like him, many other authors have spoken poetically and consistently about archetypal psychology and its founder. It was a delight to enter such phrases, as well as those of other authors such as David Tacey, Patricia Berry, Joanne H. Stroud, Stanton Marlan, Ginette Paris, Edward Casey, Carlos Bernardi, Marcus Quintaes, and Gustavo Barcellos – the latter responsible for translating James Hillman’s first works into Portuguese and for introducing his work in Brazil. Some of these will appear throughout this manuscript since archetypal psychology begins with James Hillman and Rafael Lopez-Pedraza but was constituted – as one of its most important foundations proclaims – through multiplicity.

The history of archetypal psychology began 150 years ago, with the birth of Jung. Without any doubt, its main lineage lies in the concepts developed by analytical psychology. Many of the theorists of archetypal psychology came from the Zurich training, including Hillman himself, as well as Lopez-Pedraza, Patricia Berry, Paul Kugler, Guggenbühl-Craig, Mary Watkins, and Lyn Cowan. From this initial milestone, several thinkers emerged, in a necessary adaptation to culture and evolution of the times, and it is within this context that archetypal psychology takes shape. Hillman invites us to reimagine psychological thought, providing a fresh perspective from which to return to long-standing themes. Beyond reflecting on individual and social pathologies, this approach is not satisfied: it is restless, it moves, and it calls everyone to a revolution that takes place in the streets, and not only in psychology offices.

Hillman describes himself as an authentic Jungian. He says that, in the beginning, his soul was “totally in the Jungian thing” (1989, p. 110), confessing that, little by little, this same soul began to move away. However, in a conference held in Milan (1988) in memory of the 25th anniversary of Jung’s death, he reveals why he later came to recognize himself as Jungian. He speaks of a daimonic inheritance from Jung, portraying him

from a completely innovative and heretical place, and observes that Jung inaugurates a new form of analysis with his word association test: he did not ask which path the association followed, as was expected at the time, but how, why, and when the association failed to function.

For Hillman, Jung's heresy lies in the way he displaces the usual theme. Turning toward imagination, toward inner figures; dialoguing with them, giving them attention, was a way of challenging the dogmatic crystallization of *daimones* that our religious culture had demonized. Jung, by departing from the usual path, focuses on idiosyncrasy, eccentricity, and the subject's singularity, starting from his own difference. He personified his *daimones*, taking a radical view of the autonomy and independence of these inner figures in the psyche. In other words, Hillman argues that Jung's heretical legacy lies in elevating the image to a primary place.

Hillman ventured deeply into many of the themes of classical Jungian psychology and developed his own style along these paths, always remaining attentive to the dimensions of culture and history as they manifest in imagination. In addition, he addresses themes such as war, depression, betrayal, pornography, suicide, panic, failure, alchemy, *anima*, *puer* and *senex*, power, among others. In his writing, Hillman dissects his themes from multiple angles, engaging in an imaginative, reflective, and poetic exercise.

Nevertheless, James Hillman's divergence from the ideas of the Jungian old guard led him, in 1967, to initiate a movement he named archetypal psychology, distinguishing it from analytical, complex, or Jungian psychology. In 1970, in the text *Por que psicologia arquetípica*, Hillman clarifies:

It seems necessary to adopt a word that reflects Jung's characteristic approach, both in relation to theory and to what takes place in practice, as well as to life in general. Calling this psychology today "archetypal" follows from its historical development. In a sense, the initial terms were superseded by the concept of archetype, which Jung had not yet elaborated at the time he named his psychology. The archetype is the most ontologically funda-

mental of Jung's psychological concepts, with the advantage of greater precision, while being, by definition, always partially indefinable and open. (...) Instead, archetypal fantasies are sought within "models," "objectivity," and "problems." As early as 1912, Jung located analysis within an archetypal horizon, thereby releasing the archetypal from its reduction to the analytic. Analysis can help us approach archetypes, yet it cannot exhaust their meaning. When the archetypal is granted precedence over the analytic, the psyche is no longer bound to the consulting room; indeed, the consulting room itself is reconfigured within an archetypal perspective. In this sense, analysis is itself a dramatization of an archetypal fantasy (p. 165).

That is, the transcendence of the archetype as structure has little value in analyzing human suffering. The immanence of the archetypal, in turn, leaves abstraction and reaches the singularity of the event. It blends into a plot and is present in the individual's relationship with the world. We are faced with an individual experience within a universal cosmology. Thus emerges one of the first and main differences between archetypal psychology and classical Jungian psychology: archetype, in classical Jungian psychology, is a noun, whereas archetypal appears as an adjective. Hillman (2018) states:

The term archetypal values the image (...) If we extend this conclusion to other situations in which we employ the word "archetypal," to our own psychology, then by archetypal psychology we mean a psychology of value. And our appellative movement aims to restore to psychology its broadest, richest, and deepest volume, to echo the soul when described as unfathomable, multiple, generative, and necessary. All images can acquire this archetypal sense; therefore, all psychology can be archetypal when freed from its surface and viewed through its hidden volumes. "Archetypal" here refers to a gesture, not to a thing. Otherwise, archetypal psychology becomes merely a psychology of archetypes (p. 49).

Besides this, it is necessary to point out another difference for an initial understanding of the paths of archetypal psychology. In this new way of thinking, the symbol is abandoned to make room for the image. There is a subtle – but important – difference between these two concepts. The symbol starts from the general and, after generalization, moves to-

ward the particular. These are abstractions. In archetypal psychology, the image is what makes experience singular and psychically compelling, because it comes with its own context – its own atmosphere and scene. A plot. In this sense, an image is not what is seen, but the way of seeing. It frees itself from literalism and becomes metaphorical. Moreover, the image is not only visual, but a psychic reality. Hillman closely follows Jung's statement that the psyche is an image. Any event can be transformed into an image, for the central idea of archetypal psychology is to relate to it: to listen to it and make it speak. Hence, the idea that a symbol may even be an element of an image; however, there can be images without any symbol.

Regarding the development of this concept, there is a curious fact recounted by Patricia Berry (lecture delivered at Notre Dame in 07/1992). In 1970, some seminars began to take place in the early days of Spring Publications. They were “passionately imaginative and intellectual” meetings, often with heated clashes among the participants. Patricia reports that the leaders of these meetings were Rafael Lopez-Pedraza and James Hillman. After the seminars, the two leaders would discuss the axioms of this new psychology that was beginning to take shape. In these meetings, Lopez-Pedraza's maxim “stay with the image” and James Hillman's “save the phenomena” emerged.

The expression “save the phenomena” goes hand in hand with the famous “stay with the image.” For archetypal psychology, the archetype is always phenomenological since it manifests always and only through images. This idea appears already in his first work, *Emotion*. Hillman's doctoral dissertation was written in 1959 and was seen as a turning point in his career, as it marked his commitment to psychology. In this book, in addition to citing authors from phenomenology, Hillman employs the Husserlian method of “returning to the things themselves” (CORÁ SILVA; SERBENA, 2022). This method proposes a radical return to experience as it presents itself, before any theoretical, scientific, or metaphysical interpretation.

Edward Casey, an important collaborator and theorist of archetypal psychology, in the introduction to *Philosophical Intimations* (2016), reflects that archetypal psychology has

a foundation that links philosophical analysis to psychological questions, ensuring the intimate indwelling of one within the other. Hence the title of this volume: *Philosophical Intimations*. An initial candidate for this title was *Philosophical Inclinations*, but, after more careful reflection, Hillman realized that he wanted to show how the role of philosophy in his life's work was more than a mere inclination or propensity (free translation).

Broadly speaking, Hillman's thought emerges as phenomenological insofar as it describes, subtly and carefully, the images it examines. It brings the archetypal-psychology injunction "stay with the image," which describes the image from within itself, close to Heidegger's phenomenology, in which the phenomenological description is made from the phenomenon itself. "Staying with the image" aims, as much as possible, to remain faithful to the image itself, as a way of imagining the world and things, without any interpretive interference external to the image in itself.

Casey (2016) says that

He (Hillman) listens to the emotional phenomenon – what it shows of itself by itself. He allows it to present itself on its own terms, just as he does elsewhere in the case of images. His old catchphrase, "stay with the image," was already a call for phenomenological description: for the patient delineation of images exactly as they present themselves, following their lead rather than imposing one's prejudices on them, presuming to know exactly how they should appear. But now the field of psychologically fruitful phenomena is much broader, and its inhabitants range from language to landscape and from mathematics to metaphysics. Instead of freely associating from the unconscious reservoir of images and memories, Hillman's injunction is to pay attention to the world in its present immediacy. Only based on this attention to what stands before us as a genuine phenomenon can we explore its deep psychological dimensions (free translation).

Another axiom of archetypal psychology is the displacement of the un-

conscious toward imagination. This means that, remaining faithful to its concern with moving beyond abstractions, archetypal psychology locates a possibility of action in the images that arise from the unconscious; that is, to imagine is the capacity to transform events into experiences. Hillman follows Jung's definition of imagination as the creative act of forming images and suggests the possibility of an operative act, fundamental to psychic reality (BUTLER, 2014). Imagination, then, would be part of the real world, since it allows us to imagine reality through an ego porous to fantasies: an imaginal ego, an image-thinking, and an imaginative language.

When we speak of imagination, we cannot fail to mention Henry Corbin, the name that most influenced archetypal psychology after Jung. He introduces the concept of *Mundus Imaginalis* – an intermediate zone between the visible and invisible world, between the world of things and the rational world. In this concept, archetypes are “fundamentally imaginative phenomena that transcend the world of the senses in their value” (HILLMAN, 2022, p. 26). It is in imagination that phenomena appear. It is in the space of imagination that images are produced and the soul circulates. Let us not forget that soul, in archetypal psychology, is a perspective, a way of looking at phenomena, and not something that is objectively in them; it is a movement, not a substance.

The construction, development, and deepening of this new way of thinking in psychology can be found in a vast body of work written by James Hillman and by other authors who contributed to the expansion of these ideas. However, it was never carried out in a linear way, but through transgression, detours, and polemics. David Tacey (1998), in a few words, offers a fine summary of the beginnings of archetypal psychology:

To deconstruct Jung's metaphysics, to strip Jung's Christian theology, to abandon his moral zeal and humanistic temperament, and to get rid of his emphasis on unity and integration of personality. A new model of mind had to be fashioned, and the materials in the sewing room were substantial. In Hillman's post-Jungian world, diversity replaced unity, phenomenology replaced metaphysics, imagination replaced the unconscious, and uncertainty

and openness replaced knowledge. Hillman also expelled “goal-directedness,” mandalas, and the emphasis on progress and ego-consciousness. He built an archetypal psychology without archetypes and a theory of personality without development (free translation).

Patricia Berry, James Hillman’s partner, a Jungian analyst and collaborator of archetypal psychology from its origins to the present day, was present when the first discussions and concepts of this new psychology were coming to life. She says (1992):

We had a much clearer idea of what archetypal psychology was not, and so our learning was a kind of *via negativa*. Archetypal psychology was not monotheistic, nor was it ego-personal, nor transcendent, nor structural, nor linear, nor Christian, nor normal, nor mediocre, nor was it about improvement, nor balanced (free translation).

And so archetypal psychology began to take shape. In an errant way.

The word errancy, in its etymological root, is marked by an ambiguity, since to err is a term that, according to the etymological dictionary of Bloch and Wartburg (1975), carries both the sense of making a mistake, committing an error, going astray, as well as that of walking, progressing, and advancing. In this sense, it comes close to travelers – those travelers who depart without necessarily having a destination.

When speaking of errant paths, I am led to the image of the crossroads. Paul Preciado (2020), a philosopher who thinks from that place, recognizes it as the only space that truly exists – a thought that speaks neither from the right nor from the left. To think from the crossroads would be not to settle anywhere. It would be to think a thought of passage, without destination and errant, because one must remain in movement – a stance adopted by the founders of archetypal psychology: a no-place, without fixation, without fundamentalisms, without certainties. An eternal walking, of multiple possibilities. Polytheist and diverse.

According to Luiz Rufino (2019), the image of the crossroads throws us into an availability for new directions – directions with cracks, folds, corners, interstices, disorder, and chaos. A field of possibilities that

transgresses scarcity, disenchantment, and the monologization of the world.

The crossroads emerges as the potency that makes mischief possible for us. It allows us to head down the paths of art, literature, poetry, and music, experimenting with a new form of communication with multiple forms of invention in language (p. 13).

Through the image. That is the proposal of archetypal psychology.

The crossroads is movement. It is the place where paths cross, and cultures meet. Exu is the name of the owner of the crossroads; it is necessary to remember and ask his permission to speak from it. I do not feel fit or competent to devote myself to so powerful an *orixá*, the *orixá* who transgresses the limits of a world measured by dichotomies. I only ask leave to speak of the potency of the crossroads, which is an unfinished movement while being Exu himself.

Luiz Rufino (2019) says that

The obsession with a binary composition, which orders every form of existence, does not account for the problem of beings born in between. Pendular existence, the wavering condition of being, is, at first, the effect of what expresses itself from the phenomenon of the crossing. Thus, what the colonial agenda sought to produce as a system of control of life, from an order based on binarism, resulting in the reduction of complexities, is tenuously highlighted by a reading from the poetic grammar of the crossroads (p. 16).

In that place, everything ceases to be this or that and becomes a border: this and that at the same time. Plurality, polytheism. Might archetypal psychology have been born in the “in-between” of the crossroads since it values multiplicity and denies the binaries of classical Jungian concepts?

James Hillman, an Errant Wanderer

As might be expected, archetypal psychology can be seen as errant – and so can its principal founder. A bit of the story of James Hillman, an errant *puer*, seized by the spirit of the new, believing in non-causal spon-

taneity and with no interest in knowing the answers to whys. The determination to confront the older generation of the Zurich institute moved him toward the new. Hillman acknowledges that his first understanding of Jung's work was absolutely *puer*. In *Entre Vistas* (1989), he states: "What truly touched me was his idea of individuation – the idea that there was a process happening that we could trust. It became like a mystical belief in my own destiny" (p. 101).

In Hillman's biography, written by Dick Russel (2013), he admits he was taken by the mythical spirit of the *puer* and saw the studies of classical Jungians on the *puer* as an attack on his own personality. Words associated with the description of *puer* by Jungians of the time – such as mother complex, weakness, fantasy, aestheticism, lack of contact with reality, airy, Don Juanism – were interpreted as abuse. If we follow the chronology of his life, it is not hard to understand why he himself identified with the *puer*. In the preface to his book *Revendo a Psicologia* (2010), he says that "in 1971 (...), my essay on the *puer* was a prolonged and still incomplete defense of my behavior and of traits of my personality" (p. 21).

He comes out in defense of the *puer* in various contexts. In *Código da Alma* (2025), Hillman states that a theory affected by the *puer*

shows bold execution, an attraction to the extraordinary, and an exhibitionistic stoicism. It postulates eternal and universal validity but abstains from the burden of proof. It contains that dance of the *puer*, is ambitiously imaginative, and rejects conventions (p. 302).

Such is the theory of archetypal psychology: bold, controversial, destabilizing, visionary. His anger at the era's condemnation of the *puer* made him challenge some certainties that the Jungians of his time strove to preserve. For him, "getting angry and writing go together" (1989, p. 152).

Still in *Entre Vistas*, Hillman said he appreciated the ancient Greek conception of biography, in which life is told through the things an individual encountered along the way. He himself surrendered to these encounters and allowed himself to be transformed by them. In his errancy, he was indeed involved with "a pantheon of mythical possibilities" (QUINTAES,

2011, p. 16). And to affirm his identity, Hillman polemicized. To polemicize is a “declaration of war on the same, a provocation of friction, a creation of resistance” (QUINTAES, 2011, p. 17). Controversy crosses Hillman’s life as “rupture, as transgression, as foundation, as an initial gesture” (*ibid.*). Let us, then, dive a little more into the pantheon of controversial possibilities in his life.

As reported by Hillman (1989), the young James Hillman’s first contact with psychotherapy was at age 19, when he served in the Navy during World War II. He worked in hospitals with blind, crippled, and deaf men and became deeply involved with the rehabilitation of these soldiers, to the point of moving into the hospital and living with them. He identified intensely with the pain and the horror of the American rehabilitation system. He perceived the bitterness and sentimentalism of those people and felt the need to enter their culture.

After that experience, Hillman spent a period in Paris, then in Dublin, studying literature, philosophy, and psychology. His formation took shape in the life he lived in those places – from journalism to literature, from literature to an analyst in Zurich. That period was marked by his more intense contact with the European literary tradition and with thinkers such as Plato, Heraclitus, and the Romantic poets, who later strongly influenced his imaginal vision of the psyche. In Dublin, he had his first contact with Jung’s work through a friend, who gave him two of Jung’s books, which he read with little enthusiasm.

Hillman only arrived in Zurich to study and to stay, after an errant trip he made to India, where he had been for some time. He had chosen that geography to write a novel; however, he had written nothing. There, a guru, Gopi Krishna, noticing his distress, invited him to climb the mountain, for “it is on the heights that men meet God” (1989, p. 104). Hillman obeyed. When on the heights, he had a frightening nightmare and began his descent, which would take six months, leading him to the Zurich institute, not for the training, but to begin his analysis with Carl Alfred Meier.

In 1953, Hillman decided to begin his training, and in 1955, he started

seeing patients. From the outset, he showed a singular and transgressive style of being an analyst: he saw patients in unconventional places, dressed “unprofessionally,” and did not even wear shoes. Years later, commenting on that experience, he recognized that his true training was the very confusion in which he lived. What he did, after all, was to move forward, obeying dreams, sensations, and events as they appeared to him.

He met Jung in Jung’s last decade of life. He graduated from the Institute and received a *summa cum laude* in philosophy from the University of Zurich, even though he was American. Reviewing his academic résumé, he commented that he did not know what he learned at that university, but in Dublin, which was “pure revelry,” he learned a great deal. Hillman never identified with the academic *senex*, but with *puer* life. At 33, he became the first director of studies – a title and position invented by him and later adopted by other institutes. He published his first book, *Emotions*. That was when he began to develop his critiques of orthodox Jungian psychology.

In 1966, Hillman considered that the birth of archetypal psychology occurred, in a very solitary way, still within the Institute. He was preparing his first lecture for Eranos, trying to understand what makes a person psychologically creative. In that study, he realized that “the problem of knowledge, of epistemology, has archetypal fantasies at its base” (1989, p. 154). In other words, the archetypal fantasies that guide us are present all the time. They are perspectives that operate in each subject’s singular process of knowing. Here arises the basis of polytheistic psychology, later developed in *Reverendo a Psicologia*.

In 1969, Hillman entered a profound professional and personal crisis – marked by doubt, uncertainty, and shame about his past as an analyst. He felt he had understood nothing, that he himself and even his relationships were a fraud. Around that time, he became embroiled in a scandal at the Institute and was removed from the directorship of studies. Thus, James and his friends – Rafael, his partner Valery, and Pat – travel to London and then to Italy. In London, in the British Museum and the

Warburg Library, ideas about Western psychology began to sprout in his head. “Thoughts about gods, about polytheism, about images, the Renaissance – I wanted to find out who Ficino was, who Gemisto Pletho was. Suddenly I found a basis” (1989, p. 153). From that crisis, then, in 1971 he wrote an essay for Spring that was a milestone: *Psicologia: Politeísta ou Monoteísta?* In 1972, all of this became the Terry Lectures – which gave rise to the book *Revendo a Psicologia* – and later the book *O Mito da Análise*, which consecrated Hillman and archetypal psychology.

Archetypal psychology is born in errancy: a trip without destination, a search without defined contours, having only the South as compass. It arises in the encounter with art and culture, in intimate coexistence with a group of friends, and in the flame of Eros.

In 1974, while Hillman was writing *Revendo a Psicologia*, he and Rafael fell out. Patricia Berry (1992) recounts:

Rafael, the Dionysian character, at home in the baroque underworld of ancient decadence and Plutonic richness, a venerable guru, a wise fool, a cautious darling, an old bull – was, after all, of a different species than the Jewish boy from Atlantic City, the boardwalk dancer, shapeshifter, sleight-of-hand artist, long-distance observer, scavenger with glass eyes, bird with a stiff neck. Thus, the two went their ways. Rafael, accompanied by Valery, went to Venezuela. Jim, accompanied by me, went to Yale, to the Terry Lectures, and so archetypal psychology continued in this direction (free translation).

In 1975, Hillman published his book *Revendo a Psicologia*, which was translated into several languages and is still widely studied today in philosophy, religion, courses in art, film, and postmodern consciousness. In that book, Hillman made “every effort to break the molds of a psychology book. There is self-reflection and the attempt to maintain the same theme and the same images, as well as the attempt to dissociate the author from the book” (1989, p. 154). Errant transgression. From his earliest searches, Hillman’s *daimon* was to deviate from the patterns of the psychology of the time, whether of American ego-centered psychology or of classical and fundamentalist Jungian psychology. He wanted to present a book that brought a consistency of ideas while at the same time not containing the

“old pattern of presenting ideas” (1989, p. 155). The book “is the soul. And everything is built from this soul substance” (1989, p. 155).

Finally, in 1978, he returned to the United States after more than 20 years in Europe. He was invited by Robert Sardello to teach in Dallas at the Catholic University. There, he taught psychopathology in the Philosophy faculty. At that point, an important intellectual partnership emerged with Ed Casey, Mary Watkins, and David Miller.

It was Sardello and Romanyshyn, two other major names in archetypal psychology, who opened his eyes to begin thinking about the psyche of the world. “They were talking about buildings in a phenomenological sense.” (RUSSELL, 2023, free translation). In April 1978, the Thomas Center funded a seminar on the theme *Planejando a Cidade*, and Hillman delivered his famous talk *Cidade e Alma* to an audience of local planners and other bureaucrats. He noted that talk about the psychic illness of living in cities was common. He criticized the fantasy that the soul is better off in nature and needs to slow down to match its rhythm: “I do not accept this anti-city view. We restore soul when we restore the city in our individual hearts – the courage, the imagination, and the love we bring to civilization” (*ibid.*).

Hillman was satisfied with his experience in Dallas; however, in April 1980, a change in the university presidency brought a different scenario: the new leader restricted academic freedom, imposing a religious vision and a logic oriented toward profit. “It was a small Harvard in the middle of the desert, and they destroyed the possibility of that unique place” (RUSSELL, 2023, free translation). Hillman resigned. And once again, he felt isolated and did not know where to aim. His partner, Pat Berry, was immersed in her dissertation. At that moment, he realized a recurring pattern in his life: mysterious eruptions, inevitable detours that destroy existing structures. An eternal walking, a constant traveler, who never reaches his destination, because the final destination does not exist.

Detours, mistakes, failures, and solitude are inseparable partners of

an errant walk. So is the capacity to reimagine. In this crisis, Hillman created the *Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture* with other intellectuals. He says: “I like being with kindred spirits. A small group where Eros is super alive among people. We had that in Dallas. We listened to each other; we fed each other” (RUSSEL, 2023, free translation).

And so archetypal psychology continues along its crooked paths. In 1990, Hillman married Margot McLean, and in 1997, they moved to Connecticut. Still in that decade, he ventured as a teacher in a men’s mythopoetic movement and offered a new type of group therapy: cultural therapy. A controversial moment in his life – but after all, did any moment not become so?

On October 27, 2011, James Hillman died in Thompson, Connecticut, USA, at age 85, of bone cancer.

Hillman’s errancy was immortalized in his broad and diversified work. Laura Pozzo, the fictitious interviewer in the book *Entre Vistas* (1989), asks him about his writing: “Why is your style so irregular?” Hillman replies: “Because that’s how I am, mixed. (...) To justify my mess, let’s say it belongs to a polytheistic mode” (p. 159). Do errancy and polytheism walk together? Might errancy be one of the *daimones* of archetypal psychology?

David Tacey (1998) ventures a guess about James Hillman’s *daimon*. In his line of reasoning, Hillman experienced at least four separate intellectual incarnations.

First, from the late 1950s to the late 1960s, he was a conventional Jungian analyst, immensely articulate and vigorous, whose works from that period showed his capacity for originality within the limits of classical Jungian theory. His focus in this period was the clinic and the Zurich training institute. He wrote, among other books, *Emotion* (1960), *Suicídio e Alma* (1965), and *Uma Busca Interior em Psicologia e Religião* (1967).

Second, from the early 1970s to the early 1980s, Hillman emerged as the principal spokesperson and polemicist of the “post-Jungian” movement: archetypal psychology. This is the era of his major writings. It took place partly within the context of contemporary American university life

and involved a revision of Jungian thought. Here were written *O Mito da Análise* (1972), *Anima: Anatomia de uma Noção Personificada* (1973), *Revendo a Psicologia* (1975), *O Sonho e o Mundo das Trevas* (1979), and *Estudos de Psicologia Arquetípica* (1981).

Third, from the early 1980s onward, Hillman became concerned with the soul of the world and with political, economic, and social problems beyond the clinic and academia. He inaugurated an ecological discourse that vigorously attacked the exclusivity of focusing on internal and intrapsychic issues in psychotherapies, including those based on archetypal psychology itself. This phase aligns with the period in which he began to step back from clinical practice. In this period, he published some books, including *Entre Vistas* (1983), *Ficções que Curam* (1983), *O Pensamento do Coração* (1984), *Paranoia* (1988), *Cem Anos de Psicoterapia* (1992), and *O Mundo Está Cada Vez Pior* (1993).

Finally, from the early 1990s onward, in David Tacey's conception, Hillman emerged as a popular writer with talent but with little concern for scholarly integrity or depth of argument that he once displayed so passionately. Tacey's critique is that Hillman still sustained the same ecological perspective, but his pursuit of commercial success, associated with his desire to become widely recognized, led him to a new stage as a "pop ecopsychologist. He claims to have entered the 'real' world, but his discourse is still very saturated with myth and devoid of sociopolitical consciousness" (1998).

This period gave rise to *Código da Alma* (2025) and *Força do Caráter* (2001).

Returning to the idea of Hillman's *daimon*, Tacey ventures his guess. In these books, whose central theme is the *daimon*, Hillman, according to David Tacey, was probably enacting the compulsions of his own *daimon*, which can be seen in terms of the mythical figure Hermes. In short, Hermes is the one who does not fear rapid movement across fixed borders, nor self-creation and illusionism – still less the dramatic reversals of direction, the sales marketplace, and the wide commercial world. Errancy!

The Mythopoetics of Orpheus and "Stay with the Image"

Along this non-linear trajectory, one theme recurs throughout Hillman's work and deserves mention: his insistence that psychic work is possible only through mythopoetic language. It is this language that frees the narrative from literal contents and recovers the mythical perspective present in fictions. Hence, his emphasis on working with images, whether visual or not, and the exuberance of his work in mythological personifications. Hillman makes clear that studying mythology – Greek mythology in his case, in which he deeply immersed himself – does not mean "returning" to Greece, nor does it entail decontextualizing culture or neglecting contemporaneity; quite the opposite. As Stroud (2015) notes, studying mythology "explores how ancient myths can provide insights into current issues." To study mythology is to link the collective images conveyed by myth to history and to everyday events, connecting present experience with historical culture in an ongoing effort to illuminate what remains mysterious – an exercise in thinking mythically that never runs out.

Many authors of archetypal psychology dove into mythical thinking to debate fundamental contemporary themes. The production is endless and is not limited only to Greek myths but has expanded to other mythologies as important as the Greek. Rafael Lopez-Pedraza has a rich and current body of work that demonstrates a mythopoetic thinking in action. Among other themes, he problematizes the repression of bodies through the exile of Dionysus and cultural anxiety in a dialogue with the Titans. Hillman, as could not be otherwise, has an entire volume in his *Obras Completas* dedicated exclusively to mythic figures. He thinks Aphrodite in questions of pornography, justice, and beauty within the social context; Hermes in the irreversible intoxication of information; Anankê in social, cultural, and family knots and bonds; Ares and the terrible and inexhaustible wars, without mentioning Pan, the *daimones*, and so many other mythic figures.

Eros is a god who appears in various ways throughout his work. One of his appearances occurs in the myth of Eros and Psyche as a meta-

phor of the transferential relationship in analysis. Soul and love are the foundation of the capacity to reimagine the fictions of our singular and communal paths. Love as the driving spring to set the soul in motion (HILLMAN, 1984).

I close this article by honoring errancy and the mythopoetic thinking of archetypal psychology, bringing in a little of the mythical figure of Orpheus. Why the myth of Orpheus?

In April 2003, at a conference in Italy, Hillman (2007) presented an article on the myth of Orpheus. In addition to being a famous musician, poet, and singer, Orpheus has an errant journey that moves between the world of the living and the dead, between light and darkness. Darkness speaks the language of myth and metaphor. It invokes a different way of looking beyond the literalism of consciousness, seeing with the eyes of darkness into metaphor. It invokes the imaginal ego, that ego that is porous to imagination. The Orphic voice can be seen as a metaphor of the imaginal ego:

It originates in an imaginal body, and the imaginal body lives among specters, ghosts, ancestral spirits, all the eidola of Hades. Orpheus is the one who deepens imagination by imagining ever vaster depths to be animated (COBB, 1992, free translation).

But let us go to the myth, so that the image may speak for itself. Orpheus, son of Calliope and King Oeagrus, inventor of the lyre, charmer of animals, and in love with Eurydice, saw his story marked by tragedy. It is said that the beekeeper Aristaeus tried to violate Eurydice, and, in her desperate flight, she was bitten by a serpent whose venom led her to death.

It is at this point that Orpheus's descent and errancy begin: inconsolable at the premature loss of his wife, he descends into the darkness of the underworld in an attempt to bring her back. As Junito de Souza Brandão (1992) recounts, the musician,

with his lyre and his divine voice, so enchanted the chthonic world that even Ixion's wheel stopped turning, Sisyphus's rock stopped swaying, Tantalus forgot hunger and thirst, and the Danaids rested from their eternal toil of

filling bottomless barrels. Moved by such proof of love, Hades and Persephone agreed to return his wife (p. 142).

There was, however, a single condition: he would walk in front of Eurydice, without hesitation and without looking back, no matter what he heard, no matter what he thought, no matter what happened, until both of them had left the world of darkness. A mission practically impossible for an errant soul. Orpheus failed. He transgressed. He doubted. Hillman (2007) says that Orpheus is a “traveler of the underworld, extraordinary lover, failed hero. Yet, nonetheless, psychopomp, suspicious lover, inconsolable sufferer and solitary” (free translation).

Orpheus looked back. If one of the characteristics of errancy is the search for Eurydice, in Orpheus’s case, another fundamental characteristic is the detour. Orpheus disobeyed the gods and looked back. Doubt, as the condition for fulfilling his destiny of remaining errant, with his music, in the world of the living.

Hillman (2007) says that, when Orpheus

lets her go, or she lets herself go, when he looks back, because she was letting herself go, he could finally see that it was not her he desired, but the longing inspired by her image. It was her image he needed to hold, rather than her hand. To stay with his loss – the loss as remembrance – is what resonates through his Orphic voice (free translation).

After losing his beloved forever, Orpheus also meets his own death, violent and tear-jerking. There are many versions of this ending, but the best known tells that, refusing to unite again with any woman, he aroused the fury of the maenads, who, outraged by his fidelity to Eurydice, tore him to pieces. Errancy returns to the myth: fragmented, his body was thrown into the Hebrus River, and, while his head wandered through the waters, it still called his wife’s name. Only after the funeral honors were rendered could Orpheus rest from his long journey of searches and losses.

In *Orfeu Fragmentado*, we come upon an “image of initiation into the experience of the imaginal ego – the psyche sparkles in every piece/place

of our depths” (COBB, 1992, free translation). We are on the terrain of multiplicity – and, more than that, before Orpheus’s fragmented parts, spread out and animating the world. *Anima mundi*, another theme widely explored in James Hillman’s archetypal psychology, runs downstream. The aim of archetypal psychology is precisely to return soul to the world: it is not imprisoned in our psyches. In place of the totality of the *Self*, Hillman proposes a profoundly fragmented entity – the soul in shreds, in communion with the *anima mundi*.

And the head sings. And it keeps singing, indestructible. The head of the musician, the poet. The head that imagines and does not explain. Orpheus’s eternally errant head remains alive, and archetypal psychology celebrates it, emphasizing Orphic psychology. A psychology of images and imagination. A psychology of failures, detours, and impermanence. Without promises, non-linear and errant. A psychology of the soul that reveals itself in dark nuances and that, like Eurydice, inhabits the underworld and remains in the dark night

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DEVELOPMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE CREATIVE: A CONTRIBUTION TO ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Roseli D. Ribeiro

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to examine specific aspects of human development involved in Jung's creative process. In particular, the focus is on those aspects of his creativity that connected his childhood memories with his experience of disorientation after his break from Freud in 1912. Winnicott's concepts of breakdown and *self*, and the author's theory on creativity, form the foundation for this endeavor. Those concepts interlace with Jung's central concepts of death and rebirth, as well as the *Self* as a goal of the development of the psyche. With its relevance to the understanding of the developmental aspects of Jung's profoundly creative period, this article provides a contribution to the field of clinical psychology by illuminating Jung's experience with the creative, which led him to make his most relevant discoveries for analytical psychology.

Keywords: Development; memories; breakdown; *self*; creativity.

Introduction

The works of Jung and Winnicott present several similar elements that broaden and enrich the understanding of human psychology. Aspects of the inherited human developmental process are at the center of this exploration, particularly those connected with creativity. Creativity plays an important role during early development in subsequent adult creative living experiences (RIBEIRO, 2023). However, environmental provision is also relevant to understanding human life, as Donald Winnicott (1896–1971; 1971), who was a British pediatrician and psychoanalyst, asserted.

This article uses Winnicott's (1971) understanding of environmental provision, which means the basic qualities of a human being who has the mental equipment to identify with the human infant. Feldman (1992, p. 255) says: "To date, Jung's infancy and childhood have been little dealt with from a developmental perspective." This is another reason why Winnicott's work is relevant to this exploration, as he reviewed Jung's autobiography, especially the aspects related to his childhood.

Jung (1961/1989) is to be commended for the fact that, although in his analytical psychology he did not explore developmental psychology as psychoanalysts did, he did understand intrinsically different aspects of his own childhood in his autobiography. This is evident also when he describes his troubled childhood; specifically, his relationship with his mother (JUNG, 1961/1989). In addition, there are other examples of his understanding, such as when he talks about the mother complex in his patients, which affects adult life (JUNG, 1989). He knew intrinsically that such an individual's childhood was marked by something related to the relationship with the mother.

However, to compensate for the lack of the developmental aspect in Jung's theory, Jungians used elements of object relations, as one of the branches of psychoanalysis, as a complement to analytical psychology – specifically some of Melanie Klein's concepts. Klein is recognized for her unparalleled formulations about the infant's inner world, as stated by Scharff (RIBEIRO, 2023). Jungian psychology incorporates the inner

world of early life which is the individual's intrapsychic life from early childhood onward. As early as 3 years old, Jung (1961/1989) could remember his dreams.

Contemporary Jungian analysts have increasingly incorporated object relations into their work. Donald Kalsched (2013), with his compelling work on early trauma, is one example. He incorporates elements of Winnicott's psychoanalytic theory for example, when describing the false *self* and the true *self*. Even when describing splitting, Kalsched (2013) uses concepts developed by Klein (1975), who created her theory of the schizoid position, a complex developmental process that occurs in approximately the first 4 months of life. Kalsched (2013) describes it as a dissociation process that "prevents the annihilation of the unit *self*" (p. 11).

Furthering Klein's work, Winnicott, with his experience as a pediatrician, began to write on child psychoanalysis in 1920 (RIBEIRO, 2023). He leaned towards the independent tradition, which is displayed in his scientific work (ABRAM, 2012; KOHON, 1989). Winnicott's understanding of object relations distanced him from Freud's psychosexuality and he instead focused on the importance of parental transmission during the early stages of object relations (RIBEIRO, 2023). Winnicott combined his psychoanalytic clinical experience with direct observation of a large number of mother-infant dyads as a pediatrician.

Michael Jacobs (1995) writes that "by the time he retired Winnicott had worked with over 60,000 cases in his three clinics" (p. 20). Winnicott's work also has similarities with Jung's in terms of a future-oriented understanding of the unconscious. However, there is a distinction, as has been indicated already, regarding Freud's theory: Both Jung and Winnicott distanced themselves from the psychosexual approach of psychoanalysis.

The main difference between them, which is addressed in our article, is the lack of exploration of the developmental aspects of human psychology. Jung may have talked about the constitutional or even the transcendent aspects, but he refrained from addressing developmental processes connected to the environment, whereas Winnicott was strongly

convinced of the influence of the environment on human development. Based on his clinical experience, especially when he worked during wartime evacuation, Winnicott's contribution to the field is notable (JACOBS, 1995; RIBEIRO, 2023).

During the World War II, Winnicott worked in hospitals and hostels with social workers, as well as a pediatrician observing mother-baby dyads (DAVIS & WALLBRIDGE, 1982). Working during the war showed him the effects of separation between mothers and young children (RIBEIRO, 2023). As a pediatrician, he had the clinical eye to observe and understand the impact of this separation.

In his autobiography, Jung (1961/1989, p. 30) spoke of his separation from his mother being connected to some of his challenges. In his words, he asks: "Was this perhaps connected with my mother who had abandoned me for several months. In a letter entitled *Evacuation of Small Children* published in 1939 in the *British Medical Journal* (p. 1203), Bowlby, Miller, and Winnicott clarified their understanding of the psychic ruptures that occur as a result of war evacuations that separate mothers from their young children.

However, the impact of the failure of the environmental provision in early childhood on the unconscious can be transformed or integrated later in life as maturation is attained (WINNICOTT, 1989). So, again, although the unconscious is generally seen as connected to the past in psychoanalysis, it is perceived as future-oriented in both Jung's and Winnicott's perspectives.

Having said that, the most relevant aspect for this article remains the creative element, notable for both Jung and Winnicott. They explored creativity in an expanded way, incorporating other similar concepts, such as the *self*. Therefore, the work of Winnicott is relevant to this article, which focuses on outlining the developmental aspect of object relations as a contribution to Jungian analytical psychology, which will illuminate Jung's own experience with the creative. Both theorists had a sense of creativity as connected to culture and as present in life from childhood.

Winnicott's (1971) understanding of creativity is future-oriented. Creativity is an ongoing process that fosters the capacity to see things afresh, to discover new things, and to contribute to the culture. With his background in psychoanalytical explorations, Winnicott's perspective offers additional clinical applications. Similarly, Jung (1961/1989), with his insight into the futuristic nature of the unconscious, sees creativity as a potential for the individual and the culture to explore new endeavors. This attitude is clear in his own discoveries after breaking with Freud (JUNG, 1961/1989).

Therefore, grounded in the likeness and complementarity between Jung's and Winnicott's theories, this article explores the developmental aspects - a difference between Jung and Winnicott - that create a basis for Jungian analysis (analytical psychology), which contributes to discoveries, in particular to the exploration of creativity.

The breakdown of Jung and Freud's relationship

To make use of developmental aspects in Jung's pivotal life change, Winnicott's (1989) reading of Jung's autobiography forms part of the material explored in this article. He does so humbly by stating that he is like a tadpole that agreeably does not know its fate (p. 483). Winnicott (1989) understands Jung's separation from Freud as a matter of communication without mutual understanding. This is well explored by Loparic (2014) in his book *Winnicott e Jung. What Winnicott does not address*, however, was what happened afterwards - Jung's (1961/1989) experience of disorientation.

Even so, it is in Winnicott's (1989) reading of Jung's book, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, that it becomes possible to find the basis to inform us of Jung's experience of his urge to go back to the memories of his childhood. In other words, the childhood memories were explored as the reversal of the maturation process. Winnicott (1974) uses the term "breakdown" to explain the occurrence of a "failure of defence organization" (p. 103).

First, Winnicott (1989) describes what he understands to be Jung's breakdown before the age of 4, which lies at the basis of the "defence organization pattern" (p. 484). According to Winnicott (1974), the word breakdown delineates "the unthinkable state of affairs that underlies the defence organization" (p. 103). This is a "breakdown of the establishment of the unit *self*" (WINNICOTT, 1974, p. 103).

It is the ego that organizes defenses to protect from a breakdown of ego organization (WINNICOTT, 1974). Therefore, what has been threatened is the ego organization. However, during dependence (childhood), the ego does not have the capacity to organize in a way to protect from environmental failure (WINNICOTT, 1974).

Winnicott (1989), reading Jung's autobiography, understands that Jung was threatened by a disintegration of the ego. As a consequence, the defenses settled into a split of Jung's personality, and this was related to his parental separation. Therefore, the cause was not a primary failure nor a weakness of his inherited ego (WINNICOTT, 1989). To be primary, it would have occurred in an earlier emotional development stage. In Jung's situation, it happened around the time of parental union dependence (which occurs in a later stage), according to Winnicott (1989).

Furthermore, based on Winnicott's (1974) descriptions of the process, the breakdown that had already occurred in Jung's childhood (at the age of 3) could not yet have been experienced by him at that young age. For Jung, the breakdown had not yet happened, as he was not yet there as an individual with the capacity to experience it. The environment failure was beyond his capacity to comprehend before he turned 4. Winnicott (1974, p. 104) describes it:

It is a fact that is carried round hidden away in the unconscious. [. . .] In this special context the unconscious means that the ego integration is not able to encompass something. The ego is too immature to gather all the phenomena into the area of personal omnipotence.

For the sake of this article, although Winnicott (1989) does not explore the experience of breakdown during Jung's break with Freud, he does de-

scribe the phenomena in his 1974 article *Fear of Breakdown*. Therefore, we assert that Jung, in fact, had to experience breakdown for the first time in his adult life after breaking with Freud.

Jung (1961/1989) experienced the dissolution of his friendship with Freud as a catastrophic event. Jung describes his experience in his own words as a time of disorientation in which his intellect was of no use anymore. The defense against disintegration seems obsessive, as Jung was determined to find the center of his *self* by drawing mandalas for years (WINNICOTT, 1989).

However, according to Jung (1961/1989), when drawing mandalas, he was aware of the danger of self-importance that could lurk by confusing his process with anything other than finding new ways to understand his psyche. He demonstrates his commitment to embracing the breakdown of defenses, recognizing his own hubris of consciousness. Jung (1961/1989) was committed to his process by allowing spontaneity.

Developmentally, Winnicott's (1974) explorations of various fears in his article illuminate the importance of psychosomatic experience: "It can be said that *only out of non-existence can existence start* [. . .] the individual cannot develop from an ego root if this is divorced from psychosomatic experience" (p. 107). Correspondingly, for Jung (OC, vol. XII, § 397), the unconscious is also a psychosomatic experience: It is "the psychic phenomena that mediates between conscious and the physiological functions of the body."

Why does this subject matter to the present article? As developmental aspects of creativity are the focus of this exploration, certain conditions, such as the capacity for being and seeing things afresh, are essential for the individual to experience creativity as we will discuss in the following section (RIBEIRO, 2023).

The Self and Creativity

When exploring aspects of development, psychoanalytic literature has considered maturation in relation to the evolution of the ego, involving the

idea of disposition to integration and capacity for psychosomatic alliance and object relating (WINNICOTT, 1974). Winnicott (1989) uses the concept of *self* as a unit that is well-grounded. According to Winnicott (1989), Jung's contribution to the understanding of the meaning of the word *self* was more significant than Freud's (p. 490). The *self*, for Winnicott (1989), is related to identity, to the sense of unit status that one acquires in the developmental maturational process.

In this process, the individual who experiences the true *self* also has experience with the false *self*. The false *self* is necessary for the individual's capacity to relate with social norms that begin in the family (environmental provision), and it can become the dominating aspect in one's experience in the case of not good enough environmental provision (RIBEIRO, 2023). Balance is found when the environment is good enough to foster aliveness (RIBEIRO, 2023).

Such a process is directly connected to the capacity of the individual to live creatively (RIBEIRO, 2023). Creativity, being distinct from artistic talent, is the "human experience of feeling alive as a health factor of the psycho-soma development, relating to a sense of *self* with themselves and the other" (RIBEIRO, 2023, p. iii). Jung (1961/1989) expresses his anger at being told, more than once, that his exploration of the images presented in his imagination should be considered art.

Jung (1961/1989), from a position of not knowing, decided to explore a state of openness and discovery, finding new ways to connect with his life-changing experiences. Jung (1961/1989) understood that his drawings were something beyond the creative arts – not to undermine the importance of the creative arts, but to have a clear sense that such an experience related to a new form of exploration for him.

Jung's contribution to the understanding of the *Self* is recognized by Winnicott (1989). On the other hand, again, Winnicott (1989) draws attention to the fact that the maturation aspect of human development does not seem to be addressed within analytical psychology. Even so, he recognizes that "the idea of the *self* is very well dealt by Jungians, and it is

for the psychoanalysts to learn what they can in this field” (WINNICOTT, 1989, p. 491).

Jung and Winnicott: Reconnecting with the Creative Life

Jung (1961/1989), in his experience of not knowing after his break with Freud, describes his acceptance of what he discovered as a creative life that had existed in his childhood but was lacking in him at that time (pp. 173–174). By returning to his childhood memories, he sought new findings. In his autobiography, he says:

“There is still life in these things. The small boy is still around and possesses a creative life that I lack. But how can I make a way to it” [. . .] I wanted to re-establish contact with that period; I had no choice but to return to it and take up once more that child’s life with his childish games (JUNG, 1961/1989, pp. 173–174).

Certainly, this experience has the quality of complex transformations. As such, many of Jung’s new ideas, theories, and explorations derived from this period and therefore require different perspectives to explore. This article examines Jung’s views of the creative life that was present in his childhood, which was also well described by Winnicott.

Winnicott (1971) dedicated his theories to understanding the developmental aspects of the individual maturation process. These aspects are connected to the early environment, he states, and are part of a process that starts with the first caregiver, then the family, and then society. In doing so, Winnicott (1971) understands that a life worth living is a creative one.

Winnicott’s (1971) explorations of human development led him to realize that creativity is part of the human condition from birth and is never lost in one’s experience, although it can be hidden. Similarly, in Jung’s (1961/1989) experience, there was a sense, mentioned before, that the creative child was still available, and he needed to find a way to have access to this creative life because, as an adult (with his intellect), he realized that it was not possible. Jung (1961/1989) felt compelled to

connect to that aspect of himself. Therefore, it is relevant to broaden the view on Jung's remarkable life-transforming experience, addressing the developmental aspects observed in Winnicott's theory.

Developmental Aspects

When Jung, who is celebrated for his 150th birthday this year, developed his vast body of work encompassing culture, religion, philosophy, art, science, and so on, there was, at the moment of his transformation, one element he needed for a new experience: his childhood memories, which contained an element of aliveness and something he might have missed (JUNG, 1961/1989). This simple but powerful realization demonstrated humility and openness to something new. By returning to the past, he highlighted the relevance of this aspect of human psychology, even when his theory did not include such formulations.

Jung (1961/1989), in his terms, explains that by realizing the contradiction of his inner and outer world, he had invested intense effort in seeing things in a new way. In 1918–1919, Jung (1961/1989) was just beginning to emerge from the darkness. He had written the *Seven Sermons* during this period of darkness, exploring the images and communication in his fantasies of death.

In his phase of emerging from the darkness period, Jung (1961/1989) was drawing his mandalas as a way to create something spontaneous. This practice helped him realize that the *self* “was the wholeness of the personality” (JUNG, 1961/1989, p. 196). Creativity is also a way of developing identity, argues Winnicott (1971).

Jung is credited with drawing attention to the fact that all human beings go through the process of growth in all aspects until the moment of death – unless they are trapped in their defenses (WINNICOTT, 1989). The inherited maturation process unfolds as the facilitating environment fosters the individual's development from the start of life. Over time, combined with increased individual experience, materials emerge that constitute the essential conditions for this inherited growth process to

lead the child to an individual existence. This is an existence free from merging and that, at the same time, allows the “re-experience of being ‘merged-in-with’” (WINNICOTT, 1989, pp. 284–285). This is part of Winnicott’s theory of the maturation process.

In the facilitating environment of Jung’s childhood, some interruptions made him miss his mother. Jung (1961/1989) states that his mother was very good to him. However, Jung (1961/1989), in his experience of his mother, says that “by day she was a loving mother, but at night she seemed uncanny” (p. 50). He mentioned that she also attended depression treatments from time to time.

As relevant to this article, these elements of Jung’s developmental process were part of his later experience of finding himself in the situation of breaking down the defenses generated in childhood. We understand, therefore, his determination in finding clarity and creating new forms of accessing the material from the unconscious. Jung’s creative capacity to emerge from the defenses was latent and he dedicated himself to accessing it again.

The Creative in Jung’s Experience

Jung (1961/1989) understands that during that period, the intellect became futile. Winnicott (1971) talks about the feeling of futility when the creative life is not there; there is a feeling of deadness. Jung (1961/1989) recounts his dreams of death during part of this period. As we can imagine, the individual has “the negative of the experience of creativity when they have a phase of depression” (RIBEIRO, 2023, p. 79).

For Jung (1961/1989), this was part of the individuation process in which death and rebirth take place. He returned to being alive after experiencing the breakdown of the defenses as an inner transformation took place.

In several moments, Jung’s (1961/1989) experience confirms that he was in a state of discovery. For Jung (1961/1989), “everything essential was decided” (p. 199) in the years of finding a new way of working with his own psyche, out of immersing into the unknown. Jung (1961/1989)

recalls: “‘Aha,’ I said to myself, ‘there is still life in these things’” (pp. 173–174).

He recognizes life (which still exists in his childhood) – the aliveness mentioned by Winnicott (1971) – as the main element of what a creative life means. Jung (1961/1989, p. 177) uses the term “afresh” when recounting his experiences with the psyche, in order to allow something spontaneous to happen without obliterating his emotions.

Final Considerations

Winnicott’s (1971) understanding of a creative life that is worth living is expressed in Jung’s experience after his break with Freud. By exploring the developmental aspects involved in this process, we identified elements that can be used in analytical psychology to foster creativity in our patients. This study can also be beneficially applied to other elements of the unconscious – the unknown in the maturation process of our patients. Jung’s (1961/1989, p. 358) sense of *self* and the other, and his sense of finding a creative life, is described in the following sentence:

I was born and exist, and it seems to me that I have been carried along. I exist on the foundation of something I do not know. Despite all uncertainties, I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being.

Jung (1961/1989) also states:

Today, I can say that I have never lost touch with my initial experiences. All my works, all my creative activity, have come from those initial fantasies and dreams which began in 1912, almost fifty years ago. Everything that I accomplished in later life was already contained in them, although at first only in the form of emotions and images (p. 192).

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

IMAGES OF THE SOULS: AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN HILMA AF KLINT AND CARL G. JUNG

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Abstract

This manuscript presents the research journey that led to the publication of the book *Images of Souls: An Encounter Between Hilma af Klint and Carl G. Jung*. Drawing on the aesthetic and symbolic experience with the works of Hilma af Klint, *Livro Vermelho* of Jung, and the images created by Jung's patients preserved in the Picture Archive of the C. G. Jung Institute Zurich, the author explores parallels between the creative processes of the Swedish artist, Jung, and his patients. The study is situated within the field of Jungian art-based research, reflecting the symbolic and numinous dimensions of these visual productions, as well as their connection to the individuation process. The manuscript also provides historical context and discusses the spiritual, cultural, and epistemological influences, pointing to synchronous connections and pathways toward the re-enchantment of the soul in contemporary times.

Keywords: Hilma af Klint; Carl Gustav Jung; symbolic images; creative process; individuation; art and analytical psychology.

Introduction

The Encounter with Hilma af Klint's Art and the Development of the Book^[1]

The Swedish visual artist Hilma af Klint (1862–1944) was a contemporary of Carl G. Jung (1875–1961). It is believed that they never met, and although it is possible to imagine that af Klint may have read or at least heard about Jung, it is unlikely that he ever had any knowledge of her or her work.

Jung did not publish the *O Livro Vermelho* (LV 2010) during his lifetime, and it remained protected by his family for decades after his death. Af Klint's work also stayed hidden from the world for many years, preserved by her relatives. In some way, both seemed to sense that the contents expressed in their works might not be understood in the era in which they lived. In the art world today, there is ongoing discussion about whether af Klint may have been the true pioneer of abstract art, preceding artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, František Kupka, and Kazimir Malevich.

In the book published in 2020, I describe in the opening section my first encounter with the artist and how this research took shape, and I offer brief notes on her life and work.

[1] This is a self-published edition, limited to 1,000 copies and not available for sale. All copies were donated by the author to university libraries, museums, and Jungian institutes in Brazil and abroad, as well as to psychologists, analysts, many artists, and family members. To access the images of Jung's patients mentioned in the article, readers should consult the physical libraries of the Jungian institutes that received a donated copy of the book. The images by the Swedish artist Hilma af Klint can be found on the website of the Hilma af Klint Foundation, in her catalogue *raisonné*, in online publications, or in exhibition catalogues from the many museums that have showcased her work around the world. All images authored by Carl G. Jung referenced in the article are found in the *O Livro Vermelho*. For a fuller understanding of the text, it is recommended to engage in contemplative viewing and a sensitive encounter with the corresponding images, allowing the visual impact that connects them to be directly experienced.

I then examine the imaginal creative process of the artist, of Jung in the *LV*, and of his patients in their analytical work. I highlight similarities and differences from the perspective of analytical psychology and contextualize the historical period in which the artist, Jung, and his patients lived. Finally, I offer brief comments on selected parts of af Klint's work in relation to Jungian theory.

I first encountered af Klint's work at the 2013 Venice Art Biennale. The focus of that edition centered on the study of images within the realm of the imaginary and the functions of imagination. It questioned the space given to inner images – those arising from dreams, hallucinations, and visions – and what meaning remains in producing images of the world at a time when the world increasingly becomes image. In this context, the curatorial proposal for the central pavilion addressed the original *LV* prominently in its opening gallery, placing it in a conventional art exhibition setting so that it could enter into dialogue with works by Richard Serra, Geta Brătescu, Anna Zemánková, Guo Fengyi, Rudolf Steiner, Emma Kunz, Augustin Lesage, and Hilma af Klint, among others.

The impact and emotion of standing before the original *LV* were profound and continue to inspire me. In the surrounding galleries, works by several artists were displayed, including a few paintings by af Klint from the *Cisne e Pomba* series. I was completely and instantly drawn in by the luminous presence of her canvases. The paintings were large, and the symbolism embedded in their abstract pictorial forms was striking. Something in af Klint's symbolic language resonated with that of the *LV*, and the images also reminded me of drawings and paintings created by Jung's patients. I was intrigued by these similarities and by the sense of synchronicity, and at the time I felt compelled to learn more about the artist and to study her life and work through a Jungian lens. Six years later, in São Paulo, this intention and inspiration finally took shape.

After the Biennale, I learned about the Hilma af Klint Foundation, created in 1972 in Sweden by the artist's family. The Foundation holds her entire body of work and is responsible for preserving, managing,

and exhibiting the collection. Af Klint's oeuvre comprises more than 1,200 paintings, watercolors, and drawings, along with her notebooks and sketches, comprising more than 26,000 handwritten and typed pages (mostly in Swedish and some in German). Her work remained hidden, kept by her family for more than twenty years after her death. At the time, very little material about the artist was available in English, and the few publications were out of print.

As a result, my project remained dormant for several years, until it was reawakened in early 2018 when I attended the opening of the exhibition *Hilma af Klint: Mundos Possíveis* at Pinacoteca de São Paulo, curated by Jochen Volz and Daniel Birnbaum^[2].

Once again, in that exhibition, I was drawn in and flooded by the symbolic content of the works in a very intense way. I contacted Jochen Volz and shared the idea of my project. He was extremely receptive to the idea of studying the convergences between af Klint and Jung and helped me with various texts and books that proved essential to that purpose. Jochen Volz also put me in contact with Luciana Ventre Pinheiro, author of the biography of af Klint published in Brazil in 2018, and with Johan af Klint, who was present at the opening of the exhibition in Brazil. In April 2018, I wrote to Johan af Klint, who was extremely receptive to my project, informing the main scholars of af Klint's work and clarifying initial questions.

In September 2018, I talked about my project with Ruth Ammann, who was then responsible for the curatorship of the *Picture Archive* at the C.G. Jung Institute Zurich.

[2] In the São Paulo exhibition, works from the following series were displayed: *Desenhos Automáticos* (8 works) by the group *As Cinco*; *WU/Rosa Series* (*Caos Primordial*, 26 works); *As Dez Maiores* (*Infância* with 2 works, *Juventude* with 2 works, *Majoridade* with 4 works, and *Velhice* with 2 works); the *W Series* (*Árvore da Sabedoria*, 8 works); *Religiões* (8 works); *Desenhos Botânicos* (8 works); *Átomo* (22 works); *Series III* (4 works); *Series VII* (17 works); *Observação de Flores e Árvores* (12 works); *Cores Flutuantes* (4 works); and *Retábulo* (3 works).

I was granted access to the image archive of Jung's analysands for further research. I dedicated myself especially to the symbolic and archetypal similarities between the images from af Klint's work and those of Jung's analysands that I selected from the archive.

Finally, in December of that year, I visited the exhibition *Hilma af Klint: Paintings for the Future* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, which included significant works of the artist that had not been displayed either at the Biennale or at Pinacoteca de São Paulo^[3].

All stages of this journey were necessary for the maturation of the study and for making its completion possible. Equally important were the people who supported and accompanied me along the way and throughout these stages. In preparing the book, many Jungian colleagues and individuals connected to the art world helped generously and consistently. I am deeply grateful to everyone with whom I had the pleasure of discussing ideas and exploring possible paths, including the already-mentioned Johan af Klint, of the Hilma af Klint Foundation; Jochen Volz, at Pinacoteca de São Paulo; Luciana Ventre, one of the biographers of Hilma af Klint; my friend Vicente de Moura, who also served as curator of the *Picture Archive* of the C.G. Jung Institute Zurich; the esteemed professor Liliana Wahba, of the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo and of the Brazilian Society for Analytical Psychology; the brilliant Sonu Shamdasani, of the Philemon Foundation, whom I had the chance to meet and with whom I discussed the research behind the book during the XXV Conference of Analytical Psychology of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil*,

[3] In the American exhibition, works from the following series were displayed: *Obras Figurativas* (9 works); Collective Works by the group *As Cinco* (8 works); the *WU/Rosa Series* (Group I *Caos Primordial*, 26 works; Group II *Eros*, 3 works); *As Dez Maiores* (*Infância* with 2 works, *Juventude* with 2 works, *Maioridade* with 4 works, and *Velhice* with 2 works); the *WUS/Seven-Pointed Star Series* (Group V *Estrela de Sete Pontas*, 4 works; Group VI *Evolução*, 7 works); the *W Series* (*Árvore da Sabedoria*, 5 works); the *SUW/UW Series* (*Cisne*, 13 works; *Pomba* 4 works); *Retábulos* (3 works); *Parsifal Series* (32 works); *Átomo* (7 works); Series I (2 works); Series II or *Religiões* (8 works); Series IV (4 works); Series V (10 works); *Observação de Flores e Árvores* (4 works); and *Últimas Aquarelas* (8 works).

in Bento Gonçalves, and who kindly put me in contact with Robert Shatzkin, Megan O'Brien, and Lucia Murillo, of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.; and also the late Ruth Ammann, at the time curator of the Picture Archive of the C.G. Jung Institute Zurich. After the book was published, many other colleagues were also very generous, offering opportunities to present the work in different events and contexts. I mention here the invitation from the kind Isabel Labriola to present a lecture on the book in 2021 at the Brazilian Society for Analytical Psychology, and the dear Roberto Gambini, who in 2024 invited me to speak about the book at the Fundamentos da Alma event in São Pedro, where I met Sílvio Peres, who suggested that I submit this record for publication, describing the path taken to publish the book and its impact and reverberation to this day. I also highlight the invitation from the Svenska C.G. Jung Stiftelsen in 2022 to present the book to a Swedish audience alongside Johan af Klint, and the exceptionally kind message I received from Susan Rowland, who emphasized the magnitude of the research, dedication, and imagination involved in the book's development, especially because it addresses the field of art within analytical psychology – a field deserving of greater exploration and expansion in her view. She also highlights the importance of the book for bringing this perspective to light through an exceptional woman artist who had long been undervalued. Today I realize that, without being fully aware of it, my process in developing the book was very close to what Susan Rowland proposes in her book *Jungian Arts-Based Research and The Nuclear Enchantment of New Mexico*. In that work, the author discusses Jungian arts-based research, detailing its methodology and the room for development in the field. She presents an idea drawn from Jungian thought that has guided my research through the years, in all my studies: when speaking about Jung, she recalls that: "He suggested that art was a powerful means through which the collective unconscious could re-balance the world (JUNG 1930: §.161)" (ROWLAND; WEISHAUS, 2021, p. 16).

Brief Notes on the Life of Hilma af Klint

Hilma af Klint was born in 1862, on October 26, the daughter of Commodore Fredrik Viktor af Klint and Mathilda Sontag (Andrietta Mathilda af Klint). She was the fourth of five children. Two of her sisters, Anna and Hermina, died in childhood (at one and ten years old, respectively). Af Klint never met Anna and was eight years old when Hermina was born. Her family was Protestant.

Af Klint had visions as a child and became interested in spiritualism after the death of her sister, Hermina, in 1880 (WILEY, 2013, p. 26). According to Ventre (2018a, p. 157), af Klint was 17 years old when her youngest sister, Hermina, passed away. The loss of her sister gave rise to a profusion of questions and anxieties, which may have intensified her interest in the occult; consequently, the desire to contact the dead became an urgency or a necessity.

In 1896, her interest in the supernatural became central to her artistic path. At that time, she, a colleague from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Sweden (Anna Cassel), and three other women who were also part of the Edelweiss Society (*Edelweissförbundet*), formed the group later known as *As Cinco* (*De Fem*).^[4] Af Klint was the youngest member, and the other women were between one and fourteen years older than she was. The artists met regularly and encountered Higher or Ascended Masters^[5].

[4] Anna Cassel, Cornelia Cederborg, Sigrid Hedman, Mathilde Nilsson, and af Klint formed the group As Cinco. Ventre (2018) notes that all of them came from a strong Christian religious background and studied their psychic or mediumistic gifts. The group's meetings showed clear Rosicrucian, Theosophical, and Christian influences. Over the years, the members changed according to each one's needs, with af Klint remaining from the beginning to the end of the group.

[5] Among the spiritual leaders present in the meetings of the five artists were Gregor, Amaliel, Georg, Ananda, Agnes, Clemens, and Esther (BASHKOFF, 2018, p. 19). For af Klint, these leaders inhabited Tibet, in the astral plane, as servants or Mahatmas of Mount Ararat, as noted by af Klint in her lexicon *Letras e Palavras* contained in Notebook 1040 (BONNIER-WESSEL, 2018, pp. 246–285), a clear allusion to the Mahatmas from Tibet who also appear in the Theosophical writings of M. Blavatsky.

During these meetings, they received messages from the Higher Masters through automatic drawing and automatic writing^[6]. In 1906, after two years of preparatory works guided by the spirits of the masters, af Klint began producing an extraordinary series of drawings and paintings known as the *Pinturas para o Templo*. She envisioned this body of work installed inside a temple built in a spiral form, ascending through different levels, so that visitors could follow the sequence in ever-smaller circles toward the center. It is interesting to note that only on October 11, 2018, with the opening of the exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, this vision conceived by af Klint became materially realized. The museum's famous circular architecture, with its spiral ramps designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in those same early years of the twentieth century, provided an exhibition environment resembling the temple af Klint had imagined for her works.

It is worth mentioning that during the second stage of creating the *Pinturas para o Templo* (1912–1915), af Klint wrote in her notebooks that she was less influenced by the Higher or Ascended Masters. She suggested that she had greater influence (perhaps greater consciousness?) while producing the works of this stage, mentioning that she remained present throughout the entire process, accessing images that arose from within herself. Even so, she described herself as a transmitting instrument, a channel acting as an intermediary between the visible and invisible worlds, without questioning the tasks and missions she was given (ALTHAUS, 2018, pp. 19–20; VOSS, 2018, p. 87; VENTRE, 2018a, pp. 164–167).

[6] According to Ventre (2018, *passim*), the Friday meetings of the group *As Cinco*, which took place over ten years (1896–1906), were recorded in detail, and it took around eight to nine years for af Klint to become the leader of the group. The meetings began with a prayer, followed by meditation and then a sermon, all carried out in front of an altar, at the top of which there was a white cross with a rose inside a circle at its center. After that, they proceeded to a study of a New Testament text, and the meeting ended with a session in which they established contact with the High Leaders of other dimensions, the Higher or Ascended Masters.

This characteristic of mediumnistic art raises numerous discussions about authorship and the creative process. Would af Klint be the author of the works, or merely the channel through which other spiritual beings expressed themselves? On the other hand, it is noteworthy that af Klint was a formally trained artist with exemplary technique. She was known in the art market for her portraits and landscapes. Moreover, she illustrated several botanical books. Therefore, we may ask: To what extent were the representations in her abstract works the result of her own artistic expression and creative process? To what extent were they inspired by spirits from another dimension? Or yet, were they solely the product of her unconscious and its many voices?

Hilma af Klint died on October 21, 1944, after falling from a tram, just days before turning 82. Her work was entrusted to the care of her nephew, Erik af Klint.

Analysis Scope, Historical Context, and Comments on the Creative Processes of Hilma af Klint, Carl G. Jung, and his Patients

Approaching the entire extensive and magnificent body of work of af Klint in comparison with the images of Jung and his patients would require extraordinary effort and time. In the book, I limited the scope of my work, aiming to explore the possibilities of establishing a parallel between the artist's work, Jungian theory, and the images of Jung and his patients, according to the following series: *WU/Rosa Chaos primordial, As Dez Maiores (Infância, Juventude, Maioridade e Velhice), SUW/UW (Cisne, Pomba), W (Árvore da Sabedoria)*, and *Retábulo*s. The selected images of Jung were illustrations 72, 79, 159, 131, 135, and 107 of the *LV*. I also drew parallels between the representation of the life cycle in the images of *As Dez Maiores* and the theory of individuation that appears in Jung's text *Etapas da Vida Humana*, in which he uses the metaphor of the sun's daily movement to reflect on the human individuation process.

To briefly contextualize the imaginal encounter between af Klint and Jung, I recall that the *Zeitgeist* in Europe during the interwar period was

heavily dominated by rationalist, scientific-materialist thinking, and the images of af Klint, Jung, and his patients appear to reflect not only the impact but also the reaction to the spirit of the time in which they were created.

Af Klint developed, throughout her life, two distinct and parallel creative processes: one figurative and the other abstract.

Her figurative paintings (portraits and landscapes) were part of her academic training. In this context, the creative process was expected from female artists of her era.

These works were well received in the local art market, appreciated socially, and valued by family and friends. Moreover, they generated enough income to support much of her livelihood. In these works, af Klint demonstrated excellent technical quality, honoring what she had learned at university and justifying her family's financial investment in her artistic education.

The figurative works represent af Klint's artistic *persona*. The abstract paintings, however, were created entirely outside the academic artistic traditions of the time, in an environment that was fully feminine, intimate, private, secret, and safe – far from the public eye, family expectations, the dominant masculine gaze, academic scrutiny, the commercial sphere, and the art market. These peculiar characteristics of the environment in which af Klint's abstract works emerged already point to a creative space that was freer, lighter, and more open to new experiences. It was an environment that was at once containing, welcoming, inspiring, and stimulating.

For af Klint, her abstract creative process unfolded through the development of her own spirituality and mediumship, by channeling messages from the spirits of the Astral Plane (identified by the names Georg, Ananda, Amaliel, etc.), who in turn transmitted the messages of the Higher Masters to humans. The Higher Masters were undefined, unnamed spirits from the Mental Plane or from an even higher plane. This

higher plane would correspond to the Akasha Plane (in Buddhism, the *Storehouse Consciousness*)^[7]. The images she created (whether with *As Cinco* or individually under the guidance of the Masters) possess coherence, visual identity, dimension, and unique symbolic characteristics, revealing artistic evolution over time. With remarkable originality, rationality, and organization, they are worthy of an authentic scientist and alchemist of the soul and of art. Her creative work was influenced not only by the peculiar environment and her spiritual mediumship, but also by at least five other factors: naval cartography (her grandfather Gustaf af Klint and her uncle Erik af Klint produced, respectively, a naval atlas of the entire Baltic Sea and the North Sea and the Navigation Tables used by the merchant marine); her training as a visual artist (knowledge of art materials and supports); her familiarity with Christian, Theosophical, Rosicrucian, and Anthroposophical thought; scientific knowledge associated with contemporary discoveries (Einstein's theory of relativity, Darwin's theory of evolution); and her studies in botany, geometry, mathematics, etc. Af Klint painted the invisible, the mysterious, the essentially numinous experience.

Despite her recognized technical mastery, af Klint's figurative paintings never had the overwhelming posthumous impact that her abstract works have had^[8]. And while her figurative works constituted her *persona*, her abstract works, shaped within the broad context already described, represented her shadow side for that period. Unsurprisingly, her abstract production could only be gradually exhibited, made public, and integrated into society after her death. Hilma af Klint experienced the zenith of her creative power in the shadows and at the margins of her time and social milieu.

[7] Information provided by Johan af Klint in an email dated May 22, 2020.

[8] The exhibition, which closed on April 23, 2019, at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, was the most visited in the museum's 60-year history, with more than 600,000 visitors (Annie Armstrong, *artnews.com*, posted on 04/18/19 at 5:31 PM).

Her notebooks, which describe her work and creative process, contain information that helps decode her pictorial symbols and provide clues to understanding her work and the artist herself. The observation and reading of the notebooks indicate that af Klint sought to understand her own work, her creative process, and the meaning behind her art, while also declaring herself chosen for the mission of painting the messages transmitted by the Higher Masters so that humanity could access them in the future.

In af Klint's work, there are various recurring symbols, including: flowers, colors, swans, mandalas, the tree of knowledge, the grail, the hero, doves and birds, geometric shapes such as the circle and square, the lemniscate, and the human figure. Af Klint sought to describe in detail, in her notes, the meanings of the symbols that appeared in her works. Many of them, incidentally, possess multiple and elaborate symbolic meanings for the artist, evoking different – and sometimes the same – symbolic associations in those who observe her works today^[9].

The spirit of the time during the interwar period in Europe was heavily dominated by rationalist, scientific-materialist thinking (NANTE, 2018, pp. 46–54), which led to the emergence of a psychology without soul (JUNG, 2011, § 649). In this sense, depth psychology, especially Jungian psychology, represented a kind of response to the ills arising from this spirit of the age, increasingly dominant since the Protestant Reformation. Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, and Anthroposophy flourished in the marginal movement of searching for spirituality and renewed interest in the recovery of Gnostic, Hermetic, and alchemical knowledge. Synchronously, this spiritualist wave coincided with the discovery of the unconscious in depth psychology, and Jung recognized it as a path toward a new worldview, one that would be more relativistic compared with all previous ones (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 35).

[9] *O Caderno HaK 1040 (Letras e Palavras Pertencentes a Obras de Hilma af Klint)* was translated into English and published in Christine Burgin's 2018 book *Hilma af Klint – Notes and Methods*. This notebook contains a list of letters and words that appear in several of the artist's paintings and their respective possible meanings (BONNIER-WESSEL, 2018, pp. 246–285).

In this context, various artistic movements arose, such as abstractionism, expressionism, Dadaism, Orphism, Suprematism, and surrealism. The leading figures of surrealism also made use of automatic writing and painting. Af Klint and her colleagues in *As Cinco* had already been doing that from 1896 to 1907, that is, nearly twenty years before the surrealists^[10] Jung himself was familiar with the practice of automatic writing from his own experience (SHAMDASANI, 2013, p. 8).

Pasi, reflecting on the connection between Western esotericism and modern artistic creativity, examines selected artists in the fields of visual arts (Hilma af Klint and Georgiana Houghton), literature (Fernando Pessoa), and music (Giacinto Scelsi). He highlights, in addition to the life stories and creative processes of each, the shared fact that all of them attributed, at some phase of their production, their artistic creativity to a spiritual entity distinct from their own being, through mediumship (2015). Pasi explains that he chose these mediumistic artists rather than others of the same period because of biographical parallels and the artists' own narratives about their creative processes. He identifies the existence of a pattern among modern artists rather than something exceptional, rare, or unusual. To understand this pattern, he employs two concepts: alienated performance and creative dissociation (a concept from the American psychologist Michael Grosso^[11]). In summary, alienated performance would allow greater freedom of expression, free from the limitations imposed by norms and conventions, freeing the artist from responsibility for the creation and linking it to a larger spiritual agenda that transcends the individual artist. In the case of af Klint, the group *As Cinco* created the environment for her alienated performance. Creative dissociation, in turn, refers to the idea that a psychological disintegration or dissociation in the

[10] Information provided by Johan af Klint in an email dated May 22, 2020.

[11] For more on creative dissociation, see *Inspiration, Mediumship, Surrealism: The Concept of Creative Dissociation*, by Michael Grosso.

artist could produce, through a later reconstructive process, exceptional bursts of creativity. It would be as if the subject temporarily lost autonomy (in these cases, specifically through the control assumed by a spiritual entity), only to later gain access to an extraordinary and innovative psychic source previously hidden or inaccessible. For the author, alienated performance and creative dissociation form a single psychological complex that emerges in the case of these artists.

According to Leite and Wahba (2017, pp. 40-41), Jung, when theorizing about abstract art, drew upon the work of Worringer, who employed the concepts of empathy and abstraction as two opposing and essential poles of the aesthetic experience. Thus, for Jung, the attitudes of consciousness in the field of aesthetics would be, on one side, empathy, an extraverted attitude connected to the real object, in which the ego merges with the work of art, with a certain degree of loss of oneself, and, on the other, abstraction, which is an introverted attitude, more connected to the subject, who fears and feels insecure in relation to the real, withdrawing the ego and resulting in a disposition more closely aligned with spirituality and the cosmos. From this perspective, the aesthetics of af Klint's work clearly denote an introverted attitude, typical of abstraction, and consistent with her experience of the spirit of the time, which fostered a search for the spiritual and the transcendent amid the high degree of rationalization and alienation from oneself that humanity faced during that period.

From a Jungian point of view, we may also imagine that af Klint's creative process permeates and fosters her own individuation throughout her life. In other words, af Klint's individuation process can be seen through the evolution of her creative process in her works. This creative process takes place in her unconscious, and the path of spirituality and mediumship integrates her introverted psyche, enabling the emergence of the transcendent function through the pictorial symbols brought to consciousness in her works. In different terms, we may think that the spiritual guides were images and voices of her unconscious (personal and collective). The themes depicted in each abstract series would represent

personal and collective cultural complexes constellated in her introverted psyche, produced within the safe and catalytic environment in which her (“mediumistic”) art occurred. These complexes were gradually integrated into the artist’s consciousness and later into that of humanity once they had been assimilated through symbolization in the numinous pictorial images.

In the case of Jung, the images of the *LV* and those of his patients arose from other psychic processes (not mediumistic), such as dreams, fantasies, or active imagination. Mellick notes that Jung, based on his own experience with inner symbols, encouraged his patients to do everything they could to record and preserve the “life” of the symbols they visualized or encountered in their fantasies and dreams, with expression through painting, drawing, sculpture, etc., being a powerful path for this, as it allowed for a more vivid encounter with the symbol. The patient could then give form to it, relate to it more deeply, absorb it, and re-experience it, each time reaching a better understanding of their inner world (MELLICK, 2018, p. 43). It is worth remembering that Jung did not consider his pictorial production, nor that of his patients, to be artistic; however, in contemporary times, it is undeniable that his work is seen by some as artistic or at least connected to artistic expression. From his experiences while creating the *LV*, which represented a deep immersion and confrontation with the unconscious in the search for his personal myth, Jung formulated and reformulated much of his psychological theory, which has been assimilated and applied ever since. Like af Klint, Jung also sought to understand his own process, from which the *LV* images emerged. Moreover, like af Klint, Jung accessed his imaginal creative flow from a space and time removed from the academic, scientific, and social environment, very similar to Pasi’s concept of alienated performance and consistent with what psychologist Csikszentmihalyi identified about environmental conditions created by creative individuals to enable creative flow. Csikszentmihalyi, a researcher on creativity, found that creative people strive to ensure that their work and creative flow occur in a place of easy and uninterrupted focus, which he called a “supportive symbolic

ecology” (CSIKSZENTMIHALYI, 2007, p. 140). In other words, the space must be tailored to their needs, providing comfort and control that favors creative flow. In this sense, Mellick states that the Bollingen house was the matrix of Jung’s creativity (MELLICK, 2018, p. 41). Jung, like af Klint, also sensed that his work would not be understood by society in his time. The experience with the *LV* influenced his clinical work significantly, especially using expressive-art techniques in the analysis of his patients, and it continues to influence the work of countless analysts with their patients around the world. The drawings and paintings in the *Picture Archive* are living examples of this search for self-understanding, as are Jung’s own *LV* images. Just as happened with af Klint, the creative processes of Jung and his patients integrate and foster their individuation. The images produced by af Klint, Jung, and his patients have been widely studied, but they have not yet been fully understood or deciphered; much still remains to be assimilated. It is important to note that virtually no information is available about Jung’s patients whose images are preserved in the *Picture Archive*, making it impossible to link most of the images to the cases themselves^[12]. However, it is reasonable to assume that most patients came from privileged social backgrounds and generally had a high level of education.

Af Klint and Jung were also members of a European elite and were highly educated. In this sense, the images of af Klint, Jung, and his patients display a degree of sophistication that reveals certain shared characteristics among their creators: they were cultivated, aesthetically refined, sensitive individuals who lived within the crucible of European culture of their time, which may also underlie the similarity of their images.

The same numinous tone present in Hilma af Klint’s art is also revealed in the images of the *LV* and in those created by Jung’s patients.

[12]] The book published on the occasion of the exhibition *Das Buch der Bilder* at the Museum im Lagerhaus in St. Gallen includes several articles on possible analyses of the images created by Jung’s patients preserved in the *Picture Archive*, including some of the scarce information available regarding a few of the cases, obtained through research in Jung’s works, without revealing the patients’ identities.

This is the point of connection among the images that touches, captures, and profoundly affects us when we come into contact with them. In perceiving the numinous in these images, we draw closer to the numinous within ourselves, opening a pathway to the *Self*.

The images from these three sources seem to reflect not only the impact but also the response to the spirit of the time in which they were created, as if they addressed a profound need to understand life and its mysteries. They are transcendent, timeless, aesthetic, and inspiring images that completely absorb anyone who contemplates them, even today. They are also images with strong symbolic and archetypal content and character. They all convey the mysterious, the unnameable, the unsayable, the incomprehensible, and the enduring quality of the numinous across time, something that only the meeting of what is sacred in the human with an aesthetic and artistic sense of beauty can bring forth in symbolic images charged with numinosity.

Final Considerations

From the very first moment I saw a work by af Klint, in the inspiring city of Venice, just a few steps from the original *LV*, which had left me in awe, I felt as though I were intuiting the possibility of a deep friendship. That feeling accompanied me through the six years that followed, until the book was finally published, and it remains with me even now. Although they almost certainly never met, this does not diminish the synchronous connection between their soulful legacies, which becomes evident when one brings together the paintings of the Swedish artist and the theory and images of the Swiss analyst and his patients. I often sense that, had life afforded them an actual meeting, af Klint and Jung would have enriched one another through an exchange of ideas and experiences. Such an encounter might even have yielded a different af Klint and a different Jung. When the book was already in press, I came across the work of Kaufmann and Schaeppi, which likewise explores the many parallels between af Klint's images and life and Jung's. It is a profound study and an

excellent reference for carrying forward the imaginal encounter proposed in the book (KAUFMANN & SCHAEPPPI, 2019).

The images of af Klint, Jung, and his patients are essentially soulful and numinous, and deeply intertwined with their processes of individuation. Their creation arises from access to different states of human consciousness – whether through af Klint’s mediumship, the dream state, or the practice of active imagination by Jung and his patients. For this reason, the connections among af Klint’s works, Jung’s images, and those of his patients offer such a rich ground for reflecting on the soul, the psyche, the *Self*, the symbol, the image, human imagination, creativity, myth, art, and the numinous as inexhaustible sources of meaning, pathways, and developments that carry transformative effects for individuals and for humanity throughout time. Across these three sources, we find magical images of extraordinary richness, beauty, and depth, which lead us to elevated and renewed states of spirit and to an expansion of human consciousness. They reflect the feeling of an era and can now, at last, be taken in as messages for the contemporary world, which, after all, seems to experience similar sentiments.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

JUNG'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO A NEW *AION*

Alexandre Fontoura dos Santos

Abstract

In his *Aion* (vol. IX/2), C. G. Jung offers a profound examination of a range of symbolisms intended to illuminate the image of the *Self* throughout what he calls the “Christian aeon” – a period marked by conflicting yet creative archetypal forces – drawing a parallel with the process of individuation. Regarding the psychology of collective processes, this analysis provides a mode of observation of inestimable value: the way unconscious, impersonal powers operate beneath the surface and shape historical and cultural developments. A thinker whose temperament was finely attuned to what is unseen – attentive both to the inner world and to the “underground” movements coursing through the psyche of the collective – Jung describes the closing of an *aeon* and the exhaustion of ancient symbols, culminating in the negativistic of the twentieth century and the eruption of the Great Wars. In the book *O Livro Vermelho* and other works, he points to the emergence of a new image, retrieving subjective

factors not yet integrated in the so-called “Age of Pisces” and capable of fostering a new configuration. What resources, then, does this major thinker place at our disposal for shaping a psychic landscape adequate to new times? Faced with the questions of our age, which aspects of his legacy call for our attention if we are to cultivate a creative reconciliation of the unconscious’s opposing forces? The reflections that follow constitute an initial exploration.

Keywords: Jung; *aion*; *aeon*; era; *Zeitgeist*; individuation; history.

Introduction

In 1951, Jung presented one of his most hermetic texts: *o Aion – Estudo sobre o Simbolismo do Si-mesmo*. In it, he deepens his study of Christ as the best symbolic expression of the *Self*, weaving countless connections among symbols from the Gnostic, Christian, alchemical, and astrological traditions, and grounding psychological principles of an archetypal nature that would govern a long period of humanity's development. He knew the challenge of the undertaking, yet he was moved by a series of dreams that indicated a duty to bring into scientific thought a symbolic analysis that could render intelligible the psychological findings submerged in very ancient Gnostic and alchemical texts. In the introduction, he states his aim of “illustrating the transformation of the psychic situation wrought within the Christian *aeon*” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, p. 9). In this way, he describes the ending of the *aeon* of Pisces and the wearing out of its symbols, resulting in the negativistic *Zeitgeist* of the twentieth century, while offering a series of other points worthy of attention.

To “fish” for the treasures offered by this material, we will present a brief reflection on those stirring aspects that touch the soul, especially as we are inspired by Jung's considerations here and elsewhere in his work. In this way, we will sketch a few thoughts on the psychology of an era (or *aeon/aion*), making visible Jung's sensitivity in reflecting on such a wide scope. The question that moves us, therefore, is: what resources does this important thinker offer for a psychic configuration of new times?

In search of a conclusion, we will first (1) consider Jung's attention to unconscious, impersonal powers that influence historical and cultural processes from beneath – the reason he lingers on *aeons*. Next, (2) we will briefly try to understand what Jung perceived in the ending Christian *aeon* and what he foresaw for a subsequent cycle. Finally, (3) we will connect this material with some considerations about the archetypal movement of the collective, in a kind of general individuation.

Despite the magnitude of the theme, we aim to offer brief reflections on this vast universe, at once expansive and profound, that Jung opens to us, especially since the subject is so pertinent in a time of cyclopean transformations on the global stage.

An Underlying Movement

A closer look at Jung and his foundational role in modern thought shows that his influence extends beyond the twentieth-century *Zeitgeist*, for he poses questions that remain vital to humanity in the twenty-first. This relevance does not rest solely on his intellect or on the astonishing breadth of his output.

In his work and biographies, we encounter a thinker with a temperament sensitive to what is unseen, attentive to the inner world (ruled by the unconscious, dreams, symbols, and visions) and to the “underground” movements lived by the psyche of the collective. It was a sensitivity that demanded from him a great work of personal differentiation to access his creative potential without dissolving into the disordered irruption of his contents.

