
THE DYNAMICS OF THE ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLISM AT THE MYSTICAL AND MYTHICAL LEVEL AND ITS MORAL REFERENCES THE JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

In this paper we focus on Jung's identification of several priority areas of archetypal-symbolic functionality. It is about the religious area, especially the Christian one, about the preoccupations of alchemy and art. According to Jung, besides classical mystical texts, the alchemical texts seem to have the same connection with the collective unconscious and the same way of expressing the archetypal information through symbolic structures. Art can also represent, in Jung's opinion, a sphere of intense archetypal symbolic expression. Again, Jung points out, these symbolic-archetypal eruptions have as their favourite theme the absolute good and evil, so a good and an evil that are often not recognized by everyday worldliness and profane understanding, an understanding anchored only in the sphere of collective and individual consciousness. What could be the typologies of these archetypal religious, alchemical and artistic symbols? How and when are they needed? How intense is the moral impact of these appealing symbols for human consciousness?

Keywords: spirit, image, divinity, mandala, soul

1. Introduction

The conceptual issue of *the spirit* represented for Jung one of the most important themes for his psychoanalytic thinking, due to the frequent representations of this concept in the dimension of oneiric, artistic and religious experience [1]. This presence has often constituted itself an inner insurer of the existence of *primordial morality*, the question of absolute good and evil being, in essence, of a spiritual nature. Starting from some terminological findings, Jung notices that the term of spirit, expressed in German by the word *Geist*, refers to the idea of immaterial being, either at the human level or at the absolute level, that is, it refers to the divine existence [2]. Thus, spirit and nature

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represent a dual conceptual pair, which has always been used to explain the multiple phenomena of the relationship between man and the environment that supports his earthly existence.

The hylizoist perspectives and the materialist theses support the idea that the spirit is nothing else but the most subtle product of the matter [2, p. 239]. Then there were philosophical interpretations that considered it necessary to distinguish between the concept of spirit and soul. Thus, the spirit was understood as a higher principle, and the soul as an intermediate area between this latter and corporality, an entity also called vegetative soul, soul of nerve networks and active perception. Jung recalls that for alchemists, this vision was overturned, in the sense that the soul defined the upper sphere of the human being, the spirit being the one located at lower levels, as an intermediate element, as a connecting factor with body functionality and motor skills.

Some philosophical approaches discuss spirit in the sense of collective mentality, of spirit of the times. It is a matter that Jung takes over, postulating the duality between *the spirit of the times* and *the spirit of the depths* [3] in his work *The Red Book* [4-9], the latter being a direct reference to the collective unconscious. The two spheres are not opposed, they are not in conflict, but the spirit of the times belongs to the surface structures of the collective consciousness, giving the impression of an unshakable evolutionary stability on the background of temporal insertion. For those who relate to and assume this spirit of the times, events are part of a natural historical logic, in a broad process of anticipatory fullness, which moves on a line that can be, in general, predetermined by the human will and intellect.

And yet, the whole ontic picture of this unfolding, which manifests itself logically and can be controlled in its future effects, is practically defragmented and loses all value when the spirit erupts or, as Jung calls it, *the spirit of the depths*. The collective unconscious, once erupted and poured over the surface of the spirit of the times, eclipses it and nullifies any expectation, any security of the human consciousness. The events take another turn, unexpectedly, and the calculations of pre-establishment and rational anticipation are cancelled. The unconscious eruption arises from the area of the unpredictable that, although hidden and neglected, decides on the collective and individual destiny when it erupts convulsively.

In this sense, Jung states that only those who understand the archetypal symbol by which the unconscious can announce its intention to erupt can have the feeling of a radical event, which is about to be consumed, but which no rational estimation deems as having chances to really happen. This *spirit of the depths* is the one that often appears in oneiric, religious, pathological or cultural experiences in the form of complex, but repetitive, symbolic structures. For the psychoanalyst, this multitude of interpretations and applications of the concept of spirit could represent a difficulty in one's own attempt to approach this term psychologically. In order to prove this *spirit of the depths* Jung often appeals to introverted intuition [10] (a consciousness that „is directed to an inner object” as well as „to the contents of the unconscious” [11]).

Nevertheless, Jung believes that the vastness of the landmarks of interpreting the concept of spirit can be an advantage for the psychoanalyst. Having the multiple hermeneutic picture of that notion, he can formulate his own interpretive idea, constantly referring to the other versions. In this context, Jung insists on mythical-religious interpretations in which the spirit is understood as a divine breath, as an energetic breath that gives life and is eternal life. Here the Old Testament tradition is an eloquent example, God blowing a breath of life over Adam. At the same time, the event of the descent of the Holy Spirit, mentioned in the writings of the New Testament, is accompanied by the divine wind. The spirit is thought of as abstract, transparent, immaterial, mobile, renewing and purifying. This outlines the opposition with the presence of matter or, in particular, corporeality.

