

A STUDY IN THE PROCESS OF INDIVIDUATION¹

Tao's working of things is vague and obscure.
Obscure! Oh vague!
In it are images.
Vague! Oh obscure!
In it are things.
Profound! Oh dark indeed!
In it is seed.
Its seed is very truth.
In it is trustworthiness.
From the earliest Beginning until today
Its name is not lacking
By which to fathom the Beginning of all things.
How do I know it is the Beginning of all things?
Through *it*!

LAO-TZU, *Tao Teh Ching*, ch. 21.

Introductory

[525] During the 1920's, I made the acquaintance in America of a lady with an academic education—we will call her Miss X—who had studied psychology for nine years. She had read all the more recent literature in this field. In 1928, at the age of fifty-five, she came to Europe in order to continue her studies under my guidance. As the daughter of an exceptional father she had varied interests, was extremely cultured, and possessed a lively turn of mind. She was unmarried, but lived with the unconscious equivalent of a human partner, namely the animus (the personification of everything masculine in a woman), in that characteristic liaison so often met with in women with an academic education. As frequently happens, this development of hers was based on a positive father complex: she was “fille à papa” and consequently did not have a good relation to her mother. Her animus was not of the kind to give her cranky ideas. She was protected

from this by her natural intelligence and by a remarkable readiness to tolerate the opinions of other people. This good quality, by no means to be expected in the presence of an animus, had, in conjunction with some difficult experiences that could not be avoided, enabled her to realize that she had reached a limit and “got stuck,” and this made it urgently necessary for her to look round for ways that might lead her out of the impasse. That was one of the reasons for her trip to Europe. Associated with this there was another—not accidental—motive. On her mother’s side she was of Scandinavian descent. Since her relation to her mother left very much to be desired, as she herself clearly realized, the feeling had gradually grown up in her that this side of her nature might have developed differently if only the relation to her mother had given it a chance. In deciding to go to Europe she was conscious that she was turning back to her own origins and was setting out to reactivate a portion of her childhood that was bound up with the mother. Before coming to Zurich she had gone back to Denmark, her mother’s country. There the thing that affected her most was the landscape, and unexpectedly there came over her the desire to paint—above all, landscape motifs. Till then she had noticed no such aesthetic inclinations in herself, also she lacked the ability to paint or draw. She tried her hand at water-colours, and her modest landscapes filled her with a strange feeling of contentment. Painting them, she told me, seemed to fill her with new life. Arriving in Zurich, she continued her painting efforts, and on the day before she came to me for the first time she began another landscape—this time from memory. While she was working on it, a fantasy-image suddenly thrust itself between her and the picture: she saw herself with the lower half of her body in the earth, stuck fast in a block of rock. The region round about was a beach strewn with boulders. In the background was the sea. She felt caught and helpless. Then she suddenly saw me in the guise of a medieval sorcerer. She shouted for help, I came along and touched the rock with a magic wand. The stone instantly burst open, and she stepped out uninjured. She then painted this fantasy-image instead of the landscape and brought it to me on the following day.

Picture 1

- [526] As usually happens with beginners and people with no skill of hand, the drawing of the picture cost her considerable difficulties. In such cases

it is very easy for the unconscious to slip its subliminal images into the painting. Thus it came about that the big boulders would not appear on the paper in their real form but took on unexpected shapes. They looked, some of them, like hardboiled eggs cut in two, with the yolk in the middle. Others were like pointed pyramids. It was in one of these that Miss X was stuck. Her hair, blown out behind her, and the movement of the sea suggested a strong wind.

[527] The picture shows first of all her imprisoned state, but not yet the act of liberation. So it was there that she was attached to the earth, in the land of her mother. Psychologically this state means being caught in the unconscious. Her inadequate relation to her mother had left behind something dark and in need of development. Since she succumbed to the magic of her motherland and tried to express this by painting, it is obvious that she is still stuck with half her body in Mother Earth: that is, she is still partly identical with the mother and, what is more, through that part of the body which contains just that secret of the mother which she had never inquired into.

[528] Since Miss X had discovered all by herself the method of active imagination I have long been accustomed to use, I was able to approach the problem at just the point indicated by the picture: she is caught in the unconscious and expects magical help from me, as from a sorcerer. And since her psychological knowledge had made her completely *au fait* with certain possible interpretations, there was no need of even an understanding wink to bring to light the apparent *sous-entendu* of the liberating magician's wand. The sexual symbolism, which for many naïve minds is of such capital importance, was no discovery for her. She was far enough advanced to know that explanations of this kind, however true they might be in other respects, had no significance in her case. She did not want to know how liberation might be possible in a *general* way, but how and in what way it could come about for *her*. And about this I knew as little as she. I know that such solutions can only come about in an individual way that cannot be foreseen. One cannot think up ways and means artificially, let alone know them in advance, for such knowledge is merely collective, based on average experience, and can therefore be completely inadequate, indeed absolutely wrong, in individual cases. And when, on top of that, we consider the patient's age, we would do well to

abandon from the start any attempt to apply ready-made solutions and warmed-up generalities of which the patient knows just as much as the doctor. Long experience has taught me not to know anything in advance and not to know better, but to let the unconscious take precedence. Our instincts have ridden so infinitely many times, unharmed, over the problems that arise at this stage of life that we may be sure the transformation processes which make the transition possible have long been prepared in the unconscious and are only waiting to be released.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9



Picture 10



Picture 11



Picture 12



Picture 13



Picture 14



Picture 15



Picture 16



Picture 17



Picture 18



Picture 19



Picture 20



Picture 21



Picture 22



Picture 23



Picture 24

[529] I had already seen from her previous history how the unconscious made use of the patient's inability to draw in order to insinuate its own suggestions. I had not overlooked the fact that the boulders had surreptitiously transformed themselves into *eggs*. The egg is a germ of life with a lofty symbolical significance. It is not just a cosmogonic symbol—it is also a “philosophical” one. As the former it is the Orphic egg, the world's beginning; as the latter, the philosophical egg of the medieval natural philosophers, the vessel from which, at the end of the *opus alchymicum*, the homunculus emerges, that is, the Anthropos, the spiritual, inner and complete man, who in Chinese alchemy is called the *chen-yen* (literally, “perfect man”).²

[530] From this hint, therefore, I could already see what solution the unconscious had in mind, namely individuation, for this is the transformation process that loosens the attachment to the unconscious. It is a definitive solution, for which all other ways serve as auxiliaries and temporary makeshifts. This knowledge, which for the time being I kept to myself, bade me act with caution. I therefore advised Miss X not to let it go at a mere fantasy-image of the act of liberation, but to try to make a picture of it. How this would turn out I could not guess, and that was a good thing, because otherwise I might have put Miss X on the wrong track from sheer helpfulness. She found this task terribly difficult owing to her artistic inhibitions. So I counselled her to content herself with what was possible and to use her fantasy for the purpose of circumventing technical difficulties. The object of this advice was to introduce as much fantasy as possible into the picture, for in that way the unconscious has the best chance of revealing its contents. I also advised her not to be afraid of bright colours, for I knew from experience that vivid colours seem to attract the unconscious. Thereupon, a new picture arose.

Picture 2

[531] Again there are boulders, the round and pointed forms; but the round ones are no longer eggs, they are complete circles, and the pointed ones are tipped with golden light. One of the round forms has been blasted out of its place by a golden flash of lightning. The magician and magic wand are no longer there. The personal relationship to me seems to have ceased: the




picture shows an impersonal natural process.

[532] While Miss X was painting this picture she made all sorts of discoveries. Above all, she had no notion of what picture she was going to paint. She tried to reimagine the initial situation; the rocky shore and the sea are proof of this. But the eggs turned into abstract spheres or circles, and the magician's touch became a flash of lightning cutting through her unconscious state. With this transformation she had rediscovered the historical synonym of the philosophical egg, namely the *rotundum*, the round, original form of the Anthropos (or *στοιχάειον στρογγυ'λον*, 'round element,' as Zosimos calls it). This is an idea that has been associated with the Anthropos since ancient times.³ The soul, too, according to tradition, has a round form. As the Monk of Heisterbach says, it is not only "like to the sphere of the moon, but is furnished on all sides with eyes" (*ex omni parte oculata*). We shall come back to this motif of polyophtalmia later on. His remark refers in all probability to certain parapsychological phenomena, the "globes of light" or globular luminosities which, with remarkable consistency, are regarded as "souls" in the remotest parts of the world.⁴

[533] The liberating flash of lightning is a symbol also used by Paracelsus⁵ and the alchemists for the same thing. Moses' rock-splitting staff, which struck forth the living water and afterwards changed into a serpent, may have been an unconscious echo in the background.⁶ Lightning signifies a sudden, unexpected, and overpowering change of psychic condition.⁷

[534] "In this Spirit of the Fire-flash consists the Great Almighty Life," says Jakob Böhme.⁸ "For when you strike upon the *sharp* part of the stone, the bitter sting of Nature sharpens itself, and is stirred in the highest degree. For Nature is dissipated or *broken asunder* in the sharpness, so that the *Liberty shines forth as a Flash*."⁹ The flash is the "*Birth of the light*."¹⁰ It has transformative power: "For if I could in my Flesh comprehend the Flash, which I very well see and know how it is, I could clarify or transfigure my Body therewith, so that it would shine with a bright light and glory. And then it would no more resemble and be conformed to the bestial Body, but to the angels of God."¹¹ Elsewhere Böhme says: "As when the Flash of Life rises up in the centre of the Divine Power, wherein all the spirits of God attain their life, and highly rejoice."¹² Of the "Source-spirit" *Mercurius*, he says that it "arises in the Fire-flash." *Mercurius* is the

“animal spirit” which, from *Lucifer*’s body, “struck into the Salniter¹³ of God like a *fiery serpent* from its hole, as if there went a fiery Thunder-bolt into God’s Nature, or a fierce Serpent, which tyrannizes, raves, and rages, as if it would tear and rend Nature all to pieces.”¹⁴ Of the “innermost *birth of the soul*” the bestial body “attains only a glimpse, just as if it lightened.”¹⁵ “The triumphing *divine Birth* lasteth in us men only so long as the flash lasteth; therefore our knowledge is but in part, whereas in God the flash stands unchangeably, always eternally thus.”¹⁶ (Cf. [Fig. 1.](#))