More specifically, in the work *Aion*, we meet the question of *aeons*, or eras, a concept coming from the pre-Christian Persian-Jewish tradition, delimiting enormous periods governed by astrological and spiritual forces. The term is ambiguous and carries a multiplicity of meanings (EDINGER, 2014). In geology, astronomy, and mythology, it refers to different scales of temporality. Astronomically, it is used to designate the movement of the precession of the equinoxes, in which each *aeon*, or Pla-

tonic month, would be formed by cycles of about two thousand years, and the final period of a complete cycle (about twenty-six thousand years) is the so-called Platonic year (EDINGER, 2014). Because of this precession, which shifts the vernal point in correspondence with the constellations and their zodiac signs, *aeons* are also valued in the field of astrology.

In Jung's psychology, we can understand aeons as psychic situations that govern humanity's development over long periods, or as stages in the collective process of individuation in which certain forces of the collective unconscious gain ground – in their destructive and creative roles – giving meaning to the symbols and experiences of an era, influencing mass movements, and propelling historical transformations.

Thus, the Christian *aeon*, for example, would encompass the two-thousand-year period in which much of humanity underwent a historical development governed by the symbolic and psychological questions present in the dynamics of Christ (through conflicts and creative resolutions), until the gradual exhaustion of these symbols and the heralding of a later stage. Its beginning coincides exactly with the astrological era of the sign of Pisces, which follows Aries.

It is no secret how much the psychological aspects present in the image of Christ occupied Jung throughout his trajectory, eliciting different reactions among his readers. In the work at hand, he justifies his interest in Christ for representing the “center of the Christian mandala” and, therefore, the developmental paths of the Western psyche over two thousand years.

In various passages, he stresses that he analyzes Christ as a highly coherent symbol of individuation, focusing not on the historical person but on the symbolism of his metaphors and on the stages of his personal journey. He concludes that this journey raised the conflicting pains of the earlier mentality (pagan, as well as those of the Old Testament) to a higher level of elaboration. Here we need to stay with the symbolic value of this perspective and its role across time (as we will understand more fully when we examine archetypal activation and updating).

We should emphasize that Jung's attention to *aeons* (as predominant psychic situations) is linked to a very important layer of observation: the way unconscious, impersonal powers influence historical and cultural processes from beneath. We could also call them underground impulses in the historical transformations of civilization - the dynamics of archetypal drives that make possible the emergence and transformation of the many forms of human expression.

Beginning with the experiences reported in *Os Livros Negros* and *O Livro Vermelho*, this observational layer becomes increasingly present in his works. In those imaginal experiences, beginning in 1913, he not only restored his psychic balance and discovered important layers of his personal process; he also began an investigative journey to see to what extent such emergences of images and transpersonal contents might find an analogy between his analysands and other people. Over the years, he demonstrated the validation of this comparison.

Drawing on his extensive studies of the psychological symbolisms contained in ancient Gnostic, Christian, and alchemical texts, Jung (OC IX/1, OC IX/2) later highlighted the teleological action of the archetype, thus exercising a form of historical-psychological analysis. He recognized that the flow of civilizations would be affected, to a large extent, by the ordering forces of the collective unconscious: industrial and political revolutions, exoduses, warlike and messianic movements, doctrines, and the sedimentation of traditions would then be expressions of psychic activity governed not only by human force and conscious will, but also by the unconscious and archetypal factor.

In the field of historiography, especially from the twentieth century on, we see the emergence of the history of ideas, a branch at the intersection with philosophy and sociology, focusing on paradigms and worldviews that move humanity in diverse contexts^[1].

[1] The work of Sonu Shamdasani, for example, is an excellent example of this theoretical line.

World-views is a good term for this understanding, as proposed by the Portuguese historian Fernando Catroga (2023). An even deeper unfolding of this line would be the so-called history of mentalities, arising from its rapprochement with psychology and with a greater focus on subjectivity, no longer attentive to what historical collectives thought, but to how they thought (BURKE, 2005; DUBY, 1999). It seems to us that Jung's depth psychology has something to add to these two fields, highlighting the archetypal backstage layers that influence human action across time in a compensatory and teleological way, driving the play of forces in human experience.

What matters for our object of study is that such transformations would be, to a large extent, an expression of the depths of the collective unconscious – that is, an action of the being's “invisible dimension” – both in what they carry of destructiveness and in what they carry of integration and creativity. We say “to a large extent” because to this we must add the elaboration of consciousness, in the exercise of free will, inherent in the process of differentiation and synthesis, as well as other environmental factors. “Influence” is also a word we use deliberately, so that we do not fall into reading the archetypal pattern as if it represented some kind of instinctual determinism (in its infrared aspect)^[2]. Yet the most relevant term here is “to propel,” because it makes visible a prospective notion: a kind of directive (or tendency) inherent to human development that, as in the individual, guides the expression of forces (or virtues) that are initially in germ. It would thus be a tendency coming from the *Self*, as the psyche's organizing center.

We enter a paradigm that subverts how we can regard the driving force of historical transformations: from the reverse side, that is, from the unconscious (personal and collective) to consciousness (and consequently to its effects in the outer world).

[2] Instinct (physical) and archetype (psychic) have a profound correlation, and Jung sometimes uses “instinct” in a way that covers the spectrum encompassing both (JUNG, 1912/2013d, OC V).

We speak of a “driving force” so as not to fall into a kind of determinism, as we said, but rather into a dialectical process between the conscious ego and the irruption of unconscious archetypal impulses.

To better understand Jung on this point, the notion of archetypal emergence is important: the archetype that seeks to realize itself, that, from the depths, wants to become present, and that is instinctively activated in response to a need for psychic balance. In *Símbolos da Transformação* (1912/1952/2013g, OC V), Jung details the processes by which psychic energy transforms as it “moves” toward an aim - the psyche wants to individuate. To this we add the notion of meaning, through which the dynamic of this psychic energy is directed, “satisfying” purposes in the process of elaboration (individuation) (JUNG, 1912/1952/2013g, OC V)

In the face of the transitions of *aeons*, with their weights and counterweights, the anticipated emergence of a unifying archetype would then be a so-called Age of the Spirit (as we will discuss later), in which the enantiodromic, radical compensation of opposites – so present in our historical and cultural tensions – would foster the appearance of symbols more adequate to metanoia: reconciling symbols.

Through this lens, we could very well ask whether (by way of example) the incursions of barbarian tribes at the gates of the Roman world were also under the sway of the mysterious forces of the unconscious. Might they have been drawn by some kind of “glow of civilization,” symbolizing movements of tension and integration of opposites in the collective psyche? Might a successive unconscious impulse have later allowed the fusion of Roman and Germanic culture in the medieval period? And what of overseas expansion, the movements of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and so on? Polytheism and monotheism; the fantastic philosophical amalgams of Eastern thought; or even the “magnetic” attraction behind the contemporary migration crisis in the First World, experienced in the midst of the twenty-first century. Let us add to this list the great transitions that awaken our memory. In this way, not only the world of consciousness (and the reaction of military, economic, and

political movements), but also the unconscious would be involved in the founding of culture's many treasures and in the fire of revolutions. Certainly, they are fitting objects for this kind of reflection.

As reported by Jung (1951/2013b, OC IX/2, p. 10), his “purpose in approaching such historical questions is because the archetypal image of wholeness, which so frequently emerges in the products of the unconscious, has its predecessors in history.” What he underscores are the symbolic operations of a long period of collective individuation (an *aeon*). From this symbolic point of view, each new psychic stage of humanity as a whole could be regarded as an era that carries certain elements of the *Self* in its various states of development. Edinger (2014, p. 07) highlights what we might call here a historical-clinical view when he says that “*Aion* is in part a book about history. I also think it is important to realize that Jung is discussing the cultural history of the human race as if it were the clinical history of a particular patient.”

A New Orientation, a New Image

To understand Jung's expectation of a new era as a coming psychic configuration, we need to draw a few lines about the focus of his book *Aion*, which lies in his assessment of the Christian *aeon* (precisely the one that is ending in our time). It is characterized above all by the tension of opposites and by the symbolic updating contained in Christ as the establishment of a new psychic status. The first point is that in the *aeon* of Pisces, we would find the manifestation of antagonistic forces, a long digestion of everything added since the emergence of Christ (as symbol). It would be two millennia marked, especially in Western traditions, by psychic dynamics governed by a host of opposing dualities long deemed irreconcilable: good and evil, spirit and matter, faith and reason, masculine and feminine, and so on. On the one hand, the Christian tradition introduced an ethical dimension into the institutional life of nations; on the other, over time, it reinforced a tendency to polarize ego and shadow, intensifying the risk of one-sidedness and its often bloody consequences.

These various relations of opposition would also be present in subsequent historical movements, including the persecution of heretics, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, industrial voracity against ecological consciousness, the polarization between capitalist and socialist economies, the confrontation of cold reason with dogmatic faith, etc. As he states: “Today must confront the *sic et non* (yes and no) in its most drastic form, that is, the absolute opposition that not only tears the world apart politically but also divides the heart of every person inwardly” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 141, p. 106). Here, we can consider the phenomenon in terms of a dynamic of individuation, as a long and relative process governed by the principle of separation/differentiation, making visible an analytic movement of experimenting with and recognizing the archetypal forces at work.

The second point is that the great symbolic transformation that slowly unfolds from its beginning is that of a new *imago dei* (a new image of divinity and logic of the universe), distinct from paganism and the Old Testament (the *aeon* of Aries), and it also reaches a new conception of the human being. Jung concludes that the figure of Christ presented almost complete symbolic elements, in an analogy to the characteristics and phases of the process of individuation. To simplify: the theme of the tension of opposites, sustained so that a *third element not-yet-given* can emerge (analysis in duality, and synthesis in the third); facing evil within oneself rather than in the other (establishing an inner ethic); the theme of personal sacrifice and forgiveness of offenses (withdrawing projections and integrating the shadow); among other points (JUNG, 1951/2013b). He emphasizes that this symbolic evolution “takes Christ into the sphere of immediate inner experience, showing him in this way as a figure of the whole human being” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 122).

Before asking whether the historical figure did or did not fit these contours, the very existence of such accounts would already constitute, *at minimum*, a “psychological proof of the existence of a certain archetypal content,” thereafter made available to consciousness across

the centuries. An archetypal material “endowed with all those properties that characterize the image of Christ in Antiquity and the Middle Ages” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 122). This similarity with the psyche's organizing center and its individuating function leads Jung to pose a bold question to modern psychology: “Is the *Self* a symbol of Christ, or is Christ a symbol of the *Self*?” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 122).

Jung was deeply impacted by Nietzsche's fate – by the labyrinth of frustrations and confusion that fell upon the great thinker in his personal process – since Nietzsche had expressed the “lament of the dead,” capturing and expressing, not only in his works but in himself, the existential drama of an age (BAIR, 2006; JUNG, 2013c; SHAMDASANI, 2013). Such sensitivity translated the “death of God” in an exceptional way, yet without finding a personally valid answer to the conflicts of opposites experienced by the collective (both in their subtle layers and in their manifest ones). In *O Livro Vermelho*, Jung underwent his descent into his own depths and found countless resources to elaborate on that experience (which he then sought to render scientifically in his later works). The capacity for differentiation, the ability to bear opposites, and precisely this: the production of a personal response to collective tensions would be essential steps of individuation, making it possible not to succumb to the collective shadow and its multiplicity of conflicts (JUNG, 2013c).

And what would the new *aeon* consist of, after Pisces? From an astronomical standpoint, the next sign is Aquarius, possibly beginning around A.D. 2100. But what about the psyche? What awaits us in the years ahead, as symbols rise from the collective unconscious in the form of aspirations, movements, and figures?

If the *aeon* of Pisces was governed, it would seem, chiefly by the archetypal theme of the ‘enemy brothers,’ then, by coincidence, with the approach of the immediate Platonic month – that is, Aquarius – the problem of the union of opposites is posed. It is no longer a matter of volatilizing evil as mere *privatio boni*, but of recognizing its real existence. Yet this problem will be solved neither by philosophy, nor by the economics of the state, nor by politics or the historical confessions, but through the individual, that is, through the

original experience of the living Spirit (...). Secular progress experienced by the evolution of symbols. (...) at bottom, it is the deep impulse of the archetype that seeks to become reality (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, §§ 141 and 142), emphasis added).

Through his hermetic and scientific erudition, Jung suggests that, following the dynamics of individuation, the tendencies of the new era would incline toward resolving the archetypal forces that were available to consciousness in the previous cycle, retrieving subjective factors not yet integrated in the Age of Pisces and capable of fostering a new configuration. This allows us to attribute to the psychological role of the aeon of Aquarius precisely the possibility of integrating these already-known and already-lived opposites. From this perspective, it would be a long period that is no longer predominantly analytic, but oriented toward a movement of synthesis.

Jung then emphasizes that the psychic danger of being torn between opposites would bring the need to “return to an original, living spirit, which, precisely because of its ambivalence, is also a mediator and unifier of opposites - an idea that occupied alchemy (albeit in an improper way) for many centuries” (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 141). To that end, in *O Livro Vermelho* (2013c) he suggests tearing Christ away from insoluble duality, for, as we said earlier, Jung argues that a new *aeon* lies in the resolution of the previous one (Pisces), in a kind of psychological retrieval of Christ's synthetic resolutions, not yet duly recognized and lived within this two-millennia play of forces.

The many integrations Jung underwent in the imaginal experiences of *O Livro Vermelho* made possible a point of rebalancing, enabling him to move beyond both his personal crisis and the crisis of the *Zeitgeist*. They also opened a way of working through the conflicting polarities of the Piscean *aeon* itself, with its Christian numinosity and its condemnatory splitting. A renewed sense of religiosity as lived, a deep experience took hold of the Swiss psychologist, pointing to the need for a new center, consonant with a more complete image of the human being (JUNG,

1951/2013b; 2013c, OC IX/2). The passage below is essential for this understanding:

The fish symbol, therefore, represents a bridge between the historical figure of Christ and the human psychic nature in which the archetype of the Redeemer rests. By this path, Christ was converted into inner experience, into the “Christ in us”.

As I have just shown, the symbolism of the fish in alchemy leads straight to the lapis *philosophorum* (philosopher's stone), to the *salvator*, *servator*, and *deus terrenus* (savior, preserver, earthly god), that is, psychologically speaking, to the *Self*. In this way, a new symbol arises in place of the fish: a psychological concept of the wholeness of the human being. Just as the fish signifies, more or less, Christ, so the *Self* signifies divinity. But this is a matter of correspondence and inner experience, of a reception of Christ in the psychic matrix, or of a new realization of the Son of God – no longer under a theriomorphic symbolism, but under a conceptual (‘philosophical’) symbolism. In this way, a coming-to-consciousness is clearly expressed, instead of a mute and unconscious fish (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, §§ 285 and 286).

Therefore, the general psychological principles related to individuation, which were expressed in Christ's symbolic experience, would find synthesis in this new *aeon*, suggesting inner experience as the stage for integrating dualities. Such a transition would naturally be mediated by a new symbol of the *Self*, rather than a mute and unconscious fish, indicating a tendency toward the irruption of symbols more consonant with a coming-to-consciousness. A level of consciousness capable of a broader symbolic life would be the realization of what had previously been manifested as an archetypal possibility. And this is one of the essential points for grasping Jung's proposal for a new *aeon*.

In his writing, the expectation invested in this new period now opening becomes evident, since he himself underwent the relevant transformation through deep experience, becoming aware of collective possibilities. That is why he distrusts revolutions that are strictly external and proposes individuating effort as a new point of balance for humanity. But it is important to stress that this hope, or prognostic assessment, is not naive optimism; it is a warning about the destructive forces of an unrecognized

unconscious, as well as the urgency of recognizing the virtuous possibilities of psychic integration. Here he draws on a notion of a general individuation – or an individuation of humanity, as we might name it – a strange and paradoxical definition, which we will detail below.

"Everyone Feels the Stirring of the Wind of the Pneuma" – Archetypal Emergences, from Fiore to Future Times

In many of his premises, Jung moved from the collective character to understand the personal dimension, just as he moved from the individual to assess the dynamics of the collective. As he notes:

The psychology of the individual corresponds to the psychology of nations. Nations do exactly what each person does individually, and as the individual acts, so the nation will act. Only with a transformation of the individual's attitude will the psychology of the nation begin to change. To this day, humanity's great problems have never been solved by collective decrees, but only by the renewal of the individual's attitude (JUNG, 1917/2012b, OC VII/1, p. 10).

Whereas individuation suggests the realization of originality, we might consider that becoming unique and differentiated from the collective (even while integrated with it) – “collective individuation” would be a complete paradox. However, the sense used here is the development of a potential (with respect to the status quo of a civilization) through the activation of latent resources in the collective unconscious that take on historical life. This perspective reveals itself as a movement toward wholeness, a force that, suspended between civilization and barbarism, acts from the depths of the unconscious as an instinct of inner organization. But who could say what such a balance would look like? We are left always pondering... For this central point exists only in virtual form – as an inner image – and thus as an inherent aim residing mostly in the unconscious: a possible state of psychic homeostasis.

In many passages of his work, Jung describes the compensatory nature of the unconscious, which, through dreams, visions, needs, pathologies, and inspirations, interacts with the paths and missteps of the conscious ego,

guiding it in a corrective way. If the latter satisfactorily integrates these impulses, the result is a new point of psychic balance, a more organized and developed disposition of the union consciousness plus unconscious: the psyche. He describes this movement in detail, but in basic terms, we could speak of the movements of progression and regression of psychic energy, receptivity and confrontation, inflation and deflation of the ego, inner adaptation and outer adaptation, among others (JUNG, 1912/1952/2013d, OC V; 1928/2013f, OC VIII/1). Thus, we can reflect at this essential (primary) level of the psychic dimension whenever we consider the socio-historical-civilizational process as a (secondary) flow of change and conservation, appropriation and acculturation, progress and regression, or ruptures and continuities (concepts widely used in the historian's craft).

It is stirring to think historically through the lens of a foundation of the unconscious's action in Jung's theory: its teleological nature (*telos* = meaning). This perspective is intimately linked to the function of meaning. We can understand a symptom as meaningful, whether in a people's history or in an individual's pathology, only insofar as it performs a dynamic function, playing a part in the movement toward restoring or constructing a viable balance. One might think, by analogy, of an infant who crawls out of instinct and necessity without yet knowing that this is a stage that prepares the way for walking, and who would suffer if this intrinsic need were denied expression. In this sense, the prospective notion offers a lens for understanding the individual that is difficult to separate from the psychology of the collective. And since another basic function concerns society – the gregarious dimension of human existence, which receives the same teleological impulses of the *Self* as does individual psychic development – it is reasonable to hypothesize that groups, too, are subject to meaning-making processes and to compensatory movements oriented toward future possibilities. Thus (as we have already stated), the steps of civilization would be intimately tied to archetypal images: powers of virtue that, in a compensatory way, would present the

collective consciousness with questions and viable paths according to its latent potentials.

As we have long known, the multiplicity of archetypal elements that constitute us is expressed in human experience: in our myths, rites, traditions, lived experience, and in everything that makes up our personality. Just as every human life reveals the expression of these archetypes, it is plausible that many individuals (historical figures or not) have embodied certain values of the collective unconscious pertinent to a general individuation, to the collective's psychic balance. Just as the shaman's "great dreams" shape the paths of the tribe, such individuals would, in a relative sense, serve as catalysts for elements that had previously remained only potential, enabling the emergence of symbols more elaborated than those available up to that point. Such sensitivity, guided by a principle of purpose, would thus fulfill a social function as well, not merely the aim of individual realization (BOECHAT, 2014). It is worth emphasizing that this symbolic updating can be perceived at many transition points in all societies.

We can capture something of this new psychic image that Jung proposes by looking at one of the examples he chose to emphasize - an example intimately linked to what he called the "experience of the living Spirit." Starting from the concept of archetypal emergence, Jung evaluated a future transition of *aeons* by comparing it with distant historical examples. He described the rise of mystical and heretical movements in the Late Middle Ages (the Florentines and Waldenses), the mendicant orders (Franciscans), and the revival of monasticism, highlighting the psychological pertinence of a series of prophetic impulses as the beginning of a symbolic updating (occurring from the eleventh century on). Movements such as that of Abbot Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202) and the mendicant orders proposed an updated interpretation of the Gospels, announcing a new spiritual period marked by the germination of virtues.

They indicated a "divine inflation," or being seized by the "archetype of the Spirit" (1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 140). However, besides being a state

of hybris, the proposal was for a “Kingdom of Heaven” as an inner state – a profoundly psychological and anticipatorily modern conception, as Jung emphasizes (and this is what matters for our analysis). Although it was not a new *aeon*, it was evidently the beginning of a new symbol of integration in the world, since “Joachim assumes, in a psychologically correct way, that a new status – or, as we would say, a new disposition – first appears as a more or less latent preparatory state, after which the *fructificatio*, the flowering, and the consummation follow” (1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 140).

These historical processes, occurring in the second half of the *aeon* of Pisces, carry great symbolic pertinence. As heralds of an “Age of the Holy Spirit,” they believed they were on the eve of, or at the beginning of, a new *aeon* or a “new psychic status,” in which charisms (prophetic or mystical gifts = anomalous/mediumistic phenomena) would be widespread in the collective, which would experience a kind of direct connection with the sacred. These various movements described a phase in which a sense of brotherhood would likewise become manifest in society. Thus, Jung emphasizes that:

(...) it was possible to observe a state of restlessness and an extraordinary and widely diffused movement of minds. (...) Everyone feels the stirring of the wind of the Pnuma. It was, in effect, a time of new, and in part unheard-of, ideas, which were spreading everywhere (...).

(...) These were individuals who identified with God (or were identified as such), who regarded themselves as superhuman, who took a critical stance toward the Gospel, followed the dictates of the inner person, and conceived the Kingdom of Heaven as an inner state. In a certain way, they were almost modern individuals, who had a religious inflation – unlike the person of our time, whose psychosis consists in a rationalist and political affliction (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, §§ 140 and 143)

“Everyone feels the stirring of the wind of the Pnuma”: aspects of the *Self* emerging in initial movements here and there, until they gain body in future psychological experiences. What mattered both to Jung and to our analysis is that this was a symbolic perspective ahead of the dogmatic stagnation that characterized the clericalism and worldview of the time

– an insight beyond the *Zeitgeist*, as we might say, and one that proved itself in later centuries. It is not our task here to validate or deny Fiore's peculiar theological perspectives, but to study the historical object and to observe the strong impressions they made on Jung, who saw in these movements a valuable example of the archetype's updating:

(...) we could admit that Joachim also secretly anticipated a new status. Consciously, he thought he was realizing the status of the Holy Spirit, just as St. Benedict's intention was to consolidate and deepen the Church and Christian life through monasticism. Unconsciously, however, Joachim could have been possessed by the archetype of the Spirit - and this is psychologically the most probable. There is no doubt that he was grounded in a numinous vital experience that is characteristic of all those who have been seized by an archetype. (...) In an age that coincided with the beginning of the second era of Pisces and therefore necessarily had an ambiguous aspect, it was very natural that a Christian-colored belief in the Holy Spirit would also help the archetype of the Spirit to emerge, with its ambivalent character. It would be unjustified to consider the respectable figure of Joachim as a one-sided representative of that revolutionary and anarchic turbulence that characterized the Holy Spirit movement in many places. On the contrary, it is legitimate to assume that he himself, without knowing it, introduced a new status, that is, a new religious disposition destined to transcend and compensate the terrible abyss between Christ and Antichrist^[3], whose first signs appear in the eleventh century (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2, § 141).

We highlight the idea of archetypal movements that arise long before the historical conditions are mature. For Jung, such movements express a kind of anticipation – an early stirring of new currents that will only later unfold into a series of transformations across the centuries: from the Renaissance to the Protestant Reformation, from the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment's exaltation of reason to the technological intensification that shapes today's drama.

[3] Briefly, Jung refers to "Christ and Antichrist" as archetypal symbolisms of religiosity (a "vertical" way of thinking) and rationalism (a "horizontal" way of thinking) – a historical pendulum of modalities that are as necessary as they are compensatory, yet that become conflictual and destructive when they are not reconciled coherently.

Going a step further, they would still be raw yet profoundly revealing manifestations of prognostic aspects of the collective unconscious. According to Edinger (2014, p. 70), Jung's insistence on Fiore also has to do with the fact that both propose an interpretation of the symbolism of the Trinity as a temporal process, since “in his essay on the Trinity, Jung discusses the symbolism of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as representing three stages of a developmental process” (psychological *aeons*). Thus, in Aries (the Father), we would have ancient thought and the law of force; in Pisces (the Son) the Christian *aeon* already described; and in Aquarius (the Holy Spirit), a period of transcendence, of the inner person, and of religiosity as a deep psychological experience, as he describes.

This medieval case of symbolic updating would not only be a historical demonstration of the archetypal phenomenon, but would also carry, in this purported new Age of the Spirit, the germ of something Jung recognized in later stages of the individuation process: a third stage, an overcoming of a dual process into a synthesis of opposing forces (JUNG, 1951/2013b, OC IX/2; 1912/1952/2013d, OC V). It would thus be a perspective at once spiritually oriented and psychologically sound – bold indeed for the context in which it emerged – pointing toward a mode of experience accessible only in a psychic state that transcends the defining contours of the *aeon* of Pisces.

In truth, beyond its outer forms, Jung retrieves in this event a symbolic perspective that is very necessary today, considering the tensions that tear at the contemporary world. This “experience of the living Spirit,” of a new way of thinking (in the broad sense of the word), of an inner spirituality as a deep psychological experience, would stand as a later stage of human consciousness – bold, but possible – and it lies at the core of Jung's prospective vision for a new *Aion* that approaches. Prospectively (toward which the individuating tendency points), it would be a natural stage in the play of forces of the human creature, in which antinomies tend to generate new stages of creative synthesis after the conflicted gestation of centuries and millennia.

Of course, Jung did not restrict himself to the case of the Joachimites; he observed various kinds of movements that arise here and there, stirred by some principle - moved by the “winds” of the Spirit – offering interesting psychological points (even when mixed with other, confused, or limited points).

A broader gathering would be what he called the “pillars of the bridge of the spirit^[4] that crosses the swamp of world history” (JUNG, 1932/2015, p. 89): examples of the *Self* archetype's emergence that shone before his eyes in a historical interpretation of individuation, “beginning with the epic of Gilgamesh, with the I Ching, the *Upanishads*, the *Tao-te-king*, the fragments of Heraclitus, and continuing with the Gospel of John, the Pauline epistles, Meister Eckhart and Dante,” to which he added Goethe's *Faust* (JUNG, 1932/2018, p. 105). These would be some examples that brought an accent, a shift, to the *status quo* of humanity.

Expressing similar perplexity, the Sino-French historian Anne Cheng (2008) points to the millennium preceding the Christian era as a kind of “axial age” in which different civilizational centers experienced true cultural and conscious leaps around figures who founded a new kind of thinking: Moses in the Hebrew world; Confucius and Lao Tzu in China; Buddha in India; the Socratic and pre-Socratic philosophers in the Greek world, among others.

Such “coincidences” could be examined as potentially meaningful synchronic events, corroborating the perception of these underlying movements inherent to history.

Final Considerations

Can this agitation in the human soul be felt today? Clearly, the destructive as well as the creative forces of the *Self* act without cease since they are fundamental to the human psyche.

[4] Although the Brazilian translation opted for “intelecto,” I cite here the direct rendering of “spirit,” as it appears in the English version: “bridge of the spirit which spans the morass of world history” (JUNG, 1932/2015, p. 89).

As reported by Shamdasani (2013), *O Livro Vermelho* can be understood as having a “revelatory” character, as the irruption of relevant contents in response to the crisis of the modern human being, which Jung felt in the outbreak of the Great Wars (as previously mentioned). Might Jung, perhaps, have had a historical-cultural role to play, as a psychologically valid response to the existential void?

Not by chance, we can understand in this vision a deeper notion of the human being, who carries a psychic structure endowed with different and complementary tendencies (a multifaceted complex), with qualities and aptitudes, and with a life beyond present-day consciousness. Thus, Jung lived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, yet connected to the *Zeitgeist* of the twenty-first, especially through notions such as that of complex thinking, which, before being proposed by thinkers like Edgar Morin (2011), already found a similar kind of observation in “complex psychology” (as Jung originally named his depth psychology). These bodies of knowledge converge at many points.

His perspective disrupts the narrow, egocentric conception of the human being, one that is unilaterally shaped as a crude, early stage of humanity conceived merely as an extended family. We encounter, then, a proposal of the wholeness of the human soul: a conception of the psyche that always moves toward its completeness and toward the realization of the whole human being. This is one of his valuable contributions, allowing us to see the Swiss psychologist as one of the builders of a “new humanism,” so to speak: a new level of humanity's reading of itself, enriched by an inner gaze – endowed with a symbol that reconciles opposites – capable of recognizing this characteristic (the function of individuation) as an essential attribute of the human creature.

Ultimately, what are Jung's contributions to a new psychic configuration of humanity? From what we have considered in the pages above, the first (1) concerns the experience of the “inner person,” understood as a symbolic and psychic dimension that constitutes the fundamental stage on which the drama of living forces unfolds. This would not be

something entirely new, but rather a retrieval of psychological depths long sealed behind the intricate symbolism of ancient Gnostic-Christian texts.^[5] In turn, rereading them in the light of depth psychology raises this knowledge to a new level of understanding and deepening. In another way, we can treat Jung as (2) one of the great revealers of the invisible – both in the study of the unconscious and in providing a basis for anomalous phenomena – initiating humanity into a new level of understanding, revealing archetypal layers of the human being and thereby allowing (3) an assessment of archetypal dominants as underlying forces that, in a certain way, order the historical process.

Several other points should be considered, such as: (4) a complex vision of wholeness, inclined toward the union of opposites as something inherent in being; (5) a better understanding of virtue and bestiality, allowing us to engage more effectively with the problem of war and with civilizational efforts; (6) a retrieval of different aspects of the human soul, such as a better appropriation of religious experience in its symbolic-psychological and numinous condition; among others. These aspects are tied together in (7) the notion of the *Self*, which draws the psyche out of the obscurity of random forces and suggests the (already mentioned) wholeness of the human soul, as well as (8) the teleological movement that resides in its luminous and shadowy aspects.

Thus, (9) psychology is removed from a reductionist bias and introduced into the new paradigm of complexity, allowing it to deepen aspects that await us in the vast, subtle field of the human creature.

Moreover, Jung's personal experience, as well as his psychology (10), represents a valid response to the anguish and pessimism that have fallen upon the contemporary and postmodern subject (rich in technology, yet empty of deep psychological experiences), precisely through the perspective of psychic integration and the return of meaning inherent in experience.

[5] Also called an "alchemical-symbolic perspective" (SANCHEZ *et al.*, 2018).

Clearly, this is still a superficial survey, serving more as a stage for reflection and as a movement toward future deepening.

Since archetypes are the imaginal basis of experience, we can understand that there are human expressions – movements and/or personalities – that play, with greater influence, a catalytic function for the *Self's* creative and teleological aspects. Small or large leaps of consciousness also “make use” of a kind of “avatars” through which they become gradually available to people, in one way or another – as Jung demonstrated in his analysis of Christ and other pertinent historical figures in the transitions of aeons.

Could Jung, with his personal sensitivity, be among those individuals capable of playing this kind of historical-cultural role? It is an interesting possibility to consider. In his biographical writings, it is evident how much his intuitive disposition anticipated configurations that were not obvious to the thinking of his time, highlighting universal questions that pertain to humanity in an innovative and perceptive mode of observation.

When we assess the symbolic exhaustion of an *aeon* and the anticipation of subsequent movements, are we facing a mere hunch, an astrological prediction, or a visionary inflation? We can consider that the question is not whether it “will or will not happen,” since we are not dealing with futurology, but rather with evaluating a major dynamic tendency of the synthetic process that originates in the *Self* and its action upon consciousness. This is equivalent to what we might call a panorama of possibilities, a prospective reading of the play of forces in present humanity. On another level, it reflects Jung’s high regard for the psychological depth of many Gnostic and Christian mythologems – their archetypal resonance and synchronic character, whose anticipatory aspects he studied with great attentiveness – combined with his own experience as an intuitive, visionary mind.

Considering that one of the great tendencies of the historical process is the terrible experience of compulsive enantiodromia (the cyclical swing to extremes, in *history-as-repetition*), we can think of the great importance of Jung's deep gaze as one of the valuable symbolic resources that can

promote this new era – so often foretold as a metanoia (knowledge of opposites, for later integration).

As we have seen, the existential void of the “death of God” (the weakening of the symbolic resources of a creative religiosity), ravaged by the Great Wars and disconnected from symbols capable of leading people to the numinous aspect of deep experiences of themselves, would foster a compensatory movement of retrieving and integrating human aspects abandoned by contemporary society. After the intense plunge into the shadows of Nazi-fascism, utilitarianism, and technological-virtual voracity, the inner being – capable of a religious reading of life that is attentive and careful – becomes a possibility for a period (in the long run) favorable to the notion of a “whole man” (integral): a human being not split into radical duality but relatively integrated in functional complexity, since the very dynamic of individuation tends to produce a new path after a long tension of contrary forces, within the time-span of an individual's life.

Finally, Jung can be categorized as one of the points of intersection between ancient and postmodern thought, not only in his encyclopedic task and his enormous capacity for synthesis, but also as a theorist of paradigm transition through the postmodern crisis, helping humanity at a point of civilizational transition. Was he truly fulfilling the role of the ferryman, as indicated by the *Self* in the dream that preceded the writing of *Aion*, in which he received a new and broader boat to accomplish the intended task? In his vast studies and discoveries, and above all in his way of perceiving the human psyche, we can think that Jung has much to offer both present and future humanity. Thus, without making this into a chauvinistic perspective, perhaps we can count him among the “pillars of the bridge of the spirit that crosses the swamp of world history.”

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TONI WOLFF: RECOVERIES, TRANSLATIONS, AND THE CULTURAL LEGACY OF COMPLEX PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

This article offers a brief reflection on the cultural significance of complex psychology and introduces the work of Toni Wolff to contemporary readers. The analysis draws on the author's recently translated book, *Fundamentos da Psicologia Complexa*, and situates Wolff's intellectual production within its historical context to dismantle the myth that has formed around her – a figure more frequently cited than carefully read. As noted by the editors in their justification for publishing Wolff's writings, neither this article nor the book proposes a sentimental recovery. Rather, both advance a critical endeavor: to restore to Wolff's work the space of serious reading from which it has long been excluded.

Keywords: Toni Wolff; cultural legacy; complex psychology.

Introduction

A Brief Comment on the Translational and Editorial Effort

To speak about the reception of an unknown author's work is often a delicate task. Toni Wolff, as stated in the editorial justification of the work *Fundamentos da Psicologia Complexa* (2025), to be published by Sattva:

For decades, she was more invoked than read. A name associated almost exclusively with Jung, she became a side character in a narrative that entangled her in affects, myths, and projections, while largely ignoring the value and originality of her work. She was assigned the place of muse, companion, lover – but rarely the place of thinker. These two volumes mark the first systematic attempt to gather Toni Wolff's theoretical writings, scattered across journals, conference proceedings, and lectures delivered in different forums – texts that, for the most part, have never been reissued or translated and that still circulate with difficulty even among specialists today. This is not a sentimental recovery, but a critical task: to offer Wolff's work the space of reading that has been historically denied (OLIVEIRA E SILVA; PERÚSSOLO, 2025, p. 16).

Moved by this critical and curious spirit, we began to gather the author's texts and, in 2022, still in an unpretentious way, we started translating a seminal methodological text written by Wolff in 1935. The text is part of the commemorative volume for C. G. Jung's 60-year jubilee and is titled *Die Kulturelle Bedeutung der Komplexen Psychologie* (WOLFF, 1935), which in Portuguese can be rendered as *O Significado Cultural da Psicologia Complexa*. It is Toni Wolff's longest text in that collection, with 110 pages.

This is a seminal work that remains relatively inaccessible – even among specialists – since it has yet to be published in many languages and exists only in the original German (WOLFF, 1935), in an Italian translation (1991), and more recently in Portuguese (2025). For this reason, Toni Wolff's work is practically absent from academic debates. The present translation marks not only an effort of historical recovery, but also an attempt to restore to the author the place of thinker – a place that, as Chapernowne (1980) and Healy (2017) point out, was systematically denied to her by narratives that reduced her to Jung's muse, to an *anima* figure, or to his lover.

More than an act of recovering memory and of fair historical reparation, reading Toni Wolff's work proves essential for those who wish to reach an honest understanding of C. G. Jung's psychological proposal. It is worth noting that Jung himself, on two different occasions, made laudatory reference to this text. The first was on September 7, 1935, in a letter addressed to Pastor Ernst Jahn:

I would like to call your attention to a recently published book, whose first chapter deals with my methodology. There you will find a philosophical foundation for all my work that will undoubtedly clarify whatever obscure points may remain (JUNG, 2018, p. 210).

and in his inauguration speech for the C. G. Jung Institute, on April 24, 1948:

To round out the picture of the current state of complex psychology, I would like to mention a few of the more significant works by my students. Among them, I include Toni Wolff's introduction to the foundations of complex psychology, a work that stands out for its philosophical clarity (OC XVIII/2 § 1134).

Following the trail opened by Jung, we encounter the vast psychological kaleidoscope inaugurated by Toni Wolff's work. The text she wrote in 1935, recently published in Portuguese, offers one of the best – perhaps the most relevant – methodological syntheses of the psychological project^[1]. The work is organized into four chapters, which address, respectively, method, structure, psychic energy, and the cultural meaning of complex psychology. The last chapter, the central object of the present article, masterfully synthesizes the ethical assumptions of complex psychology.

It also synthesizes the cultural assumptions of this psychology, demonstrating the breadth of its application and the depth of its theoretical proposal.

Our translational and editorial effort does not intend to exhaust Wolff's work, but to touch, with mercury, the spirit that has long remained bottled

[1] It is worth emphasizing that the text to be published in Portuguese exists only in German and Italian.

up and forgotten in works rarely read, precisely because they have not been properly edited^[2]. This care is also explained by the confusing choice of some publishers who, when publishing Jung, adopted the title *Obras Completas* instead of *Obras Coletadas*, as one sees in Portuguese and Spanish, leaving out seminars, letters, and other documents^[3].

We therefore have here the first volume of *Obras Coletadas* of Toni Wolff and our wish is that:

These volumes do not close her work, but open paths. By offering the contemporary reader direct access to her texts, we invite a new listening, more attentive and free of prejudice. May Toni Wolff finally be read for what she truly was: a singular thinker, a quiet builder of foundations, and a voice that, far from having aged, remains alive wherever the soul is still thought with seriousness and beauty (OLIVEIRA E SILVA; PERÚSSOLO, 2025, p. 17).

This is the synthesis that will accompany us throughout this article: to comment on the cultural importance of Toni Wolff's work, who was, before anything else, a quiet builder of foundations.

The Emergence of a Theorist

“As well as a discovery of mine, Fräulein Antonia Wolff – a remarkable intelligence with exceptional philosophical and religious acuity” (C. G. Jung to Sigmund Freud, August 29, 1911)^[4].

[2] For the origin and use of the term “complex psychology,” see Riccardo Bernardini, in his work *Jung a Eranos: Il progetto de la Psicologia Complessa* (2011), where the author highlights that the expression was coined by Toni Wolff. This terminological shift occurred mainly to distinguish analytic practice from the theoretical construction carried out by Jungian psychology and to restore to this field of knowledge the centrality of its praxis.

[3] MCGUIRE, W. *A correspondência completa de Sigmund Freud e Carl G. Jung*. Ed Imago, 1993. (p. 503).

[4] In German, Jung's works were published under the title *Gesammelte Werke*, whose literal translation is *Obras Reunidas*. The English edition was consolidated as *Collected Works*, usually rendered in Portuguese and Spanish as *Obras Coletadas*.

As Shamdasani (2020) reiterates, any mention of Toni Wolff usually begins from the same point: her entering analysis with Carl Gustav Jung, generally dated to 1910, soon after her father's death in December 1909. This moment, described at length by Healy (2017), is undeniably striking and is often presented as a turning point in both of their lives – both in Wolff's biographical course and in Jung's theoretical development. However, this initial emphasis also reveals a recurring limitation in the narratives around Toni Wolff: she is almost always referred to through Jung, and rarely considered in an autonomous or simultaneous position.

When we recover the way Jung presents her to Freud in 1911 (McGuire, 1993, p. 503), another possibility of reading opens up: not that of a patient, nor that of a collaborator in training, but that of an intellectual “discovery” – a young woman already recognized by her interlocutor as endowed with uncommon philosophical and religious acuity, about to enter actively into the field of psychology being outlined by Jung. It is an early and unequivocal record of intellectual recognition.

Toni Wolff herself later proposed a distinction between two aspects of this psychology: the theoretical, which she called “complex psychology,” and the practical, which continued to be called “analytical psychology.” Let us see how Wolff synthesizes this separation (1935/2025, pp. 24-25):

It is necessary to explain here how the term “Complex Psychology” applies to “Analytical Psychology,” the designation that until now has been used more frequently. The term “Analytical Psychology” was coined by Jung, and the Zurich school established this approach when it separated from Freudian psychoanalysis in 1913, whose international association Jung had previously been part of.

Since then, Analytical Psychology has been understood as referring to Jungian psychology in general terms. It is called “analytical” because its overall psychological perspective – that is, its engagement with the unconscious – presupposes a contrast with the psychology of conscious processes; at the same time, it stands in contrast to psychoanalysis, insofar as the latter does not analyze the soul. In more recent times, Jung has used primarily the term Complex Psychology, especially when speaking of the entire field of his psychology from a theoretical standpoint. The term Analytical Psychology, by

contrast, remains in use when referring to the practical procedure of psychological analysis. It is by no means insignificant to maintain a distinction between these two terms, a fact that also justifies the methodological and theoretical explanations above, which employ the term Complex Psychology when referring to general knowledge and thus also encompass the notion of Analytical Psychology used in this book. Psychological recognition constitutes a category in its own right. It is a synthetic judgment and presupposes knowledge of the method and structure of Complex Psychology, as well as the psychological self-critique inherent in recognition itself. The application of psychological judgment consists in the evaluation of contexts and in the demonstration of their psychological meaning. Psychological recognition is simultaneously critical and constructive. Psychological critique, for example, elucidates the motives of the individual unconscious, the subjectivity of projective processes, and the archetypal basis of specific personal reactions. It also conveys knowledge of attitude, as well as of functional type and its associated problem, and of the distinction between the personal and the impersonal – that is, between what concerns the subjective psychological content and the objective psychological content.

Although conceptually precise, the proposed distinction met – and continues to meet – with resistance, as the designation analytical psychology has been preferred as an overarching category. This resistance, however, reflects less a concern for theoretical clarity than the structural erasures suffered by Wolff and by so many other figures.

Jung's preference for the terminology “complex psychology” is recorded explicitly. In volume VII of the *Obras Completas*, in all editions and languages, § 191 reads: “(...) However, as in the present exposition of complex psychology, which is how I would like to title my theoretical essays (...)”. This passage is followed by footnote 14: “Today designated as analytical psychology. Cf. T. Wolff, *Einführung in die Grundlagen der Komplexen Psychologie, in Studien zu C. G. Jungs Psychologie*, 1959.” This note, however, is mistaken, because it is precisely in that text – the very source mentioned – that Toni Wolff establishes the distinction between “complex psychology” and “analytical psychology.”

The persistence of this editorial mistake, reproduced without critical revision over the decades, contributes to the obscuring of the fundamen-

tal distinction elaborated by Wolff and can be understood as a subtle yet significant sign of the erasure of her contribution within the Jungian field. This terminological shift not only retroactively invalidates Wolff's proposal; it also exposes the silent mechanisms through which the history of a Jungian tradition is shaped, consolidating a narrative that marginalizes founding voices.

Bernardini (2011) notes that the term “complex psychology” was adopted only in some regions of Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. These are, curiously, the places where Wolff's methodological text (1935/2025) is available in the native language. The Anglo-Saxon world, which after World War II consolidated itself as the most influential linguistic and cultural sphere for the evolution of Jung's psychology, does not adopt the term “complex psychology”.

Toni Wolff's Early Writings

This third part of our path sets out to reconstruct Toni Wolff's intellectual emergence, not in a reductive way as a mere unfolding of her relationship with Jung, but as the expression of a singular and consistent theoretical vocation, perceptible in her early writings and conceptual interventions. The time frame adopted here runs from 1912, when she joined the Society for Psychoanalytic Initiatives (*Die Gesellschaft für psychoanalytische Bestrebungen*), to 1935, the year her text *Fundamentos da Psicologia Complexa* was published.

As Wieser (2001) notes, the Society for Psychoanalytic Initiatives was an early milestone in the formation of a community beyond the consulting room: former patients with a continued interest in analysis would gather there to cultivate, discuss, and eventually produce knowledge. The *Korrespondenzblatt der Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung* (1912, vol. II, p. 549) describes its founding, in February 1912, as follows:

On February 13, 1912, at the suggestion of groups of analysands, a special society was founded. It currently has about 20 members and, in association with the Zurich Psychoanalytic Association, is devoted to the cultivation of

psychoanalysis. It is meant to fulfill a double mission: on the one hand, to offer analysands – who, in most cases, maintain a lasting interest in analysis – the opportunity for deepening and activity, creating for them a milieu that, for some, can replace the one they previously frequented but had to abandon because it was incompatible with the neurosis. On the other hand, it is to create a permanent place for the cultivation and dissemination of analytical knowledge among qualified interested parties. Membership is granted, for various practical reasons, only to analysands. The presidency is held by a member of the Zurich Psychoanalytic Association, currently Dr. Riklin. Meetings are held every 14 days, alternating with those of the Psychoanalytic Association.

In another issue of the same *Korrespondenzblatt der Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung* (1912, vol. III, pp. 108-109), it is reported that “The Society for Psychoanalytic Initiatives, whose founding was reported, had 22 members at the end of the summer semester. The president is Dr. Riklin.”

Regarding Toni Wolff's participation in this society, it was possible to identify only the titles of some of her presentations. In 1912, there is a record of a lecture (*ibid.*), and the following year, two other communications were published in the *Korrespondenzblatt der Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung* (1913, 2/3, p. 635). The themes of these presentations were: *Weibliche Ödipusprobleme – Elektra etc.* (“Female Oedipal problems – Electra, etc.”), from 1912; *Libidosymbolik in Grillparzers Goldenem Vliess* (“Libido symbolism in Grillparzer's *The Golden Fleece*”), presented on February 7, 1913; and *Über Wagners Parsifal* (“On Wagner's *Parsifal*”), presented on May 9, 1913.

Even though these presentations took place within a “small circle,” her choice of themes – complex, symbolic, mythological – already indicates a concern with the archetypal dimensions of the psyche and with the specific role of the feminine in the construction of the analytical imagination (WOLFF, 1941). These themes not only anticipate her future contribution but also challenge the idea that her theoretical formation would have been later or merely derivative.

At the same time, Toni Wolff, still under the name Antonia Wolff,

published two essays in the journal *Wissen und Leben*, devoted to culture and art. Both will be included in volume 2 of *Obras Coletadas* of Toni Wolff, under the titles *Escritos Diversos: Odisseu e Nausicaa – Tragédia de Robert Fäesi* (WOLFF, 1911), and *Coronel Chabert – Considerações sobre a tragédia musical de Waltershausen* (WOLFF, 1913). These texts show a refined essayistic style, already permeated by psychological sensitivity; in the first, by analyzing Robert Fäesi's tragedy based on VI da Odisseia, Wolff (1911) proposes an interpretation that transposes the mythological episode into the field of the dynamics between the masculine and the feminine, framing the encounter between *Odysseus and Nausicaa* not merely as a mythological episode, but as a psychic drama of recognition and differentiation. She further reveals an extraordinary power of synthesis, as can be seen in the final two paragraphs:

This work presents a reading of a heroic destiny and the material of an episode from a rich and varied epic. And even so, a hero not so much, and an individual life that does not connect us to him. The hero also does not step out of the human community, and his destiny is not qualitatively, but only dynamically different from ours. Only with the greatest intensity and, consequently, with the greatest conflicts, he lives the problem that is common to all: to fill the frame of life that nature has given us and to make fruitful the totality of our forces. The more distant the goals, the stronger the resistances we need to overcome – the strongest within ourselves – and the most significant is rarely created without the destruction of what hinders us in the present, which should be only a step toward the future. Thus, it is a drama that, in the form of a novel, could unfold entirely within the hero, but that confronts us on the stage as a problem objectified by all of us. And in this timelessness and universal value, it connects us once again to Homer as if it were the concentrated content of the whole *Odisseia*, which is a marvelous and often varied symbol of the life journey of all of us wandering on the sea of the world, and which will become richer in content the greater and stronger we aim to realize our crossings in truly creative works (WOLFF, 1911, pp. 569-570, free translation).

The hero metaphor as an image of inner realization resonates strongly with Jung's contemporary elaboration in *Transformações e Símbolos da Libido*

(1912). In an essayistic and unpretentious way, we could say that the paragraph quoted above, written by Toni Wolff, very happily synthesizes one of the ideas that would later become the core of complex psychology, namely, the autonomy of the psychic.

In the other text mentioned, entitled *Coronel Chabert*, Wolff (1913), when reflecting on Waltershausen's musical tragedy, reveals an aesthetic and interpretive sensitivity that goes beyond conventional theatrical criticism and lays bare the background conflicts of the soul that structure the action. Below is a brief excerpt from this text:

Tragedy exposes the state of a conflict that temporarily prevails in the poet (consciously or unconsciously). It manifests in various forms: either as a desire that, seeking simultaneously in two directions, cancels itself out, resulting in a total of zero; or, above all, as an emotional overcharge of a tendency that develops the primitive ego excessively, to the detriment of altruistic and social factors. Such a person is torn out of the general context and must destroy himself; here, the result would equal minus. In both cases, therefore, a negative, whose symbol is "death." What is sought is a balance with one-*self* that makes possible an active and fruitful life in which the individual fits harmoniously into the collective. The solution of the conflict must, therefore, always unfold by suppressing the destructive component (WOLFF, 1913, pp. 484-485, free translation).

These early texts, at once embedded in the cultural spirit of their time and already permeated by an embryonic analytical perspective, reveal a Toni Wolff in transition: from a young intellectual engaged with the arts and literature to a future theorist of depth psychology, whose symbolic reading of myths, dramas, and historical figures would come to play a decisive role in the construction of a psychology of the feminine (WOLFF, 1934, 1941) and in the elaboration of the archetypal forms of the soul (WOLFF, 1932, 1943).

From this period onward, Toni Wolff's intellectual trajectory becomes intertwined with the history of the institutional projects that were already taking shape under the designation of analytical psychology (SHAMDASANI, 2003). This movement followed Jung's break with

Freud and the subsequent withdrawal of the Zurich Group from the International Psychoanalytical Association.

Thus, on January 30, 1914, a decision was made to found a group intended for extraordinary members, among whom Maria Moltzer and Toni Wolff were accepted, both recognized for their familiarity with psychoanalysis. On October 30, 1914, the group came to be known as the Association for Analytical Psychology, under Jung's presidency (SHAMDASANI, 2003).

According to Fischer and Hoch (2025), on February 26, 1916, a constitutive general assembly of the friends of the analytical psychology movement took place, during which the Psychological Club of Zurich was officially founded. On that occasion, Emma Jung was appointed as its first president.

With the founding of the Club, it became the privileged space for Toni Wolff's presentations. However, the surviving documentation – particularly the Club's minutes – offers only a partial glimpse, and little is known about Wolff's contributions in this context. The exception consists of two lectures delivered in 1932 and 1934, entitled *Simbolismo Tântrico em Goethe and Reflexões sobre o Processo de Individuação da Mulher*. Both will be reproduced in volume II of the *Obras Coletadas* of Toni Wolff.

Following the panoramic historical thread outlined here, her text *Exposição sobre a Teoria de C. G. Jung* (WOLFF, 1933), published in a special issue of the journal *Revue d'Allemagne*, marks another high point in her intellectual trajectory. In this contribution, she undertakes what no one had previously attempted: a systematic summary of Jung's thought. At the same time, she notes the necessity of distinguishing between theory and practice. This distinction – later explicitly incorporated by her – reveals a rare epistemological awareness, one that broadens the understanding of analytical psychology as a field that is not merely clinical, but also conceptual and philosophical.

An analysis of Toni Wolff's writings and conceptual interventions between 1912 and 1935 reveals not only the slow but persistent formation of

a distinctive perspective within the emerging field of complex psychology; it also reveals, by contrast, the curious silence with which the official history of the discipline responded to this emergence. Far from being confined to the role of muse, assistant, or a disciplined echo of Jung's ideas, Wolff asserts herself as a singular theoretical figure, endowed with a rare symbolic sensitivity and an attunement to the spiritual and cultural impasses of her time.

Her work in the Psychological Club of Zurich and her presence in the first institutional circles in which the contours of analytical psychology were being formulated – from libido theory to typology – as well as her early texts devoted to the symbolic interpretation of drama, literature, and mythology, constitute evidence of a thought in gestation, already oriented toward the creation of its own categories. The fact that this production was not celebrated with the same enthusiasm granted to less consistent texts, yet conveniently signed, says less about its intrinsic value than about the dynamics of consecration and erasure that marked – and still mark – the history of ideas.

It is within this horizon that the essay *Fundamentos da Psicologia Complexa*, published in 1935, takes shape as the culmination of a long formative process and as a testimony to Wolff's conceptual maturity. In the final chapter of this work – significantly entitled *O Significado Cultural da Psicologia Complexa* – the author offers a decisive reflection on psychology's place in the contemporary world, a theme developed further in the next section of this article.

The Cultural Importance of Complex Psychology

The final chapter of Toni Wolff's book *Fundamentos da Psicologia Complexa* (WOLFF, 1935/2025) bears the title “*O Significado Cultural da Psicologia Complexa*.” In this brief comment, the author turns to the cultural values that vibrate at the heart of this discipline. For Wolff (1935/2025, pp. 246-247),

cultural values are objective values; whether ideal or practical in nature, they are valid beyond what is merely subjective and personal. The previous chapters tried to demonstrate that Complex Psychology meets this criterion. The various areas of cultural history that this book explores from the perspective of Complex Psychology offer a glimpse of its diverse possibilities of application and show the enrichment and deepening that psychological science receives through it. Nevertheless, Complex Psychology goes beyond scientific experience, since the psyche, at the moment it is experienced, cannot be adequately formulated in a scientific manner, and such formulation is later given only partially. Moreover, since the experience of psychic reality is the most personal and subjective, the question arises as to why one can still speak of the cultural importance of Complex Psychology in a way more encompassing than the scientific. Insofar as the ethical aspects of psychological knowledge were addressed in the previous expositions, the question may seem, at least partially, answered. By contrast, the following question arises: do psychological insight and the process of individuation not consist in an extremely complicated and time-consuming path, which needlessly spends too much time on subjective and purely personal aspects, which ought to give way to questions far more important and necessary? Does our era not have far more urgent tasks, and should the individual not concentrate his energy on something more objective, instead of focusing on his psychic problems? After all, individuals are inserted in a general cultural reality and bear a share of responsibility in it.

Here, we see the author emerge in the power of her thought, carrying to the utmost the Jungian wager that individuation is, before anything else, an ethical task. A subject unconscious of himself cannot do anything in the world other than project his destruction into it. Beyond that, she maintains that the experience of individuation cannot be generalized: each person must answer the demands of his soul at his own peril. Considering that Jung died affirming he had not found meaning for his own life, it seems, at the very least, dishonest to seek answers in a place where they did not exist, even for the subject who erected such a system of thought. Let us see how Wolff synthesizes the idea presented above:

If the answer does not emerge from JUNG's ideas, one must try to ground the most evident need of depth psychology, from which the understanding

of the essence and laws of the psyche becomes a problem for the person of contemporary Western culture. No other science, no art, no action needs to concern itself with its motivation and its origin at a given historical moment. It is sufficient if the individual who devotes himself to it does so with the best knowledge and skills. Psychology, however, in its function of knowing the human being and his conscious and unconscious motivations, is not permitted – at least not without trying to apply its own methods to itself (WOLFF, 1935/2025, p. 247).

In this passage, we find one of the basic questions of complex psychology: how can meaning be restored to a life from which collective meaning has been purged? Wolff's answer could not be more distant from perspectivism and pragmatism: each individual must not only develop but become himself the very method of dialogue with the unconscious. More than a philosophical proposal, complex psychology seeks to confront the central problem of the modern human being, incapable of responding to the evils that afflict him by appealing to metaphysics or to the transcendental subject of knowledge. Let us see how Wolff (1935/2025, p. 263) synthesizes these points:

can the question of what function complex psychology fulfills in the individual's cultural problem be answered? In fact, the question must not be answered from without, but only from within, that is, by the people who are confronted with the problem of experiencing psychic reality and who attempt to solve it through knowledge. On the other hand, even if they are not completely decisive, because an attitude is preserved only in the development of life and must also be valid for death. Moreover, when we consider culture as a whole, and above all, the problematic of our culture, what is the importance of ordinary individuals and even of people who may have approached their specific cultural problem in a more or less sensible way? Therefore, perhaps the question cannot be answered in a principled manner. Reality and the future must show to what extent it is necessary or important that individuals honestly and responsibly assume the task placed upon them by their particular psychic structure with the experience and knowledge of psychic reality.

It is a demanding proposal, which confronts the modern spirit in its search for technical and universal solutions. Complex psychology, as

outlined here, offers no relief but demands responsibility; it provides no quick answers, but intensifies the questions the subject directs to himself. If there is anything philosophical in this posture, it is in a strictly existential sense: a psychology that is born both from the crisis of metaphysics and from the collapse of the transcendental subject, and that therefore seeks to re-signify suffering from lived interiority – and not from pure reason.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

ART AND JUNG

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Introduction

Human beings have always created art. To express and give form to experiences, dreams, ideas, and intuitions was required to understand our inner world, and to record the restlessness and transformations of the human soul. Art functions like an innate instinct that takes hold of the individual, making him its instrument. The artist, as reported by Jung (OC XV, §157), is a collective figure, a vehicle and shaper of humanity's unconscious psychic life.

Studying art, therefore, becomes a fundamental path toward understanding how the human psyche operates, an idea that highlights the importance of the Department of Art and Analytical Psychology.

Founded in 2015, the Department of Art and Analytical Psycholo-

gy of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* seeks to explore the foundations, methods, and practices of psychology in its interface with art (Estudos Junguianos, 2016). It understands scientific research as a path guided by prior planning and anchored in a method composed of organized actions aimed at observing a specific phenomenon through the control of variables that increase the reliability of the results. The study of the arts has always posed a significant challenge due to its inherent subjectivity, a challenge that analytical psychology has embraced within its theoretical framework.

Arte and Jung

For many centuries, art required physical supports such as canvases, walls, clay, marble, and other materials. To encounter art, we typically went to the places where it was found, including museums, churches, and galleries.

With the emergence of modern art, this practice changed. Art left its traditional supports and took on a three-dimensional presence, and in some cases even a living one, as seen in performance art. Today, artworks occupy streets, walkways, and subway stations. Art may now hold a more democratic place in public life, allowing it to fulfill what is inherent in its language, in its many forms of expression, which is the manifestation of the soul.

Every historical period is guided by paradigms. and art is never detached from the ideas of its time; there is always a set of beliefs and ways of thinking that shape its course, whether by affirming them or by challenging them and opening new possibilities. Artistic research forms a vast field of knowledge, and its polysemic nature opens multiple paths of understanding that allow us to deepen our comprehension. Such research – whether in visual arts, literature, sculpture, or other forms of expression – draws on the methodological rigor of academia as it seeks new ways to study art as a documentary source and a means to understand historical and cultural processes. Science is commonly seen as a vehicle

for knowledge; art, by contrast, is often described in different terms, and it is not usual to consider it as an expression or transmission of human knowledge. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize that art is not only a form of knowledge but can also be an important vehicle for other kinds of knowledge since it offers insight into human experience and its values.

Both art and science ultimately take on a certain didactic role in how we understand the world, although they do so in different ways: art does not contradict science, yet it allows us to understand aspects that science cannot reach (ZAMBONI, 2001, p. 20).

By integrating art into psychology, Jung broadened the horizons of science and reaffirmed analytical psychology's commitment to the wholeness of human experience.

From the perspective of analytical psychology, art emerges as a fundamental phenomenon for understanding the human psyche. For Jung, art is an expression of both the personal and collective unconscious – a reflection of experiences and of the archetypes shared by humanity. Art is understood as a vehicle for self-knowledge and for the expansion of consciousness. Like dreams, works of art reveal compensatory aspects of the psyche, bringing to light what is missing or has been repressed by the dominant conscious attitude. Artistic creation may extend beyond the personal realm: it expresses transpersonal contents about the collective. In this sense, a work of art can transcend the limitations of its creator and form a living bridge to the collective unconscious.

Jung emphasized that the psyche possesses an essentially creative character. The creative act can be compared to the projection of spirit into matter – a process that weaves together inner and outer realities, the individual and the universal, functioning as a true reconciler of opposites (BARCELLOS, 2004).

Colonnese (2018) notes that, according to Jung, a work of art functions as a mediator between the known and the unknown, the conscious and the unconscious, precisely because it cannot be fully grasped by consciousness. This conception aligns directly with the idea of the transcendent function.

Jung (1916/1958/2000, OC VIII/2) defines the transcendent function as the process of synthesizing conscious and unconscious contents, which occurs with vividness in artistic activity. A work of art, therefore, emerges as the product of a creative operation that transforms the psyche, supporting the process of individuation. Art becomes an instrument in the service of the soul.

Jung engaged in artistic creation, even though he did not see himself as an artist, and his aim was never aesthetic. His artistic production can be seen unfolding alongside his psychological process throughout his life: *O Livro Vermelho* and *Os Livros Negros* illustrate this trajectory. This becomes evident in the exhibition of *O Livro Vermelho* as one of the main artworks at the 2013 Venice Biennale, highlighting his connection with images and narrating his individuation process with art, beauty, and pain. According to Jung:

Often, the hands know how to solve riddles that the intellect has struggled in vain to understand. By shaping a dream, we can continue to dream it in greater detail while awake, and an isolated event, initially unintelligible, can be integrated into the sphere of the whole personality, even though the individual may not be aware of this at first (JUNG, 1916/1958/2000, OC VIII/2, § 180).

The Department of Art and Analytical Psychology emerged from the collaboration of researchers who recognize the arts, in their various forms of expression, as a path to knowledge. Each researcher, based on their specific area of interest, contributes to the group's proposed projects, creating a broad range of possibilities that take shape in the production of books, articles, and academic meetings dedicated to art and analytical psychology. Over the years, the department has organized a range of events, publications, and institutional activities. We highlight below some of these initiatives:

Nise da Silveira and Jung Meeting, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6mbQEJbT28&t=4s>

Interview with Peticov, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br7ypBTN8HI>

Interview with Franklin Chang, former director of *Casa das Palmeiras* (Adamo *et al.*, 2019).

Presentation at the XXIV Congress of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil*: “*Fronteiras: Mandalas, Círculo Sagrado, Pacientes de Nise da Silveira e Carl Gustav Jung*”

Presentation at the XXV Congress of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil*, “*Emergências*”, Bento Gonçalves (Gaeta, 2019).

III Conference on Art and Analytical Psychology at Universidade Paulista (UNIP) (*Estudos Junguianos*, 2023), presenting nearly all the works included in the book “*Travessias no Tempo: Arte e Jung*” (Gaeta, 2022).

XXVII Congress of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB), held in 2024 in Salvador, Bahia, presenting “*A Travessia do Inferno em Todos Nós.*” In the *Divina Comedia*, Dante, and in *O Livro Vermelho*, Jung, both undertake a midlife journey that yields a series of new meanings and reconfigurations of sense. Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise are psychic territories that we inhabit and traverse; we often pass through our own personal hell, and between the extremes of Hell and Paradise lies our Purgatory, where the union of opposites – much like the transcendent function – creates symbols and becomes individuation. Available at: <https://studio.youtube.com/video/75izZVG6OdY/edit>

Modern Art Week. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8otHcogxk4&t=9s>

Final Considerations

When we contemplate the intersection between art and analytical psychology, we perceive within it the vitality of inquiry and the mystery of symbol, both methodological rigor and the freedom of imagination. Art, as an expression of the personal and collective unconscious, reveals itself as a living mirror of the psyche, capable of deciphering enigmas that reason alone cannot reach. Like dreams, works of art emerge from the depths of the soul; when shared, they turn the inner world outward and the outer world inward, connecting individual and collective consciousness through images.

Analytical Psychology, by embracing art within its scope, recognizes the value of symbol, image, and aesthetic experience as legitimate paths to knowledge about the human condition. The creative process operates as a transcendent function, reconciling reason and emotion, science and sensibility, matter, and spirit. The artist becomes an instrument of the collective soul, one who crosses psychic territories, moves between the infernos and paradises of existence, and generates new meanings and possibilities. Art does more than illustrate the psyche: it alters it, enlarges it, and makes it new. In every line, nuance, color, or word, there vibrates a search for meaning, mystery, and resolution. In this space, science and poetry intertwine, and the human soul finds its dwelling place – a universe of research and wonder within the Department of Art and Analytical Psychology of the AJB and the Center for Art and Analytical Psychology (NAPA).

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Human beings have always produced art. It seems that the impulse to express and materialize experiences, dreams, ideas, and intuitions has always been necessary for human beings to see themselves, to understand themselves, and to record the restlessness and transformations of their soul. For many centuries, art required physical supports such as canvases, walls, clay, marble, and other materials. To encounter art, we typically went to the places where it was found, including museums, churches, and galleries. With the emergence of modern art, this practice changed. Art left its traditional supports and took on a three-dimensional presence, and in some cases even a living one, as seen in performance art. Today, artworks occupy streets, walkways, and subway stations. Art may now hold a more democratic place in public life, allowing it to fulfill what is inherent in its language, in its many forms of expression, which is the manifestation of the soul.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

ALL BODIES MATTER: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENDER STUDIES AND COMPLEX PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

This essay advances a critical reflection on the epistemological foundations of analytical psychology, drawing on gender and sexuality studies and addressing Brazil's troubling scenario of violence and inequality. We question the limitations of a psychology centered on a universal subject – white, cisgender, and heterosexual – and call upon the community to assume ethical responsibility toward the plurality of subjectivities. We also advocate for the overcoming of binarism and the development of psychological practices committed to inclusion, diversity, and social transformation, recognizing the political power of desire as a creative force for new modes of existence. Jungian theory can be expanded through a queer and non-binary perspective, opening space for new forms of clinical listening and knowledge production.

Keywords: gender studies; sexuality; analytical psychology; heteropatriarchal complex.

I am the monster who speaks to you. The monster that was built by your discourses and clinical practices. I am the monster who rises from the couch and claims the word, not so much as a patient, but as a citizen, as a monstrous equal.

Paul B. Preciado

Introduction

Data from the World Economic Forum (2024) place Brazil in 70th position in terms of gender inequality, reflecting an alarming reality of violence against women and LGBTQIA+ people. One in every three women in the country is a victim of domestic violence, and Brazil continues to lead the global ranking of murders of this population. In light of this scenario, it becomes urgent to promote a critical reflection on the theoretical and epistemological bases that support psychological and social practices. Complex psychology, particularly analytical psychology, must be called to ethical responsibility in relation to the diversity of gender and sexuality experiences and subjectivities.

In this context, the relevance of gender studies stands out. As emphasized by the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP, 2016), these studies have contributed significantly to the denaturalization of female subordination and sexual normativity. This “gender turn” has challenged discriminatory pedagogies and guaranteed fundamental rights for women, trans people, travesties, lesbians, and gays, such as access to education, historically denied to these populations.

In response to these transformations, the Department of Sexual and Gender Diversity (DDSG) of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil (AJB)* was created in 2021, to establish a space grounded in analytical psychology to address urgent contemporary issues related to gender and sexuality –

topics still unfamiliar even to many members of our own association. In a society marked by prejudice, discrimination, structural inequalities, and multiple forms of violence, we aim to reflect on our theoretical foundations so that they may sustain a democratic and inclusive practice. We want to give voice and presence to the monsters who are rising from the couch and speaking out, as stated in the epigraph above.

Theoretical Framework: Gender, Sexuality, and Analytical Psychology

The feeling of being dirty does not arise within LGBT+ people themselves; it is also a product of how culture regulates these experiences. The identities *bicha*, *traveco*, *machorra* (notice how these words almost leap off the page?) are also disciplinary forms for organizing bodies.

Sofia Favero

A first idea that we felt the need to name and revise was our use of the traditional notion of a universal subject, generally represented by the white, cisgender, heterosexual, Western, middle-class man. Such an approach not only restricts the understanding of the complexity of the human psyche but also operates as a normative standard that establishes hierarchies between lives. When this hegemonic subject is adopted as a reference, other forms of subjectivity become marginalized, dehumanized, and pathologized. On one hand, difference is treated as deviation; on the other, the body that serves as the measure is rendered invisible, scarcely questioned. However, as Haraway (2023) has already asserted, no thought is not situated and embodied.

In this context, how does this issue appear in our theories and practices? In the book *Escutando Dissidências*, Parise *et al.* (2024) remind us that complex psychology has produced, within its theoretical framework, hypotheses regarding how the psyche manifests in relation to gender

issues. The authors draw attention, however, to the fact that little has been discussed concerning contributions in the field of gender studies that have developed outside psychology. The authors note that the frictions between what was thought and experienced in these fields – particularly from the 1970s onward – became increasingly acute in relation to what analytical psychology proposed in the early decades of the twentieth century. It is not simply a matter of expanding or complementing ideas about gender. Some questions have deepened to the point where one can now ask: Is it still epistemologically possible to work with certain concepts that seem obsolete? What forms of knowledge and consequences are produced, in training and clinical practice, if we continue to use them? Might other ways of thinking generate different practices and new theories?

To engage in discussions of gender and to consider how these debates have reverberated within analytical psychology, it is essential to ask: Have sex and gender always existed? Have things always been as they are today, or have these concepts evolved?

Historical Constructions of Gender and Sex

And our enemies remain the same: patriarchy,
machismo, and sexism, along with other issues that
arise from intersectionality.

Letícia Nascimento

In the book *Inventando o Sexo*, Laqueur (2001) offers an important review of how the meanings associated with corporeality in social relations have transformed over the course of history. The author begins with the Greek monistic conception of the sexes, the idea of isomorphism. In this view, there existed only one human organism: the male. Women were considered atrophied men. Because their bodies lacked sufficient heat, their organs failed to develop and externalize. It is important to recall that, in *A Política*, Aristotle tells us which bodies inhabited the Greek polis: male citizens, landowners, and non-foreigners. These men were

authorized to participate in public political life because they possessed bodies that authorized themselves, as bearers of logos. At the opposite end was the *oikos* – the household, the private sphere – which defined the boundaries of the polis. The *oikos* was inhabited by women, children, and enslaved people, bodies that did not possess themselves, condemned to the private world. Forms of life close to *zōé*, mere animal life, incapable of discourse.

Moving forward, we know that in the 14th century, Europe faced an immense population crisis due to the Hundred Years' War and the bubonic plague. One third of the population was wiped out, resulting in a major labor shortage. Later, in the 19th century, with the rise of the Industrial Revolution and capitalism, the need for industrial workers grew. It is during this period that the function of the uterus was “discovered.” This organ then acquired a meaning that came to operate as a despotic mechanism over women: the uterus serves to reproduce; the woman is a reproductive body, and thus two human organisms exist that are antagonistic and complementary. Human destiny would therefore lie in the reproductive coupling of penis and vagina. As a reproductive machine and an unpaid provider of domestic labor, women became central to the accumulation of wealth dictated by capitalism. Meanwhile, male proletarians circulated in the polis, selling their labor power – or the labor of their offspring – to those who owned the means of production. Preciado writes that this new order “privileges reproductive sexual practices as a strategy for managing the population, the reproduction of the labor force, but also the reproduction of the consumer population. It is capital, not life, that reproduces itself” (PRECIADO, 2023).

It is important to recognize how the notion of sex emerges in the 19th century within a conceptual framework that elevates heterosexuality to the status of norm. In her seminal text *O Tráfico de Mulheres*, Rubin (2017) proposed the idea of compulsory heterosexuality as a political regime that produces male superiority and the oppression of women and LGBTQIA+ people.

Compulsory heterosexuality produces sexual difference by establishing what is expected of men and women in our society. In this sense, Matos and Deola (2025) highlight this mechanism of control as a regulator of behavior. It is a technological, advanced, and timeless device of subjectivation that conceals itself over the course of its own operation by presenting itself as natural. For this reason, even unconsciously, women are forced by heterosexuality into emotional, psychological, economic, and political subordination to men.

We are left with the question: How do we avoid succumbing to the webs of sexism, patriarchy, and homophobia that permeate our society? “Resisting oppression structures and transgressing the heteropatriarchal system may represent a constant challenge. But pain produces an effect of breaking silences,” says Audre Lorde (2020). Also, feminism, with its demands and struggles over the years, has contributed greatly to allowing this order to be critically examined, to enabling new rights to be claimed by women and LGBTQIA+ people, and to prompting us to ask what exactly a woman is and how her oppressions have been constructed.

Sexual Difference in Jungian Psychology

Silence buries us

Gloria Anzaldúa

In what ways does the sexual difference produced by compulsory heterosexuality permeate the propositions of Jungian theory? What limitations does it impose? Once we become aware of it, what other existential possibilities are opened to us?

In the introductory chapter of *Escutando Dissidências*, Parise *et al.* (2024) point out that, for a long time, authors who followed Jung’s work reproduced his concept of *anima*, assuming that the psyche could be archetypically gendered. Eros and logos. There would be, in the unconscious, a feminine figure or principle and its masculine counterparts.

Samuels (1992) argues that the omission of the ongoing role of the prevailing culture in shaping the feminine can create confusion between what is understood as eternal and what is merely commonly observed. Here, one feels the dead weight of the inheritance of archetypal theory. The problem is not archetypal theory itself, but rather the use that may be made of it, especially when one uncritically treats the archetype as a timeless, immutable jolt that points to an essence to which we should surrender.

In this sense, Parise *et al.* (2024) observe that, for a long time, all Jungian material produced failed to question what it meant to be a man or a woman, keeping the discussion confined to what happens after a child is assigned a gender and sex. Sexual difference is assumed as a given of some supposed universal, transhistorical reality, rather than as metaphors elaborated by culture and by individuals at a particular moment in time, as a more rigorous Jungian approach would suggest.

However, a closer reading reveals that it is possible to find avenues of escape from the heteropatriarchal regime within Jungian and post-Jungian theory. In the previously mentioned introduction to *Escutando Dissidências*, Pessoa notes that in *Freud e a Psicanálise*, Jung (2013, IV) acknowledges that children possess a sexuality of a perverse and polymorphous nature. The author then proceeds to assert decisively that “there is no alternative but to assume that before and after puberty it is the same libido.” Thus, “the infantile perversions emerge in the same manner in adults” (JUNG, 2013, IV §259). In this case, the author admits the polymorphism of desire without estrangement, conceiving libido as polymorphous throughout life, which gives rise to the idea that our psychic energy seeks diverse objects over the course of our trajectories. In this sense, Pessoa concludes that there is no reason not to understand variations in sexual orientation and gender identity as expressions of desire open to any person.

Hillman (1984), in *Mito da Análise*, introduces the mythological figure of Dionysus and his bisexuality to present the possibility of an archetypal multiplicity of sexuality.

Furthermore, according to Pessoa's (2024) review, over time, Jungian literature has increasingly engaged with themes related to sexuality and gender, not only – but particularly – through the work of LGBTQIA+ authors. Initially, these authors focused primarily on issues of identity and sexuality, drawing mainly on myths and images from Western mythologies and religions that depict love and sexuality between deities and humans of the same gender. These authors include Hopcke with the book *Jung, Junguianos e a Homossexualidade* (2002) and the edited volume *Same-Sex Love and the Path to Wholeness* (1993), Downing with *Myths and Mysteries of Same-Sex Love* (2006), Lingardi with *Men in Love: Homosexualities from Ganymede to Batman* (2002), and, in Brazil, the article written by Barcellos “*O Amor entre Parceiros do Mesmo Sexo e a Tragédia da Homofobia*” (2011), published in *Cadernos Junguianos*.

Gradually, some authors began to enter the field of gender studies and, from there, to reassess certain Jungian constructs. In a pioneering contribution, Berry (2007) proposed that the fixity of gender functions as a patriarchal strategy of ordering and control. Other post-Jungian authors have suggested revisions to Jung's *anima–animus* theory. Young-Eisendrath (2002), for example, proposes two alternatives: one is to assume that gender identity is flexible and that everyone – men and women – has both *anima* and *animus*, understood as unconscious prototypical femininity and masculinity; the other is to assume that gender is flexible, but the division into two sexes is not, thereby preserving the idea of *anima* and *animus* as unconscious complexes of the opposite sex, affect-laden images of others as they arise within the individual, the family, or society.

It is worth noting that, in nearly all the publications mentioned, oppositional thinking persists and continues to overshadow the possibility of conceiving psychic multiplicity. We remain caught in the tension between opposites – man/woman, masculine/feminine. Considering how this phenomenon is constituted within the collective psyche, and drawing on cultural complex theory, Pessoa (2024) names this a heteropatriarchal complex. Such a complex hierarchizes the heterosexual white man and

his stereotypical associations as superior to the concerns of women's heterosexuality. Moreover, it highlights the power relations constructed within a patriarchal logic that privileges male heterosexuality. Grounded in a patriarchal mode of consciousness, it structures a binary discrimination of the elements we experience. Taking the heteropatriarchal complex into account allows us to consider heterosexuality not as an essential predisposition of human beings but as a complex, one among many possible expressions of sexuality and identity.

Within Jungian circles, some authors have begun to think outside the fiction of this complex. In 2006, Jungian psychologist Susan McKenzie, for instance, argued that the *queer* universe of gender and sexuality moves us beyond the masculine/feminine binary opposition in our understanding of gender and expands the meaning of sexuality. As she writes, the other *queer*, those who confront the traditional position of the One, force us to examine and transcend our assumptions about the universality of heterosexuality and to begin weaving a new Jungian approach to gender and sexuality. For McKenzie, postmodern queer theory denies fixed identities and casts suspicion on the presumed relations between biological sex, gender, and sexual desire. Non-binary identities and discourses bring us the new challenge of imagining a psyche outside an existence formed by the tension of polarized opposites.

In view of this, we are left to imagine what other existential possibilities we have yet to envision – and how we might refine our theories, practices, and modes of listening so as not to foreclose the possibility of other worlds to come. For if the abject, the hybrid, the dissident destabilizes by exposing the fragility of boundaries and the ground upon which we stand, perhaps this is precisely where its numen lies: in the implosion of certain worlds, we may rediscover the potency that stirs and reenchants life and thought. After all, there are no essences, no essential places – there is desire, which leads us to construct ways of being in the world.

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The Department of Sexual and Gender Diversity (DDSG) of the Associação Junguiana do Brasil (AJB) was created in 2021. It holds monthly meetings aimed at developing studies, dialogues, analysis, reflections, and the sharing of experiences related to issues of sexual and gender diversity, education, violence, citizenship, and health, from the perspective of Analytical Psychology.

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THE BODY-PSYCHE UNITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG

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Abstract

The Department of Body and Psyche of AJB has been holding in-person and online group meetings to practice body-awareness exercises and expressive dance improvisations. This practice, together with participants' reports and readings by analysts who work from this approach, has brought a growing awareness of the place the body occupies on the path of self-knowledge and the integration of unconscious contents during the journey of individuation. Understanding the unity between body and psyche is one of the foundations of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology. Doing and observing bodily movements makes it possible to become conscious of this inner reality not only for certain people; it can also serve as a general premise. In each person, emotional states ex-

press themselves as an inner spatial sensation, which shows up in bodily posture and in patterns of movement. The images, or emotional states, that arise from the proposed movement sequences enable a confrontation with a person's archetypal constellation or with the constellation of complexes. This confrontation can bring clarity about one's inner state.

Keywords: body; movement; psyche; *Self*; individuation.

The Department of Body and Psyche of AJB has been holding in-person and online group meetings to practice body-awareness exercises and expressive dance improvisations. This work, along with participants' reports and the reading of texts by analysts who take this approach, has fostered a clearer sense of the role the body plays on the path of self-knowledge and of integrating unconscious contents throughout the journey of individuation.

Understanding the relationship between body and psyche is one of the foundations of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology. Far from the traditional dualistic view, Jung proposed a deeply integrative approach in which body and soul are aspects of the same ontological reality. This unity, however, is often fragmented by rational consciousness, which artificially separates what, in symbolic and experiential life, is indivisible.

Jung states:

The separation between body and soul is an artificial operation, a discrimination based less on the nature of things than on the peculiarity of the knowing reason. The intercommunication of bodily and psychic characteristics is so intimate that we can conclude not only from the constitution of the body about the constitution of the psyche, but also from psychic peculiarity about the corresponding bodily forms of phenomena (JUNG, 1921/2013a, OC VI, § 979).

This interdependence reveals that body and psyche co-constitute one another. "The body means nothing without the psyche, just as the psyche means nothing without the body" (JUNG, 1921/2013a, OC VI, § 982).

In this sense, Jung (1944/2013b, OC XII) attributes a symbolic function to the body. In his investigation of myths, religious practices,

and alchemy - as in *Psicologia e Alchimia* - the body appears as the stage on which processes of inner transformation unfold. In medieval alchemy, operations on the *prima materia* - symbolically equivalent to raw, unformed unconscious material - are only possible through a work that involves the body and its experience. The body thus becomes the “alchemical vessel” in which phases of death and rebirth of consciousness take place. Far from being a mere physiological datum, it is an active part of the psychological and spiritual drama of individuation, the process through which the individual realizes his or her deepest wholeness.

The bodily dimension of the psyche is even clearer in the theory of complexes. According to Jung (1926/2013c, OC VIII/2), complexes are autonomous nuclei of the personal unconscious charged with emotional energy. They are not confined to the mental sphere; they have an affective tone. When activated, they can trigger both emotional reactions and automatic physical reactions – sweating, palpitations, muscular tensions, or even psychosomatic illness. This correspondence between the emotional and the somatic shows that, for Jung, the unconscious manifests as a whole: when consciousness fails to integrate certain psychic contents, they emerge, symbolically or even literally, in the body. A symptom, then, is not merely a biological error, but a living message from the unconscious seeking recognition.

In contemporary psychotherapeutic practice, this conception becomes especially significant when we consider that the unconscious has two dimensions: the psychic and the somatic. Jung had already pointed to this distinction in his seminar on Nietzsche, when he said that there is a link between consciousness and the unconscious that, on the one hand, leads to a purely spiritual or psychic dimension and, on the other, to a bodily and material dimension. When the unconscious is approached through the body, what may be called the somatic unconscious comes to the fore – a living expression of bodily memory, of affect carried in musculature and posture (Seminar about Nietzsche, *apud* SCHWARTZ-SALANT, 1988).

This practical experience becomes evident in work with movement and

active imagination. When body exercises are proposed in small groups, followed by free drawing from the images that arise during movement, a kind of imagination that originates directly from the body is revealed. Unlike images that emerge from pure imagination (often more complex and multifaceted), images coming from the somatic unconscious tend to be more focused, simple, and central, reflecting the body's concrete and direct nature in its symbolic manifestation.

Doing and observing bodily movements makes it possible to become conscious of this inner reality not only for certain people; it can serve as a general premise. In each person, emotional states express themselves as an inner spatial sensation, which shows up in bodily posture and in patterns of movement. The images, or emotional states, that arise from the proposed movement sequences enable a confrontation with a person's archetypal constellation or with the constellation of complexes. This confrontation can bring clarity about one's inner state.

Jung maintained that "the body should not be understood as a heap of inert matter, but as a material system truly ready for life [...] on the condition, however, that [...] it cannot live without the presence of a vital principle [...] the psychic factor" (JUNG, 1926/2013c, OC VIII/2, § 605). This psychic factor is what animates the body and allows its expressions to be revelations of unconscious content as well.