Christianity, as Jung recalls, pushed the duality between the spirit [12] and matter at the heights of maximum intensity, odds that only Plato may have approached, when in the Myth of the Cave he considered the spirit captive in a cavernous world, the world of matter, of immanence and deceptive shadows. If, therefore, the Christian vision postulated the centre of gravity of human existence in the area of spirit, investing corporality only as an auxiliary element or factor of expression of the soul, materialism and atheism reversed the data of the problem, postulating this centre of ontic gravity in the dimension of matter, of corporeality, the spirit being in this case an annex or even a subtle product of the matter. For the psychologist, especially for the psychoanalyst, the spirit is the human psyche as a whole. In materialist-atheistic psychological thinking, such as the Freudian thought, the spirit can only represent the result of complex glandular processes, of multiple reactions and interactions in the human body, especially in the anatomy of the brain and the functionality of the central nervous system.

For Jung, such a perspective is scientifically naive, remaining tributary to nineteenth-century conceptions, conceptions with strong Enlightenment valences. In the Jungian thought, the human psyche or spirit is a distinct entity in relation to physiological processes, which do not determine the human soul, but are determined and influenced by it. The focus of Jungian analytics on this concept is motivated by the fact that one of the most common archetypal symbols in oneiric, cultural, religious experiences or related to the sphere of pathological delirium is *the symbol of the spirit* [2, p. 244].

From the psychoanalytic approach of this primordial archetypal symbol, Jung argues that the modern man is under the influence of a danger that has already shown its extreme negativity through the dramas of the twentieth century. In his creative-scientific exuberance, he tries to assume control and possession over the spirit, considering that his psyche can be easily circumscribed to external purposes, the psychic energy being accessible to conversion processes meant to determine the enslavement of the materialistic and immanentist human spirit.

In essence, Jung believes, the reality turns out to be reversed here. Man has been and still is subject to the dynamics of the psyche, especially its most important sphere, namely the unconscious. In the modern era, the human being undergoes a process of intense *deseccation*, in which he supports the idea of giving up on the spirit since it is an outdated human creation, a metaphysical lie that must, according to the *Nietzschean* view, be cancelled. But in all this journey of the alienation of the spirit, man proved to be subject to unsuspected earthly forces, which are of a spiritual or psychic nature and which induced his adherence to destructive ideologies and visions. In this context, unconscious negative contents have taken over the human being, systematically directing it towards its own destruction.

Jung argues that this unfounded pride of modern man, to consider himself the creator and master of the spirit, is similar to his relationship in terms of the components of nature revealed by the explorations of *physics*. In essence, nature continues to dominate the man, and his sense of superiority proves to be a utopian experience. The danger perceived by Jung, in the case of the modern belief according to which the man is the master of his own psyche, is that this focus on the sphere of material exteriority, the belief that everything is matter, and that the spirit can be mastered as a *material element*, leads to the withdrawal of the whole unconscious in a state of the symbolic inexpressible, a state of maximum tension, which generates major unconscious negative accumulations, able to erupt with the intensity of the eruptions that determined the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century. The unconscious, as the most important part of the psyche, has its own dynamics, different from everyday demands, as it has its own archetypal morality, which is distinct from religious-social ethics.

To neglect or deny this psychological reality is equivalent, in Jung's opinion, to the commitment to an attitude that potentiates, above all, the negative fluctuations of the unconscious, the refusal to assimilate their symbolic expression being only a gesture that, far from neutralizing the influence of the unconscious, amplifies it and hides it. For an edification of this risky situation in which the man of modernity has positioned himself, Jung recalls the Christian tradition, which says that not only God is spirit, but also *the tempting demon*. The more the psychic attention tries to avoid the awareness of the major influence of the unconscious and refuses the interpretive assumption of the archetypal symbols through which the unconscious flow and contents appeal to the conscious, the more real the possibility of the modern human be influenced by unconscious negative tension.

There is an ongoing state of human hypocrisy, with the human being no longer recognizing himself as a spirit above the matter, hypocrisy that Jung places in parallel with the theological state of *falling into temptation* or with the mystical experience of prayer, which requires, in specific terms, the non-temptation of human existence. What unfolds in this case, in Jung's view, is the refusal to assume the archetypal symbolic expression that indicates founding archaic truths, including the separation of absolute good from absolute evil. With this refusal comes the withdrawal of *the archetypal expression* and its inactivity

of eruption in consciousness, which is equivalent to an abandonment of the human consciousness. As a consequence, a major distance is established between conscious and unconscious, the two spheres no longer communicate operationally, and this non-communication could be the basis of the collective neurosis.