[535] In this connection I would like to mention that Böhme associates lightning with something else too. That is the *quaternity*, which plays a great role in the following pictures. When caught and assuaged in the four “Qualities” or four “Spirits,”¹⁷ “the Flash, or the Light, subsists in the *Midst or Centre as a Heart*.”¹⁸ Now when that Light, which stands in the Midst or Centre, shines into the four Spirits, then the Power of the four Spirits rises up in the Light, and they become Living, and love the Light; that is, they take it into them, and are *impregnated* with it.”¹⁷ “The Flash, or *Stock*,²⁰ or Pith, or the Heart, which is generated in the Powers, remains standing in the Midst or Centre, and that is the *Son*. ... And this is the true *Holy Ghost*, whom we Christians honour and adore for the third Person in the Deity.”²¹ Elsewhere Böhme says: “When the Fire-flash reaches the dark substance,²² it is a great terror, from which the Cold Fire draws back in affright as if it would perish, and becomes impotent, and sinks into itself, ... But now the Flash ... makes in its Rising a Cross²³ with the Comprehension of all Properties; for here arises the Spirit in the Essence, and it stands thus: . If thou hast here understanding, thou needest ask no more; it is Eternity and Time, God in Love and Anger, also Heaven and Hell. The lower part, which is thus marked , is the first Principle, and is the Eternal Nature in the Anger, viz. the Kingdom of Darkness dwelling in itself; and the upper Part, with this figure , is the Salniter;²⁴ the Upper Cross above the Circle is the Kingdom of Glory, which in the Flagrat of Joy in the Will of the free Lubet²⁵ proceeds from the Fire in the Lustre of the Light into the power of the Liberty; and this spiritual Water²⁶ ... is the Corporality of the free Lubet ... wherein the Lustre from the Fire and Light makes a Tincture, viz. a budding and growing and a Manifestation of Colours from the Fire and Light.”²⁷

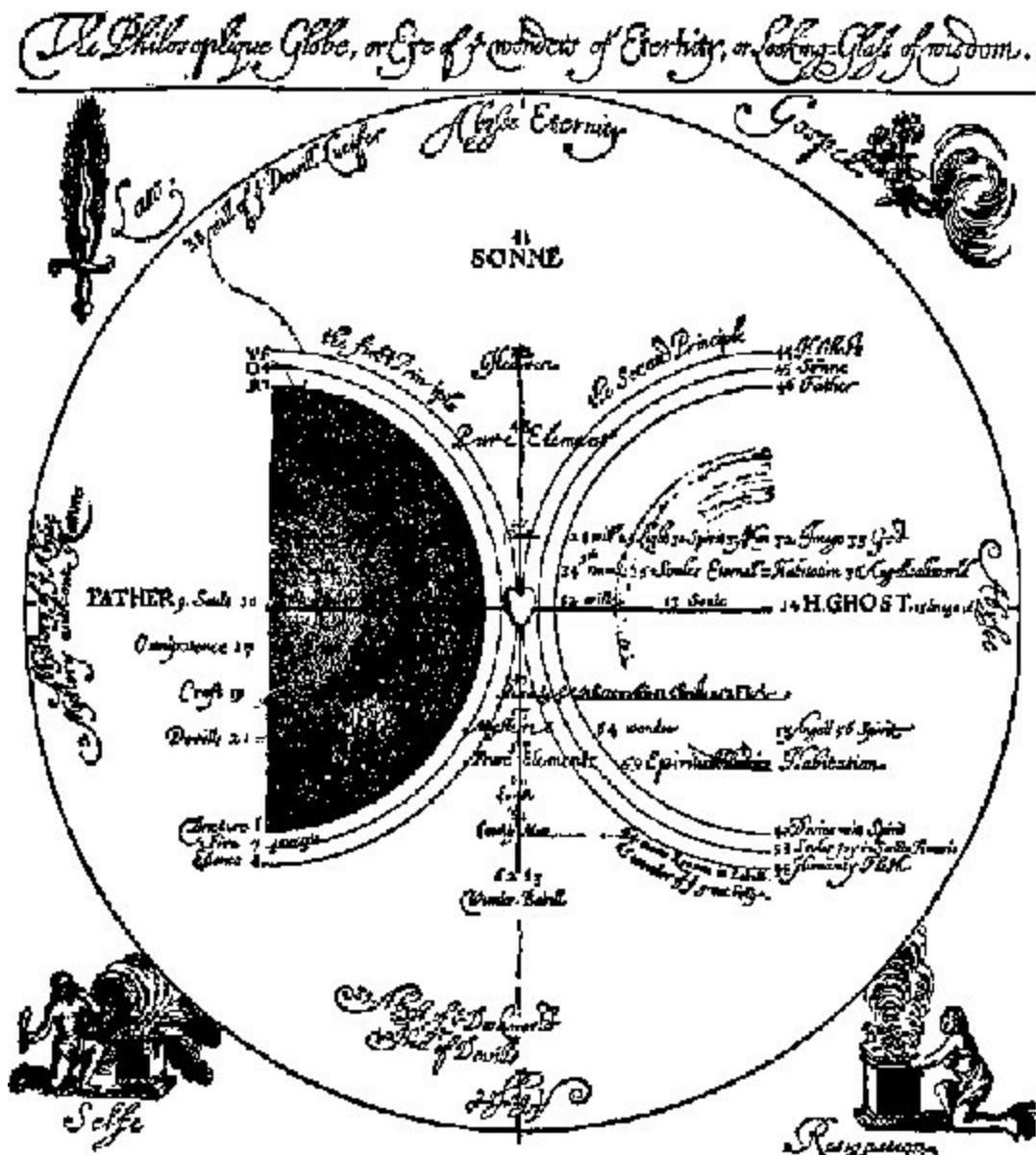











Fig. 1. Mandala from Jakob Böhme's *XL Questions concerning the Soule* (1620)

The picture is taken from the English edition of 1647. The quaternity consists of *Father*, *H. Ghost*, *Sonne*, and *Earth* or *Earthly Man*. It is characteristic that the two semicircles are turned back to back instead of closing.

[536] I have purposely dwelt at some length on Böhme's disquisition on the lightning, because it throws a good deal of light on the psychology of our pictures. However, it anticipates some things that will only become clear

when we examine the pictures themselves. I must therefore ask the reader to bear Böhme's views in mind in the following commentary. I have put the most important points in italics. It is clear from the quotations what the lightning meant to Böhme and what sort of a role it plays in the present case. The last quotation in particular deserves special attention, as it anticipates various key motifs in the subsequent pictures done by my patient, namely the cross, the quaternity, the divided mandala, the lower half of which is virtually equivalent to hell and the upper half to the lighter realm of the "Salniter." For Böhme the lower half signifies the "everlasting darkness" that "extends into the fire,"²⁸ while the upper, "salnitrous" half corresponds to the third Principle, the "visible, elemental world, which is an emanation of the first and other Principle."²⁹ The cross, in turn, corresponds to the second Principle, the "Kingdom of Glory," which is revealed through "magic fire," the lightning, which he calls a "Revelation of Divine Motion."³⁰ The "lustre of the fire" comes from the "unity of God" and reveals his will. The mandala therefore represents the "Kingdom of Nature," which "in itself is the great everlasting Darkness." The "Kingdom of God," on the other hand, or the "Glory" (i.e., the Cross), is the Light of which John 1 : 5 speaks: "And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." The Life that "breaks itself off from the eternal Light and enters into the Object, as into the selfhood of Properties," is "only fantastic and foolish, even such as the Devils were, and the souls of the damned are; as can be seen ... from the fourth number."³¹ For the "fire of Nature" is called by Böhme the *fourth form*, and he understands it as a "spiritual Life-Fire, that exists from a continual conjunction ... of Hardness [i.e., the solidified, dry Salniter] and Motion [the Divine Will]."³² Quite in keeping with John 1 : 5 the quaternity of the lightning, the Cross, pertains to the Kingdom of Glory, whereas Nature, the visible world and the dark abyss remain untouched by the fourfold light and abide in darkness.

[537] For the sake of completeness I should mention that  is the sign for *cinnabar*, the most important quicksilver ore (HgS).³³ The coincidence of the two symbols can hardly be accidental in view of the significance which Böhme attributes to Mercurius. Ruland finds it rather hard to define exactly what was meant by cinnabar.³⁴ The only certain thing is that there was a *κιννάβαρις τῶν φιλοσόφων* (cinnabar of the philosophers) in Greek

alchemy, and that it stood for the *rubedo* stage of the transforming substance. Thus Zosimos says: “(After the preceding process) you will find the gold coloured fiery red like blood. That is the cinnabar of the philosophers and the copper man (χαλκάνθρωπος, turned to gold.”³⁵ Cinnabar was also supposed to be identical with the uroboros dragon.³⁶ Even in Pliny, cinnabar is called *sanguis draconis*, ‘dragon’s blood,’ a term that lasted all through the Middle Ages.³⁷ On account of its redness it was often identified with the philosophical sulphur. A special difficulty is the fact that the wine-red cinnabar crystals were classed with the *άνθρακες*, *carbons*, to which belong all reddish and red-tinted stones like *rubies*, *garnets*, *amethysts*, etc. They all shine like glowing coals.³⁸ The *λιθάνθρακες* (anthracites), on the other hand, were regarded as “quenched” coals. These associations explain the similarity of the alchemical signs for gold, antimony, and garnet. Gold , after mercury the most important “philosophical” substance, shares its sign with what is known as “regulus” or “button” antimony,³⁹ and during the two decades prior to the writing of *Signatura return* (1622), from which our quotation comes, this had enjoyed particular fame as the new transformative substance⁴⁰ and panacea.⁴¹ Basilus Valentinus’ *Triumphal Car of Antimony* was published about the first decade of the seventeenth century (the first edition possibly in 1611) and *soon found the widest acclaim*.⁴² The sign for garnet is , and  means salt. A cross with a little circle in it  means copper (from the “Cyprian,” Venus ). Medicinal tartaric acid is denoted by , and hydrogen potassium tartrate (tartar) has the signs  .⁴³ Tartar settles on the bottom of the vessel, which in the language of the alchemists means: in the underworld, Tartarus.⁴⁴