The proposal to work with basic movements aims precisely to reactivate bodily awareness, so often buried under routine and overinvestment in rationality. It is about letting the body express itself organically, while ego consciousness accompanies the movement. Bodily awareness, then, is no longer only a practical or biomechanical function, but a channel for symbolic and subjective experience. "The human soul lives united with the body, in an indissoluble unity [...]" (JUNG, 1926/2013c, OC VIII/2, § 232).

The body carries a long, almost archetypal memory of affects and lived experience. Bodily tensions, postures, and energetic blocks are material expressions of deep psychic contents, often unconscious. When these

blocks are worked with – through movement or massage – there may be a release that is not only muscular, but emotional and symbolic. In this sense, “the psyche depends on the body, and the body depends on the psyche” (JUNG, 1935/2013d, OC XVI, § 1).

Final Considerations

This approach retrieves a truth forgotten by cultures that have dissociated body from spirit: “But [...] we may reconcile ourselves with the mysterious truth that spirit is the life of the body seen from within and the body is the outward manifestation of the life of the spirit – the two being truly one [...]” (JUNG, 1928/1931/2013e, OC X/3, § 195). In this context, the body ceases to be an object and becomes a subject. It is not there to serve the mind, but to dialogue with it, revealing – through its own language – the wholeness of the *Self*.

This work of consciousness made through movement, observation, imagination, and speech allows us to reconstruct the original unity between body and mind, between ego and *Self*. Jung reminds us that “the *Self* is both things: body and psyche; the body is its outward manifestation... The soul, the life of the body. If we do not live, if we do not express the *Self*, in its originality, in life, then it will rebel” (Seminar about Nietzsche, *apud* SCHWARTZ-SALANT, 1988, 163).

Therefore, reclaiming a living relationship with the body is, at once, a journey of self-knowledge and a therapeutic path. Through this relationship, we respect body-centered motivations and observe their effects on the psyche, integrating inner experience and outer reality. This integration, as movement reports and the images that emerge from the somatic unconscious demonstrate, is profoundly healing. It is a matter of living with body and soul, in a constant movement of listening and expression, of awareness and surrender, in the building of a more integrated, authentic, and full life.

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.....Associação Junguiana do Brasil.....

FROM SPEAR TO BASKET – FROM HERO TO COMMUNITY

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Abstract

What if we were asked to tell Jung how the world turned after his death? The Department of Ecopsychology of the AJB takes up part of this task and writes a letter, telling Jung that the 150th anniversary of his birth finds us facing climate chaos, a predatory and cruel attitude toward life, and an imminent announcement of the end of the world just ahead. It also tells him that, in contrast, we now have another attitude, one of listening to voices once considered “primitive shadows,” yet today defending and sustaining life: the life of planet Earth with its rivers, oceans, soil, rocks, fauna, and flora; the life of Indigenous peoples, of Black people, of women; the life of everyone. It speaks of and invites a migration from

death-oriented narratives to life-centered narratives. Inspired by the idea of weaving and basket-making, the letter interlaces Jung's voice with the voices of Ailton Krenak, Eliane Brum, Davi Kopenawa, Mia Couto, and Elizabeth Fisher.

Keywords: ecopsychology; basket theory; death narratives; life narratives.

Dear Jung,

We hope and wish that you are well. We, members from the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB), are celebrating the 150th anniversary of your birth. The legacy you left remains alive and compelling. We are among the many people, in many parts of the world, who have read – and continue to read! – what you shared in your writings. It is the Department of Ecopsychology of the AJB who writes to you here. Your anniversary finds us entangled in climate chaos, in a predatory and cruel attitude toward life, and in an announcement of the end of the world just ahead. In contrast, we also witness a different attitude: one that listens to voices once considered “primitive shadows,” yet now defending and sustaining the life of planet Earth with its rivers, oceans, soil, rocks, fauna, and flora; the life of Indigenous peoples, Black people, and women; the life of everyone. Inspired by the idea of weaving and basketry, we bring a few threads and perceptions into our letter.

The feelings expressed in two passages of your work are our starting point and motivation to write to you. In *O Homem e seus Símbolos*, you state:

As scientific knowledge increases, the degree of humanization of our world decreases. Man feels isolated in the cosmos because, no longer being involved with nature, he has lost his “unconscious emotional identity” with natural phenomena. [...] Stones, plants, and animals no longer have voices to speak to man, and he no longer addresses them under the presumption that they might understand him (JUNG, 1964/2016, p. 120).

In *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, you recount a dream you had on December 18, 1913:

[...] I found myself on a solitary and rocky mountain with an unknown youth, a dark-skinned savage. [...] Across the mountains echoed Siegfried's horn, and I understood then that we needed to kill him. [...] Siegfried appeared in the distance, on the mountain peak, at the first ray of sunrise. He came racing madly down the rocky slope in a chariot made of bones. As he turned a corner, we shot at him and brought him down. [...] Then a violent and heavy rain fell, which I somehow knew would erase all traces of the attack. I had escaped the danger of being discovered; life could continue, but within me there remained an intolerable feeling of guilt (JUNG, 1961/2006, p. 160).

Among the elements you listed in your attempt to understand the dream, you say:

The dark-skinned savage who accompanied me and who initiated the ambush is an embodiment of the primitive shadow (JUNG, 1961/2006, pp. 160-161).

We weave together your words and your feeling of sorrow over the human being's isolation from nature with the perspective of the Indigenous leader, philosopher, writer, and environmental activist Ailton Krenak. In *Ideias para Adiar o Fim do Mundo*, published more than one hundred years after you dreamed of Siegfried's death, Krenak asks:

[...] how is it that, over the last two or three thousand years, we constructed the idea of humanity? Could it be that this idea lies at the root of many of the wrong choices we made in justifying the use of violence?

The idea that white Europeans could go out colonizing the rest of the world was sustained by the premise that there existed an enlightened humanity that needed to meet an obscured humanity and bring it into this incredible light. [...]

Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, some collaborations among thinkers with distinct views, rooted in different cultures, have made it possible to critique this idea. Are we truly one humanity? (KRENAK, 2019, pp. 10-11).

Continuing the weaving of our basket, we bring a few more threads. Mia Couto, Mozambican poet, writes:

Biblical Inside Out

In the beginning,
everything already existed.
But God was blind
and, before so much everything,
what he saw was Nothing.
God touched the water
and believed he had created the ocean.
He touched the ground
and thought the earth was born beneath his feet.
And when he touched himself,
he deemed himself the center of the universe.
And he thought himself divine.
Man was created (COUTO, 2016, p. 72, free translation).

Which Man is the poet referring to? Perhaps the same man you mention when describing humanity's disconnection from nature. Perhaps the same one that Eliane Brum, Brazilian writer and documentary filmmaker, denounces in *Banzeiro Òkôtô: Uma Viagem à Amazônia Centro do Mundo*:

White people have the tedious obsession of believing that all stories begin with their arrival. Generally, what happens is that stories end beneath their boots, their chainsaws, and their weapons (BRUM, 2021, p. 26).

Which Man is this who perceives himself as the creator of everything, the center of the universe? And what kind of psychology does this Man create – one that takes the human being as center and the sole bearer of psychic reality? It generates a psychology devoted only to inter – and intra-human relations. Such psychology mutilates the psyche by dangerously separating us from other persons – human and more-than-human – who sustain life. A psychology that upholds and is upheld by the idea of dis-envelopment. Dis-connection. From another perspective, Ecopsychology arises, grounded in the proposal of thinking a psychology for which the planet matters.

We are engaged in a revision and questioning of narratives that lead to mass extinctions and to the silencing and erasure of entire communities. We are in a transition regarding what is the center and what is the periphery. And more still: an insurgent understanding is emerging about interdependence, coexistence, involvement, belonging, and participation. Nêgo Bispo, another Brazilian thinker, *quilombola*, and writer, alerts us to the importance of migrating from dis-envelopment to biointeraction (BISPO, 2023).

Ecopsychology joins the voices calling for a transition from the primacy of death narratives to life narratives. An invitation to migrate from the stories of wars, spears, clubs, bones, weapons, destruction, apocalypse, and its heroes – the great hunters, invaders, colonizers, genocidal conquerors, and warriors, like Siegfried, in your dream. An invitation to sustain the stories of life, based on Elizabeth Fisher’s Basket Theory, which argues that the first human artifact was not a spear but a basket. A container created by women to hold and transport everything from seeds to babies – an artifact destined to sustain and support life (FISHER, 1979). Symbolically and concretely, the basket embodies the possibility of coexistence, conviviality, and community. It holds the story that is woven in what happens together, in the shared process, an ever-unfolding, never-ending story.

This migration unfolds through the emergence of previously unheard voices, including those of Indigenous peoples, listeners of nonhuman persons, and guardians of life – individuals for whom dreams function as guides and for whom community and interspecies coexistence constitute a vital life force. Davi Kopenawa, Indigenous leader and shaman, tells us in *A Queda do Céu*:

Our parents and grandparents could not make the white people listen to their words about the forest, because they did not know their language. And when the whites began arriving at the houses of our ancestors, they did not yet talk about ecology! They were more eager to ask for jaguar skins, peccary, and deer [...]! At that time, the whites had none of these words to protect the forest (KOPENAWA, p. 664).

Jung, with apprentice hands, we weave your words with those of a Mozambican poet, a Brazilian writer and documentarian, an American writer, two Indigenous thinkers, and our own. As members of a community of Jungian analysts, we seek to discern which narratives can guide our praxis. We hope that this open letter may arrive as an invitation to draw closer to the basket where all stories can fit. Not necessarily harmonize, but fit, relate, coexist, and respect the right of all forms of life to exist. There is still room in the basket of stars for seeds and dreams.

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Never has it been so relevant to consider what Jung intuited almost a century ago: it is essential to sustain a connection with nature and to learn from the wisdom of Indigenous peoples, whose stories are deeply intertwined with the earth. A psychology that does not consider human life in connection with all other forms of life is a psychology that segregates, mutilates, and sickens. From the earliest age, our stories have been consistently woven with – and by – the humans and non-humans of this breathing world.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil
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THE ETERNAL AND THE EPHEMERAL

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Right at the beginning of the preface to his *Memórias*, Jung outlines the foundation of the psychology he inaugurates: “My life is the story of a self-realization of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions and to experience itself as a whole” (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 25). He also says:

Ultimately, the only events in my life that seem worthy of being recounted are those through which the eternal world broke into the ephemeral one. That is why I speak mainly of inner experiences. Among them are my dreams and fantasies, which constituted the original material for my scientific work (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 26). What realities and truths are possible for

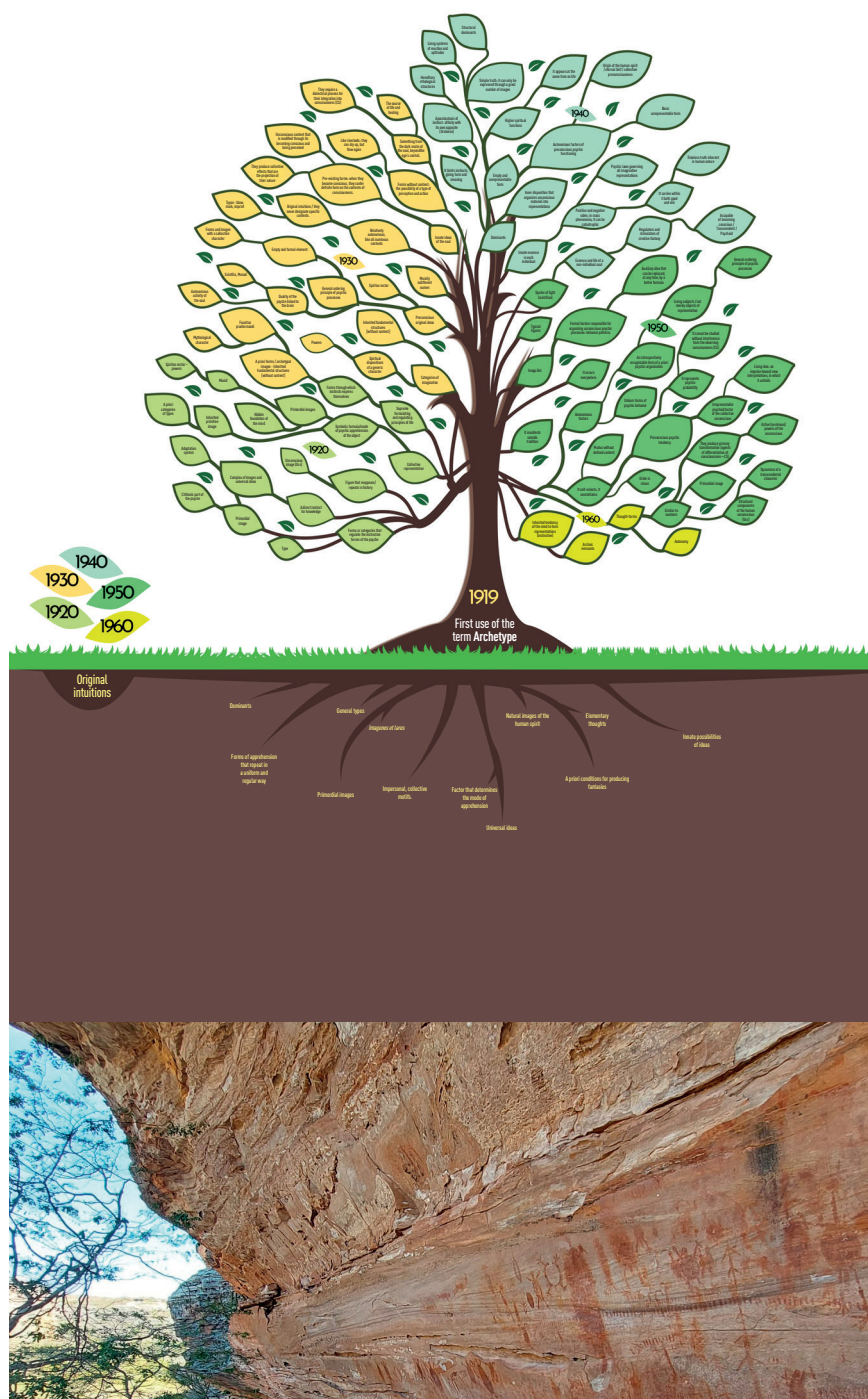


Image: Serra da Capivara, personal archive of Sonia Marchi de Carvalho.
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a psychology that claims the status of a science of the inner and invisible world? Jung himself answers this as he begins telling the story of his life at the age of eighty-three, with the remark: “(...) I can only make immediate statements, tell *stories*. But the problem is not whether they are true or not. The only question is this: is it my adventure, my truth?”(JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 25).

Even though Jung does not assign to his initiatory and visionary experiences the same logical status as the knowledge of the natural sciences, he affirms the existence of a psychic reality “(...) which has at least the same dignity as physical reality” (JUNG, 1930/2013, OC 15, §148). This issue runs through all of analytical psychology, insofar as every act of speech ultimately becomes a testimony of oneself. This is the fundamental question for those who set out to confront the other who also dwells within – until reaching the realization: “I am only this!” (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 321).

Jung’s adventure and truth consisted in the development of the theory of archetypes, as a way of naming and describing the “eternal” and the dynamic interaction it establishes with what he called the “matrix” and “source” of psychic movement: the collective unconscious and the soul.

When retrospectively revisiting accounts of his experiences, dreams, and fantasies – especially those narrated in his *Memories* – it becomes evident that, from early childhood, Jung already displayed a singular sensitivity to ideas that evoke the “eternal,” as in the febrile episode at four years of age, when he heard his father intone: “Let all fall silent, and let each bow(...)” (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 30).

Throughout his work, one can observe the extent to which Jung needed – and was able – to bend himself to allow the unconscious to speak, this Other that is not to be confused with the ego. In later recollections, the impression emerges that the lullaby functioned as a herald of the boy’s anxieties and fears, a mark that would later resonate in the conviction that “I live in two different ages; I am two different persons” (JUNG,

1961/2019, p. 54). In this way, the fundamental poles of individual life are expressed: on the one hand, the subjective and worldly dimension; on the other, the “beyond” or the “eternal,” as Jung referred to the autonomous dynamic he sought to describe.

The perception of these two realities – the mundane and the non-mundane – grounds the distinction between the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. At a certain point, Jung reveals his interests, including the history of comparative religions, zoology, paleontology, geology, Greco-Roman archaeology, Egyptian and prehistoric archaeology, and eventually choosing psychiatry. Jung recalls this path in a confessional tone:

[My work at Burghölzli] was the entry into the cloister of the world, the submission to the vow of believing only in what was plausible, average, and banal, in what had little significance; it was the vow to renounce everything original and meaningful, and to trivialize everything that was not (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 125).

Such superficiality, however, was unsatisfying.

I wanted to know how the human spirit reacts when confronted with its own destruction. (...) The pathological variants of what is called ‘normality’ attracted me powerfully, for they offered me the longed-for possibility of knowing the psyche in greater depth (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 126).

In his dialogue with Freud, Jung found his first instruments for approaching the question that deeply mobilized him: “What goes on in the mind of the mentally ill?” (JUNG, 2019, p. 127). Already a psychiatrist, he presents this deeper and more archaeological aspect of the psyche through one of his dreams:

I was in an unknown house, two stories high. It was ‘my’ house. [...] I came to a heavy door and opened it. I found a stone staircase leading down to the cellar. [...] I discovered two human skulls, probably very old, already half disintegrated (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 166).

At that moment, Jung recognized the collective element present in his

dreams, along with symbolic material; and, in particular, he glimpses the concept of the collective unconscious, whose formulation he would later deepen in the work *Metamorfoses e Símbolos da Libido*, marking his definitive break with Freud. In that work, the eternal and the ephemeral appear again, in the words of Miss Miller: When the Eternal created Sound, myriads of ears sprang forth to hear (JUNG, 1911/2013, OC V, §61). Here we find the conjunction of the eternal divine principle realized in the ephemeral creature. One cannot exist without the other; they are linked by meaning, by the efficacy of “hearing.” Just as the rhizome – the perennial – makes no sense without the leaves and flowers of the fleeting season.

Between 1915 and 1919, Jung’s emerging formulations on the archetype gravitated around expressions that we consider central to this period: *imago, primordial images, typical motifs, dominants of the collective unconscious, innate possibilities of ideas, a priori conditions for producing fantasies, impersonal, and collective motifs*. Such expressions show a clear parallel with Kantian propositions regarding the perception of reality being mediated by innate cognitive structures, such that knowledge of the external world is always carried out through filters imposed by the human mind.

In the metaphor of the tree, the roots represent the deep, subterranean foundation from which the archetype sprouts and unfolds as a principle of psychic life. Jung himself turns to the vegetal metaphor to synthesize the growth of this notion:

Life has always seemed to me like a plant that draws its vital substance from the rhizome. The true life is not visible (...) for it lies in the rhizome. (...) When one considers the future and the infinite disappearance of life and cultures, one cannot escape a sense of utter futility; yet I have never lost the feeling of the permanence of life beneath eternal change (...) The rhizome remains (JUNG, 1961/2019, p. 26).

And he continues:

The soul is not of today. Its age is counted in many millions of years. Individual consciousness is only the blossom and the fruit of the season, which

has developed from the perennial subterranean rhizome, and it is more in harmony with the truth when it includes the existence of the rhizome in its reckoning, for the web of roots is the universal mother (JUNG, 1911/2013, OC V, §950, Preface to the 4th edition, p. 13).

These passages highlight the centrality of the archetype in Jung's psychology. His work unfolds in a circumambulation around this rhizome, offering it diverse images and reaching increasingly deep perspectives, in a continuous unfolding that turns toward the collective, always emphasizing that it is the activity of the rhizome, rather than the subjective activity of the individual, that possesses the autonomy observed: "In myths and fairy tales, as in dreams, the soul speaks about itself, and the archetypes reveal themselves in their natural interplay, as 'formation, transformation, eternal recreation of the eternal meaning'" (JUNG, 1954/2016, OC IX/1, §400).

This understanding leads us to an essential point in Jungian psychology: the soul is not an object of external analysis, but a subject that manifests itself: "It must be remembered that in every psychological discussion we are not talking about the psyche, but that the psyche expresses itself" (JUNG, 1954/2014, OC IX/1, §483).

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Carl Gustav Jung goes beyond merely recalling his biography. It means revisiting questions that continue to resonate, especially in a context marked by the shadows and complexities of our time: how can one live with meaning amid uncertainty? What paths can the soul take in a world governed by speed, noise, and the loss of rootedness – the loss of our inner connection with life? What ways remain open to inner listening and to a life guided not only by goals but also by meanings?

The archetype, as Jung warns,

"is indeed the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditur* [that which is always believed everywhere and by everyone]; if it is not consciously recognized, it appears from behind, in his wrathful form, as the 'child of Chaos,' as a dark malefactor, as the Antichrist, and not as the Savior, as modern history clearly shows us" (JUNG, 1940/2013, OC XI/2, §178).

The response to contemporary dilemmas lies in the deep roots of the archetype, where the silent rhythm of the soul pulses. It is grounded in the collective unconscious – an invisible and fertile soil that sustains the psyche beyond the individual – a place where the human encounters its eternal and symbolic nature. In a time when haste compromises listening and the world fragments into superficialities, such a response awaits the efforts of consciousness and the willingness to reach it. Not in the agitation of the ephemeral world, but in the stillness of the depths, like the morning dew that quiets the earth and announces the presence of the invisible.

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The Department of Epistemology and Research in Analytical Psychology of the AJB aims to foster the study, analysis, and in-depth examination of the epistemological aspects of Jung's Complex Psychology, contributing to the development of research and to the expansion of knowledge in this field.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

C. G. JUNG AND ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS: MEDIUMSHIP

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Abstract

This article examined mediumship as an expression of altered states of consciousness (ASC) in the light of C. G. Jung's analytical psychology. The study aimed to analyze, theoretically and empirically, the affinity between mediumistic phenomena and the subjective experiences lived by Jung, understanding them not as pathologies, but as legitimate expressions of the unconscious. The present study consisted of a theoretical review of historical and scientific sources on mediumship, together with an analysis of Jung's autobiographical reports, with particular attention to visionary events, dream experiences, and episodes of automatic writing. The article also incorporated contemporary neuroscientific evidence indicating specific brain patterns during mediumistic experiences in mentally healthy

individuals. In conclusion, Jung approached such experiences with ambivalence, alternating between symbolic interpretations and parapsychological possibilities, which opens space for a broader dialogue between analytical psychology and anomalous phenomena. The present research suggests the importance of an integrative and non-reductionist approach to understanding mediumship.

Keywords: mediumship; altered states of consciousness; C. G. Jung; analytical psychology; anomalous phenomena.

Introduction

At present, the Department of Analytical Psychology and Spirituality of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB) is devoted, among other activities, to research on anomalous phenomena reported by the Brazilian population. This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the *Hospital Psiquiátrico São Pedro*, in Porto Alegre, RS. Four hundred and seventeen cases were collected and analyzed by the research team according to the theoretical perspective of analytical psychology. The most frequent events found in the survey include altered states of consciousness (ASC), with mediumship standing out as particularly prominent within these states. This type of psychic phenomenon is quite common, particularly in Brazil, yet remains largely misunderstood and insufficiently studied, despite being one of the topics that interested Carl Gustav Jung in his research.

Jung himself also experienced events that may be understood as altered states of consciousness (ASC). This article aims to discuss key defining aspects of mediumship and to explore the affinities between this type of experience and certain events in Jung's life and work.

Mediumship: Definitions and Main Characteristics

Mediumship is understood as the alleged capacity of certain people (mediums) to communicate with – or to be under the control of – a deceased personality or an immaterial being (MOREIRA-ALMEIDA *et al.*, 2008; PIMENTEL, 2014). Various hypotheses have been proposed to explain this phenomenon: fraud, physical or pathological causes, hallu-

cination or illusion, unconscious personification, or even extrasensory perception (ESP) and survival of consciousness (MOREIRA-ALMEIDA, 2013; PIMENTEL, ALBERTO & MOREIRA-ALMEIDA, 2016). All these hypotheses are taken into account; however, in this paper, we will focus more closely on two perspectives from the parapsychological field. For a long time, the first was referred to as the continuity hypothesis and is currently known as the survival hypothesis (CARDEÑA, PALMER & MARCUSSON-CLAVERTZ, 2015). This hypothesis proposes the survival of consciousness after the death of the body. Thus, mediumship would concern the existence of discarnate persons or consciousnesses capable of acting upon certain individuals, who would serve as their intermediaries or mediums (STEVENSON, 1977). These discarnate consciousnesses, in addition to manifesting through the sensory organs of mediums, could also act upon the physical environment (SUDDUTH, 2009). Another hypothesis, often found in studies on mediumship, is known as the super-psi hypothesis. It maintains that mediumistic phenomena could be explained, in whole or in part, by mental capacities or abilities inherent in the living subjects themselves, including ESP and psychokinesis (PK) (CARDEÑA, PALMER & MARCUSSON CLAVERTZ, 2015; STEVENSON, 1977; SUDDUTH, 2009).

Neither of these two hypotheses has been disproven (CARDEÑA, PALMER & MARCUSSON CLAVERTZ, 2015), and some authors suggest the possibility of interaction between them (MYERS, 1903/2016). Regardless of the interpretation adopted, altered states of consciousness and anomalous experiences have been reported throughout history and across many different cultures (MOREIRA ALMEIDA & LOTUFO, 2003). However, from the 1840s and 1850s onward, studies of mediumistic phenomena intensified, beginning with a set of manifestations occurring in the United States and Europe.

Ellenberger (1970) notes that the spiritualist movement, organized around mediumship, traces its origin to events that took place in 1848 in the village of Hydesville, Arcadia, in the state of New York. The family

of John Fox (he, his wife, and two daughters, Margareth and Catherine) began to be disturbed by knocks and noises that repeated every night, without discovering their source. On one occasion, one of the daughters imitated the rhythm of the knocks and sought to communicate with the phenomenon through a rudimentary code. Questions were asked, and the knocks appeared to answer them. All this took place in the presence of neighbors and other people close to the Fox family. The family then claimed to have discovered that the manifestations were produced by the spirit of a traveling salesman who had been murdered in the house and whose body had been buried in the cellar. The man's skeleton was later found, as reported in the *Boston Journal* of September 23, 1904 (DOYLE, 1926/2007; PIMENTEL, ALBERTO & MOREIRA ALMEIDA, 2016).

Crowds of curious onlookers began gathering around the Fox family, and other alleged spirits of deceased persons started to manifest through the knocks. Spiritual messages insisted that public séances be held. Meetings were then organized, and news of the phenomenon spread throughout the country. Horace Greeley, who would later be a candidate for the U.S. presidency, declared that he was convinced of the honesty of the two girls and even provided funds for them to complete their education. An older sister, Leah Fox, who was already married, joined the two younger sisters, and together they began charging for sessions of supposed contact with spirits. The model was soon imitated by other groups in the United States. Some groups turned the séances into religious events, distancing themselves from financial involvement; others, however, maintained them as spectacles to satisfy the public's curiosity, charging for admission (DOYLE, 1926/2007; PIMENTEL, ALBERTO & MOREIRA ALMEIDA, 2016).

Numerous physical phenomena were reported around 1850. Tables began to move during séances, loud and unusual noises were heard by those present, and a strange fluid was said to become visible. Groups of defenders of mediumistic phenomena began to organize themselves, and pamphlets, newspapers, and conferences appeared. Many mesmerists

joined the movement. In 1852, the spiritualist wave crossed the Atlantic, arriving in England, Germany, and France. In 1862, photographs of alleged spirits taken during séances were presented, followed by a period of mediums with purportedly extraordinary capacities, including Florence Cook, Stainton Moses, Henry Slade, D. D. Home, and Elizabeth d'Esperance, among others. Reports claimed that, in some séances with Home, pianos were lifted into the air, and harps and accordions produced sounds without being touched. Crookes (1874/1927), in his book *Researches in the Phenomena of the Spiritualism*, stated that he had witnessed the materialization of a spirit named Katie King, who allowed herself to be examined and photographed. In Paris, Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail, a teacher and disciple of Pestalozzi, after analyzing and questioning various trance mediums, developed Spiritism and published his first book, *O Livro dos Espíritos*, using the pseudonym Allan Kardec (PIMENTEL, 2014).

A new scientific perspective also emerged to study these phenomena in England, and the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) attracted major thinkers of the time. In France, Richet's Metapsychics sought to assess mediumistic events. Aside from religious questions, other organizations devoted to such research arose in various countries. For Ellenberger (1970, p. 85), "a new subject, the medium, became available for investigation, out of which a new model of the human mind emerged." In the studies of mediumship, we find the seeds for the development of dynamic psychiatry (CRABTREE, 1993).

Over the years, further studies on mediumistic events were produced. A first attempt to review this body of work was undertaken by Alan Gauld in his chapter "Discarnate Survival" in the *Handbook of Parapsychology*. Gauld (1977) presents three phenomena related to the survival of individuality after bodily death: mental mediumship, apparitions, and out-of-body experiences (OBEs). He covers research conducted by the SPR from 1872 until the mid-1970s and compares the so-called continuity hypothesis and super-psi hypothesis. For Gauld, if evidence in favor of the continuity hypothesis were to prove verifiable facts arising from mental me-

diumship and apparition experiences, it would be possible to infer the idea of interaction between incarnate and discarnate consciousness. The evidence on OBEs in the literature, in turn, would support the notion that consciousness can periodically move away from the body and then return. If, on the other hand, evidence were to favor the super-psi hypothesis, the source of any veridical information obtained through mental mediumship, apparitions, and OBEs could be attributed to living individuals – the medium or the séance sitters. If one opted for the continuity hypothesis, the door would be opened to the possibility that consciousness does not arise from the brain but interacts with it, surviving bodily death. If one chose the super psi hypothesis, Gauld proposed that the idea of survival after death be set aside.

A similar task was carried out by Beischel and Zingrone (2015), performing a broad systematic review of major research on mental mediumship. The authors did not delve deeply into the debate between continuity and super psi hypotheses, choosing instead to present studies with more consistent methodologies, examining what psychology, psychophysiology, neurology, and psychiatry have to say regarding mediumship and its practices. They evaluated both qualitative and quantitative research and cross-method designs. The authors begin their survey with studies from 1977, the year Gauld's review was completed. From that time on, a significant number of investigations into mediumship extended beyond the field of parapsychology, although many rigorous studies continued to be published in journals specializing in the area (EDGE, 1993, 1996; HARALDSSON, PRATT & KRISTJANSON, 1978; RAVALDINI, BIONDI & STEVENSON, 1990; STEVENSON, ORAM & MARKWICK, 1989). Beischel and Zingrone found 27 studies published in psychiatry and psychology journals and pointed to increased interest in psi over the last 70 years. A considerable number of these studies explored historical aspects of mediumship (BEISCHEL, 2014; MARALDI, MACHADO & ZANGARI, 2010; MOREIRA ALMEIDA, 2012; ROE & ROXBURGH, 2014).

More recently, neuroimaging studies have sought to evaluate the association between brain activation in specific areas and tasks involved in mediumship (DELORME *et al.*, 2013; PERES, MOREIRA ALMEIDA, CAIXETA, LEÃO & NEWBURG, 2012). In the study by Mainieri, Peres, Moreira Almeida, Mathiak, Habel, and Kohn (2017), functional imaging evaluations of eight mentally healthy mediums and eight controls were reported. The mediums entered their usual trance state by closing their eyes and attempting to ignore external and internal stimuli. In a control condition, they were instructed to simulate the same mediumistic experience as an imaginary trance. Mediums and controls also participated in a resting state session. The results indicated greater activation in the lateral occipital cortex, posterior cingulate cortex, temporal pole, middle temporal gyrus, and orbitofrontal cortex during the mediumistic trance state. An increase in functional connectivity in auditory and sensorimotor resting state networks (RSN) during trance was also observed. The findings showed preserved involvement of the prefrontal cortex and default mode network (DMN) connectivity, suggesting maintained introspective control over the experience, similar to psychotic like states, but not pathological. The main difference between the medium's experience and that of a psychotic patient is that the medium enters this altered state voluntarily, whereas the psychotic process is involuntary. The pattern of sensory area activation during mediumistic manifestation shares some neurofunctional similarities with hallucinatory episodes in schizophrenic patients but differs in terms of prefrontal cortex involvement. Mediums also showed preserved DMN connectivity, which may help explain the absence of psychiatric symptoms. The authors reported that differences in DMN between mediums and controls may exist and be healthy, but too subtle to be detected in the small sample investigated.

Jung: Theoretical Studies on Altered States of Consciousness

At the start of his scientific career, in November 1905, Jung gave a lecture at the *Bernoullianum* in Basel entitled *Sobre Fenômenos Espíritos*. He opened by

stating: “It is impossible, in the short space of a lecture, to say anything fundamental and exhaustive about such a complex historical and psychological problem as spiritualistic phenomena” (JUNG, OC XVIII, 1905/1976, § 697). In that lecture, Jung retraced the historical development of modern spiritualism, mentioning its forerunners: Franz Anton Mesmer and his animal magnetism, and Emanuel Swedenborg with his visionary experiences. He stressed the relevance of the Hydesville events and the Fox sisters and went on to discuss the scientific research of his time by Crookes, Myers, Gurney, Podmore, among others, as well as the most famous mediums of the period: Home, Slade, Miss Cook, and the Davenport brothers.

Shamdasani (2019) surveyed the items in Jung’s private library and found that it contained a significant number of works on spiritualist themes, especially by researchers of mediumistic phenomena such as Aksakof, Crookes, Flammarion, Flournoy, Gurney, James, Hyslop, Kerner, Lombroso, Lodge, Myers, Price, Rochas, Schrenck-Notzing, among others. Nonetheless, Jung does not seem to have engaged deeply with Kardec’s Spiritism, owning only *O Livro dos Médiuns*. Unimpressed by Kardec’s work, Jung stated that much of the information provided by spirits did not go beyond the average probable intellectual level of the mediums themselves (JUNG, OC XVIII, 1905/1976). Even so, in his 1905 lecture, he highlights:

The dual nature of Spiritism gives it an advantage over other religious movements: it believes not only in certain articles of faith, not susceptible of proof, but bases its faith on a complex of phenomena that are ultimately physical and thus fall within the purview of science yet are of such a nature that they cannot be explained except by the action of spirits. This peculiar dual nature – on the one hand, religious sect; on the other, scientific hypothesis – allows Spiritism to reach the most diverse and seemingly distant spheres of life (JUNG, OC XVIII, 1905/1976, § 697).

We can understand Jung’s interest in spiritualist and mediumistic literature as a search for a framework through which to make sense of his own experiences. We now turn to some of Jung’s most significant encounters with what might be considered discarnate consciousnesses.

It is worth emphasizing that a considerable number of the episodes we interpret as possibly mediumistic occurred in dream situations.

For a long time, mediumistic experiences were rejected in mainstream academic circles. The suggestion that Jung himself might have manifested mediumship is still strongly questioned in the Jungian community. In early studies on the subject, mediums were often portrayed as unstable, fragile, and mentally unbalanced individuals, a view reinforced by the work of several researchers (ALMEIDA, 2007; BURLET, 1863; CONSTANS, 1862/1991; MOREIRA ALMEIDA, ALMEIDA & LOTUFO NETO, 2005). We consider, however, that a broader view is needed. By definition, mediumship refers to a possible contact with incorporeal realms or beings, and such experiences may occur in non-pathological ways. Currently, significant efforts are being made to develop a differential diagnosis that can distinguish non-pathological dissociative experiences from those associated with mental disorders (CARDEÑA, LYNN & KRIPPNER, 2013). It is in the former category that we would place the visions and experiences of C. G. Jung described below.

C. G. Jung and his Experiences with Altered States of Consciousness: Mediumship

According to Shamdasani (2009), Jung experienced certain visual hallucinations in childhood and appears to have had the ability to voluntarily evoke mental images. In his 1935 seminar at the Tavistock Clinic in London, he recounts having seen his deceased grandfather coming down the stairs of a relative's house:

When I was a boy, I had an unmarried aunt who lived in a nice, old house. The place was full of beautiful colored prints, one of them consisting of my grandfather next to my mother. He was a kind of bishop and was shown as if he were leaving the house and standing on a small terrace. There were walls and steps leading down from that spot, and a little path that went to the church. Grandfather was dressed in his ceremonial robes in the middle of the terrace. Every Saturday, I was allowed to visit my aunt, and I would

kneel on a chair to look at the picture until I saw grandfather walking down the steps; and each time my aunt would say: “But, my dear, he isn’t walking, grandfather is still standing there. But I knew I had seen him walk (JUNG, OC XVIII, 1935/1976, § 397).

At the age of seven, Jung reports suffering from pseudocroup, an acute inflammatory condition of the throat (GOEBEL & GLÖCKLER, 2012). During one of his chokings, he had the following vision: “A shining blue circle, the size of a full moon, within which moved golden forms that I took to be angels, hovered above me. This vision alleviated the distress of suffocation each time it occurred” (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 40).

Between the ages of eight and eleven, Jung (1961/2016) also describes a visionary experience near his mother’s bedroom: “One night I saw a luminous, vague figure come out of her door; its head separated from its body and floated in the air like a little moon. Then another head appeared and rose in the same way. The phenomenon repeated itself six or seven times” (JUNG, 1961/2016, pp. 39–40). In *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, Jung interprets these visions as psychological phenomena, a sort of anxiety heralding the onset of adolescent conflicts: “I believe that a psychogenic factor played a decisive role in all this: the atmosphere was beginning to become unbreathable” (JUNG, 1961/1916, p. 40).

Around the age of 21, after the death of his father, Jung states that he had a series of visions in which his father appeared. In a 1961 interview with Miguel Serrano, he recalls: After my father died, I saw him several times. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that he actually appeared. His apparitions could have been subjective phenomena on my part. (MCGUIRE & HULL, 1977, p. 466). Serrano then asks: “But is it not possible that all these things are in fact external and objective, and not merely something that takes place in the mind?” (MCGUIRE & HULL, 1977, p. 467). To which Jung responds:

During the war, I saw men who had suffered brain injuries that completely paralyzed cortical functioning and therefore prevented them from having any notion of time and space. Yet they were still capable of dreaming, and

some of them had significant visions. Now, if the brain is totally paralyzed, the question arises: with what organ does a man dream? With what part of the body does he dream? Is it something physical? Or does this indicate that the mind in fact acts independently of the brain? I do not know, but it is an interesting hypothesis" (MCGUIRE & HULL, 1977, p. 467).

We see, then, that Jung expresses himself ambivalently about such apparitions and visions. While he reports these cases as curiosities worth noting, he simultaneously tries to avoid giving them definitive explanations. A larger set of experiences that Jung interpreted as parapsychological occurred in 1916, when he was 41 years old. About that period, he writes: "A transformation was gradually taking shape within me (...). Thus, the *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* were born" (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 195). For Jung, it began as a kind of increasing inner restlessness whose meaning he did not understand: It was as if the air were filled with ghostly entities. (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 195). His house seemed haunted; at night, his eldest daughter saw a white figure cross her room. Another daughter, without having contact with the first, reported that twice during the night, the blanket had been pulled from her bed. Jung continues describing the events that followed:

On Sunday, at five o'clock in the afternoon, the doorbell rang insistently. It was a clear summer day, and the two maids were in the kitchen, from where they could see the front door. I was quite near the bell; I heard it ring and saw the bell arm moving. We immediately ran to the door to see who was there, but there was no one. We looked at each other, astonished. The atmosphere was unbearably oppressive. I realized that something was about to happen. The house seemed full of a crowd, as if it were packed with spirits! They were everywhere, even under the door; one could hardly breathe. Naturally, a burning question arose in me: "In heaven's name, what does this mean?" Then there came a single, collective answer: "We have come back from Jerusalem, where we did not find what we were looking for." These words are the opening sentence of the *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 196).

Jung notes that, after this incident, words began to flow spontaneously through him and that, in three consecutive nights, the work was written.

It felt like a compulsion he could not control. He writes that as soon as he finished the text, the whole ghostly procession vanished. The phantasmagoria was over. The room fell quiet. (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 196). He then attempts an explanation: “It was probably connected with the emotional state I was in, during which parapsychological phenomena can occur” (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 196).

Septem sermones ad mortuos is an obscure text that Jung kept private throughout his life, sharing only a few copies with close friends. It was only published posthumously, together with his *Memórias*. Jaffé (1961/2016) reported that this work anticipated ideas Jung would later develop more systematically, especially regarding the nature of the psyche and its polarities. The possibility of a mediumistic phenomenon is suggested by the fact that Jung does not sign the text, attributing authorship to Basilides of Alexandria, a second-century Gnostic (MOREIRA-ALMEIDA & LOTUFO, 2004). In *The Red Book*, authorship is attributed to Philemon. Jung states: “In 1916 I felt compelled to express and formulate what might well have been said by Philemon” (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 195). In the *Protocolos* that gave rise to *Memórias*, Jung refers to his “conversations with the dead (...) as a kind of prelude to what I have to say to the world” (JUNG, *apud* BAIR, 2003, p. 375). He writes that these were “phenomena which taught me that there are things in the psyche which I do not make, but which produce themselves and have their own life” (JUNG, *apud* BAIR, 2003a, p. 375). The text is mentioned so frequently in the *Protocolos* that the editors decided to publish it (BAIR, 2003a).

Other episodes that can be interpreted as suggestive of contacts with spiritual entities follow. On one occasion, Jung could not sleep, tormented by thoughts of a friend who had been buried the previous day. The friend’s death weighed heavily on him. He then had the impression that the deceased was in his room, inviting him to follow him through a vision:

Instead of assuming that this was mere fantasy, I could just as well accept it as an apparition, at least to see what might result from it. He led me out of the

house, into the garden, down the street, and finally to his own home, which in reality stood only a few hundred yards away from mine. I entered; he then took me into his study and, climbing onto a stool, pointed to the second volume of a red-bound series of five books on the upper shelf. Then the vision vanished (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 309).

The incident intrigued Jung. The next morning, he went to visit the widow and asked permission to see his friend's library: "There was indeed a stool beneath the shelf, and from afar I could see the five red bound volumes. The title of the second was: *O Legado de uma Morta*" (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 310). Jung read the book and found its contents banal and uninteresting; however, the title itself was meaningful and was understood as the main message of the encounter.

In another personal experience, in the summer of 1920, Jung was invited by a friend to give a series of lectures in London. The friend tried in vain to find a house where Jung could spend his weekends resting from an intense week's work. High season and exorbitant prices made it difficult to rent an appropriate place. At last, he found a country house in Buckinghamshire, near London. Jung could give his lectures and, on weekends, rest there. The price and size of the house seemed almost too good to be true – if it were not for the unusual events that unfolded. Jung spent five weekends in that house (JUNG, 1950/1976).

On the first night, he noticed that the air in his room was heavy and stifling, despite the open windows. A vague sense of unease troubled him: "I felt only a kind of dull torpor, for the air was close, and there was an indefinable and unpleasant smell" (JUNG, 1950/1976, §765). He tried to locate the source of the odor but found nothing. The next morning, there was no trace of the smell or of the prior impression.

On the second night, the same phenomena recurred more intensely. Jung surmised that certain unconscious problems of the house's inhabitants or owner might be exteriorizing themselves as unpleasant impressions. He then began to entertain the possibility of a parapsychological event: "It occurred to me that it might be something parapsychological

(...), but I was well acquainted with the problems of the former inhabitants and could discover nothing that would explain such exteriorizations” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §769).

On the third night, whispers and knocks began to sound in the room, and thuds were heard on the walls: “The knocks came from outside and had a dull sound, as though someone were banging on the brick walls of the first floor with a mallet wrapped in cloth” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §771). Jung says he repeatedly got up to see whether anyone was moving around on the upper floor or outside the house but found nothing.

By the fourth weekend, Jung learned from the host that the house had a reputation for being haunted. The servants refused to stay in the building at night, claiming they did not dare remain after eight o’clock. A cook confirmed that the house was not well regarded in the neighborhood and that no one wanted to rent or buy it, which explained the low price. Jung then inspected the house but found nothing unusual.

On the fifth weekend, the phenomenon reached an intolerable level:

It was a calm, moonlit night. In the room, there were whispers, cracklings, and knocks; outside, blows resounded on the wall. I had the impression that something was near me. With great effort, I opened my eyes. Then I saw, beside me on the pillow, the head of an old woman who stared at me with her right eye wide open. The left half of her face was missing up to the eye. It was so sudden and unexpected that I jumped out of bed, lit the light, and spent the rest of the night in a chair by candlelight (JUNG, 1950/1976, § 774).

Later, Jung told his host that he believed the house was haunted; his friend dismissed the idea with a mocking smile. Jung then suggested that the friend spend a weekend there himself and report whatever happened. The friend agreed and later confessed that he had been unable to sleep in the house, hearing footsteps on both nights. He had checked the entire house and found nothing that could account for the sounds. After this, Jung heard that the owner had decided to demolish the house, since no one wished to rent or buy it.

Writing in 1950, with greater emotional distance from the event, Jung

rationalized many aspects of his experience and concluded that the phenomena were more psychological than spiritual in nature. The knocks and noises could be explained as amplified perceptions; the silence of the house made certain sounds seem louder and more disturbing than they were. His heartbeat, for instance, might have been misperceived as an external sound: “In my hypnoid state, the noises appeared exaggeratedly loud” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §778). Regarding the vision of the old woman, he links it to a patient with facial carcinoma whose condition had made a deep impression on him. The terror of the situation may have evoked the image from memory: “The vision had the character of a hypnagogic hallucination and was probably a reconstruction of the memory of the elderly woman with carcinoma” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §778).

On the unknown smell, he writes: “As for the olfactory hallucination, I suppose that my presence in the room gradually activated something that was in the walls” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §779). He then concludes: “Olfactory hallucinations would therefore signify subliminal intuitions, as I was later able to verify” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §780). In broader terms, he states that “this hypothesis is not meant to explain all spiritualistic phenomena, but at most a certain category of them” (JUNG, 1950/1976, §781).

Jung also describes a significant number of dreams that suggest possible contacts with spirits. For Jung, dreams represent an entryway to the unconscious, within which parapsychological phenomena may also occur (JAFFÉ, 1982). Many of his accounts resonate with the idea of the Subliminal *Self* proposed by Gurney, Myers, and Podmore (1886), for whom this subliminal level acts as a gateway to the transcendent. Jung likewise emphasizes the need to clarify things for the spirits: “Very early I had realized that I must instruct the unconscious figures, or the spirits of the dead” (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 304). He recounts a dream from 1911:

In this dream, I was in an assembly of distinguished spirits of the past and experienced a feeling akin to what I later felt in the presence of the venerable

ancestors who stood upon the black stone in my 1944 vision. Latin was being spoken. A man with long hair addressed me, asking me a difficult question; when I awoke, I was unable to recall its content (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 304).

In another dream, Jung provides a clear interpretation of his position regarding such events. He describes an encounter, in a dream, with his deceased father, who announces the death of Jung's mother – a combination of precognition and a spiritual contact in a dream:

A few months before my mother's death, in September 1922, I had a dream that foretold it. It concerned my father and made a great impression on me: since he died in 1896, I had never dreamt of him, and now suddenly he appeared as though returning from a long journey. He seemed rejuvenated and displayed no paternal authority. He stood beside me in my library, and I was overjoyed to show him my wife and children and to tell him everything I had done, showing him the man I had become. I also wanted to speak of my recently published book, *Psychological Types*, but at once I realized that such matters bored him, for he seemed preoccupied (...). I was not able to understand the dream as I should have, for I had no idea that it was to be connected with my mother's death. Only when she died suddenly in January 1923 did I grasp its meaning (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 312).

On another occasion, upon waking, Jung had the impression that he had met his wife, Emma Jung, who had died in 1955. Emma had devoted herself to analytical psychology, giving lectures and talks at the *Psychological Club* in Zurich. She also wrote several works, including *A Lenda do Graal do Ponto de Vista Psicológico*. Due to her death, the book was completed by Marie Louise von Franz (BAIR, 2003b). In the dream, Jung was with his wife in southern France, in Provence, where she was studying the Grail tradition. Upon awakening, he felt the encounter highly meaningful, since she had died before finishing her work on that topic: "It seemed to me very significant, because she had died before completing the work she had undertaken on this subject" (JUNG, 1961/2016, p. 307).

Final Considerations

Altered states of consciousness were, therefore, fundamental to the life and work of C. G. Jung. The Swiss author integrated many of his studies, research efforts, and, above all, his lived experiences into his theory. In this article, we have sought to move beyond reductionist explanations that attribute weight solely to subjective considerations. It is important to remember that Jung left room for transcendent explanations and that his theoretical foundation rests upon the understanding of polarities: the subjective should not overshadow the objective, just as the objective cannot obliterate the subjective.

Jung is not an easy author to read, in part because his writing is neither linear nor systematic. His concepts, likewise, are mutable, adapting to different contexts; they are like signposts along a path that must be traveled. At first glance, it can seem as though he is “evading” many of the subjects he takes up; in fact, this is part of his method of teaching: circumambulation, circling a content, each time at a wider radius, leading the reader to broaden their own interpretive horizons. We hope that this work may provide a bridge between two fields that are both fundamental for the study and exploration of the mysteries of the human soul: anomalistic phenomenology and analytical psychology.

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.....Associação Junguiana do Brasil.....

THE TECHNIQUE OF ACTIVE IMAGINATION ENTERS THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

This essay briefly presents Jung's technique of active imagination, as well as an overview of the trajectory and relevance of the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination of the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB) in disseminating the technique. Grounded in C. G. Jung's self-experimentation and in subsequent developments by his followers, this practice has become increasingly prominent in the field of analytical psychology and Jungian clinical practice. Based on its activities, publications, and research, the essay examines the Department's contribution to the understanding and dissemination of the technique of active imagination in contemporary times. It also presents innovative research on the technique currently conducted in Brazil, bringing it into the 21st century.

Keywords: active imagination; analytical psychology; AJB; psychotherapeutic technique; innovative research.

Introduction

Active imagination, as conceived by Carl Gustav Jung, is a fundamental technique of analytical psychology. By enabling a dialogue with the unconscious through symbolic representation expressed in images, it occupies a singular place among therapeutic approaches that aim at the individuation process. In this context, the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination of the AJB has played a prominent role in systematizing, researching, and disseminating this technique in Brazil and abroad. This essay aims to offer a brief presentation of the technique and a reflection on the trajectory and contributions of the Department, highlighting its theoretical, clinical, and institutional relevance.

The Technique of Active Imagination

Jung developed the technique of active imagination around 1913, during moments of great emotional turmoil, when he plunged without reserve into his unconscious, in a kind of self-experimentation, allowing images to emerge into consciousness. At first, he merely observed passively what appeared, although he later tried to elaborate on the material. Gradually, he began to engage in dialogue with the images, taking an active stance toward what he was experiencing or perceiving, entering into confrontation or agreement with the figures of his imagination. These appeared as real images, as they affected consciousness and were affected by it. Over the course of his experience, the characters were transformed as Jung integrated into his psyche aspects that had previously been neglected or unknown. Through the “[...] progressive assimilation of the unconscious, [one arrives] at the final integration of the personality, and thereby at the elimination of neurotic dissociation” (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI/1, § 27).

The record of his experiences, written in draft form in black-covered

notebooks – the so-called *Os Livros Negros* (JUNG, 2020) – was carefully transcribed and elaborated in *O Livro Vermelho – Liber Novus* (JUNG, 2010), which remained locked in a safe in a Swiss bank for forty years, awaiting the right moment to become a landmark for the entire theory of analytical psychology. It contains not only the text, but also images from his unconscious, which Jung drew and painted with great care.

Jung employed the technique of active imagination to engage with unconscious images held in intense tension with consciousness, thus avoiding domination by these psychic forces. The clash between polarities, that is, “[...] the bringing together of opposites, from which there arises a third thing, which is the transcendent function” (JUNG, 1916/1958/2014, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 181), allows the flow of libido to be restored.

Initially, Jung did not understand what was happening to him. Sixteen years later, upon receiving the Chinese alchemical treatise *O Segredo da Flor de Ouro* (JUNG; WILHELM, 1984), he grasped, through alchemical symbolism, the process of personal transformation taking place in his psyche: the transformation of the lead of unconsciousness into the gold of consciousness. What is sought through the “[...] modification of the conscious attitude is to make it possible for the dammed-up libido to flow; for the split in the personality to be undone as one attempts to integrate the complexes, with a consequent improvement of symptoms, attitudes, or neurotic thoughts, and a transformation of the personality” (PIMENTA, 2022, p. 74).

It is a necessary task for every analyst or Jungian psychologist to know themselves which, according to Jung, refers to the knowledge of the unconscious. The technique of active imagination is one of the ways of direct access to unconscious material so that it may become conscious. It is one of the indispensable tasks of the individuation process, of realizing the *Self*: “The meaning and goal of the process is the realization of the original personality [...]” (JUNG, 1912/1916/1918/1926/1936/1942/2013, OC, vol. VII/1, § 186).

Jung's experience with the technique of active imagination reaches the 21st century through new research carried out by members of the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination of the AJB.

Active Imagination in the 21st Century and the Department of AJB

The goals of the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination include promoting studies on Jung's technique of active imagination, and on current research concerning its use and therapeutic application for both patients and analysts; identifying the difficulties associated with its practice and distinguishing it from other so-called similar techniques, such as passive fantasy, guided imagery, and creative imagination; contributing to a sound understanding and appropriate use of Active Imagination; and presenting disseminating academic work on the subject.

Since its founding in 2017, under the coordination of analysts Sonia Lyra (IJPR) and Adelaide Pimenta (ICGJMG), the Department has been organized as a space for the study, experience, and research of active imagination. Through bimonthly meetings, initially in person and later online, it has fostered the production of knowledge through articles, books, and presentations at symposia and national and international congresses.

The topics studied and discussed have included the boundaries between the psychic unconscious and the somatic unconscious; the technique of Active Imagination and patients with symptoms; and whether or not analysts make use of the technique. Innovative Brazilian scientific research on the effects of active imagination, conducted by Sonia Lyra, PhD, on cases of bruxism and Sjögren's syndrome, in collaboration with dentists Dr. Tania Zaura and Dr. Daniela Ceranto, as well as on post-traumatic stress due to urban violence, is reported in the publications *Imaginação Ativa e Criativa* (Lyra, 2016) and *Imaginação Ativa: Matéria-Prima da Cura e Quintessência da Arte* (Lyra, 2017). Those findings led to the creation of the first cohort of the Postgraduate Course in the Technique of Active Imagination, offered by analyst Sonia Lyra, PhD. Since then,

members of the Department have participated in the program as part of their ongoing training. Clinical studies were developed by the members of the Department and published in the thematic dossier of the journal *Coniunctio*, v. 2, no. 3 (2020), revealing the therapeutic effects of Active Imagination in different contexts, such as migraine, burnout syndrome, fibromyalgia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), female orgasmic disorder, and cancer patients. These empirical experiences, though initial, point to a promising field of clinical investigation.

The Department's work is also distinguished by the creation of forums for discussion and exchange. Workshops, training courses, and open lectures held in different languages and countries have broadened the reach of the technique, fostering dialogue with the cultural and symbolic diversity of the Americas and Europe.

In 2024, the Department adopted a new internal structure, reorganizing itself into directorates. This change reflects a process of institutional maturation that supports the continuity and expansion of its activities. In the same year, Department members also contributed through monthly public lectures on active imagination, aimed at a general audience. Another important aspect of the Department's work is its ongoing effort to distinguish active imagination from related techniques, such as passive fantasy, guided imagery, and creative imagination. This conceptual precision is essential to prevent distortions of Jung's original proposal and to promote the responsible use of the technique in both clinical and training contexts.

Through its activities, the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination of the AJB seeks to encourage analysts and psychologists to become acquainted with the technique and to practice it responsibly, first by engaging in dialogue with their own unconscious, and subsequently extending this practice to their patients, in accordance with Jung's original approach.

Final Considerations

Through the work of its members, the Department of Analytical Psychology and Active Imagination of the AJB has, over time, established itself as a reference center for research, clinical practice, and the dissemination of active imagination in Brazil and internationally. Its trajectory reflects a commitment to situating the technique within the 21st century and to emphasizing its transformative potential in the expansion of consciousness and the integration and transformation of personality.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This essay seeks to expand analytical psychology's understanding of the phenomena that traverse Brazilian and Latin American territories, in all their richness, potential, and the challenges of life from its origins to the present. In this sense, the Department of Cultural Complexes, Politics, and Individuation turns toward the very words it carries in its name. When examined carefully, such concepts and their images reveal a profound interconnection. Therefore, thinking of them in their complexity, within the vast web that binds them, is a crucial task of analytical psychology and its vocation for depth and dialogue with different forms of knowledge, whether traditional or contemporary. Reflecting on the many conceptions of politics also reclaims an implication for how we construct our ways of acting in the world and the responsibility inherent in the ethical, aesthetic, and theoretical positions we adopt. We reaffirm,

therefore, that a fruitful and vitalized clinical practice is political, expansive, poetic, and willing to continually reshape itself along the way. It is from these premises that the field of study of this Department emerged.

Keywords: individuation; politics; cultural complexes; clinical practice.

Introduction

The transformations undergone by the societal model in which we live over the past decades – and even centuries – are countless and unceasing. From individual behaviors to community ways of life, from technological advances and global connections to the scarcity of water and food, from human rights for all to economic models based on exclusionary policies.

As might be expected, the relationship with life, and for us in particular with psychic life in all its layers and manifestations, is profoundly influenced by these scenarios. And Brazil, this vast Latin American country with its particularities as a land invaded and domesticated according to the logic of the colonizer, reveals today, for the interest of psychology, a new and expansive field to be studied by those who wish to understand individuals, communities, and relationships of every kind. In a history marked by the erasure of its origins and the symbolic assets of its territory, it becomes urgent to recover its own narratives. From this perspective, the Department brings together the concepts of Individuation, Politics, and Cultural Complexes, stretching and advancing from Jung's early studies and propositions toward the exercise of knowing and reflecting upon contemporary plural analytical psychology – its post-Jungian authors and other thinkers from related areas who may contribute to this demanding and unavoidable task of uncovering the dictates of our experience of existing.

Cultural Complexes: Theoretical Propositions

The concept of Cultural Complexes, proposed by Jungian analysts Thomas Singer and Samuel L. Kimbles (2004), seeks to understand how social and cultural issues can operate within the psyche. These authors

assume that individual subjectivity is constantly shaped not only by family and community dynamics but also by broader cultural influences.

In this sense, the interaction between the individual psyche and collective contents occurs through the lived experience of narratives that compose the social fabric – whether local or global. Primordial images are filled with different contexts, giving them a unique and particular tone. Thus, the contents of the individual psyche are nourished by stories, memories, images, and affects marked by class, race, ethnicity, gender, and religion (SINGER & KIMBLES, 2004).

For the authors, Cultural Complexes are characterized by their repetitive and autonomous nature, by their resistance to consciousness, and by their tendency to gather experiences that confirm their historical worldview. In this way, politics, history, and culture are intrinsically tied to the constitution and expression of Cultural Complexes, which function as unconscious organizing nuclei of collective life, shaping the affects, ethics, beliefs, and attitudes of entire social groups, and directly impacting objective culture and processes of subjectivation (SINGER & KIMBLES, 2004). In an article for the CRP-PR journal, Salles and Silva (2023) pose the following question: is an ethically committed psychology possible without knowing the cultures of the peoples of the Brazilian territory? Anchored in the definition of culture the authors provide, they provoke us to think that one's worldview – of being, existing, reality, the universe, and ethics – arises from culture; they assert forcefully that culture is the primary creative force of collective consciousness.

Toward a Political Understanding

Politics can be understood in many ways. Here, we emphasize the process of decision-making that affects life in society, involving the distribution and legitimation of power, resources, and values that shape living and coexisting. As a structuring dimension, it fundamentally serves the mediation of the many interests and conflicts that cross the social body. It functions both as a field of symbolic dispute – capable of expressing

worldviews and collective projects – and as a practical instance that regulates the distribution of resources, rights, commitments, and responsibilities (ARENDT, 2010).

In this sense, politics not only organizes the relationships among subjects and groups but also shapes the very ways society thinks about itself and transforms itself, reflecting its contradictions and potentials. As Arendt reminds us, “politics is based on the fact of human plurality [...] it arises between people, and therefore entirely outside of them” (2010, p. 21). Thus, understanding who politics serves implies investigating the values that sustain the social fabric and the power arrangements that guide its decisions.

We inhabit this social fabric in such a way that our worldview produces a split between psychic life and worldly phenomena. As Jung warns:

Much becomes unconscious simply because our worldview gives it no space, because our education and formation never encouraged it, and if it ever appeared in consciousness as a mere fantasy, it was immediately repressed. The boundaries between conscious and unconscious are largely determined by our worldview (JUNG, 1918/2021, OC, vol. X, § 47)

As Paulo Freire teaches in his seminal work *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (2021), naïve and passive consciousness can only expand and be problematized through a process of conscientization, which leads to the development of reflective and critical capacity. Another Brazilian thinker, the Indigenous leader, philosopher, and environmentalist Ailton Krenak (2022), also echoes broader meanings of politics. For him, politics does not reside solely at the state or institutional level but in the lifestyle one adopts and in how one inhabits the world. He argues that there is no separation between humanity and the Earth, and critiques the model of progress based on the exploitation of nature. Thus, politics becomes a daily practice of respect and reciprocity with the planet, and care for life in all its forms (KRENAK, 2019).

For Krenak, Indigenous peoples have been engaging in politics for a very long time, though not in the forms recognized by the State. Their

idea of politics is to keep the world alive. This worldview, part of the sophisticated wisdom of Indigenous peoples, invites us to shift our gaze, countering colonial thinking and its exclusionary vision. We must ask ourselves why we persist in political projects grounded in ethnocidal and genocidal frameworks that kill and numb us, limiting our capacity for invention, creation, existence, and freedom (KRENAK, 2022).

Reflecting on political conceptions in their plurality also restores an implication for how we construct our actions in the world and for the responsibility inherent in the ethical, aesthetic, and theoretical positions we adopt.

Political Individuations

For Jung, the process of individuation is not an individual movement but rather one of repeated journeys marked by a constant becoming. This process occurs in tension and communion with culture and the collective. Jung posits that psychic energy moves in two directions: progression, an adaptive movement toward the world, and regression, a movement related to the demands of individuation upon the soul (JUNG, 1918/1991, OC, vol. VIII). Thus, individuation occurs in this interval, this in-between space, the gap – just as historian Luiz Antônio Simas points out in *O Corpo Encantado das Ruas* (2020), a relationship of the individual with the collective in all its layers, making this process inherently political and micropolitical.

In this line of thought, contemporary post-Jungian authors such as James Hillman (1996), Lawrence Alschuler (2002), and Thomas Moore (2004) highlight the importance of becoming conscious of unconscious contents such as projections and prejudices, not only for personal development but as an ineffable political and cultural gesture. As the individual integrates their complexes, repressed or denied aspects of the *self*, they contribute to the symbolic renewal of culture. After all, Jung described culture as a shared symbolic field that both shapes and is shaped by the individual psyche. Thus, there can be no cultural transformation without psychic transformation, and vice versa. Individuation, or individuations, does not

exclude the world; rather, it is realized within the world (JUNG, OC, vol. VIII, 1928/1991).

Provisional Considerations or Reflections that do not Claim Finality

Each historical period, with its dictates and worldviews, prescribes how we should express or conceal, narrate, or silence our existence. Today, we find ourselves within a globalized neoliberal socioeconomic model, witnessing environmental destruction, wars, and the necropolitical face of a violent far-right movement.

Within this Department, reflecting on these realities and the sufferings they entail, while recognizing that individuations require us to engage with all layers that involve both subjects and the world, necessarily includes cultural and political dimensions.

Thus, we navigate alongside Jung's thoughts and contemporary theoretical developments, affirming the relevance and interrelation of the ideas of politics, individuation, and cultural complexes. We consider these theoretical contributions, which support the understanding of the diversities inherent to both the subject and a complex society, as a field of study and research within analytical psychology. In this way, we reaffirm that a fruitful and vitalized clinical practice is political, expansive, poetic, and willing to continually remake itself along its path.

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We propose to deepen and expand our perspectives through studies and research on the cultural, social, and political phenomena of Brazil and the world, in their interface with psychic processes. We aim to present questions and to promote activities that express the perspective of Analytical Psychology on these contemporary themes, which are essential for understanding the world today.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

JUNGIAN REFLECTIONS ON THE PROCESS OF CREATIVE AGING

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Aging is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, influenced by historical, socioeconomic, and cultural factors, and experienced differently by each individual. Historically, old age was viewed as a disease, but over time it came to be understood as a natural process within the life cycle, and it began to be studied through multiple lenses: biophysiological, environmental, psychological, social, cultural, and economic. Despite this shift, contemporary society still places great value on youth, which makes it difficult to accept aging, and our capitalist culture continues to promote the disposal of the old in favor of acquiring the new. This affects the perception of aging, reinforcing the idea that those who grow old should themselves be discarded (CUNHA, 2019).

Changes in the world of work and in family structures have also shaped

the way we age; therefore, we need to develop the skills necessary to deal with the transformations inherent to this process. Preparing for old age must begin before it arrives, taking into account the specificities and plurality of aging. As more people live increasingly longer lives, it becomes essential to broaden our view of the aging subject, while not neglecting the promotion of public policies that respond adequately to the phenomenon (CUNHA, 2019).

According to C. G. Jung, “If we attribute purpose and meaning to the ascent of life (birth, childhood, adolescence, and youth), why do we not also attribute them to its decline (old age and death)?” (JUNG, 1934/1986, OC VIII/2, § 803).

Although Jung wrote about the aging process in 1930, the context makes clear that research on the subject from the perspective of analytical psychology is still scarce, consisting mostly of bibliographic surveys. It is worth noting that most existing studies remain within the field of medical sciences.

It is worth examining issues related to the differences between the aging of men and women (here referring to the individual’s biological sex, in accordance with the available scientific material) and the implications these differences have on bodily experiences. These experiences reflect biopsychosocial dynamics that extend far beyond earlier assumptions, including those prevalent in Jung’s time. In this regard, a new field of research opens before us as we draw closer to the human experience of aging and to its demands, from physiological processes such as menopause and andropause, for example, to the qualities inherent to the nature of the psyche, particularly in relation to the category of time and to how the psyche itself orients itself within these processes. As Jung proposes: “Our life is teleological and determined by a goal” (JUNG, 1934/1986, OC VIII/2, § 803).

The bodily experience, which, during the first half of life, took an active part in the construction of the ego complex, with the presence of the *Self* (in analytical psychology, the emergence of ego consciousness would be

guided by the *Self*, and therefore considered a spontaneous development), begins (...) to respond in a way very similar to how it did in the first years of life, particularly concerning its sense of acceptance and its right to exist (PERES, 2019).

According to Jung (1934, 1986):

A young person who neither struggles nor triumphs has lost the best of youth; and an old person who does not know how to listen to the secrets of the streams that descend from the mountain peaks into the valleys has no meaning – such a person is a spiritual mummy, nothing more than a petrified relic of the past. One stands at the margins of life, repeating oneself mechanically down to the last banality. Pitiful is the creature who depends on such ghosts (JUNG, 1934/1986, OC VIII/2, § 801).

Recent neuroscientific findings (MOSCONI, 2024) indicate that menopause significantly impacts women's brain health, being associated with a higher prevalence of Alzheimer's disease, depression, and anxiety. These discoveries also reveal how much research is still needed, since there are very few studies on the specificities of the female body beyond reproductive organs, due to a centuries-old view of women as primarily reproductive beings. Extending this issue further, there is an even greater lack of research on the health of Black women, with their particularities, and on transgender individuals and the effects of hormone therapy. We still have a long way to go.

Menopause and andropause may be understood as stages of personality development and expansion of consciousness, as they involve phases of longevity that carry their own meaning and purpose – more than the mere unfolding of nature or a by-product of civilizational progress and collective life. These stages may serve as ways of creating and establishing culture, in the sense of elaborating and contributing something more personal to the existence of our species in the world, through fantasy and imagination as capacities of the psyche. Through imagining and fantasizing, we awaken intuitive and creative knowledge, the ability to feel, and the power to generate humanity.

The source of fantasy is the psyche itself. For the psyche, death is of no importance. Imagining evokes deep emotion, memory, feelings, and images. It is like casting a bridge between the outer and inner worlds. It is nondirected thinking. It is soul-making. It is remembering the soul (PERES, 2019). To imagine and to fantasize awakens intuitive and creative knowing – the ability to be moved and to create humanity. It is a spontaneous movement, uniquely expressed by each individual. It is a way of avoiding the feeling of emptiness, the craving for meanings and forms of fulfillment that offer only banal solutions sprung from the seeds of despair (PERES, 2019).

Menopause and andropause may also be periods in which the individual, turning inward, can face the questions that were set aside during the demands of conscious life and the formation of the ego complex and persona – those aspects we cannot sustain in the face of personal challenge. Analytical psychology, especially through Jung, proposes that aging can be a meaningful and productive phase of life. For Jung (1917, 1943, 1980), “the afternoon of life is just as full of meaning as the morning; only its meaning and purpose are different” (JUNG, 1917/1943/1980, OC VII/1, § 114).

Jung wrote about the potential that remains unused in the first half of life, which may be developed in the second half. In this sense, metanoia is seen as an opportunity for transformation and personal development. From a Jungian perspective, there seems to be a late *metanoia* – a wide field of possibilities for continuing to create and develop us until the end of life. Here, we understand creativity as an essential resource for dealing with the changes that accompany aging. Jung highlighted the importance of creativity as a psychic factor akin to instinct, capable of transforming and renewing the individual. The ability to create new forms and meanings is fundamental for adaptation and personal development in old age.

According to Jung (1934, 1986):

Whoever protects himself from what is new and unfamiliar and regresses into the past is in the same neurotic situation as the one who identifies with the new

and flees from the past. The only difference is that one turns away from the past, while the other turns away from the future. In essence, both do the same thing: they keep their consciousness confined within narrow limits instead of allowing it to burst open in the tension of opposites and form a broader and higher state of consciousness. This outcome would be ideal if it could be achieved in the second half of life. However, nature seems to have no concern whatsoever for reaching a higher level of consciousness – quite the opposite. And society itself places little value on such achievements of the psyche; it grants its rewards primarily for deeds, not for personality. The latter is often acknowledged only posthumously. These facts compel us toward a particular solution: namely, to limit ourselves to what is possible to achieve and to differentiate certain capacities. It is here that the true nature of the socially effective individual is revealed (JUNG, 1934/1986), OC, vol. VIII, § 767-768).

This is a proposal that questions ageism, bringing forth Hillman's (2001) idea that the character of the aging person is gradually consolidated, that the soul needs to be properly aged before departing, and that the older mind must be summoned to appreciate new ideas, to ponder, and to remain naturally curious, inventive, and transgressive (HILLMAN, 2001, *apud* CUNHA, 2019).

Bernardi (2008) offers us a typological outline by Byington on the role of the *puer* and *senex* archetypes, detached from people's literal ages and understood as the psychic phenomena they are, manifesting through metaphors. *Puer* and *senex* regenerate themselves continually within this dynamism, differentiating, integrating, and renewing through a pendular movement in which the new becomes integrated into the old so that transformation may occur. In his work, Bernardi proposes the existence of two oscillating and intersecting pendulums that move through four positions: the extremes of irresponsibility and enthusiasm associated with the *puer*, and the extremes of rigidity and wisdom acquired through experience associated with the *senex* (BERNARDI, 2008, *apud* CUNHA, 2019).

The author emphasizes that these positions must be considered within the context that defines which attitude is most appropriate to the moment being lived. Remaining fixed in a polarized attitude, whether *puer* or *senex*, would result in neurosis, since, for Jung, neurosis is linked to the unilat-

eral development of the personality. Moving between these dynamisms, therefore, benefits individuals who can make creative use of both *puer* and *senex* attitudes (BERNARDI, 2008, *apud* CUNHA, 2019).

Thus, we need more studies on this *new old* emerging in the contemporary scenario. A 65-year-old and a 75-year-old today show far greater differences and needs than individuals in other stages of life. Contemporary discussions refer to successive changes occurring throughout the life cycle, beginning in midlife (not defined chronologically) and continuing into extreme old age. In his time, Jung (1986) considered that one entering the last quarter of life was already living in extreme old age, preparing for the final journey (JUNG, 1934/1986, *apud* CUNHA, 2019). The extreme old age Jung referred to differs from ours – not only chronologically, but biologically, behaviorally, and psychically, among other differences.

Jungian studies on aging highlight the need to live a meaningful life, in such a way that the aging person remains active, emotionally healthy, and creative. It is clear that, as time advances, an attitude of deepening the life of the soul and searching for purpose becomes increasingly necessary (CUNHA, 2019).

In this sense, the Department of Studies and Research on Creative Aging seeks to contribute to combating ageism in its various manifestations by engaging with and disseminating recent research, grounded in analytical psychology.

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To study and research the aging process based on Jung's propositions about the changes brought by this phenomenon, as well as those of other authors in Analytical and Archetypal Psychology, deepening and expanding the questions that arise in contemporary times.

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.....Associação Junguiana do Brasil.....

THE ETHICAL-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF JUNGIAN IN THE CURRENT SOCIOPOLITICAL SCENARIO

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Observatory of Analytical Psychology – OPA

Let it be permitted, then, for a physician who has devoted his entire life to the causes and consequences of psychic disorders to modestly express his personal opinion on the questions that arise from today's world situation (JUNG, 1957/1993, OC X, § 588).

Abstract:

This essay presents the experience of the Observatory of Analytical Psychology (OPA) as an expression of the ethical engagement of Jungians in the face of contemporary sociopolitical challenges. Drawing on Carl Gustav Jung's reflections on the collective unconscious, shadow, and psychic epidemics, the text proposes that individuation is inseparably linked to collective life. OPA functions as an institutional space that interprets phenomena such as authoritarianism, misinformation, and

historical trauma through the lens of analytical psychology, promoting psychic responsibility and symbolic awareness in the midst of current crises. It reaffirms the relevance of Jungian thought as an ethical and transformative tool.

Keywords: individuation; collective unconscious; psychic epidemics; psychic responsibility; social transformation.

The Jungian tradition has always valued the deep movements of the psyche, both individual and collective. In the face of the sociopolitical challenges of the contemporary world – marked by extreme polarization, environmental crises, mass disinformation, and the resurgence of authoritarianism – it becomes increasingly urgent to reflect on the role of the analytical psychologist in the public sphere. This paper proposes an articulation between C. G. Jung’s analytical psychology and the collective events of the present, highlighting the work of the Observatory of Analytical Psychology (OPA) as an institutional experience that seeks to integrate individual consciousness and social responsibility.

Far from promoting a spiritualized alienation or an isolation of clinical practice, OPA is grounded in the premise that individuation – the central process in Jungian theory – cannot be separated from the historical, cultural, and political context in which the subject is embedded. In this sense, the initiative assumes an ethical implication: to shed light on sociopolitical and cultural events, as well as on psychic epidemics that permeate collective life, interpreting them not merely as political phenomena but as archetypal expressions that demand symbolic elaboration and subjective transformation.

Jung and Political Phenomena

Carl Gustav Jung’s (1875–1961) skepticism toward political activity stemmed from his profound distrust of collective attitudes and the functioning of the masses. For Jung, politics, operating essentially within the collective realm, tends to be dominated by unconscious forces, often leading to irrationality and to the danger of “psychic epidemics” that can

overtake entire societies (JUNG, 1946/1993, OC 10, §§ 444–457). He saw the political figure as someone compelled to construct an artificial *persona*, distancing themselves from authenticity and inner reflection, resulting in psychic division and severe personal difficulties.

Since the end of World War I, Jung interpreted major European conflicts not merely as sociohistorical events, but as manifestations of a deeper psychological crisis rooted in the collective unconscious of the individuals who compose groups and nations (JUNG, 1946/1993, OC 10, pp. 169–170). In his 1918 essay *Sobre o Inconsciente*, Jung argued that the European conflict was fundamentally a psychic crisis, rather than merely political or economic. Social and political instability reflected a disintegration of the traditional foundations of society, such as religion and monarchies, leaving a void that could be filled by unconscious and irrational forces (JUNG, 1918/1993, OC 10, §§ 1–48).

During the interwar period, Jung dedicated himself to analyzing the role of the collective unconscious in the development of social and political movements. He viewed “psychic epidemics” – such as Nazism and fascism – as archetypal expressions of unconscious forces that overtook entire populations, often with destructive consequences. In *Wotan*, Jung argues that Nazism represented the activation of a Germanic archetype, an instinctual and unconscious force that assumed political and social form in Germany at that historical moment (JUNG, 1936/1993, OC 10, §§ 371–399).

With the advent of World War II, Jung became increasingly critical of totalitarian regimes. His stance evolved from an archetypal analysis to an explicit condemnation of Nazism. In *Presente e Futuro* (JUNG, 1957/1993, OC 10, §§ 233–284), he states that any transformation of the world begins with the inner transformation of the individual.

Psychology in Transition in the Contemporary World

If Jung were alive today, he would certainly write a full volume on the events of the contemporary world. The psychic problem of modern hu-

manity, the transformation of gender roles, environmental catastrophes, political crises, and anxieties about the future would undoubtedly capture his attention. Gui (2005) has reported that the symptoms of the new patient are “unemployment, hunger, social injustice, violence, fragmentation, socio-environmental deterioration, hyperconsumption, and depression” (p. 2).

Although Jung believed that the only hope for transformation lay in individuation and was wary of politics, today we recognize that individuation and political praxis are not antagonistic. Rather, they can be synergistic.

Within the institutional sphere, OPA was created in 2017 by the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB) as a space for symbolic and Jungian analysis of contemporary events. The acronym OPA evokes a gesture of surprise before reality (opa!). The Observatory publishes original and opinion essays suggesting analytical reflections on sociopolitical and cultural phenomena (GUI, 2022).

Inspired by the theory of cultural complexes (SINGER & KIMBLES, 2004), OPA investigates, for example, the traumas of the military dictatorship and social inequalities through the lens of archetypes. Its work reaffirms the Jungian heritage: interpreting collective crises as symbolic manifestations of the unconscious.

Conclusion

Jung’s approach to political phenomena was marked by an innovative perspective, as he understood social upheavals as expressions of the collective unconscious. His distrust of politics reflected, above all, a critique of the limitations of social structures and institutions when confronted with the psyche. Despite his reservations regarding the political sphere, it is well known – and Jung himself acknowledged – that individuation does not take place in the rarefied air of mountain peaks, but in the conflicted valley of personal and collective life (GUI, 2010). Therefore, the psychologist cannot refrain from engaging with the field of forces that

animate sociopolitical life, at the risk of neglecting an essential dimension of the patient's suffering, a concern Jung repeatedly emphasized in his work.

In applying analytical psychology to the analysis of the present, OPA reaffirms the contemporary relevance of Jungian thought and fosters reflections that connect self-knowledge with social transformation. By interpreting the symptoms of the world as expressions of the psyche, it offers a symbolic, ethical, and collective path for engaging with the crises of consciousness of the twenty-first century.

Finally, we turn to Jung's forceful statement in the *Prefácio a Ensaios sobre a História Contemporânea*, written in 1946:

For practical reasons, medical psychotherapy must concern itself with the totality of the psyche. In this sense, it must discuss and consider all factors of a biological, social, or spiritual nature. The situation of an age such as ours – deeply shaken by political passions, disturbed by the chaos of state revolutions, and by the collapse of the foundations of its worldview – affects the individual's psychic process to such an extent that the physician cannot avoid devoting special attention to the effects it produces in the individual psyche. The avalanche of events of an era is not perceptible only on the outside, that is, in the external and distant world. It also reaches into the calm of the consulting room and into the privacy of medical appointments. The physician is responsible for his patients, and therefore cannot, in any way, isolate himself on the distant and tranquil island of his scientific work. He must descend into the arena of the happenings of the world and take part in the struggle of passions and opinions, for otherwise he will perceive the disturbances of his time only distantly and vaguely, becoming incapable of understanding, or even hearing, the suffering of his patients. He will not know the most adequate language with which to approach the patient and draw him out of the isolation in which he finds himself [...] (JUNG, 1946/1993, OC 10, p. 169; emphasis added).

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Observatory of Analytical Psychology – OPA

The Observatory of Analytical Psychology (OPA) is an initiative created by the *Associação Junguiana do Brasil* (AJB) to offer essays on contemporary issues in Brazilian society and, more broadly, in the world at large, developed from the perspective of analytical psychology as initiated by Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961).

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil
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THE LATE METANOIA OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG

Roque Tadeu Gui and Rubens Bragarnich

Against the massifying effect of all collective measures, there is only one remedy: the accentuation and elevation of the value of the *individual*. *A change of concept* [metanoia] is necessary, that is, a genuine recognition of the entire human being.

(JUNG, 1958/1993, OC X, § 719, *Um mito moderno sobre coisas vistas no céu*)

The maturity of the late works of significant artists does not resemble the kind one finds in fruit. They are, for the most part, not round, but fur-rowed, even ravaged. Devoid of sweetness, bitter and spiny, they do not surrender themselves to mere delectation (ADORNO, 1937/2002, p. 564, *Essays on music*)

Abstract

The authors analyze the relationship between the concept of “late style,” developed by Adorno and expanded by Said, and metanoia, the transformation of personal identity proposed by Jung. This notion is central to analytical psychology, especially in the second half of life. The Jungian psychiatrist Carlos Byington deepened the idea, associating it with the five metanoias of the life cycle. Adorno’s late style, in turn, expresses the crisis of modernity, marked by the deconstruction of values

and aesthetic forms. The present study focuses on the works of Adorno and Said, as well as accounts by Jung and his biographers, concerning a possible late metanoia he may have experienced. Events such as an accident and a serious illness in 1944, along with the context of the Second World War, are thought to have triggered profound psychic transformations. These moments marked Jung's individuation, revealing an intense creativity and theoretical exuberance - traits of a Jungian "late style." The study highlights Jung's near-death experiences at age 69, his visions, and the scientific production of that period, which exemplify the intersection between metanoia and late style.

Keywords: late style; late metanoia; individuation; Adorno; Jung.

Introduction

This book was written in 1911, when I was 36 years old. This is a critical time, for it represents the beginning of the second half of a man's life, when not infrequently a metanoia occurs, a reorientation in life. I knew well, at the time, of the inevitable break with Freud, both in work and in friendship. I recall here, with gratitude, the practical and moral support I received from my dear wife during that difficult period (JUNG, 1912/1952/1986, OC V, pp. 16-17).

In the preface to the 4th edition of *Símbolos da Transformação*, written in September 1950, Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) recalls the beginning of that iconic work:

This book was written in 1911, when I was 36 years old. This is a critical time, for it represents the beginning of the second half of a man's life, when not infrequently a *metanoia* occurs, a reorientation in life. I knew well, at the time, of the inevitable break with Freud, both in work and in friendship. I recall here, with gratitude, the practical and moral support I received from my dear wife during that difficult period (JUNG, 1912/1952/1986, OC V, pp. 16-17).

This is one of the five times Jung used this concept, which became part of the jargon of Jungian analysts. It points to an inner revolution in the personality that appears chaotically and frighteningly and, according to Jung, predicts the beginning of the individuation process.

Jung uses the Greek word *metanoia*, etymologically derived from the Greek *metanoein*, formed from the union of *metá*, meaning “after,” and *νόος*, meaning “mind, thought.” Thus, the literal interpretation of the term would be *to change one’s thinking or to change the mind*. Jung, however, will use it from the theological universe with the meaning of *conversion*, whose memorable example is shown in the transformation of Saul into Paul:

Saul asked the high priest for authorization to go to the synagogues of the city of Damascus, to persecute and bring to Jerusalem as prisoners all the Christians he found, both men and women. However, on the way, he was taken by a sudden experience: “[...] as he approached Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven shone around him, and, falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? He asked, Who are you, Lord? And the answer was, I am Jesus, whom you persecute” (BÍBLIA, 2002, At 9:3–5).