In other words, Jung argues that certain unconscious negative contents, on the background of this psychic rupture, cross the gap and break out violently on the surface of the collective consciousness, with the tragedies of the twentieth century confirming this approach. The unconscious *moral evil* thus constantly finds a level of passage, even in spite of the detachment between the conscious and the unconscious. Therefore, people reach decisions that involve mass destruction and incalculable suffering, not suspecting that it was not the autonomy of their consciousness that decided these cataclysms, but negative telluric-unconscious influences that occurred in the sphere of *the collective unconscious*. In this sense, Jung insists on the importance of focusing psychic attention on *the archetypal symbol* as an expression of unconscious dynamics, any neglect in this regard can generate individual or collective tragedies.

The voice and message of the unconscious are revealed only through the symbol that pervades the environment of the oneiric experience, of the mystical revelation, of the artistic or pathological fantasy. The archetypes and their dynamics thus expressed reveal, among other unconscious data, the directions they will impose on human destiny. Within the mechanisms of archetypal symbolism there are, therefore, representations that personify the spirit or its will, its options and guidelines in relation to the sphere of consciousness. The oneiric appearance of a certain symbol, which refers to the dreamer's spirit, indicates the decision of his unconscious in a certain situation. Basically, the dreamer is revealed the options of his own unconscious through a certain symbolic appearance.

Talking to yourself in a dream is a good example of this mental situation. The mechanism of symbolization plays an extremely important role as well as other symbolic-archetypal structures, and in this situation, there is a group of specific representations, which are widely present in the great mythologies and oneiric experiences of humankind. They metaphorically render the spirit and especially its unconscious part. The manifest dynamics of the spirit symbol include advice, warnings, guidance.

Often, what is not obvious or does not find its solution in the sphere of the consciousness and in the framework of interrelationships related to this sphere can be detected and receive the answer during the oneiric experience, experience during which the unconscious symbolized by a certain archetypal-fantastic configuration provides solutions and discovers realities not noticed by the vigilance of the conscious. Both the issued data and the symbol through which this informative process is carried out become extremely important, indicating the capacities of the unconscious and of its archetypal-symbolic structures.

2. The archetype of the spirit and the dimensional relativity

Within the oneiric experience, the spirit [2, p. 244-245] it is often symbolized by fantastic compensatory elements. Therefore, Jung notices, if the dreamer is a woman, then the spirit could be represented in her dreams by a male protective person, who indicates, conveys wise thoughts and important warnings. If the dreamer is a man, then with predilection the oneiric symbol of the spirit will be a feminine person, a noble presence of high standing, who guides, counsels and warns. Thus, the unconscious finds those symbolic formulas that can inspire a maximum of confidence and stability, only on this background revealing its telluric options and tendencies. Almost all oneiric experiences of this type involve the presence of a character who indicates, also through other symbolic elements, *the absolute good and the absolute evil*. It sometimes happens that two distinct personalities appear in the same dream, one positive and the other negative [2, p. 242-245].

Jung observes that the unconscious formula often agreed upon for such situations is the oneiric appearance of the mythical archaic hypostases defining the *moral* problems. Therefore, the dream scenario includes two opposing characters, such as teachers of good and evil, the white and black wizard, the wise old man and the cunning master. In this imagistic duplicity, there is also the unconscious's approach to indicating absolute *good and evil*, and the huge range of efforts that the human being makes for his own moral evolution and for overcoming the transcendent spatio-temporal materiality. Another dimension in which the symbol of the spirit is strongly imposed is that of the *fairy tale* [2, p. 245-270].

Accessing an extensive study material, Jung finds that for most of the profile literature of humankind, the spirit or will of the unconscious is expressed through characters that represent wise elders, elderly saints or forest beings, especially elves or fairies. All these hypostases come to indicate the telluric nature of the information processed and exposed through fantastic narratives, and their deep psychic substance. The archetypes of the collective unconscious, as sources of information and moral direction, are symbolically expressed through portraits of beings who inspire wisdom, calm, balance and who come from a simple, withdrawn environment, as is *the unconscious* in relation to the surface agitation of the conscious. Following the exhortations offered by these symbolic characters leads to the release of the central character of the fairy tale from the ontic node in which he is trapped, a node that also represents the intrigue of fantastic stories.

The disobedience of the respective guidelines or, in psychoanalytic language, the neglect of the data issued by the unconscious project the destiny of the main character in the sphere of a major danger or even of the irreversible loss. The moral aspect of the fairy tale is an extremely well-known issue, in essence most of it having as its central theme the duality of good and evil, the conflict between them and the final victory of good etc. The symbolic characters of the unconscious expression aim at guiding the subject towards the final

supremacy of the absolute good, its placement in the service of this limit goal. In fact, what is symbolically expressed is the moral function of the unconscious, especially the collective and its constitutive archetypal structures.