[538] I will not attempt here any interpretation of Böhme’s symbols, but will only point out that in our picture the lightning, striking into the darkness and “hardness,” has blasted a *rotundum* out of the dark *massa confusa* and kindled a light in it. There can be no doubt that the dark stone means the blackness, i.e., the unconscious, just as the sea and sky and the upper half of the woman’s figure indicate the sphere of consciousness. We may safely assume that Böhme’s symbol refers to a similar situation. The lightning has released the spherical form from the rock and so caused a kind of

liberation. But, just as the magician has been replaced by the lightning, so the patient has been replaced by the sphere. The unconscious has thus presented her with ideas which show that she had gone on thinking without the aid of consciousness and that this radically altered the initial situation. It was again her inability to draw that led to this result. Before finding this solution, she had made two attempts to portray the act of liberation with human figures, but with no success. She had overlooked the fact that the initial situation, her imprisonment in the rock, was already irrational and symbolic and therefore could not be solved in a rational way. It had to be done by an equally irrational process. That was why I advised her, should she fail in her attempt to draw human figures, to use some kind of hieroglyph. It then suddenly struck her that the sphere was a suitable symbol for the individual human being. That it was a chance idea (*Einfall*) is proved by the fact that it was not her conscious mind that thought up this typification, but the unconscious, for an *Einfall* “falls in” quite of its own accord. It should be noted that she represents only herself as a sphere, not me. I am represented only by the lightning, purely functionally, so that for her I am simply the “precipitating” cause. As a magician I appeared to her in the apt role of Hermes Kyllenios, of whom the *Odyssey* says: “Meanwhile Cyllenian Hermes was gathering in the souls of the suitors, armed with the splendid golden wand that he can use at will to cast a spell on our eyes or wake us from the soundest sleep.”⁴⁵ Hermes is the *ψυχῶν αἴτιος*, ‘originator of souls.’ He is also the *ἡγήτωρ ονειρώων*, ‘guide of dreams.’⁴⁶ For the following pictures it is of special importance that Hermes has the number 4 attributed to him. Martianus Capella says: “The number four is assigned to the Cyllenian, for he alone is held to be a fourfold god.”⁴⁷

[539] The form the picture had taken was not unreservedly welcome to the patient’s conscious mind. Luckily, however, while painting it Miss X had discovered that two factors were involved. These, in her own words, were *reason* and the *eyes*. Reason always wanted to make the picture as *it* thought it ought to be; but the eyes held fast to their vision and finally forced the picture to come out as it actually did and not in accordance with rationalistic expectations. Her reason, she said, had really intended a daylight scene, with the sunshine melting the sphere free, but the eyes favoured a nocturne with “shattering, dangerous lightning.” This realization helped her to acknowledge the actual result of her artistic

efforts and to admit that it was in fact an objective and impersonal process and not a personal relationship.

[540] For anyone with a personalistic view of psychic events, such as a Freudian, it will not be easy to see in this anything more than an elaborate repression. But if there was any repression here we certainly cannot make, the conscious mind responsible for it, because the conscious mind would undoubtedly have preferred a personal imbroglio as being far more interesting. The repression must have been manoeuvred by the unconscious from the start. One should consider what this means: instinct, the most original force of the unconscious, is suppressed or turned back on itself by an arrangement stemming from this same unconscious! It would be idle indeed to talk of “repression” here, since we know that the unconscious goes straight for its goal and that this does not consist solely in pairing two animals but in allowing an individual to become whole. For this purpose wholeness—represented by the sphere—is emphasized as the essence of personality, while I am reduced to the fraction of a second, the duration of a lightning flash.

[541] The patient’s association to lightning was that it might stand for *intuition*, a conjecture that is not far off the mark, since intuitions often come “like a flash.” Moreover, there are good grounds for thinking that Miss X was a *sensation* type. She herself thought she was one. The “inferior” function would then be intuition. As such, it would have the significance of a releasing or “redeeming” function. We know from experience that the inferior function always compensates, complements, and balances the “superior” function.⁴⁸ My psychic peculiarity would make me a suitable projection carrier in this respect. The inferior function is the one of which least conscious use is made. This is the reason for its undifferentiated quality, but also for its freshness and vitality. It is not at the disposal of the conscious mind, and even after long use it never loses its autonomy and spontaneity, or only to a very limited degree. Its role is therefore mostly that of a *deus ex machina*. It depends not on the ego but on the *self*. Hence it hits consciousness unexpectedly, like lightning, and occasionally with devastating consequences. It thrusts the ego aside and makes room for a supraordinate factor, the totality of a person, which consists of conscious and unconscious and consequently extends far beyond the ego. This self was always present,⁴⁹ but sleeping, like

Nietzsche's "image in the stone."⁵⁰ It is, in fact, the secret of the stone, of the *lapis philosophorum*, in so far as this is the *prima materia*. In the stone sleeps the spirit *Mercurius*, the "circle of the moon," the "round and square,"⁵¹ the homunculus, Tom Thumb and Anthropos at once,⁵² whom the alchemists also symbolized as their famed *lapis philosophorum*.⁵³

[542] All these ideas and inferences were naturally unknown to my patient, and they were known to me at the time only in so far as I was able to recognize the circle as a *mardala*,⁵⁴ the psychological expression of the totality of the self. Under these circumstances there could be no question of my having unintentionally infected her with alchemical ideas. The pictures are, in all essentials, genuine creations of the unconscious; their inessential aspects (landscape motifs) are derived from conscious contents.

[543] Although the sphere with its glowing red centre and the golden flash of lightning play the chief part, it should not be overlooked that there are several other eggs or spheres as well. If the sphere signifies the self of the patient, we must apply this interpretation to the other spheres, too. They must therefore represent other people who, in all probability, were her intimates. In both the pictures two other spheres are clearly indicated. So I must mention that Miss X had two women friends who shared her intellectual interests and were joined to her in a lifelong friendship. All three of them, as if bound together by fate, are rooted in the same "earth," i.e., in the collective unconscious, which is one and the same for all. It is probably for this reason that the second picture has the decidedly *nocturnal* character intended by the unconscious and asserted against the wishes of the conscious mind. It should also be mentioned that the pointed pyramids of the first picture reappear in the second, where their points are actually gilded by the lightning and strongly emphasized. I would interpret them as unconscious contents "pushing up" into the light of consciousness, as seems to be the case with many contents of the collective unconscious.⁵⁵ In contrast to the first picture, the second is painted in more vivid colours, red and gold. Gold expresses sunlight, value, divinity even. It is therefore a favourite synonym for the *lapis*, being the *aurum philosophicum* or *aurum potabile* or *aurum vitreum*.⁵⁶

[544] As already pointed out, I was not at that time in a position to reveal anything of these ideas to Miss X, for the simple reason that I myself knew nothing of them. I feel compelled to mention this circumstance yet again,

because the third picture, which now follows, brings a motif that points unmistakably to alchemy and actually gave me the definitive incentive to make a thorough study of the works of the old adepts.

Picture 3

[545] The third picture, done as spontaneously as the first two, is distinguished most of all by its light colours. Free-floating in space, among clouds, is a dark blue sphere with a wine-red border. Round the middle runs a wavy silver band, which keeps the sphere balanced by “equal and opposite forces,” as the patient explained. To the right, above the sphere, floats a snake with golden rings, its head pointing at the sphere—an obvious development of the golden lightning in Picture 2. But she drew the snake in afterwards, on account of certain “reflections.” The whole is “a planet in the making.” In the middle of the silver band is the number 12. The band was thought of as being in rapid vibratory motion; hence the wave motif. It is like a vibrating belt that keeps the sphere afloat. Miss X compared it to the ring of Saturn. But unlike this, which is composed of disintegrated satellites, her ring was the origin of future moons such as Jupiter possesses. The black lines in the silver band she called “lines of force”; they were meant to indicate that it was in motion. As if asking a question, I made the remark: “Then it is the vibrations of the band that keep the sphere floating?” “Naturally,” she said, “they are the wings of Mercury, the messenger of the gods. The silver is *quicksilver!*” She went on at once: “Mercury, that is Hermes, is the Nous, the mind or reason, and that is the animus, who is here outside instead of inside. He is like a veil that hides the true personality.”²⁷ We shall leave this latter remark alone for the moment and turn first to the wider context, which, unlike that of the two previous pictures, is especially rich.

[546] While Miss X was painting this picture, she felt that two earlier dreams were mingling with her vision. They were the two “big” dreams of her life. She knew of the attribute “big” from my stories of the dream life of African primitives I had visited. It has become a kind of “colloquial term” for characterizing archetypal dreams, which as we know have a peculiar numinosity. It was used in this sense by the dreamer. Several years previously, she had undergone a major operation. Under narcosis she had the following dream-vision: *She saw a grey globe of the world. A*

silver band rotated about the equator and, according to the frequency of its vibrations, formed alternate zones of condensation and evaporation. In the zones of condensation appeared the numbers 1 to 3, but they had the tendency to increase up to 12. These numbers signified “nodal points” or “great personalities” who played a part in man’s historical development. “The number 12 meant the most important nodal point or great man (still to come), because it denotes the climax or turning point of the process of development.” (These are her own words.)

[547] The other dream that intervened had occurred a year before the first one: *She saw a golden snake in the sky. It demanded the sacrifice, from among a great crowd of people, of a young man, who obeyed this demand with an expression of sorrow. The dream was repeated a little later, but this time the snake picked on the dreamer herself. The assembled people regarded her compassionately, but she took her fate “proudly” on herself.*

[548] She was, as she told me, born immediately after midnight, so soon afterwards, indeed, that there was some doubt as to whether she came into the world on the 28th or on the 29th. Her father used to tease her by saying that she was obviously born before her time, since she came into the world just at the beginning of a new day, but “only just,” so that one could almost believe she was born “at the twelfth hour.” The number 12, as she said, meant for her the culminating point of her life, which she had only now reached. That is, she felt the “liberation” as the climax of her life. It is indeed an hour of birth—not of the dreamer but of the self. This distinction must be borne in mind.