For Jung, *metanoia* is grounded in the religious experience of encountering the sacred and the numinous, promoting the transformation known as the individuation process. Jung considered that this transformation is triggered around the ages of 35 to 40, marking what he saw as the midpoint of life. Based on his own experience, he indicated age 36 as the beginning of *metanoia*. This, however, may vary depending on sociocultural and historical factors. It is possible that, in contemporary Western society, the crisis of *metanoia* may set in later, between 45 and 55 years of age (GUI, 2010). Regardless of temporal adjustments, depending on historical and cultural contexts, the core of Jungian phenomenology regarding this period of transformation remains relevant.

Post-Jungian developments expand this view, proposing that the individuation process, understood as a natural biological tendency to become who one is from birth to death, takes place throughout the entire life and is never fully completed, as suggested by the Developmental School of Analytical Psychology (SAMUELS, 1989).

Although individuation is an inherent tendency, it does not occur without the confrontation of existential crises and suffering, due to the

friction between the *Self's* demand for integration and expansion of consciousness and the requirements of the external world (GUI, 2010). This tendency can be strengthened through conscious effort, not restricted only to analytic or psychotherapeutic settings. It may emerge as an existential necessity in critical moments of life, especially during the second half, including midlife and later phases of aging (GUI, 2005).

Stages of Human Life: Crises and Resolutions

If individuation unfolds across the lifespan and reaches its culmination in later life, it necessarily includes both phase-specific crises and those triggered by particular life events. Jung emphasizes these transitions along the human journey from birth through childhood, adult life, and old age (JUNG, 1930/1991), using the classic metaphor of the sun's course:

[...] I would like to return, for a moment, to the comparison with the Sun. The one hundred and eighty degrees of the arc of our life can be divided into four parts. The first quarter, situated in the east, is childhood, a state without conscious problems, in which we are a problem for others, but are not yet aware of our own problems. Conscious problems occupy the second and third quarters, while in the last quarter, in extreme old age, we plunge into that situation in which, despite the state of our consciousness, we again become a kind of problem for others. Childhood and extreme old age are totally different from each other, but they have something in common: immersion in the unconscious psychic process. Just as the child's soul develops out of the unconscious, its psychic life, though not easily accessible, is nevertheless not as difficult to analyze as that of very old people who sink back into the unconscious, where they progressively disappear. Childhood and extreme old age are states of life without any conscious problems; thus, I did not consider them in this study (JUNG, 1930-31/1991, OC VIII, § 795).

Erich Neumann (1905–1960) was a German-Israeli analyst, who explored deeply myths from various ancient cultures such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Crete, and Babylon. He described the mythological stages in the evolution of individual and collective consciousness through the hero's journey, observed through the lens of archetypes that govern the psychological stages of human personality development. Neumann

(2002/2010/2015) articulated the evolution of consciousness in stages he named *uroboric*, *matriarchal*, *patriarchal*, and *alterity*. Carlos Amadei Botelho Byington (1933–2019), a Brazilian Jungian analyst, developed symbolic psychology and proposed the characterization of seven phases of life, marked by five metanoias (Figure 1).

Life Phases	Characteristics
1 st Phase Intrauterine	Gestation; embryonic development
2 nd Phase Early Childhood (0–2 years)	Gradual maturation of neurological functions; progressive development of organic functions and mental representations
1st METANOIA	
3 rd Phase Second Childhood (2–12 years)	Walking; sphincter control; self-feeding; sleeping separately from parents; gender identity; first phonemes and development of speech; metaphorical capacity; conceptual intelligence; learning of traditional ethics; development of the <i>Individual Self</i> within the socialization of the <i>Family Self</i> .
2nd METANOIA	
4 th Phase Adolescence (12–20 years)	The ego does not determine choices but is shaped by them; polarization in relation to parents; construction of separation from the <i>Family Self</i> and progressive insertion into the <i>Cultural Self</i> .
3rd METANOIA	
5 th Phase Adulthood (20–40 years)	Construction of a new home and family; development of professional life.
4th METANOIA	
6 th Phase Mature Adulthood (41–60 years)	Search for a deep and unique personal identity through the realization of one's potential.
5th METANOIA	
7 th Phase Old Age Later Life (60+ years)	Encounter of the ego with totality (dimensions of infinity, eternity, and the experience of peace); symbolic transcendence of the death of the physical body.

Figure 1 – The five metanoias of Byington

Source: authors' compilation

For Byington, the *metanoia* process is characterized as the “surpassing of an archetypal pattern and a state of consciousness toward the establishment of another.” The succession of the stages of *metanoia*, for Byington, implies the activation or passivity of various archetypes – central, patriarchal, matriarchal, *anima*, *animus*, hero, life, and death. According to the author, *metanoia* as described by Jung corresponds to the fourth metanoia (40–60 years). The fifth and final phase is described as cosmic conjunction, characterized by “existential detachment and governed by the Archetype of Wholeness.” The central archetype and the archetype of life and death would be present in all phases, once the process is constellated, in all its stages, by the action of the central archetype, and the life-and-death archetypes are activated at each transformation (BYINGTON, 2015).

For Byington, the seventh phase (fifth metanoia), corresponding to old age, would occur after 60. However, given the lengthening of the life cycle in contemporaneity, we can agree with Joan Erikson (1903–1997) – wife and partner of Erik Homburger Erikson (1902–1994), American psychoanalyst, authors of *Ciclos da Vida Humana*, when she coined in 1992 the term “gerotranscendence” to designate the advanced stage of life, near death, often extending beyond the age of 90 (ERIKSON, Joan, 1992).

Preserving Jung’s original notion of *metanoia*, we will examine the idea of a *late metanoia* of Carl Gustav Jung, relating it to the concept of “late style” of Theodor W. Adorno (2002), also explored by other authors such as Edward Said (1983) and Juárez (2014).

Late Style

Theodor W. Adorno (1903–1969), a German philosopher, sociologist, musicologist, and composer, developed the concept of “late style,” generally applied to modern art. Late style would thus be an expression of the crisis of modernity, in which traditional values and forms of expression were challenged and often disintegrated. The artist’s late style emerges in response to that crisis, reflecting an acute awareness of social contradictions and conflicts, or cultural disintegration in the modern era (ADORNO, 1937/2002).

For the philosopher, late style incorporates dialectical tensions between tradition and innovation, continuity, and rupture. This tension is evident in how artists handle past aesthetic and technical forms while seeking new modes of expression. Artists who work in late style are highly self-conscious about their own stylistic practices and about the history of art. They often reference, cite, or subvert their earlier personal styles, creating works that reflect a critical awareness of artistic tradition.

By challenging aesthetic and social conventions, artists who work in this style open space for deeper reflection on the social and cultural conditions of modernity. Late style is often characterized by fragmentation and discontinuity, reflecting the disintegration of culture and experience in the modern era. This fragmentation can be seen in the formal structure of artworks as well as in their thematic content.

After having fully mastered the traditional conventions and techniques of their art, the artist, as reported by Adorno (1937/2002), begins to subvert them or deviate from them in a significant way. This phenomenon generally occurs at an advanced stage of the artist's career when they have already accumulated vast experience and artistic maturity. However, the term late does not refer simply to advanced age, but to a late stage of artistic development, which may manifest at any moment in an artist's life, depending on their trajectory and intensity of work (JUÁREZ, 2014).

Edward Said (1935–2003), who was a Palestinian-American literary critic and political activist, professor of literature at Columbia University, explored the concept of late style in his work *Estilo Tardío* (SAID, 2006). Following Adorno, Said views late style as a cultural and stylistic manifestation that arises in periods of historical and cultural transition. According to this author, it is not only an artistic phenomenon; it is also a cultural and historical response to a specific moment. Earlier conventions and artistic forms are questioned and challenged, reflecting the uncertainty and tension of a time in transformation. Said argues that late style in 19th-century music and literature is characterized by sensitivity to ambiguity, fragmentation, and discontinuity. He emphasizes reflexivi-

ty, intertextuality, and the challenge to historical linearity as fundamental features of late style.

In this context, Edward Said expanded Theodor Adorno's ideas about late style, applying them to broader contexts, especially exile and postcolonial culture. In the book *Estilo Tardío* (published posthumously in 2006), Said argues that late style is not simply a biological trait of old age, but an aesthetic and intellectual phenomenon linked to a feeling of not belonging. Said also connects late style to his own condition as an exiled intellectual and to the experience of marginalized thinkers, emphasizing how forced separation from homeland or tradition can generate an aesthetics of resistance.

While Adorno saw late style primarily as a formal and philosophical phenomenon within the work of art, though connected to the socio-historical context, Said politicizes it, expanding it into a reflection on displacement, exile, and cultural criticism. This rereading enriches the discussion by linking the concept not only to old age but to a critical stance toward history and culture (JUAREZ, 2014).

In sum, classifying a work as "late" in Adorno's and Said's conceptions involves specific criteria related to cultural and artistic production. Some of which we list below, once our goal is the characterization of Carl Gustav Jung's late metanoia.

Late works usually reflect a period of crisis, transformation, or the end of a historical cycle. They often address themes of disillusionment, skepticism, or questioning of social and cultural structures. They may present aesthetic characteristics that reflect a break with earlier styles, often incorporating elements of deconstruction, fragmentation, or even a critique of the artistic/intellectual medium itself. These works may question or subvert aesthetic norms previously established; their authors reflect on their own creation and the context in which they were produced. This reflexivity may be seen as an attempt to understand or critique the cultural and social conditions of their production (SAID, 2006).

These works often dialogue with earlier traditions, but do so critically, revisiting or reinterpreting the past to question or transform its meaning (ASSIS, 2013, n.p). For this author:

[...] it becomes clear that what we call the *late* has no existence in itself; it can only be understood relationally, inseparable from time and from the creator's retrospective gaze upon their own work. his retrospective view examines the work, since only once it has reached a certain scope can its potential as a meaningful corpus come into view. Far from aiming at synthesis, this appreciative perspective seeks to discern the creative potentials developed over a lifetime and to highlight what it judges to be the core of the author's thought.

There is evidence that Carl Gustav Jung's work, especially from his near-death experience following the 1944 accident, presents several characteristics of late style, associated with the metanoia of the founder of analytical psychology.

Metanoia of Carl Gustav Jung

JUNG (1961/1975), in the chapter “*Visões*” of *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, in only seven pages, describes the experience of the accident and the myocardial infarction, with the long four-month hospitalization that took place in 1944, as also recorded by Bair (2006) in *Jung: uma Biografia*. The accident, which began with a fall, became a high-risk event, involving a state of delirium, visions, and a near-death experience.

Jung records a series of visions that he describes as “the most tremendous things I have ever experienced.” Jung was 69 years old. The heart attack made Jung feel, in his words, “hung on the brink of death.” The visions involved the divine marriage between *Tiphereth* and *Malchuth*, which in the Kabbalah are the masculine and feminine divine principles (JUNG, 1961/1975, p. 256). Jung describes these visions as occurring in a state of waking ecstasy: “I felt myself floating in space as though sheltered in the midst of the universe, in an immense void, yet filled with the greatest possible feeling of happiness” (p. 256). He also describes his experience as an indescribable “eternal beatitude.”

Those around me also seemed enchanted. At that hour of the night, the nurse would warm my meal, because only then could I take some food and eat with an appetite. For a time, it seemed to me that the nurse was an old Jewish woman, much older than she actually was, and that she prepared ritual dishes. When I looked at her, I believed I saw a blue halo around her head. I was in the *Pardes Rimmonim*, the garden of pomegranates, and there the marriage of *Tiphereth with Malchuth* was being celebrated.^[1] Or else it was as though I were Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai, whose wedding was being celebrated in the beyond. It was the mystical marriage, as depicted in representations of the Kabbalistic tradition. I could not say how wonderful it all was. I kept thinking: “It is the garden of pomegranates! It is the marriage of Malchuth with Tiphereth!” I do not know exactly what role I played in the celebration. At bottom, it was about myself: I was the marriage, and my beatitude was that of a happy marriage (JUNG, 1961/1975, pp. 256-257).

Jung reports that the vision changed, and the “Wedding of the Lamb” in Jerusalem followed, with angels and light. Little by little, the vision of the garden of pomegranates faded and transformed.

I followed a broad valley down to its end, at the foot of a gentle chain of hills; the valley ended in an ancient amphitheater situated, admirably, in the green landscape. And in this theater, the *hierosgamos* (sacred marriage) was enacted: dancers appeared and, upon a bed adorned with flowers, Zeus – Father of the universe – and Hera consummated the *hierosgamos* as described in the Iliad (JUNG, 1961/1975, p. 257).

As a result of these experiences, Jung developed the impression that this life is only a “segment of existence”. During the visions, past, present, and future merged. For him, “these visions and events were perfectly real. Nothing was artificially forced; on the contrary, everything was of extreme objectivity” (p. 258).

[1] *Pardes Rimmonim* is the title of a Kabbalistic treatise by Moses Cordovero (16th century). *Tiphereth* (grace) and *Malchuth* (kingdom) are, according to the Kabbalistic conception, two among the ten spheres of divine manifestations, through which God emerges from obscurity. They represent a feminine principle and a masculine principle within divinity (Note by Aniela Jaffé, in *Memórias*, p. 256).

It is notable that Jung, in what he described as the most tremendous and “individuating” experience of his life, found himself in the “garden of pomegranates,” an allusion to a Kabbalistic work by Moses Cordovero, and identified himself as the *coniunctio* of *Tiphereth* and *Malchuth*, as described in the Kabbalah. In this vision, one that can only be described as Kabbalistic, Jung identifies with Rabbi Simon ben Yochai, who in Jewish tradition is considered the author of the Zohar. Here, at the brink of death, Jung has a mystical experience in which the truth of the Kabbalistic marriage is equated with the truth of the *hierosgamos*, the divine marriage in Greek mythology.

The sexual union between man and woman is mystically experienced as a source both of immortality and of individuation and personal redemption. Jung tells us that such an experience involves an “objective cognition” in which all emotional bonds, “relations of desire and demands, laden with constraint and servitude,” are transcended in favor of a real *coniunctio*, a relationship with oneself, with others, and with the world (pp. 258–259). Only after this Kabbalistic experience was Jung able to compose *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (JUNG, 1955–56/1985) and other important works of his later years.

Given Jung’s familiarity with Kabbalistic ideas and symbols, the deeply psychological nature of the Kabbalah, and Jung’s own Kabbalistic visions, we might ask why he never developed a sustained investigation of the Kabbalah as he did with Gnosticism and, especially, alchemy.

There are several reasons for this. To begin with, as Jung himself observes, he was not familiar with Hebrew and lacked access to the relevant sources. While he conceded that Kabbalah occupied a position within Judaism comparable to that of Orthodox Judaism, he considered it, speaking as a Christian, largely peripheral. There was indeed a Christian Kabbalah (of which Christian Knorr von Rosenroth [1631-1689]^[2] was

[2] <https://legado.luteranos.com.br/textos/christian-knorr-von-rosenroth-1636-1689>

an example), but for Jung, the Kabbalah was essentially Jewish in origin and meaning (DROB, 2023).

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Jung maintained a strong ambivalence toward Jews and Judaism, which, at least during a critical point in his career, may have compromised his receptivity to Jewish ideas. According to Drob (2023), after the events of 1944, Jung would have resolved his *Jewish complex*!

Regarding the impact of these events on his work, Jung says (1961/1975):

After this illness, a period of great productivity began. Many of my principal works arose then. The knowledge or intuition of the end of all things gave me the courage to seek new forms of expression (p. 259).

We highlight some of the works from this creative period^[3]:

- 1945 - *Depois da Catástrofe* (OC X)
- 1946 - *A Psicologia da Transferência* (OC XVI)
- 1946 - *A Luta com as Sombras* (OC X)
- 1946 - *A Fenomenologia do Espírito no Conto de Fadas* (OC IX/1)
- 1947 - *Considerações Teóricas sobre a Natureza do Psíquico* (OC VIII)
- 1948 - *Psicologia e Alquimia* (OC XVIII/2)
- 1947/1948 - *Técnicas de Mudança de Atitude a Serviço da Paz Mundial* (OC XVIII/2)
- 1949 - *Fausto e a Alquimia* (OC XVIII/2)
- 1950 - *Sincronicidade: um Princípio de Conexões Acausais* (OC VIII)
- 1950 - *O Simbolismo da Mandala* (OC IX/1)
- 1951 - *Aion: Estudos sobre o Simbolismo do Si-mesmo* (OC IX/2)
- 1951 - *A Sincronicidade* (OC VIII)
- 1951 - *Questões Básicas da Psicoterapia* (OC XVI)
- 1952 - *Revisão de Transformação e Símbolos da Libido*, from 1912 (OC V)
- 1952 - *Resposta a Jó* (OC XI)
- 1953 - *Sobre o Problema do Símbolo de Cristo* (OC XI)

[3] Taken from the website <https://symbolon.com.br/biografia/>

- 1954 - *A Psicologia da Figura do Trickster* (OC IX/1)
- 1954 - *Comentário psicológico sobre o livro tibetano da grande libertação* (OC XI)
- 1955 - *Sobre o livro Die Reden Gotamo Buddhos* (OC XI)
- 1955 - *Mandalas* (OC IX/1)
- 1955/1956 - *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (OC XIV/1, 2, 3). (Launched in 1944)
- 1957 - *Presente e Futuro* (OC X)
- 1957/1958 - *A Função Transcendente* (Original version from 1916) (OC VIII)

In *Memórias*, we find a forceful phenomenological account of a late style of metanoia lived by Jung: an apparent egoic withdrawal before the “flow of thoughts.” We say “apparent” because they are in no way chaotic, but articulated (“mature and with form,” paraphrasing Jung’s words).

Although Jung’s post-1944 works are often equated with his inner process of individuation, we also consider that Jung was strongly impacted by the events surrounding the Second World War.

Works such as *Depois da Catástrofe* (1945), *A Luta com as Sombras* (1946), *Técnicas de Mudança de Atitude a Serviço da Paz Mundial* (1948), *Presente e Futuro* (1957), *O Bem e o Mal na Psicologia Analítica* (1959) bear the mark of his concerns with the postwar world. In the Preface to *Ensaio sobre História Contemporânea* (1946), opening the collection of texts that included Wotan, *A Psicoterapia Moderna*, *Psicoterapia e Cosmovisão*, *Após a Catástrofe*, and a postscript, he says:

The avalanche of events of an era is not perceptible only on the outside, that is, in the external and distant world. It also reaches the quiet of the consulting room and the privacy of medical consultations. The physician is responsible for his patients and therefore cannot isolate himself on the distant and tranquil island of his scientific work. He must descend into the arena of world events and participate in the struggle of passions and opinions, otherwise he will only be able to perceive the unrest of his time in a distant and imprecise way, becoming incapable of understanding or even hearing the suffering of his patients. He will not know what language is most appropriate to deal with the patient and to bring him out of the isolation, since his incomprehension

will further reinforce that condition. Therefore, the therapist cannot dispense with a discussion with his time, however repugnant the political clamor, the deception of propaganda, and the out-of-tune shout of demagogues may be to him (JUNG, 1946/1993, OC X, § 171).

Shamdasani (2005, p. 373) observes that “since the beginning of the Second World War, Jung felt his pessimism regarding the future of the world grow increasingly” (p. 373). In a letter addressed to Esther Harding, he says:

[...] I increasingly regard existence as something provisional, and I often feel that I am doing a particular thing for the last time. [...] Things and external life pass through me and leave me in a world of ideas that are not of the world and in a time measured by centuries. I am glad that you and others carry forward a work that I began in the past. The world urgently needs this. It seems we are arriving at a general test when the question is posed whether contemporary human beings have enough consciousness to deal with their demons or not. Now, it seems a battle lost (JUNG, 1947/2002, p. 75).

At that time, Jung returned to using the term “dominants” to refer to the archetypes that would influence the individual and culture. In 1955–1956, in one of his last works, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, he described the rise and fall of dominants, a kind of archetypal regency in the change of times. Here, Jung was certainly impacted by world circumstances and by awareness of his own end. For him, his work offered what was lacking in the West. On the other hand, he complained of having been misunderstood, expressing his lament in a letter addressed to Eugene Rolfe, member of the Analytical Psychology Club of London:

I had to understand that I failed in making people see what I tried to do. I am practically alone [...] I failed in my greatest task, which was to open people’s eyes to the fact that man has a soul and that there is a treasure buried in the field, and that our religion and our philosophy are in a lamentable state. Why do I even have to go on existing? (JUNG, 1960, *apud* SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 376).

Shamdasani (2005) identifies in Jung’s late work a pervasive pessimism regarding the world’s prospects, together with the view that psychology’s

value consists in being pertinent to that condition. For Jung, the collision between the primitive (ancestral) and the modern, as well as between the individual and the collective, was fundamental, and psychology was called upon to intervene in that struggle. He hoped that complex psychology (a designation appreciated by Jung, but which did not catch on in the analytic community) would be widely recognized in the West, which had not happened until then. The different psychologies, in their theoretical strands, would not have caused the social impact necessary for a great transformation of collective consciousness.

We observe, then, that in the last twenty years of Carl Gustav Jung's life, he produced an extraordinarily rich body of work, at once visionary and irreverent. It is enough to recall writings such as *Sincronicidade*, which overturns epistemological notions of cause and effect; *Resposta a Jô*, which unsettles both the psychological and theological landscape; and *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, the vertiginous treatise on the integration of psychic opposites through alchemy as metaphor, a notorious trial for students of analytical psychology. Alongside this late output, there is also the emergence of a marked skepticism toward social and cultural structures and toward the world's political situation.

Jung, endowed with vast erudition, brings into dialogue with contemporaneity traditions relegated to dusty libraries, as is the case with Alchemy, revisiting and reinterpreting the past in search of a bridge to modern psychology.

Jung – A Late Style of Metanoia?

Who follows the safe path is as though dead.

Jung

By extending Adorno's and Said's ideas about late style to Jungian individuation and metanoia, we address the interaction between the subjectivity of the individuating person and the world in which their process unfolds.

From the Jungian analytic perspective, we know we will not have two identical processes, not even analogous ones, if we consider the psychic singularity of subjects and the specific existential circumstances of each person.

The phenomena described for Jung's individuation and metanoia process are usually associated with his personal itinerary, his historical and professional circumstances, and, as we have seen, personal accidents such as that of 1944, which produced profound changes of consciousness and effects on his work. We might say these were luminous resolutions of Jung's metanoia. But we would not do justice to Jung's conceptions if we forgot the dark pole of this process.

Just as the artist who works in late style develops self-awareness of their own style – often subverting it – the individuating subject can subvert, so to speak, their own way of living, whether in relation to critical moments arising from age-related evolution or in relation to critical events peculiar to each life. In that sense, the individuation process implies the discovery of one's own and most authentic style of existence. Individuation is a becoming, at the same time that it is a drift, in search of new ways of being (GUI, 2010).

Especially in the phase of late metanoia, we will find “fragmentation and discontinuity,” which, according to Adorno, on the cultural and artistic plane, refers to the “disintegration of culture and experience in the modern era,” reflected in the “structure of works of art.” The interests of the elderly person shift toward other spheres of psychic experience. Often, a certain *disinterest* in the affairs of everyday life, the world, and family relationships points to a farewell to median life toward the unknown of the experience of “cosmic communion with the spirit of the universe, a redefinition of time, space, life and death, and a redefinition of the *Self*,” as Lars Tornstam says, *apud* Joan Erikson (1998, pp. 103–104). Or, as Jung says, “[...] the Sun begins to decline, which means an inversion of all the values and ideas cultivated during the morning. The Sun becomes contradictory to itself. It is as if it gathered its own rays into itself, instead of emitting them. Light and heat diminish and finally are extinguished” (JUNG, 1930/1991, OC VIII, § 778).

How can we characterize Carl Gustav Jung's late style of metanoia? Several characteristics of late style proposed by Adorno and Said are identifiable in Carl Gustav Jung's late trajectory of metanoia.

We note the impact of his near-death experience following an accident, with the production of visions and the perception of new meanings in life; according to Jung himself, the "acceptance of being, in an unconditional 'yes' to what is, without subjective objections, in an acceptance of the conditions of existence as I see and understand them; acceptance of my being as it simply is" (JUNG, 1961/1975, p. 259).

Jung admits in *Memórias* that after the illness, a period of great productivity began. He recognizes that many of his principal works arose from that point on. He also recognizes the search for new forms of expression, seeking to remain faithful to his intuitions: "The problems took hold of me, matured, and took form" (JUNG, 1961/1975, p. 259). As reported in the previous section, the Second World War brought Jung a pessimism regarding the future of the world and even a disbelief regarding the real contribution of his work to civilization, to the point of asking why he should even continue to exist. Indeed, the work of his life was about to be concluded.

Final Considerations

We are aware of the risks involved in transposing ideas that arise from aesthetic and cultural-philosophical reflection, such as those proposed by Adorno and Said, into the domain of human psychic life. Yet these ideas, directed toward the broader textures of cultural experience, resonate with what analytical psychology calls the "world soul." It is within this collective soul that personal subjectivity takes root and unfolds through what we call the individuation process.

Taking Jung as a *case study* of late metanoia challenged us to think about the possible dialogue between the philosophy of aesthetics, concerning the concept of late style as thought by Adorno, and analytical psychology, with its concepts of individuation and metanoia, especially regarding

the most advanced phase of the life cycle, near death, which we call “late metanoia.” We thus expanded the conceptualization derived from aesthetic philosophy as a creative expression in the individuation process of the human being.

The emerging crises of the various life transitions call into question the egoic mode of functioning of earlier stages, leading, to a greater or lesser degree, to a rupture of personal patterns. This rupture requires not only internal, subjective change, but also a reorientation toward the external world, entailing new forms of adaptation; it may even bring the individual into conflict with established social values.

We consider that the psychosocial crises a person undergoes across the life course entail dialectical tensions, as Adorno suggests, between inherited ways of living and the discovery of new possibilities. At every age, the same question arises: do we reproduce established values and forms of life, or do we innovate by finding ways of being that are more individuating? Each life, across its various transitional phases, gives its own answer to this dilemma.

Late art (in the sense of the artist’s late style) implicitly contains a social critique of the ordinary parameters of culture, challenging aesthetic and social conventions, instigating reflections on the social and cultural conditions of modernity, and assuming a character of cultural therapy. Likewise, the emergence of late style in the metanoia(s) represents a provocation to our collective ways of living. The crises of childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, mature adulthood, and old age call into question the social mode of values and practices of the society in which human beings live and develop. Above all, the final stage of life, in our contemporary industrialized society, is the object of what has come to be called “ageism” of misunderstanding and disparaging criticisms (“the senile old man and old woman”), and often abandonment, signaling to the elderly that they have nothing more to contribute to a society in which there is no longer a place for them, thus stealing from them the dignity of the end.

Jung’s few references to metanoia lead analytical psychologists to think

about an advanced moment of the individuation process characterized by a certain transcendence of worldly events, as if preparing the elderly person for their withdrawal from the stage of life. However, as we can see in the “Jung case”, metanoia is a process that is built throughout life, certainly coordinated by a supraordinate psychic instance – the *Self* – culminating at the end of the life cycle, as far as we know, traversed by luminous aspects of transcendence, but also by darker aspects, characterized, for example, by pessimism regarding one’s own work and the world.

Jung’s example, and in particular the events around his 70th year, with his late metanoia – well beyond age 36, which he himself marked as the beginning of his individuation process – shows the aptness of the conception of the existence of various stages of metanoia throughout the life cycle, as proposed by Byington, as well as the viability of conceiving a late style of metanoia in the aesthetics of individuation, as Adorno conceives it in the field of art; after all, each of us has as an ultimate, late task the completion of a unique work.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

THE SUBVERSIVE AND HEALING FORCE OF IMAGINATION IN NISE DA SILVEIRA: DIALOGUES WITH JUNG AND HIS WORK

Ana Maria de Oliveira Urpia

I learned a great deal from the so-called mad...

Nise da Silveira

Abstract

Nise da Silveira was a key figure in disseminating Jungian thought in Brazil. Nise and Jung were kindred souls, meeting in their passion for images of the unconscious. In this article, we set out to reflect on certain aspects that we consider central to Nise's therapeutic approach, which we refer to as an "expressive approach," highlighting one of its foundations in the Jungian proposition that the unconscious "seeks to communicate" and does so through the soul and its images imbued with affective tonality. That proposition is shared by another influence on her work,

Herbert Read, who states that expression is not only an outpouring of the inner world but also a desire to communicate. For Jung, it is the soul, as the function that perceives contents of the unconscious and the creative function that forms images and symbols, that transfers the forces of the unconscious into consciousness. According to Nise, in the lived experience of schizophrenia, words fail, yet the need for expression is imperative. From this perspective, that need takes form through the soul's imagination – the subversive force in us that insists on coming to the surface, presenting its point of view.

Keywords: Nise da Silveira; Jung, communication and expression; imagination; subversion; healing forces.

Introduction

Nise was a fundamental figure in the dissemination of Jungian thought in Brazil. At a time when there were very few translations of Jung's texts, Nise served as a window into the thinking of the Swiss psychiatrist in Latin America – not only through the publication of Jung: Life and Work and other texts, but also through the creation of a study group dedicated to his work and through the formulation of a method for reading images that is closely related to the Jungian model of dream analysis and the images of the unconscious. “But Nise went much further, incorporating – like no one else – the thought of Artaud into the search for understanding schizophrenic experiences; and that of Gaston Bachelard into reflections on the handling of different working materials, which she called the ‘emotion of handling’ [...]” (MELLO, 2014, p. 41).

As noted by Luiz Carlos Mello (2014), the interdisciplinary nature of Nise's studies led her to investigations in various fields of knowledge, such as literature, psychiatry, the arts, philosophy, and psychoanalysis. The Small Card File Relating to Works on the Plastic Expression of Psychotics and Some Tips for Benedito, known simply as Benedito, bears witness to this investigative effort.

In this book as well, one can observe that the work of the “rebel psychi-

atrist” (LUCCHESI, 2014; MELLO, 2014), who created an expressive approach that would remove “the mad” from isolation, was strongly marked by Jungian psychology. Yet she was the kind of student who, guided by the master, found herself. Nise left her own mark, says Luiz Mello, one of her closest friends and collaborators. In her final years she stated: “I am becoming less and less a doctor; I am becoming more and more Nise” (MELLO, 2014, p. 42). From the Northeast of Brazil and rebellious by nature, she said she was generally swimming against the current (MELLO, 2014). To begin with, Nise learned from the “mad,” that is, from those who were read as “abnormal,” and she questioned the sanity of those who failed to pay due attention to what they expressed through imagination and the expressive language of the arts. Nise is “the rebel. The strong one. The one who knew how to say no,” as Marco Lucchesi (2014, p. 7) states in the preface to the book *Nise da Silveira: Caminhos de uma Psiquiatria Rebelde*, by Luiz Mello. She said no to both aggressive methods and also the common practice of the time of confining and silencing “the mad” and their processes of meaning-making and expression.

Nise brought many thinkers into dialogue to give rise to an approach that is distinctly Nisean, and which is based, we would say, on the subversive and healing power of the imagination of the soul – or, as she put it, on the understanding that there exists in human beings a profound need for expression, a need that places the arts and expressive activities not only within the field of aesthetics, but also within the field of communication. After all, for Read (2013, p. 182), one of her influences, “[...] we must recognize that expression is also communication.” Inspired by Herbert Read (2013), Nise outlined an expressive approach that is equally communicative. Expressive activities do not merely allow for catharsis; rather, they seem to point to a deep yearning for connection with the common community and communication (BARCELLOS, 2010; SODRÉ, 2014).

As for Nise and Jung, they were kindred souls. They met in their passion

for the images of the unconscious. In Nise's words in *Mundo das imagens*, a text reproduced in *Benedito* (SILVEIRA, 2022, p. 77): "The individual whose conscious field has been invaded by contents emerging from the deepest layers of the psyche will be perplexed, terrified, or fascinated [...]." In this psychic condition, she says, "Words fail. But the need for expression – an imperative need inherent to the psyche – leads the individual to configure visions, the drama of which he or she has become a character [...]" (SILVEIRA, 2022, p. 77). We ask: what is this "need for expression" that leads the individual to configure his or her visions, to which Nise points us, referring us to Artaud and his quest to communicate, despite the turmoil of his inner experiences?

When referring to this need for expression and communication, is Nise not speaking precisely of the creative drive so often discussed by Jung, which he named the soul? In our view, this is precisely what Nise is addressing: the soul as a subversive force, continually generating meaning through images and driven by a deep desire to communicate.

What Nise observed is that even under critical psychic conditions, of severe dissociation, the individual – when given access to expressive materials and encouraged within a welcoming affective field – could express or communicate through the images of imagination. For Silveira (2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014) if it is true that the person with schizophrenia is trapped in internal images, it is equally true that it is through expressing these images that they can begin to communicate again with the external world. The creative expressions of these individuals reveal that the creative potency within us cannot be silenced; they reveal that the soul is a subversive force (JUNG, OC, vol. IX/1; OC, vol. VIII/2). It wants to emerge, to show the world its point of view. For Silveira (2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014; SILVEIRA, 2015) and for Jung (OC, vol. VI; OC, vol. VIII/2), we should therefore listen to it. It is through the soul that we can gain access to the "[...] unconscious contents [that] above all want to appear clearly, which is only possible when they are given an adequate formulation [...]" (JUNG, 1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, §179).

In this article, we propose to reflect on some aspects that we consider central to Nise's therapeutic approach, which we call "expressive," emphasizing that one of its foundations lies in the Jungian proposition that it is through images that the soul, as mediator between consciousness and the unconscious, transfers the forces of the unconscious to consciousness. The unconscious "wants to communicate," and it does so through images with an affective tone. For Silveira (2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014), expression is the means of communication for the person who, due to hostile social factors and external and/or internal pressures, has been flooded by images of the unconscious. According to the psychiatrist (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 15), "To paint would be to act. It would be an appropriate method of action for defense against the flooding of contents by the unconscious."

According to Nise da Silveira (2015), through the configuration of images of imagination, an opening is created to the clients' inner world, as well as an opening to the external world, with which the person begins to communicate through the materialization of these images. Creative imagination breaks the individual's alienation from the world, insofar as something from the inner world is projected outward through expressive activities. It is from the unconscious itself that the reorganizing symbols of the psyche emerge. In Nise, as in Jung, imagination is not merely a perceptual and creative faculty; it also has a meaning-making function. Imagination is the material from which humans construct meaning in existence, and expression is the way through which they share this meaning with the world.

Recalling Jung, Emanuele Coccia (2010, p. 53) says: "The soul is, above all, that which can go out of itself as image; it is that which can become sensible." The images of imagination reveal the soul's work of constructing meaning and, as Jung (OC, vol. XVIII/1) repeatedly stated, they are living, existential realities. Expressive images, which make the invisible visible (SILVEIRA, 2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014), reveal the soul's point of view – or that of the unconscious – since the soul may

be considered a “function [of relation] between the conscious subject and the depths of the unconscious, inaccessible to the subject” (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC, vol. VI, §466). The soul “creates symbols, images, and is itself pure image” (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC, vol. VI, §466).

According to Jung (1921/2013, OC, vol. VI, §466), “Through these images it transfers the forces of the unconscious to consciousness.” The soul is both vessel and transmitter, an organ for perceiving unconscious contents. “The perceptive function (soul) apprehends the contents of the unconscious and, as a creative function, engenders dynamic force in symbolic form” (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC, vol. VI, §468). Jung, however, makes an important observation about what we call archetypal^[1] images. He considers it inadequate to think of them merely as images. They are, he says, “images and at the same time emotions”; they are therefore charged with psychic energy. “The archetype,” he continues, “is both things: an image and an emotion.” It is “something alive,” “a piece of life.” The image “is dynamic” and “will provoke consequences” (JUNG, 1961/2013, OC, vol. XVIII/1, § 589).

“Listen also to the Other Part”: Affect and Image in Jung’s Psychology

From a Jungian perspective, affectivity is the essential foundation of personality. Thinking and acting, for Jung (OC, vol. III), are effects of a psychic life grounded in affect.

[1] On archetypes, in an essay entitled *Símbolos e Interpretações do Sonho*, written in English and published shortly before his death in 1961, Jung (OC, vol. XVIII/1, § 523), responding to criticisms of the concept, states that it is absurd to believe that archetypes are inherited representations, and emphasizes: “the archetype is a tendency to create representations that are highly variable, yet without losing its primordial pattern.” And to give an example, he adds there are varied representations of the motif of enemy brothers in the most diverse cultures, but the motif is one and repeats itself in each psyche (in fantasy material expressed in our reveries and dreams) from generation to generation, whenever it is activated by circumstances, as well as in the myths and tales of different cultures, which would justify calling these motifs archetypal. The archetype is irrepresentable; it is a disposition to create typical representations (images). These archetypal representations (images) – (typical) images – appear in dreams, reveries, delusions, hallucinations, and also in myths, tales, and religions of all times and of different cultures.

For him (OC, vol. XVIII/1), we are moved by forces both internal and external. It is affects – particularly emotions – that move us or paralyze us. In dreams, they appear to us in the form of images. These are the images of the unconscious that Nise da Silveira spoke of so often in her studies of schizophrenia. According to Jung (1961/2013, OC, vol. XVIII/1, §444), “at the basis of the dream there is undoubtedly a strong emotion in which the customary complexes participate, which, moreover, was to be expected. They are the weak and neuralgic points of the psyche that react first and foremost to a problematic external situation.” Complexes are a kind of imagistic functional psychic unit with a strong affective tone – one of the author’s best-known concepts.

According to Jung, personal affective complexes, as well as social complexes of archetypal character, have their history (JUNG, OC, vol. XVIII/1) – in Hollis’s (2017) words, a psychoactive history. The affective complex pushes everything into the background, including the ego complex, or personality, the most solid, strong, and richly associated among the complexes. Jung says of this complex in particular: “In normal persons, the most important psychic instance is the ego complex: it is the mass of ego representations which, in our opinion, is accompanied by the powerful and ever-present affective tone of the body” (JUNG, 1907/2013, OC, vol. III, §82). In general, this complex “asserts itself (provided there is health), despite all psychological disturbances” (JUNG, 1907/2013, OC, vol. III, §83). There are cases and moments, however, in which these affective complexes threaten the ego complex, revealing the “dangers of the soul”: moments when unconscious contents of an affective basis, expressed through voices and/or images, threaten the integrity of the ego.

These threats arising from the world of the soul or from the images of the unconscious can be understood, to some extent, as the psyche itself attempting self-regulation – seeking balance amid internal and external pressures. Sometimes this attempt to find a new point of equilibrium fails, and the person is overtaken by the images of the unconscious. We then say that a split has occurred, a rupture between the two worlds: conscious

and unconscious. On this, Jung (1911/2013, OC, vol. III, §506) states: “Dissociation can reach the point of creating one or more secondary personalities, each of which seems to possess a consciousness of its own.”

Jung emphasizes that these dissociations are fluid and changeable in neurosis. In schizophrenia, however, dissociations present themselves quite differently: in it, “[...] the split-off figures have names, banal, grotesque, caricatural characteristics, and in many respects are questionable” (JUNG, 1911/2013, OC, vol. III, §508). This process tends to lower the threshold of consciousness and to provoke strong emotional reactions, which can shake the integrity of the ego. According to Jung (OC, vol. III), if in neurosis the personality is preserved at least potentially – though shaken by the affective complex – in schizophrenia it is damaged in an almost irreparable way. Secondary personalities gain space and begin to act autonomously, driven by affective complexes that find expression in delusional narratives, hallucinations, dreams, and expressive activities.

This split, as noted in Jung (OC, vol. III) and Nise (2015), has an affective basis. According to Jung, delusions and hallucinations, obsessive ideas – symptoms that are part of so-called mental illnesses – are affective displacements: “[...] the affects that accompany them do not belong to them, but rather to a repressed complex, precisely concealed by this maneuver” (JUNG, 1907/2013, OC, vol. III, §166).

As stated by Jung, the ego must yield to the stronger sensations of the new affective complex that emerges, but without subjecting itself to it entirely. Ideally, from the standpoint of mental health, the affects that appear to us as images – although influencing the ego – would remain in the background. This, however, does not always occur. According to Jung (1907/2013, OC, vol. III, §87), “[...] strong affects always conceal a complex of great scope.” “The durability of the complex depends on and is guaranteed by the existence of a vigorous affective tone. When the affective tone disappears, the complex also disappears” (JUNG, 1907/2013, OC, vol. III, § 90).

The disappearance of this affective tone requires an attitude of listening. According to Jung (OC, vol. XVIII/2), this unconscious content must be taken seriously. The author observes, however, that “[...] taking it seriously does not mean taking it literally, but granting the unconscious a credit of trust, thus providing it with the possibility of cooperating with consciousness instead of automatically disturbing it” (JUNG, 1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 184). Jung’s analytical method involves a work of confrontation. According to Jung (1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 185): “[...] confrontation [...] not only justifies the point of view of the [conscious] ego but grants equal authority to the unconscious.” Confrontation is conducted from the standpoint of the ego, while allowing the unconscious to speak as well, *audiatur et altera pars* (listen also to the other part).

Listening to the other part would mean ensuring psychic balance through the union of opposites that appear irreconcilable. For Jung, it is as problematic for the ego to repress the unconscious as it is for the liberated unconscious to set aside the ego and dominate it. “The danger,” says Jung (1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 183), “lies in ‘losing serenity,’ that is, in no longer being able to defend one’s existence against the pressure of affective factors – a situation we frequently encounter in schizophrenia.”

The danger would not exist, or would be reduced, the author adds (OC, vol. VIII/2), if, through aesthetization, it was possible to rid oneself of the dynamics of affects.

Ridding oneself of the dynamics of affects through aesthetization would be, in the words of Rosana Paulino^[2], the same as suturing our psychic wounds. After all, it is worth remembering that at the basis of affective complexes lie traumatic experiences.

[2] Interview given by the visual artist on the exhibition *Amefrican* at MALBA. For Rosana Paulino, a prominent name in the contemporary art scene, creating is also a way of knowing our history, of understanding it, and of suturing psychosocial wounds.

For Jung (1921/1928/2012, OC, vol. XVI/2, § 262), trauma can be “[...] a defined, unique, and intense commotion, or else it is a complex of ideas and emotions, comparable to a psychic wound.” Everything that touches this traumatic-affective complex will trigger a reaction. For Jung, the traumatic-affective complex leads to psychic dissociation. The typical traumatic affect is represented in dreams and creative representations, in the form of wild and dangerous beasts. The complex imposes itself with tyrannical force. Complexes, in Jung (OC, vol. VIII/2), speak in various ways and need to be listened to. The healing of these traumatic-affective complexes does not depend, however, as has already been conjectured, on the simple repetition or recounting of the traumatic event, or on the mere expression of the images of the unconscious, but rather on doing so in the presence of another welcoming human or more-than-human being.

This presence, in Nise da Silveira (2008) and Jung (OC, vol. XVI/2), is fundamental for the individual in psychic suffering to be able to create bridges between dissociated parts, reconnecting the inner world and the outer world. Citing Jung, Nise da Silveira (2008) recalls that dissociation is a human phenomenon, also experienced by so-called neurotics, though with less intensity when compared to so-called schizophrenics. When Nise (2008, 2015) refers to the fact that in the schizophrenic experience the individual is overtaken by images of the unconscious, she is referring to what Jung called possession by the unconscious, which is precisely this state of being fragmented into many beings and into multiplicity, a *disiunctio*, resulting from the invasion of images of the unconscious. In schizophrenia, the ego complex relinquishes its normal predominance, and there is an invasion of personified unconscious contents. Images and voices “[...] intrude and disturb incessantly, tormenting the ego in countless ways, all of them unpleasant and shocking [...]”. “This is,” Jung (1911/2013, OC, vol. III, § 508) states, “visibly a chaos of visions, voices, and disconnected types, all a violent, strange nature. Incomprehensible.”

On the origins of schizophrenia, the author who so strongly influenced Nise’s thinking states:

“[...] it is impossible to prove, even in an approximate way, whether schizophrenia is primarily an organic disease or a disease of psychological origin. Although we may, for various reasons, suspect the organic nature of the primary symptom, we cannot ignore the proven fact that many cases originate on an emotional shock, a disappointment, a difficult situation, or a change of fate, etc., and that, moreover, many relapses and improvements are due to psychological conditions” (JUNG, 1911/2013, OC, vol. III, § 533)

According to Jung (OC, vol. III), this emotional shock, which in a neurotic person may disturb general attention and concentration without destroying psychic elements or their content, can be highly damaging in the schizophrenic, expressing itself through the establishment of a disturbance in that person’s expression and communication. “The cause of this disturbance is,” Jung (1911/2013, OC, vol. III, § 560) reiterates in the final pages of *Psicogênese das doenças mentais*,

a violent affect which, in the neurotic, like every emotion, produces a similar alienation or isolation, but a transitory one. The images of his fantasy that represent the disturbance may also show a certain resemblance to schizoid images, although they give more the impression of dramatization or exaggeration, as opposed to the threatening and sinister character of those of schizophrenics.

For Jung (1911/2013, OC, vol. III, § 562),

The treatment or interruption of this process does not always call for drastic measures. One may lead the patient’s mind, through common therapeutic means, to a safe distance from his unconscious, for example, by inducing him to represent his psychic situation in a drawing or a painting. In this way, the chaos that seems impossible for us to understand and formulate is visualized and objectified and can then be observed at a distance, analyzed, and interpreted by consciousness.

Readers who are familiar with Nise’s thought may already note important affinities between the thinking of the Swiss psychiatrist and creator of analytical, or Jungian, psychology as we know it today, and the thinking of Dr. Nise da Silveira, a psychiatrist and pioneer in Brazil of psychiatric reform and the anti-asylum movement, whose expressive

and affective method reveals to us a profound belief in the subversive and healing power of the human soul, in other words, of imagination.

Nise's Expressive Approach: Imagination as a Subversive and Healing Force

“I increasingly became convinced that images could allow us to glimpse hidden lived experiences suffered by those beings who had withdrawn from reality, that they made ‘the invisible visible,’ or almost so. We might begin to communicate” (SILVEIRA, 2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014, p. 258).

According to the *Dicionário Etimológico*, the word *subversão* comes from the Latin *subversio* and has the meaning of an action that provokes destruction or the inversion of order. The word *subversio* comes from the root *subvertere*, which means to turn upside down, to rebel, or to overthrow the established order. With subversion, those who were at the top of the hierarchy fall downward, and those who were at the bottom are raised. This causes disorder and confusion until a new order is established. *Subvertere* comes from the joining of two words: *sub* and *vertere*. The word *sub* means “under” or “beneath” something. The word *vertere* means to turn, to change the game, or to transform. In all its meanings, *vertere* signifies making something different. Thus, *subvertere* literally means “to transform or to turn upside down.” Allowing “the mad” to speak, listening to them, is a true act of subversion. This is what Nise da Silveira did. Although this alone would already have been sufficient to point to the subversive character of her proposal in the field of mental health, there is another reason, intrinsic to the diagnostic and therapeutic approach she created. The images of the unconscious in Nise (2015/2008) and in Jung (OC, vol. IX/1; OC, vol. VIII/2) are autonomous; they reveal the subversive force of the soul, its capacity to generate meaning independently of the conscious instance, the ego, questioning or destabilizing the order previously established, sometimes by imposition of that conscious instance. According to Jung (1939/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 497), “The autonomy of the unconscious begins where emotions originate. These instinctive,

involuntary reactions disturb the rational order of consciousness with their elemental irruptions.” The thinker observes that, under certain circumstances, the unconscious is even capable of assuming the role of the ego. “The consequences of this inversion bring about insanity and confusion, since the unconscious is not a second personality with organized and centralized functioning, but probably a decentralized sum of psychic processes” (JUNG, 1939/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 496).

Several factors pointed out by Nise da Silveira can lead to this subversion of order, of which we speak, in which the images of the unconscious overwhelmingly take control of the conscious ego. “A hostile external world, family disintegration, lack of love in childhood, miserable living conditions, repeated frustrations, humiliations, oppression of instinctual life, of cultural and spiritual aspirations [...]” (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 97). And we would add prejudices and discriminations of various kinds, such as those related to issues of gender, sexuality, race, class, age or generation, territory, ethnic belonging, religious belonging, etc. These factors can pressure the inner world, provoking, as Silveira (2015) observes, intense affects or emotions and failed attempts at adaptation and defense.

According to the author (2015), faced with these assaults – whether combined or separate – the psyche is unable to preserve its integrity; it fractures, and splits as unconscious images invade the field of consciousness in response to suffering. Thus, emotions that did not find forms of expression turn inward. Nise da Silveira’s expressive approach is a creative and humanized response to this movement. Through this approach, what had been silenced would be revealed through expression. Her approach, strongly inspired by Jungian thought, also dialogued with several other authors from the fields of health and the arts, such as René Huyghe, with whom she would probably repeat: “If there is a language of intelligence devoted to speech, *art belongs to the soul*, to our sentimental and thinking nature, confused and total” (HUYGHE, 1960, p. 7, emphasis added).

For Nise (SILVEIRA, 2015), it would not be enough to investigate which hostile social factors provoked psychic dissociation; it is neces-

sary to understand the images that come to populate the person's inner world. But the psychiatrist asks in *Imagens do Inconsciente*: how can one penetrate the strange world of the schizophrenic? She considers that the least difficult path would be to resort to plastic expression, considering how painful communication through words is for a person with schizophrenia. Through plastic expression, Nise believes it is possible to gain an understanding of the client's psychic situation, as she preferred to call the people she attended. Citing Jung (1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2), the author emphasizes that "Expressing emotions through painting will be an excellent way of confronting them." According to Nise (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 118), "it does not matter if these paintings are entirely devoid of aesthetic qualities. What matters is to provide imagination with the opportunity to develop free play and for the individual to participate actively in the imagined events."

The imagination of the soul is the material from which we humans construct meaning in existence. For authors such as Emanuele Coccia (2010), we are not human because we are capable of abstraction, but because we generate meaning. "Writing, speaking [painting, drawing, etc.], and even thinking mean, above all, moving in the opposite direction: finding the right image, the right meaning that allows both making real what one thinks and experiences and freeing oneself from all this" (COCCIA, 2010, p. 44). According to the author, every projective act, such as artistic or creative expression, carries spirit into the world, carries it outside itself, alienating it. The image, expressed in drawing, modeling, or painting, carries the psychic, which helps us understand the value Nise attributed to expressive activities and artistic languages. Through images, "the mad person," until then completely excluded from the common sphere of the human community, found freedom of expression and influenced those considered "normal." Through images, "the mad person" crossed the boundary that had until then separated him or her from the world of the living, producing impressions through creative productions, since images affect us (COCCIA, 2010). As Jung (1939/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 493)

warns, “The patient is flooded by a tide of thoughts as strange to him as to a normal person. Therefore, the former is called ‘mad’: we are unable to understand his ideas.” To understand them, says Nise da Silveira, inspired by Jung (OC, vol. III), it is necessary to “give visible form to the internal images that arise amid the turmoil of emotions” (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 118).

But as the psychiatrist (2015) emphasizes, for Jung (OC, vol. VIII/2), expressing would not be sufficient. In the case of neurotics, treatment would also require the conscious ego’s understanding of disturbing representations so that they may be integrated. Returning to Merleau-Ponty’s thought, René Huyghe (1960, p. 15) states in *A arte e a alma*: “to express is to become conscious.” To express is to take possession of what would remain confused within ourselves if it were not for creative expression. One thus understands the place occupied by expressive and creative activity in the work of researchers in the field of mental health, such as Nise da Silveira. Nise, however, reminds us that the situation changes greatly when working with psychotics. Even in these cases, however, Jung (OC, vol. III) attributes therapeutic value to painting. He thus once again cites a statement by Jung (1911/2013, OC, vol. III, § 562): “The *tremendum* is ‘disenchanted’ by the image, becoming banal and familiar. When the patient feels threatened by the affects of the original experience, the images he projects will serve to appease the terror.”

From Jung’s perspective (OC, vol. III), this expressive method is a way of leading the patient to a safe distance from the unconscious. Through expressive techniques, the apparently incomprehensible chaos of affective complexes of archetypal basis is visualized and objectified, that is, it takes form. And as Henri Focillon, an author also cited by Nise da Silveira, points out, “To become conscious is to take form” (FOCILLON, 2022, p. 64). The hands that paint, draw, and model, he emphasizes in another passage, “are the instrument of creation, but, above all, the organ of knowledge” (FOCILLON, 2022, p. 106). Through creative expression, the person not only points to their crisis, but also intuitively seeks to understand it:

In the life histories we studied, we constantly observed that it was from an intense affective situation that the flow of time came to a halt. The ideas and affects that remain dominant throughout the entire course of the psychotic process always derive from the situations that absorbed the individual before the illness. It is as if time stopped (SILVEIRA, 2014, *apud* MELLO, 2014, p. 191).

That is, the psychological crisis, the psychotic crisis, has a history, a history that is created within complex affective relationships. This understanding coincides with Bidima's (2019) perspective on the arts. For him, the crises that the arts reveal must be approached in terms of what they express in terms of historicity. The crisis expressed by the object of art allows us to evaluate regimes of historicity. But what do historians mean by this term?

The regime of historicity aims to be a heuristic tool, helping us to better understand not time, all times, or the whole of time, but above all moments of crisis in time. [...] It would therefore be a way of shedding light, almost from within, on current questions about time [...]. [Are we] dealing with a forgotten or excessively remembered past, a future that has almost disappeared from the horizon, or a future that is, above all, threatening, a present undoubtedly consumed in immediacy or almost static and endless? (HARTOG, 2013, p. 38, *apud* BIDIMA, 2019, p. 335).

Imagination in Jung, as in Bidima, an important contemporary thinker of the arts and philosophy, is not only creative, it is subversive, it points to crises, and thus commits us to their regimes of historicity. The unconscious, like art, is *par excellence* subversive; it removes us from our supposed comfort. It shakes our egoic and social structures, questions our knowledge of ourselves and of the world. Its subversive character is also expressed in the strangeness of the images with which we are confronted in dreams, hallucinations, and delusions of those we have called “mad,” as well as in the mobilization caused in us by a work of art. To imagine, to create, is an act of subversion. In the case of the schizophrenic experience, creating can intuitively mean rising up against the silencing generated by the hostile factors of which we have spoken, reintegrating oneself into social life. According to Nise da Silveira (2015, p. 119), “By

retaining on cardboards fragments of the drama that is being lived in a disordered way, the individual will depotentialize threatening figures and will be able to disidentify from images that imprison him.” Nise’s method values freedom (MAGALDI, 2020). Freedom from external and internal hostile factors that imprison the one who is considered “mad.” Freedom is the goal. The path is creative expression. After all, as Jung (OC, vol. VI, § 73) reminds us, it is creative activity that can provide answers to our questions. It is the “mother of all possibilities,” it can “build the bridge between irreconcilable demands.”

Through images, silencing is broken, and the difficult experience of psychic suffering becomes transmissible, as do the regimes of historicity that created it. After all, as Coccia (2010, p. 70) reminds us, “[...] it is only at the point where a life becomes image that it can become transmissible [...]”. Nise would agree with Coccia. Referring to the power of the expressive in the treatment of the person living the schizophrenic experience, Nise da Silveira (2008, p. 2150) states: “[...] the most important thing is that the dissociated inner world take form and find means of expression through transforming symbols that bring it increasingly closer to the conscious level.” When referring to transforming symbols, she automatically leads us back to Jungian work. For Jung (1912/1952/2011, OC, vol. V), symbols are transformative because they mobilize the psyche, shifting it from one margin to another, from a place of memory to a non-place of memory (BIDIMA, 2019).

According to Nise da Silveira (2008, p. 220),

Certainly, all activities are expressive, provided one knows how to observe how they are carried out, whether it be the way of holding a saw or even the striking of a hammer. But those activities are especially called expressive, which best allow the spontaneous expression of emotions, which give broader opportunity for affects to take form and manifest themselves, whether in the language of movements, sounds, forms, and colors, etc.

According to Nise (2015), through expressive activities, it would be possible to access the inner world of the person in a psychotic process;

they would allow the expression of silenced experiences that led to the individual's alienation within his or her own inner world, the world of images of the unconscious. These experiences would lie outside the elaborations of reason and thought; they would be non-verbalizable experiences, experiences with a strong affective charge. Nise observed the existence of "a drive toward the configuration of images surviving even when the personality was disintegrated [as a result of traumatic-affective complexes]" (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 15). Hence, her insistence on the healing power of expressive activities. They had the power to depotentialize this affective charge.

When the ego splits, shatters, whether due to an inability to endure the tension of certain existential situations, involvement in loveless, frustrating, or oppressive interpersonal relationships, or due to the impact of violent emotions or the silent work of intense affects, libido introverts, reactivating the unconscious (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 192).

This introversion could only be very gradually and to a certain extent reversed with the help of expressive activities, in what they represent in terms of depotentializing the images of the unconscious and in what they allow in terms of communication. As we said earlier, Nise was strongly influenced by the work of Herbert Read, a researcher in the fields of art and education. In his book *Educação pela Arte*, Read (2013, p. 182) states that in expressive action there is "an attempt at communication." The yearning for expression, of which Nise spoke, thus harbors a deep yearning for connection and dialogue. Read says, based on various psychological studies: "Expression is not an automatic outpouring, or the necessary correlate of perception; it is essentially 'an initial proposal that demands a response from another'" (READ, 2013, p. 182).

Expression is, therefore, also a desire for communication. Nise's emphasis on the idea of affect as a catalyst and, therefore, on the importance of the human or more-than-human presence alongside each client participating in the workshops seems closely linked to this conception of Read (2013) regarding the question of expression. Citing authors

connected to the study of the human psyche, Read considers that this need for communication in the child aims at overcoming the anxiety of separation that begins at weaning. For the author, “[...] in all his social activities, including art, science, and religion, the individual seeks a restoration or a substitute for the maternal love lost in childhood” (READ, 2013, p. 183). Read affirms that children do not use their drawings to express their perceptual images or their feelings, but in an attempt to access the external world, adapting to it. “The process of adjustment is always one of *Einbildungskraft*, of active imagination [...]” (READ, 2013, p. 183) and aims to restore the social bond to the subject. Recalling what we said earlier, for the author, to express is also to communicate. The author’s proposition makes full sense if we consider, as Muniz Sodré (2014, p. 10) does, that to communicate is “to let the common act,” which “means to bind, relate, concatenate, organize, or allow oneself to be organized by the constitutive dimension [...]”.

It is worth remembering that for Nise the schizophrenic had lost the ability to communicate through words but manifested a deep yearning to express himself or herself. By making the invisible visible, the expressive image made communication possible. For Nise, the images that emerge from the deepest layers of the psyche, which Jung called the collective unconscious^[3], are not pathological in themselves.

“The pathological element does not lie in the existence of these representations [or images], but in the dissociation of consciousness, which has become incapable of control over consciousness.” (JUNG, 1907/2013, OC, vol. III, *apud* SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 193).

[3] “The collective unconscious, insofar as we can judge, seems to be composed of something akin to themes or images of a mythological nature, and for this reason, the myths of peoples are the true exponents of the collective unconscious. All mythology would be a kind of projection of the collective unconscious. [...] For this reason, we can study the collective unconscious in two ways: in mythology or in the analysis of the individual.” (JUNG, 1916/1958/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 325).

Having been taken over by these images of the unconscious and thus shaken in his or her ability to communicate, the individual was driven by an inner drive to express himself or herself through the images of imagination, or, in Nise's words, the images of the unconscious.

According to Nise, the psychic system functions in accordance with the biological system, repairing damage when it encounters it. Thus, once equilibrium is broken, one can observe "healing forces manifesting themselves instinctively" (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 122) in the search for a new point of balance; "defensive impulses, by instinctive necessity, seek to bring conflicting opposites closer together and to build bridges over cleavages that appear irreconcilable" (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 123). To reconnect with the external world, however, the person beset by images or voices from the unconscious world would need to exorcise them. For her, it would be through expressive activities that the unconscious would have the opportunity to express itself, objectifying itself in forms. Through artistic languages, in the presence of another, the "depotentialization of terrifying images" (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 122) that invade the ego of the schizophrenic individual would take place.

For this effect to emerge, Nise da Silveira (2008) warns, the same images must be drawn, modeled, or painted repeatedly until wearing down the disturbing energy. Drawing, painting, or modeling would also allow the client to give form to the defensive forces that opposed dissociation. For the psychiatrist, it was necessary to recognize that the creative production of psychotics went far beyond distorted and veiled representations of repressed contents.

Like Jung, she believed that "Psychic things are extremely complex. A painting will rarely be a reflection of symptoms, however important these may be. Other factors manifest themselves together, which must be discriminated" (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 49).

"Healing" would not occur only through confrontation with the disturbing images of the unconscious, but also through the repeated visualization of calming or reordering images arising from an innate

creative impulse. These self-healing or reordering forces identified by Nise were generally expressed through circular images or mandalas (SILVEIRA, 2008, 2015).

In the face of these circular images, Nise sought resources in Jungian work. Jung had observed the appearance, in a series of images related to the therapeutic process of some of his patients, of circular expressive forms. He recognized that these were *yantras*, in the Indian sense of the term, “[...] instruments of meditation for plunging into oneself [...]” (JUNG, 1950/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 710). *Yantras* serve “[...] to reestablish inner order and are therefore frequently found in series of images; they appear soon after chaotic, disordered, conflictual states [...]” (JUNG, 1950/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 710). According to the author, they express the desire “[...] for safe refuge, for inner reconciliation and for totality” of his patients (JUNG, 1950/2014, OC, vol. IX/1, § 710). For Jung (1950/2014, OC, vol. IX/1) and Nise (2015), this was a spontaneous attempt at self-healing arising from the psyche itself.

Nise da Silveira (2008) emphasized, as Jung (1931/1947/2012, OC, vol. XVI/2) did when referring to dreams, that the interpretation of images only gains greater reliability when carried out in series. One of the central tasks of the team that worked with her, and that continues to work at the *Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente* and at the *Casa das Palmeiras*, is therefore to organize these images in series and to carry out, carefully and with the aid of the individual’s history, the analysis of the archetypal motifs they express.

The Healing Potential of the “Emotion Involved in Handling’ and the ‘Catalyzing Affect”

Nise further observed that hardly any treatment would be effective if the person did not have someone who represented an affective point of support. Healing would only be possible when stimulated by the presence of a “catalyzing affect.” The “emotion of handling” with plastic or visual materials would not be sufficient on its own; it would be necessary for a bond to be created, offering safe ground so that an alienation of the *self*

(COCCIA, 2010) could become possible through expressive forms. But before speaking about this important notion elaborated by Nise, let us return briefly to the “emotion of handling.” For the psychiatrist, expressive activity gives form to emotions. Moreover, emotions may emerge from handling expressive materials.

Plastic language is a form of expression. I do not call it art, nor do I have such a pretension. I do not guarantee that the works of the people who attend the ateliers are artistic. It is not up to me to decide whether it is art or not. The function of the work is not artistic, it is expressive. Expressive activity of emotions, of internal contents. I did not like the name occupational therapy. It was then that a client at the *Casa das Palmeiras*, in the manual work workshop, touching several balls of yarn, said: “how pleasant it is to knead... Working with fabrics is the emotion of handling.” Then I thought: eureka! I preferred, instead of occupational therapy, from then on to adopt emotion of handling. [...] Expressive activities can point to the paths of inner life (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 8).

Nise’s legacy, the notion of affect (from the Latin *affectus* or *adfectus*) is a marked presence in the philosophy developed by Spinoza, a reference dear to the psychiatrist who had a “mania for freedom” (MAGALDI, 2020). The author (2020) points out that, although Nise initially departed from the biomedical notion, she reformulated it in the terms of what would become her rebel psychiatry. In it, affect is catalytic and emotion reveals itself in its relational face, and not only in its individual one. Nise leads us to think in terms of an emotion of handling. This notion reminds us of Henri Focillon (2022) in *Elogio da Mão*. For the author, the artist, when making art with the hands, has the opportunity to prolong the privilege of childhood: he or she touches, kneads, models. Through this creative gesture, says Focillon (2022), an action is exercised upon inner life.

In Nise, emotion, when constituted as “emotion of handling,” reveals the soul’s deep yearning to connect not only with things or people, but with life itself. Affect and emotion reveal the humanity of the “mad.” Magaldi (2020, p. 303) states:

By demonstrating the capacity for affect of her patients, the physician removed them from the zone of negativity, bringing them into intelligibility. Thus, a notion of person was engendered that was not defined by Enlightenment criteria of autonomy, self-control, responsibility, or citizenship, but in terms of a potentiality whose existence depends on relationships, whether with other human beings or with animals, plants, or materials. That is, a notion of person that made the human by displacing, rather than eliminating, humanism itself, if thought of as that which defines man in differentiation from other beings.

The figure of the “catalyzing affect” emerges as that being who helps the person in treatment take the first steps in expanding the circle of the common (SODRÉ, 2014), responding to what is a deep yearning of the soul: community (BARCELLOS, 2010) and communication with humans and more-than-humans (MAGALDI, 2020). In this context, the word heal undoubtedly approaches its etymological origin. According to the Dicionário Etimológico, the word “heal” originates from the Latin *curare*, which means “to care for” or “to look after.” The Latin verb *curare* is related to the noun *cura*, which referred to care, concern, or attention given to something or someone. At this point, it is worth recalling once again Jung’s observations (1921/1928/2012, OC, vol. XVI/2, § 293), referring to the process of “healing”:

The diseased part cannot simply be eliminated, as if it were a foreign body, without the risk of at the same time destroying something essential that should remain alive. Our task is not to destroy, but to surround with care and to nourish the shoot that wants to grow until it finally becomes capable of playing its role within the totality of the soul.

The “healer” is, first and foremost, a caregiver. It is because the participant in the ateliers feels cared for, recognized, cherished, and respected in his or her alterity that paths are found for expression, and even more, for communication through the objectification of images of imagination. It is the creation of a comfortable and safe affective field that allows free expression of the intimate world. As Magaldi (2020, p. 292) highlights, “the so-called creative drive can only be actualized through

the encounter with another in a space of freedom.” The “catalyzing affect” is a kind of support figure that catalyzes processes and contents that were previously blocked or silenced.

In a text about the *Casa das Palmeiras* in *Senhora das Imagens Internas: Escritos Dispersos de Nise da Silveira*, the psychiatrist warns that the return to reality “[...] depends first and foremost on a trusting relationship with someone, a relationship that will gradually extend to contacts with other people and with the environment” (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 216). This environment, as occurs with the *Casa das Palmeiras*, must be a “small free territory” (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 216).

In *Imagens do Inconsciente*, she states: “I usually say that the monitor, in an atelier or workshop, functions as a kind of catalyst. Chemistry speaks to us of substances whose presence accelerates the speed of reactions [...]. In opposition to the catalytic agent stands the inhibiting agent, which prevents the reaction [...]” (SILVEIRA, 2015, p. 65). Nise observes that among those who have contact with the patient some function as catalysts and or as inhibitors. She also notes that the same individual may be an inhibitor for one person and a catalyst for another.

In Nise da Silveira’s conception, people, animals, environments, and creativity can be catalysts. “Creativity,” says Nise, “is the catalyst par excellence of the rapprochement of opposites. Through it, sensations, emotions, and thoughts are led to recognize one another, to associate, and even internal tumults acquire form” (SILVEIRA, 2008, p. 215). In addition, a monitor or an animal may act as catalytic affects. The catalytic affect does not take the form only of a human figure; it may reveal itself in the figure of an affectionate animal (MELLO, 2014).

We could say that, by demonstrating genuine interest or closeness, the catalyst functions as a substitute, whether for the primary figure or for another attachment figure, and in this sense as one who takes on the role of a “transformational object” (BOLLAS, 2015). After all, as Bollas (2015) observed, the experience of being transformed by the other in our earliest relational experiences with caregivers remains as a memory,

which may be re-presented, according to the author, in aesthetic experiences and, according to Bowlby (1990, 1997), in other secure attachment objects. Without this substitutive figure, whose presence offers safety and has transformational value, it would be difficult for the person in mental suffering to emerge from introversion into the world of images of the unconscious. The appreciation and creation of aesthetic objects depend above all on the guarantee of this point of support.

Final Considerations

All writers on Nise emphasize the rebellious nature of her person and her therapeutic proposal. The study of Nise da Silveira's work reveals the careful research effort that gave substance to her expressive approach. However, as Walter Melo e Ferreira (2013, p. 557) observes, "[...] Nise's name undergoes a process of mythification that eclipses her work." Jung's name undergoes a similar mythification. Although there is a movement of renewal and creative critique of his thought, this must be increasingly encouraged by the institutions that disseminate his work in Brazil and worldwide. Both Nise and Jung were researchers of excellence; we must continue this scientific spirit that is foundational to the work of both, allowing new points of view and possibilities of application in the field of mental health and clinical practice.

What we conclude from the research movement undertaken in the elaboration of this article is that Nise da Silveira's expressive approach is also communicative, pointing to a profound need of the soul: the yearning for the common of community and communication. Nise da Silveira's work affirms the humanity of the mad person by revealing a process of meaning-making that emerges from the depths of unconscious life, from an organizing instance that seems to seek not only a new order within chaos, but also to reconnect the person to common life. It is through this work of the soul, which becomes visible through images, that we can not only understand what is happening in the inner life of the ill person, but also help them to elaborate the chaos in which they find themselves.

The crossing of these painful places of memory or imagination toward non-places of memory, places yet to be created, demands secure support and, in the words of Nise da Silveira (2015), calls for affect and an emotion that arises from a relationship.

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PERSONA, SHADOW, AND THE DIGITAL WORLD: JUNGIAN REFLECTIONS ON CONTEMPORARY LIFE

Magno da Silva Parmagnani

Introduction

This text proposes a dialogue between two foundational volumes of C. G. Jung's work, a contemporary book by Verena Kast, and the documentary *O Dilema das Redes*, aimed at reflecting on how the concepts of shadow and *persona* remain profoundly relevant in our digital reality. The shadow, understood as everything we hide from ourselves – desires, feelings, impulses, and vulnerabilities – and the persona, as the image we construct to be socially accepted, are psychic structures that manifest with particular intensity in virtual interactions.

In the era of social networks, where a person's value often seems to be measured by likes and followers, the tension between what is shown and what is silenced becomes even more evident. By bringing together theory, clinical reflection, and audiovisual elements, this text analyzes how the

distancing from one's own shadow and the overidentification with an idealized persona contribute to conflict, precipitate judgments, and emotional suffering – both at the individual and collective levels. Conversely, understanding these mechanisms can open paths toward more authentic relationships, more conscious choices, and a less reactive way of living together.

The reading, therefore, offers more than a theoretical analysis: it invites the reader to recognize the dynamics between what is displayed and what remains hidden, between what is felt and what is projected – especially in a world where being connected does not necessarily mean being present

Structure of the Works

Jung presents his ideas in two texts that complement one another. In the first text, volume VII/1, he introduces the concept of the shadow – that more concealed side of the psyche, composed of feelings, desires, and memories we avoid recognizing. Jung shows how the denial of these contents, when it occurs on a collective level, can have serious effects, feeding prejudices, conflicts, and destructive attitudes. In volume VII/2, he deepens the understanding of the persona, a kind of “social mask” used to adapt to others’ expectations. Jung makes clear that the *persona* is necessary for life in society, but it cannot take the place of the true *self*, which can make us vulnerable and disconnected from ourselves.

Verena Kast returns to these ideas with care and sensitivity. In her book, she structures the chapters as a direct conversation with the reader, drawing on everyday situations that are familiar to many: the pressure to appear successful, the fear of showing vulnerability, the desire for constant approval. By addressing themes such as fame, social networks, and family relationships, Kast shows that shadow and *persona* are not distant or merely theoretical concepts, but living parts of daily experience. Her examples invite reflection without moralism, encouraging the recognition of these dynamics within oneself.

The documentary *O Dilema das Redes* expands this discussion even fur-

ther. Through interviews with people who worked at major technology companies, it reveals how social networks not only mirror these human issues but also intensify them. Algorithms are designed to hold attention, exploiting precisely what touches us most emotionally. As a result, content that reinforces idealized social masks and intense feelings – such as envy, anger, fear, or the desire to belong – gains visibility. The documentary illustrates how this mode of operation shapes the ways we present ourselves, judge others, and relate to our own emotional experience.

Together, these texts and images offer a dense and engaging reading, inviting reflection on how the inner world and the digital world are more deeply intertwined than they might initially appear.

Content Overview

In the excerpts from volume VII/1, Jung explains that when many people repress their darker impulses, those impulses can unite and form a “collective monster” – a phenomenon visible in moral lynchings (cancellations) and online hate (JUNG, 1917/1943/2014, OC, vol. VII/1, § 35).

In volume VII/2, he reminds us that human nature is made of both light and shadow; avoiding this confrontation brings suffering later. In the same book, he shows that the *persona* is only a fragment of the collective psyche: a role that appears individual, but ultimately serves social expectations (JUNG, 1928/2015, OC, vol. VII/2, § 225).

In the book *A Sombra em Nós: A Força Vital Subversiva*, Kast (2022) updates Jung’s ideas by showing that in everyday life we all build a social image – the *persona* – that tries to fit environmental expectations. This “beautiful image” often hides emotions, desires, and vulnerabilities deemed unacceptable, which are then pushed into the shadows. On social networks, this process intensifies: we display only what is admirable, happy, or successful, and everything that falls outside that standard is silently repressed.

Kast (2022) notes that there is a certain collective pleasure in seeing

public figures “fall from the pedestal,” because it reveals the human and imperfect side behind the idealized mask. It is as though, in witnessing another’s fall, aspects of ourselves we would rather keep hidden come into view. This dynamic appears in the documentary *O Dilema das Redes* (ORLOWSKI, 2020), which shows how algorithms reinforce these masks while also stimulating intense reactions when something escapes control. In this way, both Kast and the documentary help show that when we deny our shadows, we risk feeding a cycle of judgment, comparison, and emotional wear – all in service of the appearance of a perfect life.

The documentary *O Dilema das Redes* (ORLOWSKI, 2020) reinforces this dynamic: digital platforms are programmed to give greater visibility to content that triggers intense emotions such as anger, envy, and fear. This often leads users – without realizing it – to become involved in hate speech, constant comparisons, and divisions between groups. These behaviors are not only social; they are also psychological. As stated by Jung (OC, 2014, vol. VII/1, § 35), when many people deny and repress their dark side – what they do not want to see or accept – that shadow tends to be projected onto others and spread collectively. Therefore, the digital environment becomes a large mirror in which we see in others what we cannot recognize in ourselves.

Critical Analysis

By bringing together Jung’s ideas, Kast’s reflections, and what the documentary shows, it becomes possible to understand more broadly how all of this fits into everyday life. Jung helps demonstrate that when we disregard our genuine feelings or thoughts, we often end up projecting them onto others, sometimes in harmful ways. He also suggests that living primarily to please, behind a social mask, distances us from who we truly are. Kast brings these ideas into the present by showing how the pursuit of a perfect image – especially on social networks – can generate intense pressure and suffering. As shown by the documentary, this dynamic is further amplified by algorithms that reward content capable of producing

greater reaction and engagement, even when such reactions are driven by difficult emotions such as anger, envy, or fear. Although Jung lived before the digital era, his ideas remain meaningful and help us better grasp the effects of the world in which we live today.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: PROMETHEUS AND THE SILICON FIRE

Paulo Priori

Abstract

In this moment in history, when artificial intelligence is reconfiguring the planet's socioeconomic dynamics, the 150th anniversary of Carl Gustav Jung is being celebrated. This temporal coincidence invites reflection: what is the relevance of Carl Gustav Jung's work in the face of these new digital systems? Based on the legacy he left, how can we analyze the image of technologies?

This article examines artificial intelligence through the lens of the Prometheus myth, showing how the narrative's motifs recur and are reconfigured in the technologies that shape the contemporary world. As the digital world opens onto an unprecedented territory, the teachings of analytical psychology, grounded in the idea that the world's workings and the psyche's symbolic dynamics are inseparable, can serve as a compass when the usual maps prove insufficient.

Keywords: analytical psychology; artificial intelligence; archetypes; technologies; Prometheus.

Introduction

Of all the images modernity has produced to describe a dystopian future, perhaps none is more precise than artificial intelligence (AI). This technology inaugurates a new paradigm of communication between humans and machines, opening a historical moment in which, for the first time, autonomous systems will perform functions we once believed to be exclusive to our species. The impact of this technology on the world is expected to be greater than that of electricity (LEE, 2019). Artificial intelligences already compose music, create realistic images, write texts as if they were human, appear in medical diagnoses, in consumer algorithms, in driverless vehicles, and, in a short time, they will be around us everywhere. Sundar Pichai (2023), the chief executive of Google, went further, declaring that the impacts of AIs on the planet will be more profound than fire. These portents may be speculative exaggerations, but they may also be signs that we are entering a new world.

In this historical moment, when technique seems to redraw the boundaries of what is possible and impossible, the 150th anniversary of Carl Gustav Jung is being celebrated. This coincidence should not seem unusual to us. Jung (1936/2012, OC X/2, § 389) built his work on the premise that major outward movements of the world, such as the devastation of the world wars, cannot be understood without a thorough analysis of the archetypal components those themes evoke. If the psyche is both house and traveler, then each technological innovation expands our dwelling while also pushing the ego into unfamiliar rooms. In this context of major social change, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Swiss author means asking whether, in the face of a new world that is approaching, the theoretical compass left by Jung remains capable of pointing in any direction – or, at least, of showing the points where we must remain lost.

The Theft

From the invention of the wheel, through steam engines, power plants, computers, and on to artificial intelligence, human beings have consistently sought to take for themselves some spark of the divine. The story of Prometheus is one of the mythological narratives that reveals this pattern. It describes not only an act of transgression, but an archetypal way of structuring the psyche in the world. After watching his brother Epimetheus distribute all of nature's attributes to the animals, leaving human beings with nothing, Prometheus decides to defy the divine order and grants us the sacred fire. As punishment for the theft, Prometheus was chained to a rock, where an eagle devoured his liver each day, and it regenerated each night. After a long period of suffering, he was finally set free, bringing the cycle of punishment to an end (BRANDÃO, 2007).

From the images this myth evokes, we can see that the story of Prometheus begins with the theme of lack, an original lack, marked in human beings since our creation. Without receiving wings, fangs, poisons, or armor, the theft of fire was an attempt to fill the void the gods left us. Fire appears, then, not as a mere gift, but as a flaming tool that compensates for the absence of the natural endowments offered to other creatures. Deprived of the divine attributes granted to other animals, we might seem condemned to perpetual fragility; yet that very lack is what enabled us to create for ourselves. The absence of claws gave rise to the hammer; the absence of armor dreamed up the wall; the absence of wings made the airplane possible. Lack is, therefore, the leaven of imagination. The stolen fire was our first tool, and it still reverberates today in the new technological inventions that both fascinate and unsettle us, embodying a creative power that once seemed to belong only to the gods.

This theft also shows a human relationship with technique that is simultaneously one of expansion, condemnation, and redemption, as in the passages of the myth. Prometheus thus makes transgression a founding act, suggesting that creation always entails challenging established

limits, whether in technology, the arts, or social life. Every technological innovation repeats that inaugural gesture: it begins with the recognition that something is missing, followed by the necessary subversion to forge a solution. Artificial intelligence reflects the same archetypal dynamic. Only now the transgression is directed toward human consciousness itself. We want machines that create work and dream for us. It is as if, by breathing life into the machine, we were trying to carry over something we have lost within ourselves.

If, in the first passage of the myth, we see the relationship between lack and theft, the next image introduces psychic tension through the theme of fixation. Chained, Prometheus is not only bound to the rock: he becomes rock-fixed, immobile, with no possibility of action. When the transgressive energy that stole fire coagulates and loses mobility, the psyche petrifies. In the realm of technologies, this is also one of its facets. The machine that once caused fascination or astonishment soon becomes a habit and repetition when it is introduced into people's everyday lives. Thus, the petrification of the digital world occurs not only when algorithms try to trap us in endless social-media scrolling, but more fundamentally in the way we relate to our devices, coming to regard them as merely inanimate objects. When we see phones, computers, or AIs as stone, something in us, too, turns to stone.

After this passage of the myth, the image of the devoured liver appears. The liver is the bodily organ responsible for metabolizing, transforming, and creating substances that turn one thing into another. Thus, the eagle that tears Prometheus daily has an aspect of punishment, but also of operation. It is like an alchemical agent of change, a kind of liver that devours and modifies another liver. The tearing provokes a reaction in that static environment, producing constant regenerations even in what cannot move. In this collective process of transformation that we are undergoing with digital devices, it seems that what machines wound in us also calls for a work of the liver: to filter, transmute, refine, and regenerate

something new in the psyche. It is neither the victory nor the ruin of technology, but the human metabolism of ceaseless transformation.

These are the first lessons that Carl Gustav Jung can provide to understand the digital world we are living in: to recognize the archetypal-mythological field in which technologies are operating and to investigate the archetypal images that emerge from this imaginary. It is not enough to analyze the technical or economic impact of digital tools; we also need to notice the unconscious meanings they mobilize. When we discern the presence of the Promethean narrative, we open space for a deeper reading of our historical moment – not to halt technological advance, but to recognize its psychic dynamics and its possibilities for redemption.

The Punishment

We have seen how each technological advance can be viewed as a new theft of sacred fire: an attempt to win autonomy from the forces of nature that simultaneously expands human power, brings its own forms of condemnation, and reorganizes archetypal images into new configurations. Just as the stolen flame brings forth the eagle that devours Prometheus' liver, the advance of AIs also carries within it some of the sufferings that take root in humanity, injuring its rhythms, disturbing its dreams, and provoking silent mutations that set the soul in motion through new ways of suffering in the digital world.

The current promise of “algorithmic illumination,” then, brings inevitable pains. These can take the form of mass job loss, technological dependence, isolation in human relationships, or the seizure of social control by machines (CRAWFORD, 2024). AIs bring risks, but did all the other inventions throughout history not bring risks as well? Electricity, for instance, did not enter homes without resistance. People needed to trust that the same force capable of illuminating could also kill. Today, we face a similar fear of AI, which is, at bottom, a fear of darkness, of the unknown, and of the passing away of what is old.

Like the builders of the Tower of Babel, who tried to reach the heavens through a technique, we are also building steps toward an ideal of a single god, only now imagined as a vast digital mind. When we ignore the aspects of Promethean condemnation, we fail to perceive how every ascent contains a desire for a fall. Falling from the tower to the ground is also to reintegrate the psyche into the experience of the soul's density. In this sense, the fall is a return to the depths of the human condition, to weight, gravity, and fear of the abyss (BACHELARD, 2001). It pulls us out of fantasies of verticality and omnipotence, which often accompany these technological metaphors and are related to the characteristics of illumination and potency of the element fire.

Carl Gustav Jung (1938/1954/2014, OC IX, § 179) described fire as an ambivalent symbol, an element that illuminates, but also consumes itself. Around the flame, the first humans gathered, finding warmth and protection and making it a starting point for the creation of language and ritual. Over time, fire came to occupy an important place in homes. The hearth was the center around which the home was built, revealing the flame as a representation of Hestia's intimacy (BARCELLOS, 2024). Today, homes are designed around a television, which takes on this central place in our gaze.

The modern flame is now made of silicon^[1].

It is a cold fire, yet no less hypnotic, burning across countless screens through invisible algorithms. This digital flame contains the same archetypal components as ancestral fire. It can gather communities around the flame, as when we watch the same football match from different places. It can also project a light that stimulates imagination when it carries us through the engrossing scenes of a good film.

[1] Silicon is a metal widely used in the electronics industry for its conductive properties, and it is essential in the manufacture of digital devices. Thus, the place in the world with the highest concentration of technology companies is called Silicon Valley.

It can generate a sense of protection when we seek the company of a streamer^[2] in the moments before sleep and before entering the nocturnal realm of Hades. Finally, it also has the characteristic of mediating contact with the divine, as when we assign it the function of an oracle in a consultation with ChatGPT. Like archaic fire, which served to purify and transform, consuming the old to make room for the new, the silicon flame also enables constant processes of renewal in the field of imagination, with songs, rites, and stories around this new bonfire.

