





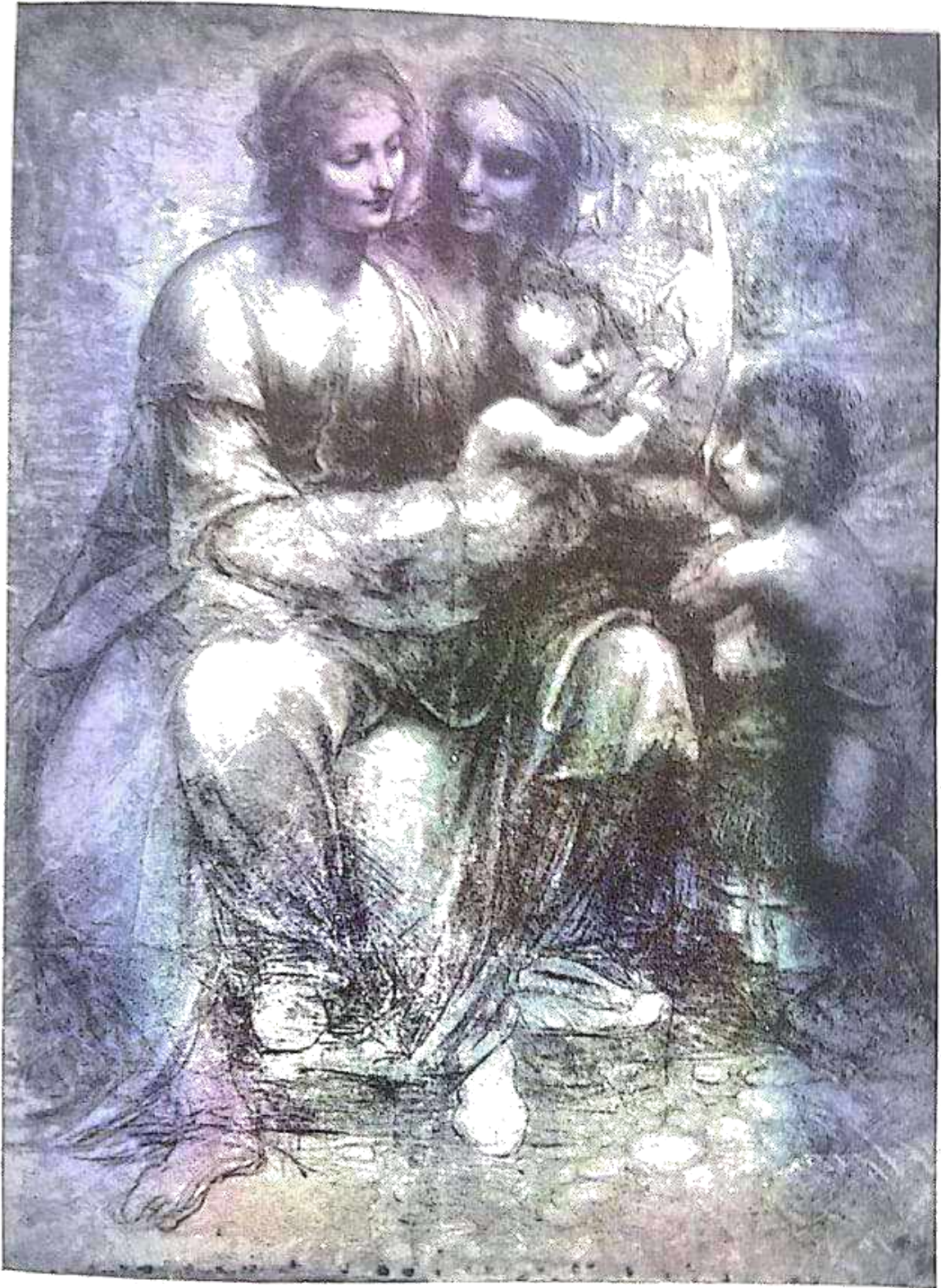
LEONARDO DA VINCI: The Virgin of the Rocks





LEONARDO DA VINCI: St. Anne with Virgin and Christ Child





LEONARDO DA VINCI: Cartoon for St. Anne





LEONARDO DA VINCI: Bacchus





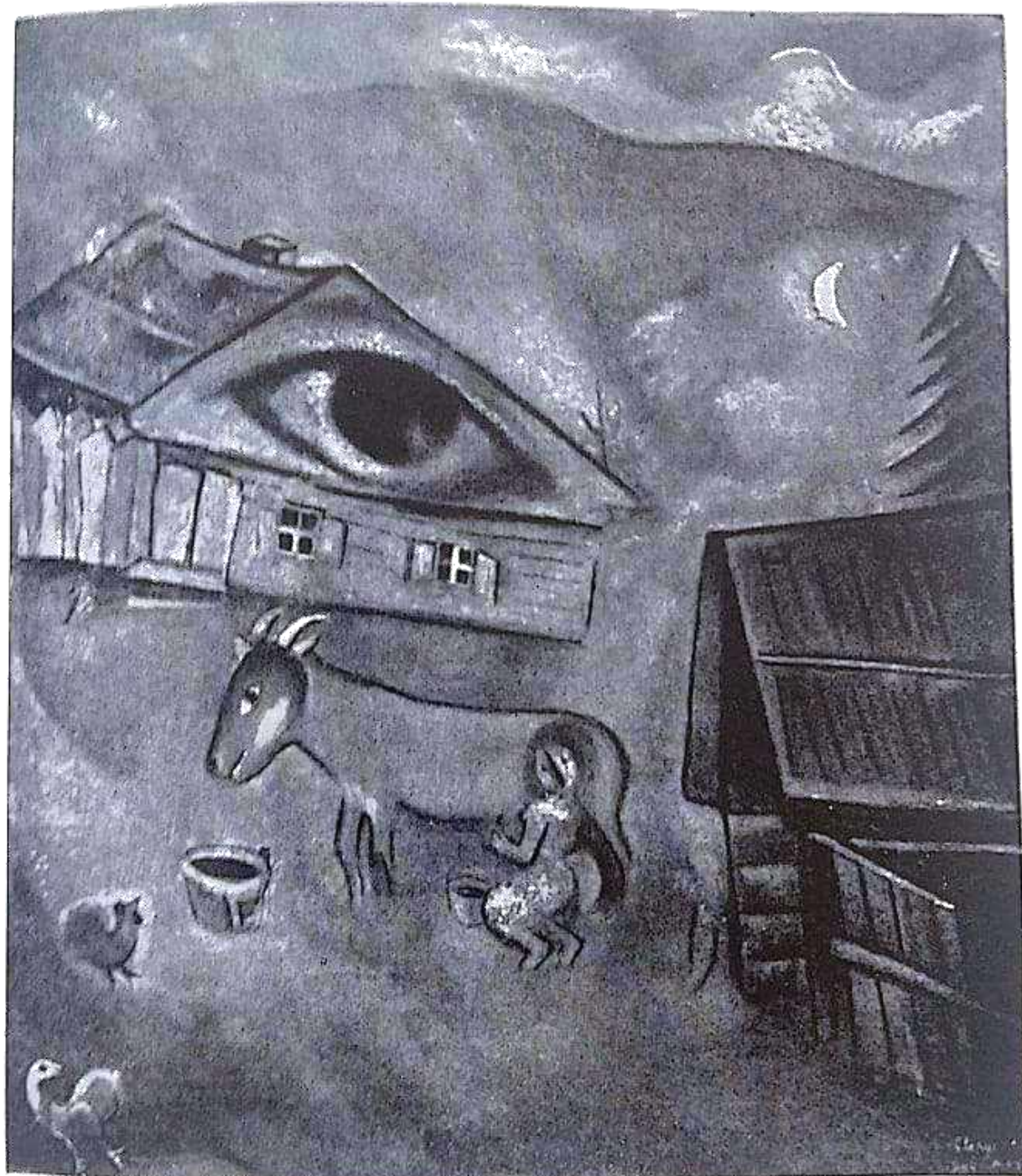
LEONARDO DA VINCI: John the Baptist





HIERONYMUS BOSCH: Christ Bearing the Cross





MARC CHAGALL: The Green Eye



type is a representation of something eternal, and although the archetypes are the real content of art, the eternal quality in a work of art can by no means be apprehended at first glance. Precisely because art is devoted to such a great extent to the representation of the cultural canon, its understanding requires historical knowledge, an orientation in the assumptions of the cultural canon to which the work belongs. Here perhaps you will disagree, but consider how we take the greatness of Asian or primitive art for granted today, and then recall Goethe's judgment on the horrid idols of India and the general opinion of primitives held up to a generation ago. Only in our own time has it become possible to experience and appreciate a "world art."

*Historia  
necessaria est  
comprehensio  
historiae*

And consider that nearly all the great artists of our own culture, from Rembrandt to Bach, from the Gothic sculptors to El Greco, have had to be rediscovered. Here, too, we are the heirs of a tradition which taught us to see, hear, and experience anew. Where there is new knowledge of man, new art will be discovered, and the eternal in the art of the past will be discovered afresh.

In this sense, the timelessness of art can be experienced only by an enhanced consciousness, for what figure of Christ can be fully understood without knowledge of Christianity, what Buddha without Buddhism, what Shiva without the Hindu conception of cosmic cycles?

Is, then, the stage of transcendent art an illusion? Can we really know nothing more than the relation of the work of art to ourselves and to its own time? And is the most we can say of an artist that, if we disregard the



eternity of the archetype he represented, he was a hair's breadth in advance of his own time?

Perhaps I can best explain what I mean by "transcendent" if I refer to the works of the great artists' old age.

We are accustomed—and this, too, is an acquisition of the last Western century, with its emphasis on the individual—to take an interest in the biographies of artists. We approach their lives like the mythological lives of prehistoric heroes, except that these Great Individuals are closer to us and we feel more related to their sufferings and victories, so that, far above us as they may be, they seem to offer a pledge of the dignity of our own individual existence.

It is no idle curiosity that makes us follow the course of their lives. They serve us as models in the sense that their work and lives form the unity which we call individuation and for which we must strive on the smaller scale allotted to us.

Each of these artists seems to pass through all the stages that we have attempted to characterize. He begins by responding to a creative impulse within him, which, as in the stage of the self-expression of the unconscious, strives to find form of whatever kind. Then, maturing, he grows into the contingency of his epoch; through study, he becomes the heir and son of his cultural tradition.

But whether the artist grows slowly away from the tradition of his time or passes over it at one bound and brings the new element the epoch lacked, ultimately, if he does not stop at the stage of representation of the



cultural canon—and no truly great artist has ever done so—he finds himself alone. He is alone regardless of whether he is worshiped as an Olympian, whether he is an organist respected in a small circle, or whether he ends in deafness, poverty, or madness.

The struggle of these great men with the powers inside them and the times outside them seems to result in a statement which transcends the artistic and symbolic reality of their creative life. In music, painting, sculpture, and poetry they penetrate to the archetypal transcendence which is the inner life of the world. What speaks to us from a self-portrait of the aged Rembrandt, from the end of *Faust*, Part II, from Shakespeare's last plays or Titian's late paintings, from *The Art of Fugue* or a late Beethoven quartet, is a strange transfiguration, a break-through into the realm of essence. And this transfiguration is independent of content, form, matter, or style, although the transcendence of form would seem to be one of its elements.

In these works of man a numinous world is manifested in which the polarity of outward and inward—nature and art—seems to be resolved. Their secret alchemy achieves a synthesis of the numinosum at the heart of nature and psyche.

These aged masters seem to have attained the image and likeness of a primal creative force, prior to the world and outside the world, which, though split from the very beginning into the polarity of nature and psyche, is in essence one undivided whole.

In the creative solitude of the Great Old Men the limitations of the epoch are passed over; they have escaped



the prison of time and the ego-bound consciousness. We begin to see that the supreme alchemical transformation of art merely reflects the alchemical transformation of the Great Individual's personality. At first, whether carried along by the powers or resisting them, he had remained distinct from them. But now, as his ego itself is integrated by the creative self, which from the very outset was the directing force of his existence, the center of gravity shifts. The original tension between his ego, the numinous substratum, and the outside world is annulled and, in the highest form of this transcending art, replaced by a creative act which is spirit-nature and transfigured nature.

For this reason it is not possible to characterize the style of these works of advanced age, for the creative integration of the personality transcends the contingency of any time-bound form.

This art no longer relates either consciously or unconsciously to any historical time; the solitary monologue of these "extreme" works is spoken, as it were, into the void. And one cannot quite tell whether it is a monologue or a dialogue between man and the ultimate. Hence the alienation of these great men from their contemporaries—they all, like the aged Laotse, have left the mountain pass of the world behind them.

If we call this transcendent art religious it is because the faith of Bach and the atheistic infinity of a Chinese landscape would seem to be two kindred forms of transcendence, and because we regard these ultimate works and many others of different kinds as the supreme religious act of which creative mankind is capable.



And here again we must declare that a feeling for this universal kinship has become possible only in our own ostensibly irreligious time, a time, as we often hear, that is fit only to be destroyed. Wherever traditional art apprehends the essence of the archetype, it does so by fitting the archetype into a fixed framework oriented toward the human world—even when this archetype consists of the death of the Saviour, the meditation of the Buddha, or the emanation of the divine. As object of worship, as example, and as representation of the transpersonal, it always signifies a descent of the eternal into the reality of a secure world of faith.

But in the rare instances when the phenomenon of transcendence occurs, the transpersonal seems, even though it has passed through the medium of the human, to have achieved its own objectivity—to speak, one might say, with itself. It is no longer oriented toward the world or man, the ego or the collective, security or insecurity; instead, the creative act which mysteriously creates form and life in nature as in the human psyche seems to have perceived itself and to shine forth with its own incandescence. The creative impulse seems to have liberated itself. United on the plane of artistic creation, the self which man experiences within him and the world-creative self which is manifested outwardly achieve the transparency of symbolic reality.

Of course, it is impossible to state objectively that everyone can find this transcendence in certain specific works of art. It suffices to note that the level exists and it is possible to experience it in some works of art. One of us will find it in a landscape by Leonardo or a poem

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by Goethe; another will find it elsewhere. But in any event we may say that this experience can be gained only through a few of the very greatest works and only by those who are open and prepared for it. For even when the highest form of artistic reality has achieved objective existence in a work, it must be reborn in subjective human experience.

And it seems to us that one of the principal functions of all art is precisely to set in motion the archetypal reality of the transpersonal within the individual and on the highest level of artistic experience to bring the individual himself to transcendence—that is, to raise him above time and epoch and also above the limited eternity realized in any limited archetypal form—to lead him to the timeless radiant dynamic that is at the heart of the world.

In this sense the greatest art is a learning to see in the way described by Rabbi Nachman of Bratislava: "Just as a hand held before the eyes conceals the greatest mountain, so does petty earthly life conceal from view the vast lights and mysteries of which the world is full, and he who can withdraw it from his eyes, as one withdraws a hand, will behold the great light of the innermost world."<sup>8</sup>

## II

It is difficult if not impossible to analyze the art of our own time, because we ourselves still live entirely within the psychic field of which it is a part. You will therefore

8. Martin Buber, *Die chassidischen Bücher*, p. 32.



forgive me for returning briefly to matters we have already touched upon.

In Fig. 2, you will find a diagram of a "balanced" culture, showing a collectivity and an epoch integrated with a cultural canon. The semicircle is the arch supporting the supreme values of the time, the symbols, images, ideals that constitute the transpersonal medium in which the psychic-spiritual existence of the collectivity is rooted. An archetype of the collective unconscious is associated with each of these supreme values. And we may say that the depth and force of an archetype, which is perceived through its projection into a supreme value of the cultural canon, are commensurate with the elevation of its position in the celestial arch. +

For the collectivity the world of the cultural canon is as transpersonal as the world of the collective unconscious. The bond between the upper and lower semicircles, and between those two and the psyche of the group and of the individual, is unconscious.

The unity of life in this relatively self-contained sphere is secure and ordered as long as the higher corresponds to the lower. For in a balanced culture the collectivity and the individual integrated with the group are fed by the forces of the unconscious. In part, these forces flow into the personality through consciousness, which stands in direct communication with the constellations of the cultural canon in religion, art, custom, science, and daily life; in part, the unconscious is set in motion by the archetypes embodied in the cultural canon.