[549] The context to Picture 3 here established needs a little commentary. First, it must be emphasized that the patient felt the moment of painting this picture as the “climax” of her life and also described it as such. Second, two “big” dreams have amalgamated in the picture, which heightens its significance still more. The sphere blasted from the rock in Picture 2 has now, in the brighter atmosphere, floated up to heaven. The nocturnal darkness of the earth has vanished. The increase of light indicates conscious realization: the liberation has become a fact that is integrated into consciousness. The patient has understood that the floating sphere symbolizes the “true personality.” At present, however, it is not quite clear how she understands the relation of the ego to the “true personality.” The term chosen by her coincides in a remarkable way with

the Chinese *chen-yen*, the “true” or “complete” man, who has the closest affinity with the *homo quadratus*⁵⁸ of alchemy.⁵⁹ As we pointed out in the analysis of Picture 2, the *rotundum* of alchemy is identical with Mercurius, the “round and square.”⁶⁰ In Picture 3 the connection is shown concretely through the mediating idea of the wings of Mercury, who, it is evident, has entered the picture in his own right and not because of any non-existent knowledge of Böhme’s writings.⁶¹

[550] For the alchemists the process of individuation represented by the *opus* was an analogy of the creation of the world, and the *opus* itself an analogy of God’s work of creation. Man was seen as a microcosm, a complete equivalent of the world in miniature. In our picture, we see what it is in man that corresponds to the cosmos, and what kind of evolutionary process is compared with the creation of the world and the heavenly bodies: it is the *birth of the self*, the latter appearing as a microcosm.⁶² It is not the empirical man that forms the “correspondentia” to the world, as the medievalists thought, but rather the indescribable totality of the psychic or spiritual man, who cannot be described because he is compounded of consciousness as well as of the indeterminable extent of the unconscious.⁶³ The term microcosm proves the existence of a common intuition (also present in my patient) that the “total” man is as big as the world, like an Anthropos. The cosmic analogy had already appeared in the much earlier dream under narcosis, which likewise contained the problem of personality: the nodes of the vibrations were great personalities of historical importance. As early as 1916, I had observed a similar individuation process, illustrated by pictures, in another woman patient. In her case too there was a world creation, depicted as follows (see [Fig. 2](#)):

[551] To the left, from an unknown source, three drops fall, dissolving into four lines,⁶⁴ or two pairs of lines. These lines move and form four separate paths, which then unite periodically in a nodal point and thus build a system of vibrations. The nodes are “great personalities and founders of religions,” as my erstwhile patient told me. It is obviously the same conception as in our case, and we can call it archetypal in so far as there exist universal ideas of world periods, critical transitions, gods and half gods who personify the aeons. The unconscious naturally does not produce its images from conscious reflections, but from the worldwide propensity of the human system to form such conceptions as the world periods of the

Parsees, the yugas and avatars of Hinduism, and the Platonic months of astrology with their bull and ram deities and the “great” Fish of the Christian aeon.⁶⁵

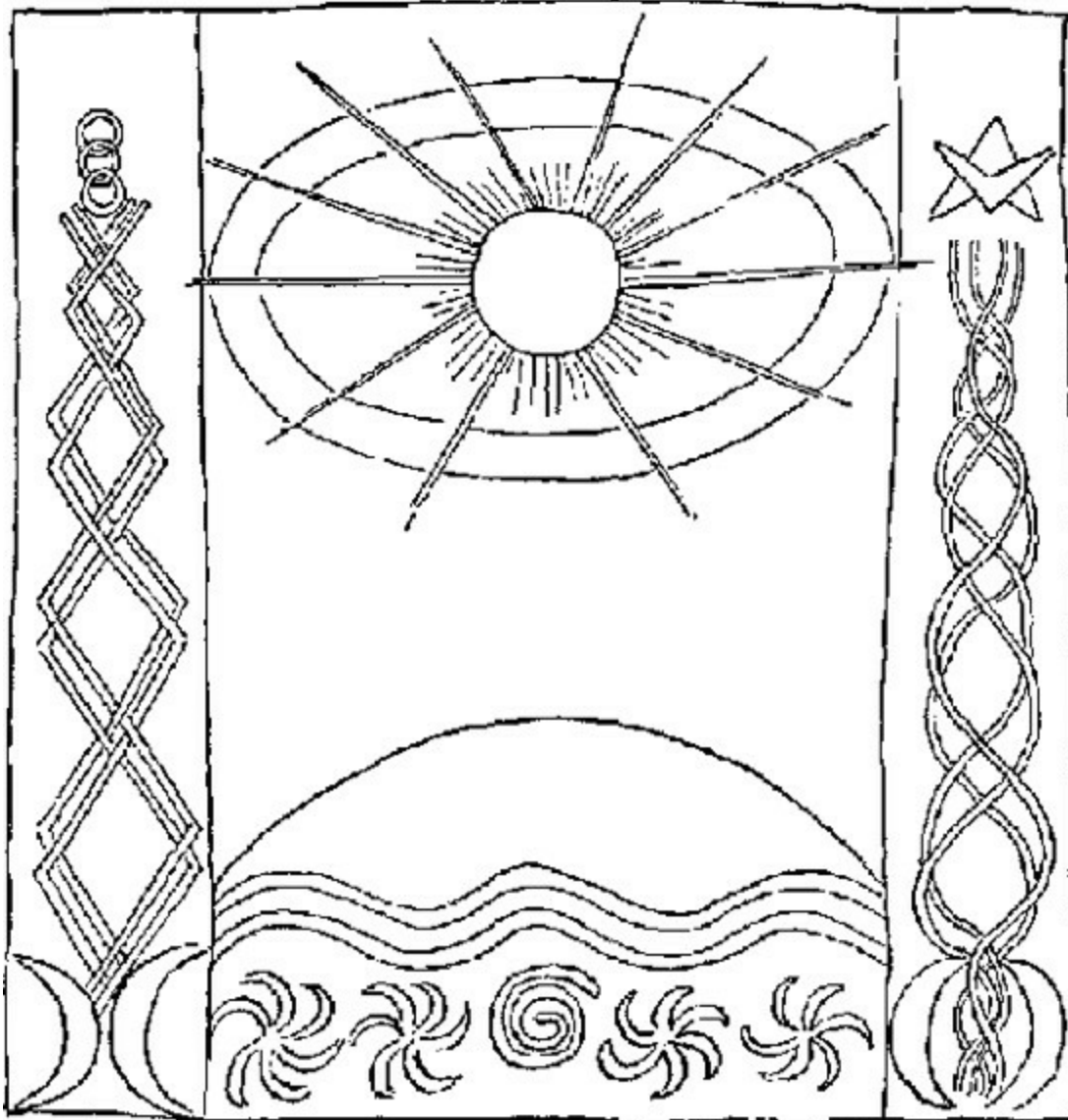


Fig. 2. Sketch of a picture from the year 1916

At the top, the sun, surrounded by a rainbow-coloured halo divided into twelve parts, like the zodiac. To the left, the descending, to the right, the ascending, transformation process.

[552] That the nodes in our patient's picture signify or contain numbers is a bit of unconscious number mysticism that is not always easy to unravel. So far as I can see, there are two stages in this arithmetical phenomenology: the first, earlier stage goes up to 3, the second, later stage up to 12. Two numbers, 3 and 12, are expressly mentioned. Twelve is four times three. I

think we have here stumbled again on the axiom of Maria, that peculiar dilemma of three and four,⁶⁶ which I have discussed many times before because it plays such a great role in alchemy.⁶⁷ I would hazard that we have to do here with a *tetrameria* (as in Greek alchemy), a transformation process divided into four stages⁶⁸ of three parts each, analogous to the twelve transformations of the zodiac and its division into four. As not infrequently happens, the number 12 would then have a not merely individual significance (as the patient's birth number, for instance), but a time-conditioned one too, since the present aeon of the Fishes is drawing to its end and is at the same time the twelfth house of the zodiac. One is reminded of similar Gnostic ideas, such as those in the gnosis of Justin: The "Father" (Elohim) begets with Edem, who was half woman and half snake, twelve "fatherly" angels, and Edem gives birth besides these to twelve "motherly" angels, who—in psychological parlance—represent the shadows of the twelve "fatherly" ones. The "motherly" angels divide themselves into four categories (μέρη) of three each, corresponding to the four rivers of Paradise. These angels dance round in a circle (ἐν χορῶ κυκλικῶ).⁶⁹ It is legitimate to bring these seemingly remote associations into hypothetical relationship, because they all spring from a common root, i.e., the collective unconscious.

[553] In our picture Mercurius forms a world-encircling band, usually represented by a snake.⁷⁰ Mercurius is a serpent or dragon in alchemy ("serpens mercurialis"). Oddly enough, this serpent is some distance away from the sphere and is aiming down at it, as if to strike. The sphere, we are told, is kept afloat by equal and opposite forces, represented by the quicksilver or somehow connected with it. According to the old view, Mercurius is duplex, i.e., he is himself an antithesis.⁷¹ Mercurius or Hermes is a magician and god of magicians. As Hermes Trismegistus he is the patriarch of alchemy. His magician's wand, the caduceus, is entwined by two snakes. The same attribute distinguishes Asklepios, the god of physicians.⁷² The archetype of these ideas was projected on to me by the patient before ever the analysis had begun.

[554] The primordial image underlying the sphere girdled with quicksilver is probably that of the world egg encoiled by a snake.⁷³ But in our case the snake symbol of Mercurius is replaced by a sort of pseudo-physicistic notion of a field of vibrating molecules of quicksilver. This looks like an

intellectual disguising of the true situation, that the self, or its symbol, is entwined by the mercurial serpent. As the patient remarked more or less correctly, the “true personality” is veiled by it. This, presumably, would then be something like an Eve in the coils of the paradisaal serpent. In order to avoid giving this appearance, Mercurius has obligingly split into his two forms, according to the old-established pattern: the *mercurius crudus* or *vulgi* (crude or ordinary quicksilver), and the *Mercurius Philosophorum* (the *spiritus mercurialis* or the spirit Mercurius, Hermes-Nous), who hovers in the sky as the golden lightning-snake or Nous Serpent, at present inactive. In the vibrations of the quicksilver band we may discern a certain tremulous excitement, just as the suspension expresses tense expectation: “Hover and haver suspended in pain!” For the alchemists quicksilver meant the concrete, material manifestation of the spirit Mercurius, as the above-mentioned mandala in the scholia to the *Tractatus aureus* shows: the central point is Mercurius, and the square is Mercurius divided into the four elements. He is the *anima mundi*, the innermost point and at the same time the encompasser of the world, like the atman in the Upanishads. And just as quicksilver is a materialization of Mercurius, so the gold is a materialization of the sun in the earth.⁷⁴

[555] A circumstance that never ceases to astonish one is this: that at all times and in all places alchemy brought its conception of the *lapis* or its *minera* (raw material) together with the idea of the *homo altus* or *maximus*, that is, with the Anthropos.⁷⁵ Equally, one must stand amazed at the fact that here too the conception of the dark round stone blasted out of the rock should represent such an abstract idea as the psychic totality of man. The earth and in particular the heavy cold stone is the epitome of materiality, and so is the metallic quicksilver which, the patient thought, meant the animus (mind, *nous*). We would expect pneumatic symbols for the idea of the self and the animus, images of air, breath, wind. The ancient formula *λίθος οὐ λίθος* (the stone that is no stone) expresses this dilemma: we are dealing with a *complexio oppositorum*, with something like the nature of light, which under some conditions behaves like particles and under others like waves, and is obviously in its essence both at once. Something of this kind must be conjectured with regard to these paradoxical and hardly explicable statements of the unconscious. They are not inventions of any conscious mind, but are spontaneous manifestations of a psyche not controlled by consciousness and obviously possessing all the freedom it

wants to express views that take no account of our conscious intentions. The duplicity of Mercurius, his simultaneously metallic and pneumatic nature, is a parallel to the symbolization of an extremely spiritual idea like the Anthropos by a corporeal, indeed metallic, substance (gold). One can only conclude that the unconscious tends to regard spirit and matter not merely as equivalent but as actually identical, and this in flagrant contrast to the intellectual one-sidedness of consciousness, which would sometimes like to spiritualize matter and at other times to materialize spirit. That the *lapis*, or in our case the floating sphere, has a double meaning is clear from the circumstance that it is characterized by two symbolical colours: red means blood and affectivity, the physiological reaction that joins spirit to body, and blue means the spiritual process (mind or *nous*). This duality reminds one of the alchemical duality *corpus* and *spiritus*, joined together by a third, the *anima* as the *ligamentum corporis et spiritus*. For Böhme a “high deep blue” mixed with green signifies “Liberty,” that is, the inner “Kingdom of Glory” of the reborn soul. Red leads to the region of fire and the “abyss of darkness,” which forms the periphery of Böhme’s mandala (see [Fig. 1](#)).

