

Paper written in honour of Csaba Pléh
on the occasion of his 75th birthday

Kristóf Nyíri

FOREVER JUNG

Dunabogdány 2020

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Forever Jung

0. The Jung Mystery

1. The Jung-code

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0. The Jung Mystery

My paper's title is an attempt at a pun, suggesting that Csaba Pléh, becoming seventy-five this November, is indeed forever young and thriving; but it is also an implicit reference to a task Csaba has completed in 1985, the translation into Hungarian of Bartlett's *Remembering*. In that book Bartlett has some interesting pages on C. G. Jung. Bartlett focusses on, and attempts to come to terms with, a talk given by Jung in 1916,¹ a time at which the latter was already suffering from a neurosis that continued to torment him for quite a number of years. Bartlett finds Jung's argument "exceedingly obscure", his discussion "tangled". Jung's celebrated notion of a "collective unconscious" Bartlett takes as designating "a storehouse of pictures, of ideas, of themes". The collective unconscious comprises "images, ideas, formulae and laws" which "express the views of our ancestors about the

¹ The talk had been held in Zürich and appeared in French under the title "La Structure de l'inconscient" (*Archives de Psychologie*, XVI [1916]), this is the publication Barlett quotes. The English translation of an earlier, less elaborated version of the originally German talk has been published in C. G. Jung, *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology*, 2nd edition, London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1917, pp. 445–474. For the English translation of the fully reconstructed version see *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* [hereafter: CW], vol. 7: *Two Essays in Analytical Psychology*, 2nd ed., revised and augmented, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966.

objective world”. Bartlett asks “whether there is any way of showing in actual fact that there does exist this common stock of images, ideas and formulae which continue independently of individual acquisition”.² His view is, obviously, that there is no such way, and the discussion he offers of Jung stops short at this point. My aim in the present paper is to answer Bartlett’s question, albeit somewhat differently put. The question I will try to answer is: Do *primordial images* in Jung’s sense, that is those famous “archetypes” making up our collective unconscious, actually have a *visual* dimension?

Before however facing this question, let me refer to an encounter Pléh had with Jung that was more direct than the one I mentioned above by way of introduction. In his magisterial *History of Psychology* (in Hungarian)³ he allots some important passages to Jung, referring, first, to the *word-association test* as developed by the young physician working under the direction of Bleuler in a Zürich hospital. Jung built on the work of Galton and Wundt – both are discussed by Pléh, in Galton’s case he specifically mentions the latter’s combining the theme of mental images with that of word-associations, and also refers to Galton’s method of “allowing the mind to play freely”, having “fleeting, half-conscious thoughts”.⁴ Jung’s insight, recalls Pléh, was that prolonged reaction times point to “complexes”, clusters of disturbing ideas, which in the patient’s unconscious become associated with the stimulus word. Pléh then proceeds to offer nutshell explanations of the Jungian collective unconscious, of archetypes as manifested in mythology, religions, and dreams, and touches on Jung’s interest in primitive cultures and Eastern religions. A text by Jung that Pléh quotes in some detail is the much-read *On the Psychology of the Unconscious*, or more precisely the 1944 Hungarian translation of the 1942 so-called “fifth edition” of Jung’s *Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten*. And here we have to pause.

² Frederick C. Bartlett, *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology* (1932), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 285 and 287.

³ Csaba Pléh, *A lélektan története*, Budapest: Osiris, 2000.

⁴ Pléh, *loc. cit.*, p. 242. The reference is to Galton’s 1883 book *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*.

In 1912 Jung published, under the title “Neue Bahnen der Psychologie”, a short paper in vol. III of the Rascher Yearbook (Zürich: Verlag von Rascher & Co., *Jahrbuch für Schweizer Art und Kunst*). In 1916 he revised and enlarged this paper, the preface to the new piece is dated December 1916, the volume of 135 pages appeared in 1917, under the title *Die Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse: Ein Ueberblick über die moderne Theorie und Methode der analytischen Psychologie* (Zürich: Verlag von Rascher & Co.). A second – unaltered – edition was published in 1918. For the third edition he rewrote the text, and gave a new title to it: *Das Unbewußte im normalen und kranken Seelenleben* (1925). The fourth edition, 1936, is an unaltered version of the third. The fifth edition was substantially rewritten, and appeared in 1942, titled *Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten* (Rascher being the publisher throughout), the further editions henceforth remaining unaltered. Jung’s writings were translated into English in an amazing mass and at an amazing rate, and the sequence I have just described formed no exception. The “Neue Bahnen der Psychologie” appeared under the title “New Paths in Psychology” as chapter XIV of Jung’s *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology* in 1916;⁵ a translation of the *Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse* came to be included a year later in the second edition of the *Collected Papers* volume;⁶ the next version, *Das Unbewußte im normalen und kranken Seelenleben*, was published as “The Unconscious in the Normal and Pathological Mind”;⁷ while after 1942, for translations of *Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten*, and so of course also for the *Collected Works* edition (vol. 7)⁸, the title *On the Psychology of the Unconscious* became binding.

Slightly prior to the “Neue Bahnen der Psychologie” there appeared Jung’s work *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* – a lengthy

⁵ London: Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, 1916, pp. 352–377.

⁶ Published in 1917, cf. note 1 above. The piece was translated by Dora Hecht as “The Psychology of the Unconscious Processes: Being a Survey of the Modern Theory and Method of Analytical Psychology”.

⁷ In *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, translation by H. G. and C. F. Baynes, London: Bailliere Tindall & Cox, 1928.

⁸ Cf. note 1 above. The first version of CW 7 was published in 1954.

and difficult text complemented by a number of images – a work of decisive importance for the author’s oeuvre, and for the influence that oeuvre exerted. It was written in 1911, published in the *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen* in 1911 and 1912, and in book form (subtitle: *Beiträge zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens*) in 1912 (Leipzig – Wien: Franz Deuticke). The second – unaltered – edition (with a preface written for that edition) appeared in 1925, the third (with only inessential modifications, as its preface says) in 1938. By contrast, Jung radically rewrote and extended the fourth edition, giving it, also, a new title and subtitle: *Symbole der Wandlung: Analyse des Vorspiels zu einer Schizophrenie* (Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1952), with dr. Jolande Jacobi adding 300 images. A translation of the first edition appeared as early as 1917, under the title *Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido: A Contribution to the History of the Evolution of Thought* (New York: Moffatt, Yard and Co., and London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner), while the translation of the rewritten version was published in 1956: *Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia*.⁹

What I have here presented are two prominent examples from the fuzzy history of Jung’s publications. Further examples could easily be added. Systematizing efforts by editors of the *Collected Works* (and the German *Gesammelte Werke*) notwithstanding, one faces an extreme lack of transparency when embarking on the road to grasp exactly which book title or which paper title belongs to which piece by Jung. Not just the simple reader, but even the expert librarian encounters a mystery here. Let me call it the second Jung mystery. The first Jung mystery of course is how this author of works which so often border on esotericism and mysticism was at the same time also able, until the very end, to write clear and interesting essays.