The diagram in Fig. 3 represents the disintegration of the canon, characteristic of our time and the century

# ART AND THE CREATIVE UNCONSCIOUS

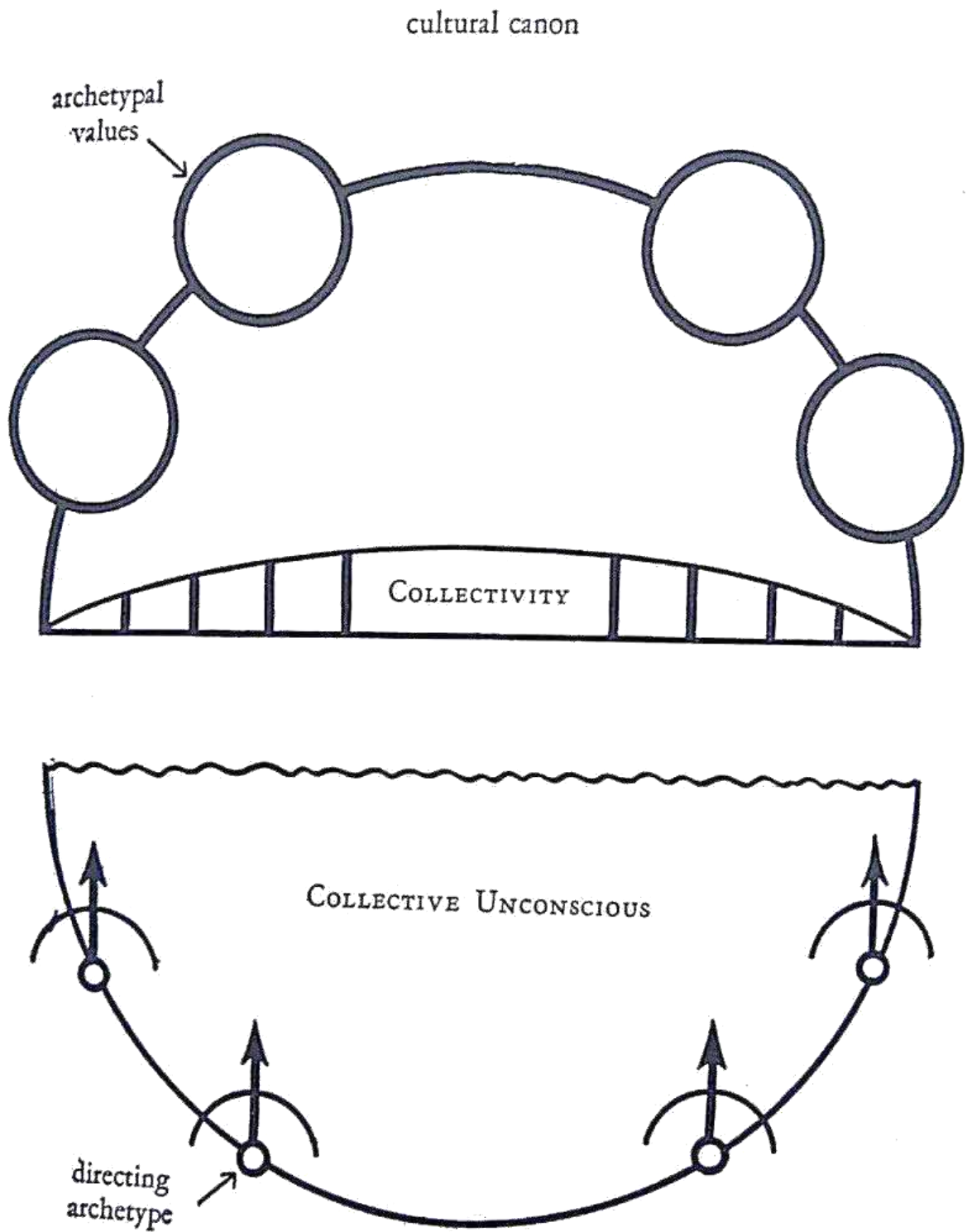


Fig. 2



# ART AND TIME

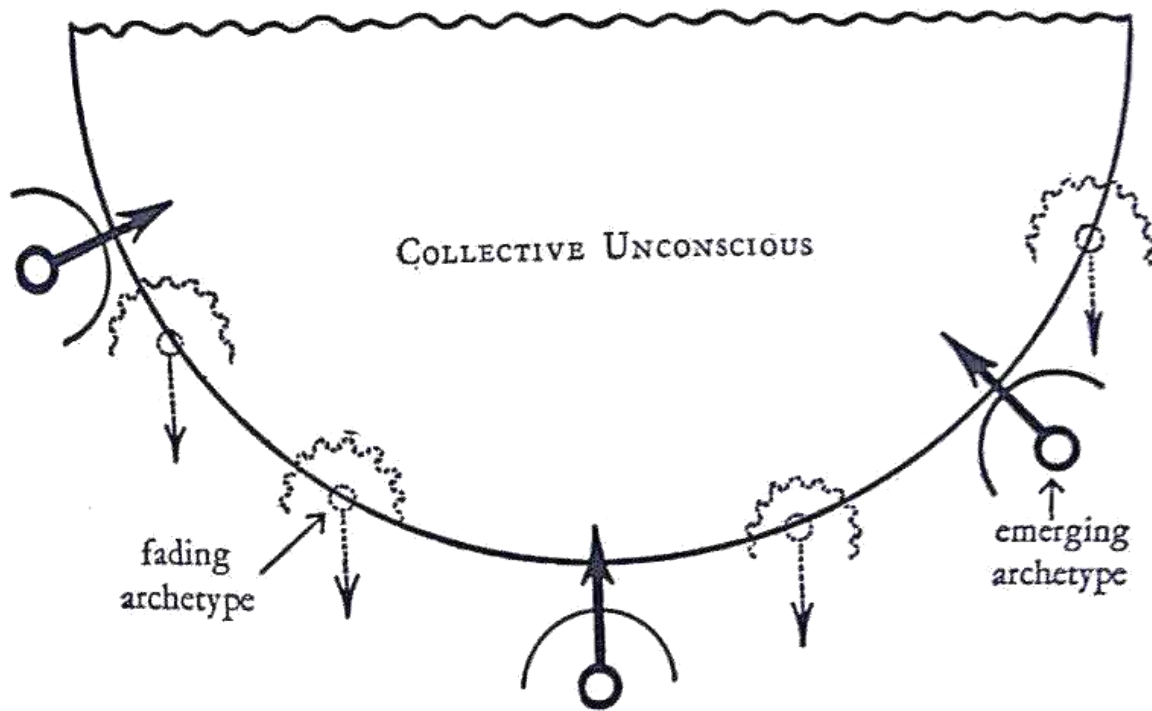
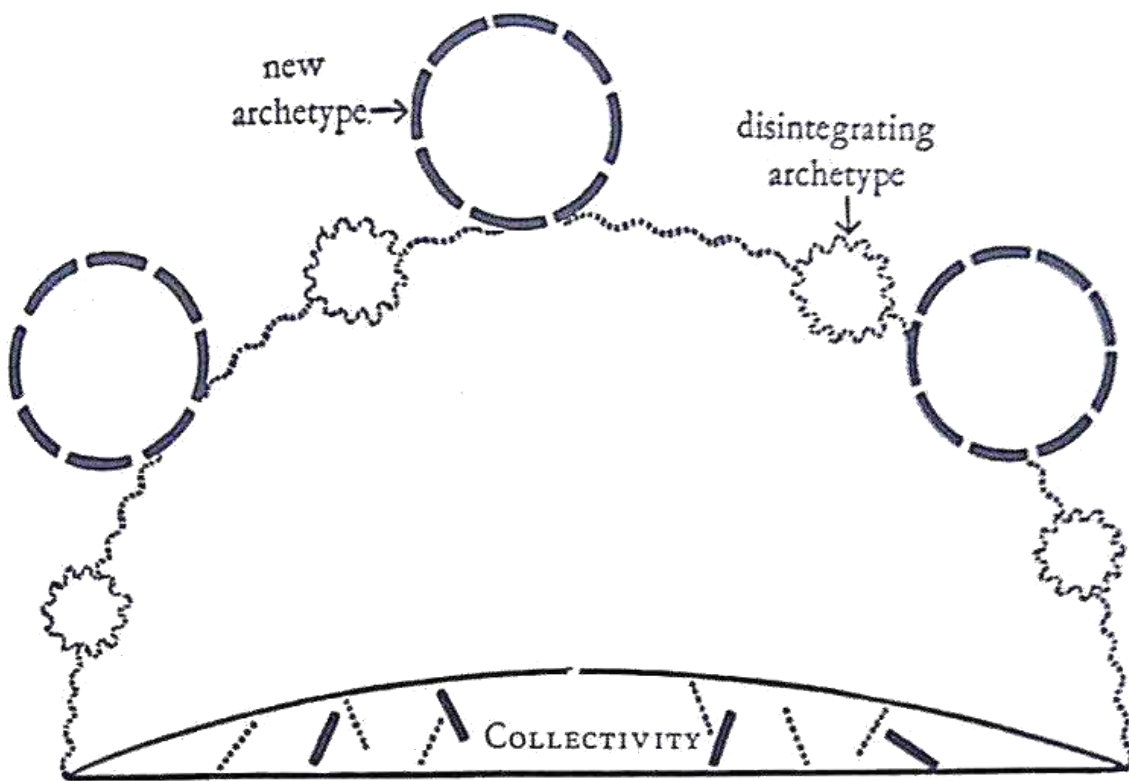


Fig. 3

or two preceding it. The equilibrium in the tension of the psychic field has been lost. In my figure the archetypes forming the canon seem to be fading out. The symbols corresponding to them disintegrate and the arch collapses because the underlying order has broken down. Just as a hive of termites or bees falls into chaos and panic as soon as the central power vested in the queen is destroyed, here too chaos and panic arise when the canonic order crumbles.

This chaos and the attendant atmosphere of doom are by no means diminished by the approach of other archetypes, which may actually have ushered in the collapse of the old cultural canon. Just as in antiquity and the Middle Ages, men today are afraid when stars fall, when comets move across the heavens, and when terrifying changes in the firmament and other signs announce the end of an epoch, which for the generation in question seems to be the end of the whole world.

For just as, archetypally, every New Year—or as in Aztec Mexico the beginning of every new end-of-year week<sup>9</sup>—is a perilous time of judgment and doom, so is the beginning of every new cultural epoch bound up with all that characterizes the end of an era. Only at rare intervals, when the clouds part in the dark sky of the crumbling canon, do a few individuals discern a new constellation, which already belongs to the new canon of transpersonal values and foreshadows its configuration.

We need not dwell at length on the trend of Western culture in the most recent centuries and particularly the

9. [Cf. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, p. 185, and Vaillant, *The Aztecs of Mexico*, pp. 195 f.—Ed.]



## ART AND TIME

last. This work of cultural critique has been done by great thinkers, particularly by Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Freud. The self-assurance and smugness of this age; its hypocrisy; its certainty of possessing everything that was good, true, noble, and beautiful; its indifference to the misery next door; the missionary and imperialist arrogance of this age, which thought it represented the peak and summit of humanity; its Victorianism, against a background of prostitution and French cancan—all this was an expression of the inner hollowness of values which had once held meaning and which mankind had built up at the cost of endless effort.

Since then, all these stage properties have rotted away; today the disintegration of our cultural canon is evident, and it is the general symptoms of this disintegration which characterize our time and its expression in art. It seems to me that on the whole this disintegration is similar to that which occurs in an individual when for some reason his individual canon, his conscious world of values, collapses.

The disappearance of the certainty and security once conferred by the cultural canon shows itself primarily in a sense of isolation, of forlornness, of homelessness and alienation, which has vastly increased in the course of the last hundred years. Probably never before in the history of literature or painting have there been so many isolated individuals. The concepts of school, tradition, and unity of style seem to have vanished. At a distance, of course, we can discover certain kinships; yet each individual seems to have felt the necessity of starting from the very beginning.

//disoriented

Consider, to mention only a few of the painters of the last sixty years, such figures as Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Rousseau, Munch, Klee, Matisse, Chagall, Picasso—there has never been anything similar in history. Each of them is a world in himself, endeavoring alone to ward off the chaos that menaces him or to give it form, each with his own characteristic desperation. It is no accident that we hear so much today of the void and the forlornness of the individual. And the profound anxiety, the sense of insecurity, uprootedness, and world dissolution, at work in these painters also move modern composers and poets.

True, just as there is still a preanalytical psychology, there still exists an art that belongs to the day before yesterday. But the false innocence of this pseudo art, which strives to illuminate life with the light of stars that set long ago, is no less disquieting than the modern art that belongs to our time. To this day-before-yesterday's beauty the words of the *I Ching* apply: "But [the superior man] dare not decide controversial issues in this way [that is, according to beauty of form]." <sup>10</sup> And indeed today we are confronted with great and controversial questions.

Thus in our age, as never before, truth implies the courage to face chaos. In his *Dr. Faustus*, in which he embodies the profoundest insight into the character of our time, Thomas Mann says of Leverkühn's *Apocalypse*, that expression of modern despair: "The whole

10. *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, Hexagram 22: *Pi* (Grace), p. 97. Also cf. Wilhelm, *Der Mensch und das Sein*, p. 211.



work is dominated by the paradox (if it is a paradox) that in it dissonance stands for the expression of everything lofty, solemn, pious, everything of the spirit; while consonance and firm tonality are reserved for the world of hell, in this context a world of banality and commonplace."<sup>11</sup>

When the world of security crumbles, man is inevitably devoured by *nigredo*, the blackness and chaos of the *prima materia*, and the two great archetypal figures of the Devil and the Terrible Mother dominate the world. The Devil is shadow, evil, depression, darkening of the light, harsh dissonance. Elsewhere I have discussed at greater length this incursion of the dark aspect into the Western world and, to the displeasure of those who like to see the world through rose-colored glasses, attempted to draw its ethical consequences.<sup>12</sup>

Consider the great line which begins with Goethe's *Faust* and the Romantic Doppelgänger literature: Melville's *Moby Dick*, Poe, Baudelaire, Trakl, Heym, Kubin, Kafka, and their heirs in modern crime fiction and films. Consider how the dark prophecies of misery, sickness, crime, and madness have been realized, how the black hordes of darkest mankind have shaken the world. Hell, *nigredo*, has been let loose and, as in the paintings of Bosch, peoples our reality. Those whom this blackness has almost blinded do not believe that nature is good, man noble, progress natural, or the godhead a good God.

This darkening brings with it dissonance; the "beautiful" is abandoned for the true, for so-called ugliness.

11. Tr. H. T. Lowe-Porter, p. 375.

12. My Depth Psychology and a New Ethic. X

Di Caprio Doc

*nigredo*

And the dissonance characteristic of the contemporary world has not only carried its dark, negative *content* into our consciousness but has concurrently brought about a general disintegration of form. Behind the archetype of Satan and the blackness surrounding him, at whose impact the crumbling world of the old cultural canon has collapsed, rises the devouring Terrible Great Mother, tearing and rending and bringing madness. And everywhere in modern art we see this dissolution in the breakdown and decay of form.

The libido would seem to have withdrawn from the once round and solidly modeled outside world and flowed inward. In painting, the world, formerly seen as real, has become one of appearance and illusion. This process began with the Impressionists, who abandoned the "illusory depth" of perspective, optical surface, objective color, and outward unity. Similarly in literature, the laws of composition have broken down. The line from Goethe to Dostoevski to Proust and Joyce is not a line of degeneration, but it does mark the increasingly conscious dissolution of style, human personality, and the unified work.

In Dostoevski's novels, for example, we have no longer a plastic individuality but a psychic movement which shatters all form, even that of the individual; what he essentially reveals is not any single man but the numinous powers of the inner world.

Even in such great portrayers of character as Balzac and Tolstoi we find an analogous dissolution of the plastic individual. A collective process, the group or the epoch, replaces the individual as the actual "hero." This



does not mean that the individual is no longer characterized as an individual or that there is no emphasis on literary form. But the central character is a collective entity, which is seen not only in sociological but in much more universal terms: war, money, marriage, etc. The novel has ceased to be purely personal and is peopled with transpersonal powers. And where the family novel does appear as such, its emphasis is on the passing generations, the changing times, and epochs and their decay.

Unity of time, place, and action; unity of character; plasticity of the individual; the *Bildungsroman*—how harmless and dated they all seem at a time when chaos threatens to engulf us and every serious work of art must directly or indirectly come to grips with this problem. For even where the problem is formulated differently, even where it assumes a philosophical or sociological, a theological or psychological, coloration—if we consider it as a whole, we perceive an immense anxiety and indeed a clear consciousness of great danger. And this was true long before our own epoch of world wars and atom bombs.<sup>13</sup> The chaos was first discernible within; this

13. It is highly questionable whether we can derive all these manifestations from the decay of our social structure. We can equally well demonstrate the contrary, that the disintegration of the cultural canon, originating in the unconscious, leads to the collapse of the social structure. More significant than any typologically determined overemphasis of inward or outward causality, in my opinion, is the realization that we have to do with an integral psychic field embracing two worlds in which changes occur simultaneously. Such prophecies regarding the future of our culture as those of Heine and Nietzsche show that the disease of the times can be diagnosed from within as well as from without.

danger threatened from within; and perhaps more than any art before it, modern art is turned inward.

If we have abandoned outward unity, quasi-reality, it is in response to an overwhelming force from within us; the annihilation of everything that passed as good has brought with it the devastation of all that was held to be real. Outstandingly in Joyce this force from within is manifested as an erupting stream of language, as involuntary creation.

It is at this point that psychoanalysis and depth psychology, which are analogous phenomena from another part of our psychic field, invaded modern art as a whole—not merely literature; they have fructified its development in every sphere. The method of free association is an instrument for the discovery of unconscious contents and their movement, and it is also a destroyer of form and of conscious systematization, which now seem a fraud and façade, a figment of the “outside world,” without inner truth.

In reality this incursion of the irrational into art was a legitimate expression of the time long before the Surrealists made a dogma of it. The surrender of conscious control is only a consequence of the disintegration of the cultural canon and of the values by which alone consciousness had oriented itself. And if the Surrealists made dreams, sickness, and madness the central content of art and tried to make their writing and painting flow directly from the unconscious, this was merely a late caricature of what was suffered by the great creative personalities, for they all stand under the sign of Orpheus, who was rent to pieces by the maenads. And in conse-



quence the art which expresses our time seems to consist only of fragments, not of complete works. For the swarms of "little" artists the absence of canon imposed by the situation has itself become canon, and this is what gives rise to all our current "isms."

Here again the Great Men differ from the little. The great artists make conscious use of the situation, dissolving configured outward reality into a stream of feeling and action that, though coming from within, is nevertheless directed; this is equally true of Klee or Chagall, of Joyce or Thomas Mann. The lesser artists make a program of this principle; they amuse themselves and the world with the literary and artistic expression of their incontinence, with an exhibition of their private complexes. For example, Dali. *FORRA!*

The modern painters of the last sixty years have been captured by a power which threatens to destroy them. These painters are not masters in the old sense, but victims, even when they dominate this situation. Because the form of the outside world has been shattered, an identifiable and learnable artistic technique has almost ceased to exist. All these artists suffer the demonic violence of the inward powers. Whether they are driven like Munch into solitude and sickness, like Van Gogh into the release of madness, like Gauguin to the distant isles of primitivism, or like Picasso into the amorphous world of inner transformation—their despair and the strain under which they work contrast sharply with the tranquillity of earlier artists, who felt that they were carrying on a tradition.