Picture 4

[556] Picture 4, which now follows, shows a significant change: the sphere has divided into an outer membrane and an inner nucleus. The outer membrane is flesh coloured, and the originally rather nebulous red nucleus in Picture 2 now has a differentiated internal structure of a decidedly ternary character. The “lines of force” that originally belonged to the band of quicksilver now run through the whole nuclear body, indicating that the excitation is no longer external only but has seized the innermost core. “An enormous inner activity now began,” the patient told me. The nucleus with its ternary structure is presumably the female organ, stylized to look like a plant, in the act of fecundation: the spermatozoon is penetrating the nuclear membrane. Its role is played by the mercurial serpent: the snake is black, dark, chthonic, a subterranean and ithyphallic Hermes; but it has the golden wings of Mercury and consequently possesses his pneumatic nature. The alchemists accordingly represented their *Mercurius duplex* as the winged and wingless dragon, calling the former feminine and the latter masculine.

[557] The serpent in our picture represents not so much the spermatozoon but, more accurately, the phallus. Leone Ebreo,⁷⁶ in his *Dialoghi d'amore*, calls the planet Mercury the *membrum virile* of heaven, that is, of the macrocosm conceived as the *homo maximus*.⁷⁷ The spermatozoon seems, rather, to correspond to the golden substance which the snake is injecting into the invaginated ectoderm of the nucleus.⁷⁸ The two silver petals (?) probably represent the receptive vessel, the moon-bowl in which the sun's seed (gold) is destined to rest.⁷⁹ Underneath the flower is a small violet circle inside the ovary, indicating by its colour that it is a "united double nature," spirit and body (blue and red).⁸⁰ The snake has a pale yellow halo, which is meant to express its numinosity.

[558] Since the snake evolved out of the flash of lightning or is a modulated form of it, I would like to instance a parallel where the lightning has the same illuminating, vivifying, fertilizing, transforming and healing function that in our case falls to the snake (cf. [Fig. 3](#)). Two phases are represented: first, a black sphere, signifying a state of profound depression; and second, the lightning that strikes into this sphere. Ordinary speech makes use of the same imagery: something "strikes home" in a "flash of revelation." The only difference is that generally the image comes first, and only afterwards the realization which enables the patient to say: "This has struck home."

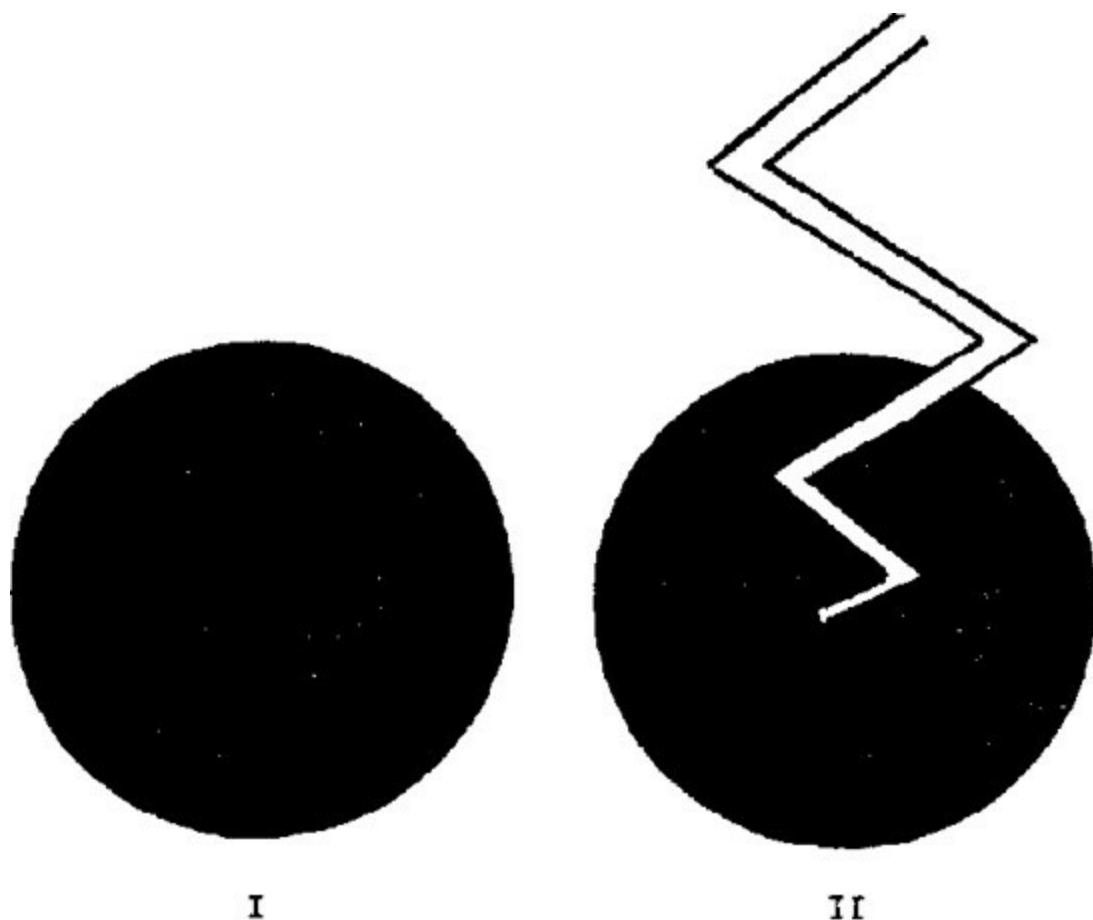


Fig. 3. Sketch of a drawing by a young woman patient with psychogenic depression from the beginning of the treatment

I. State of black hopelessness / II. Beginning of the therapeutic effect

In an earlier picture the sphere lay on the bottom of the sea. As a series of pictures shows, it arose in the first place because a black snake had swallowed the sun. There then followed an eight-rayed, completely black mandala with a wreath of eight silver stars. In the centre was a black homunculus. Next the black sphere developed a red centre, from which red rays, or streams of blood, ran out into tentacle-like extremities. The whole thing looked rather like a crab or an octopus. As the later pictures showed, the patient herself was shut up in the sphere.

[559] As to the context of Picture 4, Miss X emphasized that what disturbed her most was the band of quicksilver in Picture 3. She felt the silvery substance ought to be “inside,” the black lines of force remaining outside to form a black snake. This would now encircle the sphere.⁸¹ She felt the snake at first as a “terrible danger,” as something threatening the “integrity

of the sphere.” At the point where the snake penetrates the nuclear membrane, fire breaks out (emotion). Her conscious mind interpreted this conflagration as a defensive reaction on the part of the sphere, and accordingly she tried to depict the attack as having been repulsed. But this attempt failed to satisfy the “eyes,” though she showed me a pencil sketch of it. She was obviously in a dilemma: she could not accept the snake, because its sexual significance was only too clear to her without any assistance from me. I merely remarked to her: “This is a well-known process⁸² which you can safely accept,” and showed her from my collection a similar picture, done by a man, of a floating sphere being penetrated *from below* by a black phallus-like object. Later she said: “I suddenly understood the whole process in a more impersonal way.” It was the realization of a law of life to which sex is subordinated. “The ego was not the centre, but, following a universal law, I circled round a sun.” Thereupon she was able to accept the snake “as a necessary part of the process of growth” and finish the picture quickly and satisfactorily. Only one thing continued to give difficulty: she had to put the snake, she said, “One hundred per cent at the top, in the middle, in order to satisfy the eyes.” Evidently the unconscious would only be satisfied with the most important position at the top and in the middle—in direct contrast to the picture I had previously shown her. This, as I said, was done by a man and showed the menacing black symbol entering the mandala from below. For a woman, the typical danger emanating from the unconscious comes *from above*, from the “spiritual” sphere personified by the animus, whereas for a man it comes from the chthonic realm of the “world and woman,” i.e., the anima projected on to the world.

[560] Once again we must recall similar ideas found in Justin’s gnosis: the third of the fatherly angels is Baruch. He is also the tree of life in paradise. His counterpart on the motherly side is Naas, the serpent, who is the tree of knowledge of good and evil.⁸³ When Elohim left Edem, because, as the second member, he had retreated to the first member of the divine triad (which consisted of the “Good,” the “Father,” and Edem), Edem pursued the pneuma of the Father, which he had left behind in man, and caused it to be tormented by Naas (ἵνα πάσαις κολάσει κολάζη τό ὄν πνευμα του Ἐλωείμ τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις), Naas defiled Eve and also used Adam as a catamite. Edem, however, is the soul; Elohim is spirit. “The soul is against the spirit, and the spirit against the soul” (κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς τετάκται).⁸⁴ This

idea sheds light on the polarity of red and blue in our mandala, and also on the attack by the snake, who represents knowledge. That is why we fear knowledge of the truth, in this case, of the shadow. Therefore Baruch sent to mankind Jesus, that they might be led back to the “Good.” But the “Good One is Priapus.”⁸⁵ Elohim is the swan, Edem is Leda; he the gold, she Danae. Nor should we forget that the god of revelation has from of old the form of a snake—e.g., the *agathodaimon*. Edem too, as a snake-maiden, has a dual nature, “two-minded, two-bodied” (δίγυνωμος, δίσωμος), and in medieval alchemy her figure became the symbol of the androgynous Mercurius.⁸⁶

[561] Let us remember that in Picture 3 *Mercurius vulgi*, ordinary quicksilver, encircles the sphere. This means that the mysterious sphere is enveloped or veiled by a “vulgar” or crude understanding. The patient herself opined that “the animus veils the true personality.” We shall hardly be wrong in assuming that a banal, everyday view of the world, allegedly biological, has here got hold of the sexual symbol and concretized it after the approved pattern. A pardonable error! Another, more correct view is so much more subtle that one naturally prefers to fall back on something well-known and ready to hand, thus gratifying one’s own “rational” expectations and earning the applause of one’s contemporaries—only to discover that one has got hopelessly stuck and has arrived back at the point from which one set forth on the great adventure. It is clear what is meant by the ithyphallic serpent: from above comes all that is aerial, intellectual, spiritual, and from below all that is passionate, corporeal, and dark. The snake, contrary to expectation, turns out to be a pneumatic symbol,⁸⁷ a *Mercurius spiritualis*—a realization which the patient herself formulated by saying that the ego, despite its capricious manipulation of sexuality, is subject to a universal law. Sex in this case is therefore no problem at all, as it has been subjected to a higher transformation process and is contained in it; not repressed, only without an object.