Another important aspect emphasized by Jung in terms of the symbolism of the spirit present in both oneiric experiences and those of fantastic narratives is *the dimensional relativity*. Most dream or fairy tale characters that represent the spirit or the unconscious are disproportionate in size to the dreamer's being. The wise old man, for example, often appears either in the form of a small entity, especially a dwarf of the forest, or, on the contrary, in the form of a giant. These dimensional distortions are meant to indicate that the unconscious is not subordinated to the notions of space and time, operational notions at the level of the dynamics of the conscious. Drawing a parallel with research in physics again, Jung insists that in Physics, also spatio-temporal relativity is a confirmed issue, and the overwhelming energy force can be hidden in a structure with extremely small dimensions, such as the atom. But from this insignificant unit in size, a huge force can be generated, the impact of which extends to surfaces and large scales.

Such a duplicity of the forces of nature is similar, Jung notes, to *the duplicity of unconscious psychic energy*, not coincidentally the symbolism of the dwarf and the giant being extremely used by the archetypal unconscious tension. In many situations, in fairy tales and dreamlike experiences, the characters-symbols of the archetype of the spirit or of the will of the unconscious manifest attempt to test, to prove the level of the dreamer's morality. It often happens that the dreamer is subjected to a test of nobility of the soul, compassion and openness to fulfil positive actions. Only after passing this moral exam, the archetypal character gives him data and information essential for breaking the deadlock and continuing on the path of his own destiny.

Through the approach of these evidentiary attempts, the moral function of the archetypal structures is highlighted once again, their direct connection with a primary archaic virtue, which must not be identified with the social-religious ethics. Of course, as already mentioned above, there are also situations in which the character represented by an old man can behave cunningly, negatively, with reprehensible intentions. In this case, is symbolized the ambivalent character of the unconscious and of the morality indicated by it. Negative archetypes can therefore appear from the unconscious sphere, with a wide destructive potential, being conceived as matrices compatible only with those evil unconscious contents or, from the perspective of religious faith, being thought of as openings to transcendent darkness, darkness about whose reality or fiction psychoanalysis is unable to determine.

Interestingly, Jung observes, these negative-symbol characters end up in the case of the fairy tale, but often also in the case of the oneiric experience, in a negative way, they become victims of their own malicious actions, and the good always *wins*. This finality of the triumph of the good is constantly indicated by the unconscious and its symbolic manifestations, from the first mythical accounts to *the Apocalypse of John*. The action of evil has a force and an impact

of proportions, and through these victories it generates a wide discouragement and the feeling of an impossibility of victory of the good. The effort to overcome this state is given by the act of trial and sacrifice. Apart from these radical assumptions, the prospect of a possible final success cannot be obtained. Again, throughout the spiritual evolution of humankind, this aspect is present in mythology, religion and oneiric experiences, the works of *Heracles*, *temptation* and *Christian sacrifice* being some well-known universal examples.

In this context, the tests or trials required by the symbolic character of the wise old man from the dreamer or the main hero of the fairy tale, find their full justification in the dynamics of the collective unconscious and how it influences the evolution of all humankind. Jung frequently mentions the *theriomorphic* aspect of the symbolism of the spirit. It is about the fact that the archetype of the spirit repeatedly has not only humanoid symbolic structures, but also animal forms. The mythological tradition of humankind confirms the presence of this embodiment both in terms of negative unconscious contents, such as the case of *the serpent* mentioned in the Old Testament Genesis, and for the rendering of unconscious positive contents. The image of the animal being does not refer to an area of ontic and gnoseological inferiority, but on the contrary, it can often be a more direct form of expression of unconscious wisdom.

In this sense, for the primitive man the animal symbolism had a sacred nature, the unconscious being directly reflected in revered animal forms and presences. Characters such as the eagle, the snake or the wolf become symbolic expressions of the same unconscious will that is present behind the image of the wise old man. The unconscious can also indicate, direct, reveal or solve through animal symbolism, the examples in the case of fairy tales being eloquent here. Repeatedly, the central character in a fairy tale is guided and advised by an animal character, but he can also be deceived or hindered by such symbolic presences.