We find in Kubin and the early Klee the grotesque

distortion, the anxiety and distress, that come of inundation by the unconscious; we find it in Odilon Redon and Ensor, in Lautrec and Munch. A sinister quality, a fear of world catastrophe, are apparent not only in the fractured lines of the paintings of Picasso and Braque but equally in much modern sculpture, with its disorganized fragments of shattered bodies.

The dream world of Chirico and the spirit world of Barlach are interrelated, just as they are related to Rimbaud and Rilke, to *The Magic Mountain* despite its totally different configuration, and to Hesse's *Steppenwolf*. Over them all stands anxiety, the incursion of *die andere Seite* (the Other Side), which Kubin intuitively anticipated.

As our daytime world is devoured by the Terrible Mother, torn to pieces in the bloody rituals that are our wars, demonic, magical, and elemental irrationality invades us. The stream of the libido flows inward, from the crumbling canon into the unconscious, and activates its latent images of past and future.

This is why the art of primitive peoples, of children, and of the insane arouses so much interest today; everything is still in mixture and almost unarticulated. It is almost impossible to render this phase of the world faithfully, because we are still in a formless state of creative disintegration: protoplasm, mingling decay and new birth—amorphous, atonal, disharmonious, primeval.

Blackness, *nigredo*, means the breakdown of distinctions and forms, of all that is known and certain. When the psychic libido of the individual drains off into the darkness, he falls back into *prima materia*, into a chaos



in which the psychic state of origination, of *participation mystique*, is reactivated. And in modern art we find the same phenomenon. The dissolution of the outside world, of form and the individual, leads to a dehumanization of art.

The vital energy leaves the human form that was hitherto its highest embodiment and awakens extra-human and prehuman forms. The human figure that corresponds in a psychological sense to the personality centered in the ego and the system of consciousness is replaced by the anonymous vitality of the flowing unconscious, of the creative force in nature and the psyche.

This process is evident in the landscapes of the Impressionists. The transformation begins with the outside world, which becomes psychic and gradually loses its objective character. Instead of painting a segment of the outside world, the artist paints for painting's sake, concerning himself only with the inherent modality of the picture, with color and form; the psychic symbol has replaced the object. But through *participation mystique* this psychic symbol has a closer, more effective, and more inward contact with the segment of world to which it relates than a naturalistic, objective picture, dictated by consciousness and "made" with detachment.

We find in modern paintings a strange mixture, a unity of world and psyche, in which fragments of landscapes, cubes, circles, forms, colors, parts of human figures, organic and inorganic components, curves, tatters of dreams, memories, deconcretized objects, and concretized symbols seem to float in a strange continuum. We are reminded of the myth that, before the world

was created with its familiar figures, fragments came into being, arms, heads, eyes, torsos, etc., without interconnection, which appeared only in a later birth.

Whether Picasso represents this world of the beginning or in his cubist efforts he opposes its chaos, whether in harmony with the life stream of color Chagall hovers lyrically over this world, or Klee, with the knowledge of an initiate, chisels out the secret counterpoint of its inner order, the driving force is in every case the participation mystique, the inner stream that follows its own laws, detached from the illusion of outward reality.

All this is deconcretized; and if corks and cookies, scraps of paper, or other articles are pasted on the picture, this quasi-concreteness only makes the spectral quality of the whole even more evident. Dynamics replaces composition, the energy of color and form replaces the illusion of outward reality, the amorphous replaces the conventional and matter of fact, and disintegration and the abyss banish comfort and "still life."

This deconcretization is also expressed in the two-dimensional trend of painting, which relinquishes the corporeality of world and body for a dynamic of form and color—a trend, by the way, which has its analogy in science, in both physics and psychology.

The human becomes demonic, things become human: a face dissolves into colors and forms, a blob of paint looks at us with a human eye. Everything shifts and leaps, now into empty banality, now into an abyss of cosmic suffering, now into a mystical transfiguration of color. Whip all this together and mix it with the unintelligible— isn't that just what life really looks like? But



even if we recognize that this modern art is an authentic expression of our time, the question arises: Is it still art in the same sense as all previous art? And although those who first called it "degenerate art" were themselves degenerates, has our art not really gone astray?

But let us be careful! We are speaking of ourselves. If this art is degenerate, we too are degenerate, for innumerable individuals are suffering the same collapse of the cultural canon, the same alienation, the same loneliness—the rising blackness with its shadow and devouring dragon. The disintegration and dissonance of this art are our own; to understand them is to understand ourselves.

If the need for expression has its source in the intensity of the experience, how can modern man, whose world is menaced by chaos, do other than give creative form to this chaos? Only where chaos is overcome can what lies behind it emerge, and the seed of the fruit of chaos is perhaps more precious than the seed of any other fruit. Today there can be no hope for the future in any religion, art, or ethic that has not faced this threat of chaos.

That a new ethic is needed is neither a philosophical whim nor merely the product of an unfortunate disposition; it is a profound concern of our time.<sup>14</sup> Here the men of today and the men of yesterday must part company. Anyone whose ears do not burn, whose eyes do not cloud over, at the thought of the concentration camps, the crematoriums, the atomic explosions which make up our reality—at the dissonances of our music, the broken, tattered forms of our painting, the lament of Dr. Faustus

14. Cf. my *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*.

—is free to crawl into the shelter of the safe old methods and rot. The rest of us must again taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which will redeem us from the paradise in which it is believed that man and the world are wholly good. It is true that we run the risk of choking on it. But there is no other way. We must acknowledge the evil, the blackness, the disintegration which cry to us so desperately from the art of our time, and whose presence it so desperately affirms.

Paradoxical as it may sound when formulated in theological terms, it seems today that we must redeem a bit of Satan. It is not without significance that I have never met any man for whom the idea of hell as eternal punishment, the idea of absolute damnation, was not utterly inconceivable. Hell no longer seems an inhuman, alien conception, for all of us are too close to this hell within us and outside us; all of us are consciously or unconsciously dominated by the numinous law of transformation, which leads to hell, and also through it and beyond it.

Again I must quote from *Dr. Faustus*, this time Frau Schweigestill's words, with which the tragedy ends: "Often he talked of eternal grace, the poor man, and I don't know if it will be enough. But an understanding heart, believe me, is enough for everything."

Let us understand these words correctly. They are not proud or arrogant; on the contrary they are desperately modest. We really do not know any longer whether grace is enough, precisely because we are as we are and are beginning to see ourselves as we are. But at a time of overwhelming crisis, the questionable nature of grace, or



rather our knowledge that we are unworthy of grace, compels us to understand and love mankind, the fallible mankind that we ourselves are. Behind this abysmal crisis, the archetype of the Eternal Feminine as earth and as Sophia would seem to be discernible; it is no accident that these words are spoken by Frau Schweigestill, the mother. That is to say, it is precisely in chaos, in hell, that the New makes its appearance. Did not Kwanyin descend into hell rather than spend her time with the serene music makers in heaven?

*Feminine*

Modern art, then, is not concerned with beauty, much less with aesthetic pleasure. Modern paintings are no museum pieces. Since they are not primarily the product of a directing consciousness, they can only be effective and fruitful when the beholder himself is in an adequate psychic situation—that is, not centered in his ego consciousness but turned toward his own unconscious, or at least open to it.

There is in modern art a psychic current which descends like a waterfall into the chasm of the unconscious, into a nonobjective, impersonal world. With their animism that brings to life the inner world and the realm of participation mystique, many of these works are charged with a demonic force that can suddenly leap out at the overwhelmed and terrified beholder at any time, in any place, and strike him like lightning, for modern art lives in a world between chaos and archetype; it is filled with plasmatic forces out of which such an archetype can suddenly be constellated.

Sometimes the powers themselves appear, as in the spectral, demonic world of Kubin, in Ensor's masks, and

to a lesser degree in Dali. True, most modern artists deprecate realistic, objective representations of demonic forces, and indeed there are countless other ways of expressing the powers. They range from Barlach's picture of a world dominated by unseen forces to the plastic abstractions of Henry Moore and Picasso's abstract grotesque demonism.



Distortion, crookedness, and grotesque horror form an archetypal aspect of the demonic. If modern art is characterized by the disintegration of external reality and an activation of the transpersonal psychic world, it becomes understandable that the artist should feel a compulsion to depict the powers in their own realm—which is, of course, a psychic realm—and not as they appear, disguised, in nature. And in the art of primitives also, abstraction is often the form corresponding to the world of spirits and the dead.

As magnets order a field of iron filings, so do the archetypes order our psychic life; a similar process takes place in modern painting. Among primitive peoples the powers are projected into strange forms and symbols, and modern art has returned to this primordial phase of exorcism.

In Western culture the artist first set out to represent the world implied in the idea of the beautiful; he strove to concretize this transfigured vision, and later, with the emergence of the earth archetype, the ideal of the beautiful seemed to have been imprinted on life itself. The modern development, however, has been to shatter all these static, ontological conceptions. The powers become



visible as pure dynamic, no longer incarnated in man and object.

He who has perceived the numinosum which destroys every canon, dissolves every fixed system, and reduces every form to relativity tends to see the godhead as an irrupting power, a lord of destruction who dances like Shiva himself over a collapsing world. And it is easy to misinterpret our world and its art in this sense—as annihilation. For all of us are still accustomed to believe in set images, in absolute ideas and values, to see the archetype only as eternal presence and not as formless dynamic, to forget the central commandment of the godhead, which is: "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image."

But it is a total misunderstanding of our time and our art to regard their relation to chaos as purely negative. For all these artists have one thing in common: they have all experienced the creative truth that the spirit blows where it will; and even where they seem to be playing and leaving things to chance, it is not only because the perplexed ego has renounced all hope of knowledge but because they believe profoundly that in and behind chance a greater truth may be at work. Conscious renunciation of form is often falsely interpreted as inability to give form, as incompetence. Actually the breakdown of consciousness, carrying the artist backward to an all-embracing *participation* with the world, contains the constructive, creative elements of a new world vision.

The deflation of man makes for a sense of world and life far transcending the common bond which unites all



men on earth. It is no accident that a human element appears so seldom at the center of the modern mandala, and so frequently a flower, a star, a spring, a light, an eye, or the void itself. The center of gravity has shifted from consciousness toward the creative matrix where something new is in preparation.

This shift is perhaps most evident in Chagall's paintings, which reflect most clearly the synthetic force of the soul's emotional reality. The luminous power of the inward colors, an inward movement guided by a stream of symbols, produces paintings which are an authentic metaphor for the inward life of the psyche. And beyond all chaos, yet profoundly bound up with it, there arises a new kind of psychic beauty, psychic movement, and irrational unity, whose flowerlike growth—otherwise found only in Klee, and here in a different form—is rooted in the profoundest and most secret depths of the soul.

Our art contains as many revelations of the archetype as of chaos. Only the simplest form of this reawakened archetypal world is reflected among the neoprimitives, whether like Gauguin they seek archaic form or like Rousseau represent the archetypes in naïve splendor: the desert, the forest primeval, the Great Mother as snake charmer, the battle in the jungle, or, contrasting with all this, the *petit bourgeois* world, the nosegay, etc.

An animistic, pantheistic sense of a world animated by the archetypes is revealed in the autonomous dynamic of natural form, as in Cézanne, the cubists, and modern plastic art. Not only in Van Gogh and Munch, but actually in all moderns, whether they paint portraits, land-



scapes, or abstractions, this autonomous dynamic creates psychic landscapes whose mood, emotion, color—the inner music of primal feeling, line and form, and the primal constellations of form and color—are the authentic expression of the powers. These powers everywhere, in wind and cube, in the ugly and absurd, as well as in stone or stream—and ultimately in the human as well—are manifested as movement, never as given and fixed things.

For the art of our time inclines toward a radical spiritualism, a solemnization of the secret transpersonal and suprapersonal forces of life and death, which surge up from within to compensate for the materialism dominating the outward picture of our times, a materialism conditioned by the rise of the earth archetype during the Renaissance.

Thus it is a great misunderstanding to characterize this art as intellectual—for only its hangers-on are intellectual—and to underestimate its religious and, in the true sense of the word, metaphysical impetus. The anonymous creative drive itself is the essential reality of a human art independent of any external world. Our art, like our times, is characterized by the old Chinese saying quoted by Richard Wilhelm: "The heavens battle with the creatures in the sign of the Creative."<sup>15</sup>

In compensation for the decay of our cultural canon and our permanent values, both the individual and the group are experiencing an awakening of the collective unconscious. Its inward, psychic expression is modern art, but it is also outwardly discernible in the flood of

15. Wilhelm, *Der Mensch und das Sein*, p. 234.

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religious, spiritual, and artistic forms that are erupting from the collective unconscious into Western consciousness.

The art of diverse epochs and religion, peoples and cultures, tends to merge in our modern experience. In the symbols of their worshipers' rapture the gods of all times confront us, and we stand overwhelmed by this inward pantheon of mankind. Its expression is the world's art, that prodigious net of numinous creation in which man is captured, although he himself has brought it forth.

The dignity of man now appears to us in his creative power, whether in the modern or the Indian, in the medieval Christian or the Bushman. All together are the creators of a higher reality, of a transpersonal existence, whose emanation, transcending times and cultures, shows man in his creative reality and spurs him toward it.

The revelation of the numinosum speaks out of every creative man regardless of his cultural level, for there are different aspects of the transpersonal, which leads one individual to a religious calling, another to art, still another to a scientific or an ethical vocation. The fraternity of *all* those who have been seized by the numinosum is one of the great human phenomena we are beginning to perceive in this era which, more than any other before it, is gaining an awareness of the immensity of man's works.

The religions of the world, the saviors of the world, the revolutionaries, the prophets, and not least the artists of the world—all these great figures and what they have



created form for us a single whole. We all—and not just individuals among us—are beginning not to free ourselves from our personal determinants, for that is impossible, but to see them in perspective. The African medicine man and the Siberian shaman assume for us the same human dignity as Moses and the Buddha; an Aztec fresco takes its place beside a Chinese landscape and an Egyptian sculpture, the Upanishads beside the Bible and the Book of Changes.

At the center of each culture and time stand different numinous—or, as we say, archetypal—powers, but all are eternal, and all touch upon the eternal existence of man and the world. Whether it be Egypt's striving for permanence, Mexico's primitive terror, the human radiance and clarity of Greece; whether it be the faith of the Psalmist, the transfigured suffering of Jesus or the Buddha withdrawing into the infinite, the power of death in Shiva, Rembrandt's light, the emptiness of an Islamic mosque, the flowering earth of the Renaissance, the flaming earth of Van Gogh, or the dark earth of the African demons—all bear witness to the timelessness of man's seizure by the numinosum.

For the source of the creative drive is not nature, not the collective, not a definite cultural canon, but something which moves through generations and peoples, epochs and individuals, which calls the individual with the rigor of an absolute; and whoever he may be, and wherever he may be, it compels him to travel the road of Abraham, to leave the land of his birth, his mother, and the house of his father, and seek out the land to which the godhead leads him.

## ART AND THE CREATIVE UNCONSCIOUS

*forms of integration;  
in-out  
ind-col*

In our time two forms of integration appear side by side, an outward and an inward, a collective and an individual. Much as they may seem to differ, they are essentially related. The one is the integration incumbent upon our culture, an integration with world culture and all its contents. Inundation by the world's collective contents leads first to chaos—in the individual as in the group as a whole. How can the individual, how can our culture, integrate Christianity and antiquity, China and India, the primitive and the modern, the prophet and the atomic physicist, into one humanity? Yet that is just what the individual and our culture must do. Though wars rage and peoples exterminate one another in our atavistic world, the reality living within us tends, whether we know it or not, whether we wish to admit it or not, toward a universal humanism. But there is an inward process of integration which compensates for the outward one; this is individuation. This inner integration does not consist merely in the integration of the individual's personal unconscious; when the collective unconscious emerges, the individual must inwardly come to grips with the very same powers whose integration and assimilation as world culture are his outward tasks.

*Horizontal  
Vertical*

Our conception of man is beginning to change. Up to now we saw him chiefly in a historical or horizontal perspective, embedded in his group, his time, and his cultural canon, and determined by his position in the world—that is, in his particular epoch. There is truth in this vision, no doubt, but today we are beginning to see man in a new perspective—vertically—in his relation to the absolute.



## ART AND TIME

The roots of every man's personality extend beyond the historical area of his factual existence into the world of the numinosum. And if we follow the course of these roots, we pass through every stratum of history and pre-history. We encounter within ourselves the savage with his masks and rites; within ourselves we find the roots of our own culture, but we also find the meditation of Asia and the magical world of the Stone Age medicine man. The challenge of this transpersonal world of powers must be met by modern man, despite his characteristic sense of inadequacy.

We must face our own problems and our own imperfections; and at the same time we must integrate a superabundant outward and inward world that is shaped by no canon. This is the conflict which torments modern man, the modern era, and modern art.

This integration of chaos, however, is not possible in any single act or constellation; the individuation it requires is a process of growth, embracing the transformations of a whole lifetime; during such a process each individual's capacity for resolving conflict is repeatedly strained to the utmost. This perhaps is why the careers of the great artists of our time are all, in greater or lesser degree, calvaries. The task of integration facing the great artist today can no longer be performed in a single work, but more than ever before requires a unity of life and work. Van Gogh's pictures cease in this sense to be individual paintings; they are a storm of painting bound up with his life, and each picture is only a part of it. But often it has even ceased to be the painter's intention—if we can speak here of intention—to achieve a

unity  
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complete statement in any one picture; his orientation is toward the work as a whole, which is meant to express a reality that transcends painting.