The present paper is, in what follows, divided into three sections. The title of section 1, “The Jung-code”, refers to Jung’s association theory, to delayed – revealing, decodable – word-associations as pointing to suppressed, unpleasant ideas the patient is disturbed by.

⁹ CW 5, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Section 2, “The Jung-image”, focusses on my main topic, the Jungian notion of primordial images, while alluding, also, to the image Jung made up of himself, and presented to the world, throughout his life. Finally, section 3, “The Jung Picture-Book”, on the one hand draws attention to the fact that the image which after Jung’s death his school (or schools, some would say his sects) painted of him is not in every respect a reliable one, and on the other hand provides a glimpse of the so-called *Red Book*, a hand-written, richly illustrated codex Jung began to prepare around 1915, shortly after the onset of his neurosis.

1. The Jung-code

Invited by Australian colleagues, Jung in 1911 gave a talk in Sydney, with the title “On the Doctrine of Complexes”. Looking back on the beginnings of his professional activities – on his word-association researches conducted with a close collaborator – this is the exposition he gave:

[association experiments] are used for the demonstration of certain intellectual types, but I must here mention that an important point was formerly disregarded, namely, the disturbing influence of the experiment on the subject. ... I have now given special attention to these disturbances. Noting at which stimulus-words they occur, we find that it is principally where a stimulus-word refers to a personal matter, which, as a rule, is of a distressing nature. ... [We] have introduced for this “personal matter” the term *complex*, because such a “personal matter” is always a collection of various ideas, held together by an emotional tone common to all.¹⁰

Towards the end of his talk Jung comes to refer to those neuroses and indeed psychoses which the association method helped him to diagnose and better understand. This is how, in particular, he characterizes the schizophrenic outlook: “The direction of thought is ...

¹⁰ CW 2 (*Experimental Researches*), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973, § 1350.

entirely turned away from reality, and prefers thought-forms and material no longer of interest to modern man; hence many of these fantasies appear in a purely mythological garb. Owing to the loss of the recent biological train of suitable thought, there is apparently substituted an antiquated form.”¹¹ As a concluding bibliographical reference Jung mentions the 1911 journal appearance of his *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*: “Proofs of the resumption of antiquated forms of thinking”, he writes, “are as yet published only in part.” On the horizon there unmistakably arises the shadow of the future Jung. But let me continue focussing, for a minute, on his association theory. In 1909 Jung gave a talk at Clark University.¹² We here encounter the following passage: “Words are really something like condensed actions, situations, and things. When I present a word to the test person which denotes an action it is the same as if I should present to him the action itself... .. we must be contented with the linguistic substitutes for reality...”¹³

From our present perspective it might perhaps meet the eye how strongly Jung in this talk still concentrated on the function of *words* – how little awareness in his early publications he showed of the *visual*, while we know, and I will soon return to this point in the next section of my paper, that in his own mental life images played a decisive role. And indeed deeply in the background of Jung’s association theory the image issue was present from the very beginning. Let me refer to his 1905 paper “Über das Verhalten der Reaktionszeit beim Assoziationsexperimente”. The paper contains a lucid formulation, as befits the early Jung, pertaining to the notion of a “complex”, and here I have to quote the original German: “abnorm lange Reaktionszeiten [treten] besonders da auf..., wo durch das Reizwort ein gefühlsbetonter Komplex, das heißt eine durch einen bestimmten Affekt zusammengehaltene Vorstellungsmasse getroffen wird”¹⁴. The

¹¹ *Ibid.*, § 1354.

¹² “The Association Method”, published in the *American Journal of Psychology*, vol. 21, no. 2 (Apr. 1910), pp. 219–269.

¹³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 223.

¹⁴ C. G. Jung, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 2 (*Experimentelle Untersuchungen*), Ostfildern: Patmos Verlag, 1995, p. 253.

gist of the formula is entirely lost in this paper's 1919 translation,¹⁵ where the wording runs: "abnormally long reaction-times more especially occur when an emotionally accentuated complex was aroused by the stimulus-word".¹⁶ By contrast, the 1973 *Collected Works* translation¹⁷ does succeed in getting the syntax across: "abnormally long reaction-times occur particularly when the stimulus-word touches on a feeling-toned complex, i.e., a mass of images held together by a particular affect"¹⁸ – it preserves the "held together by a particular affect" construction, has however "images" instead of "ideas" which latter is the standard English translation, in the Jung editions too, for "Vorstellungen". The choice of the word "image" here I feel frustratingly misleading, precisely because, as I have suggested above, at this stage of his association researches Jung was not consciously concerned with visuality. Unconsciously, we might say, he of course very much was. In the paper I have just quoted he discusses the literature on word-association reaction times, including in his references also the 1879 essay "Psychometric Experiments" by Francis Galton.¹⁹ Now what Galton in that essay, while assembling a mass of word-association statistics, continuously connects his observations with, is precisely the phenomenon of inner mental images.

¹⁵ "Reaction-Time in Association Experiments", in *Studies in Word-Association: Experiments in the Diagnosis of Psychopathological Conditions Carried Out at the Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Zurich, under the direction of C. G. Jung*, authorized translation by Dr. M. D. Eder, New York: Moffat, Yard & Company.

¹⁶ *Loc. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁷ "The Reaction-time Ratio in the Association Experiment", in CW 2 (cf. note 10 above).

¹⁸ *Loc. cit.*, § 602.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, § 569. – Galton's essay first appeared in vol. 2 of *Brain: A Journal of Neurology* (pp. 149–162), and was reprinted in his 1883 book, this is the one Pléh refers to (cf. note 4 above).

2. The Jung-image

Telling about his early childhood, in the volume *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*²⁰ Jung writes: “[I] had learned to read before I went [to school]. However, I remember a time when I could not yet read, but pestered my mother to read aloud to me out of the *Orbis Pictus*, an



old, richly illustrated children’s book, which contained an account of exotic religions, especially that of the Hindus. There were illustrations of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva which I found an inexhaustible source of interest. My mother later told me that I always returned to these pictures.”²¹ In the next paragraph we read: “Between my

“The Besieging of a City”. From the 1664 edition of *Orbis pictus*

²⁰ Translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston, revised edition, New York: Vintage Books, 1989. Originally: C. G. Jung, *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken*, recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé, Zürich – Stuttgart: Rascher Verlag, 1962.