For Jung, these aspects indicate the preservation, even at the level of the modern man, of the rudimentary archetypal imaginary components specific to the primitive man, for which the animal hypostasis of the archetype of the spirit or the unconscious represents a normality. A very good example of this symbiosis between the animal symbolic register and the eruptions of the unconscious can be represented by the mythology and religious tradition of ancient *Egypt*. Also, in the mythology of *the ancient Greeks*, the gods sometimes change into animals to come into contact with humans. *The archetype of the spirit* or the unconscious appears and manifests itself, in Jung's opinion, as a *daimonion* similar to the Socratic one which, in human or animal form, goes in the way of the dreamer or fairy tale character to express unconscious informational landmarks. In the face of these psychic realities, Jung believes the modern man responded with arrogance and negligence.

His disregard for the symbolic expressions of archetypal structures, such as the spirit or the identity of the unconscious, generated a risky slip in the area of excessive rationality. Nevertheless, precisely from the position of such rationality, the modern man has not proved able to understand the unconscious

dynamics and has allowed the eruption of negative archetypes, which were the basis of the bad ideologies that affected the humanity of the twentieth century. The attempt to replace the primordial archetypal morality indicated by these archaic forms of expression, such as the dream, the fairy tale or the myth, with ethics and social conduct of another axiomatic regime, supported and amplified, in Jung's opinion, the tragedy of the twentieth century [2, p. 236-283].

3. The archetype of totality, of the harmony and of the moral balance represented by the symbol of the mandala

One of the symbolic structures that emerged from the area of the unconscious, which Jung considers extremely suggestive of the ways of archetypal expression, is *the mandala* [13]. Terminologically, this word has its origin in the Sanskrit language and represents the idea of a circle. In terms of pictorial presence, the mandala is found in various temples and oriental shrines. It is presented as a formation depicting *a circle* that generally circumscribes *a quaternion*, a figurative multiple of four embodied by a square, octagon, or other similar geometric graphs [14].

Jung notes this icon appears frequently [13, p. 123-130], in pathological dreams and delusions, as well as in mystical revelations related by sacred texts such as the Old Testament books. Also, the mandala is a constant alchemical symbol, known as *quadratura circuli*. Jung begins the hermeneutic approach to this important symbolic configuration by noting its presence in *Buddhism*, as a cult tool called *yantra* [13, p. 114] and holding the function of supporting meditation and restoring soul balance. Jung observes that this symbol appears in the oneiric experiences of children who suffered as a result of their parents' divorce, in the pathological delusions of the mentally ill, where the conscious-unconscious dissociation is severe or where the unconscious contents have overwhelmingly and chaotically flooded the conscious, or at the level of the active imagination of people who, without manifesting a severe mental pathology, are marked by problems of dissension, major emotional fragmentation.

Also, for Jung, perhaps the most important mandala is *the image of the Christian cross* which, although not exclusively presenting a surrounding circle, has the four landmarks, and its appearance is accompanied by a circular halo of light or a graphic spherical frame. Starting from these records, the Jungian analytics considers that the mandala is one of the most important archetypal symbols, a symbol that refers to *the archetype of harmony and moral balance*. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the appearance of the mandala is equivalent to the unconscious approach to heal and recalibrate the whole psyche. What is manifested here is the capacity of the unconscious to intervene thaumaturgically where an intense emotional crisis has erupted. The external format of the mandala constantly differs in relation to the traditions and religions in which it is integrated and to the spatio-temporal diversity of human spirituality. But in essence, Jung notes [13, p.208-210], the mandala has the same substance and the

same function regardless of the environment of its appearance. Therefore, the concordance between the various mandala forms is obvious, and the mission of this archetypal symbol seems to be a common one for all people [15; N.L. Nijhuis, *Psychological Healing as Religious Experience: In The Works of Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961)*, https://www.academia.edu/44674148/Psychological_Healing_as_Religious_Experience_In_The_Works_of_Carl_Jung_1875_1961_].

In Jung's opinion, the mandala represents an archetype of totality, of integral spiritual fulfilment. It can be understood as *the architecture of the image of God*. In support of this idea, Jung exemplifies by evoking the great visions of the Old Testament characters, including Ezekiel, Daniel and Enoch. In addition, mandalic configurations are observed in the prophetic revelations with reference to angelic beings, in which three of the mandalic points are represented by animal faces, and the fourth by a human figure. Subsequently, the Old Testament mandalic schemes were transferred to *the early Christian* universe, for example the number four indicating the number of the Gospels, three of which were synoptic and one Gnostic [14, p. 447-448]. Jung also recalls Platonic interrogative meditations, where the need for the fourth point in a global ontic configuration is evoked [16], and the alchemy, in its turn, axiomatically invested in the number four, starting from its unity generated by the symbiosis of three with one.