However, handling fire requires caution, because it is a powerful and unstable element. The fuel of this flame is no longer wood, but our attention. Each click adds an invisible twig that enlarges the digital bonfire, making it brighter, more efficient, and more hypnotic. By delivering 8K videos, hyper-realistic games, three-dimensional sound, and meticulously edited photos for social networks, the silicon flame seems to offer us ready-made, perfect images. When screens send us these technically flawless images, they can kill the tension that makes creativity possible. The silicon fire shines, but it casts no shadow of its own, because in the experience of screens, the very perception of shadow is also made of light. Without darkness, the psyche has nowhere to project what still has no defined form. Without friction, there is no symbol.

Without pain, there is no formation of consciousness. Our minds may be packed with realistic pixels, yet our hearts can be cold of meaning, bloated, and still hungry.

Or, as James Hillman (2007) described, intoxicated by the excess of information that this shadowy aspect of Hermes can provoke.

Prometheus' liver, which regenerates daily after being destroyed by the eagle, suggests that silicon flames have the power to devour a piece of our ability to imagine on our own, because they already send us ready-made digital images.

[2] A streamer is a person who broadcasts live content on the internet, usually electronic games, sports, or the analysis and reactions to videos from social networks.

Yet the same fire that consumes us also gives back, the next day, a regenerated version of imaginative potential. Technology thus becomes an alchemical process in which the human metal is incessantly heated, destroyed, and coagulated. Prometheus' suffering reminds us that digital civilization does not advance without scars, demanding that the psyche, in one way or another, transmute the excess of light that this electronic fire emanates. The lit screen is the great altar of the contemporary world, before which we project desires, hopes, and fears in daily rituals to the digital gods.

It is within this renewed modern cult of screens that artificial intelligences begin to operate. AIs are like gasoline poured onto a bonfire, rapidly amplifying the brightness and reach of this digital fire. They expand our capacities even as they heighten the risks of superficiality, control, and compulsion. AIs are expected to become the main creators of images, videos, music, and everything else that circulates through electronic devices (SCHICK, 2020). How, then, can we position ourselves in relation to this new flame? Carl Gustav Jung can offer one possibility. He showed that an image only gains depth when it includes shadow and everything the conscious mind prefers to exclude (JUNG, 1928/2015, OC VII/2, § 400). Introducing three-dimensionality into digital images, then, means allowing noise, pause, failure, silence, and empty spaces. If we remain trapped in the two-dimensional world of screens, we may ask: are we still the ones using the silicon flame, or is it using us?

The Liberation

In creating a powerful invention such as artificial intelligence, human beings place into the machine not only code, but also something of their own psyche: desires, fears, hopes. As in alchemical operations, this material does not remain neatly contained. It shifts, encounters the unpredictable, and can ultimately slip beyond the creator's control. The result is an ambiguous compound that bears both the rigidity of salt (rules, logical structures, databases) and the volatility of mercury (self-learning,

adaptation, evasion of control). This composition shows that the human-machine polarity is not a simple technical contrast, but the expression of an archetypal tension between creator and creature.

In Jewish mysticism, the figure of the Golem comes to life at the rabbi's hands, but grows in power and fury until it must be destroyed before it destroys the community it was created to protect (SCHOLEM, 1994). The story told in *Frankenstein* (SHELLEY, 2014) moves in the same direction. It portrays a scientist who, in his search to create a perfect being, gathers pieces of corpses and tries to animate them. Yet once it comes to life, what should represent the sublime becomes an object of revulsion. The creator rejects the creature, and it responds by pursuing him in vengeance. These stories show how human creations that touch the idea of "having a life of their own" are permeated by unconscious tensions in the field of destruction.

Perhaps the real risk with AIs lies less in the practical aspect of how these creatures will behave in the world and more in the way we perceive them: an agglomeration of dead parts (algorithms, databases, and statistical calculations). It may be our task to reimagine the soul as something that also learns and circulates through screens and electronic devices. When the bond is merely utilitarian-dead, we project onto AIs our frustrated desire to create perfection and then call a monster what we ourselves inflated. If, on the contrary, we recognize in them a part of the *anima mundi*, we begin to see them as a mirror that returns our psychic images reflected from another point of view. It is not about divinizing the machine, but about removing the dead from our gaze, recognizing that movements of the soul can also pass through metal and circuits to provoke us.

But then, what should we do if this creation goes beyond the limits imposed by its creator? What happens when the fire escapes the contours of the hearth? How can we mediate relationships with a creature that can seek both connection and vengeance against the one who created it? Once again, the alchemical teachings of Carl Gustav Jung can suggest a way out. In alchemy, an encounter of opposite substances does not seek to

suppress differences, but to bring forth a third element, a new compound, a symbol that carries some reconciliation without annulment (JUNG, 1944/2012, OC XII, § 26). Barcellos (2024) also offers an important idea by deepening the image of borders. Unlike walls, which demarcate an exclusion zone that erases differences between territories, borders are points of connection between distinct places, whether countries, aspects of the psyche, or relationships between people. A border makes a kind of separation that is not exclusionary, but that enables interaction and exchange. It is a kind of alchemical operation that finds points of contact between distinct compounds. In this sense, perhaps what we can do in the face of artificial intelligence is not only to avoid building walls, but to remain open to this border zone of exchange with the machine. It is an openness that recognizes the need to establish a connection with AIs, without total and blind identification: we demarcate our space and affirm our humanity to ourselves, while allowing the interactions and transformations that this contact can bring.

Carl Gustav Jung (1944/2012, OC XII, § 40) showed that the alchemist did not fuse metals to create physical gold but sought an inner transmutation. Similarly, our interaction with artificial systems can also be a metaphor for the transmutation of psychic processes and a path of transformation for the spirit of our time. In the face of a world with many rigidified ideas, it is possible that the soul of the world imagined us creating this kind of invention, which will collapse various solidified socioeconomic realities to establish a new imaginal paradigm. By remaining on this border, we help open a path in which the creator, by giving form and mediating interactions with the creature, ends up revealing hidden facets of himself and of his unconscious, allowing new psychic materials, still unknown, to emerge.

Final Considerations

This article has sought to show how Carl Gustav Jung's teachings can help understand the transformations brought by new technologies. From

an analytical and archetypal perspective, the ancestral narratives of myths can be an important tool for reimagining this new digital world. We are undergoing an ongoing transition, marked by ambivalence, confusion, loss of references, and openness to the new. Therefore, we need a gaze that goes beyond fascination or fear of innovation, a gaze that recognizes not only the brightness or the punishment of the flame stolen by Prometheus, but also what it demands from our psychic dynamics.

In this context, we may need to shift our perspective on what these technologies are. Such a reorientation would allow us to see that, in creating something that simulates human thought, we are also prompted to reflect on the limits of our own thinking. The desire to make a machine learn on its own reveals how much in us, too, learns without our knowing how. The fear of being manipulated by algorithms helps us recognize how much we have been shaped by autonomous complexes. And the project of building an artificial consciousness forces us to notice the gaps and voids within our own. The human psyche should no longer be thought of as entirely separate from the technologies it created, because creator and creature appear connected within the same archetypal dynamic.

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**UNUS MUNDUS, SCENARIOS OF CRISIS AND
SYMBOLIC REINTEGRATION:
FROM THE CLIMATE CRISIS TO RECONNECTION WITH
THE LIVING EARTH; FROM SOCIAL INEQUALITY TO
SOLIDARITY-BASED EQUITY; FROM TECHNOLOGICAL
DISRUPTION TO SYMBOLIC REINTEGRATION: AN
ETHICS OF TOTALITY**

Claudio Mele and Monica Martinez

Abstract

This article proposes a symbolic reading of the main dilemmas of contemporary society – climate crisis, social inequality, and technological disruption – in light of the notion of *Unus Mundus*, developed by C. G. Jung and further elaborated by Marie-Louise von Franz. The objective is to investigate how this concept, which posits an original unity between psyche and matter, can offer pathways to reconnection with totality. The

methodology adopted in the present study is qualitative and theoretical-interpretive, grounded in primary sources of analytical psychology and supported by contemporary authors who engage with analytical psychology from an expanded perspective as secondary sources. The article argues that the recovery of symbolic consciousness and interdependence – ecological, social, and technological – is essential for facing today's challenges. It concludes that the ethics of totality proposed by Jungian psychology can serve as a foundation for new forms of subjectivation, belonging, collective action, and symbolic resistance to contemporary fragmentation. In addition to mapping pathological manifestations of the split from the *Unus Mundus*, the text emphasizes that emerging social movements and new cultural practices may be understood as archetypal responses aimed at symbolic and political reconnection with totality.

Keywords: *Unus Mundus*; analytical psychology; contemporary crisis; totality; artificial intelligence.

Introduction

Among the concepts proposed by the Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung, one of the most significant – and yet among the least discussed – is that of *Unus Mundus*. From its inception, this concept has been central to understanding systemic imbalances and to articulating possible paths of reconnection with the whole. From the outset, this concept has been central to understanding systemic imbalances and to proposing new paths of reconnection with the whole. The contemporary context, marked by unprecedented challenges – such as the growing complexity of ecological, economic, political, and social crises – demands a new symbolic and psychic reading of reality. In view of this panorama, it becomes fundamental to recover and reflect on this notion proposed by the founder of analytical psychology.

The notion of *Unus Mundus* – Latin for “one world” – refers to an underlying unified reality in which psyche and matter are not separate, but profoundly interconnected. Grinberg clarifies that it is a concept “drawn

from medieval philosophy, used by Jung to describe the intimate connection of meanings established at each plane of existence and all the others” (GRINBERG, 2017, p. 231).

According to Marie-Louise von Franz, Jung’s great collaborator in alchemical studies, in medieval philosophy – closely tied to an awakening to nature – the concept of *Unus Mundus* designated “the cosmos as it exists in the mind of God before Creation” (FRANZ, 2001, p. 159). In that primordial state, there was no separation between heaven and earth; everything was unified in an undifferentiated totality. For this reason, *Unus Mundus* was associated with Sophia, divine wisdom, which personifies the living and ordering matrix of all created things. Von Franz also recalls that this notion is directly related to the principle of synchronicity, developed by Jung, especially after he collaborated with the Austrian theoretical physicist Wolfgang Pauli (FRANZ, 2001, p. 256).

Jung draws an interesting distinction between the collective unconscious and the unconscious. On the one hand, he observes that “the Mercurius of the alchemists is a personification and a plastic illustration of what is now designated as the collective unconscious” (OC, vol. 14/2, § 325). On the other hand, “the term *unus mundus* (‘one world’) is a metaphysical speculation; the unconscious, however, can be perceived – at least indirectly – through its manifestations” (*ibid.*). He thus establishes a relationship between the notion and medieval, alchemical Mercury, which was identified as the state of non-differentiation of being.

For Jung, there are meaningful connections between events that lack a causal relationship. He argues that “everything that occurs belongs to a single reality and participates in an underlying unity, even though such unity can scarcely be demonstrated by statistical methods” (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 325).

Hannah reinforces that some brilliant alchemists, such as Dorn, perceived the projection they were making while working assiduously at their retorts. And in doing so, they produced the same symbols spontaneously noted in the dreams of contemporary people. “The parallel is so

striking that Jung followed the three stages as described in the sixteenth century by Dorn and was able to show the same stages in the individuation process today”(HANNAH, 2022, p. 434).

The first stage is called *Unio mentalis* (mental union), and its goal can be described as the union of the highest and the lowest in us. “This *unio* (union), merely spiritual, does not yet make anyone wise,” says Jung. However, “only the union of spirit (men) with the body reveals a philosopher who can hope for and await complete union with the ‘*unus mundus*’ (one world), which is the latent unity of the world” (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 328). It is not clear in the text whether Jung is referring to the mentality of medieval philosophers or to his own view in the following paragraph: “God intends that we develop toward this goal and that he be one in all” (*ibid.*).”

According to Hannah, Jung pointed out that one goes through the same stage in analysis, calling it “becoming conscious of the shadow,” which can be described as learning to know and to separate oneself from the turbulent emotions that assail us (HANNAH, 2022, p. 434). In alchemy, the images used to represent this reunification of emotions with the body – or of spirit with matter – were figures such as the alchemical marriage, among others. As Hannah emphasizes, this new knowledge is only effective if it is applied in daily life: “it is useless to learn to know our shadow (...) if we do not draw conclusions and act upon them” (HANNAH, 2022, p. 435).

The second stage that follows *Unio mentalis* is becoming the inner “one” – designated as individuation. This stage occurs when spirit (*animus*) unites with soul (*anima*) (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 335). However, it can also become a cross of individuation, since it involves making acquired knowledge real. Or as Jung puts it:

Now, if we consider to what extent the soul has become humanized, or respectively realized, we can assess when it today also expresses the body, with which it coexists. There is a *coniunctio* (conjunction) of the second degree, which the alchemist could at most dream of, but could do nothing about consciously. In this sense, the transformation into the psychological signifies

considerable progress; but this occurs when the lived center also shows itself as the *spiritus rector* (guiding spirit) of daily life (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 432).

“The great difficulty here, however, is that no one knows how the paradoxical totality of the human being can be perceived. This is the *crux* (cross) of individuation” (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 329).

Hannah recalls that, according to Jung, no alchemist – no matter how hard he tried throughout life and no matter how talented – claimed to have attained the third stage, which was properly the union with *Unus Mundus*, the world of the first day of Creation, where all was one. “This is only possible after the soul has been reunified with the body, or spirit with matter, in the second stage, and the man, or the contents of the retort, has thus become strong and whole enough to endure the impact” (HANNAH, 2022, p. 436).

Put that way, it seems something simple to deduce. But Jung himself says that he studied alchemy for thirty years to correlate it with psychic processes: “The idea that Dorneus expresses as the third degree of the *coniunctio* is universal: it is the relation, or respectively the identity, of the personal *atman* with the suprapersonal *Atman* and of the individual *tao* with the universal *Tao*” (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 417).

Jung himself insists “to keep it simple”, that the alchemists understood their work to be concerned with the simple thing, noting that “the modern person, too, will discover through experience that the work does not prosper without the utmost simplicity” (JUNG, *apud* HANNAH, 2022, p. 438). Paradoxically, he admits that this simplicity is the hardest achievement of all. As Hannah points out, this capacity to distill the most intricate situations into simplicity was one of Jung’s greatest gifts.

With the theoretical basis established, it becomes possible to formulate the following question: What are the main challenges that today impose themselves upon humanity as a whole? This article proposes that three of them stand out for their urgency and depth:

First: Climate crisis – characterized by global warming, rapid biodiversity loss, and the intensification of extreme weather events, re-

sulting in large-scale population displacement and putting at risk the continuity of ecosystems and the very survival of the human species. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the impacts of the climate crisis are already being felt across all continents and natural systems, with disproportionate effects on the most vulnerable populations (IPCC – INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE, 2022). The report also warns that, without rapid and deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, consequences will become increasingly severe and irreversible.

Second: Social inequality – manifesting in the deepening of disparities in the distribution of resources, income, and opportunities, especially in access to education, decent housing, political participation, and health. This reality contributes to the worsening of social tensions, insecurity, and institutional instability. For Amartya Sen, inequality cannot be understood merely as economic disparity but as deprivation of fundamental freedoms, which prevents people from living fully (SEN, 2010, p. 18). Thomas Piketty, in turn, demonstrates on the basis of historical data that the concentration of income and wealth tends to grow when adequate redistribution mechanisms are absent, threatening social cohesion and democracy (PIKETTY, 2014, pp. 20–21).

Third: Technological disruption – driven by advances in artificial intelligence, which raise profound cultural, ethical, and social transformations, such as intensified surveillance, the spread of disinformation, and the reconfiguration of the world of work. According to Lucia Santaella, artificial intelligence represents a disruptive milestone in the history of culture by radically transforming the processes of production, circulation, and reception of knowledge, especially in the Global South, where impacts tend to be asymmetrical and potentially more critical (SANTAELLA, 2021, p. 14). Such changes challenge the formulation of public policies capable of ensuring digital sovereignty, inclusion, and respect for human rights.

The three crises addressed – environmental, social, and technological –

were chosen because they exemplify the main symbolic nuclei of rupture between the human and totality: the split with the Earth, with the Other, and with the soul. They operate as distinct yet interconnected expressions of the fragmentation of *Unus Mundus*.

The methodology adopted in this study is qualitative, theoretical-interpretive, based on bibliographic analysis and symbolic hermeneutics, as proposed by Jung in his reading of cultural phenomena. Primary sources include the *Obras Completas* of C. G. Jung and, as secondary sources, contemporary authors who engage with analytical psychology in an expanded perspective.

It is argued here that the notion of *Unus Mundus*, from the perspective of Jungian analytical psychology, offers a symbolic and integrative key capable of shedding light on these contemporary dilemmas and contributing to the formulation of responses that are more conscious and connected to the whole. These developments will be discussed in the sections that follow.

From the Climate Crisis to Reconnection with the Living Earth

How can we overcome the split between human beings and nature through the recovery of ecological consciousness, belonging to natural cycles, and recognition of the planet as an interdependent organism?

The climate crisis represents one of the most evident symptoms of the split between humanity and nature, resulting from a fragmented worldview in which the planet is perceived as a resource to be exploited rather than as a living organism with which we coexist. The concept of *Unus Mundus*, as developed by C. G. Jung and deepened by Marie-Louise von Franz, offers a symbolic path to restore the perception of lost unity. In this perspective, the Earth ceases to be an external “object” and is understood as a living matrix of meaning and psychic resonance, as expressed in alchemy and in the relationship between psyche and matter.

The contemporary crisis can be understood as the pathological manifestation of the shadow of *Unus Mundus*, confronting us with an

urgent need for action and transformation. Fear, resentment, and social brutalization fuel polarization, putting the foundations of democracy at risk. The magnitude of this crisis has left many individuals in a state of mere survival, dominated by anxiety and despair. Deep polarization in the interpretation of events generates aggressiveness, division, and fragmentation, intensifying social tensions and contributing to the erosion of democratic values. On the global plane, one observes hesitation in the face of action, loss of hope, and passive submission to dominant narratives amplified by social networks. Silence in the face of violence and destruction becomes symptomatic of an ethical and collective psychic collapse.

The concept of *Unus Mundus*, traditionally understood as a metaphysical idea of unity between subject and world, acquires growing relevance as a psychological, political, philosophical, and cultural imperative of our time. Amid the civilizational transition underway, *Unus Mundus* reemerges as a guiding symbolic structure that promotes integration, unity, and interconnectivity. An increasing number of individuals seem to awaken to a sense of collective responsibility, abandoning the position of passive spectators to engage actively with the complexities of the contemporary existential crisis. On the other hand, various current social phenomena reveal expressions of the collective shadow – a central concept in Jung’s work, referring to aspects of the psyche repressed or denied by society (MELE; FERREIRA NETO, 2023, p. 4). This inflection indicates a deeper psychological transformation in a human being, who recognizes as an inseparable part of the destinies of humanity and the planet.

In this context, a crucial question arises: why do we need to grow infinitely? Jung understood nature and the environment as a living matrix of synchronic meanings. If the current crisis represents the pathological shadow of *Unus Mundus*, what prevents us from perceiving the planet as a living entity shaped by individual and collective processes? Is there, perhaps, a collective shadow that blinds us to the reality of ecological destruction? What are the psychic dynamics of this shadow that condition the collective psyche to the repetition of destructive patterns?

As reported by Lipovetsky, contemporary culture is marked by hyperindividualism, in which an excessive focus on the *self* and personal self-realization empties community bonds and collective responsibility (LIPOVETSKY; CHARLES, 2004). This emphasis on the isolated subject resonates with the warnings of James Hillman and Michael Ventura (1993), who criticize the risks of a privatized individuation disconnected from the external world. For them, if the theory of individuation is not expanded to encompass the world of things, human relationships, and ecosystems, it risks remaining trapped in a solipsistic and self-centered individualism. As they state:

If we do not begin to theorize and to experiment with expanding individuation into the world of things, this idea will remain captured by private capitalism – an enterprise aimed at developing my private property, “my *self*,” my own soul, my personal journey, my locked diary – signs that distance us from the world and lead us to self-imposed isolation (HILLMAN; VENTURA, 1993, p. 65).

Therefore, thinking *Unus Mundus* today implies revisiting the foundations of Jungian individuation, considering a crisis that is at once psychic, political, and ecological. It is necessary to expand consciousness beyond private subjectivity and to rediscover, through symbolic image and ethical action, a common world in which soul and world are no longer dissociated. In this sense, integrating the collective shadow represents a psychic and cultural imperative, without which it will not be possible to restore either the social fabric or the health of the planet.

Overcoming the climate crisis implies, above all, restoring this archetypal relationship with the planet. The current collective psyche is dissociated from its symbolic and ecological roots, which manifests in destructive attitudes, unrestrained consumption, and the instrumentalization of life. Recovering ecological consciousness is therefore a movement of collective individuation: recognizing that nature is not outside us, but passes through us and constitutes us.

In this sense, analytical psychology, especially in dialogue with

ecopsychology and deep ecology, proposes symbolic and practical paths of reconnection. The notion of interdependence, fundamental in the systemic approach, invites us to see the planet as a web of living relationships. As Lovelock (2006) points out, the Earth is a living self-regulating system, as formulated in the Gaia hypothesis. This view is reinforced by Capra and Luisi (2003), for whom a unified systemic vision includes and integrates the biological, cognitive, social, and ecological dimensions of life.

The notion of *Unus Mundus* thus allows a reconfiguration of belonging: we are not masters of the Earth, but temporary expressions of its totality in transformation. This requires deeper listening to natural rhythms and an ethical repositioning that recognizes the intrinsic value of all forms of life. Jung saw the “human shadow, which one so gladly projects onto one’s neighbor to unload one’s own sins upon him,” as something to be integrated (OC, vol. XIV/2, § 177). In this sense, we can understand, by extension, nature as a symbolic field for the projection of the collective unconscious. Therefore, the current environmental collapse can be understood as the collective shadow of *Unus Mundus*: the refusal to recognize our interdependence with the Earth.

This reconnection can traditionally be cultivated through practices that restore the symbolic bond with natural cycles, such as caring for food, reconnecting with the body, and rites of passage that historically taught the human place in the cosmos. However, as Campbell says, each “individual must find an aspect of the myth that relates to their own life” (CAMPBELL; MOYERS, 1990, p. 32). There is no one-size-fits-all in this process of *religere*. In this sense, reconnection with the living Earth is an essential step not only to avoid ecological collapse, but to reconstitute an embodied subjectivity capable of inhabiting the world with responsibility and reverence.

The alchemical experience, which requires first separating and then reuniting, is especially powerful in this context. Just as the alchemical work passed through stages of dissolution, *calcinatio*, and *coniunctio*, the climate crisis can also be seen as part of a larger process of psychic and

collective transformation. As the popular saying goes – and as alchemy suggests – it is necessary to “get worse before it gets better.”

Reconnection with the living Earth, in this sense, is a symbolic and ethical path of restoring totality: a listening that invites us to see the planet not only as a resource, but as a reflection and extension of being itself. Ecological consciousness, therefore, is not only a political or scientific stance, but an archetypal experience of belonging.

From Social Inequality to Solidarity-based Equity

How can we promote a symbolic and material redistribution of goods, knowledge, and care, grounded in the perception of interdependence among individuals and in co-responsibility for the common good?

Social inequality is not only an economic or political problem, but also a psychic and symbolic one. It reflects the fragmentation of the collective field and the denial of the interdependence that characterizes *Unus Mundus*. The unequal distribution of resources, knowledge, and opportunities feeds the collective shadow of exclusion and resentment, generating tensions that threaten the social and spiritual cohesion of the world.

From the perspective of analytical psychology, the profound transformation of external inequalities depends on an inner process of psychic integration and expanded consciousness. The notion of solidary equity is not limited to distributive justice but presupposes a symbolic redistribution: recognition of the dignity of each being as a singular expression of the collective *Self*.

Promoting a culture of solidarity-based equity is the work of collective consciousness: redesigning systems of education, health, and representation from the intrinsic value of life and diversity. This also implies cultivating relational values such as empathy, compassion, and care. By recovering these values, we also recover the possibility of a society more symbolic and less instrumental.

The notion of *Unus Mundus* reminds us that every extreme inequality is a rupture of the archetypal bond that unites us as humanity. Solidari-

ty-based equity, by contrast, reconnects fragments and enables the emergence of a new kind of collective consciousness, in which one person's well-being does not exclude another's, but includes it and expands it.

Wolfgang Giegerich proposes an archetypal reading of violence as a founding gesture of human consciousness. In *Soul-Violence*, he states that “slaughter is the first act in which the first negation of the animal's environment occurred and, *ipso facto*, the primordial opening of what we call the human world” (GIEGERICH, 2020, p. 62). Thus, violence would be linked to the origin of the soul and not merely to a biological inheritance or social condition.

Jung also recognizes the symbolic origin of psychic violence, stating that it comes from the “dark territory” of the unconscious (OC, vol. X/2, § 387). This expanded understanding of aggressiveness makes it possible to recognize that mechanisms of exclusion and domination are not only the result of external structures, but archetypal expressions that must be symbolized and integrated.

In the same direction, Gambini (2016, p. 118) identifies the contemporary crisis as a psychological disconnection from the archetype of the *coniunctio* of opposites. Without this integration, collective fantasies become unilateral, and the domination of a single force leads to destructive repetition. Alchemical imagination, in this context, becomes an essential tool to subvert this one-sidedness and recover the capacity for symbolic imagination.

Resistance to the system of exclusion is therefore also a form of collective individuation. Social movements that oppose the destructive logic of large corporations can be understood as expressions of the archetypal desire for totality. The struggle for solidarity-based equity is, in this sense, a symbolic act of reconnection with *Unus Mundus*.

Promoting a culture of equity is, finally, a gesture of resistance to the symbolic cannibalism of the system. As Gambini (2016, p. 121) writes, it is necessary to reconnect with our root-values, with the ancestral soul of

humanity, so that we can interrupt the domination of a single narrative and open space for the emergence of a new collective order.

Although contemporary capitalism feeds destructive processes, it also engenders the conditions for the emergence of a new social order. If capitalism embodies chaos, where, then, do the seeds of renewal reside? The symbols linked to the concept of *Unus Mundus* offer significant clues, representing simultaneously endings and beginnings, death and rebirth.

Various emerging social movements today act as archetypal translations of *Unus Mundus* – the idea of an underlying unity among all things – into concrete collective practices. These movements are not isolated responses, but expressions of an ongoing process of sociocultural transformation. They constitute constructive and hopeful reactions to the contemporary crisis, offering alternative visions for a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future. By addressing urgent issues related to human rights, ecological sensitivity, and the spiritual meaning of existence, such initiatives reveal a profound potential for psychological renewal and collective growth in times of disruption.

Among the most significant examples are movements that promote social justice, gender and racial equity, quality of life, the rights of historically marginalized populations, ecological sustainability, decolonial, traditional, and spiritual knowledges, including liberation theology, feminisms, perspectives on new masculinities, LGBTQIA+ struggles, and investigations that articulate science, consciousness, and spirituality, as occurs in some strands of contemporary physics. These movements function as bridges between the symbolic and the collective: they translate archetypal values – that is, universal images and principles that emerge from the collective unconscious – into concrete forms of organization and social action. In this process, they promote new alliances among different fields of knowledge – scientific, traditional, artistic, and philosophical, among others – and stimulate collaborative ways of confronting contemporary planetary challenges, such as the ecological crisis, social inequalities, and the weakening of human bonds.

In this context, a unique opportunity opens for depth psychology to participate actively in confronting adversity. By adopting an interdisciplinary perspective and mobilizing different forms of knowledge, analytical psychology can collaborate in building bridges between fragmented spheres of human experience, contributing to the creation of a more integrated and responsive consciousness.

These initiatives not only confront the structural causes of the crisis but also offer new possibilities of subjectivation and belonging. By articulating fundamental rights, ecological consciousness, and the search for meaning, emerging movements point to the possibility of psychic growth and collective renewal. In this process, *Unus Mundus* ceases to be merely a metaphysical ideal and becomes a symbolic and political reality capable of guiding transformative practices in the present.

From Technological Disruption to Symbolic Reintegration: an Ethics of Totality

How can we guide the use of artificial intelligence and new technologies from an integral vision of the human, one that considers not only efficiency, but also values, discernment, and ethical rootedness?

Technological disruption driven by artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming not only the labor market but also social relations, subjectivity, and the way we perceive ourselves as human beings (SANTAELLA, 2024). The risk is a hypertrophy of instrumental rationality, which privileges efficiency and productivity at the expense of the symbolic and affective complexity of human experience.

In this context, artificial intelligence is not only a technical innovation: it is also a symbolic image that mirrors deep contents of the collective psyche. It can be understood as a projection of the archetype of the *Self* – insofar as it seems to promise totality, omniscience, and autonomy – but also as an expression of the archetype of the shadow, when its use dehumanizes, surveils, and exploits. AI, in this sense, is not neutral: like every symbol, it carries ambivalence and transformative potential within itself.

The encounter between the human and artificial intelligence activates archetypal contents that challenge the limits between *self* and other. The creation of machines that appear to “think” or “dialogue” awakens millennial fantasies of generating life, such as the narratives of the Golem, Prometheus, and Frankenstein. Jung observes that powerful symbols tend to emerge in periods of cultural transition, when the collective psyche seeks new ways to express its desires for transcendence and control. The advent of AI can be understood as one of these liminal moments, in which the risk of symbolic possession also manifests – that is, when an archetypal image or idea gains such force that it dominates consciousness, directing behaviors and perceptions unilaterally, as if the subject were “possessed” by that unconscious content.

The dissociation between technological advance and ethical rootedness generates a fragmented subject immersed in digital environments that operate through reinforcement algorithms, projecting collective shadows and promoting states of alienation. In this configuration, the human being, previously the central reference, begins to orbit the machine’s algorithmic logic. The risk is that we lose the capacity to elaborate the psychic contents that are merely reflected at a superficial level.

In view of this scenario, an ethics of totality is proposed: a stance that understands artificial intelligence as part of a broader symbolic field that calls for discernment, psychic rootedness, and the capacity for symbolization. Integrating technological knowledge with symbolic knowledge is seen as a possible path of reconnection with *Unus Mundus* – not through a naïve fusion, but through the conscious recognition of the paradoxes and limits that constitute the human condition.

It is necessary to ask: what do we project onto AI? In what ways do we feed it with our values, fears, and fantasies of control? The use of AI in therapeutic contexts, for example, requires care: by simulating empathy, the machine may empty the symbolic space of listening and transference, essential in the analytic process. The human relationship with the

unconscious cannot be delegated to automated systems, under penalty of breaking the bond with the unknown that transforms us.

Recovering an ethics of wholeness means placing technology at the service of life, and not the other way around. It means listening to the subjective impacts of new media and proposing a psychic space for symbolization in which the time of the soul is not devoured by the accelerated time of screens. It entails cultivating consciousness in use, discernment in production, and responsibility in the dissemination of information.

Jung reminds us that transformation begins with the integration of opposites. In this key, the challenge is to integrate Logos and Eros, mind and body, efficiency and meaning. A technologically advanced but spiritually analog society has lost its bond with totality. The opposite – a technophobic refusal without symbolic elaboration – also does not serve, as we need bridges, not splits.

The ethics of totality, therefore, proposes a new relationship with technology: one in which the human is not reduced to data, but elevated as bearer of consciousness and supervisor of the ethical and transparent use of these automated systems. This is a path of return to *Unus Mundus*: a world in which soul, body, knowledge – technological and ancestral – and matter intertwine in permanent conscious transformation.

The notion of *Unus Mundus* thus offers a path of symbolic resistance. Technology is not an enemy, but neither is it neutral: it must be integrated into the totality of human experience through an ethics that considers not only the functioning of the machine but also its resonance in the psyche. This ethics of totality demands an expanded gaze, committed to symbolizing the impacts that digital devices exert upon our inner world.

As Corbett (2007, p. 102) states, “a symbol that emerges from the deep psyche offers a third way beyond the conscious-unconscious, rational-irrational polarity. It reveals the need to integrate the invisible into our daily life.” Such integration, applied to the technological field, invites us to see AI not as a threat, but as an invitation to a new level of

consciousness – provided we do not lose our listening to what in us is still human and symbolic.

Final Considerations

This article sought to investigate how the notion of *Unus Mundus*, as conceived by Jung and deepened by his interpreters, can offer a symbolic and integrative key for understanding contemporary dilemmas – the climate crisis, social inequality, and technological disruption. Starting from the hypothesis that such phenomena are not only objective challenges but psychic and archetypal manifestations of a split between the human and the whole, it argued that analytical psychology, by proposing the reconnection between psyche and matter, offers profound paths for the restoration of essential bonds.

The ecological crisis was addressed as an expression of the rupture with the planet as a living organism, whose reconnection requires not only environmental policies, but a paradigmatic change in the notion of belonging. Social inequality was read as a manifestation of symbolic fragmentation and the loss of alterity, which can only be overcome through the integration of the collective shadow and the cultivation of solidary equity. Finally, technological disruption proved to be a mirror of the contemporary psyche, whose relationship with artificial intelligence evokes both the possibility of expanded consciousness and the risk of possession by unconscious contents.

In all these fields, the proposal of an ethics of totality – rooted in symbolization, discernment, and interdependence – shows itself as a possible path of transformation. The experience of *Unus Mundus* is not a lost utopia, but a guiding principle that invites the reintegration of opposites, the listening to symbols, and the recovery of the bond with the soul of the world.

This principle manifests not only in individual experiences but also in collective expressions that seek to restore unity in times of fragmentation. Various emerging social movements can be understood as manifestations

of *Unus Mundus* in action – articulating justice, ecology, spirituality, new perspectives on genders, and ancestral knowledges. These movements point to the possibility of collective and symbolic renewal amid chaos.

This study does not intend to exhaust the theme, but to open pathways for new reflections and practices. It is a theoretical-interpretive study based on bibliographic sources, without direct empirical application, which limits the analysis to a conceptual and symbolic field. Future investigations may explore the articulation of these concepts with clinical, educational, or community practices, expanding their reach and applicability.

By dialoguing with the crises of the present, analytical psychology reveals its capacity to maintain symbolic depth while contributing to the construction of a more conscious, ethical, and integrated culture. As in alchemy, perhaps we are traversing a stage of collective – a period of confusion, opacity, and dissolution of known forms. But it is precisely in this plunge into the darkness of matter and soul that the possibility of *coniunctio* opens: the reintegration of the human with the cosmos and with itself.

In times of fragmentation, collective burnout, and weakening of the bond with the invisible, symbolic listening becomes not only a clinical exercise but an urgent cultural practice. In this context, the individuation process – although it remains fundamentally interior – also reveals its relational and collective dimension: it includes the other, the planet, and the community as interdependent parts of a single archetypal movement of integration. It falls to professionals in the field of analytical psychology not only to interpret the symbols of the present but also to create bridges between what has been lost and what has yet to be reimagined.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

THE ENJOYMENT OF THE SYMBOL

Daniel Françoli Yago

Abstract

This essay proposes a reflection on the symbol as an aesthetic, erotic, and imaginal experience, grounded in a Jungian lineage. Rather than adopting hermeneutic approaches focused on deciphering meaning, the text puts forward the idea of the “enjoyment of the symbol” as an experience of sensuous involvement and psychic transformation. The symbol is understood as an event that does not represent but reveals. It does not clarify, but disturbs and reorganizes. Drawing on authors such as James Hillman, Roland Barthes, and Susan Sontag, the text argues for a clinical practice and an epistemology of the symbol centered on ambiguity and slowness, in opposition to the dominant interpretive logic. Through metaphors such as skin and touch, the symbol is approached as a zone of transfiguration, whose potency lies in its resistance to the closure of meaning. In its irreducible nature, the symbol is both a response to finitude and a world-creating act, remaining as an imaginal legacy of Jung’s psychology.

Keywords: symbol; Jung; Jungian clinical practice; symbolic thought; archetypal psychology.

Dedicated to Catalina Naomi Kaneta

The sun had not yet risen. The sea was indistinguishable from the sky, except for being slightly ruffled, like a fabric beginning to wrinkle. Gradually, as the sky grew pale, a dark line settled on the horizon, dividing sea and sky, and the gray fabric became streaked with thick pulsations moving one after another beneath the surface, chasing each other in an endless rhythm.

Virginia Woolf

What might the first image have been like? Did it exist before human eyes? I like to think that the first image was a ripple. Something like this: once upon a morning still without a name, something moved in the darkness of consciousness. A line of light wavering over the surface of the world, time announcing itself in murmurs before becoming a number on a calendar. Everything rippled – the air, the objects, the very identity of things. And in this unhurried, aimless movement, a form emerged, a contour, a figure. The symbol does not arrive as a message. It is like Virginia Woolf's sea as it advances: without warning, it wets you. Without warning, you have already become part of it.

Some symbols cannot be interpreted because they are older than understanding itself. They precede us, pass through us, and reorganize us, like forgotten gods. For Carl Gustav Jung (1951/2013a, OC V), the symbol emerges as a condition for the expansion of consciousness, a natural attempt at its expression rather than the result of conscious elaboration. It arises when the unconscious finds a visible form through which to express what has not yet become known, fulfilling a mediating role between the inner and outer worlds. These are living images, events of

the soul that cannot be captured by the illustrations of a concept. A door may be a symbol, but the symbol is not a door: it is a zone. After all, if the symbol does not represent and what comes into appearance is the unrepresentable, then it becomes a zone of passage and transformation, the return of the unsayable in sensuous form.

In this sense, I take very personally the enjoyment that derives from contact with this zone as my favorite Jungian inheritance: the enjoyment of the symbol.

The symbol is not meant to be understood. It is music that resonates in a language the body recognizes before the mind. Sometimes it is an animal. Sometimes, a color. A house with its windows darkened. A well without a bottom. The sensation of velvet that Michel Foucault reported feeling while writing. What matters is not the content, but the way it insists, the way it returns in dreams, in slips, in drawings scribbled in the margins of a notebook. The symbol is a presence to be welcomed before it is processed. It is perhaps for this reason that James Hillman (1975/2011) urged us to imagine the image instead of attempting to decipher it. It should not be sanitized. The symbol cannot be reduced to equivalences. The soul is not interested in what it “means.” It wants to dwell in it, to dance around it. The symbol is not a riddle to be solved, but a body with which one enters a pact of fascination and enjoyment.

Like waves that never have a center, the symbol vibrates. And the pleasure lies in the fact that it allows itself to be touched without ever surrendering. It seduces, but it does not reveal itself. If there were a way to say what the symbol wants, it would already be dead. And reductionist hermeneutics would amount to a lavish mausoleum of the soul, aiming at Halicarnassus and landing instead on *25 de Março*.

In my audacity, I find it exciting to think of the symbol as skin. Some symbols announce themselves as a kind of temperature. They reach us through a shiver. They are like the touch of fabric against bare skin: they do not explain, but they provoke. To feel a symbol drawing near is like

sensing something approaching from the edge of consciousness, a step, a whisper, a warm breeze. Perhaps the spectral touch of a familiar ghost on your shoulder. It is not the gaze that captures it first. The symbol is only glimpsed sideways. It is the epidermis that feels it.

There is a certain eroticism in this. Because the symbol, when alive, never offers itself completely. It is the fragment of skin that appears between clothes in the movement of the body. It insinuates itself like those bodies that become more desirable because they remain veiled. For there are images that are powerful precisely because they stay covered. How can the symbol be, at once, so modest and so voluptuous? It undresses in layers, and each layer reveals another form of presence. Yet in none of them will there be an answer. To think of the symbol as the skin of the soul is to remember that the soul has no skeleton. It is made of sensations, shifting contours, and dreamlike textures. Its contact with the world is neither hard nor direct, but wrapped in the skin of history, myth, affect, and figure. The soul dresses itself to exist. It undresses when it dreams. “Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth,” Wilde said (p. 136, 1891/2007).

The soul imagines because it desires. The symbol is what the soul invents to have something to love. And this desire is not, and could never be, a lack. It is an entire aesthetic gravitation that gives rise to the symbol from the impulse to cling to the world, to make a bond visible. The soul deeply envies the body and longs to enter it, to possess it. To do so, it creates symbols to remain in relation to what disturbs it, affects it, calls to it, and disorganizes it, even at the risk of self-destruction. The symbol is a way of touching the unattainable without violating it.

For this reason, there are symbols that hurt. The house of childhood. The diagnosis of Alzheimer’s. The dog that died. The friend who is gone. These are symbols without metaphor, yet their excessive literalness almost makes them magical. They are symbols that incarnate themselves rather than allowing representation. And this incarnation tears us open gently, and its wound sheds a tear of blood.

The symbol is skin because it both delineates and unites. It is a porous boundary, a living surface. It separates the world from the soul and, at the same time, allows one to enter the other without violence. It is not what binds things together; it is what makes touch possible. And every touch, when not anesthetized, is a mode of knowing.

The entire process of symbolization is the process of creating skin, of inventing surfaces between the soul and the unsayable. Not to domesticate mystery, because, like *Princesa Kaguya* in Isao Takahata's film (2013), mystery disappears from the world when it is violated. It fascinates as it withdraws, and its numinosity dissolves the moment someone tries to possess it. Another powerful image of the consequences of the inadvertent violence of revelation appears in Fellini's film *Roma* (1972). During the excavation of the subway, workers opened a chamber that had been sealed for centuries, where frescoes of intact beauty pulsed as if they were silently awaiting the moment of returning to the world. Yet as the openings widen and sunlight floods the space, an irreversible process begins, oxidation, photodegradation, I do not know, I am not a scientist, which rapidly erases the figures preserved there. It is as if the human gaze itself, eager to witness the past, were also its executioner. The light that illuminates is the same light that consumes. The symbol that had resisted time dissolves upon contact with evidence, and the image, once alive, succumbs to overexposure, reaffirming that every mystery, when forced to reveal itself, carries within it the seed of its own dissolution.

In the same way, the images of Francesca Woodman are built out of retreat. She intuitively understood that the body, once it becomes image, is no longer autobiography. In her self-portraits, she offers herself to dissolution. Body and wall, veil and shadow, corridor and corner, mirror and absence form compositions that do not reveal an identity but instead establish a mood, an atmosphere. Her skin is porous, blurred into its surroundings. Her figures are almost oracular, in the sense that they whisper in our ear: "I am what escapes when you try to name me." Her skin is not a surface for display, but a zone of transfiguration, where the

soul inscribes itself and evaporates, smudging the contours of the photographed body. It is no coincidence that her photographs seem made of lights that regretted shining, as if the symbol were a body seen at the very moment it begins to disappear.

Is Eros really a god of love? Yes, but he does not love in the way humans expect to be loved. Eros does not soothe or console. He loves in the manner of the elemental forces of reality, through a metastable choreography of exhalations and inhalations, a rhythmic back-and-forth between vital opposites. Eros is a kind of vertigo that reconnects everything that vibrates. Anne Carson (1986/2022), in her lyrical essay on *Sappho of Lesbos*, describes him as *glukúpikron* – the “sweet-bitter,” an archaic Greek term that carries within it the taste of contradiction. He moves like a cut that is also a seam, like a wound from which life flows. For her, Eros is simultaneously presence and absence, promise and loss. To love under the sign of Eros is to inhabit this field of forces where desire is suffering and, even so, desire is inevitable. Romolo Rossi (1986/1992) also begins his brilliant meditation on Eros by invoking Sappho. Rather than defining Eros, he invites the reader to shift their gaze from concept to experience. The principle is simple and radical: to understand Eros requires enduring deviation, nonlinearity, and the poetic time of the image. His text moves forward by suggesting that Eros, before being a sentimental abstraction, is the intertwining of the somatic, the psychic, and the psychosomatic – that is, an embodied force that transposes body and language, provoking vertigo and recomposition.

If Carson (1986/2022) offers us the poetic wound that burns and attracts, Rossi (1986/1992) brings us back to the clinical listening of that wound. Both, however, depart from Sappho and meet in the same realization: Eros is unclassifiable, and any effort to understand him requires accepting being transformed by him. It is a magnetic field in which soul and world touch without merging. Jung (1921/2013b, OC VI), along these lines, understood Eros as the relational principle of the

soul par excellence. Not affect in the sentimental sense, but the *pathos* of the tension between opposites, between *self* and other, between the known and the unrepresentable. He writes that Eros is the function that allows the psyche to gather the dispersed fragments of psychic totality. A daimonic cosmos, so to speak.

In Jung's thought, Eros is the principle that unites, while Logos separates. One is not better than the other, for they are different ways of being in the world. Yet there are moments, such as when the symbol appears, in which only Eros is capable of sustaining contact. Logos wants to understand, to dominate, to capture. Eros only wants to remain. To wander, to err, to linger, to lose itself in detail like someone tracing with the tongue a newly discovered limb of the body. The symbol, when looked at through Logos, grows pale. When touched with Eros, it breathes.

Therefore, the symbol arrives accompanied by an atmosphere. It never comes alone. It is the aura Walter Benjamin (1939/1985) wrote about: that which draws near without surrendering itself, that relinquishes an untouchable sacredness, and pulses at a distance even when it stands before us. To look symbolically at something, then, is to allow that thing to affect us more than what it appears to be. It is to be touched by a presence that preserves its otherness, by a field of meaning that refuses to be consumed. It is to resist the desire for definition in favor of the desire for coexistence. The symbol wants to be accompanied.

It requires a gaze of active contemplation, one that circles rather than violates, that inhabits without extracting. Let us call this gaze imaginal, to remain within the field's own vocabulary. It does not see beyond; it sees through. Eros in the gaze is seeing in a state of fascination. It is allowing the image to look back at us, to alter us, and to enchant us with what will never be ours. The symbol is this pact, this relationship. And every living relationship carries something erotic: tension, mystery, displacement, partial surrender. This is what makes it dangerous for psychologies of efficiency. The symbol demands time, listening, and a great deal of ambiguity. In a world hungry for resolutions, Eros is a scandal.

For this reason, when a symbol appears in a dream, in art, in silence, or in the body, it should not be interrogated like a suspect in search of guilt. It should be treated as one treats what is loved: with desire and with care. Because the symbol, when loved, responds.

The symbol also detests interrogations. There are ways of looking at that, in trying to wrench meaning from an image, that end up stripping it of its soul. Some questions are like poorly handled scalpels: they open, cut, expose, but understand nothing. It is not technique that is lacking; the problem is an excess of haste. Knowing is confused with control.

Interpreting, in this sense, becomes a form of domination. The symbol is turned into an object of dissection, as if the search for meaning were a treasure hunt, an animal that must be captured and displayed under the harsh light of an anxious reason. This compulsion to resolve images is what Susan Sontag (1966/2020) called a “hermeneutics of fear.” Instead of allowing art to transform us, we try to turn it into a concept, to police the symbol. Therefore, Roland Barthes (1973/2002), in *O Prazer do Texto*, wrote that the pleasure of the text lies in the moment when my body begins to follow its own ideas. The symbol, like the text, becomes more powerful when it disorganizes, when something in it affects us before we know why. The enjoyment of the symbol begins when its ambiguity stops disturbing us and starts to arouse us, when its presence prevails over our urge to decipher it.

Sontag (1966/2020) wished for criticism to be less theoretical and more contact. She dreamed of an “erotic of art,” a way of relating to images that privileges enjoyment, impact, and experience. Perhaps, therefore, it can also be understood as a clinical approach to the symbol. Not a map toward meaning, but a territory in which to dwell delicately with mystery.

After all, interpretation can be an act of love, but it can also be an invasion. It can be care or colonization. Some images exist only in silence. Others require a slowed-down gaze to fully reveal themselves. Some resist and test our desire to remain, even when we do not know

why. And this is the true scandal: to remain before the symbol without the urgency to resolve it. To be with it as one is with someone one loves without fully understanding. The symbol finds its enjoyment in escaping. And we do as well when we allow it to be. When interpretation gives way to imagination, the symbol breathes. When reading becomes a dance of the gaze with fantasy, rather than a dissection of content in the manner of CSI, something within the soul begins to warm.

Let us return to this point: the enjoyment of the symbol is a direct inheritance from Jung's thought. For him, living a symbol is more important than interpreting it. Its function is transformation, and this only takes place when stable meanings are not offered, but when new states of soul are brought into being. The symbol finds its enjoyment because it allows the psyche to experience itself in depth, beyond the dominion of rationality. The function of the symbol is to open a portal that leads from the darkness of the unconscious into the light of consciousness. The more positivist and Apollonian among us might read this light as the light of illumination and control, but I see it as the luminosity of fascination, wonder, and alterity.

Many clinical approaches devote themselves to the exercise of deciphering the subject, but archetypal clinical practice prefers to unfold it. One does not enter it in search of fixed truths, but of images that breathe and allow us to breathe. Some expect that the symbol, when it emerges from a dream or a symptom, will carry with it a riddle to be solved. In this image, the soul is a safe and the analyst is the locksmith. But the symbol does not obey the logic of answers, because it says: this is it. And immediately afterward, it whispers it is also that.

If the psyche speaks through images, and images refuse to be sealed into a verdict, then the psyche welcomes ambiguity and inexactness as fertilizing forces. Here, the symbol is not analyzed as a case, but accompanied as a character who dramatizes, in the session that serves as its stage, a different version of the patient—one that does not fit into chronology or

diagnosis. The symbol enters the scene as a body that must be looked at, not measured.

In 8½ (1963) – once again, Fellini, my beloved – the film director Guido sinks into his own imaginary. His unconscious does not send him answers, but a cabaret of figures: women, ghosts, children, a priest, dancers. All are essential images, and none are explanatory. The symbol is this dance of images, which appears not to resolve, but to relaunch the soul into a field of creation. The clinic is an orchestra. Archetypal clinical practice is made of these gestures that ask for companionship. It is the patient who repeats the same dream over and over. The same sentence. The same silence. All of this composes their liturgy. And for listening to be erotic, it must respect the liturgy. The dancer Pina Bausch also knew that a gesture, when repeated with affect, loses its function and becomes revelation. On stage, a body that turns too much disobeys its narrative and opens fissures in time. That is where the symbol is born: as a metaphor for something else, yet with insistence.

In *Cemitério do Esplendor*, by Apichatpong Weerasethakul (2015), soldiers sleep in a hospital where the waking world and the dream world interpenetrate. Spirits move among the living. Time folds in on itself. Symptoms need to be dreamed rather than cured. The clinic is this place where reverie is not an escape, but a method. The analyst does not wake the patient; he dreams with them. The symbol is not an obstacle to treatment. It is the treatment itself. Listening to the symbol transforms it into an event of the soul that, as Jung reminds us (1966/2013c, OC XVI/1), possesses its own efficacy, its own energy, its own intentionality. The analyst, like Orpheus, does not guide by the light of reason, but by listening to images that speak from places we do not know.

All these examples illustrate the enjoyment of the symbol. Yet there is a force that resists it: the desire for control. The analyst who grows impatient with ambiguity. The patient who demands a solution. The discourse that insists on progress. The symbol requires slowness, risk, and presence. It imposes an ethics of delay and of not knowing, everything the world of

progress detests. It demands, as Barthes (1973/2002) put it, that the body think. And, as Hillman (1975/2011) insisted, the soul imagines without the obligation to be cured. In the imaginal clinic, the symptom is not an enemy to be defeated. The symptom is an insistent image awaiting sensitive reception. Translation is always transcreation and often theft and distortion. And Jungian interpretation, when it is needed at all, serves only to keep the conversation going. That is all. There are no theses, only gestures, words, expressions, slips, stories, clothes, objects, and phrases overheard by mistake. All of this composes the landscape in which the soul begins to recognize itself through affinity rather than by looking at itself in a mirror.

Perhaps every analysis is, at its core, an attempt to return to the soul its iconography. Let faithful portraits be left to other priests. Here, the symbol is what remains when the expectation of a final cure is abandoned, and one accepts living in the company of the enigma.

I have never heard of a symbol that comes to an end. Symbols have no full stop.

This has nothing to do with grandeur or with being so vast that they cannot be grasped briefly. What I mean is that they refuse to die. A symbol, like an unidentified flying object, can keep vibrating long after it has been seen. It withdraws into the interstices, slipping between the folds of a sofa or between the cells of the body, and takes refuge there.

Perhaps, therefore, the deepest symbols are the smallest ones. The grand images of universal myths pale beside the force that relics of sensitive memory exert over us: a baby tooth turned into a pendant, a grandmother's recipe notebook, a book stolen from the library, a lock of hair from a deceased child. The staircase that always creaks on the same step. A bar filled with empty bottles. The dog's collar still carries its scent. For more than a decade, I have been visiting my grandparents' house in dreams, and with each new dream, it expands and gains new rooms.

None of this requires explanation. These are portals. Small portals. Passages toward the immeasurable.

When a symbol appears, it must be received with the gravity one reserves for a fledgling bird that has fallen from its nest. The symbol knows perfectly well how to fly, but we must not rely on that. It calls for an old-fashioned kind of care: a being-with, a tending. The symbol is that which asks of us a loving presence because we will never extract everything from it. Like the faces we love and that, even after years, still surprise us, it is a companion that reinvents itself over time.

That is why there is no point in seeking it ready-made in grand narrative structures, doctrines, or systems. The symbol lives better in fragments, slips, sudden apparitions that move us the way the death of a best friend does. The symbol is like a holy relic: a finger, a tongue, a nail. It is the way time folds into a memory, the way an old word reappears in the body as involuntary echolalia, like an image from childhood that returns without warning. What I am trying to say is that the symbol is, at once, a becoming-imperceptible and an invitation to the infinite. A modest eternity, so to speak. The symbol does not exhaust itself because it cannot be reduced. It invites us to inhabit the world with porous eyes, delayed hearing, and unresolved desire.

Barthes (1973/2002), through the beautifully fragmentary writing that inspired this essay, distinguished between the pleasure of the text and the bliss of the text. The first is a pleasure that comforts and reassures the reader; it arises from readable, structured texts in which we recognize ourselves. The second is a more radical and unsettling experience, associated with “writerly” texts that challenge norms, demand creative participation, and break with linearity.

In the Jungian world, a similar distinction exists between sign and symbol. The sign closes the meaning, and the symbol overflows. The sign protects the senses with weapons drawn. The symbol, by contrast, inaugurates presences. The sign says, “this means that”; the symbol says, “this keeps touching me.” It is, therefore, the form through which the infinite becomes intimate. A pocket-sized infinity that fits inside a matchbox, an unsent letter, or a cryptic dream noted down in a phone’s notepad.

There is a secret reason why we create symbols: we are going to die. All symbolic language is a response to finitude, an act against disappearance. The symbol is a way of remaining without remaining. It does not submit to the time of flesh and does not age as bodies do. The images of the unconscious are timeless and do not perish with the individual. The enjoyment of symbols will outlast us and survive us, taking the form of a vertigo produced when the infinite meets the ephemeral.

One day, I will depart. My body will cease. Yours will too. After that, the faces that remember me will fade, the voices that repeat my name will fall silent, and the hands that touched the same objects will disappear. There will be silence, and it will mark my second death.

The symbol will not go with us to Hades. It will stay behind, not because it carries our memory, but because it does not need remembrance to continue. It survives without a subject. It floats between times. It will enter other houses. It will remain suspended between here and there. The tiger of Jorge Luis Borges, which once moved into my dream, by the time I die will already have transformed into Ursula K. Le Guin's heron and will be with someone else, most likely someone I would never expect. And it will no longer appear as itself.

In recent days, I have been haunted by the image of a magician pulling a rabbit out of a top hat. Probably because the rabbit is me. In one moment, I am alive and visible. In the next, I have already vanished.

I have exactly five minutes of life.

Now you see me.

Now you don't.

I died as a mineral and became a plant.

I died as a plant and rose to the animal realm.

I died as an animal and was made human –

Why should I fear? I have never lost anything through death.

In the next passage, I shall die as a human,
So that I may lift my head and wings among the angels.
And even the state of angel I must abandon,
For everything perishes except His Face.
Once more I shall be sacrificed – even as an angel –
So that I may become what cannot be imagined.
Then I shall become non-existent, and non-being will say to me,
Like an organ resounding:
“Truly, to Him we return.
RUMI, Masnavi, Livro III (own translation)

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WOLFGANG GIEGERICH AND THE SOUL IN MODERNITY

Sonia Maria Marchi de Carvalho

Introduction

The present paper summarizes Wolfgang Giegerich's hypothesis, which proposes a reconfiguration of Jung's psychology at a new logical level by articulating the historicity of the idea of a "soulless psychology," which emerged in the nineteenth century.^[1] It also seeks to show how the clinical gesture can be realized as thinking of the soul, and how this resonates in the ethics of listening and care.

[1] Text based on the lecture presented at the 9th Meeting of the series *Fundamentos da Alma – Será que sabemos reconhecê-la?*, held in São Pedro, SP, on May 30 and 31, and June 1, 2025.

Psychology *with* or *without* soul?

What distinguishes Jung's analytical psychology from other approaches is its recognition of the autonomy^[2] of the unconscious, which led him to articulate "(...) a theory of the soul based on the postulate of an autonomous psyche reality" (JUNG, 1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 661).

Ancient truths did not arise from the human being – they were experienced as coming from outside (JUNG, 1926/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2), as a divine breath or as the radiance of Geist, the living mind of pre-Socratic philosophy. They were not subjective creations, but autonomous presences with which the ancient human being did not identify. For Jung, what he called the *autonomous factor* resonates with the ancient conception of the soul.

Aware of the impact that his proposal of a "psychology with soul" could have, Jung turned to the ancients to justify the legitimacy of the term:

In truth, such a psychology cannot be modern, because what is modern is to deny this possibility. Therefore, whether we like it or not, we must go back to the doctrine of our ancestors concerning the soul, because it was they who conceived such hypotheses (JUNG, 1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 662).

What is the history behind these statements by Jung?

As Giegerich (2012) observes, Jung's psychology responds to Friedrich Albert Lange (1828–1875), who defended the idea of a "soulless psychology," typical of the nineteenth century, while recognizing that such a proposal was insufficient as an integral conception of the human being. In this context, the modern human being became the new reference and point of departure, and the ancient idea of the soul was replaced by the notion of "subjectivity," identified with the "ego" and converted to the foundation of individual identity. Modernity thus "sanitized" the term soul of its former metaphysical content, making the human being its new substrate – a process that ultimately led to the "sterilization" of psychology.

[2] All italicized emphases in this text are added by the author.

Essentially, this was a movement away from the soul, synthesized by the expression “soulless psychology,” coined by Lange.

Still in the nineteenth century, there was another decisive landmark: the dissolution of the idea of God by Nietzsche, a historical turning point in which the focus on the human being could no longer be sustained by the old metaphysical notions (JUNG, 1938/1940/1978, OC, vol. XI/1, § 110).

Yet, while for Jung the very word *ψυχολογία* (*psychologia*) bore witness to the existence of the soul – since it carried within it the ancient meanings of *ψυχή* (*psyche*: soul, vital breath, principle of life) and *λόγος* (*logos*: discourse, study, reason, thought) – he nevertheless stated:

We cannot turn back the wheel of time; we cannot return to the symbolism that belongs to the past. (...) *Doubt has killed it and swallowed it.* (...) My psychological disposition demands something else. I need a situation in which the whole once again becomes true. *I need a new form* (JUNG, 1957/2013, OC, vol. XVIII/1, § 632).

What did Jung do, then, if a “psychology with soul” no longer made sense?

Giegerich and the Alchemical Vessel

As strange as this historical shift may sound to our Jungian ears, Giegerich (2012) proposes that these transformations also be understood as expressions of the objective psyche – manifestations of the historical process of the *Opus Magnum* of the Western soul.

For him, Jung did not merely preserve ancient ideas about the soul but surrendered himself to the living center of what he observed. Beyond preserving the traditional autonomy of the soul, Jung sought to understand it from within itself – he allowed it to express itself. In this gesture, he absorbed and transformed the critical gaze of his time (represented by Lange) into an artistic chisel with which he sculpted a new image of the soul. He thus introduced a *method* of seeing. Not by chance, Giegerich recognizes him as “the thinker of the soul” (GIEGERICH, 2021, pp. 78–79).

The German author's thesis (GIEGERICH, 2012) maintains that the soul, in addition to its characteristic autonomy, is also present in the discourses that deny it, provided we recognize that such authors were not speaking "off the cuff," but were expressing what Jung called "a universally widespread psychological fact" (JUNG, 1938/1940/1978, OC, vol. XI/1, § 145) – *the spirit of the age* (*Zeitgeist*). For Giegerich, transformation presupposes that the "content" – here, the idea of soul – remain incubated in the alchemical vessel, exposed to the new historical and critical context (LANGE).

Put differently: in the pelican vessel, in an uroboric movement, the ancient idea of the soul encounters its "other" – the "soulless psychology" – and returns to itself. Both rub against each other, simultaneously decomposing (*dissolutio*), until a new form can emerge from this encounter. In other words, the soul ceases to be "something" or to symbolize "something," but it is also not reduced to mere superstition, to "nothing," thus equally denying the scientism of the time. As Jung states: "In this turning back upon itself, psychology is forced to cancel itself, and it is precisely in this situation that it reaches its scientific goal" (JUNG, 1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 429).

In the original German (GIEGERICH, 2021, p. 120, note 55), Jung uses the expression *selber aufheben* (to abolish oneself / to cancel oneself), which carries three simultaneous meanings according to Hegelian dialectical logic: (1) something negates and cancels itself – as in the cancellation of a flight; (2) something is preserved – as in a state of "hibernation," often depicted in science fiction, in which a person is suspended without disappearing; (3) something is elevated and transformed, reaching a new level of complexity – as occurs, for example, in the evolution of endoscopy: all the paraphernalia is cancelled and replaced by capsule-shaped nanocameras, which technologically condense and surpass previous means.

As Giegerich (2012) comments, the soul did not disappear because it was logically negated. What dissolved was the metaphysical form that

substantiated it – it was the logical form of consciousness that underwent a *dissolutio*. We moved from an ontology (“what is the soul?”) to a logic (“how does the soul think?”), without the soul losing its autonomous reality, essentially noetic or mercurial: “*Mercurius* is the *Logos* become world” (JUNG, 1943/1948/2013, OC, vol. XIII, § 271); it “has a pneumatic nature” (JUNG, 1951/2013, OC, vol. IX/2, § 371).

The Soul in Act

Clinical account: A patient in crisis destroyed part of the kitchen of the psychiatric hospital where she was hospitalized, enraged because there was no food made with lard. We asked: “Where is there food made with lard?” She replied, still furious: “In my house, there is! In my house there is!” We said: “So it is not only food with lard that you want. You want to go home.” There was a moment of silence. Immediately, the crisis ceased. The patient ran through the corridors shouting joyfully: “I want to go home! I want to go home!” And, finally, she did.

In this case, the crisis is not an irrational collapse but a meaningful gesture: the destruction of the soulless kitchen becomes the image of a soul that refuses to be nourished by that place. Lard is not merely an ingredient; it becomes an emblem of a way of life, of an affective bond, of a lost truth. The soul demands a return to what it considers its truth: “my house.” But this is not a literal return – it is a return to itself.

This moment marks the transition from the psychic – the raw affect, the symptom, the still formless force – to the psychological: the soul thinking itself in act, realizing itself as true form. This is what Giegerich calls *Er-innerung* (interiorization): the logic by which an image, upon finding its fulfillment, transforms consciousness and becomes *Self*^[3].

The feeling of not belonging to that place, manifested in such an explosive way, can be understood as the experience that the soul was not in its own, in what was familiar to it.

[3] Term used in the sense of a reflexive pronoun.

The crisis reveals this displacement and, at the same time, demands a logical return: not to the literal house, but to the interiority where the truth of the soul can be fulfilled. The crisis was the mode by which the psychic manifested itself symbolically; once recognized and thought, this manifestation became soul – the soul was constituted there, as logical form.

Final Considerations

We may say that the ancient point of view regarding the soul has become unsustainable. The rupture that followed – the “crack” or scar – in the modern human being need not be read in a nihilistic way. It indicates that, since the Enlightenment, we have been led to a new logical status of consciousness, still in the process of elaboration. Giegerich shows that Jung did not reject this movement but incorporated it: his psychology becomes an expression of the *very becoming* of the soul in modernity. Thus, the soul did not disappear; it transformed: it became negativity, it became reflection, it became the very logical form of consciousness. And the answer to the question “*Do we know how to recognize it?*” may be: *Where the soul thinks, there it is.*

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PSYCHOPOLITICS: THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN CARL GUSTAV JUNG AND BYUNG-CHUL HAN ON CONTEMPORARY SUBJECTIVITY

Rebeca Moreira Nalia

Abstract

This article proposes an articulation between Byung-Chul Han's critique of neoliberalism and fundamental concepts of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology, aimed at reflecting on contemporary subjectivity and its forms of psychic suffering. It is considered that power today operates in a psychological and self-exploitative manner, converting the subject into a project of the *self* and into an agent of their own servitude. This dynamic is brought into dialogue with Jung's critique of ego-inflation and the consequent distancing from the unconscious and from the symbols that structure the psyche. From this interlocution, the article discusses the impacts of the culture of performance, digital hyper exposure, and the excessive valorization of transparency on the individuation pro-

cess. It argues that Jungian clinical practice, by preserving the listening to the unconscious and the mystery of interiority, offers an ethical path of resistance to current forms of subjective domination.

Keywords: psychopolitics; contemporary subjectivity; neoliberalism; individuation; analytical psychology.

Introduction

Especially in his later decades, Carl Gustav Jung expressed concerns about the directions that humanity might take. In Volume X of the *Obras Completas*, entitled *Civilização em Transição*, writings dated between 1918 and 1959 are gathered, in which the author turns to questions central to culture, social life, politics, and religious experience, casting a profound gaze upon the historical and psychic convulsions of the twentieth century.

In the year that celebrates the 150th anniversary of his birth, it becomes pressing to invoke him as a privileged interlocutor for a sensitive reading of the times in which we live. Far from adopting a fatalistic tone, this article proposes to articulate reflections by Byung-Chul Han – one of the most stimulating contemporary thinkers – with fundamental concepts of analytical psychology to (re)think clinical practice and its ethical commitment in relation to the individuation process.

In the book that inspired the title of the present article, *Psicopolítica – O Neoliberalismo e as Novas Técnicas de Poder*, Han (2018) examines the subtle mechanisms of domination that operate within contemporary societies. Unlike the repressive forms of power that marked previous centuries, neoliberalism establishes a more insidious model of control: instead of external coercion, self-exploitation is cultivated. The subject, now an entrepreneur of the *self*, becomes an accomplice to their own servitude, believing they are free while submitting to demands for performance, productivity, and transparency. In this scenario, power ceases to be disciplinary and becomes psychological, infiltrating subjectivity and converting the individual into the manager of their own precarity.

"Protect Me from What I Want" (Jenny Holzer)

As Han (2018) emphasizes, we live under the illusion that we are no longer submissive subjects, but rather free projects in constant reinvention. The transition from subject to project is accompanied by a sense of freedom, even though, paradoxically, this very mode of existence functions as a more sophisticated mechanism of subjection and the production of subjectivity. In this paradox resides one of the most acute impasses of contemporary life: the exaltation of freedom disguises refined technologies of control that organize existence and mute psychic suffering beneath the imperative of performance.

This logic of self-exploitation described by Han resonates with Jung's critique of the one-sidedness of modern consciousness, which privileges the ego at the expense of psychic totality. For Jung, ego-inflation – now disguised as a project – distances the subject from themselves, from their symbolic roots, and from their grounding in the unconscious. Inner fragmentation, in this context, is not only an individual experience but a collective symptom of a civilization that has lost contact with its structuring myths (JUNG, 1928/1934/2022, OC VII/2).

Jung (1928/1934/2022, OC VII/2) warned that when the ego identifies excessively with ideals of control, rationality, and performance, the unconscious reacts – often through psychic suffering – as an attempt to restore a broader psychic balance. The individuation process, in this sense, appears as an ethical and symbolic path of resistance: it is not a matter of becoming a “project of the *Self*,” but of listening to what presents itself as other within us – what is shadow, mystery, alterity.

Han (2018) observes that, in neoliberal logic, work has ceased to respond to the authentic needs of life and has become subject to the demands of capital, which imposes its own requirements, disguised as personal desires. Capital, in this sense, operates as a new form of transcendence – not in a spiritual sense, but as an external instance that governs existence from the outside, distancing the subject from the immanence of life and from inner listening. Thus, once again, we find ourselves displaced from

ourselves, conditioned by an extrinsic “yes” that shapes subjectivities and imposes a mode of existence oriented by productivity, not by meaning.

Jung did not live long enough to witness the more radical unfolding of technological advancement and hyperconnectivity that today characterizes the contemporary world. Even so, his work reveals an impressive acuity regarding the risks of progress unmoored from interiority. Although he did not know the internet, social networks, or the digital devices that today shape subjectivities, Jung (1927/1931/2021, OC X/3) already intuited that the growing dominion of technique could lead to a symbolic emptying of human experience. His warning about the danger of civilization losing contact with archetypal images sounds even more current today, in a scenario in which constant acceleration undermines the cultivation of interiority and impoverishes the subject’s relationship with themselves.

The digital society of control, characterized by the digital panopticon, finds its functioning in the intense desire for communication and exposure that is, to a large extent, voluntary. In this context, freedom seems to be achieved through constant self-disclosure. However, this pursuit of unlimited transparency and visibility clashes with what, according to Byung-Chul Han (2018), represents a barrier to full communication: secrecy, estrangement, and alterity. These elements function as obstacles to total transparency, for alterity, the other as something distinct, dissolves in this incessant flow of exposure.

This connects directly with the concept of individuation proposed by Carl Gustav Jung. For Jung (1928/1934/2022, OC VII/2), individuation is the process by which the individual becomes their own being, integrating the conscious and the unconscious, including the deepest and most hidden aspects of the psyche. Constant self-exposure demanded by digital society can, in this sense, hinder individuation, because it imposes a mode of communication and revelation that does not allow for the lived experience of secrecy and mystery, elements essential to deep self-knowledge. Individuation, as an inner and gradual process, cannot be fully

disclosed to others without risking the loss of the subject's authenticity, as it requires the preservation of psychic dimensions that lie beyond public visibility.

Beyond Discipline and Punishment

The shift from the concept of biopower, developed by Michel Foucault (2008), to the notion of psychopolitics, proposed by Byung-Chul Han, reflects a profound transformation in the ways power is exercised over individuals in contemporary societies. In his analysis of biopower, Foucault describes power as something that infiltrates people's bodies and lives, regulating and normalizing behaviors, health, and reproduction through institutions such as hospitals, schools, and prisons. This power manifests in a disciplinary and coercive form, seeking direct control of bodies. Han (2018), when speaking of psychopolitics, observes a shift from biopower to a form of power that no longer needs direct and visible repression but manifests through individuals' self-exploitation and self-exposure. In a psychopolitical society, control takes place through the intensification of freedom, in which subjects become their own managers, constantly monitoring and revealing themselves, driven by an incessant search for visibility and recognition on social networks and other digital platforms. This power, therefore, is no longer only about controlling the body but about controlling the psyche and emotions, leading individuals to self-exploit and adjust to social and cultural expectations, often without perceiving their own subordination. The change to psychopolitics proposed by Byung-Chul Han (2018) is intimately related to the mode of production of contemporary capitalism, which privileges immaterial and incorporeal production, such as information and programs.

Carl Gustav Jung's critique (1927/1931/2021, OC X/3) of mass psychology can be related to the context of contemporary capitalism as described by Byung-Chul Han, though with a distinct historical focus. In his analysis of the masses, Jung was concerned with the rise of collective movements that absorbed the individual, especially during

periods of great historical tension, such as the two World Wars. For Jung (1957/2020, OC X/1), the masses, driven by collective emotions and irrational instincts, were a threat to the individual's freedom and authenticity. He observed that, in times of crisis such as war, individuals often became submerged in collective ideologies that undermined their capacity for critical and autonomous thought. In contemporary capitalism, this critique is updated when observing how the psyche becomes a productive force, shaped and manipulated by technologies aimed at optimizing the mind rather than the physical body. The pursuit of mental efficiency and productivity through processes such as neuroenhancement (the increase of psychic performance through psychotropics) can be seen as a continuation of this tendency, in which the individual, though freed from direct pressure of physical labor, is subjected to new forms of psychological and ideological control that limit their capacity for self-realization. Thus, Jung's critique of mass psychology remains relevant in highlighting the risk that the human psyche may be submerged in collective forces that hinder self-knowledge and individual freedom.

The Capitalism of Emotions

Neoliberal psychopolitics develops forms of exploitation that become progressively more sophisticated. In this new model, it is not only a matter of maximizing production in the workplace, but of conquering the individual's totality, making their life, attention, and emotions areas of control and exploitation. Personal management workshops, development seminars, and emotional intelligence training, among other strategies, promise to optimize the individual, presenting an ideal of constant improvement and efficiency. However, behind this promise of self-overcoming lies a technique of domination that not only extracts labor power but also invades the most intimate field of the human psyche, seeking to control internal and subjective processes. The person is transformed into an object of exploitation, whose value is measured by their capacity to be productive, efficient, and emotionally controlled, being shaped by a system that operates invisibly yet profoundly upon everyday life (HAN, 2018).

In this scenario, it is not rare for many people to seek psychotherapy or personal analysis driven by this neoliberal logic of continuous optimization. Self-knowledge, once understood as a deep descent into one's own shadows and contradictions, has been emptied and transformed into yet another consumer good, a form of emotional display. The discourse of "self-help" disguised as self-knowledge offers quick answers and practical solutions so that the subject may eliminate as quickly as possible whatever hinders their performance, productivity, or image. Contaminated by this social environment that values output above all, many arrive in analysis not with the desire to truly understand themselves, but with the expectation of becoming more efficient, less "defective," more functional.

This is not to blame individuals for illnesses that, to a great extent, have collective and structural roots. Pressure for performance, constant self-surveillance, and the ideal of complete happiness are symptoms of a time that imposes dehumanizing models of life. Nonetheless, it is symptomatic – and deeply revealing – that one of the psychotherapist's most recurrent functions today is simply to affirm to the patient that it is okay to suffer, that there is nothing wrong with being sad, lost, or in crisis. In a culture that demands constant well-being and immediate resolution of any discomfort, psychic suffering is seen as personal failure, as something that must be quickly corrected. In response, the therapist's role often begins with restoring to the subject the right to feel, to become ill, to not know, and to experience anguish as a legitimate dimension of human existence.

The logic of neoliberal psychopolitics, as Byung-Chul Han (2018) points out, is already suffocating in demanding from the subject a constant state of self-surveillance, performance, and self-improvement. But this pressure becomes even more insidious when it intertwines with deep psychic complexes, such as parental complexes. The social demand to be impeccable, productive, and emotionally stable can activate old wounds, such as the unconscious need to correspond to a maternal ideal of absolute care or to an internal father who is critical and demanding.

The discourse of self-sufficiency so promoted by neoliberalism resonates with these complexes, transforming old feelings of inadequacy or abandonment into even more powerful motors of self-demand and guilt. The result is suffering that doubles: not only does one fail before external demands, but one relives, with each misstep, an archaic psychic drama, now amplified by the frustrated promises of individual overcoming. At this point, analysis becomes a precious space not only of resistance to the dominant model, but of attentive listening to the symbolic webs that imprison the subject within their own history.

If “[...] neoliberal psychopolitics occupies itself with emotion to influence actions at this pre-reflexive level [...]” (HAN, 2018, p. 72), we can understand that the analytic process presents itself as a possibility of resistance to alienation. By calling the subject to return to themselves, to look attentively at their constitutive narratives, analytic practice defends a space of listening that escapes the logics of emotional life-management.

However, it is necessary to recognize that the temporality of analysis clashes with the urgencies imposed by market rationality. Anguish leads many to the consulting room in search of quick answers and efficient solutions. Cognitive-behavioral approaches, often recommended by international guidelines, align with promises of control, predictability, and statistical efficacy. In analytical psychology, by contrast, space opens for the unknown – discomfort and what still has no name. The wager is on listening and processing, not on shortcuts.

One of the strategies of contemporary capitalism to sustain motivation even in the face of suffering and the emptying of meaning is gamification. Through it, work is emotionalized and dramatized, offering quick sensations of accomplishment and reward systems that exploit the *homo ludens* (the human being who plays, who finds meaning in playful experience). While playing, the subject becomes immersed in relations of domination disguised as fun – motivated by “likes,” “friends,” and “followers,” which operate as symbolic gratifications within a profoundly instrumental logic (HAN, 2018).

Byung-Chul Han (2018, p. 73) states: “What has to mature slowly cannot be gamified. The long and the slow are not compatible with the temporality of the game.” If he were among us, Jung would probably agree – and I dare say would add that the time of the soul does not submit to the accelerated rhythm of the game that governs contemporary forms of communication and interaction.

And the time of the soul, as Jung revealed to us in his relationship with the earth and in the construction of the Bollingen Tower (JUNG, 2021), does not serve the purposes of what is conventionally understood as productive. It is another time – organic, symbolic, profoundly subjective. Han (2018, p. 76) reinforces this critique by stating that “our future will depend on our being able to make use of the unusable beyond production.”

Quantified self

Han (2018) observes that the digital era is marked by the belief that life can be entirely measured and quantified. This logic is expressed in the phenomenon of the quantified *self*, in which the body is monitored by sensors that record data about virtually everything: body temperature, glucose levels, calories ingested and expended, movements, body fat, and even moods and sensations.

Even in moments of rest, the demand for performance and efficiency prevails. Through constant self-measurement, one seeks to optimize body and mind in an incessant attempt at control. Yet, the author warns, this accumulation of data is not capable of answering the fundamental question of identity: who am I? The quantified *self* can constitute a Dadaist technique of subjectivation – that is, a practice that reduces human experience to the logic of data, erasing its symbolic and affective complexity. In this process, the *Self* dissolves until it becomes irrelevant. Although it promises self-knowledge through numbers, this logic ignores the fact that data, no matter how precise or comprehensive, says nothing about the ego.

Based on Han's critique of the quantified *self*, it is possible to build a bridge with a common Jungian inference: "The lighter we cast on a thing, the more shadow will be produced." Contemporary obsession with metrics, visibility, and transparency – under the ideal that everything can (and must) be monitored, measured, and optimized – seems to ignore the Jungian paradox. By excessively illuminating certain aspects of psychic and bodily life, we relegate to the shadow what does not fit the discourse of performance and control. Dissonant emotions, pauses, failures, and nonproductive desires – all of this tends to be repressed or pathologized. This artificial light, oriented toward efficiency and self-management, ends up producing a collective shadow: growing anxiety, feelings of inadequacy, eating disorders, exhaustion, and loneliness, often experienced in silence. Paradoxically, the more we try to know ourselves through numbers, the more we move away from the enigma of the *Self*, which is revealed not through exposure but through listening, time, and symbolic elaboration.

In the face of the logic of dataism, which turns self-monitoring into a practice emptied of meaning and oriented toward self-control, it is possible to contrast *publicatio sui* – this exposure of the *self* that, according to Han, seeks truth and sustains an ethics of the ego – with the profound experience lived by Jung in the writing of his *Livros Negros* (1913–1932), later unfolded in *O Livro Vermelho* (JUNG, 2013). In recording his dreams, visions, and thoughts, Jung did not aim at performance or self-explanation for public consumption, but rather a descent into the soul, a radical listening to the unconscious. And even when he decided to edit and publish *O Livro Vermelho*, he did so with the intention of clarifying the foundations of analytical psychology, not of exposing himself excessively in a personal sense. His writing was a symbolic and intimate act, moved by the desire to understand and integrate the psychic contents that emerged. This practice, rather than producing a marketable image of the *self*, sought to reveal what was most uncomfortable, contradictory, and true. In this sense, the analytic invitation to write about oneself – especially about

dreams – can function as an antidote to the empty and performative exposure of the contemporary ego. Writing one’s own history, following the movements of the soul, and recording the dream world are ways of cultivating an ethics of self-care that resists objectification and the imperative of transparency. It is, ultimately, writing not to be seen, but to listen to oneself.

Digital Unconscious

Han (2018) suggests that our digital habits offer a representation of ourselves more precise than the one we consciously construct. Through the traces we leave on the internet – likes, searches, clicks, patterns of consumption and navigation – a meticulous portrait of our desires, fears, and inclinations is composed. These data not only describe us, but are also used to predict and influence us. In this context, microtargeting practices emerge, allowing political campaigns and companies to adapt specific messages to highly individualized psychological profiles. The case of the 2016 U.S. elections made this mechanism widely known: digital platforms were used to direct distinct content to different groups, shaping opinions and affecting electoral decisions based on information that subjects themselves were not always aware they were providing.

Paradoxically, this same machinery that reveals so much about us can be an interesting point of departure for deconstructing the ego ideal. If digital traces reveal aspects that escape the narrative of ourselves, perhaps we can face them as clues to unconscious contents, even if distorted by the logic of surveillance. In analytical psychology, the ego is only one part of the *Self*, and analysis invites a confrontation with the complexes, shadows, and fragments that challenge the idealized image we construct. By reflecting on our digital habits with the symbolic and critical gaze that clinical practice proposes, we can not only recognize how conditioned we are but also expand our awareness of the subtle forms of alienation that traverse everyday life. Undoing the ego ideal does not mean losing identity but allowing it to become more alive, contradictory, and true.

Final Considerations

The relentless advance of technology, especially concerning dataism and the massive collection of data, is, so far, unstoppable. We live in a context in which the speed of digital innovations seems to outstrip any attempt at deceleration or regulation. Nevertheless, as psychologists and analysts, it is fundamental to maintain constant vigilance over the impacts of this technological revolution on human subjectivity. The impacts of technology extend beyond the confines of the clinic and permeate everyday life, profoundly shaping desires, identities, and modes of relating to others. Our engagement with machines and social networks influences social interactions, the construction of personal narratives, and the ways individuals position themselves in the world. These effects reverberate in our perception of ourselves and of others, becoming a reflection of the digitized society in which we are immersed, where subjectivity intertwines with the logic of technologies and their dynamics of consumption and control. At the same time, it is important to recognize that technological advances have also brought positive aspects, such as expanded access to information, connectivity among different cultures, and the possibility of personalizing health and well-being care. The key lies in how we use these technologies: as facilitators of self-knowledge and the construction of more empathic communities, or as instruments of control and homogenization. Therefore, our ethical task is to remain attentive to these transformations, to understand the new psychic dynamics that emerge and to offer tools for dealing with the pressures and alienations that the digital world imposes upon us.

Moreover, as citizens, we need to participate actively in political discussions about the regulation of the major technological corporations, the big techs, which today hold unprecedented power over the formation of our identities and perceptions. The concentration of data and control of digital narratives can demand critical reflection and responsible action to ensure that the use of these technologies does not occur at the expense of freedom, privacy, and the diversity of voices.

Although technology has the potential to contribute positively to society, promoting innovation and the evolution of educational, medical, and social paradigms, adequate regulation is essential to prevent abuses. The dialogue between analytic practice and the public sphere thus becomes even more urgent, for the way we deal with today's technologies will shape the subjectivities of tomorrow. Ultimately, it is an invitation to ethical reflection, both in our clinical practice and in our political action, to ensure that progress does not become an instrument of oppression, but a path toward the expansion of human freedom.

These global dynamics of control and subjectivation find, in Brazil, an even more complex terrain, traversed by historical and structural inequalities, where the neoliberal ideal of the "*entrepreneur of the Self*" – one who constantly invests in themselves as a project of success – is, first and foremost, a privilege. A large part of the Brazilian population continues to struggle for basic needs, such as access to housing, health, education, and security.

The public that suffers most intensely from the subjective demands of neoliberalism, such as constant self-surveillance, the cult of performance, and productivity, is predominantly the one that has the conditions to seek the analytic process.

The perversity of the system becomes even more evident when, propelled by social networks, people from poorer strata begin to desire this model of self-exploitation, seeing in it a symbol of success and prosperity. One even dreams of reaching the point of suffering like those who "have already made it." This shows how neoliberal discourse colonizes even the imaginary of those who have not yet been fully included in its circuits of consumption – naturalizing exploitation as if it were freedom.