²¹ *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, p. 17. According to Jaffé the chapters dealing with Jung’s childhood and youth belong to the part of the book written by the author himself (*ibid.*, p. vi). The *Orbis sensualium pictus* is a kind of encyclopaedia for children, prepared by Jan Amos Comenius, illustrated with woodcuts. It deals with everything, from God through Heaven and Earth to plants, animals, occupations, geographical regions, moral judgments and of course the great religions. During the centuries the book was published in a number of languages, various versions, and many hundred editions. The first edition – published in 1658 in Nürnberg – was Latin–German bilingual, as was, similarly, the 1664 Nürnberg edition. They carried the subtitle *Die sichtbare Welt*. These editions have entries on “paganism” (listing in some detail the ancient Greek gods), Judaism, Christianity, and “Mahometism”. Likewise, say, the London 1777 English–Latin bilingual version (subtitle: *Visible World*). I have not yet found an edition in which Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva were mentioned, but it is of course possible that around 1880 the child Jung was exposed to one.

eighth and eleventh years I drew endlessly battle pictures, sieges, bombardments, naval engagements. Then I filled a whole exercise book with ink blots and amused myself giving them fantastic interpretations.”²²

The adult Jung, too, went through phases when he was enthusiastically drawing and painting, and he also did not miss the chance to exploit these activities for therapeutic purposes. His best paper on the topic is probably the 1929 talk “Aims of Psychotherapy”.²³ As Jung here tells us, it often happened that patients would recount some dream in which the colours were particularly vivid, or in which there appeared a strange figure,²⁴ and the patient said: “Do you know, if only I were a painter I would make a picture of it.”²⁵ Sometimes the dreams were directly about photographs, or images painted or drawn, or illuminated manuscripts, or even about the cinema.²⁶ Jung urged his patients to translate into paintings their dreams and fantasies, and

²² *Memories...*, p. 18.

²³ “Ziele der Psychotherapie”, published in C. G. Jung, *Seelenprobleme der Gegenwart*, Zürich – Leipzig: Rascher Verlag, 1931. English translation in C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1933, translated by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes. Revised translation by R. F. C. Hull, in CW 16 (*Practice of Psychotherapy*), 2nd edition, revised and augmented, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966, third printing, with corrections, 1975.

²⁴ In the German original: “ein besonders farbiger Traum ... oder einer von seltsamer Figur”. The Dell–Baynes translation has “an especially colourful or curious dream” (*loc. cit.*, p. 78), misunderstanding the phrase “besonders farbige” and failing to note the expression “seltsame Figur”, while in the Hull translation – “a particularly vivid or curious dream” (CW 16, § 101) – all traces of both “farbig” and “Figur” are lost.

²⁵ CW 16, § 101.

²⁶ *Ibid.* – Jung greatly influenced the film director Fellini, both his personal life and the images he created, see on this in detail Peter Bondanella, *The Films of Federico Fellini* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, cf. pp. 5, 10, 27 and 29, in particular pp. 94 and 96: “Jungian psychoanalysis defined the dream not as a symptom of a disease that required a cure but rather as a link to archetypal images shared by all of humanity. ... Under Jung’s influence, Fellini began to rely more and more heavily upon the irrational quality of his own fantasy, images inspired by his dreams...”).

not to worry about the worth or worthlessness of their work when judged by the canons of art. The patients endeavoured, writes Jung, “to give form, however crude and childish, to the inexpressible. – But why do I encourage patients”, he continues, “to express themselves by means of brush, pencil, or pen at all?”²⁷ The explanation: it will definitely have an effect if one struggles for hours with “refractory brush and colours”. He goes on:

the physical shaping of the image enforces a continuous study of it in all its parts... This invests the bare fantasy with an element of reality, which lends it greater weight and greater driving power. And these self-made pictures do indeed produce effects... a patient needs only to have seen once or twice how much he is freed from a wretched state of mind by working at a symbolical picture, and he will always turn to this means of release whenever things go badly with him.

And Jung continues: “The patient can make himself creatively independent... .. by painting himself he gives shape to himself. ... that which is active within is himself, but no longer in the guise of his previous error, when he mistook the personal ego for the self...”²⁸

There is one more passage I will quote from this paper, but first we have to consider the opposition Jung here suggests between the “personal ego” and the “self”. It was in his 1916 Zürich talk²⁹ that he first contrasted the expression “das Ich” – the *I* – with the expression “das Selbst” – the *self*. However, Jung’s notion of *das Selbst* is not really covered by the term “self”. A somewhat intelligible reference as to the actual content of this notion is offered by Jung in his

²⁷ CW 16, §§ 104 f.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, § 106. I have put “the physical shaping of the image” for “die materielle Gestaltung des Bildes” where Dell–Baynes has, perplexingly, “give visible form to the image”, and Hull has “concrete shaping”; also, I have put “self-made pictures” for “selbtsgefertigte Bilder”, where Dell–Baynes has “crude pictures” and Hull has “rough-and-ready pictures”.

²⁹ Cf. note 1 above.

1950 paper “Concerning Mandala Symbolism”, where he describes “a special category of symbols, the *mandala*”³⁰:

Their basic motif is the premonition of a centre of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy. The energy of the central point is manifested in the almost irresistible compulsion and urge to *become what one is*... This centre is not felt or thought of as the ego but, if one may so express it, as the *self*.³¹

The self, Jung sums up, is the completed total personality, a totality comprising, beyond the conscious ego, the personal unconscious, and an indefinitely large segment of the primordial collective unconscious.



“*Systema munditotius*”, the first mandala painted by Jung, in 1916

Between 1916 and 1927 Jung himself, too, drew and painted mandalas, and gradually came to believe they had healing powers. “We know from experience”, he wrote, “that the protective circle, the mandala, is the traditional antidote for chaotic states of mind. ... Mankind has never lacked powerful images to lend magical aid against all the uncanny things that live in the depths of the psyche. Always the figures of the unconscious were expressed in protecting and healing images and in this way were expelled from the psyche into cosmic space.”³² Let me add three more, related, passages. The

³⁰ CW 9/I (*The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*), 2nd edition, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968, § 627.

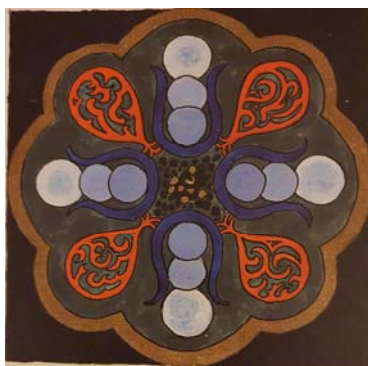
³¹ *Ibid.*, § 634.

³² “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious” (“Über die Archetypen des kollektiven Unbewussten”, first published in 1934, rewritten in 1954), in CW 9/I, §§ 16 and 21.

first is from *On the Psychology of the Unconscious*³³, with Jung writing that the human personality tends towards the “production and unfolding” of an “original, potential wholeness. The symbols used by the unconscious to this end are the same as those which mankind has



Mandala drawn by Jung on Aug. 2, 1917, in one of the Black Books



The painted version of the same drawing in the Red Book



*Mandala prepared by Jung in 1927, published in sinologist–theologian–missionary Richard Wilhelm’s translated volume *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (1929), to which Jung wrote a commentary*

always used to express wholeness, completeness, and perfection: symbols, as a rule, of the quaternity and the circle.”³⁴ The second: “the severe pattern imposed by a circular image of this kind com-

³³ See the present essay, p. 5 above.