Of course, there are also mandala forms that are structured around three or five components, but these situations are rare and involve special motivations. Last but not least, Jung mentions, the mandala can also take on a specific individual form, in relation to the need and deficiencies of a certain psyche. This fact indicates the constant use of mandala configurations by the individual unconscious, not just by the collective one. Jung argues that it is possible for an individual unconscious to develop a mandalic figure with a specific content, meant to provide rebalancing and protection in relation to possible particular mental imbalances. In fact, *magical practices* involve investments with protective capabilities of the mandala circle. But every human being can develop their own protection mechanisms, configuring them based on the mandala architectural scheme.

In Jung's opinion, the appearance of the archetypal symbol of the mandala in oneiric or revealing experiences indicates the urgent need for balance and stabilization, states of a moral nature, ultimately. What the mandala imposes, as an expression of *the archetype of harmonic totality* [17], is precisely a *superior moral* attire, a behavioural level that does not take into account the relative socio-religious ethics, but only that *primordial archetypal morality*. The fact that the mandala represents a matrix of universal-human order, so that it activates at the level of the collective unconscious and at the level of the individual one, is confirmed by the wide and diverse presence of its emblem in various traditions, religions and psychic experiences.

The mandala is the symbol of the archetype that requires unification, reconciliation of opposites and balancing of opposing tensions. This archetype intensely manifests its *primordial moral function* by constantly demanding the

assumption of a superior moral conduct, only in this way can occur the steps of balancing and fully stable reunion. Analysing the cult mandalas in comparison with the individual ones, Jung finds that the former have some graphic stereotypes that are constantly repeated in different compositional reformulations. Instead, the attempt of the individual unconscious to balance and heal in the case of major splits in relation to the sphere of consciousness, splits with severe repercussions in the behavioural-moral area, involves the symbolic formulation of an unlimited multitude of graphics-mandalas, meant to indicate the same archetype of *The reuniting self*, of the balancing-integrating totality that brings the individual unconscious closer to the individual conscious.

In Jung's opinion, individual mandalas also include even stronger *the shadow* aspect of the individual unconscious, the features of that negative sediment accumulated in the private life. This type of mandala is divided into two distinct areas, one representing the psychic light, the other the darkness of the soul. Jung recalls the mandala made by the mystic and the metaphysician Jacob Böhme, where the image of God is expressed, which includes *the evil aspect* of the world. Also, in the case of universal mandalas that manifest repetitive graphic themes, one can see the understanding of the archetype of totality as a symbiosis between the individual and the universal self, this fact being well illustrated in Hindu and Buddhist mandala representations, where the idea of reuniting it dominates *Brahma Ātman*, as an individual presence, with *Brahma Brahma*, as absolute divine existence.

The oriental mandala tends to express even a form of indistinguishability between the individual and the universal self, more precisely that higher plane in which the individual psyche reached perfection through symbiosis with divine energy, energy emitted, in the psychoanalytic version, from the sphere of the collective unconscious. For Orientals, the mandala is an inner image that not only indicates balance and peace of mind, but can also restore them [13, p. 114-115]. The Western mandala, called *scintilla*, in its turn, expresses through a specific configuration the presence of the unifying divinity, acting on the three exceptional ontic levels, namely the dimensions of man, nature and worldliness. Jung also insists on the therapeutic effect of mandala symbolism, especially on the level of human individuality. It starts from a mental imbalance with deviant behavioural manifestations. The unconscious intervenes in an attempt to restore order and mental unity. This intervention is based on the activation of the archetype of unity or self [13, p. 244-253] that reunites. In the version of the mystical experience, we can talk about the call to divine support, materialized by activating this archetype.

The archetypal structure thus stimulated accesses the conscious in the form of the mandala. Once the mandala is visualized, either dreamily or through compositional graphics, it becomes like a religious icon, a landmark that stimulates the reorganization of the psyche as a whole, in order to restore the balanced relationship between conscious and unconscious. The behavioural readjustment of the respective subject and his psychic invigoration depend on the success of this approach [2, p. 448-450]. In fact, the presence of mandalas in

the architecture of temples aims precisely at this induction of the state of equilibrium, supported from the unconscious by possible transcendent presences.

The cross itself, as the most important mandala of Christendom, expresses the totality of the archetypal reunion of all opposites, of the horizontal and vertical projection, thus asking each believer for calm and inner peace, as states of openness to the positivity of the unconscious, positivity beyond which there is God. The archetypal symbolism of the cross indicates an overcoming of space and time, by unifying them into a centre of maximum strength and psychic energy. At the same time, it signifies the idea of a supreme mediation between the elements of nature and the spiritual, between Divinity and man [18], and in a psychoanalytic perspective it reflects the balancing mediation between conscious and unconscious.