All modern artists—in contrast to the fulfilled artists of normal times—have the sacred enthusiasm of which the *I Ching* says: "Thunder comes resounding out of the earth: the image of enthusiasm," and "Devotion to movement: this is enthusiasm."<sup>16</sup>

Whether we consider Picasso, with his single-minded devotion to a great creative impulse—whose work represents a significant reality only when taken as a whole, each part being problematic, questionable, and incomplete; or Rilke, whose development leads from delicate sound arrangements through the catastrophe of ten years' silence to the gigantic dome of the *Duino Elegies*; or the even-paced building of Thomas Mann's work, increasingly preoccupied with what is evil, diseased, and archaic in man, which he (who, more than any other artist of our time, has achieved the unity of life and work that is individuation) uniquely integrated; when we consider the tragic frenzy of Van Gogh or the mysterious transformation of Klee—all of them belong to us; they are we, or rather we are fragments of them all.

★ || We know that the core of the neuroses of our time is the religious problem or, stated in more universal terms, the search for the self. In this sense neuroses, like the mass phenomena resulting from this situation, are a kind of sacred disease. Our whole epoch is full of it, but behind it stands the power of a numinous center, which seems to direct not only the normal development of the

16. Vol. I, p. 71; Vol. II, p. 105.



individual but his psychic crises and transformations as well—not only the disease but also its cure, both in the individual and in the collective.

This centroverson has great consequences in the great and small consequences in the small. However, our whole art, which may be called neurotic in its rapture and “sacred” in its neurosis, is unconsciously or—in its highest summits—consciously directed by this central force. And so it is with each one of us.

Just as the psychic totality of the individual takes form around a mysterious center, the mandala of modern art, in all its vast diversity, unfolds around a mysterious center, which as chaos and blackness, as numinosum and as change, is pregnant with a new doom, but also with a new world. In the *Duino Elegies* Rilke wrote:

For Beauty's nothing  
but beginning of Terror we're still just able to bear,  
and why we adore it so is because it serenely  
disdains to destroy us.<sup>17</sup>

More than to any other beauty in art, these words apply to the terrible beauty of modern art, which itself denies that it is beauty. Never before was the beautiful so close to the terrible. The masters of Zen Buddhism often twisted their disciples' noses or struck them in the face in order to bring them illumination by thrusting them back on themselves. Similarly, our time and our destiny, and often our art as well, strike us in the face, perhaps also in order to fling us into the void of the center, which is the center of transformation and birth.

17. Tr. Leishman and Spender, p. 25.

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For despite all the despair and darkness which are still more evident in us and our art than the secret forces of the new birth and the new synthesis, we must not forget that no epoch, amid the greatest danger to its existence, has shown so much readiness to burst the narrow limits of its horizon and open itself to the great power which is striving to rise out of the unknown, here and everywhere in the world. Menaced as we are by our own atom bombs, every act of destruction will be answered by a rebuilding, in which the unity of everything human will be affirmed more strongly than ever.

This is surely no prophecy; it is the reality of the road which we travel, or rather which we are compelled to travel. Upon this road the horizons are changing in a way we ourselves scarcely realize, and we along with them are moving toward the New, all of us, on this side and that side of the iron curtains that divide us today.

Let us not forget that, despite all the darkness and danger, the man of our time, like the art that belongs to him, is a great fulfillment and a still greater hope.



### III

#### NOTE ON MARC CHAGALL

Marc Chagall. The strange painter from Vitebsk is generally regarded as a Romantic, a painter of folklore. Some stress his "childlike" or primitive quality, others the idyllic aspect of his youth in a small town, or his Jewish milieu. But all these interpretations miss the essential.

He is not a great painter of the kind whose gradual growth takes in greater and greater areas of the outward or inner world. Nor is he a painter of upheaval like Van Gogh, who passionately experienced the nascent modern world in every cypress tree of Provence. But he is unique in the depth of feeling that carried him through the surface manifestations of his personalistic existence to the fundamental symbols of the world, the foundation underlying all personal existence.

His pictures have been called poems, they have been called dream images, implying that the intention of his painting extended to a plane removed from all painting—even that of our day. Perhaps only the Surrealists, who for this reason called Chagall the first Surrealist, shared his intention, which might in a certain sense be called a lack of intention. But—and this is the very crux of the

matter—Chagall is no Surrealist working with the blind unconsciousness of Freudian free association. A profound, but by no means unformed, reality makes itself felt in his work. The dream law of his paintings flows from a unity of feeling, reflected not only in the intrinsic color development but also in the relationship between the symbols that order themselves round the symbolic center of the picture. These symbolic centers of Chagall's pictures are unquestionably spontaneous products of his unconscious, and not constructions of his ego. The consciousness that executes his painting follows the mood and inspiration of the unconscious. The unity and force of conviction in his pictures are an expression of the obedience with which he accepts the intention of his unconscious. Like a medium, undisturbed by the impressions and influences of the world around him, he follows the inner voice that speaks to him in symbols.

Here we touch on a central Jewish paradox in Chagall: a prophecy in which the godhead does not, as from time immemorial, speak in words, but in mystery and image—an unmistakable sign of the upheaval that has taken place in the Jewish soul.

Language, and the language of prophetic religion more than any other, is indeed rooted in the unconscious, with its stream of images; but Judaism and Jewish prophecy were formed by the ethical accent of a consciousness which derived its own central force from its analogy with the central power of the One God. The imperative guidance of this prophetic will so sharpened the intention of the unconscious forces that stood behind, heated it to so white a glow, that the images lost



their colors; the variegated flowers of psychic life were turned to ashes.

But in Chagall for the first time something originating in the very same psychic stratum from which Jewish prophecy drew its power speaks in images and colors. In the new historical situation of a Jewish people transformed through the central depth of its unconscious, prophecy speaks a new language and utters new contents—the beginning of a new Jewish message to the world. The soul of Jewry, compressed by necessity into the shell of isolation, makes itself free, sinks its roots deep into the earth, and manifests itself in a first new flower.

At first glance there seems to be nothing very impressive about Chagall's Jewish provincialism. Folklore, the village idyll, the Jewish small town with its petty bourgeoisie, childhood memories—childhood memories over and over again. Who cares about this Jewish town, about all these relatives and bridal couples, these eccentrics and fiddlers, these festivals and customs, sabbath candles and cows, these scrolls of the Torah and village fences? Childhood—that is the milieu from which Chagall never escaped and to which he returns over and over again, regardless of Paris and Europe, of world wars and revolutions. All this may be lovable and touching, unless one prefers to call it sickly and sentimental. Is this all? one is justified in asking. What is all the fuss about? Is all this not a mere variant of modern primitivism, only a kind of colorful, romantic popular art? Chagall would give no answer, probably he would know no answer; he would only smile and keep on painting his colorful

world, the same little houses, the same childhood memories, the same colored fragments of his early world: cows and fiddles, Jews and donkeys, candelabra and brides. But in the midst of it there are angels and moons, blazing fires, and the eye of God in the village. For what is childhood but the time of great events; the time in which the great figures are close at hand and look out from behind the corner of the house next door; the time in which the deepest symbols of the soul are everyday realities, and the world is still radiant with its innermost depth? This childhood reaches back to the earliest prehistory and embraces Abraham's angels as tenderly as the neighbor's ass; it experiences the wedding and the meeting between bride and bridegroom with the same joy and the same radiant color as the spring and the moonlit nights of first love. In this childhood there is as yet no separation between personal and supra-personal, near and far, inward soul and outward world; the life stream flows undivided, joining godhead and man, animal and world, in the glow and color of the nearby. This simultaneity of inside and outside, which perceives the world in the soul and the soul in the world; this simultaneity of past and future, which experiences the promise of the future in the remote past and the guilt of the ages in the anguish of the present—this is the reality of Chagall's childhood, and the eternal presence of the primordial images lives in his memory of Vitebsk.

For this reason there is no above and below in his paintings, no rigid, inanimate thing, nor any dividing line between man and animal, the human and the di-



vine. In the ecstasy of love man still wears the ass's head of his animal nature and the angel's countenance shines amid calamity and doom. All Chagall's pictures are permeated by the soulful divine light—unbroken by the prism of the understanding—which in childhood fills the whole world; all reality becomes a symbol; every bit of the world is transformed into a divine mystery.

Presumably Chagall "knows" nothing of what befalls him in his pictures, but the pictures themselves know and bear witness to their knowledge. There is the beloved, over and over again, in endless transformations, as soul, as angel, and as the inspiring power of the feminine. In one painting the artist—assuredly without knowledge of the ass Lucius, the unregenerate lower man in Apuleius' romance—bears an ass's head as he stands at his easel and the feminine soul figure guides his eyes upward; in another picture it is the angel himself who holds his palette, or else the figure of the anima, the soul, may peer out of the easel. In every case he expresses the unconscious knowledge that his hand is guided and that an earthly creature is receiving inspiration and guidance from an unearthly, suprapersonal force. In all these visions the masculine is dull, bestial, earth-bound, while the feminine blooms in all the colors of a transfigured, unearthly radiance.

This emphasis on the feminine reflects something essentially new in the outlook of Jewish mankind, which hitherto with its ethic and spirit seemed so fundamentally patriarchal that the feminine, repressed and almost despised, could speak to it only through subterranean channels. In Chagall it is not only the compensating

contrary aspect that breaks through, as in the mystical undercurrents of Jewish cultural history; rather, he is the prophet of a nascent new reality, of an upheaval from out of the depths. It is this alone that justifies us in speaking of Chagall's prophetic mission.

The feminine soul figure that fills Chagall's world reaches out beyond his own personal sphere and indeed exceeds the limits of any purely Jewish contemporary constellation; for the circle whose center it forms is the primordial circle of archetypal symbols, such symbols as night or moon, bride or angel, loving one or mother. But it is striking, and characteristic for the situation of the modern man and the Jew, that the mother with child seldom occupies the center of these pictures. The Madonnalike mother with child who appears in Chagall's paintings has always played a significant role in Jewish life as the collectively regenerating emotional force of the feminine. But she has always remained a symbol of collective forces, and has never become truly incarnated as an individual feminine power in life, or as a feminine force deep within the psyche of the Jewish man. But the essential is the individual incarnation of the soulful and feminine in man, and this is how the feminine appears in Chagall and dominates his pictures: as a configuration of the magical and fascinating, inspiring and ecstatic soul that transforms the world with the star-fall of its colors.

For this reason the center of his work is the relation of the masculine to this type of the feminine; and for this reason it is in the lovers that the secret reality of the world flowers mysteriously over and over again. Cha-



gall's Vitebsk and likewise his Paris are full of this bride and bridegroom, whom he never wearies of painting; in them live the darkness of nocturnal drives and the golden light of the soul's ecstasy. The ass of the body may stagger, it may rise on wings to higher realms; in the form of a gigantic, glowing red angel it may hold the chalice with the sacred wine of drunkenness; and yet again the moon may stand so close to the lovers that the distant bridge, like the rim of reality, marks the limit of the transfiguration in which lovers, angels, and flowers hold out their hands to one another, in which the interweaving of drive and soul, the human and the divine, of color and light, is always the one encounter, which lives behind all the rest, the meeting of the bridegroom with the bride. But this is the encounter of the transcendent God with his feminine immanence; it is the encounter of *keter* and *Shekinah*, of God and soul, of man and world, which takes place in the inner reality of every living couple.

Here the cabalistic and Hasidic symbolism of Jewish mysticism become the reality of a man drunk with love, whose rich palette bears witness that creative man is made in God's image, and in whose pictures of human life in the world the creation begins forever anew.

The lovers are God's seal on the world, the seal in which his bond with the reality of man is confirmed like a new rainbow of promise. For despite all the terror, despite all the pogroms and crucifixions, despite all the fires and wars, this earthly life is the consolation of the godhead itself, if it is taken as the symbol that it is.

The white cow lying beside the Jew wrapped in the

tallith of his loneliness is the appeasement of the maternal world; and in the nocturnal village whose poor little houses stand low and crooked between the fields and fences, there gleams the gigantic, wide-open eye of God (Pl. VII). It watches us always, always it sees the world and us in it and itself; and everywhere it is the center of reality that becomes visible in the stillness as God's presence. Perhaps the woman milking the blue cow beneath the moon sees this eye less than she sees the chickens and the houses; but nonetheless it dominates the nighttime world and opens wherever the creature comes to himself.

But it is chiefly at night and under the moon, when the inwardness speaks and the world of the secret is unsealed, that the world comes to itself. And that is why the night is the time of ecstasy, when the soul's firebird in the form of a flaming rooster abducts the feminine and the music of lovers refashions the world in the perfect original unity from which it sprang in the beginning.

Yet this glowing interior world of Chagall—in which things occupy not their earthly place but the place they hold in the soul, the place assigned them by the creation that is even now in progress—this world is by no means an airy figment. Nor is it the world of miracles and magic spells, in which the Jewish mankind that draws Messianic time down to earth in prayer flies in ecstatic concentration over the historical time of reality. Rather, it is an earthly, real world of the soul, whose nocturnal roots reach deeper than the roots of a merely earthly life, down to the primordial stream of the images, which waters every living existence.



In Chagall's symbol world, the Jewish and the Christian, the individual and collective, primitive paganism and complex modernism, are fused into an indissoluble unity. The persecuted, massacred Jew with the phylacteries hangs as Christ on the Cross of suffering, and the cart, filled with all those terrified fugitives whose home is going up in flames, drives past the figure of the crucified one, who joins their suffering with his; for sacrifice and suffering are everywhere, and crucified mankind hangs everywhere from the Cross of the son of God. But side by side with this there is the pagan vitality of the animals; ram and ass become Panlike figures of the primordial pagan era, in which the angelic cuts across the divine. For nature is life with all its direct fullness of color and all its tragic depth, manifested in drives and instincts and in the wild drunkenness of ecstasy. Drunken knowledge pours from the red luminous wine and from the woman's white body no less than from the crucifix and the scroll of the Torah, and the desperate mixture of higher and lower in human nature becomes a mysterious coincidence of opposites in the one center of life.

Here past and future, higher and lower, fuse into a dreamlike reality; as in Chagall's enchanted forest, outside and inside appear as mirror worlds, reflecting a third world that hides its true reality behind them and in them.

This reality is just as much alive in the Jew at prayer and the rabbi as in the miserable servant girl and the drunkard, the rooster and the weary little horse. The transfiguration of sensuality in the nude lovers is the blazing fiery rooster, whose ecstatic arc cuts through the

night; and the lovers in the boat or under the bridge glow like the sabbath candles or the red sun of the wedding.

All these planes of God's hidden world become visible in Chagall's pictures; they appear in the natural, that is, divine, intermixture that determines the world of the soul: natural thing and symbol; specter and reality; harlequinade of life and lovers' magic; naked drive and religious ecstasy; pillaging soldiers and the silver, fish-tailed dancer of the soul; trumpets of judgment and the endless train of mothers with child, of Marys on the flight to Egypt; the apocalyptic end of the world and the October Revolution; scrolls of the Torah, crucifixes, candelabra, cackling hens, ecstatic asses, and radiant violins whose music hovers between heaven and earth. And over and over again the moon.

The godhead speaks in colors and symbols. They are the core of the world of feeling and truth, a truth of the heart, the subterranean dream reality which, like a net of colored veins, runs through existence. For the "real world" is only a feeble illusion that forces itself on the sober; only the drunken eye of the creative man can see the authentic world of images. One of Chagall's paintings bears the motto that for him embodies the secret of all authentic life or knowledge of God: *Devenir flamme rouge et chaude*. Only the flame, the passionate devotion that summons up the profound powers of the psychic in man and makes them flow, can reveal the secret of the world and its divine heart.

But all this should not be taken in a pantheistic sense; it is not a universal statement about the presence of the



godhead. Close as Chagall's work is to Jewish mysticism and to symbols such as *hitlahavut* (passionate devotion) and *dveikut* (adhesion to the divine), it must not be reduced to these narrow limits. The depth and scope of a revelation correspond to the depth and scope of the psychic intention for which it is revealed, for which the world as a whole is first manifested as a creative secret. And we find similar intentions and unconscious insights throughout modern painting and modern art in general, and in modern man wherever he attains to the heart of actuality. For the reaction against the mechanized and soulless forces, in man as well as the machine, against the soulless mechanization that threatens to stifle the world, is the rebellion of the soul and the inward plunge of modern mankind.

The irruption and descent of the soul into Jewish mankind—this event with which Chagall is possessed and which he proclaims—was long in preparation. Millennia were needed before the godhead could descend from the hard grandeur of the all-governing law, from the steep summit of Sinai, before it could make its way through the luminous spirit worlds of the cabalistic spheres and transcendent divine secrets to the warm earthly fervor of Hasidic mysticism.

With the Diaspora the fenced-in Jewish community opened to the world, and this descent into the world, begun in exile, is at the same time—this, in any case, is the secret hope of Jewish destiny—the rise of the Jew's new psychic reality. This strange people, with its mixture of youth and age, primitivism and differentiation, prophetic fervor and worldly, world-building ethos, of

extreme materialism and timeless spirituality—and Chagall is eminently an expression of all these traits—is engaged in a transformation. Regathered in the face of impending doom, the Jews are sowing once more the seeds assembled in centuries of exile. It is an age of degeneration and rot; the primordial world rises to the surface, the angels fall; but in all this the soul is reborn. Yet like all birth, this birth of the human soul occurs “*inter urinas et faeces*.” The supreme values collapse, the candelabra totter, vainly the angels blow the shofar of judgment, and bearded Jews unroll the parchment scrolls of the Torah. Everything is carried downward by the fall of a world, and this catastrophe, this crucifixion, is enacted in a sea of blood, violence, pain, and tears. The crematoriums of the concentration camps and the mountains of corpses of the world wars are the stations in this catastrophe and this transformation. For the catastrophe is a rebirth.

The fate of Jewish mankind is also the fate of Europe, the fall of Vitebsk is also that of Paris, and the wandering Jew is the wandering of countless millions of uprooted men, of Christians and Jews, Nazis and Communists, Europeans and Chinese, of orphans and murderers. A migration of individuals, an endless flight from the extreme limits of Asia through Europe to America, an endless stream of transformation, whose depths are unfathomable and whose aim and direction seem impossible to determine. But from this chaos and catastrophe, the eternal rises up in unsuspected glory, the eternal that is age-old and then again utterly new. Not from outside but from inside and below shines the mys-



## NOTE ON MARC CHAGALL

terious light of nature, the divine gloriole of the Shekinah, consoling and healing—the feminine secret of transformation.