³⁴ CW 7, § 186.

pensates the disorder and confusion of the psychic state ... through the construction of a central point to which everything is related, or by a concentric arrangement of the disordered multiplicity and of contradictory and irreconcilable elements.”³⁵ And the third: “My mandalas were cryptograms concerning the state of the self which were presented to me anew each day. In them I saw the self – that is, my whole being – actively at work.”³⁶

We are back at Jung’s notion of the “self”, having gained, on the way, an impression of his views on mandalas, and can now return to the “Aims of Psychotherapy” paper, closing with one more quote. Characterizing his patients’ paintings, Jung writes:

A feature common to all these pictures is a primitive symbolism which is conspicuous both in the drawing and in the colouring. The colours are as a rule quite barbaric in their intensity. Often an unmistakable archaic quality is present. ... We may therefore take it that our pictures spring chiefly from those regions of the psyche which I have termed the collective unconscious. By this I understand an unconscious psychic functioning common to all men... It is as if a part of the psyche that reaches far back into the primitive past were expressing itself in these pictures...³⁷

³⁵ C. G. Jung, “Mandalas” (1955), English translation in CW 9/I, § 714.

³⁶ *Memories...* (cf. note 20 above), p. 196. I am indebted to Csilla Fehér for sharing with me the experiences she gathered as a mandala painter and mandala painting teacher.

³⁷ CW 16, § 111. – “In Jung’s works”, writes one of his closest associates, Jolande Jacobi, “we do nowhere find systematic instructions as regards how one has to interpret ‘the images from the unconscious’. So I strived, labouring for twenty years, to put together a guideline that will help us to get closer to the understanding of these images.” (Jolande Jacobi, *Vom Bilderreich der Seele: Wege und Umwege zu sich selbst* [1969], Olten: Walter-Verlag, 1981, p. 51.) In the introductory chapters of her book Jacobi provides a fascinating sketch of the psychology and the medieval history of pictorial representation, but also of its primordial history, remarking: “Preconceptual language, expressed in images, was already thousands of years ago the language of primitive peoples. Rock paintings and myths tell us about that” (*ibid.*, pp. 28 and 30). Theodor Abt’s *Introduction to Picture Interpretation: According to C. G. Jung* (Zurich: Living Human Heritage Publications,

It is in his 1916 Zürich talk³⁸ Jung for the first time uses the expression “collective unconscious”,³⁹ but the notion itself is clearly anticipated in the *Wandlungen*,⁴⁰ where the term “urtümliches Bild” – primordial image – is explicitly applied. The alternative form “Urbild” – at the time actually quite widespread – Jung might have taken from his revered Goethe,⁴¹ or especially from an author he continuously quotes in the *Wandlungen*: Friedrich Nietzsche.⁴² The source of the expression “urtümliches Bild” is Jacob Burckhardt. The passage by him Jung here cites: “‘Faust ist ... ein echter und gerechter Mythos, d. h. ein großes urtümliches Bild, in welchem jeder sein Wesen und Schicksal auf seine Weise wieder zu ahnen hat.’”⁴³ Or as

2005) begins, similarly, with pictures of ancient rock paintings. The author points to some essential philosophical and psychological recognitions. On p. 17 he writes: “We are all born with [the] ability to read pictures. All small children and their mothers understand each other with the help of body language that is simply a language of pictures. And every child also has a natural pleasure, urge and ability to draw and to paint.” I have to note however that the main chapters of Abt’s book are addressed, obviously, to Jungian art teachers, to art teachers well-versed in the details of Jung’s theory of psychological types.

³⁸ Cf. the present essay, note 1 above.

³⁹ The central passage being: “The most important contents of the collective unconscious appear to be ‘primordial images’, that is, unconscious collective ideas (mythical thinking) and vital instincts” (CW 7, § 520). In the *Gesammelte Werke* edition the text runs: “Die wichtigsten Inhalte des kollektiven Unbewußten scheinen die ‘urtümlichen Bilder’, das heißt die unbewußten kollektiven Ideen und Lebensantriebe (mythisches Denken und Leben) zu sein” (GW 7, Ostfildern: Patmos Verlag, 1995).

⁴⁰ Cf. the present essay, pp. 5 f. above.

⁴¹ “Und die seltenste Form bewahrt im geheimen das Urbild”, runs the well-known line in Goethe’s didactic poem „Metamorphose der Tiere”.

⁴² See e.g. Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie* (The Birth of Tragedy, 1872), sect. 8: For the Greeks the *satyr* was “the primordial image of man” (“war das Urbild des Menschen”), Engl. transl. by Ian C. Johnston. The impact of Nietzsche on Jung is brilliantly analyzed in Paul Bishop, *The Dionysian Self: C. G. Jung’s Reception of Friedrich Nietzsche*, Berlin–New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.

⁴³ *Wandlungen...*, p. 35, note 1. The 1917 English translation misses the point (“Faust is nothing else than pure and legitimate myth, a great primitive conception, so to speak”), the lapse is rectified in the 1956 translation: “a genuine myth, i.e., a great primordial image” (CW 5, § 45, note 45).

The Psychology of the Unconscious will have it: “There are present in every individual, besides his personal memories, the great ‘primordial’ images, as Jacob Burckhardt once aptly called them, the inherited possibilities of human imagination as it was from time immemorial. The fact of this inheritance”, Jung there adds, “explains the truly amazing phenomenon that certain motifs from myths and legends repeat themselves the world over in identical forms. It also explains why it is that our mental patients can reproduce exactly the same images and associations that are known to us from the old texts.”⁴⁴

Let us note that neither the expression “Urbild” nor the expression “urtümliches Bild” refers, in the contexts from which Jung has borrowed them, to visual images. By contrast, the *Wandlungen* does indeed touch on the pictorial, and not just in the sense that this book, as I mentioned before,⁴⁵ contains some illustrations (of which alas only a fraction are reprinted in the 1917 translation, the first one being, on p. 229, a series of drawings representing specific symbols, prepared by Jung on the basis of “a late Roman mystic inscription”), but also in that it discusses important questions pertaining to the issue of the visual mind. One of the opening ideas of the book relates to the problem of the origins of language. “Language”, writes Jung, “should ... be comprehended in a wider sense than that of speech, which is in itself only the expression of the formulated thought which is capable of being communicated in the widest sense. Otherwise, the deaf mute would be limited to the utmost in his capacity for thinking, which is not the case in reality. Without any knowledge of the spoken word, he has his ‘language’.”⁴⁶ Now the language of the deaf, as was of course clear to Jung, is a *pictorial* language: a language of gestures and facial expressions.⁴⁷ Some pages later in the *Wandlungen* there

⁴⁴ CW 7, § 101.

⁴⁵ Cf. the present essay, p. 6 above.

⁴⁶ *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1917 English edition of *Wandlungen*), pp. 13 f.