[562] Miss X subsequently told me that she felt Picture 4 was the most difficult, as if it denoted the turning point of the whole process. In my view she may not have been wrong in this, because the clearly felt, ruthless setting aside of the so beloved and so important ego is no light matter. Not for nothing is this “letting go” the *sine qua non* of all forms of higher spiritual development, whether we call it meditation, contemplation, yoga,

or spiritual exercises. But, as this case shows, relinquishing the ego is not an act of the will and not a result arbitrarily produced; it is an event, an occurrence, whose inner, compelling logic can be disguised only by wilful self-deception.

[563] In this case and at this moment the ability to “let go” is of decisive importance. But since everything passes, the moment may come when the relinquished ego must be reinstated in its functions. Letting go gives the unconscious the opportunity it has been waiting for. But since it consists of opposites—day and night, bright and dark, positive and negative—and is good and evil and therefore ambivalent, the moment will infallibly come when the individual, like the exemplary Job, must hold fast so as not to be thrown catastrophically off balance—when the wave rebounds. The holding fast can be achieved only by a conscious will, i.e., by the ego. That is the great and irreplaceable significance of the ego, but one which, as we see here, is nonetheless relative. Relative, too, is the gain won by integrating the unconscious. We add to ourselves a bright and a dark, and more light means more night.⁸⁸ The urge of consciousness towards wider horizons, however, cannot be stopped; they must needs extend the scope of the personality, if they are not to shatter it.

Picture 5

[564] Picture 5, Miss X said, followed naturally from Picture 4, with no difficulty. The sphere and the snake have drawn apart. The snake is sinking downwards and seems to have lost its threateningness. But the sphere has been fecundated with a vengeance: it has not only got bigger, but blossoms in the most vivid colours.⁸⁹ The nucleus has divided into four; something like a segmentation has occurred. This is not due to any conscious reflection, such as might come naturally to a biologically educated person; the division of the process or of the central symbol into four has always existed, beginning with the four sons of Horus, or the four seraphim of Ezekiel, or the birth of the four Aeons from the Metra (uterus) impregnated by the pneuma in Barbelo-Gnosis, or the cross formed by the lightning (snake) in Böhme’s system,⁹⁰ and ending with the tetrameria of the *opus alchymicum* and its components (the four elements, qualities, stages, etc.).⁹¹ In each case the quaternity forms a unity; here it is the green circle at the centre of the four. The four are undifferentiated, and each of

them forms a vortex, apparently turning to the left. I think I am not mistaken in regarding it as probable that, in general, a leftward movement indicates movement towards the unconscious, while a rightward (clockwise) movement goes towards consciousness.⁹² The one is “sinister,” the other “right,” “rightful,” “correct.” In Tibet, the leftward-moving swastika is a sign of the Bön religion, of black magic. Stupas and chörtens must therefore be circumambulated clockwise. The leftward-spinning eddies spin into the unconscious; the rightward-spinning ones spin out of the unconscious chaos. The rightward-moving swastika in Tibet is therefore a Buddhist emblem.⁹³ (Cf. also [Fig. 4.](#))

[565] For our patient the process appeared to mean, first and foremost, a differentiation of consciousness. From the treasures of her psychological knowledge she interpreted the four as the four orienting functions of consciousness: thinking, feeling, sensation, intuition. She noticed, however, that the four were all alike, whereas the four functions are all unlike. This raised no question for her, but it did for me. What are these four if they are *not* the four functional aspects of consciousness? I doubted whether this could be a sufficient interpretation of them. They seemed to be much more than that, and that is probably the reason why they are not different but identical. They do not form four functions, different by definition, but they might well represent the *a priori* possibility for the formation of the four functions. In this picture we have the quaternity, the archetypal 4, which is capable of numerous interpretations, as history shows and as I have demonstrated elsewhere. It illustrates the coming to consciousness of an unconscious content; hence it frequently occurs in cosmogonic myths. What is the precise significance of the fact that the four eddies are apparently turning to the left, when the division of the mandala into four denotes a process of becoming conscious, is a point about which I would rather not speculate. I lack the necessary material. Blue means air or pneuma, and the leftward movement an intensification of the unconscious influence. Possibly this should be taken as a pneumatic compensation for the strongly emphasized red colour, which signifies affectivity.

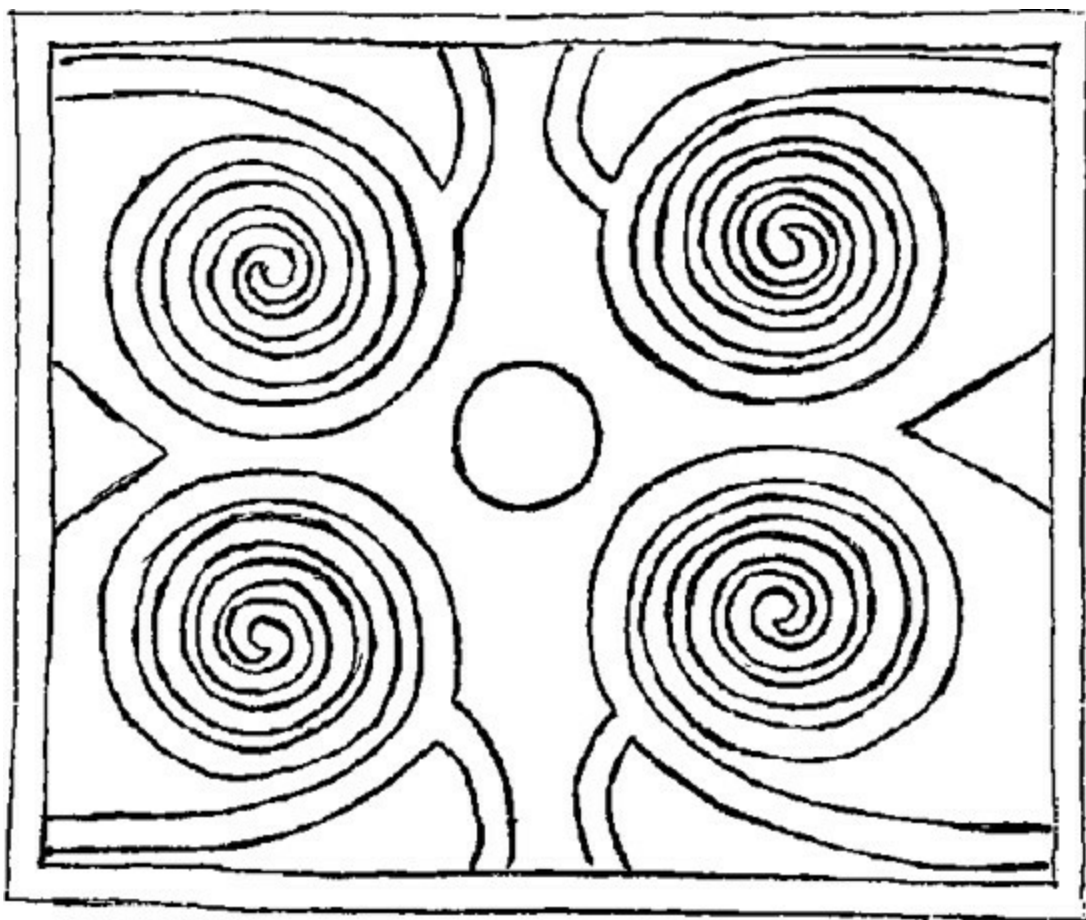


Fig. 4. Neolithic relief from Tarxien, Malta

The spirals represent vine tendrils.

[566] The mandala itself is bright red, but the four eddies have in the main a cool, greenish-blue colour, which the patient associated with “water.” This might hang together with the leftward movement, since water is a favourite symbol for the unconscious.⁹⁴ The green of the circle in the middle signifies life in the chthonic sense. It is the “*benedicta viriditas*” of the alchemists.

[567] The problematical thing about this picture is the fact that the black snake is outside the totality of the symbolic circle. In order to make the totality actual, it ought really to be inside. But if we remember the unfavourable significance of the snake, we shall understand why its assimilation into the symbol of psychic wholeness presents certain difficulties. If our conjecture about the leftward movement of the four eddies is correct, this would denote a trend towards the deep and dark side

of the spirit,⁹⁵ by means of which the black snake could be assimilated. The snake, like the devil in Christian theology, represents the shadow, and one which goes far beyond anything personal and could therefore best be compared with a principle, such as the principle of evil.⁹⁶ It is the colossal shadow thrown by man, of which our age had to have such a devastating experience. It is no easy matter to fit this shadow into our cosmos. The view that we can simply turn our back on evil and in this way eschew it belongs to the long list of antiquated naïveties. This is sheer ostrich policy and does not affect the reality of evil in the slightest. Evil is the necessary opposite of good, without which there would be no good either. It is impossible even to think evil out of existence. Hence the fact that the black snake remains outside expresses the critical position of evil in our traditional view of the world.⁹⁷

[568] The background of the picture is pale, the colour of parchment. I mention this fact in particular, as the pictures that follow show a characteristic change in this respect.