Chagall's aloofness from the events of the world is anything but indifference to the happenings of his time. Perhaps the pain-drenched colors of the dying villages and homeless fugitives in Chagall's pictures mourn and suffer more profoundly than Picasso's famous *Guernica*. Chagall lacks monumentality because any rigid, monumental form is bound to dissolve in such a swirling stream of emotion, because the pain is too great and its immediacy hollows out all circumscribed form from within. It is the dissolution of a world out of joint, a world whose whole soil is shot through with volcanic crevices; the norms collapse, floods of lava destroy the existing order, but geysers of creativity spurt from the tortured soil. For in this very dissolution a deeper plane of reality is disclosed, yielding its secret to those who, torn like the world itself, experience its primordial psychic source, which is also their own. The divine and the human travel the same road, the world and man are not a duality of one confronting the other; they are an inseparable unity. The moon rises in the soul of every individual, and the house in whose forehead the eye of the godhead opens is you yourself.

Chagall's aloofness is that of the lover who looks toward the one unknown that gives him the certainty of his own being-alive. It is the age-old covenant of Jew and man with the God who, shorn of all limits, not only offers his succor, but sacrifices himself to every nation and every individual. In each man Sinai burns, each man

is crucified: but each man is also the whole of creation and the son of God.

Like the break-through of the soul in modern man in general, Chagall's break-through is not so much an act as a suffering of the naked truth concerning the man to whom our epoch does something that it does to every man who truly lives in it. Nothing human remains except for what is divine. Chagall's alcoholism is the experience of a man to whom the divine-human world has opened, because the earthly-human is so drenched in the horror and suffering of transformation that his feeling can only remain alive if he keeps a perpetual hold on the heart of existence.



## IV

### CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

Once again I have been asked to discuss a subject so boundless that I cannot dispel a feeling of inadequacy. Creative transformation: each of these two words embraces a mysterious, unknown world. Transformation alone—the whole work of C. G. Jung, from his early *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*<sup>1</sup> to *Psychology and Alchemy* and the most recent work on the transformation symbolism of the Mass, is an untiring attempt to encompass the meaning of this word.

And when we turn to the adjective “creative,” how can we help being assailed by a sense of utter hopelessness? On the one hand the image of the creative God

1. [This work, first published in 1912, appeared in Beatrice Hinkle's English translation in 1916 as *Psychology of the Unconscious*. The 4th Swiss edn., much revised, was published in 1952 as *Symbole der Wandlung*; translated as *Symbols of Transformation*, 1956, vol. 5 of the Collected Works. *Psychology and Alchemy*: its chief contents were first published in the *Eranos-Jahrbücher* 1935 and 1936, and it appeared as vol. 12 of the Collected Works in 1953. “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass”: first published in the *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 1941 and translated in *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, vol. 11 of the Collected Works, 1958.—Ed.]

and of creation; on the other the image of the Creative with its six masculine lines, which, standing at the beginning of the Book of Changes, lends emphasis to the primordial connection between transformation and creation. But between these two great images of the world-creating God on the one hand and of the self-transforming divine world on the other, there emerges the human creative world, the world of culture and creativeness, which constitutes man as man and makes his life in the world worth living.

How infinitely vast is the realm evoked by the word transformation; it embraces every change, every strengthening and slackening, every broadening and narrowing, every development, every change of attitude, and every conversion. Every sickness and every recovery are related to the term transformation; the reorientation of consciousness and the mystical loss of consciousness in ecstasy are a transformation. Even the normalization and adaptation of a neurotic individual to a given cultural environment appear to one observer as a transformation of the personality, while another diagnoses an experience that makes over the whole personality as sickness and disintegration of the personality. Each of the many religious, psychological, and political trends interprets transformation in a different way. And when we consider how limited and relative all of these points of view are, where is the psychologist going to find criteria that will enable him to say something about transformation pure and simple, not to mention creative transformation?

What we encounter most often are partial changes, partial transformations of the personality, and particu-



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larly of consciousness. Such partial transformations are by no means unimportant. The development of the ego and consciousness, the centroverson of consciousness in the middle of which the ego complex finds itself, the differentiation and specialization of consciousness, its orientation in the world and adaptation to it, its amplification by change of contents and assimilation of new contents—all these processes of normal development are highly significant processes of transformation. Down through the ages the development of man from child to adult, from primitive to differentiated culture, has been bound up with decisive transformations of consciousness.

Let us not forget that it is less than a hundred years since modern man ceased to regard the transformations of consciousness, i.e., of the partial personality, as almost all that mattered. Even since depth psychology has begun to reshape the outlook of modern man in a way that would have been inconceivable only a short time ago, the education of the individuals who make up the nations is directed almost entirely toward transformations of consciousness and conscious attitudes—or else transformation is held to be altogether unnecessary. Yet the experience of depth psychology has taught us that unless changes in consciousness go hand in hand with a change in the unconscious components of the personality, they do not amount to much. A purely intellectual orientation can, to be sure, bring about significant changes in consciousness, but for the most part such changes are restricted to the limited zone of consciousness. Whereas partial changes in the personal unconscious, in the “complexes,” always influence consciousness

degrees  
of  
change

at the same time, and changes effected through the archetypes of the collective unconscious almost always seize upon the whole personality.

Most striking are those transformations which violently assail an ego-centered and seemingly airtight consciousness, i.e., transformations characterized by more or less sudden "irruptions" of the unconscious into consciousness. The irruptive character is experienced with particular force in a culture based on ego stability and a systematized consciousness; for in a primitive culture, open to the unconscious, or in a culture whose rituals provide a bond with the archetypal powers, men are prepared for the irruption. And the irruption is less violent because the tension between consciousness and the unconscious is not so great.

In a culture where the psychic systems are separated, the ego experiences such irruptions primarily as "alien," as an outside force that "violates" it, and this feeling is partly justified. For chiefly where a pathological development or constitution has loosened the personality and made it permeable, where the ego has not acquired the necessary stability and the systematization of consciousness is incomplete, the chaotic stratum of repressed emotional charge rises up overpoweringly from the collective unconscious and attacks the weakest spot, which is the "irruptive personality."

But the psychological disorders having the character of alien invasion include also the irruptions provoked by a disturbance of the biological foundation of the psyche, which may be caused by organic disease, i.e., infections, by hunger, thirst, exhaustion, intoxicants, or medicines.



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Related to these are the transformations known to us from the phenomenon of sudden conversion or illumination. But here the suddenness and strangeness of the irruption apply only to the affected ego and consciousness, not to the total personality. Usually the irruption into consciousness is only the culmination of a development that had long been maturing in the unconscious stratum of the personality; the irruption represents only the "bursting point" of a transformative process that has long been present but has not previously been perceptible to the ego.<sup>2</sup> For this reason such irruptions are not to be regarded as "alien" from the point of view of the total personality. But even the possession that accompanies an "achievement" or a creative process can take the form of psychic "irruption."

irruption

Yet psychic transformation and normalcy by no means stand in a fundamental opposition to one another. The phases of normal biophysical development—childhood, puberty, middle life, climacterium—are always transformative phases, subjectively critical in the life of the personality.

life cycle

The normal development is characterized by a number of transformations that archetypal dominants help to guide. But here again it is difficult to distinguish the personal and individual from the archetypal, for in every ontogenesis the archetype crystallizes in and through the personal and individual; thus, for example, we inevitably experience the ages of man also as individual biography. Every childhood is both "childhood as such" and *my own childhood*. All these phases of

2. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

transformation are common to the species and are at the same time unique, individual destiny. They represent natural transformations that should be understood in a total sense, i.e., biologically as well as sociologically. As total transformations they embrace the whole personality, consciousness as well as the unconscious, the relation between the two as well as the relation of the personality to the world and the human environment. The intensity and scope of these natural stages of transformation vary in the human sphere; but almost always childhood, love, maturity, old age, the expectation of death, are experienced and interpreted as crises, irruptions, catastrophes, and rebirths. That is why human culture set rituals in these places, rituals in which and through which the merely natural aspect of the developmental phase is raised to an awareness of psychic transformation.<sup>3</sup> In other words, the knowledge that man undergoes transformations, and that the world transforms itself with him and for him, is an element of every human culture.

Religion and ritual, festival and custom, initiation and experience of destiny, form a whole; they bind the individual to the culture of the collectivity just as they attach the life of the collectivity to the partial experience of the individual. The fact that the festivals and rites of transformation are almost always brought into consonance with the division of the year shows that the transformations of human development are experienced as one with the transformations of the natural world. In other words, the nature symbolism of the phenomena of

3. See my "Zur psychologischen Bedeutung des Ritus."



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psychic transformation is experienced not only in itself but also as an authentic identity of inside and outside: new consciousness, birth of the light, and winter solstice are one. The same is true of resurrection, rebirth, and spring; of introversion, descent into hell or Hades, and autumn; of death, west, and evening; or of victory, east, and morning.

In all these cases the natural transformation of the developmental phase was enhanced and made conscious by culture, either for all the members of a culture or, as in the secret societies and mysteries, for certain individuals. And this means that in human culture man not only experiences himself as one who is transformed and should be transformed, but, in addition, that this specifically human transformation is felt to be something that is not merely natural. In primitive cultures, as we know, man "must" be initiated. What counts is not his age, not the transformation ordained by nature, but the initiatory transformation ordained by the collectivity; a higher process of transformation, transcending nature —a traditional, that is, specifically human, process—is exacted of him. In this process the spiritual side of the collectivity, the archetypal world as related to the cultural canon of the time, is conjured up, experienced, and solemnized as the creative source of collective and individual existence. This may be accomplished by means of mysteries or sacraments or in other ways; but in every case the fundamental phenomenon, common no doubt to all mankind, is a transformation that is induced by the cultural collectivity and prepares the individual for life in the collectivity. And there can be no doubt that these

*Legum Empt*

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rites of transformation, which emphasize and enhance the phases of nature, are regenerative both in purpose and effect.

Although in our time this cultural sublimation of the natural transformations has been virtually lost, the natural curative power of the unconscious has been very largely preserved in the healthy, normal man. Not only is he guided through the phases of life—though less so than primitive man—by his phylogenic development, but moreover his whole life is molded by the compensatory action of the psyche with its tendency toward wholeness.

We have said that biopsychic transformation always embraces the whole of the personality, while possession by a personal complex, an emotional content, leads only to a partial transformation that overpowers consciousness and its center, the ego. Here one might be inclined to distinguish the complexes of the personal unconscious as negative from the creatively archetypal contents of the collective unconscious. But often in the healthy, creative man, as well as in the sufferer from mental disorder, the emotional complexes of the personal unconscious can only be separated very incompletely from the archetypal contents that stand behind them.

All psychoanalytic theories permit us to connect a possessed consciousness with a complex of the personal unconscious and reduce this complex to a feeling of inferiority, a mother fixation, an anxiety constellation, etc. But the problem must be put differently if the complex releases an achievement. Wherever a complex of the "personal unconscious" has led to an achievement and



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not to a neurosis, the personality has succeeded spontaneously or reactively in going beyond the "merely personal and familiar" element in the complex to attain a collective significance, i.e., to become creative. But actually, when this happens, the personal complex, e.g., the feeling of inferiority or the mother complex, was only the initial spark that led to the achievement, whether in religion, art, science, politics, or in some other field. \*

The term "overcompensation" here simply means that the personal complex of the individual, which is a matter of complete indifference to humanity, did not lead to an illness that would also be completely indifferent to mankind, but to something—an accomplishment—that does to a greater or lesser extent concern humanity. The initial spark, e.g., the feeling of inferiority and the related will to power, has not stopped at pathological fantasies; rather, the complex, the wound, has "opened up" some part of the personality to something with an authentic significance for the collectivity. In this connection it is of secondary importance whether something is a content of the collective unconscious or a revaluation of the cultural canon. As we know, every man, sick, normal, or creative, has "complexes,"<sup>4</sup> and the question arises: What is it in the reaction of the individual to the complexes of the personal unconscious, which occur in every individual development, that distinguishes the one from the other?

The Hero

Depth psychology has found that the psychic life of the individual comprises a tendency toward balance and

4. C. G. Jung, "A Review of the Complex Theory."

wholeness of the personality, not only in the second half of life, but from the very start. This tendency toward wholeness compensates for disturbances of development; it supplies largely unconscious countermovements that tend to correct excessive one-sidedness. The law of individual self-regulation, which applies to psychic as well as organic life, is reflected in an attempt to draw the "labile psychic position" indicated by the personal complex into the totality. First of all, fantasies develop around the complex. These fantasies consist in a connection established by the unconscious itself between merely personal complexes and unconscious representations, which are often interpreted as wish images and representations of omnipotence. But too often this interpretation leads one to forget the constructive effect of the fantasies that are always bound up with archetypal contents. These fantasies give the blocked personality a new direction, start the psychic life on a new advance, and cause the individual to become productive. A relation to the primordial image, the archetypal reality, brings about a transformation that must be designated as productive.

In the case of the average, normal development fantasies of salvation or greatness lead, perhaps through a relation with the archetypal hero myth and identification of the ego with the hero, who always archetypally symbolizes consciousness, to the strengthening of the ego that is necessary if the personal complex is to be overcome. In addition these fantasies, under the control of reality, help to foster a natural ambition that leads to cultural achievement. But the control of reality means



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the acceptance of the cultural canon and its values, to which the ambition now extends. The content of this ambition may vary greatly; it may embody a desire to be "masculine" or "feminine," shrewd, competent, brave, etc.; in other words, it always relates to that part of the cultural canon which is directly connected with the personal complex. This "transformation" might be characterized by the vague term "sublimation," which would here mean a culturization and socialization of the individual, made possible by the connection established between the complexes and the archetypes. In the neurotic who is confined regressively within his fantasy world, this transformation process of the personal complexes is not successful, or only incompletely so;<sup>5</sup> but in the creative man the process takes a different course, as we shall presently see in detail.

*For a  
neurotic*

The separation between the psychic systems, which becomes intensified in the course of development, leads more and more to a defensive attitude of consciousness over against the unconscious, and to the formation of a cultural canon that is oriented more toward stability of consciousness than toward the transformative phenomena of possession. Ritual, which may be regarded as a central area of psychic transformation, loses its regenerative significance. With the dissolution of the primitive group and the progress of an individualization dominated by ego consciousness, religious ritual and art become ineffectual; and we approach the crisis of modern

*RITUAL  
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central  
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transformation*

5. The reasons for this failure, which are to be sought, for the most part, in disturbances of ego development, cannot concern us here.

man, with his sharp separation of systems, his split between consciousness and unconscious, his neurosis, and his incapacity for total creative transformation.

At this critical point, as we know, a compensatory trend sets in: the individuation process with its individual mythology and individual rites. The problem of individual transformation arises. But here we shall not be concerned with the transformative process that takes place in individuation, with its relation to the universal creative principle and its deviations from it. These matters have been treated exhaustively by Jung.

The modern turn toward creative transformation is manifested not only in analytical psychology but also in the efforts of educators to develop the creative faculty both of children and adults. Domination by our one-sided culture of consciousness has led the individual almost to a sclerosis of consciousness; he has become well-nigh incapable of psychic transformation. In this situation the ego becomes an exclusive ego, a development reflected in such terms as "egoistic" and "egocentric." It becomes closed both to the *thou* of the self, of the individual's own wholeness, and to the *thou* of the outside, of the world and mankind.

This "egoization" of a closed-off and sclerotic consciousness is completed by the formation of an ego ideal. In contradistinction to the self, the center of the real and living totality (i.e., the totality that is transformed and brings transformation), the ego ideal is a function and an artificial product of reaction. It arises in part through the pressure of the collective conscience, the tradition-bound superego, which impresses the values desired by



the collective upon the individual and helps to suppress individual traits deviating from the cultural canon. The ego ideal comprises the culture-conditioned will to be different from what one really is, i.e., a conscious and unconscious rejection and repression of the self, which leads both to the sham personality, or persona, and to the splitting-off of the shadow.

The formation of an ego ideal through adaptation to the cultural canon and of the authorities thus necessitated is in itself normal if—and this is the crux of the matter—the experience of the individual self and the bond with the creative, transformative powers of the unconscious remain alive. In the sclerotic consciousness typical of our cultural situation, we have a radicalization of the ego and the ego ideal; egoistic separation from the living unconscious and loss of self have become an acute danger.

Repression by the sclerotic consciousness creates an underworld with a dangerous emotional charge, which tends to erupt, to overpower and destroy the world of the victors; this underworld is inhabited by the vanquished and suppressed gods, the demons and Titans, the dragons, which form the perilous substructure of the dominant world of the victors. But as the myth implies, this repression does not transform the powers; it merely chains them temporarily. The day of judgment, or some other day in the future, brings a twilight of the gods. The victorious gods of consciousness are overthrown, and old Satan, old Loki, the old Titans, break through, unchanged, and as mighty as on the day of their subjection. Seen from the standpoint of this final aspect,

OLD  
TITANS  
IN  
CHAINS

when only the intervention of the creative godhead can bring a victory and a new beginning, the entire course of history is meaningless. The antagonisms between the powers that had led to battle and repression remain as intense as they were in the beginning, and the powers that had been repressed but not transformed must again—at least according to an absurd dogma, here simplified—be repressed, but now forever. But only if the saving figure of the redeemer returns, not as a judge, in accordance with the old myth, but, as the new myth seems to say, as one who transforms, can there be a realization of the synthesis toward which the original tension of opposites aimed.

But until then—that is, as long as our reality is dominated not only by a separation of opposites within reality but also by the dangerous splitting-off of the conscious world from the unconscious—evil will appear predominantly, though not exclusively, in two very different but closely related forms. For Satan as antithesis to the primordial living world of transformation is rigidity—the rigidity which our conscious culture, for example, ordains so sternly in its hostility to transformation—but at the same time he appears as its opposite, as chaos.