⁴⁷ Immediately after the passage just quoted Jung refers to p. 365 of the 1902 edition of Wilhelm Wundt’s *Grundriß der Psychologie* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann), citing the paragraph where Wundt touches on how in the course of the development of language word meanings change, moving from the concrete to the abstract. Three pages earlier Wundt writes about deaf children “who have grown

follows a reference to James, a quote from the 1909 German translation of *Psychology: Briefer Course*:⁴⁸ “Our thought consists for the great part of a series of images, one of which produces the other; a sort of passive dream-state of which the higher animals are also capable.”⁴⁹ Jung adds: “Here, thinking in the form of speech ceases, image crowds upon image, feeling upon feeling... The material of these thoughts ... can naturally be only the past with its thousand memory pictures.”⁵⁰

Now the border line between day-dreaming – fantasy – and actually dreaming, contends Jung, is a blurred one. It is this contention that leads him, in the *Wandlungen*, to the first of his Nietzsche quotes here – and, in the background, to the notion of the collective unconscious as the guardian of our primordial history. In his work *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* (“Human, All Too Human”, 1878), Nietzsche wrote: “in the same way that man reasons in his dreams, he reasoned when in the waking state many thousands of years. ... In the dream [the] atavistic relic of humanity manifests its existence within us, for it is the foundation upon which the higher rational faculty de-

up without any systematic education. In spite of this lack of education, an energetic mental intercourse may take place between them. In such a case, however, since the deaf and dumb can perceive only *visual signs*, the intercourse must depend on the development of a natural *gesture-language* made up of a combination of significant expressive movements. Feelings are in general expressed by mimetic movements, ideas by pantomimetic, either by pointing at the object with the finger or by drawing some kind of picture of the idea in the air...” (this passage I am quoting from the English translation published in 1897: Wilhelm Wundt, *Outlines of Psychology*, Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann / London: Williams & Norgate / New York: Gustav E. Stechert, p. 299). The topic of gesture language receives a very detailed discussion in the first volume of Wundt’s *Völkerpsychologie* (*Die Sprache*, Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1900), I heavily relied on that work in the chapter “Time and Image in the Theory of Gestures” of my volume *Meaning and Motoricity: Essays on Image and Time*, Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang Edition, 2014, pp. 121–143.

⁴⁸ William James, *Psychologie*, translated by Marie Dürr, Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer.

⁴⁹ *Psychology of the Unconscious*, p. 21. The quote here, in the 1917 English edition of *Wandlungen*, is a re-translation into English of the German translation by Dürr, with Jung’s italics.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

veloped, and which is still developing in every individual. The dream carries us back into earlier states of human culture, and affords us a means of understanding it better.”⁵¹ A few pages later Jung will add: “through all our life we possess ... a phantastic thought which corresponds to the thought of the centuries of antiquity and barbarism. ... our minds, too, which apparently have outgrown those archaic tendencies, nevertheless bear the marks of the evolution passed through, and the very ancient re-echoes, at least dreamily, in phantasies. ... the soul”, Jung then continues, “possesses in some degree historical strata, the oldest stratum of which would correspond to the unconscious”.⁵² Jung’s reference here, clearly, is not to the personal but to the collective unconscious, the content of which is made up by primordial images.

A basic primordial image is that of the *mother*, “‘the great primitive idea of the mother’ who, in the first place, meant to us our individual world and afterwards became the symbol of all worlds”.⁵³ As Jung will write in his 1916 Zürich talk: “This piece of mysticism is innate in all better men as the ‘longing for the mother’, the nostalgia for the source from which we came.”⁵⁴ The phrase is repeated in the 1928 enlarged version of the talk,⁵⁵ in which however the emphasis is shifted to the primordial image of the *women*:

the whole nature of man presupposes woman, both physically and spiritually. His system is tuned in to woman from the start... Likewise parents, wife, children, birth, and death are in-born in him as virtual images, as psychic aptitudes. These *a priori* categories have by nature a collective character; they are

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28, I am quoting the Nietzsche passage in the form as quoted in the translation.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 35 and 37.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 283. Unfortunately, the translation has “primitive idea” for “urtümliches Bild”, *image*, and nor does the phrase “our individual world” express the German “uns erstmals einzige Welt”, *our in the beginning only world*. The passage is retained in *Symbole der Wandlung* and correctly translated in CW 5 (§ 373).

⁵⁴ CW 7, § 476.

⁵⁵ “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious” (in German: Darmstadt: Reichl Verlag), for the quoted phrase see CW 7, § 260.

images of parents, wife, and children in general... We must therefore think of these images as lacking in solid content, hence as unconscious. They only acquire solidity, influence, and eventual consciousness in the encounter with empirical facts, which touch the unconscious aptitude and quicken it to life. ... – An inherited collective image of woman exists in a man's unconscious, with the help of which he apprehends the nature of woman.⁵⁶

It is striking that in contrast to the visual perspective occasionally becoming apparent in the *Wandlungen*, Jung here entirely ceases to apply a pictorial interpretation to primordial images. The primordial image is merely a “virtual” one, without content, below the threshold of consciousness, just an “aptitude”. We have arrived at Jung's actual view of what an archetype is.

The expression “archetype” Jung first used in his 1919 London talk “Instinct and the Unconscious”. The expression itself reaches back to antiquity. In the first minutes / on the first pages of the talk Jung, in accordance with the title, discusses the relation of instincts to the unconscious, introducing the expression in question, as we will immediately see, with a kind of suddenness:

the unconscious is the receptacle of all lost memories, and of all contents that are as yet too feeble to become conscious. ... intentional repressions of painful and incompatible thoughts and feelings form an important part of the unconscious. I designate the totality of the contents just mentioned as the “personal unconscious”. It contains the acquisitions of the individual life, in contradistinction to another stratum or form of the unconscious, containing the “supra-individual” qualities which were not acquired but inherited, as for instance instincts, i.e. impulses to actions without conscious motivation. Moreover, in this stratum we discover the pre-existent forms of apprehension, or the congenital conditions of intuition, viz. the “archetypes” of apprehension, which are the *a priori* determining constituents of

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, §§ 300 f.

all experience. Just as instincts compel man to a conduct of life that is specifically human, so the archetypes or categories *a priori* compel intuition and apprehension to forms specifically human. I propose to designate the sum of such inherited psychic qualities as instincts and archetypes of apprehension by the term “collective unconscious”. I call it “collective” because it does not possess individual contents of sporadic occurrence, but qualities of uniform and general occurrence.⁵⁷

The problem of instincts and the problem of archetypes, continues Jung, is fundamentally one and the same problem. And we have to ask, he goes on, whether mankind possesses merely a few, or rather a great number of primordial forms of archetypes of apprehension? The answer for Jung is provided by Plato’s philosophy, specifically by the theory of ideas.⁵⁸ Now let me note that the Platonic notion of an idea is ambiguous, since on the one hand it suggests something visual – *eidos*, form – while on the other hand the *idée*, according to its Platonic definition, is not part of the perceptible world. Jung’s notion of an archetype (= primordial image⁵⁹) is similarly ambiguous; the archetype is not an image, but rather some unconscious readiness for acquiring content, say also visual content. Jung’s journey across the history of philosophy in the event leads from Plato to Kant. In Kant’s view we can have no sensory knowledge whatsoever of the world in itself, we achieve such knowledge only through the intervention of our consciousness. It was Kant himself who drew attention to the partial parallel between the theory of ideas and his own

⁵⁷ „Instinct and the Unconscious”, *British Journal of Psychology*, vol. X, no. I (1919), republished in C. G. Jung *Contributions to Analytical Psychology* (International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method), translated by H. G. Baynes és Cary F. Baynes, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1928, reprinted 1942, pp. 275 f. Note the markedly Kantian flavour of some of Jung’s formulations here.