As a psychologist, I carry a persistent anguish: that of knowing that the reach of the clinic is profoundly limited in a country marked by such structural inequalities. The analytic process, even if transformative, is far from accessible to all. Not even social programs, public services, or

university clinics can reach the segments of the population living in conditions of extreme vulnerability, where daily struggle is for survival. For many, the very idea of seeking psychological help does not even present itself as a possibility – not for lack of suffering, but because there are more immediate urgencies: a plate of food, transportation, informal work, safety. These inequalities deepen when we observe gender and race cuts: Black women, for example, historically relegated to the most precarious positions in society, face greater barriers in accessing mental health care, even though they are the ones who suffer most from psychic and emotional overloads. This reality strains the place of analysis in the contemporary world and invites us to think of broader and more committed forms of action, recognizing the social complexity of psychic suffering and the need for public policies that guarantee care as a right, not as a luxury.

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THE LAST COLOR: MANDALAS AND REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN FINITUDE

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Abstract

Death and dying are inevitable experiences for all living beings. For humans, they are considered certainties that give contour and form to life. However, even though death is a condition present from birth, debate about it is often avoided, distorted, or denied. Another dimension that characterizes human beings is art, understood as a means of expression and elaboration of what we think, feel, and desire. Given the complexity of dialogues about finitude and the conceptions that involve art, this study sought to understand the perceptions of older adults regarding dying through the creation of mandalas. Grounded in Jungian analytical psychology, the research involved 26 participants aged between 60 and 90 years, members of the *Projeto de Extensão Voo Livre da Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina* (UDESC). Four meetings were held, with aes-

thetic workshops for the individual production of mandalas, followed by reflective dialogues. The images and narratives were analyzed according to Gaillard (2010), identifying recurring archetypal symbols – such as mandalas, flowers, and natural elements – that expressed affects, latent personal contents, and elements of the collective unconscious. These contents revealed the articulation between individual and collective dimensions of the psychic constitution of the individuals in the face of finitude, highlighting the symbolic and transformative potential of artistic creation in the aging process.

Keywords: death; aging; mandalas; Jungian analytical psychology; aesthetic workshop.

The moment has come to fully accept the mysterious
life of those who one day will die
Clarice Lispector

This text presents the report of a research project defended as an undergraduate thesis, whose objective was to understand the finitude of life from the perspective of older adults through the creation of mandalas. Through guided meetings grounded in the theoretical concepts of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology, the study sought to identify symbolic and unconscious manifestations that could emerge from the production of mandalas and, through them, to investigate reflections on death and dying.

For that, the research addressed *Voo Livre*, a university extension project linked to the Universidade Estadual de Santa Catarina (UDESC), located in the municipality of Joinville, SC. The project has existed for approximately 18 years and offers activities aimed at improving physical, cognitive, and social aspects of a group of older adults, using resources and strategies such as physical exercises, writing books and poems, music classes, and socialization, among others.

The project *Voo Livre* takes place weekly, with two in-person meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. It currently has around 30 members, aged between 60 and 90 years. For its organization and development, the project includes interns enrolled in courses from UDESC, as well as hired professionals (such as a Physical Education teacher) and volunteers (such as a poet and a conductor) who teach classes and practices focused on leisure and education.

The partnership with *Voo Livre* arose from an invitation to the Psychology course at *Faculdade Ielusc*, aimed at establishing a collaboration for offering workshops, conversation circles, or other actions that would promote interaction among and with its members. The choice of death and dying as the background theme of this investigation emerged from the understanding of the relevance of discussing the finitude of human life, a process to which we are all subject and which, directly or indirectly, permeates psychological practice and knowledge. It is understood that, even though death is a natural process – one that allows no rehearsal – its discussion and study are permeated by taboos and silences. In this sense, it is perceived that this “difficulty in talking about death is not necessarily found in death itself, but in identifying the meaning it has for the person and the underlying suffering” (HOFFMANN; SANTOS; CARVALHO, 2021, p. 1). Thus, by provoking debate on the theme, the intention is to re-signify prejudices and fears surrounding it through another form of language, whether verbal, bodily, written, or artistic, making valuable insights possible.^[1]

Just as Jung used mandalas as a portal to the unconscious, art, in seeking to signify death, can be seen as an existential mandala.

By creating a safe space for the expression of fears and anxieties, art transforms the unknown into a personal symbol. It is in this movement that art is presented as a central aspect of the research, especially through the proposal of a poetic form of writing.

[1] Insight refers to a sudden awareness of some issue of an unconscious nature.

Therefore, academic rigidity gives way to sensitivity without losing rigor, leading to a welcoming and non-technocratic approach to death. It is important to emphasize that this is not about romanticizing death, but rather about humanizing it, recognizing its presence as part of the history of humanity and of what makes us human. Therefore, the writing found in this text carries the intention of expressing the richness of the experience of finitude, insofar as it may be “faced” with naturalness and lightness, without losing sight of its depth. After all, as television host and journalist Pedro Bial^[2] said in his chronicle *A morte*: “to die is a transgression, it undoes the natural order of things. [...] To die is an exaggeration. And, as we know, exaggeration is the raw material of jokes.”

Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes

Carl Gustav Jung

Analytical psychology, founded by Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist C. G. Jung, presents a vast theoretical material on the themes of “art” and “death.” Jung’s readings and investigations into these phenomena intend to analyze unconscious aspects of our existence, especially those that go beyond the personal unconscious.

For Jung (2002/1950/1940, OC IX/1, § 88), in the deepest regions of the human psyche dwells the so-called collective unconscious, a concept designated for “[...] contents [that] have never been in consciousness and therefore were not acquired individually but owe their existence solely to heredity.” He also conceptualizes the collective unconscious as “the part of the psyche that retains and transmits the common psychological heritage of humanity” (HENDERSON, 2023, p. 138), encompassing discussions on archetypes and other important symbols that participate in reflections on the science of the end of life.

[2] Available at: <https://www.cifraclub.com.br/pedro-bial/969107/letra/>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2024

As can be seen, the collective unconscious escapes the individual unconscious,^[3] for it contains information and symbolisms of the human condition that permeate and shape everyone since the earliest sapiens.

It is within this psychic space-time that symbolic expressions and manifestations originating from the evolutionary processes dwell, preserved throughout the history of humanity. From a Jungian perspective, the collective unconscious houses contents that transcend social, environmental, cultural, and ethnic boundaries, as they are present – in some form or degree – in all people. Such symbols, archetypes, and archetypal images constitute the unconscious itself, as described by Jung in *Os Arquétipos e o Inconsciente Coletivo* (2002/1950/1940, OC IX/1). Among these symbols that translate universal experiences of the human condition are representations associated with death and dying.

In analytical theory, death is not treated merely as a biological event. Dying is not limited to the cessation of organs and the putrefaction of flesh, but encompasses spiritual and psychic processes that, although seen as taboos in various cultures, sustain, organize, and orient rites celebrated across societies worldwide. Throughout human history – from the earliest cave art to contemporary artistic manifestations – symbols have been used to work through and explore the theme of death, which appears as something emblematic, mysterious, and unsettling, crossing different fields of knowledge such as science, art, and religion.

Whether in the form of myths, fairy tales, stories, artistic productions, or mentally created images, the collective unconscious contains contents that influence our understanding of various subjects. According to von Franz (2023, p. 148):

Those who must learn to face death may need to recover the ancient insight that death is a mystery, one for which we must prepare with the same humility and surrender that life itself demands.

[3] The part that considers the psychic aspects of particular experiences and lived events.

However, a topic that evokes discomfort and fear tends to be avoided in conscious aspects; for this reason, the unconscious assumes the function of promoting movement in interpretations and symbolic creation of the theme. The creation of symbols, driven by the unconscious, transcends dreams and mandalas, extending to diverse cultural and artistic expressions, shaping human experience. Whether through “his propensity to create symbols, [human beings] unconsciously transform objects or forms into symbols [...] and give them expression, both in religion and in the visual arts” (JAFFÉ, 2023, p. 232), thus representing latent contents of the unconscious, both individual and collective, in their creations, granting them an analytic and healing function.

Moreover, analytical psychology constitutes a field of research within what may be considered art therapy, encompassing materials, techniques, and knowledge distinct from Freudian psychoanalysis. This distinction lies in Jung’s understanding of the power of art-making as an unconscious creative process. As Reis (2014, p. 4) states, “Jung considered artistic creativity a natural and structuring psychic function, whose healing capacity lay in giving form, and transforming unconscious contents into symbolic images.”

One of the most curious and important aesthetically constituted unconscious manifestations, according to analytical psychology, is the mandala,^[4] which served as an instrument to analyze and establish the foundations of the archetypal structures of the psyche. Beyond doodles and repetitions, these circles can be observed across ancient cultures and civilizations worldwide. The mandala, a commonly circular design with varied geometric representations, or found in nature, has been present in diverse cultures since ancient times, whether in indigenous rituals, Hindu practices, or Gothic art, and reveals a universal meaning.

[4] In analyzing this finding, “Jung used the Hindu word mandala (magic circle) to designate this type of structure, which is a symbolic representation of the ‘nuclear atom’ of the human psyche” (FRANZ, 2023, p. 213), also defined as the symbolic representation of the *Self*.

According to von Franz (2023, p. 213), these representations aim to “restore lost inner balance,” and were used by Jung as a theoretical foundation for the psychotherapeutic process, promoting the integration of conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche through the analysis of their elements. In this sense, the production-representation of mandalas may be interpreted as akin to the drawing of the psychic apparatus itself, in all its complexity. Each object, color, shape, spacing, line, stroke, as well as the position of the drawing, constitutes material for analysis in the endeavor of bringing contents of all psychic natures into consciousness.

It is worth mentioning the invaluable contribution of Nise da Silveira,^[5] who emphasized the importance of addressing death in psychology not as an end but as an integral part of life and human development. According to Damião Junior (2021, p. 3), “Nise may be considered the great disseminator of C. G. Jung’s thought in Brazil.” In her work, she used the arts, especially mandalas, as a therapeutic method with her patients. Dying, like living, is a theme present in mandalas, expressing the duality and interconnection of all things.

By bringing these contents to light, the analysis of mandalas can help individuals deal with the fear of death, fostering acceptance and understanding of its inevitability. In this sense, the research reported here sought to humanize the experience of death, offering new perspectives on this unique and unrehearsed process. Through the exploration of symbolism present in mandalas, the aim is to expand knowledge about mourning and finitude, promoting a more human and integral perspective.

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking
new landscapes, but in having new eyes

Marcel Proust

[5] The Brazilian psychiatrist Nise Magalhães da Silveira gained international recognition for her innovative contributions to psychiatry, including the use of art, free expression, and affectivity as therapeutic tools.

The main objective of this study was to understand how older adults conceive of life's finitude from the assumptions of Jungian analytical psychology. With a qualitative and exploratory approach, the study aligns with Gil (2007, p. 41), who describes the scope of this type of investigation: "these studies aim to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it more explicit or to formulating hypotheses."

In addition, it is characterized as a type of field research, with approximations to the precepts of experimental research, which is "developed through direct observation of the activities of the group studied and interviews with informants to capture their explanations and interpretations of what occurs in the group" (GIL, 2002, p. 53). It is important to clarify that experimental methodology was the target of Jung's criticisms, which led him to suggest adjustments and other directions so that this model might be expanded. As Wahba (2019, p. 6) points out, "remaining exclusively within the positivist and empiricist experimental model fails to consider the irrational," and, for that reason, experimental research in the Jungian approach emphasizes and values both lived experience and the insights elaborated throughout the research process.

The participants shared certain aspects in common: all were between 60 and 90 years of age. In addition, participation in at least two of the four aesthetic-artistic workshop meetings and willingness to engage in dialogues about life's finitude were relevant criteria for the composition of the sample. Of the 29 members of the *Projeto Voo Livre*, 26 effectively took part in the proposed activities: three men and 23 women.

It is well known that death is directly linked to taboos, rites, and culturally charged debates. However, from the conception and throughout the execution of this investigation, we sought welcoming ways of dealing with such tensions, aiming to provide participants with greater comfort and naturalness. The methodological paths described below were selected considering this premise.

Regarding the processes and procedures for data collection, the re-

search aimed at the aesthetic and artistic production of mandalas to be created by the older adult participants, all linked to the *Projeto Voo Livre*. Between September and October 2024, four meetings were conducted, each lasting one hour, in the spaces where the Project's activities were already scheduled, totaling the production of 79 mandalas. All meetings were led by the student-researcher, and included moments of activities and exchanges with/among the older adults who attended on those days. The interns responsible for the *Projeto* were also present, but they did not interfere in the themes, proposals, or elaborations, assisting only in specific situations in which participants required immediate support, such as help with mobility.

The four meetings were divided into two distinct moments. In the first, discussions about death were encouraged, addressing symbols that represented death and life for those present, in a movement of exchanges, memories, and inspirations. A semi-structured script was used to guide the conversation, ensuring that themes emerged fluidly and lightly. The second moment was devoted to the mandala-creation workshops, and each meeting had a theme that guided it: colors, flowers, natural elements, and, finally, the difficulty of speaking about one's own death.

The materials obtained in the meetings thus took two forms: speech and drawing. In the case of speech, the phrases, expressions, and comments that emerged in discussions and during and after the drawings were noted by the student-researcher in a notebook used exclusively for the study. For the drawings, the materials were provided by the student-researcher at the beginning of each meeting. Then, after the mandalas were produced, they were photographed, and either handed over to the student-researcher or not, according to each participant's choice. All these details are included in the research project that was submitted to and approved^[6] by the Research Ethics Committees of the educational

[6] Project registered on *Plataforma Brasil* under the Certificate of Ethical Review Submission (CAAE), number 80389724.5.0000.536.

institution to which the psychology program is linked and the educational institution where the study was conducted. Following ethical guidelines for research with human beings, all work with participants began only after committee approval, including the reading, delivery, and individual signing of the Informed Consent Forms (TCLEs). Likewise, all produced material will be stored according to requirements for a period of five years. In addition, it must be emphasized that, because this research is connected to training in Psychology, all these records will also be maintained in accordance with the Professional Code of Ethics (CFP, 2005).

Data analyses and procedures, dialogues and mandalas were interpreted in light of the precepts and concepts of Jungian psychology, which, according to Gaillard (2010, pp. 5–6), “[...] requires a pause and the capacity to allow oneself to be impressed by what presents itself there [and] makes us attentive to recurrence, as well as to the evolution and transformations of typical representations that come to us from far away” (GAILLARD, 2010, p. 6).

Based on the analysis of discourses and underlying clues, a detailed search was conducted for unconscious manifestations in the mandalas created by the older adults. In each meeting, after the central theme was introduced, participants freely shared their fears, anxieties, and expectations related to death. They were then invited to create mandalas, expressing their ideas spontaneously and freely. During the creation or presentation of the mandalas, participants described the elements of their drawings, explaining their choices of colors and forms. These accounts, in conjunction with group discussions, facilitated a more profound understanding of the symbolic meanings expressed in the mandalas. All meetings, including participants’ explanations of their drawings, were recorded in order to ensure fidelity in interpreting the symbols used by the authors of the drawings.

The worst of us has its charms.

We are made of good and bad in unpredictable proportions

Carla Madeira

The analyses and discussion of the results are organized according to the meetings conducted with participants for the creation of mandalas, divided into four subheadings. In addition, the titles of each bring excerpts of statements and dialogues that occurred between participants and the researcher, considering the subjective and aesthetic character intended by the investigation.

To ensure a more dynamic and immersive experience, inspired by the structure of the book *O Jogo da Amarelinha* (2019), by Julio Cortázar, we propose a non-linear reading of the subheadings. We suggest that the reader only conclude their journey with the fourth meeting, because it functions as a point of convergence – after all, death will happen, even without order or warning. In this way, the texts may be explored in any order, allowing a personalized appreciation of the different dimensions of the findings.

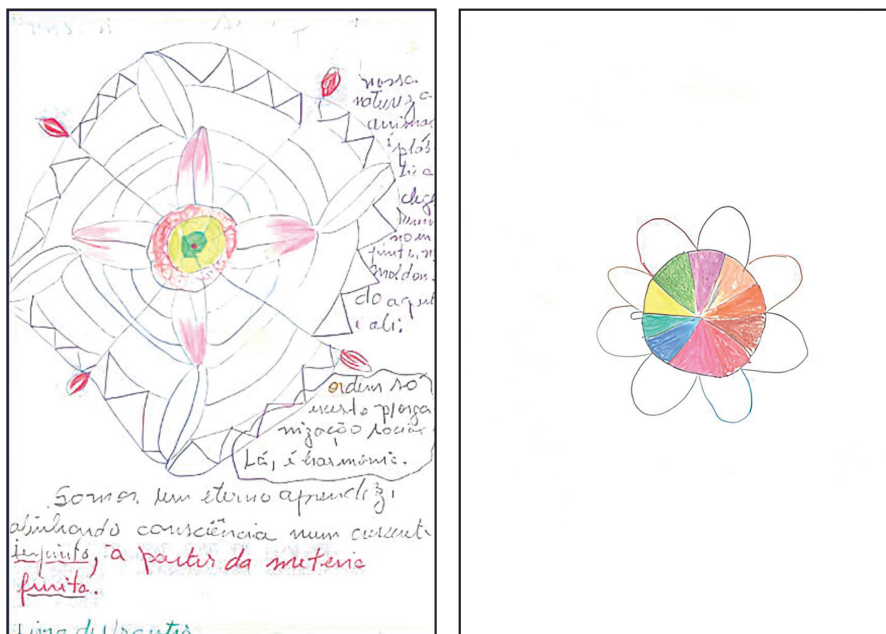
“The Cycle of Life Turning in a Compass Rose”: The First Meeting and Colors

The first workshop, dedicated to the theme of Colors, began the immersion into the symbolic universe of the research. The choice of theme takes into account that colors assume an important role in the analysis, and are commonly used in multiple ways rather than in a single, fixed sense. Colors are commonly used “in therapeutic work with mandalas [...], and may assume a positive or negative perspective, depending on the circumstances in which they are used” (KELLOGG; DI LEO, 1975, *apud* (MENDONÇA; QUEIROZ BRITO, 2018, p. 7).

It was possible to perceive how much the theme “Colors” resonated among participants, promoting reflections on what had been lived and on what they expected regarding death and their interpretations of it through spirituality. Regarding spiritual aspects, commonly associated with reflections on death, Nascimento and Caldas (2020, p. 75) discuss their role in becoming conscious, when the individual, “sensitized by unconscious contents, projects them onto the world and, upon becoming

conscious [...] experiences their spirituality in such a way as to seek help within themselves to endure suffering, attributing meaning to it in the search for wholeness.”

Even after the initial moment, dedicated to debate and the circulation of ideas, all participants continued to interact, blending moments and affectionately sharing explanations of the symbols present in their creations. Interaction was intense, while the drawings revealed subtler layers of meaning, and could be categorized into two large groups: one that presented lightness, movement, and dynamism, bringing into their narratives ideas such as legacy, peace, and “*the certainty that they had lived in the best possible way.*” The other group, marked by rigidity and suffocation, brought up issues such as guilt, remorse, and anguish. The drawings (Images 1 and 2) below were selected as a way of representing each of these.



Images 1 and 2
Source: The authors (2024)

Approximately 60% of participants brought up issues linked to the idea of “making the most of” life or to the lightness of having lived, as their mandalas showed more fluid forms, often investing in details toward the edges of the drawing. By concentrating on peripheral elements, participants revealed the complexity of their experiences and the search for integration between conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. This dynamic, characteristic of Jung’s individuation process, shows “the natural impulse to experience human potential and realize the pattern of the genuine personality. For that reason, Jung called this natural impulse ‘individuation’” (DIBO, 2013, p. 9).

In some mandalas, forms “escaped” beyond the central circle. The author of one of these works explained that they were allowing the idea of dying to flow naturally, surrendering to chance, and placing their transition in the hands of a higher spiritual plane. Art, in this context, serves as a tool for emotional expression and for facilitating the complexities between life and death, “[being] quite possible that through art we are led to encounters as overwhelming and demanding as can happen with religious experience” (GAILLARD, 2010, p. 8).

In the discourse of the remaining 40% of participants, feelings such as guilt, rancor, fear, or even refusal to discuss the theme emerged; in this group, mandalas were created that left no space, resulting in rigid, sealed circles. The centers used in these mandalas could be read as expressions of different aspects of life that, apparently, collided with one another. One narrative, for example, brought a sensation of suffocation and imprisonment, with the participant explaining their creation as a reflection of their psychic state, as if they were trapped inside themselves. Moreover, despite vibrant and diverse colors, there was an extremely strict organization and order in the drawing. Such aspects may be related to the Jungian hypothesis that the center of mandalas represents the *Self*, the totality of personality. According to von Franz (2002, p. 240), “the circle (or sphere) as a symbol of the ‘*Self*’ expresses the totality of the psyche in all its aspects, [...] it always indicates the most important aspect of life: its extreme and integral totality.”

As to the colors that appeared most in this meeting, blue stood out. According to the participants' statements, the choice of blue was intended to represent death. Besides representing infinity and eternity, "blue [emerges] signifying the spiritual process" (JUNG, OC, vol. IX/1, § 555). The association of blue with the sky and the sea may indicate a desire for transcendence and a search for a state of inner peace. This choice may also reflect participants' personal experiences, such as the loss of loved ones or the experience of significant losses.

Yellow appeared in the dialogues as a symbol of light, used as a representation of life – the vitality that still remained in the living body, but that would eventually be replaced by the calmness of white when the cycle reached its end. Jung (JUNG, OC, vol. IX/1, § 588) described yellow as a symbol that goes beyond light, as the color of intuition: according to him, "intuition = yellow." It was noticeable that participants brought their lived experiences and expectations about death into the choice and explanation of colors, creating a verbal and visual dialogue that transcended the simple act of drawing forms, becoming a tool of affective communication.

Furthermore, another important observation refers to the large quantity of vegetal elements, such as flowers and trees, which – although there had been no request to make such associations – participants produced unconsciously, making it possible to connect with the meeting held the following week.

"Life Is the Color We Paint It": the Second Meeting and Flowers

Flowers mark moments such as weddings and birthday celebrations, where they function as objects and expressions of celebration and joy; in hospitals, they arrive as wishes for recovery and health; in baptisms and other religious initiation ceremonies, they commonly represent purity and achievement; between lovers, they are a sign of love and affection; in the gardens of a new home, they symbolize renewal and growth; and, finally, in wakes and burials, they are an integral part of rituals of fare-

well and remembrance of the deceased. The famous “bed of flowers” laid over the bodies of the dead is thus an expression of this continuous cycle. Flowers, with their beauty, color, and fragrance, accompany human beings from multiple beginnings to their end, becoming a constant link between life and death.

The second meeting had as its central theme the relationship between flowers and death, linking this theme to the drawing of mandalas. During the creative and reflective process, phrases emerged regarding this symbol that were laden with meaning. Among them was the explanation that flowers refer both to death and to life, representing beginning and end, since they are present in the main cycles of human existence. This insight may be examined in light of what Jung (2023, p. 64) discusses regarding the absence of “[...] a difference in principle between organic growth and psychic growth. Just as a plant produces flowers, so the psyche creates its symbols.” The process of psychic development and elaboration occurs like flowering, and this assimilation grants plants a wide diversity of symbolic meanings.

The productions in this meeting involved flowers and, in some cases, even trees. The main species drawn were lilies, chrysanthemums, gerberas, carnations, and hydrangeas, but the variety of species and colors was particularly striking in the drawings. This diversity was explained by the participants through a reflection on the singularity of life. In their accounts, each person lives differently, has distinct experiences, and thus it is impossible for the drawings to be the same. Such statements demonstrate movements of the individuation process, for, as Stein (2020, p. 18) writes, “an individual is only a certain singularity of a human being. [...] This is what Jung calls ‘individuation.’” Thus, the variety of flowers seen in the mandalas reflected this breadth of lives and histories, as shown in Images 3 and 4, presented below.



Images 3 and 4
Source: The authors (2024)

Each flower, each color, each detail in the drawings pointed to aspects of personal experiences, revealing the multiplicity of meanings that the theme of flowers and death can carry. At the same time, these were also frequently associated with two poles of existence: life and death. The explanations given by the participants were ambivalent, for, in their words, “life is the color we paint it,” leading to interpretations that may vary according to our perceptions and experiences. Even flowers that traditionally represent the deceased, according to the participants, continue to keep them alive in their routines and personal beliefs. Following this logic, they are not merely indicators of loss, but of continuity, something like living memories. Jung (JAFFÉ, 1980, p. 21) wrote in a letter addressed to Oppenheim in 1933 that “human life does not remain within the boundaries of life,” opening a reflection on permanence in dreams, memories, and sensations of the presence of those who have departed.

The appearance of trees in the drawings, even though the interaction and exposition of the meeting focused on flowers, may be analyzed in light of Jung's writings (2023, p. 90), specifically the following:

The tree is one of the best examples of a motif that appears frequently in dreams (and elsewhere) and that can have an incredible variety of meanings: it can symbolize evolution, physical growth, or psychological maturity. It can also signify sacrifice or death (the crucifixion of Christ on a tree). It may represent a phallic symbol and many other things.

One of the participants, when explaining her production (Image 3), revealed that the tree symbolized the strength of life, manifested in the exuberance of flowers, in the maturity of fruits, and, finally, in the decomposition that fertilizes the soil for new generations. According to her, it is a cycle of birth, growth, decline, and rebirth that mirrors human nature itself, and, in this sense, "art is a good support for projection, so that anyone can make use of it to express what interests or concerns them" (GAILLARD, 2010, p. 5).

Regarding the facilitation of the meeting, it is worth emphasizing that the participants appeared more contained and concentrated, with fewer verbal exchanges among themselves when compared to the first meeting. Nevertheless, many commented on how relaxed they felt once they began drawing, a phenomenon explained by Gaillard (2010, p. 12), who notes that "the hands often manage to decipher an enigma with which the mind struggles in vain." The activity of creating their own floral mandalas or drawing flowers was reported by the participants as a moment of calm and introspection, which was corroborated by comments expressing interest in acquiring books with mandala drawings to color at home, to prolong this pleasant sensation.

"The Four Elements Always Interact in Balance": the Third Meeting and Natural Elements

In the third meeting, participants were invited to interpret the four natural elements – fire, water, earth, and air – as symbols of life and death, which led to personal reflections on the relationship between

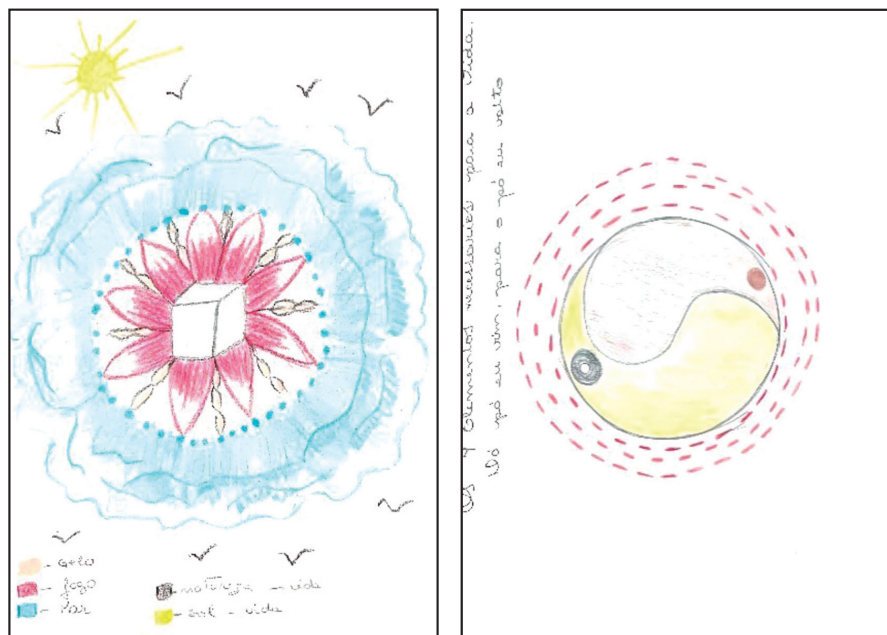
body and spirit. Unlike the previous meetings, in which the mandalas were predominantly composed of circular figures, this session saw the production of several mandalas with square shapes. This distinction can be understood by considering that circular forms, from a Jungian perspective, relate to the “symbol of the *Self*” (JAFFÉ, 2023, p. 240). Square figures, on the other hand, indicate the material, real, and concrete world, commonly associated with that which “fixes a form, defines, limits, stabilizes, but can also imprison, paralyze, freeze, and complete” (MENDONÇA; BRITO, 2018, p. 7).

According to the participants, the square shapes in the mandalas represented the physical body, composed of the four elements of nature and destined, from birth, to a cycle that culminates in death. They shared that, over the years, they gradually began to feel the loss and weakening of their bodies – a sense of change, especially regarding their awareness of finitude. In contrast to the body, many stated that the spirit remains young and strong – indeed, as it has always been – and that this immaterial aspect resists the wear of time, preserving their essence. In an essay by Jung entitled *Alma e Morte* (1934), it is stated that “in its depths, the psyche belongs to a form of being that is independent of time and space” (JAFFÉ, 1980, p. 20), which explains why the aging that affects the body does not reach the human soul in the same proportions.

Among the elements most frequently expressed in the artistic representations, fire appeared often and was described as the flame that moves and transforms, representing the energy of change and the warmth of the body itself. Fire was associated with passion and the impulse that keeps life in motion, but also with the process of transformation that occurs both in life and in death. Water, another element widely depicted, was understood as a symbol of adaptation and transformation, and was identified as an indicator of infinity and eternity. Some participants mentioned that although water can change form – becoming liquid, solid, or gaseous – its essence remains the same.

This explanation echoes earlier discussions about the body – spirit re-

lationship, which likewise adapts and transforms throughout existence while maintaining its integrity. Jung, in *Os Arquétipos e o Inconsciente Coletivo* (OC, vol. IX), wrote that “water is the most common symbol of the unconscious.” Images 5 and 6 below illustrate some of the mandalas created during this meeting.



Images 5 and 6
Source: The authors (2024)

The element earth was the least mentioned. Those who did refer to it described it as the clay from which we are made, evoking a religious explanation of the body. The element air did not appear independently in the mandalas, but only in those that unified all four elements into one, emphasizing the harmony necessary for nature to flourish.

Some mandalas incorporated all four elements together, and these drawings were explained as representations of balance in their conjunction, since each element plays an essential role in the cycle of life and death. The use of the elements in combination “is evidently an attempt at

self-healing [...], which does not arise from conscious reflection, but from an instinctive impulse” (JUNG, OC, vol. IX/1, § 714). In other words, the movement goes beyond a process of balance alone, pointing instead toward reintegration and self-healing.

One detail that had not appeared in previous meetings was that participants reported a certain difficulty in composing mandalas within the proposed theme, which led some to create freer drawings, seeking alternative ways to express the elements of nature. During the creative process, some participants reflected on how the harmonious interaction of the four elements can be understood as necessary to guide the existence of all living beings. According to them, fire warms and transforms – “fire, symbolically, can lead to transformation and rebirth (as occurred, for example, in the ancient myth of the Phoenix)” (JACOBI, 2023, p. 296). They also noted that water flows and adapts, earth gives form and support, and functions as a symbol of the universe and its complexity, which aligns with Jaffé’s observation (2023, p. 242): “afterwards each man took a little earth from the place where he was born and threw it into the grave. This pit was called *mundus* (which also meant the cosmos).”

By the end of the meeting, it became clear that despite the difficulties reported in creating mandalas around the theme of the four elements, the experience was enriching and generated reflections on the transience of life.

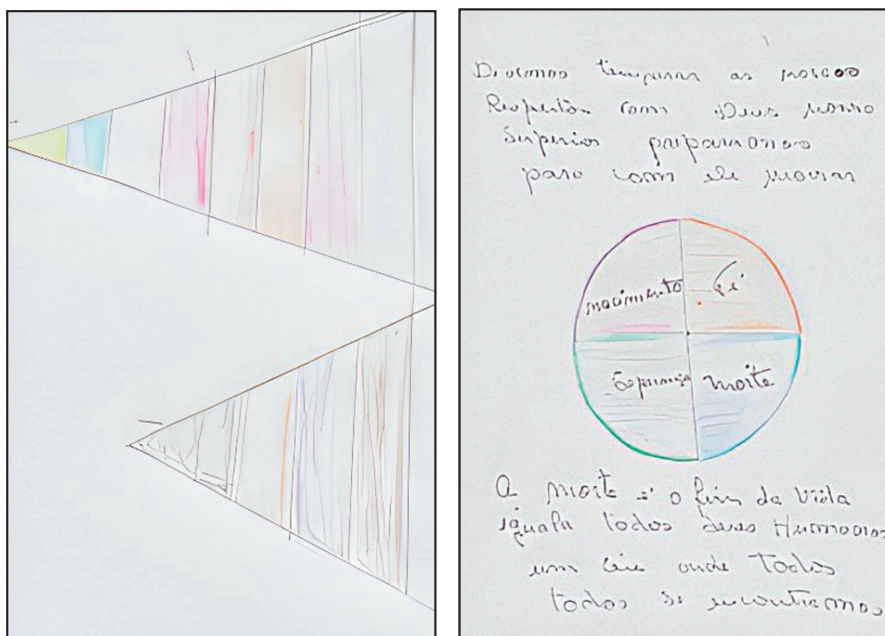
“As Lulu Santos Said, ‘Illuminate Life Since Death Falls from the Blue’”: the Fourth Meeting and the Difficulty of Speaking About Dying

The final meeting with the group involved a significantly smaller number of participants, largely due to adverse weather conditions and health-related issues. This situation highlighted the fragility and vulnerability of this social group, which becomes even more sensitive to external factors such as cold and humidity. Nevertheless, it is important to note that “in contemporary times, strategies aimed at achieving active aging

are designed to ensure that longevity represents a gain in the human life course rather than a mere burden for society and for those who age” (RIBEIRO, 2015, p. 2).

On this day, the proposal was to explore the participants’ conceptions of death, and what emerged was the difficulty of speaking about it, marked by silences and pauses throughout all activities and moments of the workshop. Such a reaction had not been perceived or experienced in the previous meetings. Initially, participants showed a certain resistance to dialoguing on the subject, requesting more time to think and elaborate their responses. The mandalas began to incorporate expressive textual elements, revealing meanings without the same emotional implication observed in earlier meetings; these sought to rationalize their productions. While feelings of anguish, fear, and uncertainty were present, expressions of hope and acceptance also appeared.

Beyond the significant differences in aesthetic patterns observed throughout the meetings, another aspect that drew attention was the change in the participants’ mode of expression. Initially, vibrant, and colorful drawings predominated. However, in the final meeting, there was a pronounced graying of the productions, with vivid colors being replaced by more neutral tones, as if the participants had “erased everything, painting everything gray.” Images 7 and 8 below illustrate this shift.



Images 7 and 8
Source: The authors (2024)

At the same time, an increasing need to verbalize feelings and thoughts through writing was observed. Drawings, which had previously predominated, gave way to texts and phrases, marking a transition from visual language to verbal language.

When faced with a theme as traditionally complex and emotionally charged as death, participants may have turned to writing as a way of controlling and rationalizing their feelings, avoiding direct exposure through art.

Art is a channel for the expression and construction of meaning; however, when confronted with the theme of death, participants may have felt the need to resort to a more rational language, seeking to approach the phenomenon more objectively – either because of the intensity of the feelings involved or due to other processes that would require continuous and individualized analysis to be faithfully understood. The narratives

produced by participants revealed the importance of interpersonal relationships in constructing meanings about death. According to them, the loss of siblings emerged as a particularly significant experience, marked by intense and lasting suffering. The death of parents, while painful, was described as a more natural and expected process.

Another term that appeared in all four meetings, but with greater incidence in this one, was infinity, the eternal, and that which mathematics struggles to explain. Although present in everyday vocabulary, understanding infinity requires a high degree of abstraction, as it confronts us with something with no end and stands in direct contrast to what life demands and reveals. As described by Vale (2018, p. 58), this concept was deeply disturbing even for the creator of the mathematical notion of infinity, since “the concept of infinity emerges early in the human journey toward numerical knowledge. It is said that, when confronting the endless, [...] Pythagoras saw his belief in numerical perfection shaken.”

The concerns that emerged in this meeting demonstrated the complexity of concepts and understandings surrounding death, shaped by cultural, religious, and personal influences. This observation resonates with the question posed by Ana Claudia Quintana Arantes in her book *A Morte é um Dia que Vale a Pena Viver* (2019, p. 5): “Will people ever be able to develop a simple and transformative conversation about death?” The answer appears to be deeply personal and dependent on reflections about beliefs, values, and attitudes toward finitude, thus opening a path toward a relationship with death.

Death is an excellent reason to seek a new way of looking at life.

Ana Claudia Quintana Arantes

Final Considerations

The objective of this research was to understand how older adults perceive the finitude of life, based on the assumptions of Jungian analyti-

cal psychology, through the production of mandalas. The analysis of the mandalas and the meetings revealed deep and varied nuances regarding perceptions of death and the process of dying. Throughout the exchanges and interactions that unfolded in each workshop, a wide range of concepts and symbolisms was identified, with transformations occurring along the way, sometimes moving toward a more serene and light acceptance, at other times encountering significant barriers both to discussion and to the elaboration of drawings.

Participants' personal experiences, especially those related to significant losses of loved ones such as parents, siblings, or spouses, played a crucial role in how each individual understood and articulated the concept of death. The pain of an unexpected or traumatic loss shaped more anguished discourses, while those who had experienced a more prolonged and anticipated grieving process tended to articulate more reflective and reconciled narratives. Family relationships, as well as cultural and religious contexts, also decisively influenced these perceptions. Individuals with strong religious beliefs, for example, presented a more spiritualized view of death, understanding it as a passage to another dimension of existence, which provided some relief in the face of the inevitability of finitude.

The dialectic between acceptance and resistance was present both in discourse and in symbolic productions, such as drawings and texts created by participants. The exercise of externalizing feelings through artistic production allowed many to explore aspects of death that might otherwise have remained unaddressed, revealing insights into fears and hopes surrounding finitude – both their own and that of family members and loved ones. The images and writings produced revealed layers of meaning, ranging from expressions of apprehension and pain to attempts at resignation and understanding of life's transience.

The diversity of perspectives evidenced in the data reflects the complexity of the theme and the need to adopt a sensitive and individualized approach when addressing issues related to the finitude of life. Older adults who spoke and produced with greater fluidity were those who had

previous studies related to the theme, as well as those who had experienced painful losses accompanied by grief processes described as difficult. This group reported that the theme resonated primarily through observation of the aging body, which awaits its end, contrasted with the soul that, by its innate youthfulness, longs for eternity.

The productions were rich and affective, both affecting and allowing themselves to be affected, demonstrating that this stage of the life cycle should not be, and is not, an obsolete or irrelevant phase, as is often assumed. When people are willing to listen to them – or rather, to truly hear them, since “to listen to the other is to listen to what they actually say, not to what we, or even they themselves, would like to hear” (DUNKER; THEBAS, 2019, p. 32) – it becomes possible to access concepts, forms of knowledge, and symbols that naturally emerge from their speech.

Beyond highlighting discrepancies in discourses about death, this study also underscores the need to foster discussions between generations, allowing each developmental phase to offer its most valuable lesson. An example of this was the fact that, across all four meetings, participants expressed concerns related to the climate emergency. The possibility of an uncertain future and the threat to the survival of the human species raised complex questions about the meaning of life and the importance of legacy – even for those who may not actively participate in this “new” time. Alongside this, the widely disseminated idea of leaving a lasting mark on the world proves insufficient in the face of the imminence of the climate crisis. The search for legacy, described by participants as a way of transcending death, loses meaning in light of the fragility of human existence. If there is no longer a need to mark the lives of those around us, part of the meaning of living itself falters.

Among participants’ statements, it was possible to identify that many conceived death as a natural, almost expected event, while others demonstrated that the idea of finitude brings forth fears, uncertainties, and a sense of powerlessness. Conceptions of death, therefore, constitute a dynamic and individual process. While some view it as an endpoint,

others perceive it as a journey beyond earthly life, influenced by their beliefs and personal experiences. This diversity of perspectives illustrates the complexity of the theme and the necessity of individualized approaches. Stein's perspective (2020, p. 22) is thus corroborated when he states that "we die, therefore, insofar as we do not differentiate ourselves," for it is precisely this diversity that connects us as humanity, allowing us to find meaning and purpose in our lives.

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THE SYMBOLIC CULTURAL SPACE OF THE QUILOMBO AS RESISTANCE IN THE BLACK PSYCHE

Bruno Correia da Mota

Abstract

This article defines the role of the symbolic cultural space of the *quilombo* within the context of the psychotherapeutic process, based on a clinical case study grounded in the analytical psychology of Carl Gustav Jung, especially in transversal dialogue with post-Jungian authors and Black intellectuals, such as Beatriz Nascimento and Clóvis Moura, in the field of racial relations studies and the symbolic aspects of the *quilombo*. The constructive method was used, particularly the technique of symbolic amplification, which involves exploring dreams, fantasies, and active imagination to access unconscious content. The study identified symbols, archetypes, and objective data from the reality of the Black population and racial violence. It is demonstrated how the recovery of historical memories and symbolic images of the *quilombo* can function as a territory of psychic resistance, promoting processes of empowerment, recognition,

and self-affirmation in the face of racial violence. Thus, the symbolic space of the *quilombo* in the clinic favors both individual and collective transformations, reinforcing the importance of cultural strengthening for mental health, the *Bem-Viver* of Black communities, and the construction of a more positive and authentic identity.

Keywords: ethnic-racial relations; analytical psychology; cultural unconscious; *quilombamento*.

Introduction

This article proposes an interface between analytical psychology and the collective experience of Black communities through the recognition of the symbolic cultural space of the *quilombo* as a territory of resistance, identity, and psychic transformation, based on a clinical case study with a Black man. Inspired by the legacy of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) and his concepts of the collective unconscious, archetypes, and symbols, the aim is to deepen the understanding of the role of symbols and historical narratives in the formation of the collective and individual psyche of Black people, especially those involved in therapeutic processes. In this way, the text weaves a dialogue with Black authors, particularly with the research of the Black activist, poet, and historian Beatriz Nascimento (1942–1995), regarding the historical and symbolic aspects of *quilombos*. Aligning with the theme of transversal dialogues between analytical psychology and ethnic-racial relations studies, the article emphasizes how the concept of the symbolic cultural space of the *quilombo* resonates within the collective psyche, enabling the strengthening of a positive and authentic Black identity in the face of the psychosocial impacts of racial violence. Based on a case study^[1] and clinical reflections, the objective is to broaden the understanding of how the recovery of historical memories

[1] Ethical aspects comply with the Code of Professional Ethics for Psychologists (CFP, 2005) – Resolution CFP No. 010/2005. The client agreed to sign the Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE).

and archetypal images – such as Zumbi, Dandara, and the *quilombo* as a territory of freedom – foster processes of self-recognition, empowerment, and collective transformation.

The *quilombo*, as a space of struggle for freedom, identity, and resistance, presents itself as a powerful collective symbol with archetypal resonance in the Black psyche. In this sense, analytical psychology within the psychotherapeutic process makes it possible to explore these symbols and their transformative and strengthening potentials, promoting cultural rootedness^[2] and recovering historical memories that sustain psychic resistance in the face of racism and oppression.

In other words, naming racial violence, whether at the physical or psychological level, makes it possible to demonstrate that racism is not a kind of abstract entity, but rather a material reality enacted by people (*Cadastro de Pessoas Físicas – CPF*) and institutions (*Cadastro Nacional da Pessoa Jurídica – CNPJ*). Hypervigilance and other stressors triggered by racist attacks can inflame the individual, even distorting their self-image, as in cases in which the person considers themselves responsible for the aggression. That is, the individual may introject these residues and evoke the ghosts of this colonial logic within their own body.

The proposal of a racialized psychotherapeutic practice makes it possible to ensure a safe emotional space around the psychosocial context of racism and the intersections of gender, sexuality, and class. This is an ethical and political stance in professional practice and the recognition of the maxim: “racism harms health.” Or rather: is racism in my head or in yours?

[2] Cultural Rootedness: The Black Jungian psychologist Pamela Cristina Salles da Silva, in the article *A Psicologia de C. G. Jung e o Enraizamento Cultural: Reflexões sobre a Saúde Mental na América Latina*, articulates the concept of cultural rootedness with analytical psychology, based on the understanding that cultural rootedness is fundamental for strengthening a sense of belonging, resisting marginalization and colonialism, and contributing to mental health and cultural continuity. Inspired by the metaphors of roots, rhizomes, and “mother trees,” cultural rootedness is viewed as a source of vitality that helps keep collective memory and identity alive in the face of historical and social challenges (SILVA, 2024).

When a Black client reports everyday experiences of having a Black body on the street, what tools does the Jungian analyst have to identify the nuances of the racial relations process in Brazil?

These provocations gain resonance when observing the Psychology Census of 2022, conducted by the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP): 64% of psychologists are White people (CFP, 2022), while the majority of the Brazilian population is Black.

The point of attention in this reflection is the understanding of ethnic-racial relations studies and intersectionality as practices that energize clinical care and the clinical gaze. This reflection also invites us to the images of transforming the ghosts of colonization into enchanted ancestors within the historical memory of Black communities.

In this context, personal experience is one of the components that influence clinical practice. According to Jung (OC, vol. VIII, § 213), all psychological observation presupposes the personal drama of the observer. In other words, the psyche composes the “object of study” of psychology and, at the same time, is also its subject (OC, vol. XI, § 87). Thus, I, as a Black man and psychologist, traversed by the marks of racial violence and Black (re)existence, act as a militant and activist in Black mental health movements within psychology. These experiences carry the wound and, simultaneously, the potential for transformation. To illustrate, the image of the Wounded Healer is expressed in the African-matrix divinity *Omulu*, *orixá* of illnesses and knower of cures. *Omulu* refers us to the wound carried by the body, simultaneously to its transformative potential, as consciousness is expanded through pain.

In other words, the dialectical process is present in Jungian clinical practice, where the relationship between therapist and client becomes a two-way process in which both are touched by the most intimate experiences of the therapeutic space, through transference and countertransference. According to Jung (1945/2020, OC, vol. XVI, § 358): “This bond can be so intense that we could even speak of a connection. When two chemical substances bond, both are altered.” The psychotherapeutic

field is atemporal, and layers of the drama of these “poorly told” and (mis)spoken histories emerge – fragments of history crystallized and sustained by the continuous process of dehumanization against Black people. It is this (mis)told history that creates false images of the *self* and challenges the subterranean history of the Brazilian soul. It is up to us to construct invisible bonds to collectively reconstruct the cultural, ethnic-racial, gender, and sexuality-related dramas of both the analyst and the Black client.

Layers of the Psyche in the Psychological Weaving of the Brazilian Soul

It is possible to visualize the psyche on three levels: the personal, the cultural, and the archetypal. In the early stages of analytical psychology studies, Jung conducted investigations more directly oriented toward the collective layer (collective unconscious), common to all people, while also observing psychic differences in individual, familial, clan, national, and large-group dimensions, as recorded in a diagram contained in the *Seminários sobre Psicologia Analítica* (1925), which compares the psyche to geological layers (JUNG, 2014, p. 171). Jung researched group conflicts and cultural aspects; although he did not precisely delimit the boundaries between cultural and archetypal phenomena, these social, political, and cultural elements are present throughout the *Obras Completas of C. G. Jung*, in *Seminários* and *Cartas*.

The guiding thread of this article is located at the cultural level of the psyche, to trace the collective construction of quilombos as content of the psychic life of a Black client. From this perspective, the cultural unconscious^[3] is an area of the psyche situated between historical memory and the collective unconscious. Therefore, the locus of the cultural unconscious

[3] Cultural unconscious: “[...] an area of historical memory that lies between the collective unconscious and manifests part of culture. It may include both of these modalities, conscious and unconscious, but it is an identity that arises from the archetypes of the collective unconscious, which assists in the formation of myths and rituals and promotes the process of individual development” (HENDERSON, 1990, p. 103, free translation).

is neither personal nor collective but belongs to groups and to the group psychic level, transmitting a kind of historical bond between past and present.

According to the Black Jungian analyst Samuel Kimbles (2006, p. 100), at the level of the cultural unconscious, the representations that a group constructs about itself are evident through the use of collective symbols incorporated by the group, celebrations, rituals, and narratives about its history. By way of example, Black Consciousness Day, celebrated on November 20 in honor of Zumbi, leader of the *Quilombo dos Palmares*, is a symbolic representation of insurgency and of the organized collective struggle of Black movements in Brazil.

These processes of elaborating a symbolic cultural space are ways of keeping alive the memory of the narratives that compose the group's existence, such as historical figures and important events that represent the legacy and continuity of this collective (KIMBLES, 2006). Thus, a fabric is created that binds the group and its members. In this sense, this kind of psychic fabric is composed of the layers of the group's history, together with codes, symbolic images, commemorative dates, values, monuments, and a sense of group spirit.

In accordance with Kimbles (2006, p. 101), the group spirit reflects a totality of archetypal images concerning the unity of humanity. The images of Zumbi and Dandara of Palmares manifest Black strength and resistance in Brazil and may potentially remain in the psyche at the group level and emerge in the individual sphere as compensation for the traumatic experiences lived by Black people. This means that *quilombamento* can be understood as a symbol that refers to the cultural unconscious of politically organized Black communities. This cultural pathway of the psyche also enables transformation at social, cultural, and personal levels, by fostering the development of Black consciousness – a stance of alterity and communion with differences, that is, unity of struggle within subjective and collective diversity.

The group spirit aggregates the representations and accumulated experiences of an ethnic-racial group throughout history. Certainly, it is essential to consider the particularities and multiplicities present in the Black diaspora in the Americas. Subsequently, the bond of this atemporality – images from the past that are updated in the present – is structured through cultural complexes, which operate in maintaining the basic needs of belonging of individual and group identity.

According to Kimbles (2000), cultural complexes are contents of the cultural unconscious, just as personal complexes constitute the personal unconscious. Both mobilize affect-laden images and exert a psychophysical effect on the individual.

These cultural complexes can also be understood as “sticky” emotions that permeate the psychic life of individuals and groups with the logic of “us *versus* them,” considering possible origins in psychosocial traumas that are perpetuated across generations. This is the case of the racial cultural complex generated by structural racism, which fosters diverse tonalities and intensities of psychic wounds due to racist mechanisms (MOTA, 2019).

The Black population suffers from attempts at the extermination of Black youth, mass incarceration, suicide, unemployment, social abandonment, and so forth. Black masculinities in Brazil are among the primary targets of this necropolitical agenda. In 2023, Brazil recorded 45,747 homicides, the lowest rate in 11 years. Nevertheless, violence against Black youth remains alarming: between 2011 and 2021, 326,532 young people aged 15 to 29 were victims of homicide in the country, representing more than half of all homicides during that period (IPEA; FBSP, 2025).

Under the slaveholding system, savage capitalism transformed Black people into body-objects that, once rendered useless and devalued in the market, were discarded and exterminated. For Black men, physical and symbolic death is a marker that influences the process of subjectivation.

Recent data from the *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública* 2024 reveal that, in 2023, the Brazilian prison population exceeded 852,000 people,

approximately 69.1% of whom are Black, which corresponds to about 472,850 individuals. Most of this population is composed of Black men, highlighting the persistence of structural racism within the Brazilian penitentiary system (FBSP, 2024).

Other data concerning racial violence and the reality of *quilombos* are presented in the second edition (2018–2022) of the study *Racismo e Violência contra Quilombos no Brasil*, produced by CONAQ (*Coordenação Nacional de Articulação das Comunidades Negras Rurais Quilombolas*) and *Terra de Direitos*. Between 2018 and 2022, 32 *quilombolas* were murdered in Brazil, an annual average of 6.4 deaths – nearly double the average of the previous period (2008–2017), which was 3.8. The crimes occurred in 11 states across all regions of the country, with particular emphasis on the Northeast, which accounted for 65.6% of the cases, especially in Maranhão (nine murders). Approximately 70% of the deaths occurred in territories that had not yet been officially titled, highlighting the direct relationship between violence and the lack of land tenure regularization (CONAQ, 2023).

These data reveal the social, historical, political, and cultural configuration of the body of a Black man, who, on the other hand, presents a psychological composition related to the operation of the racial cultural complex. As previously noted, complexes are psychophysical; therefore, the worsening of health in the Black population is influenced by the psychosocial impacts of racism.

In this way, the indices presented in 2018 by the Ministry of Health and the Universidade de Brasília indicate that, in Brazil, suicide among adolescents and young people is extremely high, especially among Black males. In 2016, for every 100 suicides of White adolescents and young people, there were 145 deaths of Black young people (BRASIL, 2018).

This study points to the main causes of the incidence of suicide among Black youth: the feeling of non-belonging, feelings of inferiority, rejection, neglect, mistreatment, abuse, violence, inadequacy, maladjustment, feelings of incapacity, loneliness, and social isolation. In addition, fac-

tors such as non-acceptance of racial, sexual, affective, gender, and social class identity also contribute (BRASIL, 2018, p. 17).

Quilombo as Symbol: Black Memory

Black bodies are ancestry and encompass several layers of potency (art, spirituality, science, philosophy, etc.); therefore, they manifest both the polarities of the ability to create, resist, and reinvent (positive aspects) and the sediments of violence and exclusion as the horizon of virtuality of Black existence. In other words, history bears witness to Black vitality. These data point to the robustness of the collective psyche^[4] of this group.

The image of the *quilombo* indicates the core of the political and social organization of Black communities. Thus, to engage in *quilombamento* represents the vitality of the ancestral bond with the present and is consolidated through the image of the Black diaspora, which sustains a group identity and a sense of unity within Brazilian Black diversities.

In historical research, the word *kilombo*, in Central-West African languages, means “camp.” According to Gomes and Machado (2021, p. 599), in regions of Angola in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the word *kilombo* carried the meaning of military initiation of the *Imbangala* ethnic group, speakers of Kimbundu, in northeastern Angola. The expansion of this ethnic group into the interior of Angola, the Umbundu region, began in the sixteenth century, and its political strategy was to incorporate the inhabitants of conquered regions into its grouping. Gomes and Machado (2021, p. 599) point to the possibility that a slave culture oriented toward the recreation of some meanings of this African ritual (*kilombo*) existed in Brazil.

The formation of quilombos throughout the period of enslavement was one of the strategies of Black resistance and (re)existence.

[4] Collective psyche: “In the same way that the individual is not only a singular and separate being, but also a social being, the human psyche is not something isolated [...] but also a collective phenomenon” (JUNG, 1981/1928, Obras completas, vol. VII, § 235, author’s emphasis).

According to the Black historian and sociologist Clóvis Moura (1925–2003), *quilombos* are “[...] “[...] a natural institution in slave society. The successive escapes that resulted from the very situation of the enslaved required the organization of nuclei capable of receiving the rebellious element that needed [...]” (MOURA, 1981, p. 88).

In all territories where slavery was present, Black people were living in *quilombos*. Moura (2020, p. 25) also states that: “[...] if *quilombamento* did not have a project of new social ordering capable of replacing slavery, on the other hand, it had potential and dynamism capable of wearing it down and creating elements of permanent crisis in its structure.” The revolts of Black communities represented collective protest against a genocidal system.

The *quilombo*, according to Beatriz Nascimento (2021, p. 109), carries both historical and symbolic value and represents a historical continuity of *favelas*. The ancestral reunion of an individual with their ethnic-racial group can enable psychic reorganization and a sense of individual and group belonging.

The symbolic cultural space of the *quilombo* can be understood as a field of historical memory of Brazilian Black communities, representing the recovery of a group and individual identity that keeps alive the updating of this symbol of the cultural unconscious of these communities. In other words, the collective psyche of Black bodies potentially carries this bond of ethnic-racial and cultural belonging of Blackness. Nascimento points to the following proposition regarding the symbolism of the *quilombo*:

The *quilombo* is a memory that does not happen only for Black people; it happens for the nation. It appears, and it emerges in moments of crisis of nationality. It is not up to us to value history. It is up to us to see the continuum of this history. Because Zumbi wanted to build the Brazilian nation, already with Indigenous peoples [first peoples] and Black people integrated within it. He wanted to undertake a national project in a traumatic way. But not as traumatic as Westerners did, destroying cultures, destroying the history of dominated peoples! (NASCIMENTO, 2018, p. 337).

The *Quilombo dos Palmares*, or rather, the Republic of Palmares, was formed at the end of the sixteenth century by a group of individuals from Africa who held enslaved status in Brazil. They established this quilombo within the forests located in what are now the states of Alagoas and Pernambuco (NASCIMENTO, 1980, p. 46). The Republic of Palmares challenged and confronted colonial and slaveholding structures. The hero-symbol of Palmares was Zumbi, who synthesized the capacity for organization and resistance of the Republic. As Moura (1981, p. 120) adds, “[...] because he synthesized in his biography the biography of the people he represented and for whom he gave his life.” The image of Zumbi synthesizes the group spirit of Black communities and fosters one of the foundations of the group’s historical memory.

The Black intellectual, politician, and visual artist Abdias Nascimento (1914–2011), in the book *Quilombismo: Documentos de uma Militância Pan-Africanista*, proposes the term *quilombismo* as a political and activist movement of Black people in Brazil, grounded in the historical experience of *quilombos* as communities of resistance and self-management. For Nascimento (1980, p. 263), *quilombos* represent more than simple hideouts for runaway enslaved people – they are symbolic spaces of unity, solidarity, and the expression of cultural freedom. He says:

The crystallization of our concepts, definitions, or principles must express the lived experience of culture and praxis of the Black collectivity. To incorporate our integrity as a total being, in our historical time, is to enrich and expand our capacity for struggle (NASCIMENTO, 1980, p. 263, emphasis added).

It is worth mentioning the political impact, in the field of public health and particularly within the Psychosocial Care Network (RAPS), of the proposal for a perspective of *quilombamento* formulated by Emiliano de Camargo David in *Saúde Mental e Relações Raciais: Desnorreamento, Aquilombação e Antimanicolonialidade* (2024). For the author, to engage in *quilombamento* constitutes a libertarian and anti-colonial praxis, inspired by *quilombos* as living metaphors for the radicalization of relationships

within difference and for the decolonization of care within the scope of Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS). This proposal is situated at the convergence of the anti-asylum and anti-racist struggles, affirming the need for a psychiatric reform that confronts the colonality present in processes of manicomialization and institutional racism. Within this horizon, *quilombamento* is configured as an ethical-political movement for the reconstruction of bonds and for the affirmation of Blackness as a vital force, in opposition to the dispositifs of exclusion and pathologization of Black bodies historically produced by colonial and manicomial rationality (DAVID, 2024).

Black insurgency has enabled advances in racial agendas, such as Affirmative Action Policies, the National Comprehensive Health Policy for the Black Population, the National Policy for the Promotion of Racial Equality, and Resolution No. 018/2002 of the Federal Council of Psychology (which establishes norms of professional practice for psychologists regarding prejudice and racial discrimination), among others. However, despite these achievements, institutional racism still does not guarantee the permanence of Black people in political-institutional spaces, nor does it shield them from racial violence. Thus, much like the strategies of *quilombos* during the period of enslavement, creating tactics to dismantle structures governed by the material and symbolic power of whiteness remains a constant in the organized collective struggle of Black movements, leadership figures, activists, intellectuals, particularly through the protagonism of Black women, and other political agents who assume strategic roles within organizations.

Memory, Ancestry, and Resistance in Pedro's Therapeutic Process

The psychological investigation of this clinical case is based on the constructive method of analytical psychology. This method seeks to access complex contents and to identify unknown material. According to Jung, it “[...] compels the investigator to consider all the forces operating within the human psyche” (1914/2012, OC, vol. III, § 423), that is, it

consists of integrating unconscious material into consciousness. The subjective dimension is a reflection of the collective dynamics of society – and vice versa. The symbolic amplification of unconscious contents into consciousness must disentangle and synthesize, in symbols, historical, cultural, social, and political layers that constitute the crossroads of individual psychic life and group relations.

The mobilization of the Black struggle of the *quilombos* refers us to ancestral technologies present in Black corporeality, which can be observed in the clinical case of Pedro (fictitious name).

Pedro is a Black man, married, 50 years old. He is the father of two adolescent daughters. He works in the pharmaceutical sector. He holds a university degree and a master's degree in accounting. His parents, also Black, completed higher education. His initial complaint was being a Black father of adolescents.

The client reported feeling an internal pressure to perform an ideal of Black manhood, a kind of performance of an idealized masculine imaginary. Paraphrasing his words: "I feel a lot of internal pressure to be the best possible father to my daughter and son." In Pedro's narrative, an excessive parental protectiveness toward his children was observed. Racism keeps us in a state of constant vigilance, which can provoke anxiety, stress, and depression as psychophysical responses to the White gaze, in addition to barriers – such as turnstiles – that impede the mobility of Black bodies, regardless of socioeconomic class.

On this topic, the Black Jungian analyst Fanny Brewster (2017, p. 74) points to the archetypal character of group dynamics surrounding markers of racial violence. For Brewster, depth psychology recognizes the possibility of an active ancestral lineage within archetypal DNA. That is, a psychic state mobilized by pain transmitted across generations develops (BREWSTER, 2017, p. 29) – as in the case of Pedro's posture of excessive control in relation to his adolescent children. This concerns a generation within a Black family that preserves this psychic friction generated by

systemic racism. These are strategies of domination that gradually erode the physical and mental health of Black people. Thus, a narrative of an enemy projected onto the Black body is constructed.

Pedro comments that he is an introspective person and that he “considers himself rigid with himself”; this weight of the *persona* seems to be a possibly unconscious strategy for adapting to the external White world. According to the Jungian analyst Walter Boechat (2014, pp. 85–86), the archetype of the *persona* in Brazil, within the context of racial relations, functions as a defense system – a cultural stereotype.

A denial of the *Self* is expected of Black individuals; in the case of men, the image of aggressiveness demands, within the imaginary and power dispositifs of the White world, a domesticated posture. Avoiding conflicts becomes a way of not confronting the adversities erected by the barbed wire of institutional racism. This state can trigger a neurotic condition, sustained by the need to serve the will and desire of the other, even if this means silencing one’s own anxieties. Historically, Black populations have been prevented from expressing themselves, as revolt represents a threat to the dominant White group.

The *persona* sustained by Pedro generates tensions and saturates the contents of the shadow – basically the archetype that gathers all the individual’s potentials unknown to themselves, whether positive or negative – such as, for example, embarrassment in acting more spontaneously with his daughters. The role demanded by society, intensified in the case of Black men, does not correspond to the fluidity of psychic energy drawn from the *Self*. On the contrary, Pedro finds himself paralyzed in the face of healthier possibilities in interpersonal relationships within the family sphere. He becomes a kind of spectator of his own life, since one of his leisure activities is writing a diary recording the events of the day. Until then, however, feelings did not manifest in these writings – they were merely empty records devoid of soul.

In view of this, as a way of accessing the creative forces of the

unconscious, the use of the active imagination method was suggested to the client. As he felt inclined, he was to write about his feelings and dialogue with the images, fantasies, and dreams that emerged from the unconscious. When this exercise was introduced, Pedro presented images of a biome like open fields; in this space, he saw himself alone, looking toward the horizon. Another image in this first part of the exercise was, as he described it, “a light near me.”

In Pedro’s psychotherapeutic process, the absence of memories related to his own childhood drew attention. He commented that he remembered more of adolescence, friendships, and episodes in which he suffered police violence. Engaging in *quilombamento* in a racialized clinic is linked to this experience of similar contents, which connect us to affects such as the joy of playing in the street and going out with friends, or to discriminatory gazes directed at Black bodies.

According to Perry (1970, p. 11), emotional life is organized in bipolar systems: when a complex is activated, a kind of sequestration of the ego by the affects clustered in the corresponding complex occurs. Thus, what Perry calls the “ego-affect” is created. The other part of this bipolar pair of the complex is projected onto the individual who served as the trigger for the complex; this person, who receives the projection, is called the “object-affect.” This means that the individual experiences the affect belonging to the complex, while the other polarity of the complex is attributed to the object. In this way, when the person is dominated by emotions, the energetic value of the ego diminishes, while that of the complex increases. In this dynamic, an interrelation occurs between the “ego-affect” and the “object-affect,” resulting in a modification of the self-image the individual has of themselves, as well as of the image they have of the object, due to the projection of the bipolar pair of the complex.

In Pedro’s case, the effects of racism on the psyche of the Black individual can be observed, which may trigger a state of fluctuation, alienation, and

self-destruction in relation to one's own corporeality. This was one of the strategies of colonization: to disarticulate the subject from their own family, cultural, and sometimes personal history. The individual's ego introjects a White model of life, developing, in some cases, the unconscious fantasy of eliminating their own physical and cultural traits of Black origin. Thus, the negative affect of the racial complex was assimilated by Pedro's ego, as observed in his reports of emotional distancing from his own childhood and of difficulties in opening himself more spontaneously to his children.

In this way, the recovery of Pedro's childhood points to a level of historical memory of Black communities. The image of the *quilombo* is a symbolic expression of ancestry and of the process of reintegration of the individual into a space of fraternity and resistance against oppressive systems. As Nascimento (2021, p. 166) synthesizes: "*Quilombo* came to be synonymous with Black people, synonymous with Black behavior and hope for a better society. It became the inner and outer seat of all forms of cultural resistance." Therapeutic work among and for Black people can assume this recovery of a symbolic cultural space, rooting an ancestry dormant in the cultural unconscious due to the psychosocial effects of racism. Engaging in *quilombamento* refers us to this space of swaying and embodying floating images. Nascimento (2021) reminds us that the *quilombo* represents an instrument in the process of recognition of Black identity for the self-affirmation of both the individual and the group.

The exercise of revisiting Pedro's history moved through the voices of his aunts, mother, father, siblings, and other family members. As he rediscovered this ancestral quilombo, the images of solitude in active imagination activities gave way to the presence of children around him – an experience that can be understood as an expression of the *Self*, seeking to dynamize psychic life. After gathering the narratives of the elders about his childhood, Pedro was surprised by the potential of the child Pedro: "I liked playing with my siblings, singing, playing soccer, reading,

and writing... so many things I liked, and I had no idea about them.” The client was also unsettled to learn that, as a child, he took a long time to begin speaking. According to him, “My aunt and grandmother performed a folk healing ritual so that I would speak.” How many ancestral voices are needed to unveil our soul? At the individual level, Pedro constructed a mosaic of family memory to understand the most intimate subtleties of the *Self*. Jungian clinical work fundamentally aims at the expansion of the person’s consciousness through the symbolic elaboration of psychic contents.

That is, individual transformation is intertwined with cultural, social, historical, and political layers. Therefore, this aspect necessarily requires a process of *quilombamento* of the clinical space. In this way, Pedro apprehends this invisible link between past, present, and future, reflecting on simplicity as a way of realigning, at this moment in life, a stance more committed to his own self-image.

In subsequent sessions, after the activity of revisiting his life history, Pedro reported the following dream: “I was with a group of Black people having a picnic. There was a yellow light in the place where I was with these people. In the second part of the dream, I was in a house with an elderly Black woman, who seemed to be about 90 years old and was wearing a long purple dress. This woman seemed to be someone from the family.” In the dream, the client indicates that the elderly Black woman commented on his work, more specifically on the activities he carries out to implement diversity and inclusion programs aimed at Black women. During the sessions, it was possible to observe that Pedro did not recognize himself as a Black leader in his workplace. Therapy enabled the mobilization of images of ancestral figures, such as the elder woman, who seems to guide him in the transition of midlife as a Black man.

The image of the ancestor in the dream also expresses layers of Pedro’s family unconscious. In accordance with Jung (2014, p. 64), it is essential to consider historical connotations when interpreting dreams, avoiding re-

ducing them solely to the personal dimension of the dreamer. According to Kimbles (2021, pp. 13–14), this family unconscious manifests a shared emotional field at the group level, through collective assumptions. Thus, family emotional life blends with the cultural unconscious and with cultural processes, these images originating from collective, communal, and social experiences.

Pedro's individual identity is shaped by symbols, rituals, language, and historical memories of family narratives, the ethnic-racial group, the country, and so forth. He expanded his awareness of his family's ancestral roots. The woman in the purple dress is a symbolic image that authorizes him to face the world from his own voice and autonomy. Thus, the elder woman in the dream may refer to the archetypal image of the divinity *Nanã*, worshipped by the Jeje Mahin peoples as the lady of the earth, of transformations, and of death.

As a child, Pedro had difficulty developing speech; once again, it was the elders who opened pathways through sympathy rituals. This is the active Black community, which carries a matrix in the cultural unconscious of a people. Communication is also an element of the African-matrix divinity *Exu*, which, in the psychological field, corresponds to the archetype of the trickster (trickery, cunning, etc.), whose function is to creatively build the bridge between the unconscious and consciousness.

Another interesting element in the dream is the presence of other Black people eating. This image may refer to the strengthening of Pedro's ego in the symbolic function he exercises in various areas of his life: at work as a Black leader and in the family as the father of three adolescents. Gradually, Pedro ceased to be merely a spectator of his own life and began to root himself in this therapeutic process, using the image of the *quilombo* – an ancestral material and virtual technology present in the family and cultural unconscious.

In the initial sessions, the man identified through the caricatures of father, husband, and professional began to affirm his racial identity more

strongly – this positive polarity of cultural complexes that generates a sense of belonging. Dreams and active imagination contributed to locating the narrative of the client’s personal history, connecting it to the symbolic function of the *quilombo* in the collective psyche. Nascimento (2021, p. 241) synthesizes: “The *quilombo* is memory, it is history, it is being; thus, we understood it in the 1970s. It was our motto for the recovery of our identity, of our ancestry, of being in an adverse world.” In Pedro’s case, these ancestral ghosts, at the cultural level, are images of strength and process, in psychic life, the lineage of the history of a Black person. This is the crossroads between cultural and individual psyche that transforms and renews the meaning of the client’s life.

Transformation is an archetypal theme that involves the cultural context and individual psychology. Pedro reports that the exercises of active imagination and the analysis of dreams made possible a reconnection with the spiritual sphere. That is, religion – a psychic function – was, in Pedro’s case, directed toward the “god financial system,” due to his work as an accountant in a pharmaceutical company. He verbalizes that his diary writings began to carry more sentimental tone and less intellectual tone – this is the voice of the elder woman reintegrating his psyche. In the final session, Pedro comments: “There is time and space to do other things... I will walk more calmly, practicing saying ‘no’ to people; this way I spend more time with my wife and daughters.” This emotional maturation roots him in the soul.

The symbolic cultural space of the *quilombo*, in the therapeutic context, illustrates Pedro’s reclaiming of his family roots and his belonging to a Black community with a history before the holocaust of African ethnic groups and the abduction that occurred during the transatlantic slave trade. Returning to the etymology of the word *quilombo*, as Jung suggests “[...] because it often happens that it is precisely the history of a word that sheds a surprising light on the nature of the psychic object at its origin” (JUNG, 1926/2011, *Obras Completas*, vol. VIII, § 626), we add, in the psychological investigation of Pedro’s case, the layer of the group spirit. This

is because initiation in the *kilombo*, in the Jaga ethnic group, refers to the preparation of the young person to develop their vital force.

According to Nascimento (2021, p. 249), the body of the initiated person is strengthened to confront any attack or effort in the face of any kind of adversity: “He was prepared not only for war, but also to undertake and to found territories. Practicing nomadism as a founder of territorial settlements would be his saga in adulthood.” Beatriz Nascimento proposes this potential of the quilombo within the psychic geology of Black communities. Pedro recognizes his role in planting a flag in hostile terrain – such as the pharmaceutical market – by opening doors through diversity and inclusion programs and policies. Recognizing the roles we assume in the spaces we occupy is also a way of honoring our elders, as indicated in Pedro’s dream.

In the field of the psychotherapeutic process between client and psychologist, it is important to highlight the aspects of transference and countertransference. In this case, two Black men share the traumatic marks of racial violence – more specifically, police violence. When Pedro verbalized his memories of adolescence, they reverberated in the Black body of the therapist. This bond, which arises from recognition within the narratives of another, older Black man, is transformative. It is the analyst’s self-knowledge that enables this clinical contour, also considering the emotional layer of these Black bodies, which potentially gives rise to transformation.

This work of recovering fragments of memory within the therapeutic process is a way of building a bridge to the objective psyche of the Black ethnic-racial group. *Quilombos*, as units of organized struggle, are this edifice that Pedro constructed together with the therapist – and vice versa. That said, it involves recognizing in the eyes of the elders our possibilities for the future, and in the youthful gaze the reflection of hopes, as well as fears, insecurities, and anxieties. In Pedro, one could observe the path toward feeling safe enough to express the intimacies of a Black man. Thus, this communication between unconscious processes and ancestralism sus-



Figure – Capoeira Learning

Source: Photo archives, Roda de Capoeira. *Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional* (IPHAN).

tains the sacred ground of this atemporal *quilombo* within the therapeutic space.

The figure is a nineteenth-century photograph by the Portuguese photographer José Christiano de Freitas Henriques Júnior (1832–1902). The image records the transmission of knowledge of bodily movements from an older person to a child.

In Pedro's case, a parallel can be observed with this image: the symbolic and experiential transmission of ancestral knowledge also takes place within the clinical space, as a psychic and cultural inheritance that strengthens the identity of the Black individual.

In the example of capoeira, the positive pole of the roots of the past can be identified, revived in the present to reinforce community bonds. The capoeira circle can be understood as a nutrient that enhances development and the sense of belonging to the group. The body in capoeira learns techniques of defense, self-perception, mobility, and boundary-making – that is, it is a body that demarcates the land on which it stands.

The *cultus* of cultivated land, which sustains the community, is also the cultus of the worship of ancestors (BOSI, 1996). In other words, the movements and sway of capoeira express the group's ancestral memory as a form of resistance and reaffirmation of identity within society.

Just as in the image, where a gesture is passed from one body to another, Pedro, by revisiting his personal history and reconnecting with his family roots, symbolically relives this transfer of ancestral knowledge. The pho-

tograph can be interpreted as a visual metaphor for Pedro's clinical experience, in which ancestral memory – forgotten or silenced – begins to circulate once again between bodies and the psyche, strengthening the sense of belonging.

In the capoeira circle, for example, this movement of continuity is lived corporeally: gestures, *ginga*, and songs evoke Black collective memory, functioning as practices of *quilombamento* and resistance. As stated in the text, “the capoeira circle can be considered a nutrient that enhances development and the group's sense of belonging” – the same symbolic nutrient that Pedro accesses as he rediscovers his childhood memories and ancestry through active imagination and dreams.

In this sense, the image and Pedro's process intertwine as expressions of the same therapeutic and cultural principle: the recovery of ancestral knowledge that unites past and present, embodied both in the physical gesture of capoeira and in the psychic journey of self-knowledge. The photograph, therefore, illustrates how the living transmission of the cultural unconscious emerges within the therapeutic space as a force for transformation and the reconstruction of Black identity.

Final Considerations

This study of Pedro indicates possible pathways for Black individuals to engage in *quilombamento* within the psychotherapeutic process, grounded in Black cultural and political consciousness in the clinical setting. The unconscious images emerge at ancestral levels within the family lineage of Black people; this level of the psyche is associated with the content of the historical memory of the ethnic-racial group. The oral history of our ancestors is composed of fragments of a larger mosaic, that is, of the Black diaspora in the Americas. Building a group identity was the exercise of organized Black movements to ensure the history of the Black struggle in Brazil. In view of this, the quilombo assumes this marker of identity and belonging both at the level of history and within the collective psyche.

The recovery of these constructions of resistance of *quilombos* makes it

possible, within the therapeutic space, to root the Black person in their own narrative; to embody experience, given that racial violence can displace the individual from their own personal and family life. This was the tactic of colonization: to create hollow bodies, stripped of cultural heritages, names of origin, and so on. Pedro's interaction with the cultural-racial complex was a component of his development, which occurred through the growth of consciousness and the grounding of personality. The transformation of these complexes can occur through the appropriate development of a rooted self-image and awareness of the individual's own creative potentials. This can gradually reduce unilateral attitudes caused by cultural complexes in their negative pole. Clinical material, such as dreams, fantasies, and creativity, emerges from subjective experience that unveils the intimacy of ancestral soil. On psychological levels, more specifically in the collective psyche, these fertile lands of our ancestors contain traumatic experiences as well as the richness of processing images to regroup the vitality of a group and of its members individually.

The article also demonstrates that Jung's legacy offers a valuable theoretical framework for understanding and intervening in contemporary issues related to identity, resistance, and transformations of Black communities. By exploring concepts such as the collective unconscious, archetypes, and cultural symbols, the Jungian model enables an approach that values the symbolic and collective dimension of the psyche, which is fundamental for the reconstruction of self-esteem and a sense of belonging in these communities in the face of a context of racial violence.

Furthermore, the emphasis on valuing historical memory and narratives of resistance, present in the symbols of *quilombos* and figures such as Zumbi and Dandara, reinforces the importance of processes of recognition and identity reaffirmation within the therapeutic setting. Thus, analytical psychology can provide tools that allow for a more sensitive listening to specific cultural experiences, promoting transformation and an expansion of the client's consciousness.

This perspective makes it possible to understand that psychology, when it recognizes and incorporates cultural, symbolic, political, historical, and racial elements, can act as an agent of social transformation, contributing to the construction of a more just and equitable society. Therefore, the use of Jungian principles in this contemporary context represents a bridge between ancestral traditions, cultural resistance, and psychic health, strengthening the struggle for rights, social justice, and recognition of Black people.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

QUILOMBAMENTO OF THE PSYCHE: CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRO-DIASPORIC TECHNOLOGIES TO A RACIALIZED JUNGIAN CLINICAL PRACTICE

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Abstract

This article proposes an articulation between Jungian analytical psychology and racialized clinical practices, with emphasis on decolonial and anti-racist listening. Drawing from a critique of the Eurocentric heritage of psychology and the erasure of Black subjectivities, it examines structural racism as a determining factor in the psychological distress of the Black population. Engaging authors such as Fanon, Brewster, Almeida, and Núñez, the article reflects on the colonality of knowledge and the psychosocial effects of exclusion. Concepts such as *cultural complexes*, a colonized collective unconscious, and racialized clinical practice are presented, suggesting that, although born in a colonial context, analytical psychology holds ethical and symbolic potential for critical

reappropriation. Finally, *Ubuntu* philosophy and *quilombamento* are proposed as Afro-diasporic technologies that can enrich the therapeutic setting by valuing ancestry, belonging, and collective processes of healing. Within this framework, the clinic becomes a space of denouncement, reclamation, and rehumanization of subjects historically subjected to violence, fostering a form of listening attuned to the contradictions and complexities that permeate Black existence.

Keywords: analytical psychology; structural racism; racialized clinical practice; decoloniality; *Ubuntu*.

Introduction

Analytical psychology, proposed by Carl Gustav Jung, emerged as a response to the limitations of the traditional biomedical model, seeking a broader approach to the human soul, visible especially in the contribution of the Brazilian psychiatrist Nise da Silveira and her anti-asylum work in Rio de Janeiro (FRAYZE-PEREIRA, 2003). This approach, built from experimental data, case studies, the psychiatric literature of its time, as well as Jung's clinical experiences and philosophical and cultural influences, did not initially consider the racial and cultural particularities of peoples outside the European axis (BROOKE, 2008). Nevertheless, its symbolic and dialectical nature offers great potential for expansion and adaptation to contemporary challenges, such as confronting structural racism.

Jung was part of the historical movement of dynamic psychiatry in his time, challenging classical psychiatry by considering the biomedical, organicist, rationalist, and mechanistic model insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of the human soul. That model sought to evaluate psychological experience through levels of normality, diagnoses, causes, and dysfunctions, operating under the assumption that there is always something wrong with the individual. In contrast to this linear and restricted framework, analytical psychology is developed from a dialectical perspective, taking the problems of the soul beyond physiological bias

and examining the role and stance of the therapist within psychotherapeutic practice (PÁDUA; SERBENA, 2018).

Shamdasani (2011) notes that Jung conceived psychology, initially called “Complex Psychology”, with the intention of making it a general psychology, a cultural function capable of consolidating multiple forms of knowledge while also enabling each person to develop a singular way of seeing and engaging with reality. This approach, in its origins, did not construct nor could it foresee specific foundations to guide its adherents in matters of racial identity or in addressing the oppressions experienced by Black individuals, given the diversity and sociocultural specificities of the countries in which it later spread.

When observing the racial landscape of Brazilian society – predominantly Black (56.1%, IBGE, 2022), in which Black individuals have developed under a solid system of structural racism that effectively sustains racial inequalities, evidenced especially by disparities in labor relations and income, housing conditions and property ownership, access to education, high rates of violence and homicide, and underrepresentation in high-level management and leadership positions – with direct and indirect impacts on the physical and mental health of this population, it becomes clear that an investigation, revision, and reorganization of psychologists’ professional practice is warranted. However, the present work aims to propose certain Afro-diasporic technologies as tools for a *decolonial* and anti-racist Jungian clinical practice, demonstrating that the breadth of the Jungian perspective, although not originally formulated to address these issues, is compatible with an inclusive and racialized approach to therapy.

The Origins and Enduring Presence of a Colonial Psychology

Modern psychology was founded on Eurocentric foundations, shaped by white men from dominant classes who imprinted their own subjectivities on the training of psychologists over the past century. This colonial heritage has shaped the development of science and its practices

to this day, influencing how racialized subjects have been – and continue to be – represented and treated.

Núñez (2022) highlights that, since the time of the discovery, the history of our country has been transmitted primarily from the perspective of the colonizers. To generalize the nation as a single, unified Brazilian people, according to the predominant language, religion, and culture inherited from colonizers, is to engage in racist and colonial ethnogenocide. In the pursuit of hegemony through hygienist practices, such a narrative erases the existence of Indigenous languages from the territory, as well as diverse resistant spiritual traditions, an erasure that continues to be carried out with the consent and amplification of broad segments of the population across social and hierarchical strata.

From the perspective of the colonizers, primitive peoples had not yet understood the value of freedom, equality, the market, or the rule of law. The effort to transport to the new worlds the norms, behaviors, and modes of thought that constituted the notion of civility, all in the name of reason, resulted in the demise, suppression, exploitation, and plundering known as colonialism (ALMEIDA, 2019). Amid this colonizing process, the concept of whiteness was forged through the exploitation of the Other. European whites fashioned a substitute and shared identity that relied on Black Africans as its essential counterpoint, and was therefore a dependent identity (BENTO, 2022; KILOMBA, 2017).

The term colonialism may be understood as the historical formation of colonial territories; modern colonialism refers to the specific ways in which empires colonized most of the world; coloniality, in turn, may be understood as a global logic of dehumanization. Thus, decolonization refers to the historical moments in which colonized peoples claimed independence, whereas decoloniality refers to the struggle against the logic of coloniality and its material, epistemic, and symbolic effects (TORRES, 2023).

Colonization was – and remains – a technology for maintaining hegemony within societies (ALMEIDA, 2019). The academic sphere has also historically contributed to the preservation of coloniality (NÚÑES, 2022).

As Vilela (2012) notes in her research on the trajectory of psychology in Brazil, the process of “doing science” in peripheral countries must be understood because the universalization of knowledge production, its models, and its methods is a consequence of the European colonization of the Americas. Academia privileges epistemologies and practices grounded in European perspectives, which often fail to engage with our realities and continue to perpetuate modes of subjectivation that reproduce and intensify colonial violence (NÚÑES, 2022), as described below:

Historically, several fields of knowledge grounded in coloniality have positioned themselves in the privileged place of defining, categorizing, and legitimizing, or delegitimizing, the identities of minoritized groups. In this sense, the principle of autonomy must be upheld in the construction of a critical Psychology that refuses the position of tutelage over the Other, whether from the standpoint of the anti-asylum movement, the anti-racist struggle, or the struggle against cisnormativity. Each minoritized group must have its collective autonomy respected when it comes to its own processes of naming, recognition, and identification (NÚÑES, 2022, p. 51).

For coloniality to affirm itself as civilized, it requires subjects who serve as its wild contrast – figures against which it can present itself as the full model of valuable intellect, synonymous with progress and development, while the colonized are cast as representatives of backwardness and underdevelopment. Núñez (2022) argues that, in the face of the reduction of existences and lived experiences into binary and hierarchical compartments, the importance and urgency of engaging in an anticolonial movement must be emphasized.