The rigid, unequivocal self-certainty—in this connection, one should say “ego-certainty”—which excludes transformation and all creativity, including revelation, is a thing of the Devil. Where it prevails, the situation of man, ego, and consciousness is profoundly misunderstood, and the fundamental phenomenon of existence,

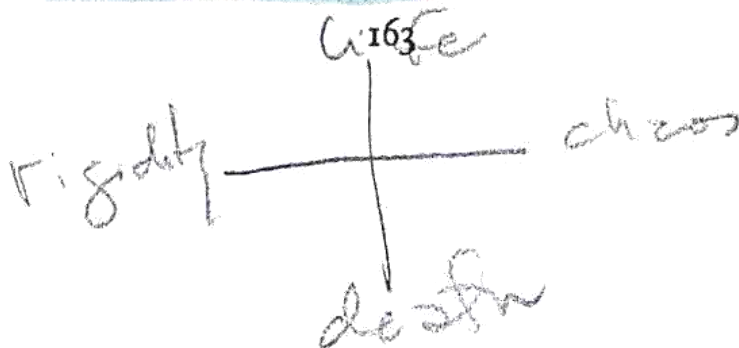


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the phenomenon of change—growth, transformation, passing away—that surrounds the life of every creature is disregarded. The danger of this diabolical rigidity is inherent in all dogmatism, in all bigotry: both are symbols of occlusion to revelation. To have eyes and not see, to have ears and not hear; these are the typical and unmistakable symptoms of occlusion to the call of creative vitality.

But the other side of the Devil, the exact reverse of his rigidity, is chaos. We know only too well by our own example, as individuals and as a whole, how this "other side" of our rigid consciousness looks. We engender within ourselves this structureless, blurred, impure amorphousness, this mass formlessness and aversion to form, wherever the Devil's rigidity dominates our consciousness and our life. The smooth, undifferentiated fixity of the one is inseparable from the mollusious, undifferentiated chaos of the other.

Rigidity and chaos, these two forms of the negative, are directly opposed to the creative principle, which encompasses transformation, hence not only life but also death. Across the diabolical axis of rigidity and chaos cuts the transformative axis of life and death. In the unconscious life of nature these two axes seem to coincide, and what in the extreme case is rigidity appears subsequently as firmness rooted in life. Similarly, what in the extreme is chaos appears normally linked with the principle of death. It is only in man, with his development of consciousness and separation of the systems, that the axes move apart. Chaos and a seemingly



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unshakable order of consciousness appear only in humankind, for extrahuman nature is as free from the Devil as it is from rigidity and chaos.

For this reason only the experience of our own confused psyche has led us to begin our mythology with a chaos out of which, as we assert in defiance of all probability, order developed. This again is only a projection of our incomplete experience of the genesis of our own order-giving consciousness. Even today our consciousness, in its striving to comprehend itself, has for the most part failed to see that the development of this order and light of consciousness is contingent on a pre-established order and a primordial light.

in a priori  
The order that we find in the unconscious as well as in consciousness—the spiritual order of the instincts, for example—long before the rise of consciousness as a determinant of organic life and its development, lies in a plane of experience to which the normal experience of our polarizing consciousness does not attain. On this plane the human community lives with the relative solidity and security of a world supported by the cultural canon, and only seldom does an earthquake, a subterranean encounter with the repressed powers of chaos, the Titans and the Midgard Serpent, disturb the security of the human collectivity.

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The stratum of chaos and the world of a prechaotic order that lives deep down below it are separated from the upper world by a fiery zone of emotions, into which the average individual rightly avoids plunging. In the late period of culture, at least, as long as the points of approach to the powers are solemnized in the cultural



canon itself, it suffices for the average man to approach the numinous volcano of the subterranean fire with veneration and at a safe distance. But if, as in our day, the collective road to these regions is no longer viable, we experience their presence primarily in the zones of irruption, to which belong the psychic disorders. Related to these, but essentially different, is the creative process—a fundamental human phenomenon.

We know that phenomena of possession appear also in the creative man. But in the evaluation of the connection between the creative personality and transformation, the individual who stops in his possession and whose productivity is based on a monomania, an *idée fixe*, occupies only a low rank in the hierarchy of creative men, though his achievement may still be significant for the collectivity.


Creative transformation, on the other hand, represents a total process in which the creative principle is manifested, not as an irruptive possession, but as a power related to the self, the center of the whole personality. For partial possession by a single content can be overcome only where the centroverson that makes for wholeness of the personality remains the guiding factor. In this event the law of psychic compensation leads to an unremitting dialectical exchange between the assimilating consciousness and the contents that are continuously being newly constellated. Then begins the continuous process characteristic of creative transformation—new constellations of the unconscious and of consciousness interact with new productions and new transformative phases of the personality. The creative principle


thus seizes upon and transforms consciousness as well as the unconscious, the ego-self relation as well as the ego-*thou* relation. For in a creative transformation of the total personality, a modified relation to the *thou* and the world indicates a new relation to the unconscious and the self, and the clearest, though not the only, indication of psychic transformation is a change in the relation to extrapsychic reality.

But objectively the transformative process typical of the creative man is not reflected only in what we call "personal influence." Often enough this personal influence, as the phenomenon of dictators has shown, is based on possession and projections, in other words, on factors of highly dubious origin. In its highest form it belongs to the effects of the creative process; but the phenomenon of the "opus," synthesized from the inside and outside, the psychically subjective and objective, is a more evident part of it. In every field of human culture, the opus is its creator's "child"; it is the product of his individual psychic transformation and wholeness, and at the same time a new objective entity which opens up something to mankind, that is, represents a form of creative revelation.

Precisely because for us the symbol-creating collective forces of myth and religion, rites and festivals, have lost most of their efficacy as cultural phenomena binding upon the collectivity, the creative principle in art has achieved a unique prominence in our time. Art, which up to the Renaissance was almost exclusively the handmaiden of religion, of culture, or of the state, has acquired an ever increasing influence on the consciousness



of our day, as the abundance of publications on the art and artists of all times indicates. The extent of the change becomes clear when we consider the social position of so great a genius as Mozart as late as the eighteenth century, and the national or international esteem in which the leading musicians, painters, and writers are held today. The creative individual seems to enjoy such prestige partly because he exemplifies the utmost transformation possible in our time, but above all because the world he creates is an adequate image of the primordial *one* reality, not yet split by consciousness—a reality that only a personality creating from out of its wholeness is able to create. 

Differentiation and hyperdifferentiation of consciousness down to the most dangerous one-sidedness and disequilibrium are the hallmarks of our culture, whose faulty balance can no longer be repaired solely by the natural compensation of the psyche. But a return to the old symbols, an attempt to cling to what still remains of the symbolic-religious values, also seems doomed to failure. For our understanding of this symbolism, even our affirmation of it, implies that the symbol itself has departed from the numinous realm of the creative and entered into the sphere of conscious assimilation. And this cannot be altered by our knowledge, born of experience, that the symbol embodies a numinous factor transcending our consciousness. As long as authentic symbolic action is present, an interpretation and a conflict of interpretations are indeed possible—as the history of all religious dogmas bears witness—but the object of controversy is realities and not symbols. To simplify, the 

# creative principle home in the Anonymous

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disagreements involve the attributes of the godhead, not the symbolism of the representations of God.

The creative principle has its home no longer in the symbolism of a cultural canon, but in the individual. It has almost ceased to live in favored holy places, in sites or at times dedicated to it, or in men consecrated to it, but may live everywhere, anywhere, in any way and any time, that is to say, anonymously. Because in our time the creative principle always hides in an anonymity that discloses its origin by no divine sign, no visible radiance, no demonstrable legitimacy, we have entered upon the spiritual poverty suggested in the Jewish legend about the Messiah in the guise of a beggar, sitting and waiting by the gates of Rome. What is he waiting for? He is waiting for you. This means that creative redemption—and for the Jew, as we know, redemption has not yet come—is disguised as an Everyman, and, what is far more, his poverty and helplessness make him dependent on the devotion that every man accords to this Everyman. This is our situation. We stand before the creative principle. Wherever we find the creative principle, in the Great Individual and in the child, in the sick man or in the simple everyday life, we venerate it as the hidden treasure that in humble form conceals a fragment of the godhead.

If the Old Testament conception of a man made in God's image can be experienced as living reality, it is primarily because man, in addition to being a creature, is also a creative force demanding fulfillment. Wherever it appears, this creative force has a character of revelation, but the revelation is intimately bound up with the



not only thought!

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psychic structure to which and in which it is revealed. For us the character of revelation is no longer separable from the individual. The creative principle is so deeply rooted in the deepest and darkest corner of his unconscious, and in what is best and highest in his consciousness, that we can comprehend it only as the fruit of his whole existence.

One of the basic fallacies in regard to the creative principle springs from the accent on a human development *progressing* from the unconscious to consciousness. As long as the development of human consciousness is regarded as identical with the differentiation and development of thought, the creative man, as well as the group which in ritual and festival comes into contact with the depths of the unconscious, must appear to be immersing themselves in worlds of archaic primitive symbolism. Even if the regenerative character of this phenomenon is understood—an insight that is often cloaked beneath the notion of sublimation—it is still held that this archaic, regressive mode should and can be overcome with advancing development. This attitude underlies every so-called scientific view of the world, including psychoanalysis, for which all symbolic, creative reality is essentially a “prescientific” phase that must be superseded. For this orientation the highest human type is the exponent of the radically rational consciousness, while the symbol-creating man, though not neurotic, “actually” represents an atavistic human type. In such an approach the nature of the artist, the creator of symbols, is totally misunderstood; his development and creative achievement are derived from a fixation in a childhood



phase of development. The symbol, too, is misunderstood and poetry, for example, is reduced to the "magical infantilism" that holds with the "omnipotence of thoughts."

It cannot be stressed enough that the key to a fundamental understanding, not only of man, but of the world as well, is to be sought in the relation between creativity and symbolic reality. Only if we recognize that symbols reflect a more complete reality than can be encompassed in the rational concepts of consciousness can we appreciate the full value of man's power to create symbols. To regard symbolism as an early stage in the development of the rational, conceptual consciousness involves a dangerous underestimation of the makers of symbols and of their functions, without which the human species would be neither capable nor worthy of living.

We do not mean to deny that at certain points the reductive analysis of the creative and noncreative man discloses authentic facts. These personal factors are significant both for the therapy of the sick man and for the biography of the creative man. But analysis of the creative process begins precisely where reductive analysis stops, with the investigation of the connections between personal factors and archetypal contents, that is to say, the contents of the collective unconscious. It is only by virtue of these connections that the individual can become creative and that his work can become significant for the collectivity. Hence a reductive analysis of the creative process and of the creative man is not only false but represents a danger to culture, because it prevents the cre-



ative powers from compensating for the culture of consciousness, exacerbates the one-sided development of individual consciousness, and drives both individual and culture to a neurotic cleavage.

And the result of such a development is that even from the standpoint of the one-sided rationalist the reverse of what he had intended happens. For if devaluation of the symbol-creating unconscious brings with it a severe split between the rational consciousness and the unconscious, the ego consciousness, unbeknownst to itself, will be overcome by the powers which it negates and seeks to exclude. Consciousness becomes fanatical and dogmatic; or, in psychological terms, it is overpowered by unconscious contents and unconsciously re-mythologized. It still recognizes only rational dominants, but in reality it is subjected to processes which, because they are archetypal, are stronger than itself, but which the prejudiced consciousness cannot understand. Consciousness then forms the unconscious religions and myths that we see on a small scale in psychoanalysis and on a large scale in movements such as Nazism and Communism. It is the pseudo-religious background of such dogmatic positions that explains why they are virtually ineradicable. Such dogmas are rooted in archetypal images which consciousness had resolved to exclude; but they are pseudo-religious because, in contrast to authentic religious contents, they lead to a regression and a dissolution of consciousness.

Even if consciousness were justified in regarding the archetypal powers of the unconscious as archaic and hostile to consciousness—though this is by no means the

case—it could ensure its development only by “keeping them carefully in mind,” for the moment it loses sight of them or regards them as nonexistent, it unconsciously falls a victim to them. When we consider the totality of the human psyche, in which consciousness and the unconscious are interdependent both in their development and in their functions, we see that consciousness can develop only where it preserves a living bond with the creative powers of the unconscious.

The growth of consciousness is not limited to awareness of an “outside world”; in equal measure it comprises an increasing awareness of man’s dependence on intrapsychic forces. But this must not be taken as “growing” awareness of a subjective limitation, of a “personal equation” which obscures an objective manifestation of the outside world that we designate as “reality.” It must not be forgotten that the outside world that we apprehend with our differentiated consciousness is only a segment of reality, and that our consciousness has developed and differentiated itself as a specialized organ for apprehending this particular segment of reality.

We have elsewhere shown in detail<sup>6</sup> that we pay a heavy price for the sharpness of our conscious knowledge, which is based on the separation of the psychic systems and which breaks down the one world into the polarity of psyche and world. This price is a drastic curtailment of the reality that we experience. And we also pointed out that the experience of this one reality is a qualitatively different form of experience, which seems

6. See my “Die Psyche und die Wandlung der Wirklichkeits-ebenen.”



\*when talking about consciousness itself

## CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

"indistinct" from the standpoint of the developed consciousness.

The experience of the one reality, which both phylogenetically and ontogenetically precedes the experience of reality by the differentiated consciousness, is eminently "symbolic." Early psychologists looked back from the vantage point of the differentiated consciousness and dissected the symbol into its components, in the belief that something inward was projected outward. More recently we have come to view symbolic experience as a primary existence: the one reality is experienced adequately and as a whole by a psyche that has not yet been split by the separation of the systems, or that has ceased to be split. Formerly it was thought, for example, that the symbolic perception of a tree involved an outward projection of an interior something; one projected a psychic image upon the tree, the object outside. But this thesis has proved untenable, although it seemed plausible to the ego consciousness of modern man, who experiences the one world as split into an inside and an outside.

Actually, for ourselves as well as for primitive man, there is not a tree object outside and a tree image inside, which may be regarded as photographs of one another. The personality as a whole is oriented toward the one reality, and its primary experience of the intrinsically unknown part of that reality that we call a tree is symbolic. In other words, the feeling-toned experience of the symbol with its sense content is something primary and synthetic; it is a unitary image of one part of the unitary world. Inward and outward "perceptual images," on the other hand, are secondary and derived. An indication of

being able  
to observe  
make a  
difference  
BATESON #

inside  
outside

A unitary image of one part  
of the unitary world

7 this is that the science of our isolated and isolating consciousness still discovers vestiges of symbols in our perceptual images and strives to move us into an imageless world that can only be thought. But even then our psyche persists in perceiving images, and we continue to experience symbols, though now they are scientific and mathematical symbols. But the greatest of our scientists and mathematicians experience these symbolic abstractions of consciousness as something numinous; the emotional factor in the subject, (previously excluded from scientific inquiry as a matter of principle,) reappears, "so to speak, in the object."

The development of the intrinsically unknown substance, of the intrinsically unknown and unrepresentable one world, brings with it a confrontation and a differentiation; with the help of images the psyche so orients itself in, and adapts itself to, the world as to become capable of life and development. For this reason we call these images "adequate to the world." This development comprises symbolic images in which parts of the one reality are perceived. The subsequent process of conscious differentiation, with its dual schema of inside and outside, psyche and world, splits the unitary symbolic image in two: on the one hand an inward, "psychic" image, on the other an outward, "physical" image. Actually neither can be derived from the other, for both are partial images of an original symbolic unity that has been split in two. The tree outside is just as much an image as is the tree inside. To the tree outside "corresponds" an unrepresentable part of the unitary reality, which can be experienced only with relative adequacy



in the image; while to the tree inside corresponds a part of the experiencing, living substance, which again is experienced only with relative adequacy. We cannot derive the inward partial tree image from the tree outside, for we experience the latter too as an image; nor can we derive the outward partial tree image from the projection of an inward image, since this inward partial image is just as primary as the outward one. Both spring from the primary symbolic image—tree—which is more adequate to the unitary reality than are its partial derivatives, the inward and outward image relating to the secondary, divided world. |||

But the "primary symbolic image" is not complex, or alien to our experience. In a certain state of mind, which may be brought on in a number of ways, the "object vis-à-vis" becomes transformed for us. The term *participation mystique* has a very similar implication, but was coined for something remote from the experience of modern man. When things, a landscape or a work of art, come alive or "grow transparent,"<sup>7</sup> this signifies that they are transformed into what we have called "unitary reality." What we see becomes "symbolic" in the sense that it speaks to us in a new way, that it reveals something unknown, and that in its actual presence, just as it is, it is at the same time something entirely different: the categories of "being" and "meaning" coincide. ★

A passage in Huxley's *The Doors of Perception* will make my meaning clear. A psychic transformation, artificially induced by the drug mescaline, has led the author to a symbolic perception of the one reality.

7. See "Art and Time" in this volume, p. 105.

it speaks to us!  
categories of "being" and  
"meaning" coincide!

"I was not looking now at an unusual flower arrangement. I was seeing what Adam had seen on the morning of his creation—the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence.

"‘Is it agreeable?’ somebody asked. (During this part of the experiment, all conversations were recorded on a dictating machine, and it has been possible for me to refresh my memory of what was said.)