⁵⁸ “Instinct and the Unconscious”, pp. 278 f.

⁵⁹ See just “Instinct and the Unconscious”, p. 280: “the archetype, the primordial image”.

strivings,⁶⁰ this was the parallel Jung exploited in his London talk – and subsequently, again and again, in his writings on archetypes.

Let me briefly quote from his 1934/1954 paper “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious”.⁶¹ “‘Archetype’, as Jung here puts it, “is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic εἶδος. For our purposes this term is apposite and helpful, because it tells us that so far as the collective unconscious contents are concerned we are dealing with archaic or – I would say – primordial types, that is, with universal images that have existed since the remotest times. ... The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious...” Here Jung adds a note: “One must, for the sake of accuracy, distinguish between ‘archetype’ and ‘archetypal ideas’. The archetype as such is a hypothetical and irrepresentable model...”⁶² And a final quote, from Jung’s 1938/1954 paper “Die psychologischen Aspekte des Mutterarchetypus”: “In former times ... it was not too difficult to understand Plato’s conception of the Idea as supraordinate and pre-existent to all phenomena. ‘Archetype’, far from being a modern term, was already in use before the time of St. Augustine, and was synonymous with ‘Idea’ in the Platonic usage. ... it is Kant’s doctrine of categories ... [that] paves the way for a rebirth of the Platonic spirit.”⁶³ Some paragraphs later Jung then makes an attempt to be unequivocal: “Again and again I encounter the mistaken notion that an archetype is determined in regard to its content, in other words that it is a kind of unconscious idea (if such an expression be admissible). It is necessary to point out once more that archetypes are not determined as regards their content, but only as regards their form and then only to a very limited degree. A primordial image is deter-

⁶⁰ Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*The Critique of Pure Reason*, 1781 [A] and 1787 [B]), see especially A 313 / B 370: “Die Ideen sind bei [Plato] Urbilder der Dinge selbst” (“For Plato ideas are archetypes of the things themselves”, Norman Kemp Smith transl.).

⁶¹ Cf. note 32 above.

⁶² CW 9/I, §§ 5 f. The expression “irrepresentable” is not an entirely happy translation of the original German “unanschaulich”, the latter having, among its many connotations, the meaning *not visualizable*.

⁶³ “Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype”, in CW 9/I, §§ 149.

mined as to its content only when it has become conscious and is therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience.”⁶⁴

3. The Jung Picture-Book

Jung passed away in 1961, but shortly after his death there appeared two notable volumes that carried his name on their covers, and soon became famous: the biography *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken*, edited by Aniela Jaffé,⁶⁵ the English translation of which came out in 1963, and has since been published in numerous editions; and the collection *Man and his Symbols* that appeared in 1964.⁶⁶ In the introduction of the biography Jaffé admits that Jung “did not regard these memoirs as a scientific work, nor even as a book by himself. Rather, he always spoke and wrote of it as ‘Aniela Jaffé’s project’, to which he had made contributions. At his specific request it is not to be included in his *Collected Works*.”⁶⁷ As Jaffé informs us:

Jung read through the manuscript of this book and approved it. Occasionally he corrected passages or added new material. In turn, I have used the records of our conversations to supplement the chapters he wrote himself, have expanded his sometimes terse allusions, and have eliminated repetitions. The further the book progressed, the closer became the fusion between his work and mine.⁶⁸

Notwithstanding the first-person narrative, what the readers of the *Memories* have before them is, then, a biography, not an autobiogra-

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, § 155.

⁶⁵ See note 20 above.

⁶⁶ According to the cover page and the imprint the collection was conceived and edited by Carl G. Jung, the editor after his death being Marie-Louise von Franz, assisted by co-ordinating editor John Freeman. I am not mentioning here the very many collections/selections published after 1961 but actually based on Jung’s earlier publications, and am of course not taking into account the *Collected Works* and the *Gesammelte Werke*.

⁶⁷ *Memories...*, p. ix.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

phy. So the picture the educated public has of Jung is based, to a large extent, on the one painted by Jaffé. This holds in particular of the picture we possess of Jung's time between 1913 and 1918. Jung was suffering from excessive emotions conjured up by neurotic fantasies. However, as the account goes,

To the extent that I managed to translate the emotions into images – that is to say, to find the images which were concealed in the emotions – I was inwardly calmed and reassured. Had I left those images hidden in the emotions, I might have been torn to pieces by them. There is a chance that I might have succeeded in splitting them off; but in that case I would inexorably have fallen into a neurosis and so been ultimately destroyed by them anyhow. ... I learned how helpful it can be, from the therapeutic point of view, to find the particular images which lie behind emotions.⁶⁹

And a few pages later:

I have learned to accept the contents of the unconscious and to understand them. I know how I must behave toward the inner images. ... I wrote [my] fantasies down first in the Black Book; later, I transferred them to the Red Book, which I also embellished with drawings.⁷⁰ It contains most of my mandala drawings. In the Red Book I tried an esthetic elaboration of my fantasies, but never finished it.⁷¹

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁷⁰ Here Jaffé inserted a note: "The Black Book consists of six black-bound, smallish leather notebooks. The Red Book, a folio volume bound in red leather, contains the same fantasies couched in elaborately literary form and language, and set down in calligraphic Gothic script, in the manner of medieval manuscripts", *ibid.*, p. 188. – I have referred to the *Red Book* on p. 7 above in the present essay, and have reproduced images from one of the *Black Books* and from the *Red Book* on p. 14 above.

⁷¹ *Memories...*, p. 188.

I will soon come to the *Red Book*, but just now let me stay with the thread Jung attaches such importance to in the *Memories*: his recovery from the neurosis that began around 1913. During the years filled with fantasies, runs Jaffé’s rendering of Jung, “my family and my profession always remained a joyful reality and a guarantee that I also had a normal existence”.⁷² He “gradually began to emerge from the darkness”, but it was only in 1918–1919 he really saw the light: “I sketched every morning in a notebook a small circular drawing, a mandala, which seemed to correspond to my inner situation at the time. With the help of these drawings I could observe my psychic transformations from day to day.”⁷³ These were the transformations that in the event led Jung to his notion of the “self”,⁷⁴ and it was experiencing the magic of this notion, the *Memories* suggest, that finally healed him.⁷⁵

The volume *Man and his Symbols*⁷⁶ grew out of a successful media event, and – as a book sold in very many copies – itself became a successful chapter in media history. In the spring of 1959 the BBC commissioned John Freeman to conduct an interview with the ageing Jung at his countryside home near Zürich, the film was shown and had a broad impact. Freeman and others persuaded Jung to take part in putting together a volume written for the non-specialist reader. He chose his collaborators from among his closest followers, has planned – as Freeman tells us – the structure of the entire book, supervised the work of each author, and wrote, in English, the – rather long – first chapter, finishing it only days before his final illness. The chapter then underwent, by Freeman, “some fairly extensive editing to improve its intelligibility to the general reader”⁷⁷. The chapter is indeed intelligible; however – to focus directly on the topic of the present essay – when one encounters, say, an interesting formulation like “archetypes ... are, at the same time, both images and emo-

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁷⁴ Cf. the present essay, pp. 12 f. and p. 15 above.