The presence of mandala symbolism in the great universal religions, in the sphere of mythology, of oneiric, mystical and delusional experiences indicates its extremely important performance at the figurative transfer of archetypal information to the interaction dimension of consciousness. Jung considers that, although the evidence and typology of the presence of mandalas are widely noticeable due to its universal extension, it still remains unknown from many analytical points of view. As an archetypal-symbolic structure, the mandala is poorly understood and known in its important causes and effects; just as exploratory access to the dimension of the unconscious and its archetypal configurations is extremely limited for the level of current psychoanalytic knowledge.

4. The alchemical language and the Christian dogma as gatherings of symbols referring to archetypal structures of the collective unconscious

For the Jungian psychoanalytic thinking, the approach of the Christian religious dogma and of the alchemical vision does not constitute an approach of denying the theses proposed by these spiritual directions [19]. On the contrary, the Jungian psychoanalysis recognizes in them essential levels of expression of the collective and individual unconscious, levels whose possible connection with the sphere of transcendence is not rejected, but neither can it be proven psychologically. For Jung, *alchemy* manages to concentrate, at the level of the adopted language and rites, primordial expressions that belong to the processes of the unconscious, especially collectively.

In order to understand *the alchemical symbolism*, it is necessary to approach the entire evolutionary process of the human being from the pre-ancient period. Following this progression as the surface of a collective unconscious dynamic, dictated and organized archetypally, we will discern the process of generating alchemical symbols as elements of semantic concentration that come to expose past and repressed events in the unconscious or its facets and factors that never materialized entirely at the level of the surface of the collective conscious. Therefore, for Jung, the whole process of constituting alchemical language is related to the mobility of the unconscious and its

interrelationship with the dimension of the conscious. In other words, the whole alchemical symbolic vocabulary refers to unconscious realities and contents.

Similarly, but expressing a higher purpose, namely the direct approach of the human soul to the divine being and the liberation from the incidence of psychic negativity or sin, *Christian dogma* includes a language and ritual that refer to the sphere of the unconscious and to certain archetypal structures. *The history of salvation* can be, in this context, seen as a story that exposes a multitude of unconscious truths, defining landmarks for the unconscious dynamics and its telluric processuality. In this interpretation, Jung warns, it is not about the tendency of a biologicalization or psychologization of Christian and alchemical experiences. What is intended is to highlight the fact that these great spiritual paradigms represent fundamental steps to connect to the dimension of the unconscious and its capacity for expression, an expression that can only be manifested in the parameters of symbolism that refers to archetypes.

The fact that the Christian being can be seen, from a psychoanalytic perspective, also as the great symbol of the archetype of the Self or as the alchemical symbol of fish and water refers to the corresponding unconscious archetypes and does not reject the involvement of transcendent nature. At the same time, the reactivation of these archetypes and their symbolic projection is an approach with an extremely important value from a psychotherapeutic and moral point of view. Thus, fairy tales, myths, legends, being always retold, have the role of reactivating for their audience certain archetypes that, once stimulated, contribute greatly to the balanced reunification of the unconscious with the sphere of consciousness, this result determining the establishment of moral behaviour and overcoming the neurotic chaos. Moreover, the constant evocation of the history of salvation, either in the ritual setting of the liturgy or by simply reading biblical texts, can activate certain unconscious archetypal structures meant to order the unconscious flows and instincts, but also to bring to a conscious level the separation between absolute good and evil. The evocation of those events considered *sacred* has the important mission of connecting the conscious to purifying and organizing archetypes, to their moral function.

Also, the *alchemical* language and rites can also determine an access to certain archetypal influences that, most often, prove to be beneficial at the level of individual and collective destiny. In other words, it is, for both Christian and alchemical symbolism, a *circular scheme* that the dynamics of the unconscious constantly follow. The initial eruption of unconscious nature generated multiple symbols related to his psycho-energetic mobility. Subsequently, these symbols were settled in a system that became the dogma of a certain cult or a certain spiritual direction, such as alchemy. Only by recounting these symbols and allegories and by ritually relating to them can the consciousness be reconnected with those unconscious regions that initially generated those symbols, in events considered revelations and epiphanies or eruptions of archetypes in the sphere of spatio-temporal conscious. The Christian and alchemical symbol manages to reunite what has been separated and to neutralize the process of dissociation between the unconscious and the conscious, a process that is at the basis of

neurotic phenomena. The symbol acts as a higher court, invested by the archetype with the role of symbiosis of factors that may be, at some point, located in a position of adversity, as is the case of the relationship between conscious and unconscious in the situation of acute neurosis, or severe mental illnesses.

Jung thinks that the symbol [11, p. 487-494], due to its shape, has the ability to unify, operating both informatively and emotionally. Hence the fact that a symbol is both understood and lived, so that the effect of its appearance can be amplified. For example, *the mandala of the cross* is a symbol that is understood by the believer, thus remembering the Christian passions and the whole hierophanic *life of Christ*, but it is also a symbol lived intensely, assumed emotionally. The double function of the symbol generates, in this context, the balance between conscious and unconscious, as well as the connection with the archetype that is at its functional foundation. Jung believes the symbol resembles a thaumaturgical water that manages to transform solid contents into fluids arranged to merge and harmonize with each other.