"‘Neither agreeable nor disagreeable,’ I answered. ‘It just is.’

|| "Istigkeit—wasn't that the word Meister Eckhart liked to use? 'Is-ness.' The Being of Platonic philosophy—except that Plato seems to have made the enormous, the grotesque mistake of separating Being from becoming and identifying it with the mathematical abstraction of the Idea. He could never, poor fellow, have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were—a transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen the divine source of all existence."<sup>8</sup>

This insight into the symbolic mode that preceded our consciousness seems to justify our theoretical digression. For it turns out that the vision and production of a symbolic world of the archetypal as well as natural in

8. Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception*, p. 17.



religion, rite, myth, art, and festival not only involve an atavistic factor and a regenerative element arising from their emotional charge. In a certain sense they are characterized precisely by the fact that in them a fragment of the unitary reality is apprehended—a deeper, more primordial, and at the same time more complete reality that we are fundamentally unable to grasp with our differentiated conscious functions, because their development is oriented toward a sharper perception of sections of polarized reality. In the differentiation of consciousness we seem to be doing the same thing as when we close our eyes in order to enhance our hearing, in order that we may be "all ears." Unquestionably this exclusion sharpens and intensifies our hearing. But in thus excluding the other senses we perceive only a segment of the total sensory reality, which we experience more adequately and fully if we not only hear it but also see, smell, taste, and touch it.

emotional  
// charge

is  
distracted  
by focus  
too much

TVPA

There is nothing mystical about the symbolical unitary reality, and it is not beyond our experience; it is the world that is always experienced where the polarization of inside and outside, resulting from the separation of the psychic systems, has not yet been effected or is no longer in force. It is the authentic, total world of transformation as experienced by the creative man.

Individualized

## II

Every transformative or creative process comprises stages of possession. To be moved, captivated, spellbound, signify to be possessed by something; and without such a

crisis  
 ha!

fascination and the emotional tension connected with it, no concentration, no lasting interest, no creative process, are possible. Every possession can justifiably be interpreted either as a one-sided narrowing or as an intensification and deepening. The exclusivity and radicality of such "possession" represent both an opportunity and a danger. But no great achievement is possible if one does not accept this risk, though the notion of "acceptance of the risk" implied in the hero myth presupposes far more freedom than the overpowered ego actually possesses. The workings of the autonomous complexes presuppose a disunity of the psyche, whose integration is an endless process. The world and the collective unconscious in which the individual lives are fundamentally beyond his mastery; the most he can do is to experience and integrate more and more parts of them. But the unintegrated factors are not only a cause for alarm; they are also the source of transformation.

It is not only the "great" contents of world and psyche, the fateful irruptions and archetypal experiences, that bear within them the seeds of transformation; the "complexes," the partial souls that are not merely hostile disorders but natural components of our psyche, are also positive movers and begetters of transformation.

normality

We have pointed out that normally the individual adapts himself to the cultural canon by way of the link between the complexes and the archetypes. As consciousness develops, the childlike psyche's bond with the archetypes is continuously replaced by personal relations with the environment, and the tie with the great archetypes of childhood is transferred to the archetypal canon



of the prevailing culture. This occurs through increasing emphasis on the ego, on consciousness and the environment. The world of childhood, with its stress on totality, on direct contact with the self, is repressed in favor of normal adaptation. In the creative man, too, a link arises between personal complexes and archetypal images. But in him it is not assimilated, as in the normal man, through adaptation to the principle of reality as represented by the cultural canon.

# creative  
mind  
normal

As we know, psychoanalysis attempts to derive creativity from a constitutional deficiency. By way of simplification this might be called an excess of libido, which causes a personally unfulfilled childhood and a fixation in it. All the schemata valid for the average man—pre-Oedipal fixation, castration anxiety, superego formation, and Oedipus complex—are applied unchanged to the creative man; but his excess of libido and its supposed “sublimation” are made responsible for the abnormal solution of his childhood problem and for his achievement. In this view the creative man represents a highly dubious variant of human nature; he remains fixated in childhood, and never grows beyond the prescientific stage of symbolism. Sublimation and recognition by the collectivity would then signify that the artist helps all men to enjoy a pretty-well-concealed infantilism—and this is called secondary elaboration. In art men abreact their own infantile complexes, looking on as Oedipus, Hamlet, or Don Carlos slays his own father. (But even in the normal man these schemata, here construed personalistically, are related to archetypal constellations that reach much deeper.)

ha!

Yet the difference between the creative and the normal man does not, as the psychoanalytical school supposes, consist in a surplus of libido; it resides in an intensified psychic tension that is present in the creative man from the very start. In him a special animation of the unconscious and an equally strong emphasis on the ego and its development are demonstrable at an early stage.

This acute psychic tension and an ego that suffers from it reflect the creative man's special kind of alertness. He usually possesses it even as a child, but this alertness is not identical with the reflecting consciousness of a precocious intellect. The childhood state of the creative individual can be characterized no better than in Hölderlin's words: "und schlummert wachenden Schlaf" ("and slumbers in waking sleep").<sup>9</sup> In this state of alertness the child is open to a world, to an overwhelming unitary reality that surpasses and overpowers him on all sides. At once sheltered and exposed, this waking sleep, for which there is as yet no outside and no inside, is the unforgettable possession of the creative man. It is the period in which the whole and undivided world, infinite and beyond the compass of the ego, stands behind every pain and every joy. In this childlike experience every personal content is bound up with a transpersonal archetypal content, while, on the other hand, the transpersonal and archetypal are always situated in the personal. Once we appreciate what it means to experience such a unity of the transpersonal and personal, in which ego and man-

9. "At the Source of the Danube," in *Hölderlin* (tr. Michael Hamburger), p. 169.



kind are still one, we begin to wonder how it is possible, by what paths and what exertions, to overcome and forget this fundamental experience, as the average man succeeds in doing with the help of his education; and we cease to marvel that the creative man should remain fixated in this stage and its experiences.

From childhood onward the creative individual is captivated by his experience of the unitary reality of childhood; he returns over and over again to the great hieroglyphic images of archetypal existence. They were mirrored for the first time in the well of childhood and there they remain until, recollecting, we bend over the rim of the well and rediscover them, forever unchanged.

It is true that all the normal tendencies are likewise present in the creative man and that he realizes them to a certain extent, but this individual destiny cuts across his normal development. Because his nature prevents him from accomplishing the normal development of the average man, with its prescribed adaptation to reality, even his youth is often abnormal both in a good and a bad sense. His conflict with his environment often begins at an early age with an intensity that seems pathological, for precisely in childhood and youth the creative and the abnormal or pathological are close together. For, in opposition to the demands of the cultural canon, the creative man holds fast to the archetypal world and to his original bisexuality and wholeness, or, in other words, to his self.

This constellation of the creative man appears at first as a fixation in the childhood milieu and the fateful persons and places of childhood. But here, even more

than in other childhoods, the personal is always intermingled with the suprapersonal, the personal locality with an invisible world. And this world is not merely a "childlike" world; it is the true, the real, or, as Rilke called it, the "open" world.

Love, the possessive, encircles  
the child for ever betrayed in secret;  
and pledges it to a future that's not its own.

Afternoons when, left to itself, it kept looking from mirror  
to mirror,  
staring; when it kept asking itself the riddle  
of its own name: Who? Who?—But the others  
return home and overwhelm it.  
What the window, what the path,  
what the stuffy smell of a drawer confided  
to it yesterday: they drown with their presence, frustrate.  
Once more it is their possession.  
Sprays will at times fling themselves out from the denser  
bushes in the way its desire flings out  
from the tangle of family, swaying into clearness.  
But day by day they keep blunting its glance on their wonted  
walls, that upward glance which encounters dogs  
and has taller flowers  
nearly opposite time and again.<sup>10</sup>

♂ ♀ ? But openness—here we speak of the boy, whose creativity is easier to understand than that of the girl—always coincides with femininity. In the creative man this feminine principle, this motive of transformation, which in the normal adult becomes discernible as an "anima,"

10. R. M. Rilke, *Correspondence in Verse with Erika Mitterer* (tr. N. K. Cruickshank), p. 35.



is usually associated with the image of the maternal.<sup>11</sup> It makes the child receptive, open to suffering and experience, but also to what is great and overpowering in the world; it keeps alive the stream that pours in on him from without. It is only too easy to understand that this constellation must be rich in conflicts and must make adaptation difficult unless nature has been particularly kind in its mixing of the elements. \*

In every creative individual the accent is unquestionably on the receptive component from the very start, but we must not forget that this same accent prevails in the child, and that a great struggle is often required before it can be overcome by an education oriented toward the sexually one-sided cultural values. But on the other hand, the preservation of a certain receptivity is at the same time a preservation of one's own individuality, an alertness toward one's own self—whether experienced as hardship, as mission, or as necessity—which now comes into conflict with the world, with convention, with the cultural canon, or, according to the ancient pattern of the hero myth, with the traditional father image. And because the dominance of the primary archetypal world is preserved and not replaced by that of the cultural canon, the development of personality and consciousness is subject to a different law than in the normal man. ||

The dominance of the mother archetype in numerous writers and artists is not adequately explained by the child's relation to his personal mother. We find good as well as bad relationships; we find mothers who have

11. See "Leonardo da Vinci and the Mother Archetype" in this volume.

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mo. \*  
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died young and mothers who have lived to a ripe old age; we find mothers with imposing as well as insignificant personalities. The reason for this—as the psychoanalysts recognized—is that the determining factor is the child's and not the adult ego's relation to the mother. But the small child's relation to his mother is molded by the mother archetype, which is always blended with the mother imago, the subjective image of the experience of the personal mother.

In the course of normal development the importance of the mother archetype diminishes; a personal relation to the personal mother takes form, and through it the individual develops a large part of his capacity for relations with the world and with his fellow men in general. Where this relation is impaired, the consequences are neuroses and fixation in the phase of the original mother relation, when something requisite to the healthy development of the individual was not accomplished. But when the archetypal mother image remains dominant and the individual does not fall sick, we have one of the fundamental constellations of the creative process.

We have elsewhere pointed out the significance of the mother archetype for the creative man; here I wish only to stress that the Good (or the Terrible) Mother is among other things a symbol for the determining influence of the archetypal world as a whole, an influence that may reach down to the biopsychical level. The prevalence of the Great Mother archetype marks the prevalence of the archetypal world, which is the foundation of all development of consciousness, of the childhood world,



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## CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

in which the phylogenetic development of consciousness and the ego is repeated ontogenetically from out of the primordial archetypal world.

The transition from the personal complex by way of the predominantly archetypal fantasy world to consciousness leads normally to a recession of the individual's tendency to wholeness in favor of an ego development that is guided by the cultural canon and the collective consciousness—by the superego of ancestral tradition and the introjected conscience. The creative man, however, is stigmatized by his failure to abandon the self's directive toward wholeness in order to adapt himself to the reality of the environment and its dominant values. The creative man, like the hero of myth, stands in conflict with the world of the fathers, i.e., the dominant values, because in him the archetypal world and the self that directs it are such overpowering, living, direct experiences that they cannot be repressed. The normal individual is released from his heroic mission by his institutional education toward identification with the father archetype, and so becomes a well-adjusted member of his patriarchally directed group. In the creative man, however, with his predominant mother archetype, the uncertain, wavering ego must itself take the exemplary, archetypal way of the hero; must slay the father, dethrone the conventional world of the traditional canon, and seek an unknown directing authority, namely, the self that is so hard to experience, the unknown Heavenly Father.

it is  
★ an  
imposition

In the creative individual, regardless of biographical details, reductive analysis will almost invariably discover mother fixation and parricide, i.e., Oedipus complex;



## ART AND THE CREATIVE UNCONSCIOUS

"family romance," i.e., the search for the unknown father; and narcissism, i.e., preservation of a relation to himself in opposition to love of the environment and of an outside object.

*relation of CM to own self*  
*Humanity*  
This relation of the creative man to himself involves an enduring and insuperable paradox. This type's innate receptivity makes him suffer keenly from his personal complexes. But from the very outset this suffering, because he always experiences his personal complexes along with their archetypal correspondences, is not only a private and personal suffering but at the same time a largely unconscious existential suffering from the fundamental human problems that constellate themselves in every archetype.

*★*  
*creative as creative*  
Consequently, the individual history of every creative man is always close to the abyss of sickness; he does not, like other men, tend to heal the personal wounds involved in all development by an increased adaptation to the collectivity. His wounds remain open, but his suffering from them is situated in depths from which another curative power arises, and this curative power is the creative process.

*healer*  
As the myth puts it, only a wounded man can be a healer, a physician.<sup>12</sup> Because in his own suffering the creative man experiences the profound wounds of his collectivity and his time, he carries deep within him a regenerative force capable of bringing forth a cure not only for himself but also for the community.

This complex sensibility of the creative man increases his dependence on the center of wholeness, the self,

<sup>12</sup> C. Kerényi, *Asklepios: Archetype of the Physician's Existence*.

## CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

which, in continuous attempts at compensation, enhances the ego development and ego stability that must provide a counterweight to the archetypal preponderance. In the perpetual tension between an animated and menacing archetypal world and an ego reinforced for purposes of compensation, but possessing no support in the conventional father archetype, the ego can lean only upon the self, the center of individual wholeness, which, however, is always infinitely more than individual.

One of the paradoxes of the creative man's existence is that he experiences his attachment to his ego almost as a sin against the suprapersonal power of the archetypes that hold him in their grip. Nevertheless, he knows that this is the only possible means of enabling himself and the powers that command him to take form and express themselves. This fundamental fact constellates the profound personal ambivalence of the creative man, but through it he achieves individuation in his work, since he is always compelled to seek the center if he is to exist.

Whereas a normal life, in accordance with the dictates of the ego ideal, demands repression of the shadow, the life of the creative man is shaped both by the suffering that knows itself and by the pleasure-toned creative expression of the totality, the pleasure-giving ability to let what is lowest and highest in him live and take form together.

This phenomenon of formation from out of the whole has nothing to do with "sublimation" in the usual sense, and it is also meaningless to reduce this totality to infantile components; for example, to derive the fundamental fact that the creative man expresses something of

possession...

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himself, that an essential part of his individual subjectivity is manifested in his work, from exhibitionism. Such a reduction is no more justified than the churlish and absurd attempt to explain Rilke's habit, of "carrying his material around with him for years before giving it final form and parting with it," on the basis of anal eroticism.<sup>13</sup>

For in the creative man attitudes that in the infant and child appear on the physical plane as universally human phenomena, and in the sick man are likewise fixated in this plane as perversions and symptoms, cease to express themselves or at least to find their chief expression on this plane. They have achieved a totally different and new level of psychic expression and meaning; they not only mean but also *are* something different.

Nearly forty years ago Jung established that the predisposition of the child was not polymorphously perverse but rather polyvalent, and that, as he then put it, "even in adult life the vestiges of infantile sexuality are the seeds of vital spiritual functions."<sup>14</sup> Today, for reasons that it would take us too far afield to explain, I prefer to speak not of infantile sexuality, but rather of infantile experiences on the bodily plane. Such experiences always contain both archetypal and worldly factors. For the child, as for early man, there is no such thing as a "merely" bodily factor; his experience of the unitary world regularly includes what we later describe as symbolically significant elements.

13. E. Simenauer, *Rainer Maria Rilke, Legende und Mythos*, p. 596.

14. Jung, "Psychic Conflicts in a Child," Foreword.

enhanced experience of unity  
analogous to child & CM

## CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

The normal individual has the same experience, in sexuality, for example, where the personal and the archetypal, the bodily, psychic, and spiritual, are, momentarily at least, experienced as a unity. This enhanced experience of unity is analogous to that of the child and the creative man. The creative process is synthetic, precisely in that the transpersonal, i.e., the eternal, and the personal, i.e., the ephemeral, merge, and something utterly unique happens: the enduring and eternally creative is actualized in the ephemeral creation. By comparison everything that is solely personal is perishable and insignificant; everything that is solely eternal is inherently irrelevant because inaccessible to us. For every experience of the transpersonal is a limited revelation, i.e., a manifestation according to the modality and scope of our vessel-like power of comprehension.

★ ★  
Semele  
★ Jirupaly

For the creative man this is fundamental—regardless of whether or not he is aware of it. He opens himself to the transpersonal; or, one might better say, only that man is creative who holds himself open to the transpersonal, that man from whom the period of childhood experience, which takes this openness to the transpersonal for granted, has not departed. This, it should be added, has nothing to do with an interest in childhood or conscious knowledge of it. What has always been regarded as childlike in the creative man is precisely his openness to the world, an openness for which the world is each day created anew. And it is this that makes him perpetually aware of his obligation to purify and broaden his own quality as a vessel, to give adequate expression to what pours in on him, and to fuse the



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archetypal and eternal with the individual and ephemeral.

In Leonardo, in Goethe, Novalis, or Rilke, for example, the experience of the child, which normally remains mute, and the archetype of the Great Mother, otherwise known to us only from the history of primitive man and of religion, take on new life. They no longer coincide with the archaic image of early mankind but have also encompassed the entire subsequent development of human consciousness and spirit. The image of the mother archetype to which creative form has been given always discloses archaic, symbolic traits, which it has in common with the mother image of early mankind and early childhood. But Leonardo's nature goddess and St. Anne, Goethe's nature and Eternal Feminine, Novalis' night and Madonna, Rilke's night and feminine loving one, are all creative new forms of the One; they are supreme and ultimate new statements. Behind them stands the "eternal presence" of the archetype, but at the same time the creative man—and therein lies his achievement—experiences and lends form to this "eternity" as something which eternally changes and takes on new form, and through which his time and himself are at the same time transformed.

One of the fundamental facts of creative existence is that it produces something objectively significant for culture, but that at the same time these achievements always represent subjective phases of an individual development, of the individuation of the creative man. The psyche carries on its creative struggle "against the stream" of normal direct adaptation to the collectivity;

CONTRA  
NATURA

but what began as compensation of the personal complex by the archetype leads to a continuous activation and animation of the archetypal world as a whole, which henceforth holds the creative man fast. One archetype leads to another, related one, so that the continuously renewed claims of the archetypal world can be satisfied only through continuous transformation of the personality and creative achievement.