⁷⁵ *Memories...*, p. 199.

⁷⁶ See note 66 above.

⁷⁷ *Man and his Symbols*, pp. 11 f. (John Freeman, “Introduction”).

tions”,⁷⁸ then of course one would be interested to know who exactly the source of that formulation is: Jung? Freeman? or possibly Marie-Louise von Franz?

As to the “Red Book”, the idea to publish it at some stage was, in the 1920s, not entirely ruled out by Jung, he discussed the possibility with people close to him, he even asked one of his followers to prepare a second copy,⁷⁹ but in the event did not complete this strange work. Many decades later, in the 1970s, from within the circle of the owners/keepers/exploiters of the Jung estate some images illustrating the codex at long last reached the public. Another twenty

years went by, and in 1997 both Marie-Louise von Franz and Jung expert Sonu Shamdasani submitted transcriptions of the codex to the Jung heirs, who in 2000 commissioned Shamdasani with the preparations for a publication. I am here displaying the recto and verso sides of the first page of the published work.



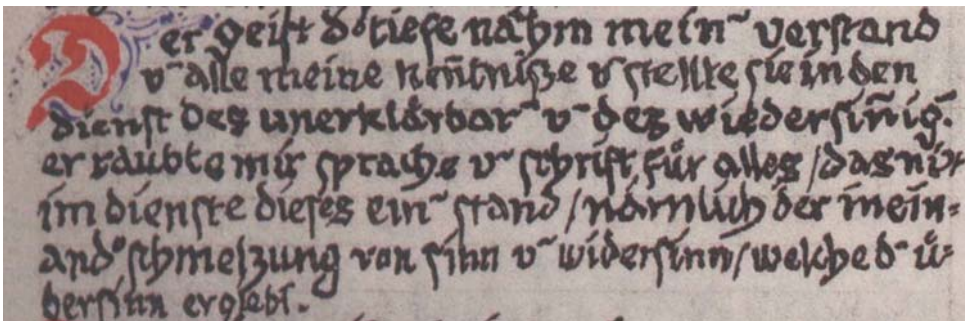
The Red Book, 1st page recto. The title of Book One: “Der weg des komenden” (“The Way of What is to Come”, English text here and in the following quoted from the Shamdasani edition)

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 96 (C. G. Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”).

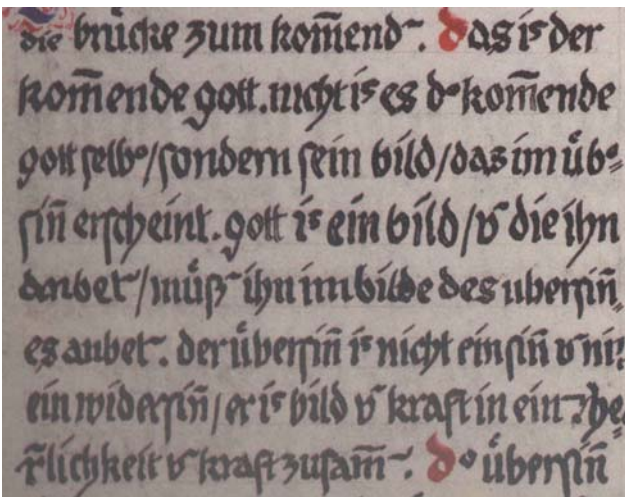
⁷⁹ See the afterword of the editor in C. G. Jung, *The Red Book: Liber Novus*, ed. by Sonu Shamdasani, New York – London: W. W. Norton & Co., 2009, p. 212.



“Wenn ich im geiste dieser Zeit rede” (“If I speak in the spirit of this time”) ... “i habe gelernt daß außer dem geiste dieser zeit noch ein anderer geist am werke ist nämlich jener der die tiefe alles gegenwärtigen beherrscht.” (“I have learned that in addition to the spirit of this time there is still another spirit at work, namely that which rules the depths of everything contemporary.”) The Red Book, 1st page verso (the first lines of the page enlarged)



“Der geist der tiefe nahm meinen verstand und alle meine kenntnisse und stellte sie in den dienst des unerklärbar und des widersinnig. er räubte mir sprache und schrift für alles das nicht im dienste dieses einen stand nämlich der ... schmelzung von sinn und widersinn welches übersinn ergibt. (“The spirit of the depths took my understanding and all my knowledge and placed them at the service of the inexplicable and the paradoxical. He robbed me of speech and writing for everything that was not in his service, namely the melting together of sense and nonsense, which produces the supreme meaning.”) The Red Book, 1st page verso (some further lines of the page enlarged)



“das ist der kommende gott. nicht ist es der kommende gott selbst sondern sein bild das im übersinn erscheint. gott ist ein bild und die ihn anbeten müssen ihn im bilde des übersinnes anbeten. der übersinn ist nicht ein sinn und nicht ein widersinn er ist bild und kraft in einem herrlichkeit und kraft zusammen.” (“That is the God yet to come. It is not the coming God himself but his image which appears in the supreme meaning. God is an image, and those who worship him must worship him in the images of the supreme meaning. The supreme meaning is not a meaning and not an absurdity, it is image and force in one, magnificence and force together.”) The Red Book, ibid.

These lines in the *Red Book* were written by Jung in 1914–1915, that is at a time when he did not yet use the expression “archetype”, but did use the expression “primordial image”, the two expressions for him representing the same notion.⁸⁰ If now Jung says that god is an “image”, he must mean, in full accordance with his characteristic world-view, that god is a *primordial image*. At the beginning of the present essay the question I asked was: do primordial images, archetypes, have an actually pictorial – visual – dimension? Jung’s answer, as we saw, was in the negative: an archetype is a specific pattern of the primordial possibility of conscious apprehension, but is in itself without content.⁸¹ A fascinating metaphor coined by Jung is “the two-million-year-old man that is in all of us”.⁸² A hypothesis this metaphor might suggest: in the course of the many millions of years of becoming a human being we have come to store visual experiences (and motor experiences at their root) which in a given situation are activated as individual inner, mental, images. And in fact Jung’s formula in December 1916 was: “the inherited potentialities of human imagination. They have always been potentially latent in the structure of the brain.”⁸³

In the 1928 edition⁸⁴ the references to the brain are still there,⁸⁵

⁸⁰ See the present essay, pp. 16 f. and 19 ff. above.

⁸¹ See esp. pp. 20 f. above.

⁸² Cf. C. G. Jung, *Psychological Reflections: A New Anthology of his Writings 1905–1961*, selected and edited by Jolande Jacobi, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, p. 76. The collection was originally published in German: *Psychologische Betrachtungen*, Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1945.

⁸³ I am quoting from p. 410 of the 1917 English translation (cf. the present essay, note 6 above). On p. 413 we have: “imprinted on the human brain for untold ages”, on p. 432: “the images formed in the brain”, and on p. 442: “the wisdom of the experience of untold ages, deposited in the course of time and lying potential in the human brain”. There are essential references to the “universal similarity of brains” as the basis of the collective unconscious in Jung’s 1916 Zürich talk (see p. 451 of the *Collected Papers*, 1st edition, cf. note 1 above of the present essay).