It is no coincidence that in the Eastern Tao tradition, the right path is considered like a river that flows quietly over our perennial agitation and turmoil, and the Christian Church is compared to divine water [19, p. 206]. At the same time, it is worth mentioning here the sermon of Christ, in the sense that who will try the water He gives to the world will never know thirst. The water from the ritual of Christian baptism or the water of the Ganges for Hindus are other suggestive examples to highlight the frequent understanding of the function of reunification and psychic healing of the symbol as the outpouring of an unconscious or even transcendent fluidity.

Jung pointed to a defining element for the modern world. It is about slipping into technical-scientific *pragmatism*, a pragmatism that refuses to symbolize mechanisms. We are witnessing the development of a world in which the symbol has withdrawn its significant presence, the rationality and mechanics of immediate efficiencies taking full priority. What is pursued through desecration, de-Christianization and the removal of the symbol as a factor that would belong to an outdated past is, in essence, the progress of human society. But, Jung wonders, is humanity heading for real *progress*? If the essential function of the symbol is precisely to reduce psychic rigidities and to determine the reunion of opposites and distant fractions, then the absence of the symbol can only accentuate the neurotic phenomenon at the individual level, but especially at the collective level.

Thus, an extremely technical society that gives up on the mythical-religious tradition and rejects the symbol cultivates its significant distance from the collective unconscious and thus opens the way to *collective social neurosis*, the foundation of possible violent global slippages and world tragedies. What is missing, argues the Jungian vision, is *the understanding of the importance of archetypal primordial morality*, which can only be addressed to the conscious through the process of symbolization. If this process is rejected, the existence of such a founding morality is also denied and an attempt is made to place man

beyond good and evil, as the Nietzschean expression stated. This approach has already shown its destructive force in the twentieth century. The rejection of Christian symbolism and the attempt to replace it has generated the manifestation of negative archetypes that are extremely harmful to all humanity [19, p. 207].

To Jung, the way in which the *psyche* of much of humanity has opened up to *the image of the Saviour* is impressive. If there had not been very strong affinities between the individual and collective unconscious, on the one hand, and the defining elements of this image, on the other hand, the most important mystical and mythical event of humankind, namely the Christian religion, could not have been inaugurated. To Jung, the primary element that determined this magnetism between the emotional side of humankind and the symbol represented by the Christian presence is *the archetype of man-God*. This *super-ordered* court, as Jung calls it, brings together all the opposites, he has authority over good, represented by angelic beings, but also over evil, signified by demons. He is a symbol of *the Self* that imposes restrictions and decides over the pulsating influences of the unconscious, himself penetrating, as a symbol, from its archetypal depth.

The need for the emergence of Christianity was imposed as a natural fact against the background of the psychic exhaustion of the old religions. A new system was needed to allow the eruption of positive archetypes and to impose wide openings to the archetypal moral function of the primordial order. The archetype of *the man-God* or the archetype of *the Self* has found its perfect symbol in the Christian presence, which being thus interpreted psychoanalytically, is not denied its divine nature, on the contrary, its wide openings to possible transcendent areas are confirmed. Of course, here neither the psychoanalyst, and perhaps nor the theologian, can have the last approach, but only the personal experience of faith [19, p. 198-209].

What is significant about the relationship between Christianity and alchemy is that, in Jung's view, Christian symbolism is, for the alchemist, the symbolism of *the fish* [19, p. 177-196; 1, p. 73]. This symbolic element was not chosen at random and is not only related to the fact that it represents the oldest Christian symbol, referring to the activity prior to the Christian calling, which was held by *the pastor* of the Christian Church, *Saint Peter*. The alchemical symbol of the fish refers directly to the Christian person and it indicates the raising of the paradigmatic image of Christ from the depths of the collective unconscious, the rise of the archetype of man-God and its symbolization at the level of the collective and individual consciousness.

5. Conclusion

Jung was of the opinion that only insofar as Christians would consider the Christian *descent* from the celestial sphere and as a symbolic *ascension* from *the collective unconscious*, will they be able to properly relate to the mystical and mythical complexity of the Christian event, the presence of Christ really lived

after Pauline, Christ being in Christians and Christians being in Him. Only in this way can the primordial moral function of the archetype of the Self be fulfilled, the distinction between absolute good and absolute evil not being, perhaps, in any other situation as obvious as in the case of the Christian message and symbolism [19, p. 203-209].

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