Because the creative individual undertakes, or rather is subjected to, this constant struggle with the archetypal world, he becomes the instrument of the archetypes that are constellated in the unconscious of the pertinent collectivity, and that are absolutely necessary to the collectivity by way of compensation.<sup>15</sup> But despite the significance of the creative man for his time, he is far from always achieving direct and immediate influence, not to mention recognition by his contemporaries. And this discrepancy, which in no way argues against the creative individual's essential function for the community, inevitably compels him to preserve, and indeed to fight for, his autonomy over against the collectivity. Thus the objective as well as the subjective situation we have stressed throws the creative man back on himself. His resulting aloofness from his environment and his fellow men can easily be misinterpreted as narcissism. But here we must learn to distinguish between the maladjustment of the neurotic, whose ego fixation makes him almost incapable of relations with others, and the maladjustment of the creative man, whose self-fixation impedes his relations with his fellow men.

15. Cf. "Art and Time."



## ART AND THE CREATIVE UNCONSCIOUS

The symbolism of the creative process contains something regenerative for its epoch; it is the seedbed of future development. But this is possible only because what emerges in the creative work is not only individual but also archetypal, a part of the unitary reality that is enduring and imperishable, since in it the real, the psychic, and the spiritual are still one.

The creative process effected in the tension between the unconscious and the ego-centered consciousness represents a direct analogy to what Jung described as the transcendent function. The hierarchy of creative processes hinges on the varying degree to which the ego and consciousness are drawn into them. When the unconscious produces something without participation of the ego, or where the ego remains purely passive, we have a low level of creativity; the level rises with increasing tension between ego and unconscious. But the transcendent function and the unifying symbol can appear only where there is a tension between a stable consciousness and a "charged" unconscious. Such a constellation normally leads to repression of the one pole: to victory of the stable consciousness, or to capitulation of consciousness and a victory of the unconscious position. Only if this tension is endured—and this always calls forth a state of suffering—can a third term be born, which "transcends," or surpasses, the opposites and so combines parts of both positions into an unknown, new creation.

"The living symbol cannot come to birth in an inert or poorly developed mind, for such a man will rest content with the already existing symbols offered by estab-

lished tradition. Only the passionate yearning of a highly developed mind, for whom the dictated symbol no longer contains the highest reconciliation in one expression, can create a new symbol. But, inasmuch as the symbol proceeds from his highest and latest mental achievement and must also include the deepest roots of his being, it cannot be a one-sided product of the most highly differentiated mental functions, but must at least have an equal source in the lowest and most primitive motions of his psyche. For this co-operation of antithetic states to be at all possible, they must both stand side by side in fullest conscious opposition. Such a condition necessarily entails a violent disunion with oneself, even to a point where thesis and antithesis mutually deny each other, while the ego is still forced to recognize its absolute participation in both."<sup>16</sup>

The one pole of this tension is provided by the consciousness of the creative man, by his will and intention to produce a work. Normally he is not without purpose and direction. But independently of his intention, as we know from innumerable statements of creative men, the unconscious often breaks through with a "will of its own," which by no means coincides with the will of the artist. (To mention but one example, Thomas Mann's Joseph cycle, first planned as a short story, was to grow into a long novel and exact ten years of effort.) But despite this autonomy of the unconscious, the archetypal world does not stand here in a hostile polar tension to consciousness; for a part of the creative man's consciousness is always receptive, permeable, and turned toward

16. Jung, *Psychological Types*, def. "Symbol."



the unconscious. Thus in the greatest of creative men the contents repressed by the collective consciousness do not emerge as hostile powers, for they too are constellated by the creative man's self, his wholeness.

The creative man's bond with the root and foundation of the collectivity is perhaps most beautifully expressed in Hölderlin's words: "The thoughts of the communal spirit come to a quiet end in the poet's soul."<sup>17</sup> But the creative man's product, as part of his development, is always bound up with his "mere individuality," his childhood, his personal experience, his ego's tendencies toward love and hate, his heights and his shadow. For the alertness of his consciousness permits the creative man more than the average man to "know himself" and "suffer from himself." His lasting dependence on his self fortifies him against seduction by a collective ego ideal, but makes him all the more sensitive to the realization that he is inadequate to himself, to the "self." Through this suffering from his shadow, from the wounds that have been open since childhood—these are the gates through which flows the stream of the unconscious, yet the ego never ceases to suffer from them—the creative man arrives at the humility that prevents him from overestimating his ego, because he knows that he is too much at the mercy of his wholeness, of the unknown self within him.

His childlike nature as well as his inadequacy to the world forever kindle his memory of a primordial world and a happy feeling that he may, from time to time at least, show himself adequate or at least receptive to this

17. "To the Poets" (tr. Hamburger), p. 163.

world. But in the creative man, receptivity and the suffering that comes of a higher sensibility are not limited to childhood and the archetypal, to the "real," the "great," one might almost say the "worthy," world that has been experienced in it. Always and everywhere, to be sure, he is driven to rediscover, to reawaken, to give form to this world. But he does not find this world as though seeking something outside him; rather, he knows that this encounter with full reality, the one world, in which everything is still "whole," is bound up with his own transformation toward wholeness. For this reason he must, in every situation, in every constellation, refresh the openness into which alone the open world can enter.

But although, particularly in the greatest creative men, the process of formation is often long and arduous, requiring the most strenuous effort on the part of the ego and of consciousness, the finding of one's depth and the being-found by it are, like every authentic transformative process, neither an act of the will nor of magic, but an event that takes place by the grace of God. This does not lessen the weight of the opus, but on the contrary enhances it; since in the mysterious correspondence between self and ego, the ego, whether rightly or wrongly, associates its own responsibility for the work with its own guilt and unreadiness.

Although the creative process is often pleasure-toned and is not always dominated by suffering, the inward tension or suffering of the psyche forms the problem that is creatively solved only in production. In this suffering which the creative man must experience in his



unremitting struggle with the unconscious and himself, the ascending transformation that constitutes his individuation process assimilates all the flaws, defeats, failures, hardships, misery, and sickness of human life, which are normally thrust aside and given over to the shadow and the Devil as negative elements opposed to the ego ideal.

But the unity of ego and self that determines the creative process as such also contains the zones of rigidity and chaos that threaten the life of the conscious man. In the creative sphere they give rise to a third term, which embraces and transcends them both, and this is form. Both antitheses have a part in it, for rigidity and chaos are the two poles that are joined together in form, and form is menaced from both sides, by sclerosis and by chaotic disintegration.

But it is not only in the bonds of form that the negative is redeemed. For the creative man always finds a source of growth and transformation in his own shadow and deficiency.

For we to what disturbs us, makes afraid,  
owe from the first such boundless obligation.  
Death always took a part in its creation:  
that's how the so unheard-of song was made.<sup>18</sup>

Here "death" means the terrible and the perilous as well as the barriers of human weakness. It is everything that strikes the ego as suffering and ruin. In praising death as the prerequisite of every transformation that merges life and death, the poet allies himself with the creative

<sup>18</sup> Rilke, *Correspondence in Verse with Erika Mitterer* (tr. Cruickshank), p. 85.

## CREATIVE MAN AND TRANSFORMATION

God himself, the God of transformation who bestows and *is* life and death.

The creative man experiences both the godhead and himself as changing, as willing transformation in creation. And the poet is speaking both of the godhead and himself when he puts these words in the mouth of the Creator:

For there is an impulse in my works  
That drives toward an increasing transformation.<sup>19</sup>

At the risk of concluding one incomplete statement with another, I should like to close my remarks with an analysis of one of Rilke's poems. An interpretation of a poem can never offer more than a hint, an intimation; but what may justify our attempt is that this poem has given unique expression to the relationships with which we have been concerned today.

The poem in question is the twelfth sonnet in the second series of the *Sonnets to Orpheus*:

Strive for transformation, O be inspired with the flame  
Wherein, rich in changes, a thing withdraws from your  
reach;  
the planning spirit who masters everything earthly,  
loves above all in the sweep of the figure the point where it  
turns.

What locks itself in endurance grows rigid; sheltered  
in unassuming grayness, does it feel safe?  
Wait, from the distance hardness is menaced by something  
still harder.

Alas—: a remote hammer is poised to strike.

19. Rilke, "Die Worte des Herrn an Johannes auf Patmos,"  
*Gedichte 1906-1926*, p. 571. (Unpublished tr. by J. M. Cohen.)



## ART AND THE CREATIVE UNCONSCIOUS

Knowledge knows him who pours forth as a spring;  
Delighted she guides him, showing him what was created in  
joy  
And often concludes with beginning and starts with the end.

Every happy space they traverse in wonder  
Is child or grandchild of parting. And Daphne, transformed,  
feeling herself laurel, wants you to change into wind.<sup>20</sup>

A critic has written: "One might be tempted to relate this poem to Goethe's words about recreating creation lest it arm itself in rigidity."<sup>21</sup> But the second stanza of the sonnet has nothing to do with Goethe's nature that contains life and death, but is based on the apocalyptic experience of vision; it is not a statement of an anonymous principle but is made in the name of the God who proclaimed to St. John on Patmos:

To me learning is as nothing,  
for I am the fall of fire  
and my glance is forks, like lightning.  
See, I never let it linger.<sup>22</sup>

And in the lines

O be inspired with the flame  
Wherein, rich in changes, a thing withdraws from your  
reach,

we seem to hear an intimation of Goethe's "blessed yearning," but here again Rilke is concerned with some-

20. Rilke, *Die Sonette an Orpheus*, Zweiter Teil, XII. (Unpublished tr. by Ruth Speirs.)

21. K. Kippenberg's postscript to the *Duineser Elegien*—*Die Sonette an Orpheus*.

22. "Die Worte des Herrn an Johannes auf Patmos," *Gedichte 1906-1926*, p. 572 (tr. Cohen).

thing else. The deadly flame brings radiant transformation, but it is only in its drawing away from us that the thing can be transformed; only in its "becoming invisible" that the miracle occurs.

We have opposed the life- and death-containing principle of transformation to rigidity and chaos. In this poem these antitheses are raised, as it were, to the realm of the invisible; the flame consumes their substance, as God says to John on Patmos:

And I taste one of their objects  
to see if I shall accept it—  
If it takes fire, it is real.<sup>23</sup>

Only in self-sacrifice, in death by the searing flame, does the thing prove its authenticity. The "strive for transformation" of the first line (more literally, "will transformation") applies only to him who is wholly prepared in his self-abnegation. For transformation, this thing that happens in opposition to all will, can only be "willed" where there is readiness to die. The man of deep insight knows that authentic life is not lived arbitrarily but is governed by a secret mesh of invisible images: "For we live truly in figures";<sup>24</sup> but even this seems like almost too much certainty, too much of the "enduring," for "in the sweep of the figure" the godhead loves above all "the point where it turns."

Here flame and sacrifice mean nothing hostile to the world and the earth, but—although we have used the word—neither do they mean a sacrifice in the usual

23. Ibid., p. 572.

24. *Die Sonette an Orpheus*, Erster Teil, XII (tr. Speirs).





sense. The meaning is closer to that contained in the Hebrew root of the word *sacrifice*: קרבן, namely, "to come near," to approach God. It is in this approach to God that the soul takes fire, but the deadly blaze is precisely the turning point, in which life springs from death. For existence at the point where the figure turns, as the strange and profound metaphor of the poem has it, is also a pouring forth, a spring. The spirit that devises projects loves the point where the figure turns and Knowledge knows him "who pours forth as a spring."

Like the act of generation, the essential, creative act in which the spring pours forth contains a sacrifice and an approach as well as a coincidence of life and death. This midpoint between oppositions, in which the tension is gathered into a third and higher term, is such a "turning point." The never-resting flow of the spring is eternal transformation, and as birth and death it is also enduring life, in which there is nothing that endures. Precisely the involuntary character of the flowing reveals the grace of transformation that, as though coming from afar, enters into man and passes through him. Thus the creative man knows himself to be a "mouth," through which passes what has arisen in his innermost earthen night. In this flowing of creativity occurs the essential, which is not embodied in its origin, for that is a "secret," or in the creation, which is enduring and therefore fated to die. Only the source point, in which the stream emerges from darkness and enters the light, and is both at once, darkness and light, is the turning point of transition and transformation. It cannot be looked for

and cannot be held; in every moment it is creation from nothingness, independent of its history, and as pure present it is independent of its past as well as its future.

It is this flow that "Knowledge knows." This knowledge embraces God's knowledge of the known; but in it one also senses some force that animates him who pours forth as a spring. The turning point and the spring that pours forth are a duality encountered by the duality of the loving and knowing God. Yet in this supreme drama of love between godhead and man, in this drama of creativeness, he who turns and is transformed, who pours forth as a spring, is not a counterpart of the godhead; he is a medium through which it passes, its mouth and expression. For what turns and pours forth in him is the godhead itself. And nevertheless this knowledge of the earthly still has the Biblical sense of a begetting—a connection so fundamental that even a zoologist, far enough removed from the text of the Hebrew Bible to be regarded as unprejudiced, writes: "The encounter that leads to procreation presupposes a simple kind of 'knowledge' of what belongs together, a finding of beings of the same variety."<sup>25</sup>

It is the same drama that is enacted between the divine knower and the earthly known, who in his self-sacrificing flow both is and becomes creative. For what happens here is what happened at the beginning of time: the creation of the world. And accordingly:

... she guides him, showing him what was created in joy  
And often concludes with beginning and starts with the end.

25. Adolf Portmann, *Das Tier als soziales Wesen*, p. 115.



And again, in this primordial act of having become creative, of world creation, such a "turning point" is achieved, in which creator and creature, as well as the acts of being begotten and born and becoming creative, merge with one another. The creative process is generation and birth as well as transformation and rebirth. As the Chinese said: "Transformation is the creation of creating."<sup>26</sup> The rapture of him who pours forth like a spring is reflected in the serenity of the creation. The perpetual self-renewal and dependence on grace of him who pours forth eternally are a human parallel to the eternal rebirth of all that is created. The rapture of the flowing deathlessness of creativity is just as much at work in man as in nature; indeed, it is only in his creative flowing that man becomes a part of nature, is joined once more to the "one reality" of existence, in which no enduring thing can endure, because all is transformation.

"The soul," said Heraclitus, "has its own Law (*Logos*), which increases itself (*i.e., grows according to its needs*)."<sup>27</sup> These words express what Philo and the Church Fathers said about the *Logos* born from the soul, and what the mystics knew of the generative word and the Holy Ghost of speech; but the archetypal meaning of this creative utterance goes deeper. The Biblical myth of the creation of the world by the word of God, and the "word magic" known to us from primitive psy-

26. Hellmut Wilhelm, *Change: Eight Lectures on the I Ching*.

27. Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, p. 32.

chology, both embody the strange unity in which to speak, to know, and to beget-create are still one. This notion of the creative word springs from one of the profoundest experiences of mankind, the realization that a creative, psychic force, reaching out far beyond the individual man, "speaks" in the poet. The images that burst forth in the man gripped by the depths, the song that is their expression in words, are the creative source of nearly all human culture;<sup>28</sup> and an essential part of all religion, art, and customs sprang originally from this dark phenomenon of creative unity in the human soul. Primitive man regarded this creativity of the psyche as magic, and rightly so, for it transforms reality and will always do so.

The basic archetypal image of this creatively transformed reality of the world is the self-contained rolling wheel of eternity, every single point of which is a "turning point," that "often concludes with beginning and starts with the end." For one of the paradoxes of life is that in its creative reality it is "existence" as pure present, but that the entire past flows into this existence while all the future flows out of it like a spring: hence it is a point both turning and at rest. This point of existence, the creative zero point of mysticism,<sup>29</sup> is a hiatus in creation, at which consciousness and the unconscious momentarily become a creative unity and a third term, a part of the one reality that almost "lingers" in the rapture and beauty of the creative moment.

But the poem continues:

28. George Thomson, *The Prehistoric Aegean*, p. 435.

29. See my "Mystical Man."



Every happy space . . . is child or grandchild of parting.

That is to say, the place of being created in the world, even the happiest part of it, is built upon a parting, a departure from the eternity of the perfect circle into limitation and into a historical reality of past, present, and future—of generations. Here death creates separation and space and can only be overcome in the creative moment. And to pass in wonderment through creation is to incur the deadliness of separation, whereby all existence must be delimited over against the infinite. Thus every birth rests on death, just as all space rests on separation, and to be a child and grandchild is in every sense a beginning in which something else ends; but that which ends is at the same time a beginning, in which the past closes and is at the same time transcended. For in experiencing themselves as child and grandchild of separation, child and grandchild at the same time experience their birth from death and the rebirth in themselves of what is dead. They experience themselves as something created, that "often concludes with beginning and starts with the end."

But as they pass through creation in wonderment, the circuit transcends itself in a new turning. The circling wheel of birth and death, in which everything is at once beginning and end, is only the rim: the essential action in its center. And in this center appears the "transformed" Daphne. Fleeing from the pursuing god, escaping him by transformation, the soul becomes a laurel tree. Metamorphosed, she is no longer the pursued fugitive; her transformation is pure growth, but at the same

time it is the laurel that crowns the poet as well as the pursuing god.

The flame at the beginning of the poem, in which the thing escapes by changing from enduring being to burning transformation, has its counterpart in the end; the eternally fugitive becomes a plant eternally rooted in being. In Apollo's love for Daphne, the pursuing god compels transformation; here again there is a creative sublimation of the soul, a higher love. For the Daphne who has escaped into the higher growth of her plant existence now feels "herself laurel." Now she is subject to the law and the love of Orpheus, of whom Rilke said: "Song is existence."<sup>20</sup>

Yet because it is existence, this higher existence of song, which captures the laurel-like soul, is not static but eternally moving. This creative spirit of song also "bloweth where it listeth." And although that which is consumed by the flame and that which pours forth in the spring were contained in the elementary nature of the creative, the soul transformed in the midst of this creation has become something other and higher. It is the partner of the divine song of which it is said: "A breath for nothing, A breathing in God, A Wind." Daphne, having taken root, desires only to be captivated; she desires only higher transformation—of herself, of God, of us.

And Daphne, transformed,  
feeling herself laurel, wants you to change into wind.

*39. Die Sonette an Orpheus, Erster Teil, III.*