⁸⁴ See above, note 7.

⁸⁵ The term “brain” is also used in Jung’s commentary to the 1929 Wilhelm volume (see above, p. 14). It is this commentary Arnheim has in mind in his seminal *Art and Visual Perception*, when he writes: “The development of pictorial form relies

when however looking at the 1942 edition, one notices that by then they have, with one exception, waned away.⁸⁶ By 1942 it is not the brain, but the “soul” that experiences images.⁸⁷ One has the very strong impression that, as time went by, Jung became estranged from any kind of biological-psychological explanation. After 1916 it was the mystical notion of the “Selbst” he regarded as the centre of his theory,⁸⁸ thereby making it increasingly impossible for himself to find any tangible carrier on which to base his primordial images. Throughout his life Jung was passionately interested in the pictorial; he drew, painted, sculpted; healed himself and his patients with pictures; the *Red Book* is replete with illustrations, from initials to mandalas and fantasy paintings; but with the problem of primordial images as an actual scientific problem he gradually became, due to his mystical leanings I would say, unable to cope.

This does not change the fact that the work Jung had accomplished in the second and third decades of the twentieth century has essentially contributed to what we today refer to as the pictorial or iconic turn. His impact on the Bauhaus movement is obvious, with the passage by Arnheim I just quoted absolutely telling. Or think of Bartlett, whose *Remembering* of course is not just about memory, but about visual memory, with drawings abounding. Then there are the

on basic properties of the nervous system, whose functioning is not greatly modified by cultural and individual differences. It is for this reason that the drawings of children look essentially alike throughout the world, and that there are such striking similarities among the early art products of different civilizations. A good example is the universal occurrence of circular, concentrically arranged figures, to which Jung has applied the Sanskrit word ‘mandala’. . . . Jung refers to this pattern as one of the archetypes or collective images that appear everywhere, because the collective unconscious, of which they are a part, ‘is simply the psychic expression of identity of brain structure irrespective of all racial differences.’” (Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954, p. 167.)

⁸⁶ The exception being the phrase “imprinted on the human brain for untold ages”. For the crucial introductory formulation (“the great ‘primordial images’”) as it then became by 1942, see the present essay, p. 17 above.

⁸⁷ See CW 7, § 151.

⁸⁸ See the present essay, pp. 12 f. above.

less conspicuous undercurrents. One of the leading philosophers of the twentieth century, Martin Heidegger, in his 1929 book on Kant gave a brilliant nutshell theory of images, a fact noted by Gottfried Boehm, inventor of the phrase “iconic turn”.⁸⁹ Might there have been an influence leading from Jung to Heidegger, in particular to Heidegger’s 1938 talk “The Age of the World Picture”? Let us recall just three formulations by Jung: “The collective unconscious contains, or is, an historical mirror-image of the world. It too is a world, but a world of images”⁹⁰; the “route, back to ourselves as an actual, living something, [is] poised between two world-pictures”;⁹¹ and his description of a schizophrenic patient “who used to declare that the world was his picture-book ... the pages of which he could turn at will”.⁹² Now if one examines the broader contexts of Jung’s formulations, and minutely reconstructs the train of thought pursued by Heidegger in his talk,⁹³ the surprising result is that there actually obtains a parallel between the positions of the two. The source of the parallel consists in their rejection of the modern self-image of man. Both Jung and Heidegger were German conservatives, having similar world-views, similar world-pictures if you like, from which they derived similar views as to what making up and possessing a picture of the world amounts to.

A conservative contemporary of Jung and Heidegger was the Austro-German philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, another – probably *the* other – leading philosopher of the twentieth century. He is generally regarded as a philosopher of language, but he was just as much a philosopher of images. Coming to the end of the present essay, let me

⁸⁹ For Boehm on Heidegger see the former’s “Die Wiederkehr der Bilder”, in Gottfried Boehm, ed., *Was ist ein Bild?*, München: Wilhelm Fink, 1994, p. 15.

⁹⁰ Written in 1916, see CW 7, § 507.

⁹¹ Written in 1928, see CW 7, § 398.

⁹² Written in 1916, rewritten in 1928, see CW 7, §§ 228 and 447.

⁹³ I have done this in my “Note on C. G. Jung, Heidegger, and ‘The Age of the World Picture’”, see https://www.academia.edu/42939334/Jung_and_Heidegger.

point to an interesting complementarity between his and Jung's theories of mental pictures.⁹⁴ What Wittgenstein argued for was that thinking consists in the collectively sanctioned use of signs, both verbal and visual, both physical and mental, with the visual more fundamental than the verbal. You can show what you cannot necessarily say. Two striking passages from Wittgenstein's manuscripts, jotted down in the early 1930s: "Thinking is quite comparable to the drawing of pictures." And: "for the picture to tell me something it isn't essential that words should occur to me while I look at it; because the picture should be the more direct language".⁹⁵ Fundamentally, there are visual patterns – most notably facial gestures – which one can point to, react to and even imitate, but cannot express in words in the absence of that pattern. To a dictation to his Cambridge students, two or three years later, Wittgenstein even added a drawing:



The accompanying text runs: "Let this face produce an impression on you. You may then feel inclined to say: 'Surely I don't see mere dashes. I see a face with a *particular* expression.' ... But this would only be meant as an approximate description of the expression. 'Words can't exactly describe it', one sometimes says. It is as though we could say: 'This face has a particular expression: namely this' (pointing to something). But if I had to point to anything in this place it would have to be the drawing I am looking at. ... Absorbing its expression, I don't

⁹⁴ Compare my recent brief essay "Back to the Roots – Conservatism Revindicated", <http://www.hunfi.hu/nyiri/BTR.pdf>, or at my academia.edu page.

⁹⁵ Compare Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar*, translated by Anthony Kenny, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, pp. 163 f. Kenny misses the point, he has: "the picture was supposed to be the more direct language". In the German original: "Denn das Bild sollte doch die direktere Sprache sein."

find a prototype of this expression in my mind”.⁹⁶ The prototypes Wittgenstein was looking for in vain seem to me to be, functionally, very much related to Jung’s archetypes – the primordial images the latter has been so vividly confronted by in his mind, but could, at the end of the day, not give conceptual shape to.

⁹⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, ed. by Rush Rhees, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958, repr. 1964, pp. 162 and 165.

This essay is an examination, from the point of view of visual philosophy, of C. G. Jung's theory of archetypes. Do those archetypes, or *primordial images*, making up our collective unconscious, actually have a pictorial dimension? A fascinating metaphor coined by Jung is "the two-million-year-old man that is in all of us". A hypothesis this metaphor might suggest: in the course of the many millions of years of becoming a human being we have come to store visual experiences (and motor experiences at their root) which in a given situation are activated as individual inner, mental, images. However, as time went by, Jung, giving way to his mystical leanings, became estranged from this kind of down-to-earth explanation. Even so, he has essentially contributed to what we today refer to as the pictorial or iconic turn.

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