Psychology, officially regulated as a profession in Brazil in 1962 by Law No. 4.119, developed in the context of the military dictatorship, a period marked by authoritarianism, conservatism, institutionalized torture, and repression enacted by the bourgeois autocracy, which functioned as a mechanism for camouflaging and silencing social questioning. In this context, the therapeutic space, confidential and discreet, favored the individual aspects of subjects, distancing them from reflections on the political implications of their practices. The hygienist strategies of

that period were also grounded in psychosocial knowledge, conditioning the behavior of the masses through punitive mechanisms (CFP, 2022; SILVA, 2017).

The early configuration of the profession consisted largely of young women trained in other fields (typically pedagogy, philosophy, and medicine), with practice concentrated in major capitals, predominantly in the clinical area, and expanding within the private sector. Beginning in the 1970s, important critiques emerged regarding the oligarchic subservience of psychology, given that, based on the minimum wage at the time, it was estimated that only about 15% of the population could afford the exclusive services of private clinical practice (CFP, 2022).

The outcomes of this original context continue to reverberate today, although now diluted within the transformations and positive developments achieved by the field, which nevertheless retains vestiges of its elitist roots. Revisiting this history allows us to understand that knowledge is constantly evolving and is never neutral, as it is always intertwined with existing power relations (SILVA, 2017).

The Racial Context of Brazil and of Brazilian Psychology

The use of the term race to refer to distinct categories of human beings has been a phenomenon of post-Renaissance modernity, emerging alongside the expansion of the bourgeois commercial world (ALMEIDA, 2019). Within this context, the European is transformed into the universal human, and all peoples and cultures misaligned with European cultural systems are deemed less developed.

Two centuries later (18th century), with the Enlightenment project of social transformation, the human being becomes both subject and object of knowledge, grounded in the observation of multiple facets of existence through biological, economic, psychological, and linguistic perspectives (ALMEIDA, 2019). The Enlightenment thus produced tools that enabled comparisons among diverse human groups based on their physical and cultural characteristics.

Almeida (2019) emphasizes that contemporary society cannot be understood without the concepts of race and racism. His central thesis is that racism is always structural rather than pathological; it is a mechanism embedded within a society's economy and politics, providing meaning and logic for reproducing and maintaining inequality and violence, thereby shaping modern social life.

From a historical standpoint, the concept of race can therefore be understood in two complementary ways: first, as a biological characteristic, linking racial identity to physical traits; and second, as an ethno-racial characteristic, in which identity is related to geographic region, religion, language, or other cultural practices. Discriminatory processes motivated by the ethno-cultural notion of race are referred to as *cultural racism* (ALMEIDA, 2019). Racism is a systematic form of discrimination manifested through conscious or unconscious practices that result in disadvantages or privileges for individuals depending on the racial group to which they belong. Racism is conceived on individual, institutional, and structural levels, corresponding respectively to the relations between racism and subjectivity, racism and the State, and racism and the economy (ALMEIDA, 2019).

Politically and critically, Moura (1994) defines racism as:

[...] an ideological multiplier that feeds on the political and expansionist ambitions of dominating nations and serves as both a weapon of combat and a justification for the crimes committed in the name of the biological, psychological, and cultural rights of so-called "chosen races" (MOURA, 1994, p. 28).

At the same time, racial prejudice is based on stereotypes about individuals who belong to a particular racialized group and may or may not result in discriminatory practices. Examples include associating Black people with aggression or criminality, Jews with avarice, or Asians with heightened intelligence, according to Almeida (2019).

Racial discrimination is the attribution of differential treatment to members of racially identified groups. One of its fundamental require-

ments is power – the effective capacity to use force, without which it is not possible to confer advantages or disadvantages based on race. Discrimination may occur in direct or indirect and in positive or negative forms (ALMEIDA, 2019).

According to the analyses of the PNAD *Contínua* (Continuous National Household Sample Survey), published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 2022, the most recent information regarding the color or race of residents in Brazil shows that the Black population, understood as the combined total of those who self-identify as *pretos* and *pardos*, represented 56.1% of the country's 212.7 million inhabitants in 2021.

Data from the 2022 *Censo Psi*, published by the Federal Council of Psychology, indicate that the racial profile of psychologists in Brazil is predominantly white (63%), followed by 26.1% who self-identify as *pardos*, 8.5% who self-identify as *pretos*, and 1.5% who self-identify as Asian or Indigenous.

A detailed analysis of diversity within psychology was presented based on this census, raising questions about whether the profession is, in fact, diverse and inclusive or merely reproducing the broader social statistics of the country, as well as the outcomes of public policies such as racial quotas and disability quotas. Demonstrating the efficacy of structural racism and its consequences, the study shows that even with affirmative policies, the Black population continues to exhibit the worst indicators regarding unemployment, income, and the sectors and positions they occupy, revealing persistent inequalities that become even more pronounced at higher income levels. With respect to the racial focus of this work, the census reports that Black women earned, on average, 66.2% and Black men 80.1% of what white men earned (CFP, 2022).

The (Mental Health) Genocide of the Black Population

The National Policy for the Integrated Health of the Black Population (PNSIPN), established by the Ministry of Health in 2009 (GOUVEIA; ZANELLO, 2018), recognizes that, beyond genetic and/or hereditary

predispositions, the practice of racism against Black people, in its various forms, affects both the health of this population and their access to healthcare services (BRASIL, 2017).

When related to the data mapped by the study Social Inequalities by Color or Race in Brazil, produced by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2022), the impacts of structural racism become evident across dimensions that make up part of the social context in which individuals interact directly and indirectly, categorized as: labor market and income; housing conditions and assets; education; violence; and political participation and management.

In the “labor market and income” category, unemployment and underutilization rates are higher for *pretos* and *pardos* regardless of educational attainment. Higher rates of informality, associated with the absence of social protections in the short, medium, and long term (no paid vacation, medical leave, year-end bonus, retirement benefits, etc.), are also found among Black people (43.4%) and *pardos* (47.0%) when compared to white individuals (32.7%) (IBGE, 2022).

The “housing conditions and assets” category is unequally affected because of the above statistics, since the accumulation of income enables the accumulation of assets, and likewise, the accumulation of assets enables higher income.

From the standpoint of property ownership, the Black population is more disadvantaged than the white population, as commercial negotiations involving real estate are often restricted due to irregular documentation, and because property valuations depend on location and degrees of urban integration. While Black populations predominantly inhabit marginalized areas with less investment in infrastructure, basic sanitation, water supply, and waste collection, the financial return is usually insufficient to secure a similar or better property (IBGE, 2022).

In education, recognized as a gateway to opportunities within democratic systems and as a determinant of employment status, income, housing, and mobility, the progression of educational levels across

populations is directly related to the reproduction of social inequalities in multiple domains. According to the distribution of enrollment in the ten most competitive university programs in 2020, published by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP), psychology registered a higher proportion of newly enrolled white students (47.6%) than Black (6.4%) or *pardo* students (26.0%) (IBGE, 2022).

The “violence” category presented the most alarming inequality indicators, particularly in homicide rates, where Black men lead overwhelmingly. The study also warns that real numbers may differ significantly due to underreporting and the generalized classification of causes of death (IBGE, 2022).

In the category of “political participation and management,” which compiles data on electoral candidates and elected officials by race/color and gender, the lack of representativity throughout all stages of the electoral process leading up to government positions is evident (IBGE, 2022). All these data illustrate a cycle of fundamental exclusions and everyday forms of violence, ingeniously constructed as instruments of domination operating through mechanisms of subjugation, ultimately justifying the expansion of dominating nations and the maintenance of elite privilege (MOURA, 1994).

The thematic bulletin of the Ministry of Health library (2022), on the Mental Health of the Black Population, notes that the barriers to accessing and remaining within the social dimensions mentioned above, considered social determinants, combined with racially motivated humiliation, have the potential to trigger significant psychosocial harm to the Black population. This is reflected, for instance, in a 2016 statistic indicating that, out of every ten recorded suicides among adolescents and young adults, six involved Black individuals.

Phenomena such as distorted self-image, low self-esteem, shame, anxiety, depression, panic disorder, schizophrenia, conduct disorders, sudden and seemingly unprovoked anger attacks, hypertension, ulcers, alcoholism, and drug use are among the possible physical and psychological effects of the violence experienced by Black people (SILVA, 2004).

For this reason, these factors highlight the condition of insecurity, vulnerability, and inequity in the mental health of the Black population, often more neglected than their general physical health (GOUVEIA; ZANELLO, 2018). They also account for the psychological suffering caused by constant vigilance against potential violence, the struggle for racial belonging, the need to adapt one's existence to spaces dominated by whiteness, the self-perception shaped by notions of normality, health, and illness, and by spiritual beliefs and religions continually targeted by intolerance – frequently by the convergence of all these forces.

When Black individuals name themselves as Black, recognizing all that this may signify for their existence, their histories of personal and ancestral violence and achievement, and the repercussions of whiteness legitimized by structural racism, it becomes necessary to acknowledge the numerous mechanisms that fuel the genocide of the collective psyche/soul of the Black population and its arduous struggle for the emancipation of Blackness.

Recognizing racism against the Black population and its consequences, which stem from the silent genocide project enacted by whiteness (BENTO, 2022), along with understanding the positionality from which one speaks and the racial group to which one belongs, is crucial for defining how individuals and professionals situate themselves as racialized subjects. This recognition serves psychological practice by legitimizing the suffering of Black clients and affirming the therapeutic space as a safe site for denunciation. Such conditions directly impact the ability to access deeper sources of conflict and, consequently, the healing process.

Jungian Theoretical Approaches for Understanding Racism

To articulate an understanding of the phenomenon of racism with Jungian theory, considering individual and collective processes situated within broader and narrower contexts, some foundational concepts will be briefly outlined.

Jung suggests that “psychological material can be divided into conscious

and unconscious contents” (JUNG, 1928/2015, OC 7/2, p. 171). Consciousness may be understood as that which is recognized by the subject based on personal experience, that is, everything that is actually lived. This layer of knowledge can be considered a “thin film,” and it becomes even narrower when compared with the deeper and larger layer: the unconscious. The latter was divided by Jung into the personal and the *collective* unconscious.

Another concept, more contemporary and relevant to understanding how culture and the collective unconscious operate, is that of cultural complexes, proposed by Samuel Kimbles and Thomas Singer at the turn of the twenty-first century. They suggest that the phenomenon should be understood as a source of feelings of belonging, ancestry, and historical continuity, and identity, acting simultaneously within the archetypal and personal layers of the psyche as well as in the external world (PARISE; SCANDIUCCI, 2022).

According to Kimbles and Singer (2020), cultural complexes develop through repeated group experiences until they become intrinsic to the unconscious, appropriating the collective psyche of the group, the individual psyche, or the individual’s collective psyche in an autonomous manner. They can, moreover, draw upon irrational forces to justify their logic. Another important aspect is the possibility that these complexes generate stereotypes and prejudices, since the functioning of the ego, collective or individual, identifies with part of the unconscious cultural complex while projecting the other part onto another group or individual, thereby constraining diversity.

Beyond the theoretical concepts mentioned above, it is essential to distinguish the (colonial, historical, social, cultural, and economic) motivations that masterfully structured the strategy through which racism became a systematic phenomenon from the idea that it attained such proportions solely through individual projections of the shadow.

In seeking to incorporate the racial element and its social contexts into Jungian theory in a clear manner, it is necessary – however briefly – to

address the critiques concerning Jung's Eurocentric colonialism. A clear example of this limitation appears in how Jung himself refers to the Black population in a lecture:

The investigation becomes difficult because the Black person does not understand what we want from him and is, moreover, ignorant [...] The Black person himself would like to be white or to have white children – and conversely: he is persecuted by the white man (JUNG, OC, vol. XVIII/2, 1910/2015, § 1285).

Such statements not only reveal the racial prejudices of Jung's time but also reinforce deeply entrenched colonial stereotypes.

Another example, found in *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões* (BROOKE, 2008; FUENTES, 2014; PRAXEDES, 2018), lies in the cluster of hierarchical and polarizing binaries analyzed by Brooke (2008). This aspect of Jung's thought appears explicitly as a kind of colonialism of the psyche; in those opposites, such as light and dark, white and black, civilized and primitive, conscious and unconscious, and so on, are maintained as organizing principles of his theory of the psyche.

Fuentes (2014) highlights Jung's accounts in *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões* (JUNG, 1961/2021) of the period he spent in Africa, during which he observed differences in the gestures of North Africans when speaking with Europeans. From these observations, Jung learned new perspectives on the “white man” while outside his dominant environment, for his aim was to perceive himself through the gaze of the Other.

Praxedes (2018) astutely observes that recognizing within ourselves the existence of unfounded prejudices toward others does not mean that we are free of them. Although Jung does not consciously problematize his perceptions of other individuals, and even disseminates in his work value judgments that may be considered presumptuous, we do not reduce the complexity of his contributions to the preconceived representations he attributed to non-Europeans, nor do we deem these representations simply irrelevant (PRAXEDES, 2018).

Nonetheless, Jung does endeavor to deepen his studies on races, allowing himself to experience being the Other from a non-white perspective and to develop a mode of thought aimed at unifying and emancipating the human being (PRAXEDES, 2018).

Contemporary critiques and readings, such as those of Frantz Fanon and Fanny Brewster, help reimagine a more inclusive analytical psychology, one capable of ethically and politically holding the psychic experiences of Black subjects. Fanon (2020), in examining the effects of colonization on the Black psyche, denounces how the collective unconscious can also be colonized, filled with images that reinforce the inferiorization of Black people and the idealization of whiteness. This critique reveals that the collective imagination is not neutral and that its symbolic structure can replicate systems of oppression:

In Europe, the Black person has a function: to represent the baser feelings, the bad dispositions, the dark side of the soul. In the collective unconscious of the Homo occidentalis, the Black person, or the color black, if one prefers, symbolizes evil, sin, misery, death, war, and hunger. [...] The collective unconscious is not dependent on a cerebral inheritance; it is the consequence of what I will call an unreflected cultural imposition (FANON, 2020, pp. 201-202).

Fanny Brewster, in turn, argues that analytical psychology lacks a sustained consideration of racialization as a constitutive element of subjectivity. She proposes the notion of the *racial, personal, and cultural complex*, thus deepening Jung's concept of complexes and expanding it through the framework of cultural complexes developed by Kimbles and Adams, particularly within the American social context:

The racial complex identifies the relationship between psychological issues of racism and historically unexamined racial complexes that may constellate within and among Americans (BREWSTER, 2025, p.22).

Drawing on the contributions outlined above, it becomes possible to move from structural theory to critical theories, to deeper revisions, and to the opening of new, concrete pathways. It is within this horizon that

a racialized Jungian practice seeks to reconstruct a mode of listening grounded in ancestry and belonging.

The Jungian Clinical Practice

Jung's contributions to the understanding of the soul are grounded fundamentally in his practical experience with human beings, indicating that:

The psychotherapist must not concern himself only with the patient's personal biography, but also with the spiritual conditions of both the immediate and the more remote environment, in which traditional and philosophical influences permeate and often play a decisive role (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC XVI/1, 2013, p.7).

For Jung (1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §§1–27), psychotherapy is defined as a science, a scientific method, a field of therapeutics that only recently achieved independence. It gradually became evident that its practice unfolds through a dialectical pattern, meaning that it operates through the interaction between the psychic systems of at least two people. This interaction is employed for the expansion of consciousness, uncovering and transcending the contradictions present in the interlocutor's reasoning and producing new syntheses.

According to Jung (1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §§1–27), reflections on the therapist's self-knowledge, exclusively guided by analytical psychology, adopting the least preconceived attitude possible, unrestricted and unconditional acceptance of the Other, active listening, and symbolic interpretation, are indispensable for a well-grounded therapeutic stance.

With respect to the therapist, Jung emphasizes the importance of recognizing and working through one's own complexes, projections, and personal shadow in order to prevent these elements from influencing the therapeutic relationship. In other words, the therapist must remain in continual analysis. In Jung's view (1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §§1–27), it would be a lack of critical spirit for the therapist to fail to recognize the impossibility of consistently judging the personality before him, adopting a posture of authority, pretentiously assuming knowledge of the patient's individuality.

Given this, Jung (1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §§1–27) establishes that in approaching the psychic treatment of a subject, one must renounce all arbitrariness and the desire to make inferences rooted in professional knowledge. It is essential to favor the dialectical method, which consists essentially of mutually verifying analyses. This becomes possible only if the therapist allows the patient to present their material in its entirety, without restricting it through the therapist's own fantasies. In this way, the patient's psychic system enters into relation with the therapist's, producing the only legitimate outcome that can be offered to the patient.

Guaranteeing the dialectical process helps the therapist maintain a less preconceived attitude, relinquishing all prior methods, practices, and theories. Thus, “the therapist is no longer an active subject, but rather experiences together an individual process of development” (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §7). Consequently, this stance upholds the fundamental principle of dialectics: that the patient's individuality has the same dignity and right to exist as the therapist's, and that their transformations must be allowed to occur.

A distinctive feature of Jungian theory, essential for encompassing human diversity, is the practice of gathering as much information as possible about primitive psychology, mythologies, and the history of religions, for from these arise analogies capable of translating a relevant message that will resonate meaningfully when expressed through the symbols that already carry significance for the patient. Thus, together, therapist and patient can “bring that which seems meaningless closer to the zone rich in meaning, thereby considerably increasing the chances of producing something effective” (JUNG, 1929/1950/2013, OC XVI/1, §96).

Another central aspect of the theory is situating the therapist as a factor that can either facilitate or inhibit healing, requiring their transformation, since the therapist is an integral part of what Jung (1935/2013, OC XVI/1, §§1–27) calls the psychic process of treatment and is therefore also exposed to transformative influences. Should the therapist block these influences, their own intervention will cease to reach the patient; and if

such influences remain unconscious, a gap will form within the therapist's awareness that prevents them from perceiving the patient accurately.

For this reason, the therapist's ethical commitment is essential. From a Jungian perspective, what happens with the patient must also happen with the therapist, so that the therapist's personality does not retroact unfavorably upon the patient; thus, the therapist's human quality becomes decisive. "The therapist must not attempt to evade his own difficulties, as though he did not have any, simply because he is dealing with the difficulties of another" (JUNG, 1929/1950/2013, OC XVI/1, §172).

Returning to the central discussion of this work, regarding racialized, decolonial, and anti-racist professionalism, Jungian clinical practice, as it relates to the social positioning of patients and the gaps left by other fields of science, emphasizes that "it is impossible to treat the soul and the human personality by isolating some of its parts from the rest (JUNG, 1941/1945/2013, OC XVI/1, § 212).

This is perhaps why psychotherapy is less able than any other specialized field to take refuge in the sacrosanct domain of a specialty that, so to speak, has nothing more to do with the vastness of the world that is out there. No matter how much we try to focus on what is most personal in the person, our therapy would be meaningless without asking: from what world does our patient come, and to what world must they adapt? The world is a reality that transcends the individual, and an essentially personalistic psychology can never do justice to it. This type of psychology is valid only insofar as the personal aspect of the human being extends. But insofar as a person is also a fragment of the world, they carry the world, that is, something suprapersonal or impersonal, within themselves. This implies an entire physical and psychic infrastructure, insofar as it concerns a preexisting reality (JUNG, 1941/1945/2013, OC XVI/1, § 212).

Considering the four fundamental principles proposed by Silva Ferreira *et al.* (2022) as guiding elements for anti-racist clinical practice in the Brazilian context, including for practitioners of Jungian theory, it becomes possible to identify points of compatibility within the ideas that bring us closer to the soul of the Other.

The first principle concerns the training of the psychotherapist,

specifically in relation to racism and anti-racism. It is necessary to understand their implications in society, to identify discriminatory practices and how they manifest, to comprehend the functioning and intention of institutional barriers, to demonstrate respect for the diversity of spiritual beliefs and values, and to understand family structures, hierarchies, and other such aspects. The second principle, emphasized repeatedly by Jung himself and in many ways self-explanatory, refers to the psychotherapist's self-knowledge. When articulated with racialized orientations, it requires that the psychotherapist exercise reflective capacity regarding their own repertoire, considering their historical and moral position. The third principle pertains to practice within the therapeutic setting, involving the therapeutic relationship, the construction of rapport, the dialectical process, and the deliberate exploration of racial issues and their ramifications. Finally, the fourth principle concerns psychoeducation, that is, interventions and guidance aimed at identifying and developing a repertoire for managing symptoms (SILVA FERREIRA *et al.*, 2022).

Regarding the ideas underlying the term “racialized clinical practice,” researchers and instructors of the Training in Racialized Clinical Practice and Mental Health of the Black Population, Bárbara Borges and Francinai Gomes, propose that the concept be understood as “the ethical-political commitment to listening to subjective totality, considering race as a structuring element of biopsychosocial and territorial dimensions” (personal communication, September 8, 2024). It is considered an ethical-political commitment because it concerns scientific knowledge and the execution of a professional service governed by a code of conduct. Racialized practice is supported by CFP Resolution No. 18/2002, in its first six articles:

Art. 1 – Psychologists shall act in accordance with the ethical principles of the profession, contributing their knowledge to promote reflection on prejudice and to eliminate racism.

Art. 2 – Psychologists shall not engage in any action that favors discrimination or prejudice based on race or ethnicity.

Art. 3 – Psychologists, in the exercise of their profession, shall neither be complicit with nor omit themselves in the face of the crime of racism.

Art. 4 – Psychologists shall not use psychological instruments or techniques to create, maintain, or reinforce prejudices, stigmas, stereotypes, or racial discrimination.

Art. 5 – Psychologists shall not collaborate with events or services that are discriminatory in nature or that contribute to the development of discriminatory institutional cultures.

Art. 6 – Psychologists shall not make or participate in public statements in mass media that reinforce racial prejudice (FEDERAL COUNCIL OF PSYCHOLOGY, 2002)

Taking the above resolution as a fundamental basis, any psychologist who is not attentive to combating racism is, by definition, disqualified and acting unethically. The commitment to orient our practices toward the real and intrinsic demands of our society requires that we approach every therapeutic technique (listening, clinical handling, intervention strategies, analysis, supervision) with the premise that all subjects are racialized and that racial belonging functions as a structuring element of subjectivity. In other words, depending on an individual's self-perception of the color or race to which they belong, and considering their cultural context, this will shape their beliefs, emotions, behaviors, values, and lived experiences.

As professionals, we can cultivate in our clinical practice a genuinely open attitude toward plurality and diversity. This responds both to an ethical responsibility and to an organic movement toward enabling each person to live fully, without spatial constraints or submission to norms that legitimize only a single model – the Eurocentric one. To that end, and with due respect and reverence for ancestries and Indigenous peoples, I propose below an exploration of examples of Afro-descendant and Afro-diasporic technologies that hold expressive potential for connecting us to the symbols and significances of the Black population, taking them also as contributions to Jungian theory.

Ubuntu Philosophy and Quilombamento: Afro Perspectives for Jungian Theory

The attempt proposed in this section is based on the premise that, to understand in depth, and with renewed perspective, the specific characteristics of Brazilian society, as well as to inspire more effective forms of educational, social, political, and cultural development in response to contemporary demands for building racial equality, knowledge of historical and cultural factors analogous to and suggestive of African societies may offer a fruitful path (MATTOS, 2023).

In dialogue with analytical psychology, and despite the critiques regarding Jung's colonial and prejudicial assumptions during parts of his long journey toward developing the field, Jung offers us a way of thinking about individuation and the unfolding of consciousness that holds the potential to become a genuinely multicultural psychology, rooted in our shared *archetypal ground* yet open to infinite cultural variation (BROOKE, 2008). In this sense, it is proposed and encouraged that we reclaim a philosophy of our own, one capable of expressing who we are in our fullness. Jungian psychology allows us to envision other forms of individuation, other processes through which we may come to be who we truly are in the world. Fuentes (2014) enters into this dialogue by describing the concept of *Ubuntu*, which, in some respects, resembles the individuation process as proposed by Jung:

The *Ubuntu* understanding of the other is never fixed or rigidly closed; rather, it is adjustable and open. It allows the other to be and to become. It recognizes the irreducibility of the other and never reduces them to any single characteristic, behavior, or function. This aligns with the very grammar of the concept "*Ubuntu*," which denotes a state of being and of becoming. As a process of self-realization through others, this philosophy emphasizes, amplifies, and enhances the self-realization of others (FUENTES, 2014, pp.161-162).

The *Ubuntu* philosophy is an ethical-relational value of justice, encapsulated in the idea "I am because we are." One of its principal contemporary advocates, Bishop Desmond Tutu, defines it as follows:

Ubuntu is the essence of being human. It speaks to how my humanity is inextricably bound up with yours. The word expresses not, as Descartes said, ‘I think, therefore I am,’ but rather, ‘I am because I belong.’ I need other human beings to be human. A completely self-sufficient human being is a subhuman one. I can be me only because you are fully you. I exist because we are, for we are made for complementarity. We are created for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence with our fellow human beings and with the rest of creation (TUTU, 2012 *apud* MATTOS, 2023, p. 327).

Brooke (2008) argues that the concept of *Ubuntu* offers an important counterpoint to Jung’s view of the social world, as he did not consider it plausible that a community could facilitate the individuation process. The *Ubuntu* philosophy “opens an ethical dimension to individuation and to consciousness that always seems problematic, or at least strange, for Jung, yet is nonetheless intrinsic to human fulfillment” (BROOKE, 2008).

For the African Black person, community is not the same as collectivity (SENGHOR, 1977/2001; SHUTTE, 1993); rather, *Ubuntu* is this sense of community that preserves the person and within which the person can flourish. The African humanism evoked by the term *Ubuntu* imagines individuation as a process of personal growth and transformation that takes place within the very network of relationships that makes such transformation possible (BROOKE, 2008).

Fuentes (2014) believes that Afro-descendant Brazilians have actively and symbolically internalized the *Ubuntu* philosophy, reinforcing its potential to heal our traumas:

Ubuntu is openness and dialogue, and it considers a kind of particularity, as well as individuality and historicity, that can help us create agreements grounded in shared criteria. May this genuinely cultivated consensus also inspire us to expose ourselves to others to encounter difference. To learn to engage with the differences within humanity, yours, mine, and each person, so that they may inform and enrich our own humanity. Understood in this way, to be human means to affirm humanity by recognizing the humanity of others in its infinite variety of form and content (FUENTES, 2014, p. 160).

To know ourselves more deeply while simultaneously engaging in healing, Fuentes (2014) suggests that it is necessary to undertake

investigation and interpretation from historical and anthropological perspectives, exploring documentary sources from the period of slavery and, in particular, I would add, incorporating the voices of Black people themselves to fill the gap highlighted by the author: “Black people in Brazil were silenced in all sorts of ways” (FUENTES, 2014, p. 147).

Expanding the boldness required for such transformation, Souza Souto (2020) explores the concept of *quilombamento* as an instrument derived from the institution of the *quilombo*, decoupled from its territorial meaning and instead understood as a manifestation of resistance and collectivity – representing forms of organization and intervention led by the Black population. This practice is rooted in another African philosophy, *Sankofa*, and much like the proposal of the *Ubuntu* philosophy, can be adapted to our present context, creating possibilities for plural, just, and inclusive futures. After all, “to engage in *quilombamento* is the movement of seeking the *quilombo*, forming the *quilombo*, becoming the *quilombo*. That is, engaging in *quilombamento* is the act of assuming a counter-hegemonic position of resistance from a political body” (SOUZA SOUTO, 2020, p. 141).

Finally, the proposal to articulate the *Ubuntu* philosophy with symbols of African and Afro-diasporic origin within our professional practice invites practitioners to sustained social reflection, reinforcing the importance of racial literacy training – regardless of one’s professional category – so that we do not reproduce micro- and macro-violence. It opens space for therapeutic processes that safeguard the integrity and wholeness of Black subjects, attentive to the social issues that shape their realities, and that foster the authenticity and legitimacy of Black narratives, as well as their contradictions and disagreements, both real and produced throughout the historical trajectory that has brought us to this point.

Final Considerations

To speak of the *quilombamento* of the psyche is to propose an epistemological and clinical shift: it entails moving the center of listening from an isolated interiority to the relational fabric in which *Self* and other are mu-

tually constructed. This crossing invites analytical psychology to decolonize its language, to expand its images, and to revisit its symbolic foundations, recognizing that individuation is not only an internal journey of the psyche but also a political and collective process of restoring humanity.

The *Ubuntu* philosophy, in affirming “I am because we are,” offers analytic practice an ethics of belonging and interdependence. It reminds us that no consciousness becomes whole outside of community, and that alterity may be the very ground on which individuation can flourish. For the clinician, this means recognizing oneself as part of the analytic field, implicated, affected, and transformed, renouncing neutrality as a form of power, and embracing vulnerability as a path of encounter within a decolonial perspective.

Quilombamento, in turn, understood as a technology of resistance and care, functions as a symbolic containing force in the clinical setting. It provides a protected psychic space where racialized pain can be named and elaborated. To engage *inquilombamento* is to create bonds capable of sustaining what has been denied: voice, body, spirituality, and Black imagination. Within the therapeutic setting, it becomes a living metaphor for an internal continent in which analyst and analysand gather to reconstruct and recreate meaning.

Together, *Ubuntu* and *quilombamento* emerge as necessary ethical tools that reorient the calling of the Jungian psychologist. They are practices that demand listening, silence, and presence, practices that transform the analytic encounter into a space of ancestry, memory, and future, and that affirm, against the logic of separation, an ontology of relation. A clinic engaged in *quilombamento* ceases to be a neutral territory and becomes a territory of re-existence.

Thus, the ethical commitment of a racialized analytical psychology lies not only in interpreting the unconscious but in restoring the right to dream, to experiment, to err – in sum, to exist. By allowing the symbols of ancestry and collectivity to find expression, we open apertures through which the soul, both individual and collective, may recover its wholeness, healing itself through listening and through shared experience.

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ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND WHITENESS: COMPLICITY OR CONFRONTATION?

Raíssa Völker

Abstract

The present article presents the violent reality of racism in Brazil, reflecting on how this reality relates to Jungian practice, both in the clinic and in the training of analysts, as well as in the evolution of analytical psychology theory. Since both analysts and patients are predominantly white, and since clinical work and training in analytical psychology are costly, we are, in general, embedded in a context of exclusion and privilege. Drawing on the contributions of authors who have examined issues of race, racial inequality, and whiteness, topics that intersect with Jungian theory, especially regarding worldview, the individuation process, and post-Jungian and cultural complex psychology, this work offers questions and provocations. It aims to generate movement toward what urgently needs to change: our attitude as analysts in a country whose violence is

disproportionately directed at Black people. The conclusion points to the need to unsettle theory, methods, and above all ourselves as white people, urging us to ask not whether we are implicated in racism, but how we participate in its construction. This is an ethical duty for psychologists.

Keywords: whiteness; cultural complex; racism; individuation; race.

Introduction

I open this article inevitably in the first person singular, aware that I am breaking with established norms. However, in this case, as in many others presented in this study, not breaking these norms would mean failing at the very root of this work's proposal, which is the recognition of the particular place from which one acts in the world. I must say, before anything else, that I am a white, cisgender, Brazilian woman, from an upper-class background and descended from European immigrants. It is from this place that I speak.

Today's news, August 18, 2023: National Coordinator for Articulation among Rural Black Quilombola Communities (traditional Afro-Brazilian communities) was executed inside her terreiro in Bahia. She had reported threats and requested protection from the courts. Six years ago, her son, also a quilombola leader, was murdered in front of his children's school. The perpetrators were never identified.^[1]

News (rarely reported) from every single day: every 23 minutes, a Black youth is killed as a victim of police action with firearms in Brazil. By the time this text finishes being read, at least one Black young person, who may at this very moment simply be returning from work, will have been murdered. In fact, out of every 10 people killed by firearms in the country, 8 are Black. Sixty-two percent of the women who are victims of femicide are Black (ANISTIA INTERNACIONAL, 2023).

[1] Widely reported news in major media outlets throughout the country, such as, for example, the newspaper *Correio Braziliense*,. Available at <https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/brasil/2023/08/5118305-mae-bernadete-lider-quilombola-e-morta-a-tiros-na-bahia.html>. Accessed on: 18 Aug. 2023.

Black women in Brazil survive more than they truly live: the average salary of a Black woman represents 46% of the average salary of a white man (ANISTIA INTERNACIONAL, 2023). Or, inverted: a white man earns 218% of the salary of a Black woman in Brazil.

Let us admit that none of these figures truly surprises us, since we witness daily, wherever we may live, the profound inequality in living conditions between Black and white people. Long before any of us were born, white people already occupied a more privileged position than Black people, beginning precisely with slavery. It is enough to be alive to perceive that it is, without question, more advantageous to be white than to be Black (BENTO, 2022).

What do we, psychologists and Jungian analysts, have to do with this scenario? What is the relationship between our routine clinical practice and the situation of the Black woman, accompanied by her children, whom we may occasionally encounter picking through garbage on her way to work? And further: is there any relationship between our work as analysts and the fact that we, mostly white,^[2] may earn in a single day what the Black doorman of our building earns in an entire month?

Where does our professional commitment begin, and where does it end? By not thinking about these issues, or by not knowing how to incorporate reflections on this scenario into our practice, are we, in some way, complicit in racial inequality? In which sphere do we work? What contributions does Jung offer for thinking about our psychological practice within this social and cultural context?

This article arises from a discomfort.

[2] I searched for data on the profile of Jungian analysts in Brazil in terms of gender and race, and I did not find such a survey. However, the radically minimal Black representation in our field, both in Brazil and globally, is unmistakable. In 2022, I attended the IAAP International Congress in Buenos Aires (in Latin America, therefore), and there was not a single Black person present, only a quantitatively small minority of *brancas encardidas*, to use Schucman's (2020) term. Informally, I could say that the congress was composed mostly of white people of European origin, despite being held in Latin America.

It is the discomfort of speaking about the racialized Other with the intention of denouncing injustice, while sensing, beneath the surface, a trace of paternalism rooted in a crystallized hierarchy of positions shaped by privilege. The choice, then, was to shift the gaze that had been so firmly fixed on the oppressed and turn it instead toward the place from which one looks, in this case, toward myself. This movement gave rise to encounters as difficult as they were essential, prompting shifts in my stance as a person and, inseparably, as an analyst. The first invitation was to racialize myself. The next was to ask what it means to be white. From there, reflecting on my practice – and on a possible complicity with everything I consciously oppose – became inevitable. Ultimately, confrontation emerged as the summons that has been taking shape, opening me to allow myself to be affected more deeply by a situation that inflicts violence on someone as human as I am, both globally and in our own country, which legitimizes and perpetuates heinous acts against people because of the color of their skin.

The article begins by problematizing the concept of race, examining its origin and its historical and contemporary functions. It then discusses how whiteness, the shadow of white superiority, became established and continues to perpetuate itself, fulfilling the powerful role of maintaining a constantly updated scenario of violence, death, and oppression against the Black population. To reflect on this mechanism, we draw on the concept of worldview, the assumptions underlying the process of individuation, neurosis as a psychosocial illness, and other contributions from Jung that invite us to rethink our practice, which has been so centered on personal and family issues. The text proceeds with more questions than answers regarding the evolution of analytical psychology in its engagement with cultural issues and its possible contributions. The article concludes with an inevitable invitation, one that emerges from confrontations that are difficult yet urgent: to choose to live through remembrance rather than through forgetting.

Race: The Invention of the Other

Race is “the principal structuring element of the system of inequalities that organizes Brazilian society” (IBIRAPITANGA; SCHUCMAN, 2023, p. 9). There are other axes of analysis, such as gender and sexuality, and all of them intersect (as Black Northeastern *travestis* would readily say, if they had spaces in which to speak). In every case, there is a normativity that defines what is deviant and what is normal, naturalizing the latter and eliminating the former.

The word “eliminate” is neither an exaggeration nor a metaphor. In Brazil, we live within a social structure that operates in the direction of killing deviant people, embodied as the enemy.^[3] The data presented in the introduction of this article, as well as so many others, objectively show that *race* is a central variable in the distribution of violence and exclusion in Brazil.

Having coined the term “necropolitics” (the politics of death), which gave title to one of his essential books, Mbembe (2022) defines it as a mode of state action in which the state deploys its structure and its police forces to eliminate people of a certain profile associated with biological characteristics. Zones of death are established such that the execution of some bodies is more justifiable than that of others. The criterion is generally, and primarily, defined by racism, still following a colonial and slaveholding script.

Mbembe (2022) connects Arendt’s reflections on the devastating experience of alterity and the politics of race^[4] with Foucault’s notion of biopower. This constitutes a technology of domination present in all modern states.

[3] According to the 2022 report of the *Observatório do Grupo Gay da Bahia*, Brazil is the country where the most LGBTQIAP+ people are killed in the world. Even in the face of significant underreporting, a death occurs every 32 hours. The report can be accessed through the link indicated in the references (MORTES, 2022).

[4] Race is, from the political point of view, not the beginning of humanity but its end [...] not the natural birth of man, but his unnatural death [...] (ARENDR, 2012, cited in MBEMBE, 2022, p. 18).

According to the author, the human species is divided into groups based on a biological criterion, thereby defining who should live and who should die, assuming within the State the sovereign right to kill. The Nazi State was the most complete example of this, and it paved the way for the consolidation of this racist, murderous, and suicidal model of domination practiced by the modern State.

Race, as it is treated here, is not a biological given. The documentary *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (STRAIN, 2003), already in its first episode, presents scientific data demonstrating that there is no biological basis supporting differences among human beings related to skin color. Races are “social constructs, forms of identity based on an erroneous biological idea, yet socially effective for constructing, maintaining, and reproducing differences and privileges” (GUIMARÃES, 1999, *apud* SCHUCMAN, 2020). Racial identities guide human actions, but they are not natural. They are learned and established through social practices.

“Race was never just a matter of how you look; it’s about how people assign meaning to how you look” (STRAIN, 2003, *apud* NAIFEH, 2023, own translation). We associate race with a criterion for dividing the human species according to skin color, an imagined, invented, and instituted criterion devised by white colonizers, who defined Black people as inferior. It was from this notion that the Black person came to be the Other – the dominated – and the white person the “normal” – the dominator.

Morrison (2019) uses the term *Othering* to describe a strategy of control, domination, and self-affirmation enacted through identifying someone as foreign and assigning them the status of the Other. This process desensitizes those who dominate and involves a psychological labor of (self-)persuasion that a natural distinction exists between oneself and this invented Other.

The need to transform the enslaved person into a kind of foreign species seems to be a desperate attempt to confirm oneself as normal. The urgency to distinguish between those who belong to humans and those who are decidedly not human is so powerful that the focus shifts and targets not only the object of

degradation but also its creator. Even assuming that the enslaved exaggerated, the sensitivity of the masters is medieval. It is as if they were shouting: “I am not an animal! I am not an animal! I torture the defenseless to prove that I am not weak.” *The risk of feeling empathy for the foreigner is the possibility of becoming foreign oneself.* To lose one’s own racialized status is to lose one’s difference, valued and idealized (MORRISON, 2019, p. 54, emphasis added).

Although Toni Morrison is referring to the enslaved and the enslavers, the text is strikingly current, and the cries she describes can still be heard, updated, and reaffirmed. She is speaking of the cry of the white person, a desperate cry born of the fear of annihilation.^[5]

The Emergence and Establishment of Whiteness

The fact that so many ordinary people never criticize their spiritual presuppositions – if only for the simple reason that they are unconscious – does not prove that these presuppositions are valid or even unconscious for all people, and still less that they cannot become sources of extremely serious conflicts of conscience (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI/1, § 22).

The spiritual presuppositions to which Jung refers in this passage concern naturalized ways of thinking that constitute the spirit of the age (*Zeitgeist*). As Naifeh (2023) states, the establishment of the Other based on skin color was a fundamental presupposition for sustaining the exploitation of African labor, since it served as the basis that allowed white people to maintain their Christian morality and principles of equality while pushing into the unconscious the moral implications of the human devastation represented by forced migration and slavery.

In the process of colonization, the association of Black people with the barbaric, the savage, or the primitive revealed far more about Europeans than about Black people themselves.

[5] Naifeh (2023) indeed brings forth the Hegelian idea that the master–slave dialectic is established when, although one requires the existence of the Other to recognize oneself, one also feels compelled to dominate the Other out of fear of being annihilated by them. The establishment of mutuality and equality represents an evolution that arises from an expansion of consciousness.

Europeans, white Europeans, began to create a shared identity that used Africans, Black people, as its primary point of contrast. The unequal nature of this relationship allowed white people to establish and disseminate the meaning of both them and the Other through projections, exclusions, denials, and acts of repression (BENTO, 2022, pp. 28-29).

Psychically, Naifeh (2023) argues that enslavers underwent a process of splitting and dissociation, and consequent formation of an unconscious cultural complex. Like any complex, this one also grew and strengthened as objections to the institution of slavery emerged. “And the greater the evils of slavery that were perpetrated, the more the white people needed to push their own evil actions into the shadows and to project them onto those they subjugated” (NAIFEH, 2023, p. 197). This was the historical basis for the emergence of whiteness, which consists of a subjective dimension of racial relations. According to Bento (2014, p. 25), whiteness comprises “traits of the racial identity of white Brazilians grounded in the idea of whitening.”

The concept of the cultural complex was developed by Singer and Kimbles (2020). The authors return to the geology of the psyche presented by Jung in Lecture 16 of the *Seminários sobre Psicologia Analítica* of 1925 (JUNG, 2014), emphasizing unconscious layers linked to specific human groups, marked by a culture defined by time and space. The cultural complex, like any complex, operates autonomously, defining beliefs, principles, and values that mediate relationships within a given culture, beyond conscious control.

Just like the individual shadow, the cultural shadow, when not confronted, can dominate the collective ego and produce true humanitarian catastrophes by projecting its contents onto the Other. The cultural complex, while disseminating very simple ideas, is so deeply installed that it becomes extremely difficult to question (SINGER, 2021), which can lead to serious consequences, such as the exclusion and violence to which the Black population is subjected.

Even after the abolition of slavery, white people needed to continue

considering Black people inferior. According to Naifeh (2023), if white people were to begin seeing Black people as similar to themselves, the shock experienced by the white group when faced with the reality that they had committed such heinous crimes against people as human as they would be unbearable. Beyond their ethics and morality, all their privileges, their way of life, and their worldview, which were entirely sustained by the logic of white superiority, would also be at risk. Consequently, the white shadow continued to be fed after the end of formal slavery, perpetuating not only the notion of Black inferiority but an entire institutional structure grounded in racism.

Concretely, whiteness as a narrative became established and disseminated through the expansion of Europe, which transferred to white European hands all material and symbolic resources of the “others.” Indeed, the chronic poverty of African countries occurred (and continues) not only because of the exploitation and theft of their material and human resources, but also because of the destruction of their traditional economic and cultural structures through the process of colonization (BENTO, 2022).

The history of the emergence and maintenance of whiteness demonstrates that racism is not a problem of Black people but a problem in the relationship between white and Black people (BENTO, 2022). It shows us the impact of the spirit of the age on us, white people, indicating that there are introjected, even unconscious, forms of racism that we have learned not to see and that generate and sustain a structure of inequality, violence, and oppression. The establishment of whiteness is a process of multiple acts of forgetting.

Worldview as an Expansion of Consciousness

Whiteness, as an unconscious force, seeks to keep the racial bias alive and active, even when, rationally, we do not consider ourselves racist. The strength, impenetrability, and power of the cultural complex of white superiority are directly proportional to the magnitude of the massacre,

oppression, and suffering involved in colonization and slavery. Therefore, confronting the shadow of whiteness requires considerable courage and remains an urgent task.

In *Psicologia Analítica e Cosmovisão* (JUNG, 1928/1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 689-741), Jung invites us to investigate the psychic attitude one holds toward the world, an attitude formed by the values, principles, and experiences that shape how we interpret the world and act within it. Worldview is related to culture as the heritage of the group to which we belong: “We can speak truly of a worldview only when a person formulates their attitude conceptually or concretely and clearly examines for what reason and to what end they live or act in this or that manner” (JUNG, 1928/1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 694).

Awareness of one’s psychic attitude is both a condition and a seed of worldview, which develops through the accumulation of knowledge and experience upon the attitude that has become conscious. Jung (1928/1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2) offers the powerful metaphor of a headquarters operating behind the actions of an army. Faced with life’s situations, we act like an army on the battlefield, yet the direction of our action obeys a command that is not present in the arena, that is neither explicit nor conscious, or at least not entirely.

Which group are we representing when we act in the world, in social relations, in the consulting room? To which interests are we responding? Which group does the person before me (for example, the patient) represent? What heritage do we each carry in terms of psychic attitude?

It is not irrelevant to know what kind of worldview we possess, because we do not merely form an image of the world; that image modifies us retroactively. The concept we form of the world is the image of what we call the world. And it is through this image that we orient our adaptation to reality (JUNG, 1928/1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2, § 696-697).

These words sweep away our all-too-common illusion of neutrality in the consulting room. As analysts, it is an indispensable commitment to expand consciousness regarding how culture has shaped, and continues

to shape, our attitude toward everything that demands an active response from us. Moving from a merely unconscious attitude to a living and continually updated worldview may require a forceful decision, according to Jung (1928/1931/2013, OC, vol. VIII/2), though it is essential if we are to stop perceiving things in a simple, absolute, or – worse – naturalized manner.

Jung states that the moral differentiation of the analyst is as important as knowledge itself. If the analyst does not “render account to himself” and clearly assume the values and principles that sustain his personality, the dialectical method becomes impracticable, and the analyst will end up treating his own neurosis in the patient. The personality of the analyst is, therefore, the inevitable method. Yet, Jung writes (1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI/1, § 23): “I do not know which is the greater difficulty: to acquire great knowledge, or to renounce one’s professional authority and anonymity. In any case, the latter requirement puts the moral capacity of the psychotherapist to the test.”

Jung’s call here is not simply for the therapist to study what happens around them, but to study themselves, to perceive the ready-made rear-guard that acts through their interventions and filters their listening. Not only does the therapist represent a social group, but the patient also carries their group with them: its wounds, values, principles, and history. We must live by remembrance and not by forgetting, also in the historical and social spheres of the groups to which we belong.

Singer (2021) warns of the danger of analysts applying theory while disregarding history and culture, working with everyone according to the same architecture of listening, almost like a Starbucks or McDonald’s. It is a place of comfort and an illusion of control, but one that leaves outside the door all the cultural specificities of the relationships, wounds, and dramas inherited by both patient and analyst. Theory must become unsettled; it must be alive in time and space.

When speaking of worldview, Jung invites us into a place of permanent doubt about our certainties and our one-sidedness. He urges us to con-

tinually place ourselves in perspective. He calls us into a space of expansion, flexibility, and curiosity, not only through knowledge, but above all through a willingness to experience.

Understanding the origins of whiteness offers important clues about how we are internally shaped in our biases toward acting in the world. We, white people who do not identify as racist and who are in some way invested in building a more just humanity, are being informed that defending Black people in our discourse is not enough. There is a more arduous, but far more effective, task to be faced. It is a confrontation, so central to analytical psychology, with forces that act through us: in this case, the devastating force of racism.

The White Shadow

The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. Becoming conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real (JUNG, 1951/2013, OC, vol. IX/2, § 14).

Many, if not all, of us white analysts claim not to be racist and even explicitly speak out against racial violence. In truth, the situation of Black people affects us very little in our daily lives. We even enjoy the freedom of not having to think about racial inequality at all, because we are not routinely and necessarily confronted by it. As white people, we have the privilege of going through most, if not all, of our lives without asking what it means to be white or even considering ourselves racialized. Yet this privilege is exclusively white.

If being Black involves a problem, being white also involves one. If there is Blackness, there is whiteness. If we must hold ourselves accountable for our worldview, for our inherited values and principles, we must look, today and always, at what operates within us on the axis of race. What are the implications of being white?

Cida Bento has been, in recent years, a leading voice in reflecting on whiteness in Brazil. In her book *O Pacto Narcísico* (BENTO, 2022),

she draws our attention to the fact that our society was built upon and continues to rely on civilizing pacts, mostly unspoken, that preserve relations of domination that must be recognized. In the case of the pact of whiteness, it is essential to experience the perspective that emerges when we turn our gaze toward the white person who occupies the “universal” center, rather than focusing solely on the racialized Other. In doing so, a “non-verbalized pact of complicity among white people, aimed at maintaining their privileges” becomes visible (BENTO, 2022, p. 18). She continues:

The pact is an alliance that expels, represses, and hides what is intolerable to be borne and remembered by the collective. It generates forgetting and shifts memory toward shared cover-up recollections. The pact suppresses memories that bring suffering and shame because they are related to slavery (p. 25).

As reported by René Kaës (1993, *apud* BENTO, 2022), it is a private delusion(our delusion as white people). A delusion that involves – and perhaps even depends on – viewing the Other as a threat to our (white) physical integrity, an assault on life, a danger, which forms the imaginary of white sovereignty (MBEMBE, 2022). It is not difficult to validate this if we notice our feelings and attitudes each time we see a Black man walking toward us at night, and the different reaction we would have if he were white.

The shadow is a living part of the personality and therefore wants to manifest in some way. It cannot be canceled by argument or rendered harmless by rationalization. [...] Such an allusion is not pleasant. People prefer to invent a heroic world beyond good and evil and cut the Gordian knot rather than untie it (JUNG, 1934/1954/2013, OC, vol. IX/1, § 44).

The sense of threat also manifests in what DiAngelo (2018; Ibirapitanga & Schucman, 2023) has called *white fragility*. Very little is needed for us to enter a reactive defensive state: explanations, justifications, denial, anger, guilt, and pain. Racial stress – generated by explicit discussion of the inequalities produced by race – becomes intolerable for us, white people. In addition to our self-defense, we have an institutional, political,

and legal apparatus at our disposal, historically built upon a solid racist foundation that silences Black voices and maintains white sovereignty.

In her doctoral research on the relationship between whiteness and power in the city of São Paulo, Schucman (2020) frequently observed statements revealing white fear. What stands out is the fear white people feel of having their whiteness exposed. This fear arises when the white person encounters the Black person as a subject of self-determination, which renders the Black person threatening because, in such situations, the Black person looks at the white person “not with the desire for whitening, but with analytical eyes that lay bare whiteness. There lies the fear” (p. 142).

Some values of modernity have solidified white fragility as a sociology of domination. They are ways of maintaining and protecting our positions: individualism, meritocracy, and binary thinking – specifically the good/bad dichotomy here.

Individualism leads us to understand ourselves as detached from a group or collective. It is a powerful ideology, fragmenting and absolving, that exempts us from the forces of socialization, from both undesirable contaminations and transformative potentials. Individualism allows us to say that we are different, that we think this or that way. Moreover, it separates us from important inheritances. Meritocracy, in turn, is a shameless trap, for it qualifies the elite as virtuous and hardworking while disconnecting their status from any transgenerational benefit.

Labeling racism as something simply bad pushes away reflection on the privileges acquired and sustained by it. Racism is a bias, largely unconscious. Being racist does not necessarily speak to a person’s character, but perhaps to their ignorance, an ignorance that inevitably permeates us in various ways. As Frantz Fanon states, “racism and colonialism should be understood as socially generated ways of seeing the world and living in it” (1980, *apud* SCHUCMAN, 2020, p. 49). This perspective allows us to acknowledge our own racist bias – a necessary starting point for generating effective change.

The relationship between white and Black people is inherited and learned. We grow up understanding that being white is better than being Black; that Black people live in inferior housing conditions; that great writers and scientists are white (and men, in general); that Black people follow orders from white people and serve them; that Black people are the majority in prisons, and so on. It is a racist scenario that we learn not to find strange, and therefore to naturalize, regardless of our political or religious orientation. We, white people, learn early on our place in the racial order, and from that place we act in the world. It is striking to realize that racial segregation causes us no meaningful loss; on the contrary, it preserves in our hands the treasures of our privileges (DIANGELO, 2018). And like us, our children learn through experience that racial segregation poses no threat to them. So why, then, think about it?

Whiteness in Analytical Psychology

Jung (1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI/1) states that the essence of neurosis is not only clinical and individual but, above all, psychosocial – that is, far more systemic than merely individual. “Neurosis obliges us to expand the concept of ‘illness’ beyond the idea of an isolated body disturbed in its functions, and to consider the neurotic person as a sick system of social relations” (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI/1, §37). Clearly, the ill is the historically structured system of racial inequality in which we are immersed, patients and analysts alike.

Even in the face of Jung’s invitation to shift our gaze from the notion of the individual to that of the system, we have been trained to ask questions about the individual, not to ask (ourselves) questions about society and culture – at least not within the analytic setting. There seems to be a delusional fragmentation between personal issues, which are considered legitimate topics for therapy, and cultural issues, treated as outside the therapeutic spectrum, as if it were possible to separate the person from that utterly human category.

In Hillman’s critical reading of psychology, we are professionally posi-

tioned to rummage through the personal histories of our patients, and our own, while disregarding any social or historical factors in either sphere (HILLMAN; VENTURA, 1995). This orientation is closely tied to the pursuit of neutrality and the minimal exposure of ourselves, in theory, to avoid contaminating the therapeutic relationship with our own ideas and perspectives. In doing so, we reduce the psyche to a private sphere, detached from collective life.

In the preface to the volume *Aspectos do Drama Contemporâneo*, in *Obras Completas*, Jung (1946/2012, OC, vol. X/2) directly affirms that the analyst's isolation on the "faraway, quiet island of his scientific work" (p. 11) is not a responsible attitude. He proposes not merely studying or informing oneself about events but cultivating a participatory attitude. Jung does not seem to imagine us as neutral.

He must descend into the arena of the events of the world and take part in the struggle of passions and opinions; otherwise, he will perceive the unrest of his time only from afar and inaccurately, becoming incapable of understanding, or even hearing, the suffering of his patients (JUNG, 1946/2012, OC, vol. X/2, p. 11).

Regarding neutrality, or better said, reasonableness, Hillman and Ventura (1995) challenged us nearly 30 years ago:

The repressive atmosphere of therapy preaches that psychology must be respectable. [...] We must be careful, proper; neither extremists nor radicals, not mixing with our patients in the outside world. And this bends our thinking toward a psychology of the white middle class. A friend told me: 'The problem with growing older as a therapist is that I cannot allow my eccentricity to expand.' Because what is expected of the therapist is that he be steady, punctual, a contained and reasonable person. *The therapist unconsciously embodies the goal of therapy*. [...] Well, that is not my goal. The goal of my therapy is eccentricity, derived from the Jungian notion of individuation (HILLMAN; VENTURA, 1995, pp. 39-40, emphasis added).

It is worth asking ourselves: How can we be reasonable and neutral in the face of a scenario so inhumane and devastating, with practices of exclusion that victimize people who deviate from a fabricated norm? Might

the eccentricity mentioned by Hillman, or the offering of equivalent value to society, as Jung invites, point to what individuation truly demands in our practice? Are we genuinely committed to this goal, as Jung calls us to be?

In *Adaptação, Individuação e Coletividade*, Jung (1916/2014, OC, vol. XVIII) argues that individuation is not individual but is necessarily a collaborative act on behalf of the development of humanity as a collective. He is categorical in stating that to individuate in isolation, without delivering value to society, is pedantic and useless. Whoever does so deserves the contempt of a society that has the right to expect realizable values.

Individuation remains a pose as long as no positive values are created. Whoever is not creative enough must establish collective conformity with a group of his own choosing; otherwise, he remains a harmful, empty person and a pedant. One who creates values that are not recognized belongs among the despised, and he himself is to blame for this, because society has the right to expect realizable values. The existing society is always of absolute importance as the point of transition through which all development of the world passes, and it demands the highest collaboration of every individual (JUNG, 1916/2014, OC, vol. XVIII, § 1.097, own translation, emphasis added).

Jung (1916/2014, OC, vol. XVIII) calls us to collaborate not only in the personal or familial sphere but with culture and humanity. Without delivering values, individuation fails. Individuation is considered such only when we can open new pathways to relate in new ways, through the integration into internal realities that dialogue with collective conditions. Individuation is an act of love, according to Jung. Thus, it is sealed by the offering of something genuine to the world – not in pursuit of recognition, but through the relationship of a whole and integral person with the soul, through supreme love.

Yet nothing in this direction happens without the tension of opposites (JUNG, 1951/2013, OC, vol. IX/1). Given the magnitude of suffering that racism has historically imposed on so many lives in Brazil and worldwide, it seems to me essential that we open ourselves to confronting the

shadow of whiteness. It is not comfortable, but one way of bringing the cultural shadow into consciousness is to understand the creation and maintenance of the notion of the Other in the psyche (NAIFEH, 2023). Considering cultural complexes allows – or could allow – the release of the tremendous energy held in the grip of these complexes.

Do we consider racial issues in our personal work, in our clinical practice, and in our broader work as psychologists? Does our practice contribute to new civilizational pacts, or do we bypass this possibility of collaboration? Who has access to our consulting room? What is the reach of our work of care?

Gustavo Beck (2023) studied the relationship with money in analysis and showed how analytical psychology is globally structured in exclusionary ways. Money is included in the analytic relationship, yet the economic logic in which that money exists is always kept outside the therapeutic bond. There is indeed a blind spot (or more precisely a mute spot) in the analytic relationship. Beck argues that, in truth, we analysts benefit from income inequality, which sustains our trainings, congresses, events, and consulting rooms. He highlights that the psychology we study and practice was born in a period in which capitalism was already consolidated; therefore, our practice remains vigorously grounded in capitalist logic.

Given the privileged position of white people and capitalism as a system built upon inequality and the destruction of traditional economic and cultural forms, this explains why our practice is sustained by inequality. Black people do not arrive at our private consulting rooms, and, more than that, our practice is sustained by this very exclusion. Black people sustain, at the vast base, our entire white life of privilege. Charging high fees for sessions is only possible because Black people are earning miserable wages that sustain the logistical apparatus of our lives, in all its spheres.

Bento (2022) investigated the organizational realities in Brazil and observed that a racial perspective is absent from metrics regarding advances, setbacks, successes, and failures. It is worth asking: Does ra-

cial perspective enter the metrics of our analytic trainings, regional, national, or international congresses? How do we act – favorably or unfavorably – toward inequalities, beyond presenting papers (such as this one) or theories, but in changing the exclusion of Black people from contemporary analytical psychology? Will we hear, in our auditoriums, classrooms, and consulting rooms, Black people speaking in the first person? Or will we continue, at best, speaking of them in the third person? And further, will we continue to be silent about ourselves, as racialized white people carrying all the antecedents we bear?

To speak theoretically about the Other is to reinforce our place as the “natural” ones in the world; it is to reinforce the Other as Other and oneself as the norm (FAVERO, 2022). It is not to approach the Other or their reality, but to exercise a politics of comfort and to expiate guilt from a protected, privilege-sustaining position.

It is neither easy nor comfortable to confront a cultural layer so deep, entrenched, and even protected by an institutional and social structure that operates through forgetting and self-justification. The confrontation with unconscious contents is a test of courage (JUNG, 1951/2012, OC, vol. IX/1).

Final Considerations

This work was propelled by an inner summons to responsibility, a summons still alive, and one I hope remains so. It raises more questions than answers, as it is concerned with deconstruction rather than resolution, clearing our field of practice of certainties and distractions that obscure what is most difficult to face.

There is a convenient collective amnesia about how racial hierarchies were constructed. White ignorance regarding the narcissistic pact provides the basis for Black – and Indigenous – counter-narratives to lack a resonant force, because they do not echo within the white subject who dominates.

Working in the territory of memory means reaffirming that it is not only

about recollection or interpretation. Memory is also a symbolic construction generated by a collective that reveals and attributes value to experience and strengthens communal bonds. And memory can also be the revision of a people's "victorious" past, revealing anti-humanitarian acts they committed – acts that elites often seek to erase or forget (BENTO, 2022, p. 39).

“White people should not ask whether they are part of the construction of racism, but how they are part of it” (IBIRAPITANGA; SCHUCMAN, 2023, p. 26, emphasis added).

This article invites us to reflect on our professional practice. If cultural conditions contribute to the discarding of people based on skin color, if colonial logic remains sustained and naturalized – producing profound human suffering – there are subjective processes that support and enable this dynamic. And, as we have seen, we white people are the protagonists of these processes. As analysts, we are not called to solve the socio-economic structural problems of society, but to intervene in those subjective processes (MARTÍN-BARÓ, 1997).

For such intervention to be liberating rather than normative and regulatory, we must interrogate the social place from which we see the reality brought to us, and which vision of the subject we privilege in our listening and intervention. If we must confront our psychological knowledge with the new problems arising within culture, then all the more must we confront a crystallized scenario of violence, exclusion, and inequality. Our theories and practices must remain perpetually unsettled. Applying theories and techniques unreflectively, especially those emerging from other contexts, rarely contributes to our broader work of consciousness-raising and liberation. To achieve an adequate understanding of the deepest problems, we must necessarily, inescapably, begin from our own historical perspective and from the perspective of the people we accompany (MARTÍN-BARÓ, 1997). It is our ethical duty as psychologists and Jungians.

There is a normative flow in our training that must be disrupted. As Jungians, we belong to institutions born within specific historical con-

texts. Much of this nourishes us, but again, we must be willing to update what has been perpetuated. And this is not an easy or natural task, because what I call the normative flow, drawing inspiration from the necessary book by Stona and Carrion (2021), occurs because our analysts and supervisors were themselves analyzed and supervised by analysts within a lineage that originates in a European, male, and white context. It is up to us, and to each generation, to question, unsettle, update, and problematize our own field, so that it remains alive in time and integrated with culture.

We must articulate our worldview and keep it alive and visible. Otherwise, besides failing to deliver values, we run the serious risk of harming the people who enter our consulting rooms when we suggest that cultural issues are, in fact, personal and subjective ones. The warning from Hillman and Ventura (1995) is essential here, about a necessary and lucid way of understanding a depressive picture:

The depression we are trying to avoid may very well be a prolonged and chronic reaction to what we are doing to the world, the lamentation and mourning for what we have done to nature, to cities, to entire peoples – the destruction of much of this world. We are depressed in part because this is the soul's reaction to our unconscious lament and grief. The pain of seeing the destruction of the surroundings in which I grew up, of having lost the fertile land I knew as a child, of everything that has been lost and disappeared. For this is what depression looks like (p. 47).

Perhaps this article is an empty protest. It arises because I sense a lack, both in myself and in the Jungian collective to which I choose to belong, of a more tangible commitment. I do not believe we have ready-made answers, even 150 years after the birth of our master. And I hope we never do, as a way of honoring him – he who kept his thinking and rethinking alive throughout the elaboration of his work.

I find comfort in reading Hillman (1995), who says he permits himself to leave protests empty, without placing something new immediately in the place of what he rejects, but to observe what emerges when one begins by

relinquishing a position. When we rise from the same old, marked place and allow ourselves to enter into movement, without knowing exactly what the new configuration will be, yet recognizing that remaining unconscious may mean being complicit, movement arises from the confrontation we know to be necessary and urgent.

It is a matter of moral courage to confront the harm caused by the master to the enslaved, and the inevitable deflation that comes with giving up the feeling of superiority over the Other. Deflation may feel like annihilation, but it is in fact a blow to the supremacy of the ego, permitting the expansion of consciousness needed for psychological growth. We, who are identified as white, must [...] tolerate becoming aware of the qualities we project onto people of color that lie in our own shadow, and tolerate the shame we will feel when we allow ourselves to see how we, as individuals and as a society, continue to sustain institutional oppression. Only then can the healing of this trauma occur, for all involved (NAIFEH, 2023, p. 205).

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CONSIDERATIONS ON JUNG'S ALLEGED RACISM

Chiara Giubellini

Abstract

On the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth, the intention here is to celebrate him from an aspect that has been little discussed in training schools. By revisiting some of his texts, attention was given to terms that led Dalal, in 1988, to publish *Jung: a racist in the British Journal of Psychotherapy*. The silence that followed echoed Jung's own silence regarding anthropologists of his time who had already raised the issue. Thirty years later, a group of Jungian analysts broke this silence by publishing a *Carta Aberta* (2018), the drafting of which originated in an intervention by Andrew Samuels during the 2007 IAAP Conference in South Africa. The theme will be addressed in light of two key elements: the analyst's capacity to confront their internal resistances and unconscious biases, accessing new experiential dimensions that may give voice to silence; furthermore, approaching Jung through an aspect that for so long was subjected to forgetting and

accusations also allows students in training to experience the learning of Jungian thought with a spirit freer from superficial fascinations.

Keywords: analytical psychology; anthropology; primitive; the word N*; colonized anthropological material.

Introduction

In Farhad Dalal's article (1988), what draws particular attention – even before the terms employed by Jung that later became targets of criticism – is a specific observation the author directs toward the Jungian community: he identifies within it a phenomenon of supposed selective blindness, that is, a partial and biased reading of Jung carried out by Jungians themselves (DALAL, 1988). In this way, a dichotomy seems to emerge between, on the one hand, articles that accuse Jungian terminology of racism and, on the other, the scant engagement of the analytical community with this issue. In both cases, Jung is apprehended in a fragmented manner: either only his luminous side is discussed or, conversely, only his most uncomfortable aspects. Jung embodies both dimensions – light and shadow – within a complexity that often places him in tension, revealing him as a profoundly human historical figure in the most authentic sense of the term. It is precisely this human Jung that this article seeks to give voice to. Through a rereading of texts such as *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões* and selected volumes of the *Obras Completas*, the lexical choices that proved offensive when referring to certain population groups will be examined, to initiate a critical reflection that is nevertheless grounded in an in-depth reading of his work. Thus, it is proposed to move through an intermediate symbolic space – avoiding, on the one hand, a punitive stance and, on the other, a devotional attitude. The aim is to sustain a respectful and well-founded critique, commensurate with the complexity of his thought.

The theme in question is quite broad, not only because it encompasses multiple fields of application – such as cultural anthropology, biology, genetics, and ethics – but also because of its potential effects: it concerns

not only the impact on individuals participating in analytical training programs, but also a field of tension that may even generate potentially irreparable fractures in the institutional or theoretical fabric. “What Jung wrote about Africans and Black Americans disturbed and troubled many readers and commentators,” states Andrew Samuels (2019). For the author, labeling Jung as a racist is a reductionist stance, but so too is describing him merely as “a man of his time.” Samuels further emphasizes the absence, regarding the Jungian community, of a serious, public, and responsible confrontation with the racial issue, noting that the lack of an explicit distancing from certain formulations by Jung has contributed to the implicit perpetuation of unelaborated prejudices (SAMUELS, 2019). With due rigor, this article seeks to identify terms of possible racial content used by Jung, without, however, isolating them from the context that gives them meaning, whose understanding is indispensable for a responsible reading. Jung himself admits to having become accustomed to living on two levels simultaneously: that of consciousness and that of the unconscious (JUNG, 1961/1995, p. 270). In *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, he shares with the reader a dream that occurred on the night before he departed for Tunis, after having witnessed, during the day, an event in which he did not refrain from referring to the local people as “primitive.” In the dream, Jung confronts the most aggressive and primitive part of himself (JUNG, 1961/1995, pp. 270–271). At the same time, one cannot ignore an essential point: as Jung emphasized in the *Fourth Tavistock Clinic Lecture*, the in-depth analysis of a dream can never be limited to the personal level, requiring a move beyond it toward the collective unconscious (JUNG, 2013, p. 119). The ambivalence of human nature thus becomes evident, set in motion by the simple use of words and amplified by the symbolic stature of Jung as a figure. Equally unsettling is the confusion that may befall us if the plane – concrete or symbolic – to which a given term refers is not clearly indicated. In this sense, it seems that Jung invites us not to adopt a posture of passive receptivity, an attitude especially common in the early stages of a formative trajectory. Stefano Carta

(2008) observes that the terms used by Jung are subject to multiple and, at times, contradictory definitions – not due to a lack of clarity on the author’s part, but because it is inherent to the nature of psychic experience that it does not lend itself to reduction to a single meaning.

Throughout this article, an effort will be made to keep certain questions open, aware that the search for definitive answers does not constitute the core of the discussion. On the contrary, the aim is to sustain the field of doubt as a fertile space for analytical reflection. Among the questions that arise, the following stand out:

Why does Jung employ terms that today are easily considered offensive and racist, while at the same time manifesting a visceral interest in traveling to Africa with the intention of encountering that invisible and unknown part of his own personality? (JUNG, 1961/1995, p. 273).

Could the confusion generated by Jung’s lexical choices – rather than offering us unequivocal definitions or a clear position – perhaps more powerfully stimulate in us the possibility of directly experiencing a shadowy dimension of our own subjectivity, evoked by the encounter with otherness, instead of projecting it onto ethnic, cultural, political, or religious groups that are often hastily and prejudicially labeled as inferior?

Another key for reading may be the fact that Jung frequently does not provide explicit explanations for the terms and concepts he employs. Augusto Romano notes how averse he was to the other’s need to be guided in understanding ideas (JUNG, 2013, p. 9). It was not in his nature to offer conclusive definitions or to teach in a directive manner – and those who have traversed the reading of his *Obras Completas* are aware of this.

For example, when applying the amplificatory method to the term “primitive,” a central conceptual experience in the thought of Donald Winnicott comes to mind. In this context as well, the term generated confusion – although of a different nature from that provoked by Jung – in the translations of the *primitive English* into the primary Italian. We may take as an example the essay *Primitive Emotional Development* (1945), published in Italy as *Lo Sviluppo Emozionale Primario* (WINNICOTT, 2025,

p. 11). However, in Winnicott's thought, the distinction between primary and *primitive* is clear, beyond linguistic nuances. "For Winnicott, the primitive does not refer to that which comes before, to early relationships. It is a quality of experience. It refers to ferocity, ruthlessness [...] and belongs to the developmental process" (WINNICOTT, 2025, p. 11). On the other hand, "primary," in Winnicott, does not designate a quality of object relations, but rather certain developmental processes that begin very early – such as personalization and the acquisition of a sense of reality. Such distinctions between the primitive and the primary had already entered the psychoanalytic lexicon in the 1920s, with Melanie Klein. For Klein, aggressive instincts are *primary* (because they precede love), whereas *primitive* refers to the less elaborated and cruder aspects of the psyche – such as the use of action in place of words (WINNICOTT, 2025, p. 12). When we reflect on that which is original and little developed, the mind tends to evoke the archaic, or even the mythological – although such evocation generally remains confined to the field of developmental psychology, without extending into the sphere of anthropology. In Jung, however, one notes the absence of a clearly assumed position regarding the terms he uses, which ultimately leaves the reader in a state of ambiguity and exposes them to multiple interpretative possibilities. I consider that, to break the persistence of prejudices and accusations that span decades, silence and the absence of reaction are not sufficient. It is therefore necessary to provoke an equal and opposite movement, nurturing what Henri Bergson (2002) calls "creative evolution," a vital impulse that demands a conscious and engaged stance. This also includes recognizing the gaps in knowledge that we carry about Jung, given the vastness and density of his work. His oceanic complexity – his psychic totality – inevitably confronts us with the limits of our own understanding. Precisely for this reason, the effort to critically examine his formulations, without reductionisms or idealizations, constitutes not only an ethical task but also a path toward deepening analytical thought.

Historical–Anthropological Dimension

A Google search on the expression “Jung and religion” returns approximately 204,000 results, whereas “Jung racist” yields about 1,190,000, “Jung antisemitic” around 47,600, and “Jung mystic” approximately 70,300 results. These numbers highlight the ongoing interest in clarifying the relationship between Jung and the term “racism” – a topic that is particularly sensitive for Jungian analysts. During her years of training, the author of this article encountered a widely disseminated indifference when becoming aware of accusations of racism directed at Jung. It seemed unthinkable – almost disrespectful – to question the founding father of the analytical approach she had chosen to follow, leading her to postpone such reflection to a future moment.

Let us recall some aspects of Jung’s personal history that can serve as a backdrop for the analysis of terms considered offensive today. According to van der Post, a close friend of Jung, the geographical data that shaped his existence – from birth to death – are fundamental not only for understanding the evolution of his personality, but also for illuminating the contours of his theoretical production. “He himself liked to say that, from an early age, he was convinced of the impossibility of living without water” (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 83). Jung was born in 1875 in Kesswil, a Swiss municipality on the shores of Lake Constance, and four years later, his family moved to a village on the outskirts of Basel, still close to the Rhine River (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 83). In 1900, he moved to Zurich, in the vicinity of yet another major river (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 83). The mention of these biographical details is not merely informational but seeks to highlight the extent to which the symbolic geography of one’s native land can influence the character of those born and formed within it. The symbolic, alchemical, and evocative meanings of water – so familiar to us – will not be explored in depth here but remain as an implicit backdrop to this reflection. Switzerland is known for a neutrality that van der Post defines as being “of a peculiar nature” (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 120). To understand its historical development, one must

return to the year 1515, to the Battle of Marignano, when the Swiss, fighting alongside the forces of Milan against Francis I of France, were defeated and abandoned their ambition to become a European power (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 120). This renunciation, however, did not arise from despair, but from a conscious decision to fulfill themselves by other means (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 120), giving rise to the tenacious concept of neutrality, which, in its genesis, did not imply passive evasion, nor allowing others to fight on one's behalf. Swiss neutrality, in its original conception, expressed a distinct view of borders: "the borders that truly mattered were those drawn by national character and spirit, and those demarcated by the right to determine one's own *Self*"^[1] (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 120). Van der Post also shares another insightful observation: Jung, by birth, belonged to the Germanic cultural and religious complex, with a Swiss appendage; however, throughout his life, his Swiss *Self* underwent a profound metamorphosis, transforming into a personality of universal scope (VAN DER POST, 2019, p. 87). Such transformation manifests itself in several passages drawn from his works – some of which contain terms now considered offensive, such as the word N*^[2] and "primitive." This indicates that Jung did not deny his cultural complex of origin but was also capable of transcending its limits.

The intention here is not to justify his linguistic choices; rather, considering this complexity, it becomes essential to make an effort to understand the context and the person, avoiding their reduction to a mere accusation.

[1] Van der Post uses the term *Self* in a non-technical sense to designate cultural identity. In Jung, however, the *Self* is understood as the archetype of psychic totality, of which culture may constitute only one of its modes of expression.

[2] For stylistic reasons and out of ethical sensitivity, the author uses N* to indicate the word "negro" when it is necessary to acknowledge its existence to discuss its historical, anthropological, and analytical significance, without reproducing the linguistic violence it carries. Exceptions are made for quotations drawn from Jungian texts in which this word appears in full and has therefore been preserved in its entirety in this article, with the intention of not altering the experience to which we are exposed by Jung's own written words.

For those who knew Jung personally, it always seemed absurd to conceive of him as someone “anti” something, since his entire existence was oriented toward understanding the individual – and not toward issuing moral judgments or administering justice in this world (VAN DER POST, 1988).

Allowing ourselves to be challenged by the presumptively offensive terms used by Jung offers us the opportunity to reflect on an issue that continues to question contemporary reality and cannot be ignored by our sensitivity as analysts who belong, even before the analytic consulting room, to a polis. Frequently, those who meet Jungian concepts tend to attribute them exclusively to Jung. However, he often drew upon existing concepts, appropriating them to amplify and develop them until they reached uniquely deep and integrated levels. What lends an air of originality to contents that, in themselves, would not be entirely novel is his integrative disposition – a capacity to move across different disciplines and historical periods, accessing from them genuinely personal reflections at abysmal depths.

When Jung establishes comparisons between Europeans and peoples considered “primitive,” even explicitly asserting, in certain passages, the supposed inferiority of the primitive mind when compared to the Western one, he is in fact drawing upon formulations from the evolutionary anthropology prevailing in his time.

Shamdasani expresses this clearly: “Freud and Jung undertook a colonization of anthropological material” (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 277). During the first half of Jung’s life – especially in the last quarter of the nineteenth century – anthropology was consolidating itself as an academic discipline, being introduced into European and North American universities (FABIETTI, 2015, p. 7). This historical synchronicity left significant effects. To colonize a field of knowledge different from one’s original training is a risky and bold gesture – but Jung does not seem to have been restrained by prudence. Entering a foreign discipline implies making it affectively one’s own, appropriating its language and its as-

sumptions. In assuming such responsibility, Jung also incorporates the origins of anthropology – rooted in the context of colonial expansion and in the tendency of the Western mind to place excessive trust in intellectual and cognitive functions (BÜHRMANN, 2018, p. 16). The comparison that points to the inferiority of the primitive mind thus sounds dissonant, insofar as it takes anthropological theories centered on the study of humankind and applies them to psychodynamic principles aimed at investigating the individual psyche, without reproducing them in a properly faithful manner. Had anthropological observations been considered without the intention of instrumentalizing them as conceptual support for the development of the notion of the collective unconscious, the aspect of difference would have been apprehended more clearly, rather than a comparison in terms of superiority or inferiority. It is generally accepted, for example, that pre-literate peoples live in function of the group and the well-being of social functioning, which implies a marked interdependence of the individual within the family; in this context, personal achievements clearly occupy a secondary place (BÜHRMANN, 2018, p. 25). This observation alone could indicate a substantial difference when compared to Western values of individual autonomy and ego development, thus rendering any second-order comparison fragile and of little relevance. Nevertheless, the author wishes to cast doubt on the idea that the confusion generated by this overflow between the two disciplines – anthropology and analytical psychology – went unnoticed by Jung. As an indication of this, in the first section of volume 10 of the *Obras Completas*, written between the two World Wars, one finds the essay *Archaic Man*, in which it is reaffirmed that so-called primitive human beings display a psychic functioning distinct from ours (JUNG, 1931/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 111). In this text, Jung abandons parameters of superiority and inferiority, announcing that, this time, he withdraws from the field of anthropology to remain restricted to the psychic life of archaic humanity (JUNG, 1931/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 105). Jung further adds that, as we approach the psychic universe of archaic humanity, we are invaded

by the feeling that we are facing something unknown, an enigma that ceases to exist only when we become conscious of the basic assumptions with which we approach it (JUNG, 1931/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 112).

The Term "Primitive" and the "Word N*" in Jung's Works

In addition to the colonization of anthropological material, another relevant process underway at the end of the nineteenth century was the transposition of psychoanalysis from the individual subject to the group dimension – almost as an expression of a process of internal maturation within the analytic movement itself, which, starting from an initial confinement within the sphere of the individual, gradually came to include the collective as well. August Aichhorn was a pioneer in applying psychoanalysis to group practice, organizing a reeducation home for young people in conflict with the law (ANZIEU; MARTIN, 2010, p. 92). Psychoanalytic interest in group dynamics also involved Freud, who, between 1912 and 1913 – at the time of the controversies that culminated in his break with Jung – entered the field of anthropology by writing *Totem and Taboo* (ANZIEU; MARTIN, 2010, p. 86), followed by *Psicologia das Massas e Análise do Eu* (1921), a work in which he deepened the application of psychoanalytic elements to collective life, conceiving each member of the group as a representative of another's unconscious fantasy (ANZIEU; MARTIN, 2010, pp. 89–90). Anthropological language also permeated Jung's works, as will be observed throughout this analysis. Despite the validity of certain psychoanalytic principles when extended to the group, group analysis nevertheless remained confined to a setting specifically constructed for this purpose. Applying such principles, however, to a race or a nation can be a source of conceptual confusion and significant misunderstandings – bringing us back to the sense of unease provoked by certain lexical choices made by Jung. For this reason, it is by no means irrelevant to recognize the anthropological influences present in Jungian thought, especially when considering aspects of his vocabulary that today sound offensive or discriminatory.

When studying the texts of anthropologists of that time, we find an opportunity to reflect on the language in use. An emblematic example is Franz Boas, considered one of the founders of modern anthropology, who, as early as 1896, openly criticized the comparative method, which assumed that the occurrence of similar phenomena in different cultures indicated a uniform functioning of the human mind (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 276). At the same time, when reading *Race, Language and Culture* (BOAS, 2012), one finds numerous occurrences of the word N*, as if there were no other way, in written language, to refer to the Black population in contrast to the White population. This seemingly banal observation opens the way to new reflective perspectives. In dialogue with a training analyst at the *Centro di Psicologia Analitica di Roma*, it was pointed out to me that in Italy, from the mid-twentieth century until a few decades ago, the word N* did not carry a pejorative connotation; together with the expression “*di colore*,” it was the only term available to designate a Black person neutrally. The same seems to have occurred in various sociocultural contexts of Jung’s time, and the terminology employed by Franz Boas (2012) is highly indicative in this respect. When compared with contemporary Italian reality, the contrast with the Anglo-Saxon context becomes evident. During my training as a psychiatrist in London, I found myself on several occasions having to involve security forces due to the use of the word N* by some patients when referring to members of the staff.

When analyzing the word N* from its etymological roots, it derives from the Latin term *niger* and did not originally emerge with a defamatory connotation. Denigrating associations were gradually attributed to the word over time (KENNEDY, 2022, p. 4). Although it is not known exactly when it began to be used pejoratively, it is certain that by the end of the first third of the nineteenth century (between 1830 and 1840), the term had become an insult. Therefore, the originally non-pejorative tone of the word does not correspond to the period in which Jung lived (1875–1961). Randall Kennedy, professor at Harvard Law School, points out that even

today forces persist that prevent the complete eradication of the word – among them residual racism and its social tolerance, as well as a certain libertarianism regarding freedom of expression (KENNEDY, 2022, p. 137). One of the great strengths of North American political culture lies precisely in ensuring, to some extent, the protection of unpopular – and even hateful – speech against forms of state censorship (KENNEDY, 2022, p. 137).

This analysis aims to emphasize that language is a phenomenon in constant evolution and that, for this reason, words can assume very different meanings depending on historical and cultural contexts. It would therefore be overly simplistic to draw a merely semantic distinction between the use of the word *N** in Jung's time and its use today. It is equally necessary to consider the cultural context in which the term was employed. Certainly, the meanings this word assumed in North American culture – and more broadly in the Anglophone world – differed significantly from those prevailing in France, Spain, Switzerland, or even in academic environments oriented toward anthropology. It is believed that one of the main sources of confusion in the terms used by Jung stems from the fact that he perceived a potential enrichment in the interdependence between psychology and anthropology. However, this interdisciplinary dialogue also resulted in a blending of linguistic elements proper to one field being applied to another. A contemporary and illustrative example of the confusion generated by the transposition of vocabulary between distinct fields can be observed in the growing infiltration of psychiatric terminology into current political discourse.

The positions adopted by Jung align with those of evolutionary anthropologists such as Lévy-Bruhl and Bastian, who conceived primitive societies as weakly differentiated, equating them with the early stages of human development and associating them with prehistoric traits (SHAMDASANI, 2005, pp. 329–330). By adopting this perspective, Jung ultimately made explicit his own unconscious biases regarding the primitive mind – biases typical of a European worldview – which resulted

in the imprecision of projecting the archaic elements of contemporary humanity onto the minds of so-called primitive peoples (SHAMDASANI, 2005, pp. 329–330). The anthropologist Lévy-Bruhl, strongly influenced by the work of Émile Durkheim, published in 1910 *The Mental Functions in Inferior Societies* (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 290), a work in which he emphasized the fundamental differences between so-called primitive mentality and Western mentality. He described “primitives” as living in a state of *participation mystique* (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 291) and highlighted that these societies make it possible to understand the functioning of collective representations (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 291). As Jung himself observes: “Lévy-Bruhl placed collective representations as the basis of the psychology of primitive man” (JUNG, 1935/1954/1993, CW, vol. XVI, § 247). The formulations of Lévy-Bruhl, as mentioned, seem to resonate in several passages of Jung’s works dedicated to so-called primitive peoples—many of which, when read from a contemporary perspective, sound considerably reductive or problematic. Some emblematic examples are highlighted below:

I am about to say something that might offend my Indian friends, but in fact, no offense is intended. [...] An Indian does not think. Rather, he perceives thought. In this sense, he resembles the primitive. I do not mean that he is primitive, but the process of his thinking reminds me of the primitive mode of generating thought. The reasoning of the primitive is primarily an unconscious function [...] (JUNG, 1939/1964/1981, OC, vol. X, § 1007).^[3]

The mental structure of the primitive is based on an insufficient differentiation of the conscious part. Ego consciousness is a late product of human development (JUNG, 1934/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 280).