Picture 6

[569] The background of Picture 6 is a cloudy grey. The mandala itself is done in the vividest colours, bright red, green, and blue. Only where the red outer membrane enters the blue-green nucleus does the red deepen to blood colour and the pale blue to a dark ultramarine. The wings of Mercury, missing in the previous picture, reappear here at the neck of the blood-red pistons (as previously on the neck of the black snake in Picture 4). But the most striking thing is the appearance of a swastika, undoubtedly wheeling to the right. (I should add that these pictures were painted in 1928 and had no direct connection with contemporary fantasies, which at that time were still unknown to the world at large.) Because of its green colour, the swastika suggests something plantlike, but at the same time it has the wavelike character of the four eddies in the previous picture.

[570] In this mandala an attempt is made to unite the opposites red and blue, outside and inside. Simultaneously, the rightward movement aims at bringing about an ascent into the light of consciousness, presumably because the background has become noticeably darker. The black snake

has disappeared, but has begun to impart its darkness to the entire background. To compensate this, there is in the mandala an upwards movement towards the light, apparently an attempt to rescue consciousness from the darkening of the environment. The picture was associated with a dream that occurred a few days before. Miss X dreamt that *she returned to the city after a holiday in the country. To her astonishment she found a tree growing in the middle of the room where she worked. She thought: "Well, with its thick bark this tree can withstand the heat of an apartment."* Associations to the tree led to its maternal significance. The tree would explain the plant motif in the mandala, and its sudden growth represents the higher level or freeing of consciousness induced by the movement to the right. For the same reason the "philosophical" tree is a symbol of the alchemical *opus*, which as we know is an individuation process.

[571] We find similar ideas in Justin's gnosis. The angel Baruch stands for the pneuma of Elohim, and the "motherly" angel Naas for the craftiness of Edem. But both angels, as I have said, were also trees: Baruch the tree of life, Naas the tree of knowledge. Their division and polarity are in keeping with the spirit of the times (second-third centuries A.D.). But in those days, too, they knew of an individuation process, as we can see from Hippolytus.⁹⁸ Elohim, we are told, set the "prophet" Heracles the task of delivering the "Father" (the pneuma) from the power of the twelve wicked angels. This resulted in his twelve labours. Now the Heracles myth has in fact all the characteristic features of an individuation process: the journeys to the four directions,⁹⁹ four sons, submission to the feminine principle (Omphale) that symbolizes the unconscious, and the self-sacrifice and rebirth caused by Deianeira's robe.

[572] The "thick bark" of the tree suggests the motif of protection, which appears in the mandala as the "formation of skins" (see par. 576). This is expressed in the motif of the protective black bird's wings, which shield the contents of the mandala from outside influences. The piston-shaped prolongations of the peripheral red substance are phallic symbols, indicating the entry of affectivity into the pneumatic interior. They are obviously meant to activate and enrich the spirit dwelling within. This "spirit" has of course nothing to do with intellect, rather with something that we would have to call spiritual substance (pneuma) or—in modern

terms—“spiritual life.” The underlying symbolical thought is no doubt the same as the view developed in the Clementine Homilies, that πνεῦμα (spirit) and σῶμα (body) are one in God.¹⁰⁰ The mandala, though only a symbol of the self as the psychic totality, is at the same time a God-image, for the central point, circle, and quaternity are well-known symbols for the deity. The impossibility of distinguishing empirically between “self” and “God” leads, in Indian theosophy, to the identity of the personal and supra-personal Purusha-Atman. In ecclesiastical as in alchemical literature the saying is often quoted: “God is an infinite circle (or sphere) whose centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere.”¹⁰¹ This idea can be found in full development as early as Parmenides. I will cite the passage, because it alludes to the same motifs that underlie our mandala: “For the narrower rings¹⁰² were filled with unmixed Fire, and those next to them with Night, but between these rushes the portion of Flame. And in the centre of these is the goddess¹⁰³ who guides everything; for throughout she rules over cruel Birth and Mating, sending the female to mate with the male, and conversely again the male with the female.”¹⁰⁴


- [573] The learned Jesuit, Nicholas Caussin, apropos the report in Clement of Alexandria that, on certain occasions, wheels were rolled round in the Egyptian temples,¹⁰⁵ comments that Democritus of Abdera called God νοῦν ἐν πυρὶ σφαιροειδεῖ¹⁰⁶ (*mentem in igne orbiculari*, ‘mind in the spherical fire’). He goes on: “This was the view also of Parmenides, who defined God as σφάνην, ‘crown,’ a circle consisting of glowing light.¹⁰⁷ And it has been very clearly established by Iamblichus, in his book on the mysteries, that the Egyptians customarily represent God, the Lord of the world, as sitting in the lotus, a water-plant, the fruits as well as the leaves of which are round,¹⁰⁸ thereby indicating the circular motion of the mind, which everywhere returns into itself.” This is also the origin, he says, of the ritual transformations or circuits (“circuitiones”) that imitate the motion of the heavens. But the Stoics named the heavens a “round and revolving God” (*rotundum et volubilem Deum*). Caussin says it is to this that the “mystical” (*mystice* = symbolical) explanation of Psalm 12 : 8 refers: “In circuitu impii ambulant” (the ungodly wander in a circle);¹⁰⁹ they only walk round the periphery without ever reaching the centre, which is God. Here I would mention the wheel motif in mandala symbolism only in passing, as I have dealt with it in detail elsewhere.¹¹⁰

Picture 7

[574] In Picture 7 it has indeed turned to night: the entire sheet which the mandala is painted on is black. All the light is concentrated in the sphere. The colours have lost their brightness but have gained in intensity. It is especially striking that the black has penetrated as far as the centre, so that something of what we feared has already occurred: the blackness of the snake and of the sombre surroundings has been assimilated by the nucleus and, at the same time, as the picture shows, is compensated by a golden light radiating out from the centre. The rays form an equal-armed cross, to replace the swastika of the previous picture, which is here represented only by four hooks suggesting a rightwards rotation. With the attainment of absolute blackness, and particularly its presence in the centre, the upward movement and rightward rotation seem to have come to an end. On the other hand, the wings of Mercury have undergone a noticeable differentiation, which presumably means that the sphere has sufficient power to keep itself afloat and not sink down into total darkness. The golden rays forming the cross bind the four together.¹¹¹ This produces an inner bond and consolidation as a defence against destructive influences¹¹² emanating from the black substance that has penetrated to the centre. For us the cross symbol always has the connotation of *suffering*, so we are probably not wrong in assuming that the mood of this picture is one of more or less painful *suspension*—remember the wings!—over the dark abyss of inner loneliness.

[575] Earlier, I mentioned Böhme's lightning that "makes a cross," and I brought this cross into connection with the four elements. As a matter of fact, John Dee symbolizes the elements by an equal-armed cross.¹¹³ As we said, the cross with a little circle in it is the alchemical sign for copper (*cuprum*, from Kypris, Aphrodite), and the sign for Venus is ♀. Remarkably enough, ☿ is the old apothecary's sign for *spiritus Tartari* (tartaric acid), which, literally translated, means 'spirit of the underworld.'

⚔ is also the sign for red hematite (bloodstone). Hence there seems to be not only a cross that comes from above, as in Böhme's case and in our mandala, but also one that comes from below. In other words, the lightning—to keep to Böhme's image—can come from below out of the blood, from Venus or from Tartarus. Böhme's neutral "Salniter" is identical with

salt in general, and one of the signs for this is . One can hardly imagine a better sign for the arcane substance, which salt was considered to be by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century alchemists. Salt, in ecclesiastical as well as alchemical usage, is the symbol for Sapiientia and also for the distinguished or elect *personality*, as in Matthew 5 : 13: “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

- [576] The numerous wavy lines or layers in the mandala could be interpreted as representing the formation of *layers of skin*, giving protection against outside influences. They serve the same purpose as the inner consolidation. These cortices probably have something to do with the dream of the tree in the workroom, which had a “thick bark.” The formation of skins is also found in other mandalas, and it denotes a hardening or sealing off against the outside, the production of a regular rind or “hide.” It is possible that this phenomenon would account for the cortices or *putamina* (‘shards’) mentioned in the cabala.¹¹⁴ “For such is the name for that which abides outside holiness,” such as the seven fallen kings and the four Achurayim.¹¹⁵ From them come the “klippoth” or cortices. As in alchemy, these are the scoriae or slag, to which adheres the quality of plurality and of death. In our mandala the cortices are boundary lines marking off the inner unity and protecting it against the outer blackness with its disintegrating influences, personified by the snake.¹¹⁶ The same motif is expressed by the petals of the lotus and by the skins of the onion: the outer layers are withered and desiccated, but they protect the softer, inner layers. The lotus seat of the Horus-child, of the Indian divinities, and of the Buddha must be understood in this sense. Hölderlin makes use of the same image:

Fateless, like the sleeping
 Infant, breathe the heavenly ones,
 Chastely guarded
 In modest bud; their spirits
 Blossom eternally ...¹¹⁷

- [577] In Christian metaphor, Mary is the flower in which God lies hidden; or again, the rose window in which the *rex gloriae* and judge of the world is enthroned.

- [578] The idea of circular layers is to be found, by implication, in Böhme,

for the outermost ring of his three-dimensional mandala¹¹⁸ is labelled “will of ye Devill Lucifer,” “Abyesse (of) Eternity,” “Abyss of ye Darkness,” “Hell of Devills,” etc. (See [Fig. 1](#).) Böhme says of this in his *Aurora* (ch. XVII, sec. 6): “Behold, when Lucifer with his hosts aroused the Wrath-fire in God’s nature, so that God waxed wroth in Nature in the place of Lucifer, the outermost Birth in Nature acquired another Quality, wholly wrathful, dry, cold, vehement, bitter, and sour. The raging Spirit, that before had a subtle, gentle Quality in Nature, became in his outermost Birth wholly presumptuous and terrible, and now in his outermost Birth is called the Wind, or the element Air.” In this way the four elements arose—the earth, in particular, by a process of contraction and desiccation.

[579] Cabalistic influences may be conjectured here, though Böhme knew not much more about the Cabala than did Paracelsus. He regarded it as a species of magic. The four elements correspond to the four Achurayim.¹¹⁹ They constitute a sort of second quaternity, proceeding from the inner, pneumatic quaternity but of a physical nature. The alchemists, too, allude to the Achurayim. Mennens,¹²⁰ for instance, says: “And although the holy name of God reveals the Tetragrammaton or the Four Letters, yet if you should look at it aright, only three Letters are found in it. The letter *he* [n] is found twice, since they are the same, namely Air and Water, which signifies the Son; Earth the Father, and Fire the Holy Ghost. Thus the Four Letters of God’s name manifestly signify the Most Holy Trinity and Matter, which likewise is threefold (*triplex*)¹²¹ ... and which is also called the shadow of the same [i.e., of God], and is named by Moyses¹²² the back of God [*Dei posteriora*], which seems to be created out of it [matter].”¹²³ This statement bears out Böhme’s view.