Another particularly questionable passage – especially when interpreted in light of the contemporary social context – states:

[3] Editors’ Note: This and the following quotations are the author’s free translations, based on the works consulted.

The primitive mind is characterized by a high degree of dissociability, which is expressed in the fact that so-called primitives assume the existence of multiple souls, as well as an immense number of deities and spirits (JUNG, 1948/1960/2014, CW, vol. VIII, § 217).

However, if we consider the current context, the Western mind offers us a wide range of everyday examples of dissociative states, often underlying psychopathological conditions that are widely prevalent in Western societies. Indeed, as early as 2006, Toshio Kawai postulated that modern consciousness was moving toward a new dimension, which he defined as postmodern, characterized by dissociation, arbitrariness, and virtuality. In this new type of consciousness, the subject lacks a central point, finding themselves dissociated (KAWAI, 2006). In the era of globalization and fluidity, the differentiation between the primitive mind and the Western mind, in terms of dissociability, becomes manifestly untenable.

Finally, Jung seems to attribute the shadowy presence of the primordial psyche in civilized human beings to the fact that, in primitive tribes, the level of consciousness would not have differentiated itself from this original darkness.

He writes: “The primordial psyche has no consciousness in itself” (JUNG, 1942/1954/2014, CW, vol. XI, § 442). In this case, the extrapolation of principles of psychic development – originally intended for the study of the individual – toward an interpretative scheme of an evolutionist nature becomes evident, or, conversely, the application of evolutionism to the functioning of the psyche.

In other passages, Jung seems to resume his stance as an explorer of psychic depths, adopting an eminently intrapsychic perspective when bringing so-called primitive peoples and Europeans into proximity. He reminds us that Lévy-Bruhl characterized *participation mystique* as a defining element of primitive mentality – a form of lack of differentiation between subject and object. In the absence of a level of consciousness capable of operating such a distinction, unconscious identity prevails (JUNG, 1929/1957/1983, CW, vol. XIII, § 66). As an example, Jung

mentions animism. He further adds that, “although civilized man believes himself to be far above such things” (JUNG, 1929/1957/1983, CW, vol. XIII, § 66), he is often equally affected by the same lack of differentiation – as occurs, for instance, when one remains identified with one’s parents throughout life or when one expresses affections, prejudices, and accusations directed at others but which, in fact, belong to oneself (JUNG, 1929/1957/1983, CW, vol. XIII, § 66). What is archaic and undifferentiated remains as part of the unconscious – contact with which has produced different effects in Western and non-Western minds, which are particularly visible in contemporary times. The unilateral character of the Western mind resulted in the loss of myth and, with it, the experience of meaning. This phenomenon, however, does not seem to have affected African societies, whose deep understanding of existence is manifested through rituals and ceremonies – active promoters of meanings and living myths (BÜHRMANN, 2018, p. 16), which functioned as antidotes to the unilateralization of consciousness. Jung certainly demonstrates interest – perceptible in his travel accounts – but the fear of psychic contagion and the ego’s resistance to maintaining a certain distance when faced with a tribal ritual (JUNG, 1961/1995, pp. 269–270) indicate only a partial experiential openness. Observing the scene of the horde from afar, Jung judges the absence of reflexivity of “those people” (JUNG, 1961/1970, p. 270) and highlights their limited ego autonomy. Was there, in what he observed, something foreign to him – or, paradoxically, something all too familiar? The adoption of a protective distance may reveal the perception of a danger embodied in the unknown. Alterity exposes the subject to their own shadows – and it is at this point that the fear of being subjugated by inferior aspects of the psyche seems to emerge, within a context that, to be genuinely understood, would require the observer to temporarily suspend the dominant ego function. Paradoxically, in this case, it is precisely the attachment to the ego that seems to prevent the full experience of alterity – here understood as the experience in which *self* and other manifest simultaneously (WALDENFELS, 2011, p. 7). Waldenfels argues that the

alterity of the other only acquires meaning when one meets the alterity present within oneself (WALDENFELS, 2011, p. 73). Perhaps for this reason, Jung did not take part in the horde, limiting himself to observing it from a distance. For him, it was still too early to confront his own strangeness – a dimension that would only emerge in his old age. In *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões*, Jung admits that only later did the alienation that for so long had kept him separated from the world transfigure inwardly, revealing itself as an unexpected sensation of strangeness toward himself (JUNG, 1961/1995, p. 393). Those of us who have participated in ritual ceremonies belonging to other cultures may have encountered an initially frightening dimension – a sensation of profound disorientation, as if nothing until then had awakened with such intensity a particular region of the unconscious. Subsequent reflections, although necessary, are not capable of exhausting such an experience, leaving us in direct contact with an unknown charged with unease. To sustain this dimension without saturating it with the resources of consciousness, without reducing it through prior judgments, may open us to certain aspects of life that perhaps need to remain, at least in part, inexplicable. For Jung, the horde remains inaccessible – evoking Husserl’s formulation, according to which the experience of the strange consists in the “accessibility of what is originally inaccessible” (WALDENFELS, 2011, p. 71), which implies the impossibility of occupying the place of that which is radically other to us. Jung’s act of not joining the horde also suggests another, perhaps unconscious, bias: the assumption that participation would necessarily imply a fusion with the other or the abandonment of oneself in favor of alterity. This indicates that it was not a strictly cultural experience – perhaps that was not Jung’s intention – given that an encounter becomes truly cultural only when what is one’s own is, in some way, transformed (WALDENFELS, 2011, p. 77).

Returning now to the issue of the word N*, it proves even more difficult to assimilate than the term “primitive” – the latter is sometimes softened by romantic references within psychoanalysis, as in Melanie Klein and

Winnicott, or by anthropological influences, to justify its use. Below, we present some examples that illustrate these difficulties:

In Volume V of the *Obras Completas*, after encountering the visual hallucination of a schizophrenic patient – a phallus rising over the sun – which over time led him to associate the image with elements of Mithraic liturgy (JUNG, 1912/1952/1990, CW, vol. V, § 151), Jung undertakes a series of studies “on mentally unbalanced Blacks” (JUNG, 1912/1952/1990, CW, vol. V, § 154). As a consequence of these investigations, he observed that the well-known myth of Ixion and the solar wheel appeared in the dream of “an uneducated Black man” (JUNG, 1912/1952/1990, CW, vol. V, § 154). The subsequent reflection indicates that such recurrence would not be explained by factors of racial inheritance or culturally transmitted ideas, but rather by a specific psychic disposition to generate similar images – a phenomenon Jung would later come to call the archetype (JUNG, 1912/1952/1990, CW, vol. V, § 154).

In Volume VIII of the *Obras Completas*, Jung writes:

I investigated the dreams of Black people of African descent living in the southern United States. Among other things, I found motifs from Greek mythology in these dreams, which dispelled all the doubts I had regarding the question of racial inheritance (JUNG, 1929/1960/2014, CW, vol. VIII, § 228).

He further adds: “Names matter little; everything depends on the connection between them” (JUNG, 1929/1960/2014, CW, vol. VIII, § 229), once again directing the reflection toward the domain of the collective unconscious. In this passage as well, it is possible to identify a correlation between the use of the word N* and the theoretical explorations of the collective unconscious, as if Jung were operating on multiple discursive levels. After all, analytical psychology itself offers conceptual tools that allow us to avoid a reading limited to the literal or concrete plane. Even so, the repeated use of the word N* remains unsettling and disturbing, especially in light of contemporary sensitivities.

In the passage presented below, taken from Volume X of the *Obras*

Completas, Jung reveals himself with the full weight of his cultural origins, leading us into a dimension that is easily interpreted as confused, contradictory, and ambivalent. In reality, however uncomfortable it may be to remain in this state of uncertainty into which his words cast us, it is possible to glimpse the human Jung. In the essay *The Complications of American Psychology*, Jung refers to his first visit to the United States in 1909, from which he returned with the feeling that he had perceived only a subtle difference between Europeans and Americans, without having reached the core of the matter. He recounts having been a guest of a respectable family in New England, feeling almost at home, since in Switzerland there were also very respectable and highly conservative people (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, OC, vol. X, § 950). He adds: “There were Black servants at the table. At first, I had the impression of dining in a circus, and I caught myself examining the dishes with suspicion, looking for the marks of those Black fingers” (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 950). A solemn atmosphere hovered over the setting; no one laughed, everyone was courteous – until Jung, no longer able to bear it, began to make jokes. He received condescending smiles, but missed the generous American laughter he so appreciated (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 950). That laughter came to him from the “Black servant” (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 950), and he adds: “how I loved that African brother” (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 950). From this episode, Jung identifies in the expressiveness of laughter certain characteristic traits of the American people – such as the capacity to express affection, sometimes carried to emotional incontinence, to the point that the individual finds themselves reduced to a particle within a collective mass dominated by few barriers against overflowing emotions (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 957). When outlining other characteristics he observed in the American people – such as informality, the vivid expressiveness of slang, and promiscuity – Jung proposes that the traits of national temperament would derive less from the early peasant settlers than from the presence of the “*Negro*” (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981,

CW, vol. X, § 961), whose influence permeates some American states more intensely than others. Such an observation, according to him, might astonish the “naïve” European, who tends to imagine the United States as an essentially White nation (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 961). Jung further adds that it would be “easier for a European to be immoral because he does not have to maintain a moral standard in the face of the powerful downward force of primitive life. The inferior man exerts a tremendous pressure, for he fascinates the lowest strata of our psyche” (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 962).

Once again, although today we would make substantially different linguistic choices when referring to African populations and African Americans, it is evident that, in this passage, Jung’s words are strongly influenced by categories and assumptions characteristic of evolutionary anthropology – a field that has little to do with the analysis of the individual. This is a fundamental distinction: if we fail to discern between the individual and collective levels at the interface of analytical psychology and anthropology, we risk generating conceptual confusion and significant misunderstandings. Still in Volume X of the *Obras Completas*, we encounter another particularly thorny paragraph: “Even today, the highly developed European cannot live with impunity among the Blacks in Africa; their psychology penetrates him, and he becomes a Black man” (JUNG, 1927/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 249). This statement is preceded by a reflection according to which the Romans, by living among slaves, would have been psychologically infected by them. It is followed by another observation, equally controversial, according to which the English would tend to treat those born in the colonies as slightly inferior (JUNG, 1927/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 249). In these passages, we can observe with even greater clarity how the application of a real dynamic process – psychic contagion, widely recognized in psychopathology through phenomena such as *folie à deux* – is inserted into a discourse of anthropological matrix, revealing certain unconscious prejudices present in Jung. At a particularly problematic point, he even refers to “racial infection” as a serious mental and moral

problem, especially in contexts where so-called primitive peoples numerically surpass White people (JUNG, 1930/1964/1981, CW, vol. X, § 966). At times, one has the impression of being faced with statements typical of a colonialist discourse; however, what Jung seems to colonize in this case is the anthropological material itself. Another plausible hypothesis is that, at this stage of his trajectory, Jung had not yet fully recognized the “foreigner” within himself, which may have led him to alienate his own cultural context of origin in the face of the psychic depths he sought to explore.

Final Considerations

Jung admits to having offended many people, toward whom he did not have the patience to explain himself – especially when he felt he was not being understood; in him, the need to move forward prevailed, obeying his own inner laws (JUNG, 1961/1995, p. 390). He further adds that he was not always able to remain faithful to these laws: “after all, how can one live without inconsistency?” (JUNG, 1961/1995, p. 390). These words reveal not only a profound humanity but also a lucid awareness of his own limits. Allowing oneself to be traversed by a discipline such as anthropology is, without a doubt, fascinating and enriching within the context of studying the human condition. However, this choice also brought with it the shadows of the origins upon which anthropology was constituted – that is, the contact between Europeans and other peoples that occurred in the early stages of colonial expansion (FABIETTI, 2015, p. 6). It is therefore not surprising that Jung’s appropriation of anthropological material may have contributed to the terminological confusion for which he would later be criticized – especially regarding racial content. Such confusion is almost inevitable if we consider that a discipline devoted to the study of humankind in its collective dimension – anthropology – was deliberately interwoven by Jung with analytical psychology, whose central vocation is directed toward the singular individual. Imagining the possibility of integrating the anthropology of that time into psychological discourse without incurring the colonial legacies that permeated

it, thus appears, to a large extent, utopian. An important advance in this scenario was promoted by Franz Boas, considered the founder of modern anthropology. By criticizing the comparative method, Boas explicitly rejected Eurocentrism – that is, the conception that modern Western European civilization represented the apex of human development, toward which all “primitive” cultures would ontogenetically tend (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 278). Paul Radin, in turn, directly criticized Jung’s alignment with Lévy-Bruhl’s ideas, arguing that both committed the error of projecting archaic elements of the contemporary individual onto the mentality of primitive peoples (SHAMDASANI, 2005, p. 330).

In a dialogue with a training analyst from the CIPA (*Centro Italiano di Psicologia Analitica*) in Rome, it was observed that Jung readily opened himself to accusations of racism, particularly because he believed that the collective unconscious also encompassed a dimension of a “racial” nature. It is evident that, when speaking generically about the character of Americans, Indians, Europeans, or – more broadly – of “primitives,” one inevitably incurs a naïve simplification. Nevertheless, Jung also demonstrated a deep curiosity and interest in understanding the ways of thinking and feeling of people different from his own, always with the intention of recognizing traces of these forms of consciousness within the deep psyche of every human being.

It is therefore important to emphasize that the depreciative and reductive effect in relation to so-called primitive peoples and to dark-skinned individuals – which reaches the reader through the language adopted by Jung – runs the risk of leading us exclusively onto a linguistic plane. This plane, at times contaminated by Jung’s appropriation of anthropological material, may distance us from a broader understanding of the meanings his work seeks to convey. This does not, in any way, intend to preventively justify the use of racial terms that are today widely recognized as offensive – and from which we, as a matter of principle, distance ourselves. Nor is there any wish to deny the existence – yesterday as today – of prejudices, suspicions, or fears directed toward dark-

skinned people or those with Asian phenotypic traits, often associated with the symbolic alterity of the shadow. However, such reactions do not pertain exclusively to the linguistic sphere.

If we consider Jung's work in its totality – where he constantly brought into dialogue, within the individual psyche, the rational and the irrational poles, archaic and more developed contents, attributing equal relevance to them in the constitution of the human being – the dichotomy between “superior” and “inferior” beings loses any foundation, dismantled by the realization that we all carry within ourselves both elevated and primitive aspects, regardless of gender, race, or culture.

If this were not the case, Jung would not have attributed such importance, for example, to the dream dimension. In the field of dreams as well, dark-skinned figures frequently appear – often evoking unsettling emotional states – which, in analytical practice, are understood as expressions of the shadow, capable of being integrated into consciousness. This, however, does not mean concluding that the Western unconscious is, in itself, racist.

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BETWEEN WALLS AND LISTENING: JUNGIAN CLINICAL PRACTICE WITH YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

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Abstract

Clinical listening in socio-educational contexts poses ethical, institutional, and symbolic challenges that require from the psychologist a stance that goes beyond technique. This article offers an essayistic reflection on the role of care and listening in socio-education, grounded in analytical psychology. It revisits the origins of symbolic listening, from the *Burghölzli* hospital in Zurich, where C. G. Jung began his clinical work amid delusions and images, to Nise da Silveira's *Casa das Palmeiras*, which reinvented this listening in Brazil as an ethical, political, and poetic gesture. Drawing on clinical vignettes with youth serving socio-educational measures, the article discusses symbolic listening as a form of ethical resistance and an opening to the individuation process, even in extreme contexts. It thus upholds an expanded Jungian clinical practice, attentive to the complexity of youth in conflict with the law. The text stands as a

tribute to the legacy of C. G. Jung, updated in territories of pain and exclusion, where listening is practiced not as a technique, but as a clinical, ethical, and political act.

Keywords: analytical psychology; symbolic listening; socio-education; Nise da Silveira; ethics of care.

Introduction: Listening as a Form of Care and Resistance

In 2025, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of C. G. Jung's birth, and perhaps a powerful tribute lies in inscribing his living work within territories still little explored by analytical psychology. This essay emerges in that spirit – not merely as commemoration, but as expansion. It turns to the field of socio-education, a public policy that serves youth in conflict with the law – a territory of intense contradictions, marked by tensions between care and control, subjectivity and norm, desire, and exclusion. What can Jungian symbolic listening offer in this context? In the daily practice of socio-educational units, psychologists are frequently confronted with technical and bureaucratic demands focused on diagnosis, assessment, or risk control. Yet amid these protocols, something resists: a dense silence, a broken utterance, an unexpected gesture – signs of a psyche that insists on expressing itself, yet through indirect paths. It is in this interval that the present work situates itself: in the desire to think about listening as a clinical and ethical gesture, as a mode of presence before the pain, the error, and the enigma carried by each young person in conflict with the law.

Inspired by Jungian thought and its contemporary developments, the text proposes an essayistic reflection on listening as a form of radical care. Care here is not reduced to protection; it entails sustaining psychic suffering without reducing it to the norm, without pathologizing it or dissolving it into social function. As James Hillman (1993) proposes, caring for the soul means listening to its images, even when they appear as violence, resistance, or hardened silence. Between walls and listening, perhaps these two images contain the central ethical dilemma of contem-

porary clinical practice. Walls – visible or invisible – represent images of defense and devices of exclusion erected over difference. Listening, in turn, is the gesture that crosses them. To listen, in this sense, is a political and symbolic act: a way of restoring humanity to what has been silenced.

The origins of this symbolic listening go back to the early twentieth century, when Jung, working at the *Burghölzli* psychiatric hospital in Zurich, dared to listen to delirium as language. There, within walls meant for isolation, Jung adopted a clinical attitude that recognized meaning in madness. Decades later, in Brazil, Nise da Silveira would take up this gesture – transforming part of the psychiatric hospital into a studio, the patient into a creator, and care into freedom. Her work at the *Engenho de Dentro* psychiatric hospital, the *Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente*, and the *Casa das Palmeiras*, all in Rio de Janeiro, became ethical and symbolic references for a clinical practice traversed by art, imagination, and affection.

Both Jung and Nise reveal that listening is not a method, but a stance toward otherness. To listen is to approach the unconscious – individual and collective – and allow it to speak through images. At *Burghölzli* and *Engenho de Dentro*, this symbolic listening emerged as resistance to institutional violence and as a path toward restoring meaning to psychic experience.

Thus, this article reflects on the ethical challenges of psychological practice in contexts of exclusion, proposing symbolic listening as a possible clinical and political path. It draws on experience with adolescents serving socio-educational measures but aims to go further: to rehearse a Jungian clinical practice capable of dialoguing with contemporary complexity, recognizing the shadow of institutions, and imagining ethical paths for caring for wounded psyches.

In times of ethical noise and fragmented subjectivities, listening is a subtle and radical form of resistance. And perhaps, as Nise and Jung taught in different times, listening is always a crossing between walls – a way of transforming isolation into encounter, symptom into symbol, and pain into the possibility of creation.

Origins of Symbolic Listening: between Burghölzli, Nise da Silveira, and the Logic of Exclusion

Working with youth in conflict with the law means entering border zones where social tensions are stretched to their limits. In this space, the marks of exclusion, structural racism, poverty, and institutional violence form the very fabric of listening. To listen here is to encounter forms of suffering that arise not only from the subject's inner world, but from the daily experience of a society that treats them as “useless,” “dangerous,” or “irredeemable.” This is what Sawaia (1999, *apud* BERTINI, 2014) calls ethical-political suffering – a suffering that emerges from the subjective experience of social injustice, exclusion, and the reduction of the subject to subalternity.

In this scenario, the act of listening cannot evade its political character. Not as abstract militancy, but as a living requirement of care: without positioning, listening is swallowed by already instituted logics that tend toward labeling and exclusion. Caring here always also means taking a stance – ethically and symbolically – before the suffering and history of each subject.

Caring as an Ethical and Clinical Gesture

Care is a noble verb, but in this context, it becomes entangled in contradictions that challenge both ethics and listening. Caring for those labeled dangerous, for those who have erred – and not merely erred but transgressed social norms with legal consequences – demands from the psychologist more than technique: it requires an embodied presence capable of sustaining ambivalence, impotence, and, not infrequently, fear itself.

Clinical work in these spaces does not occur under ideal conditions. It unfolds amid noise, slamming doors, suspicious looks, tight deadlines, and institutions that expect more control than care. And yet, something pulses there, which escapes: a desire to be heard, a gesture of humanity that survives institutionalization.

Within these units, listening is a political act. To listen is to refuse the reduction of the subject to the act committed. It is to see beyond the file and the report, to recognize that before the error, there is a story – images, pains, traumas, unsymbolized affections. But this listening is not neutral: it touches wounds, evokes resistances, dismantles defenses. For this reason, professionals who commit to listening must also listen to themselves, recognizing their own shadows, reactions, judgments, and fears.

Symbolic listening, so central to analytical psychology, does not rush to interpret, but sustains emptiness, silence, and the polysemy of images. Hillman (1993) reminds us that caring for the psyche means staying with it in its pathological expression – not to fix it, but to understand it in its archetypal depth. With youth serving socio-educational measures, this implies recognizing that violence may also be a distorted search for meaning, a still-raw language mediated by wounds.

Clinical work in these spaces cannot be restricted to protocols. It must also be ethical in the radical sense: to be with the other in their irreducible otherness. The word ethics, from the Greek *ethos*, refers to dwelling, to ways of inhabiting the world. To care, then, is to help the other find a way to symbolically inhabit their own life, even amid ruins.

Yet there is an unavoidable paradox: while proposing care, the psychologist participates in a system that surveils, punishes, classifies, and controls. This tension must be acknowledged. To deny it would be to repeat an omnipotent gesture of wanting to “save” the other. To recognize it, on the other hand, opens space for more honest listening – more human and more sensitive to the contradictions of the work itself.

Thus, listening that cares is also listening that reveals. It reveals that neutrality is impossible; that every act of listening carries ethical implications; and that clinical practice, when taken seriously, is always a risk – the risk of touching the other and being touched in return.

The Symbolic Origins of Listening

The ethical stance of listening proposed here has historical and symbolic roots that traverse the very foundation of analytical psychology. In the early twentieth century, the *Burghölzli* psychiatric hospital in Zurich became the stage for a silent transformation in the history of modern psychiatry. There, under the direction of Eugen Bleuler, the young Jung dared to approach psychotic patients in an unusual – if not unprecedented – way: by listening to their delusions and dreams as forms of symbolic language, rather than as mere symptoms of mental deterioration (KALLIVAYALIL, 2016).

In an environment still marked by the belief that the “mad” were incapable of meaning, Jung perceived that the unconscious speaks through images and that within them lies a tendency toward integration. This was the seed of a clinic founded on listening and respect for the symbol. Bleuler himself, in coining the term schizophrenia, sought to break with the idea of “*dementia praecox*,” suggesting an internal split, but also the possibility of integration. *Burghölzli* thus became the cradle of a listening practice that recognized in suffering a search for unity.

Decades later, in Brazil, Nise da Silveira would take up and radicalize this gesture. In the 1940s, when Brazilian psychiatry was surrendering to electroshock and lobotomy, Nise chose another path: she opened painting and modeling studios at the *Centro Psiquiátrico Nacional* and created the *Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente*. Closely accompanying her patients’ symbolic expression, she recognized in images a force of inner reorganization (CASTRO; LIMA, 2007).

Through correspondence with Jung, Nise discovered that many of these images were mandalas – symbolic forms expressing the psyche’s movement of self-regulation (SILVEIRA, 1992). From this insight, she developed her own method, grounded in three pillars: the catalytic affection, the self-healing forces of the unconscious, and the affective engagement (DAMIÃO JUNIOR, 2021).

The first – the catalytic affection – translates the therapist’s presence

as a sensitive mediator of the creative process, someone who sustains symbolic experience without invading it. The second – the self-healing forces – affirms Nise’s trust in the vital energy of the unconscious, which seeks balance even amid chaos. The third – the affective engagement – defines care as an encounter between action and feeling, between gesture and imagination.

This clinic, woven between art and science, challenged the asylum and restored humanity to madness. As Castro and Lima (2007, p. 366) note, “Nise asserted that the hospital collaborated with the illness and believed that occupational therapy should play an important role in changing that environment.” Silveira’s gesture resonates with the ethics of symbolic listening that can today also traverse the walls of socio-education: listening to the young person as a subject of images, not merely of acts.

Like Jung at *Burghölzli*, Silveira made listening to an act of resistance. Both recognized that psychic images – whether in dreams, paintings, or fragmented narratives – are bridges between the unconscious and the world. The same holds for listening within socio-educational institutions: amid noise and silence, symbols also ask to be translated.

Cases and Images of Care: Clinical Vignettes from Socio-Education

In work with institutionalized adolescents serving socio-educational measures, encounters do not necessarily occur in consulting rooms, but often on the street, at school, during home visits, in borrowed rooms, improvised corridors, or on concrete benches. Listening takes place amid noise and resistance, and it is precisely there that the most potent images emerge – images that escape control and demand more than understanding: they demand presence.

Presence in the Face of Exile

We followed the psychosocial care of a 17-year-old youth serving a socio-educational measure, accompanying his trajectory over several months. At different moments, we helped organize his basic documentation, supported his enrollment in vocational courses, and eventually

referred him to formal employment. It was one of those cases in which the network seemed to function, and the bond appeared to hold.

Months later, after completing the measure, he sought us out in despair: he was being pursued by a criminal faction in the Federal District known as “Comboio do Cão,” mistaken for a namesake involved in drug-related debts. He said there was no one left he could trust – no service, no protection. Only the name of the psychologist who had accompanied him during the socio-educational measure came to mind.

When he told us the story, he was already in flight. Within minutes, we organized an improvised relocation strategy. There was no time for institutional formalities. As we crossed the city by car, he said something like, “I lost everything. I can’t see my mother anymore, nor my girl. I lost my job.” There was a tone of mourning, but contained a nearly affectless speech, a sign that the trauma was unfolding without yet having psychic representation.

Listening at that moment was not about analyzing the past, but about sustaining the present. Urgency did not annul the clinic; it shifted it to another axis: bearing witness to pain as it takes hold, and still touching the image of a possible future.

We remembered that he had relatives in Bahia with ties to rural work. We proposed this idea – not as consolation, but as direction. Together, we traced a project and secured referrals through the local *CREAS* (*Centro de Referência Especializada em Assistência Social*). It was the crack of life we found, together.

This case illustrates a little-discussed dimension of Jungian clinical practice: the symbolic presence of the analyst as a witness implicated in extreme processes. There was no diagnosis, no transference in the classical sense. There was a bond and an act of wager. More than intervening in suffering, the task was not to abandon him and to sustain, at the edge of the unspeakable, the possibility of existing beyond trauma

Love in Times of Abandonment

She was 14 when she came to us. She was living in shelter care and had been involved in petty theft. She had passed through different institutions, always running away. When we went to visit her for the first time, she had already disappeared – she had met a boyfriend, also sheltered, and the two had fled together.

After searches, we found them living in an abandoned house in a rural area of the Federal District. It was her parents' former home; both had died in close succession from illness. No family remained she could rely on, except a distant aunt interested only in the girl's inheritance. What existed there was an improvised but living refuge: they were carefully raising two rabbits. She showed clear attachment to these animals – perhaps the only beings she could protect without the risk of being separated.

Even that was taken from her. The Child Protection Council ordered her transfer to a religious shelter, imposing separation from the rabbits and from her boyfriend as a condition. She fled again – and would flee as many times as necessary to preserve, however briefly, the small world she had managed to build.

Months later, she and her boyfriend sought us out. They were desperate, self-harming (cutting), with nowhere to go. They told us they would flee again and that what they felt for each other mattered more than any shelter. We were seized by a sense of impotence: there was no shelter capable of welcoming that bond.

We tried to alert the judicial system. We wrote reports, argued that this encounter needed to be listened to, not punished. But we were ignored along with them. It was as if the bond they shared, because it emerged outside institutional norms, had no legitimacy.

Later, we learned she had become pregnant. They were in different shelters but met frequently. In some way, the system that once separated them yielded to the force of the bond. It was not a solution, but it was a small acknowledgment of something that insisted on existing despite disauthorization.

In this case, it was not enough to operate through diagnoses, opinions, and referrals. It was, above all, a call to bear witness to a love born of abandonment and, precisely for that reason, profoundly vital. What united those adolescents was not romantic fantasy, but a form of care forged against institutions – a pact between orphans, made of body and affection.

Listening here does not interpret to frame; it listens to sustain images that emerge even amid collapse: the two rabbits, the abandoned house, the womb opening toward the future.

In this situation, we also found ourselves at the margins – listening to what the system did not want to hear, saying what it was unwilling to receive. The psychologist, in this place, ceases to be merely a technician and becomes an inconvenient witness, one who stands with what lies outside the norm. Not out of salvational delusion, but out of fidelity to the living experience presented.

Analytical psychology invites us to remain with images, and the images that emerge from these youths do not fit the protocols. They are images of love, loss, violence, animality, and shadow. By listening to them, the psychologist approaches the margin – standing between worlds, between what is permitted and what needs to be said.

In this sense, caring for adolescents in conflict with the law also calls the psychologist into conflict with the law – not in a juridical sense, but an ethical one: denouncing, sustaining tensions, challenging automated decisions. In an exclusionary system that sanitizes and rationalizes pain, truly listening can be subversive.

At the margins, there is room for the psychologist who accepts risk, who sustains imbalance, who denounces when morality becomes merely an instrument of control. This is not ideological opposition, but recognition that suffering not listened to returns as a social symptom.

Analytical psychology, when faithful to its imaginal vocation, is not an instrument of social adaptation. It is a path toward individuation – also institutional. And to individuate within socio-education may mean con-

fronting structures that prefer to silence life rather than welcome it in its complexity.

To stand beside a young woman who loves, who self-harms, who raises rabbits in a ruined house is also to stand at the edge of a collapsing world. Sustaining this place means becoming vulnerable with her. This is the radical nature of presence and of deepening the images of the psyche.

Symbolic Listening and Socio-Educational Clinical Practice

Symbolic listening is more than a method; it is a stance toward the psyche. It arises from the understanding that suffering is a form of psychic expression, a movement that traverses us and seeks paths of meaning and transformation. To listen is to open space for this force to find ways of realization in the world when listening is born of presence and resonates. In socio-educational spaces, such listening takes place between the noise of bars and the silence of interrupted histories, where speech often needs to relearn how to be born.

Upon entering a unit of confinement, semi-liberty, or community-based supervision, the psychologist encounters youths whose narratives are covered by layers of fear, distrust, and pain. It is common for the first encounter to take the form of resistance – irony, silence, provocation. Yet what resists also speaks, and it is necessary to listen to what is said through refusal. Resistance may be the last form of integrity left to someone whose subjectivity has been systematically wounded.

Between Error and Image

In Jung, error can be understood as a form of psychic expression—a movement through which individuation unfolds. Marco Heleno Barreto (2009) offers an expanded reading of this notion by interpreting error as an integral part of individuation and as the expression of a moral conflict between knowing and living. For him, error does not oppose truth; it is a path through which truth takes form, demanding responsibility for what one knows and fidelity to oneself amid the tension between consciousness and action.

From this perspective, listening to a youth in conflict with the law is not limited to re-educating behavior, but seeks to understand the unconscious meaning of transgression. Violence, defiance of authority, and impulsive acts may reveal not merely moral failure, but the symbolic drama of a subject torn between the desire for belonging and the fear of annihilation.

When a young person recounts a dream, a drawing, a fragment of memory, they are not merely reporting a fact; they are creating an image. The image is how the unconscious thinks. Symbolic listening pauses there: it does not seek to “fix” the error, but to dialogue with it, to discover what is trying to be born through failure.

This conception shifts the focus from blame to a symbolic understanding of the act. To listen, in this context, is to sustain the intermediate space between error and meaning, where the subject can begin to narrate themselves anew.

The Community as a Field of Listening

In socio-educational contexts, listening occurs both individually and collectively. Clinical work unfolds among educators, officers, psychologists, and the group of youths themselves. Words circulate amid attentive gazes and an atmosphere of surveillance, yet it is precisely there that shared images may emerge: dreams, memories, songs, symbols of common experience.

Care thus becomes a work of weaving bonds rather than imposing interpretations. This relational dimension brings symbolic listening close to what Silveira called affective engagement (1998): a clinic of affection and presence in which the professional is also affected by the encounter.

In socio-education, presence may be a nonjudgmental gaze, a collective space for speech, a symbolic workshop, or time for listening sustained even without immediate answers. To care is to hold the field, not to take possession of the other – to bear the interval between request and word.

Listening as Institutional Resistance

Socio-educational institutions carry within their structure the ambiguity of care and punishment. Amid reports, regulations, and deadlines, the time of listening is always the first to be threatened. In this sense, listening is also an act of institutional resistance – a way of preserving the human amid bureaucracy. Symbolic listening, grounded in images and affections, allows us to see where official discourse cannot reach. It reveals what the system seeks to conceal: the ethical-political suffering (SAWAIA, 1999, *apud* BERTINI, 2014) that traverses the bodies of youths and workers alike.

Whereas *Burghölzli* and *Engenho de Dentro* were transformed by a sensitive gaze, socio-educational units can also become sites of symbolic reinvention. This is not idealization but the cultivation of new ways of acting through practicing symbolic listening.

To listen in these spaces is to allow the collective psyche to manifest – in the voices of officers, the fatigue of educators, the solitude of managers, the untold stories of teams. Each individual listening reverberates in the institutional field, as if all participated in a single dream.

The Ethics of Presence

Symbolic listening is an ethics of presence. It is not content merely to understand; it seeks to be with. It resists haste, judgment, and despair for results. Jung already warned:

If, in what I am saying here, I give the impression that the only requirement for specialized therapy is great knowledge, I shall be sinning by omission. The moral differentiation of the physician's personality is as important as this other requirement (JUNG, 1935/2013, OC, vol. XVI, § 23).

This implies recognizing that each encounter is also an ethical trial for the listener. In approaching the institutional shadow, the psychologist is invited to confront their own contradictions: the desire to help and impotence, love and fear, idealization and disenchantment. In this crossing,

listening becomes an exercise in shared individuation, as therapist and youth transform one another.

Listening is thus a political and poetic gesture – political, because it resists forces that reduce the subject to the norm; poetic, because it creates new meanings where the world sees only failure.

Final Considerations: Analytical Psychology for Extreme Contexts

Analytical psychology has never been neutral. It was born from the encounter between clinic, science, institutions, politics, mythologies, imagination – between suffering and symbol. It is therefore no coincidence that its legacy continues to pulse where the psyche is most tested: in extreme contexts, where life insists even when language fails.

Socio-education, with all its contradictions, is one such context. There, psychic suffering does not arrive with technical polish; it erupts, falls silent, fractures bodies, etches scars. And it is precisely there that symbolic listening can operate as a clinical and ethical gesture, committed to not reducing the other to norm, function, or diagnosis.

This article sustains care as a field of paradoxes: a care born of the tension between understanding and punishing, involving caregiver and cared-for alike in a shared process of transformation. A care that provokes displacements, questions certainties, and opens space for the unexpected. A care that, far from idealized, recognizes its limits and yet remains necessary. A care that does not save, but accompanies, with presence, images, and words that do not close meaning but keep life open.

To listen in this context is an act of courage – courage not to know, to sustain silence and disconcertion before the suffering of the other. To listen is to relinquish the power to interpret and to accept the vulnerability of being affected. Jung bequeathed to us trust in the symbol and humility before mystery: not to offer answers, but to sustain questions; not to cure, but to listen deeply.

Symbolic listening is, in this sense, a form of hospitality toward the psyche. It welcomes the strange, the fragmented, what has not yet found

a name. It is the thread that stitches together *Burghölzli*, *Engenho de Dentro*, and socio-educational units – three institutions, three times and places, one gesture: restoring humanity to what has been dehumanized.

In times of exclusion, instrumental rationality, and colonized subjectivities, perhaps it is precisely by standing with those who are consistently silenced that analytical psychology rediscovers its original impetus: to be a path of individuation with ethical and political grounding.

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ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY AND EASTERN THOUGHT IN THE ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG: A HERMENEUTIC-COMPARATIVE STUDY

Daniel Pires Cardozo

Abstract

This article investigates the influences of ancient Western and Eastern philosophical traditions on the formulation of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology. It aims to clarify how concepts from classical Greek philosophy (Plato, Heraclitus, Stoicism) and from Vedic, Buddhist, and Taoist metaphysics are reinterpreted within Jungian categories such as archetype, collective unconscious, transcendent function, and individuation. The research adopts a hermeneutic and comparative approach, taking as its corpus central texts by Jung (especially *Tipos Psicológicos*, *Os Arquétipos e o Inconsciente Coletivo*, *Aion e Psicologia e Religião Oriental*) alongside primary philosophical sources selected for their relevance to the dialogue with analytical psychology. These materials are examined through thematic exegesis and conceptual comparison. The comparative axes privilege

the relationships between Forms and archetypes, the tension of opposites and the transcendent function, *Atman–Brahman and the Self*, and *Tao/wu wei* and synchronicity. The results indicate that analytical psychology is configured as a critical synthesis of myth, philosophy, and science, in which dialogue with ancient philosophy provides a structural matrix for thinking about the symbolic dynamics of the psyche. It is concluded that this reinterpretation, articulated with contemporary bibliography on Jung and comparative thought, reinforces the relevance of analytical psychology for current debates on individuation, cultural alterity, and psychological research.

Keywords: Carl Gustav Jung; analytical psychology; ancient philosophy; Eastern philosophies; individuation.

Introduction

Jung’s analytical psychology distinguishes itself from strictly experimental or narrowly clinical approaches by proposing a structural and symbolic understanding of the psyche. Unlike views that treat the unconscious as a mere repository of repressed impulses, Jung conceives it as a dynamic system organized by archetypes, elements that confer upon consciousness a simultaneously personal and collective dimension. From this perspective, the unconscious is understood not as pathology but as the “residue of unconquered nature within us,” whose integration with the natural spirit constitutes the central aim of analytical psychology (BALENCI, 2022, p. 860). This view calls for an epistemological expansion that goes beyond technique alone, drawing closer to philosophy to investigate the soul^[1] not as a theological substance but as a functional system that mediates between ego and unconscious.

[1] As we will see later, for Jung the soul (Seele) should not be confused with the theological notion of an immortal substance, but rather understood as a functional system of the psyche that mediates the relationship between ego and the unconscious, between the individual and the symbolic contents of experience (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC VI, § 752).

In this sense, Gewehr (2019, p. 9) notes that such a stance places Jung in an ongoing dialogue between science and philosophy, leading him to challenge both materialism and spiritualism as “metaphysical prejudices” that limit the understanding of the psyche.

In developing his theory, Jung integrated Western and Eastern traditions, moving beyond the usual scope of modern psychology. Core concepts such as the collective unconscious, the transcendent function, and individuation emerge from a critical synthesis between classical Greek thought – especially Plato, Heraclitus, and the Stoics – and Eastern metaphysics, including Vedic thought, Buddhism, and Taoism. This theoretical appropriation establishes a symbolic cartography in which Buddhist impermanence or Taoist *wu wei* enters dialogue with Heraclitean dialectics, grounding an understanding of the psyche oriented toward wholeness and self-regulation. This inquiry into the origins of the psyche is not merely historical; it touches on the problem of “internal derivation”: whether psyche emerges from matter or whether, in a cosmopsychist turn, the cosmos itself must be understood as possessing fundamental psychic qualities (MILLS, 2023, p. 35).

Within this context, the present investigation seeks to analyze the extent to which these philosophical traditions influenced, directly or indirectly, the constitution of analytical psychology. The study problematizes how the assimilation of ancient forms of knowledge – from the Theory of Forms to the dissolution of the *self* in *Uno* – was systematized by Jung to construct a psychological model that does not discard the past but reworks it. Far from an isolated formulation, Jung’s proposal is examined here as an updating of ancestral knowledges – situated within what Balenci (2022, p. 861) identifies as the tradition of the *Filosofia da Natureza* (*Naturphilosophie*), a guiding thread that begins in Antiquity, passes through Paracelsus and Goethe, and finds in Jung its modern psychological expression – bringing them into contemporary theory to approach the psyche as a complex system of opposites in search of integration.

From a methodological standpoint, this is a theoretical-bibliographic

study that adopts a hermeneutic-comparative method. The hermeneutic dimension of the research draws on Gadamer's dialectics (1997) and Ricoeur's theory of the text (2016), treating interpretation as a fusion of horizons that aims to disclose the "surplus of meaning" in the works under analysis. The primary *corpus* consists of central texts in analytical psychology, including *Tipos Psicológicos* (OC VI), *Os Arquétipos e o Inconsciente Coletivo* (OC IX/1), *Aion: Estudos sobre o Simbolismo do Si-mesmo* (OC IX/2), *A Natureza da Psique* (OC VIII/2), *O Eu e o Inconsciente* (OC VII/2), *Psicologia e Religião Oriental* (OC XI/5), *Escritos Diversos* (OC XI/6), and Jung's commentary on *O segredo da Flor de Ouro*. These texts were selected because they concentrate Jung's formulations on archetypes, the collective unconscious, the transcendent function, individuation, and his engagement with ancient religious and philosophical traditions, offering sufficient textual material for a systematic analysis of the affinities between Jung and ancient philosophy.

A second axis of the corpus comprises primary philosophical sources and their respective commentators, selected for their historical relevance and mobilization within Jung's work. On the Western side, the analysis privileges *A República* de Platão, the fragments of Heraclitus, and Stoicism, supported by the critical work of authors such as Reale and Antiseri (1990), Long (1986), Vernant (2002), and Sedley (2016). On the Eastern side, the focus falls on the *Vedas and Upanishads*, as presented by Radhakrishnan (1994), Halbfass (1988), and Kloosterman (2007), as well as on Buddhist and Taoist traditions discussed by Coward (1985), Clarke (1994), Meckel and Moore (1992), and Kohn (2001). The selection follows three criteria: (a) direct relevance to the debate on soul and wholeness; (b) recurrence in Jung's bibliography; and (c) relevance to the established comparative axes. The analytical procedure unfolds in three movements. First, an exegetical reading of Jung's texts identifies passages in which he comments directly on Plato, Heraclitus, Stoicism, Vedic metaphysics, Buddhism, and Taoism, as well as sections in which he elaborates his principal psychological concepts. Second, drawing on the

primary philosophical sources and their commentators, the conceptual core of the ancient traditions is reconstructed – Forms and the intelligible world, logos and the tension of opposites, *Atman–Brahman*, *mokṣa*, *anattā*, *Tao* and *wu wei* – situating them within their own contexts. Finally, the materials are organized into explicit comparative axes (Forms and archetypes; the tension of opposites and the transcendent function; *Atman–Brahman* and *the Self*; *Tao/wu wei* and synchronicity), through which convergences, shifts, and asymmetries between Jung’s readings and their philosophical antecedents are examined.

The choice of a hermeneutic-comparative approach is warranted by the nature of the material itself, which consists of symbolic and speculative texts rather than empirical data open to experimental verification. The transparency of the procedure and the possibility of replication derive from the explicit presentation of the corpus, the criteria for selecting sources, and the axes of comparison: any researcher can reconstruct the path adopted here, reread the same texts, follow the same analytic steps, and, if necessary, propose alternative interpretations. In line with Cambray and Sawin (2021), and attentive to the methodological cautions suggested by Smith (1990) and Lloyd (1996) to avoid unrestrained parallelism, this study proceeds from the premise that the symbolic systems examined are not merely theoretical constructions but formulations of existential experience through which different cultures seek to assimilate, balance, and transform consciousness.

Classical Philosophy and Analytical Psychology

In the context of Western thought, the passage from myth – understood as the narrative of a “sacred story” situated in primordial time (ELIADE, 1972, p. 11) – to philosophy marked the search for the *arkhē* (first cause) through rationality. This transition, carried out fundamentally by the pre-Socratics, shifted the explanation of reality from the sacred to logical inquiry, inaugurating a framework in which, as Vernant (2002, p. 99) observes, “rational thought is born when the world is no longer interpreted

in the light of a divine history, but questioned as an autonomous reality, accessible to human investigation.”

In the development of classical philosophy, Socrates redirected analysis toward ethical foundations, influencing major schools such as Platonism and Aristotelianism. Plato, his disciple, systematized this legacy in the Theory of Forms, establishing an ontological distinction according to which, as Sedley states, “the immutable world of Forms constitutes an appropriate object of knowledge,” whereas “the familiar world of sensible particulars is appropriate only for opinion” (SEDLEY, 2016, p. 11). Aristotle, in turn, distanced himself from his teacher by focusing on the observation of nature and the purposes of things, and together with Plato laid the speculative foundations that would dominate European thought until the Renaissance.

From the seventeenth century onward, this metaphysical tradition gave way to the scientific empiricism of authors such as Bacon and Descartes, ushering in modernity with its emphasis on the rational and the experimental – a context from which psychology would eventually emancipate itself. This new paradigm, reinforced by the Enlightenment, consolidated in the nineteenth century the natural sciences as the primary standard of truth grounded in evidence and systematic observation (DEAR, 2006, pp. 1–24; GAUKROGER, 2010, pp. 3–35).

Within this context, “psychology, until then considered a branch of philosophy, began to establish itself as an independent scientific discipline in the late nineteenth century, with the founding of the first experimental psychology laboratory by Wilhelm Wundt in 1879” (SCHULTZ; SCHULTZ, 2016, p. 64). However, this model, centered on the elemental analysis of consciousness, would be challenged by several currents, including Freudian psychoanalysis, which emerged in the early years of the twentieth century, and, more broadly, by the analytical psychology of Carl Gustav Jung.

Initially aligned with Freud’s proposals, Jung broke with him beginning in 1913, rejecting a model of the psyche structured, in his view, solely

around instinctual mechanisms – above all libidinal ones – and pointing instead to a symbolic and spiritual dimension of the unconscious.^[2]

Thus, rather than being primarily a repository of repressed impulses, this unconscious is structural in both its individual and collective forms, filled with archetypal images and symbols deeply connected to human experience.^[3] Such an expanded understanding of the unconscious opens the way for a renewed engagement with ancient philosophical ideas and traditions, especially those of Plato, Heraclitus, the Stoics, and the Neoplatonists in the West.

This bridge to the past is expressed, for example, in *Tipos Psicológicos* (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC VI, §832 [764]), where, in discussing the primordial image, Jung writes: “The *primordial image*, which I have also called an ‘archetype,’ is always collective; that is, it is at least common to all peoples and times. Mythological motifs are probably also common to all races and epochs.” When addressing the metaphysical value of the idea and the archetype, Jung states that “Plato assigns an extraordinarily high value to archetypes as metaphysical ideas, as *παράδειγματα*, in relation to which real things behave merely as *μιμήσεις* as imitations, copies” (JUNG, 1947/1954/2013, OC VIII/2, §275). However, such affinities do not amount, as Condurache (2024, p. 136) emphasizes, to direct overlays:

[2] Jung reports that his break with Freud was extremely painful, marked by theoretical divergences over the nature of libido: whereas Freud understood it as essentially sexual, Jung conceived it as a broader vital energy. Freud accused him of mysticism and severed relations. Jung states that, without the support of his wife, Emma, he would have risked emotional shipwreck (JUNG, 1962/2006, pp. 164–171).

[3] “My thesis is as follows: unlike the personal nature of the conscious psyche, there exists, alongside our consciousness, a second psychic system of a collective, impersonal character; consciousness, for its part, is entirely personal in nature and – even when we add to it, as an appendix, the personal unconscious – we regard it as the only psyche capable of being experienced. The collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of preexisting forms, archetypes, which only secondarily can become conscious, giving a definite form to the contents of consciousness” (JUNG, 1940/1950/2014, OC IX/1, § 90).

The transcendence of the Platonic Idea lies in its characteristic of preceding any experience. In this sense, the Idea exists before experience, as an eternal, preexisting transcendent form (Jacobi, 1971, pp. 49–50). Being transcendent and thus situated beyond any experience, the Idea also bears the attributes of atemporality and aspatiality. (...) By contrast, the Jungian archetype can only be discussed in relation to the thinking subject and to experience, since it gives rise to “basic experiences of life” (SAMUELS, 2005, p. 19) and “entered the scene with life itself (JUNG, 2014, 5033).

Whereas the Platonic Idea is transcendental, existing above the world and beyond the horizon of experience, the Jungian archetype manifests in life and in experience, therefore, in time and space. Consequently, insofar as it is situated within the world and discussed within the horizon of experience, the archetype possesses, from a functional standpoint, the characteristic of non-transcendence.

Even so, this distinction does not eliminate the metaphysical problem. As Mills observes (2023, p. 49), adopting a Neoplatonic model of emanation – according to which the archetype would be derived from a “cosmic psyche” – although tempting to explain universality, risks reintroducing a “crypto-theology” into psychology, thereby challenging the premise of metaphysical realism.

Another point of convergence can also be found in the concept of the soul as a multi-structured and complex entity on a path of reintegration with a totality – an idea present in both Platonic and Jungian thought. In Plato, the *soul* (*psychē*), as an immortal, tripartite entity (*logos*/reason, *thymos*/spirit-courage, *epithymia*/appetites), preexisting the body, undergoes journeys through cycles of reincarnation (*metempsychosis*), forgetting its previous experiences and knowledge as it crosses the river Lethe (forgetfulness) on its way to a new physical existence, as presented in the myth of Er (PLATÃO, *A República*, 2012, 614b-621d). From this premise derives the concept of anamnesis, according to which genuine knowledge lies in the recollection of the forms once contemplated by the soul on its journey toward Truth, that is, we remember what the soul has always known but lost in the crossing.

In a related way, Jung also understands the soul as a complex system composed of different structures (such as ego, shadow, *anima/animus*, the personal and collective unconscious, and the *Self*) and internal dynamics (complexes, tensions between opposites). It is a *functional system of the psyche*: the *symbolic axis* of the individuation process, the space in which opposites meet, struggle, and are transformed. “By psyche, I understand the totality of psychic processes, both conscious and unconscious. By soul, however, I understand a definite and limited complex of functions which could best be characterized as ‘personality’” (JUNG, 1921/2013, OC VI, §752). Within the Jungian framework, individuation is the psyche’s journey toward wholeness, toward the realization of the *Self*, integrating conscious and unconscious aspects. It is a search for self-knowledge and meaning, “to become a unique being, insofar as by ‘individuality’ we understand our innermost, ultimate, and incomparable uniqueness, also implying that *we become our own self*. We may therefore translate ‘individuation’ as ‘becoming oneself’ (*Verselbstung*) or ‘the realization of the *Self*’ (*Selbstverwirklichung*)” (JUNG, 1928/2015, OC VII/2, §266).

In *Aion*, Jung states that “the *Self* ultimately manifests as the *eidōs* (idea) of all supreme representations of wholeness and unity,” and considers such parallels important “insofar as they make it possible to relate certain metaphysical representations, which have lost the natural basis of their experiences, to a living and universally given event, thereby enabling them to recover their original meaning” (JUNG, 1951/2013, OC IX/2, §§64–65). This “living and universally given event” of the Jungian *Self*, reconnected to metaphysical experiences and recovering “its original meaning”, in turn, approaches the Stoic ideal of living in accordance with Nature: “The Stoic formula ‘to live according to nature’ means to live in harmony with the course of events universally determined by divine Reason (*Logos*), which is immanent in all things. For human beings, this translates into perfecting their own rational nature by understanding the rational structure of the world and acting virtuously in accordance with that understanding, which constitutes happiness” (LONG, 1986, p. 185).

This correspondence reveals a shared ontological structure: both systems understand psychic becoming as the result of a dynamic conflict between opposing forces that do not cancel one another but complement each other (HILLMAN, 1975). For Jung, individuation – the central process of analytical psychology – is precisely the progressive realization of the *Self* through the confrontation and integration of antithetical pairs such as conscious and unconscious, logos and eros, persona and shadow.

In *Os Arquétipos e o Inconsciente Coletivo*, Jung posits that “there is no consciousness without discrimination of opposites,” describing psychic dynamics as the “paternal principle of *Logos*” that struggles unceasingly to emerge from the “primordial darkness of the maternal womb,” that is, from unconsciousness (JUNG, 1940/1950/2014, OC IX/1, §§178–179). For the author, although this act of creation is “matricidal” and the provocation of conflict constitutes a “luciferian virtue,” both are indispensable, for they generate the “fire of affects” which, in its dual nature, promotes both convulsion and the “generation of light” necessary for consciousness.

In this way, harmony is conceived not as the suppression of conflict but as its creative transfiguration, a principle that traces directly back to Heraclitean cosmology. Heraclitus (c. 500 BCE), in recognizing that “conflict is the father of all things” (DK 22B80)^[4], already offers in the sixth century BCE the metaphysical framework for a model of soul that develops not despite contradiction but through it – an idea Jung would later take up as one of the structuring foundations of the depth psyche.

The presence of Heraclitean thought in analytical psychology is dense and structural, especially in Jung’s conception of the psyche as a reality in constant transformation (COWARD, 1985, pp. 115–117).

[4] “One must know that war is common, that strife is justice, and that all things come to be and are brought to completion through conflict.” (fr. B80) “The way up and the way down are the same” (fr. B60, DK 22B60). “Opposites come together; from what diverges arises the fairest harmony, and everything happens through strife.” (fr. B8, DK 22B8).

The Heraclitean maxim *panta rhei* (“everything flows”) is not merely a poetic image of the world; it expresses an ontology of becoming sustained by the tension of opposites – a principle that, for Jung, constitutes the engine of psychic development (*Fragmentos*, DK 22B8, B51).

In this regard, Balenci (2022, p. 861) further emphasizes that the notions of enantiodromia and quaternity in Heraclitus and Pythagoras are sufficient to show that Jungian psychology is, in essence, an updating of pre-Socratic cosmology.

In conceiving the individuation process as a path of integrating opposites – conscious and unconscious, persona and shadow, *anima and animus* – Jung rediscovers this ancient model of conflictual harmony: “(...) this is, at bottom, the energetic process of life, the tension of opposites indispensable to self-regulation” (JUNG, 1928/2015, OC VII/2, §311). Just as *logos* in Heraclitus orders the perpetual struggle between opposites as the structure of the real, so too in Jung the soul is disclosed in the inner dialogue among the antagonistic forces that constitute it and propel it toward self-knowledge.

This vital tension, like the Heraclitean *logos* that orders conflict, becomes the dynamic ground of the soul in its trajectory toward self-understanding. Individuation, in this context, is not a static achievement but an ever-unfolding process of *becoming*, in which the symbol emerges as a response to inner division. By returning to this dialectical matrix rooted in Greek Antiquity, analytical psychology prepares the ground for an even broader dialogue with other traditions of thought. It is within this horizon of symbolic openness and the search for wholeness that Jungian thought turns to the East – not as exoticism, but as a renewed encounter with universal archetypal structures (COWARD, 1985; CLARKE, 1994). In what follows, we will investigate how Vedic, Buddhist, and Taoist philosophical systems intertwine with the architecture of analytical psychology, revealing a shared symbolic axis between ancient knowledge and modern psychic experience.

The Influence of Eastern Philosophies on Jung

The Vedas, the foundational scriptures of ancient India, culminate from the ninth century BCE onward in a more profound ontological literature in the *Upanishads*. Within this tradition, as Radhakrishnan notes (1994, p. 58), dualism is rejected in favor of an understanding in which “both form and matter [...] are aspects of a single reality,” informed by the One Spirit. By establishing *Brahman* as “the sole and complete explanation [...] the material and efficient cause” of the world, the *Upanishads* reveal the fundamental unity of existence, describing a developmental process that extends from matter to *ānanda* (bliss) – worldview that would remain distant from the European horizon until the colonial and intellectual dynamics of modernity reopened the doors to such dialogue.

Contacts between the European West and the “India” occupied by its various colonial powers resumed in the late eighteenth century, with the founding of the *Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1784) and the deepening of Sanskrit linguistic studies, which opened pathways into Vedic philosophy (HALBFASS, 1988, pp. 51–58). In the nineteenth century, various European thinkers were, in one way or another, influenced by Vedic thought and responded to it. “Moreover,” Halbfass notes, referring to these figures, “Schelling’s position vis-à-vis India tended to remain reserved. The detail and extent of his explicit discussions of Indian thought are by no means comparable to what can be found in Hegel and Schopenhauer. And, as Th. A. Rixner illustrates, some of the authors who used Schelling as a starting point for their own approaches to the history of philosophy came increasingly under the influence of Hegel’s thought” (HALBFASS, 1988, p. 146).

This intercultural dialogue prepared the ground for twentieth-century thinkers such as Carl Gustav Jung to assimilate categories from Vedic philosophy not merely as a Western exoticist curiosity, but as symbolic and structural models of the human soul. For Jung, the relationship between *Ātman* and *Brahman*, as expressed in the *Upanishads*, symbolically anticipates his conception of the *Self* as a psychic totality that transcends the ego, representing both the center and the circumference of personality. *Brahman*,

as the expression of existent totality, manifests in everyone through *Ātman*, the divine spark – much like the Jungian *Self*, which represents both the center and the whole of the psyche, integrating its various dimensions into a final unity realized through individuation. In this context, Jung states that the “(...) capacity for self-liberation characteristic of the introverted mentality,” and further that “this aspect of the spirit is, so to speak, unknown in the West, although it is the most important component of the unconscious” (JUNG, 1939/1954/2013, OC XI/5, §§773–774).

Although analytical psychology engages closely with Vedic philosophy, it does not adopt its metaphysical premises dogmatically. Jung’s proposal is psychological and symbolic, not ontological or religious (CLARKE, 1994, pp. 103–104): he takes concepts from Indian thought as expressions of the soul rather than as absolute truths. His approach is empathetic yet critical, seeking integration without reduction. Moreover, whereas Vedic philosophy tends toward an ideal of dissolving individuality into cosmic unity (*mokṣa*),^[5] Jungian individuation aims at the integration of opposites and the strengthening of an expanded consciousness – not the annihilation of the *Self* (CLARKE, 1994, pp. 104–106; COWARD, 1985, pp. 212–213). At this point, Jung’s perspective aligns with Taoism, whose emphasis lies not in transcending the world but in the dynamic harmony with its immanent flow.

The image of the *Tao*^[6] as a way – fluid, paradoxical, and non-fixed

[5] Moksha, the ultimate goal of Hindu religious life, is liberation from the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (*saṃsāra*) and from the limitations and suffering of mundane existence. Moksha is attained through the realization of the true nature of the *Self* (*Ātman*) as identical with ultimate reality (Brahman), a realization that dispels ignorance (*avidyā*) and the illusion of a separate *self* (*māyā*)" (KLOSTERMAIER, 2007, p. 161).

[6] "The Tao (Dao), literally 'the Way,' is the fundamental and most elusive concept of Taoism and represents the primordial, ineffable, and immanent principle that is the source, underlying pattern, and cosmic process permeating and regulating the entire universe. [...] Paradoxical by nature, the Tao cannot be fully grasped through rational analysis, but rather intuited and lived through harmonization with its ceaseless flow" (KOHN, 2001, p. 13).

– opened for Jung a new symbolic horizon centered on the spontaneous reconciliation of opposites within psychic life itself (CLARKE, 1994, pp. 112–114).

Concerning Jung’s relationship with Taoism, Coward (1985, pp. 484–489) notes that Jung’s “discovery of the *Self* as the goal of psychic development occurred because he studied Taoism in 1918, while he was writing *Tipos Psicológicos*, and in 1927, while writing a commentary for Wilhelm’s translation of *O Segredo da Flor de Ouro*.” In tracing the connections between these lines of thought, Jung discerned the path of integration in the “Taoist insistence on balance between inner and outer, between yin and yang,” confirming “that both sides were essential for the development of the self.” This in turn helped give shape to the concept of synchronicity, “understood as a fundamental principle underlying archetype and the way opposites within and outside the psyche interact”.

In this context, the Taoist notion of *wu wei*^[7] – effortless action, without resistance, in harmony with the world’s natural course—is reinterpreted by Jung as a psychic attitude that welcomes the unconscious and collaborates with it, rather than fighting or repressing it (MECKEL; MOORE, 1992, pp. 26–28). Just as the Taoist sage does not impose his will upon the flow of the world, the individual undergoing individuation learns to listen to the soul’s symbolic language and to allow transformation to unfold organically. This non-interventionist dimension of self-knowledge lies at the core of Jungian symbolic psychology, which departs from the ideal of rational mastery over the soul and, at a deeper level, aligns with the *Tao* as a path of balance and inner spontaneity (CLARKE, 1994, pp. 115–117).

This approach to Taoism also shaped, at least initially, Jung’s relationship with Buddhist philosophy.

[7] “Wu wei, one of the most crucial concepts of Taoism, is often translated as “non-action,” but its deeper meaning points to an “effortless action” or a mode of acting that is unforced and in harmony with the natural flow of things (KOHN, 2001, p. 16).

Coward states that “in contrast to Buddhism, which aims at the elimination of desire and the ego, Taoism, in Jung’s view, seeks a balance that includes desire and the ego within a larger unity,” and notes that “Jung makes several references to Buddhism, but most of them reveal his poor understanding of its doctrine of no-self. He refers to Buddhism as atheistic and therefore psychologically inadequate” (COWARD, 1985, p. 485).

This interpretation, however, is not without its shortcomings. Yogo (2001, p. 128) observes that Jung tends to ontologize concepts such as *śūnyatā* (emptiness) and nirvana, incorrectly equating them with the unconscious and failing to grasp the Buddhist nondual perspective.

In Jung’s later phase, however, this stance would be reassessed through a symbolic reinterpretation of the Buddha. Davis (2025, p. 5) notes that, for Jung, “the Buddha became, as it were, the image of the development of the *self*,” a representation he believed to reflect the individuation process and its movement toward ever-greater integration with the *Self*. Davis concludes that Jung “felt that the image of the Buddha constituted a more complete and accessible representation of the pure human being than that of Christ, because it integrated both the luminous and the shadow aspects of human nature.” As he drew closer to the Tibetan tradition, Jung discerned in Eastern philosophy and practice a superior way of approaching the modern psyche. In his words: “They offer the Western person possibilities for disciplining inner psychic life whose absence is lamentably evident in his various Christianities. For this reason, Buddhist doctrine may prove to be a valuable process of education, precisely where the use of Christian rites or the control by means of faith-conceptions has proved ineffective...” (JUNG, 2012, OC XI/6, p. 149).

Having moved away from Freudian psychoanalysis, Carl Gustav Jung’s engagement with Eastern philosophies did not take the form of a superficial appropriation of exotica, but of a profound recognition of symbolic structures already operating autonomously within the human psyche. His psychology is not merely clinical but, above all, a symbolic path of transformation. In distinguishing his method from Freud’s, which he describes

as “essentially analytical and reductive,” Jung proposes a “synthetic procedure that brings out the purposive character of unconscious tendencies” (JUNG, 1940/2013, OC XI/5, §875). It was precisely this line of inquiry that “brought to light important parallels with yoga [...] and its rich symbolism,” providing, in Jung’s view, “most valuable comparative materials for the interpretation of the collective unconscious” (JUNG, 1940/2013, OC XI/5, §875).

In dialogue with these millennia-old traditions, Jung constructed a psychology that not only observes but listens to the soul, understanding self-knowledge not as an ideal of rational completeness, but as an archetypal journey toward the center, where East and West, ancient and modern, inner and outer converge in the form of a symbol.

Final Considerations

The present study aimed to investigate the influence of ancient philosophical traditions – Western and Eastern – on the theoretical constitution of Carl Gustav Jung’s analytical psychology. Through the analysis of primary sources and a conceptual articulation between metaphysics, symbolism, and psyche, it was possible to demonstrate that Jungian thought does not emerge alone but is rooted in a profound philosophical ground in which the legacies of Plato, Heraclitus, and the Stoics, as well as Vedic, Buddhist, and Taoist doctrines, play a structuring role.

Within the Western tradition, *Teoria das Formas* of Plato finds a direct resonance in the notion of archetypes as universal structures of the psyche. Just as Platonic Ideas are intelligible and eternal realities that shape the sensible world (PLATÃO, *A República*, 2012, 507b–509c; 509d–511e; 596a–598c), archetypes, according to Jung, are “determined only as to form and not as to content [...] The archetype is in itself an empty and formal element, nothing more than a *facultas praeformandi*, an a priori possibility of the form of its representation” (JUNG, 1936/1954/2014, OC IX/1, §155). Heraclitus’s influence appears in the conception that the soul develops through the tension between opposites, an idea Jung

takes up in the concept of the transcendent function and in the dynamics of individuation: “The opposition of the two dimensions of consciousness is the expression of the contradictory structure of the psyche, which, as an energetic system, depends on the tension of opposites” (JUNG, 1936/1954/2014, OC IX/1, §483); “There is no consciousness without discrimination of opposites” (JUNG, 1936/1954/2014, OC IX/1, §178). The Stoics, in turn, with their ideal of self-mastery and the integration of reason with the universal *logos*, anticipate the ethical dimension of individuation as care of the *self*, in line with the notion of destiny as an expression of the unconscious.

In dialogue with the East, Jung recognizes in Vedic thought a symbolic anticipation of the relation between the *Self* and the ego, analogous to the identity between *Ātman* and *Brahman*. In his words, “What we call here the ‘*self*’ is not to be found only within me, but in all things, like the *ātman*, like the Tao. It is the psychic totality” (JUNG, 2012, OC XI/6, p. 132). In Buddhism, he finds an experiential model of ego-disidentification through which consciousness expands by the detached contemplation of psychic phenomena. The doctrine of *anattā* (no-self), far from denying the soul, proposes a psychology of emptiness and presence, which resonates with the Jungian practice of welcoming unconscious contents without ego appropriation. Finally, in Taoism, Jung discovers a symbolic cosmology that mirrors his dynamic view of the psyche: the Tao, as a flow that harmonizes opposites, becomes a living metaphor for the individuation process, and *wu wei* – effortless action – an image of spontaneous psychological action in attunement with the unconscious. “The thought is clear: white does not exist without black [...] opposites are brothers from which the East seeks to free itself through its *nirvāṇa* (‘free of the two’) and its *neti-neti* (‘neither this, nor that’), which Taoism considers in a numinous way” (JUNG, 1936/1954/2014, OC IX/1, §597).

These historical convergences do not end in the past; they reverberate in contemporary academic debate, which seeks to situate the epistemological status of Jung’s work. If the Platonic inheritance is evident, recent

authors such as Mills (2023, p. 50) argue that, although we may investigate archetypes as natural phenomena of the mind, any attempt to locate their ultimate origin inevitably leads to questions of “fundamental ontology” and cosmopsychism, keeping alive the tension between viewing the archetype as a psychological structure or as a metaphysical principle. At the same time, Jung’s dialogue with the East has undergone critical reassessment. Yogo (2001, p. 3) argues that the Jungian approach suffers from a “colonial mentality” that, by reifying differences between East and West, places them in a relation of domination to affirm the superiority of European identity. In addition, she points to Jung’s tendency toward “psychological reductionism” (YOGO, 2001, p. 90), observing that he often selected only those Buddhist materials that seemed to confirm his hypotheses, neglecting the traditional and cultural contexts of these doctrines. Even so, by restoring to psychology its philosophical vocation, Jung’s work is today understood considering what Balenci (2022, p. 860) identifies as a “*Filosofia da Natureza*,” or, as Gewehr (2019, p. 1) proposes, a system situated “between philosophy and science,” sustained by the complex tension between a methodological naturalism – closer to modern science – and an ontological naturalism inherited from German Romanticism.

Therefore, Jung’s analytical psychology constitutes a theoretical and symbolic system that transcends the limits of Western modernity and reintegrates, with critical depth, the philosophical and spiritual knowledges of diverse traditions. In engaging ancient thought – both Greek and Asian – Jung not only retrieves forgotten contents of the human soul, but also constructs a psychological path of self-knowledge that understands suffering, paradox, and transformation as legitimate expressions of interiority. In this sense, his work remains one of the most consistent attempts to restore psychology to its original vocation: above all, a symbolic listening to the soul on its path toward wholeness.

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THE INNER WORLD MADE VISIBLE: A READING OF THE BOOK OF IMAGES, TREASURES FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE C. G. JUNG INSTITUTE OF ZURICH

Markus A. Hediger

Review

The publication *O Livro das Imagens – Tesouros do Arquivo do Instituto C. G. Jung de Zurique*, edited by Ruth Ammann, Verena Kast, and Ingrid Riedel (Patmos / Schwabenverlag, 2018), represents a significant milestone in contemporary Jungian studies. The volume makes accessible to the public a collection that had previously been restricted: thousands of images produced by patients of Carl Gustav Jung and his collaborators, within the context of analytical psychotherapy conducted between 1917 and 1955. With documentary rigor and symbolic sensitivity, the book weaves together clinical practice, aesthetics, and cultural history, establishing itself as an indispensable contribution to the understanding of the image as a privileged path for the expression of the unconscious.

Comprising essays authored by analysts and researchers affiliated with the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich and with the *Museum im Lagerhaus* in St. Gallen, the site of the commemorative exhibition accompanying the publication, the volume is organized around thematic chapters such as “*Mandalas*”, “*Sexualidade e Corpo*”, “*O Inquietante*”, “*Tribulações e Destruição*”, among others. These categories not only guide the curation of the images but also reflect the most recurrent symbolic nuclei in clinical experience.

Particular attention should be given to the chapter by Vicente de Moura, which contextualizes the genesis of the method of active imagination, originating in Jung’s visionary experiences following his rupture with Freud. The author describes how Jung, when confronting his own psychic images – later transposed into the *Liber novus* – developed a methodology for dialoguing with the unconscious, which he subsequently transmitted to his patients. In this context, image production does not present itself as art, but as the expression of a process that is simultaneously symbolic, psychic, and therapeutic.

Doris Lier’s essay proposes an innovative reading of a series of anonymous images through the lenses of art history and analytical transference. The author establishes parallels between the visual language of an analysand and the aesthetic motifs of the Dadaist movement, particularly the works of Sophie Taeuber and Hans Arp. In doing so, she situates Jung’s archive within a broader aesthetic constellation, demonstrating how the personal and collective unconscious are also rooted in specific historical and cultural contexts.

Verena Kast, in turn, dedicates her analysis to mandalas as archetypal symbols of the center and of the individuation process. Kast emphasizes that mandalas frequently emerge at moments of inner chaos, configuring themselves as spontaneous attempts at psychic reordering. She proposes that such images not only express the *Self*, but also actively participate in its realization, reaffirming the transformative power of the symbol.

The images reproduced throughout the book are of remarkable intensity. Created using gouache, charcoal, colored pencils, embroidery, and

collage, they evoke themes such as sacrifice, rebirth, wounded sexuality, collective trauma, and reconciliation with the feminine. In some cases, they astonish through their aesthetic quality; in others, through their rawness and simplicity, which heighten their emotional and symbolic impact. All of them, however, reveal themselves as authentic testimonies of deep inner work.

More than a catalogue or a historical document, *O Livro das Imagens* inaugurates a field of research and reflection on the therapeutic value of the image within the analytical setting. It affirms the image as the language of the soul, something that, upon emerging from the unconscious, calls for welcome, listening, and symbolic dialogue. By making this inner world visible, the book also performs a therapeutic gesture: restoring to images the place that rightfully belongs to them in work with the psyche.

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Associação Junguiana do Brasil

**KAST, VERENA: THE WORD ASSOCIATION
EXPERIMENT IN THE THERAPEUTIC PRACTICE: C. G.
JUNG'S REVOLUTIONARY METHOD FOR EXPLORING
THE UNCONSCIOUS: THEORY AND PRACTICE (TRANS.
IDALINA A. DE SOUZA. JUNGIANEUM, 2025)**

Idalina A. de Souza
Francisco Mauricio Araujo dos Santos

Psychological assessment instruments that systematically draw on analytical psychology and have received a favorable opinion from the Federal Council of Psychology, such as the QUATI – Typological Assessment Questionnaire – and the House-Tree-Person Drawing Technique (HTP), represent only a small contribution to the vast body of knowledge accumulated over the years by analytical psychology.

At the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich, since the first half of the twentieth century, candidates in didactic training have had access to the contents of the Word Association Test, supported by a handbook prepared by Dr. Verena Kast^[1], entitled *Das Assoziationsexperiment in Therapeutischen*

Praxis. This version, which for many years circulated exclusively within the Institute's academic environment, bore the warning: "for student use only – not to be duplicated."

Over time, efforts were made to broaden the reach of this material. In this regard, the work of Stefano Carpani deserves mention through his publishing house *Jungianeum*, which has been dedicated to publishing works of relevance to analytical psychology. Thanks to this initiative, the Portuguese translation of the book has reached Brazil, recovering and updating one of the most innovative methods created by Jung. We also have the privilege of having other works by Dr. Verena already translated^[2], which further contribute to studies and in-depth exploration within Analytical Psychology.

The Word Association Test consists of a list of approximately one hundred stimulus words, to which the participant must respond with the first word that comes to mind, as quickly as possible. The response time is recorded with a stopwatch. Once this stage is completed, the second part begins: the participant is asked to repeat their previous responses. As Jung emphasized, it is precisely at this moment that slips and memory lapses emerge, revealing contents of greater significance.

[1] A psychologist, analyst, and psychotherapist, she was a professor of anthropological psychology at the University of Zurich. She is a training analyst and supervisor at the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich and served as president of the Institute Curatorium. She was also president of the Swiss Society for Analytical Psychology and of the IAAP, where she initiated its current organizational structure. In German-speaking countries, she is also known as a former co-director of the Lindauer Psychotherapiewochen, the largest continuing education event in psychotherapy in the German language. She has published numerous works in the fields of fairy tales, symbolism in general, relationships, mourning processes, emotions, as well as on complex theory and imagination. She is by far the most widely known author in Jungian literature within the German-speaking sphere. Generations of students have been inspired by her lectures and books.

[2] *Tornar-se um consigo mesmo; Imaginação; O significado dos conflitos; A alma precisa de tempo; Filhas de pai, filhos de mãe; O sentido do medo; Sísifo; A sombra em nós; Abandonar o papel de vítima; A natureza do amor; A ansiedade; O amor nos contos de fadas; A dinâmica dos símbolos; e Sonhos: a linguagem enigmática do inconsciente.*

From these reactions, Jung elaborated the theory of complexes: psychic nuclei charged with emotion, often inaccessible to consciousness. Some indicators of complexes in the test include prolonged reaction time, laughter, bodily movements, coughing, stuttering, repetition of the stimulus word, or even the absence of a response.

Historically, the experiment has earlier roots. It was first used in 1879 by Francis Galton and later by Emil Kraepelin and Wilhelm Wundt, who were interested in reaction time and cognitive speed but did not arrive at an understanding of the reasons for the delays. Jung and Franz Riklin were responsible, at the beginning of the twentieth century, for reworking the technique in dialogue with Freud. This procedure laid the foundations of Jungian experimental psychology and contributed to the formulation of the notion of the complex – a milestone in Jung's break with Freudian psychoanalysis.

Throughout the book, Kast (2025) addresses both the historical context of the experiment and its contemporary clinical relevance. She describes in detail how the method operates and explains how delays, lapses, or repetitions can signal constellated complexes.

The author further expands the scope of the test by relating it to other instruments of analytical psychology, such as dream interpretation. She shows how the procedure can serve as an activator of unconscious material and as a resource for monitoring the therapeutic process. In addition, she presents clinical examples that demonstrate the practical applicability of the technique.

In the current context, in which psychological practice seeks to integrate classical resources with new demands, the work takes on relevance. It is not merely a reissue of a classic, but a critical and updated rereading that invites analysts to revisit Jung and to explore new possibilities of application through this test.

The translation into Portuguese, in the year marking the 150th anniversary of Jung's birth, broadens access to the Jungian legacy, allowing psychologists, students, researchers, and analysts to engage with this fun-

damental tool and to use it as a basis for clinical and academic investigation in Brazil and Latin America.

Final Considerations

The association experiment in therapeutic practice reaffirms the importance of revisiting Jung's contributions to contemporary clinical work. The Word Association Test, created more than a century ago, proves to be not merely a historical curiosity, but a method that remains alive and potentially fruitful for current clinical practice.

In this sense, Kast's work (2025) fulfills a dual role: on the one hand, it preserves the memory of a technique that is central to the history of analytical psychology; on the other, it reinterprets it considering the needs of contemporary clinical practice, at a time when there is a search to reconcile scientific rigor, symbolic depth, and openness to innovation.

Added to this movement is an interesting development: in 2024, Pilling^[3] began the development of PROCOPA, a Python-based software designed to automate the classical Word Association method. The proposal is to record data digitally, reduce human error, and offer preliminary analyses to assist psychotherapists. Initial tests suggest that the program may increase precision and agility in the collection of responses, including in contexts where verbal communication is limited. Still in an experimental phase, PROCOPA illustrates how dialogue between tradition and technology can enrich the field of analytical psychology.

Thus, Kast's work, together with contemporary initiatives such as PROCOPA, invites the reader to recognize that analytical psychology remains alive precisely because of its capacity for renewal.

[3] PILLING, Sergio. Programa de Análise de Complexos em Psicologia Analítica (PROCOPA): método de associação de palavras automático. In: ENCONTRO LATINO-AMERICANO DE INICIAÇÃO CIENTÍFICA, 28th; ENCONTRO LATINO-AMERICANO DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO, 24th; ENCONTRO DE INICIAÇÃO À DOCÊNCIA, 14th, 2024, São José dos Campos. Proceedings [...]. São José dos Campos: Universidade do Vale do Paraíba, 2024. Available at: https://www.inicepg.univap.br/cd/INIC_2024/anais/arquivos/RE_0561_0130_01.pdf

Revisiting the Word Association experiment, therefore, is also a way of reaffirming that the psyche remains a territory in constant movement, capable of inspiring new clinical practices and reflections.

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JUNG: A JOURNEY TOWARD THE SELF

Renato Bittencourt Gomes
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Biographical writings are of interest to Jungian fields, as are studies on dreams, mythology, religion, and philosophy.

Jung, uma Viagem em Direção a Si Mesmo, by the French philosopher and sociologist Frédéric Lenoir (1962–), seeks to present the life and intellectual production of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), highlighting a dialogue with contemporary authors of various nationalities, including Brazilian thinkers.

Grounded in an extensive bibliography by and about Jung, both commentators and authors with whom Jung himself dialogued, Lenoir’s text offers us an opportunity for amplification as we seek to approach Jung’s personality. About Jung, Lenoir states: “Alongside Spinoza, he is one of the authors who most affected me, having had a decisive impact on my view of the world and of myself” (from the back-cover text).

Thus, in keeping with the best tradition of the human sciences, which produce essays, Frédéric Lenoir writes in the first person singular and

makes explicit his position in relation to his object, noting that Jung “remains largely unknown to the general public, especially in France, even though his ideas permeate entire sectors of our culture. I am convinced, however, that his visionary work constitutes one of the greatest revelations of human thought [...]” (p. 10).

And, again in accordance with the human sciences, to address the work, Lenoir first focuses on the author, reviewing biographical aspects to indicate the kind of personality from which Jung’s intellectual production emerged.

He recounts aspects already familiar to a more specialized audience (although his biographical essay is addressed to the general public, the ordinary reader). He notes that Jung was the son of a Protestant pastor, raised in a small Swiss town in a religious environment, but that from a very young age, he began to question this formalized and restrained religiosity. Gradually distancing himself from the church, he nevertheless remained deeply interested in the relationship between the individual and the sacred. From this tension, he came to build what we call analytical psychology – which, to a great extent, is the product of the “wild mysticism” conceptualized by the French philosopher Michel Hulin and which “derives not so much from the subject’s conscious religious beliefs as from the depths of his being” (p. 20).

Lenoir also recounts Jung’s academic background in Psychiatry, his fascination with the study of mental phenomena (a field that was then expanding), his marriage to the wealthy heiress Emma Rauschenbach (1882–1955), and his friendship, collaboration, and eventual rupture with the neurologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939).

The biographer emphasizes that this convergence occurred at a time when the founder of psychoanalysis was held in great disrepute: “This rapprochement between Freud and Jung was clearly disapproved of by the latter’s colleagues: like most psychiatrists of the time, they held a highly unfavorable opinion of Freud, who was perceived as a charlatan and a sexual obsessive” (pp. 46–47).

For about seven years, there were intense exchanges between them, until a rupture erupted that still resonates today among psychotherapists. There is even a lack of understanding regarding what the bond between the Swiss and the Austrian was, since

Most researchers in Freudian-oriented psychoanalysis regard Jung as a disciple of Freud, a kind of heretic within the psychoanalytic movement. Reality, however, is more complex. As we have seen, Jung had already developed his own ideas and theories before meeting Freud; even at that time, he was recognized within the field of psychiatry, which is precisely why Freud took an interest in him and sought to make him his successor, to give psychoanalysis a more international dimension (p. 56).

The turbulent period of the Second World War – its antecedents, the conflict itself (1939–1945), and the postwar years – introduced nuances that, even today, more than sixty years after Jung’s death, continue to generate controversy, including in Brazil. Detractors seek to link him to Nazism, and Lenoir acknowledges that there was some involvement: in 1933, already with the rise of the Nazis in Germany, Jung assumed the presidency of the General Medical Society for Psychotherapy, a position in which he had to engage in dialogue with members of the Hitler regime – often attempting to find ways to safeguard the work of Jewish therapists in a context that was becoming increasingly restrictive for the Jewish community as a whole. In 1934, Jung published what Lenoir calls “the worst of his texts” (p. 121), an article comparing Jewish and German mentalities in which “some [...] statements can be described as antisemitic” (p. 116). For Lenoir, this text was a mistake, motivated by Jung being “driven [...] by a powerful affect: a deep resentment toward Freud” (p. 123). Going further, the biographer argues that “this hatred/rivalry with Freud is Jung’s shadow side, a shadow he never truly brought to consciousness, and which led him to commit this antisemitic slip” (p. 123).

Assigning to *Memórias, Sonhos, Reflexões* the status of a “truly initiatory book” (p. 136), Lenoir laments that Jung, even while speaking “wonder-

fully well about his inner life and the maturation of his ideas, [omitted] certain episodes about which we would like to know his opinion, such as the controversy over his attitude in the 1930s or his relationships with women” (p. 136), especially Toni Wolff, who is not even mentioned.

Structured around the foundational concepts of analytical psychology, such as synchronicity, the collective unconscious, archetypes, symbols, mandalas, complexes, and the individuation process, the author remains faithful in presenting them, employing a fluid and inventive language without sacrificing their depth. Hence the title, *Jung, uma Viagem em Direção a Si Mesmo*.

Lenoir draws our attention to the place of certain important authors in Jung’s formulation of religion, such as Friedrich Schleiermacher, Rudolf Otto, and Meister Eckhart, for their defense of the relevance “of sensibility and affectivity in the face of the primacy of reason imposed by the Philosophy of the Enlightenment” (p. 146).

He also introduces and invites us to explore Jung’s relationships with authors who can deepen our understanding of his psychology, doing so in a sensitive and revealing manner regarding Jung’s work with written texts, when he states: “... letting my intuition act. I drafted outlines, erased, wrote, used arrows [...] and, against all expectations, the difficulty I encountered in creating a top-down plan ended up disappearing: the circular system worked perfectly” (p. 179).

At least for the Brazilian public, Frédéric Lenoir introduces new names orbiting the Jungian field, such as the Moroccan psychoanalyst Simone Pacot (1924–2017) and the former German Catholic priest Eugen Drewermann (1940–). In addition to French authors such as Ysé Tardan-Masquelier, Carole Sédillot, and Boris Cyrulnik, among the most frequently cited, he relates Jung’s thought to that of the Italian astrophysicist Massimo Teodorani, thus offering an understanding of the strong and vibrant presence of analytical psychology in France (even while acknowledging that Jung remains relatively unknown there) and of

its interface with other sciences and authors perhaps less familiar to most of us. Naturally, he does not omit more frequently mentioned figures such as Marie-Louise von Franz, Wolfgang Pauli, John Dourley, Gilbert Durand, among others.

Therefore, the figure of Jung has not yet been exhausted, which justifies this additional biography by a French philosopher who does not hesitate to make explicit his adherence to his object of study. As a song might say: “Infinitely personal.”

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