[580] To return to our mandala. The original four eddies have coalesced into the wavy squares in the middle of the picture. Their place is taken by golden points at the outer rim (developed from the previous picture), emitting rainbow colours. These are the colours of the *peacock’s eye*, which play a great role as the *cauda pavonis* in alchemy.¹²⁴ The appearance of these colours in the *opus* represents an intermediate stage preceding the definitive end result. Böhme speaks of a “love-desire or a Beauty of Colours; and here all Colours arise.”¹²⁵ In our mandala, too, the rainbow colours spring from the red layer that means affectivity. Of the “life of Nature and Spirit” that is united in the “spherical wheel”¹²⁶ Böhme says:

“Thus is made known to us an eternal Essence of Nature, like to Water and Fire, which stand as it were mixed into one another. For there comes a *bright-blue* colour, like the *Lightning* of the Fire; and then it has a form like a *Ruby*¹²⁷ mingled with Crystals into one Essence, or like *yellow, white, red, and blue* mingled in *dark Water*: for it is like blue in green, since each still has its brightness and shines, and the Water only resists their Fire, so that there is no wasting anywhere, but one eternal Essence in two Mysteries mingled together, notwithstanding the difference of two Principles, viz. two kinds of life.” The phenomenon of the colours owes its existence to the “Imagination of the great Mystery, where a wondrous essential Life is born.”¹²⁸

[581] It is abundantly clear from this that Böhme was preoccupied with the same psychic phenomenon that fascinated Miss X—and many other patients too. Although Böhme took the idea of the *cauda pavonis* and the tetrameria from alchemy,¹²⁹ he, like the alchemists, was working on an empirical basis which has since been rediscovered by modern psychology. There are products of active imagination, and also dreams, which reproduce the same patterns and arrangements with a spontaneity that cannot be influenced. A good example is the following dream: A patient dreamt that *she was in a drawing-room. There was a table with three chairs beside it. An unknown man standing beside her invited her to sit down. For this purpose she fetched a fourth chair that stood further off. She then sat at the table and began turning over the pages of a book, containing pictures of blue and red cubes, as for a building game. Suddenly it occurred to her that she had something else to attend to. She left the room and went to a yellow house. It was raining in torrents, and she sought shelter under a green laurel tree.*

[582] The table, the three chairs, the invitation to sit down, the other chair that had to be fetched to make four chairs, the cubes, and the building game all suggest a process of *composition*. This takes place in stages: a combination first of blue and red, then of yellow and green. These four colours symbolize four qualities, as we have seen, which can be interpreted in various ways. Psychologically this quaternity points to the orienting functions of consciousness, of which at least one is unconscious and therefore not available for conscious use. Here it would be the green, the sensation function,¹³⁰ because the patient’s relation to the real world was

uncommonly complicated and clumsy. The “inferior” function, however, just because of its unconsciousness, has the great advantage of being contaminated with the collective unconscious and can be used as a bridge to span the gulf between conscious and unconscious and thus restore the vital connection with the latter. This is the deeper reason why the dream represents the inferior function as a laurel. The laurel in this dream has the same connection with the processes of inner growth as the tree that Miss X dreamt grew in her room. It is essentially the same tree as the *arbor philosophica* of the alchemists, about which I have written in *Psychology and Alchemy*.¹³¹ We should also remember that, according to tradition, the laurel is not injured either by lightning or by cold—“intacta triumphat.” Hence it symbolized the Virgin Mary,¹³² the model for all women, just as Christ is the model for men. In view of its historical interpretation the laurel, like the alchemical tree, should be taken in this context as a symbol of the self.¹³³ The ingenuousness of patients who produce such dreams is always very impressive.

[583] To turn back again to our mandala. The golden lines that end in pistons recapitulate the spermatozoon motif and therefore have a spermatogenic significance, suggesting that the quaternity will be reproduced in a new and more distinct form. In so far as the quaternity has to do with conscious realization, we can infer from these symptoms an intensification of the latter, as is also suggested by the golden light radiating from the centre. Probably a kind of inner illumination is meant.

[584] Two days before painting this picture, Miss X dreamt that *she was in her father's room in their country house. “But my mother had moved my bed away from the wall into the middle of the room and had slept in it. I was furious, and moved the bed back to its former place. In the dream the bed-cover was red—exactly the red reproduced in the picture.”*

[585] The mother significance of the tree in her previous dream has here been taken up by the unconscious: this time the mother has slept in the middle of the room. This seems to be for Miss X an annoying intrusion into her sphere, symbolized by the room of her father, who has an animus significance for her. Her sphere is therefore a spiritual one, and she has usurped it just as she usurped her father's room. She has thus identified with the “spirit.” Into this sphere her mother has intruded and installed herself in the centre, at first under the symbol of the tree. She therefore

stands for physis opposed to spirit, i.e., for the natural feminine being which the dreamer also is, but which she would not accept because it appeared to her as a black snake. Although she remedied the intrusion at once, the dark chthonic principle, the black substance, has nevertheless penetrated to the centre of her mandala, as Picture 7 shows. But just because of this the golden light can appear: “e tenebris lux!” We have to relate the mother to Böhme’s idea of the matrix. For him the matrix is the *sine qua non* of all differentiation or realization, without which the spirit remains suspended and never comes down to earth. The collision between the paternal and the maternal principle (spirit and nature) works like a shock.

[586] After this picture, she felt the renewed penetration of the red colour, which she associated with feeling, as something disturbing, and she now discovered that her “rapport” with me, her analyst (= father), was unnatural and unsatisfactory. She was giving herself airs, she said, and was posing as an intelligent, understanding pupil (usurpation of spirituality!). But she had to admit that she felt very silly and was very silly, regardless of what I thought about it. This admission brought her a feeling of great relief and helped her to see at last that sex was “not, on the one hand, merely a mechanism for producing children and not, on the other, only an expression of supreme passion, but was also banally physiological and autoerotic.” This belated realization led her straight into a fantasy state where she became conscious of a series of obscene images. At the end she saw the image of a large bird, which she called the “earth bird,” and which alighted on the earth. Birds, as aerial beings, are well-known spirit symbols. It represented the transformation of the “spiritual” image of herself into a more earthy version that is more characteristic of women. This “tailpiece” confirms our suspicion that the intensive upward and rightward movement has come to a halt: the bird is coming down to earth. This symbolization denotes a further and necessary differentiation of what Böhme describes in general as “Love-desire.” Through this differentiation consciousness is not only widened but also brought face to face with the reality of things, so that the inner experience is tied, so to speak, to a definite spot.

[587] On the days following, the patient was overcome by feelings of self-pity. It became clear to her how much she regretted never having had any

children. She felt like a neglected animal or a lost child. This mood grew into a regular *Weltschmerz*, and she felt like the “all-compassionate Tathagata” (Buddha). Only when she had completely given way to these feelings could she bring herself to paint another picture. Real liberation comes not from glossing over or repressing painful states of feeling, but only from experiencing them to the full.

Picture 8

[588] The thing that strikes us at once in Picture 8 is that almost the whole interior is filled with the black substance. The blue-green of the water has condensed to a dark blue quaternity, and the golden light in the centre turns in the reverse direction, anti-clockwise: the bird is coming down to earth. That is, the mandala is moving towards the dark, chthonic depths. It is still floating—the wings of Mercury show this—but it has come much closer to the blackness. The inner, undifferentiated quaternity is balanced by an outer, differentiated one, which Miss X equated with the four functions of consciousness. To these she assigned the following colours: yellow = intuition, light blue = thinking, flesh pink = feeling, brown = sensation.¹³⁴ Each of these quarters is divided into three, thus producing the number 12 again. The separation and characterization of the two quaternities is worth noting. The outer quaternity of wings appears as a differentiated realization¹³⁵ of the undifferentiated inner one, which really represents the archetype. In the cabala this relationship corresponds to the quaternity of Merkabah¹³⁶ on the one hand and of the Achurayim on the other, and in Böhme they are the four Spirits of God¹³⁷ and the four elements.

[589] The plantlike form of the cross in the middle of the mandala, also noted by the patient, refers back to the tree (“tree of the cross”) and the mother.¹³⁸ She thus makes it clear that this previously taboo element has been accepted and now holds the central place. She was fully conscious of this—which of course was a great advance on her previous attitude.

[590] In contrast to the previous picture there are no inner cortices. This is a logical development, because the thing they were meant to exclude is now in the centre, and defence has become superfluous. Instead, the cortices spread out into the darkness as golden rings, expanding concentrically like

waves. This would mean a far-reaching influence on the environment emanating from the sealed-off self.

[591] Four days before she painted this mandala she had the following dream: *“I drew a young man to the window and, with a brush dipped in white oil, removed a black fleck from the cornea of his eye. A little golden lamp then became visible in the centre of the pupil. The young man felt greatly relieved, and I told him he should come again for treatment. I woke up saying the words: ‘If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.’”*^S (Matthew 6 : 22.)

[592] This dream describes the change: the patient is no longer identical with her animus. The animus has, so to speak, become *her* patient, since he has eye trouble. As a matter of fact the animus usually sees things “cock-eyed” and often very unclearly. Here a black fleck on the cornea obscures the golden light shining from inside the eye. He has “seen things too blackly.” The eye is the prototype of the mandala, as is evident from Böhme, who calls his mandala “The Philosophique Globe, or Eye of ye Wonders of Eternity, or Looking-Glass of Wisdom.” He says: “The substance and Image of the Soul may be resembled to the Earth, having a fair Flower growing out of it, and also to the Fire and Light; as we see that Earth is a Centre, but no life; yet it is essential, and a fair flower grows out of it, which is not like Earth ... and yet the Earth is the Mother of the Flower.” The soul is a “fiery Eye, and similitude of the First Principle,” a “Centre of Nature.”¹³⁹

[593] Our mandala is indeed an “eye,” the structure of which symbolizes the centre of order in the unconscious. The eye is a hollow sphere, black inside, and filled with a semi-liquid substance, the vitreous humour. Looking at it from outside, one sees a round, coloured surface, the iris, with a dark centre, from which a golden light shines. Böhme calls it a “fiery eye,” in accordance with the old idea that seeing emanates from the eye. The eye may well stand for consciousness (which is in fact an organ of perception), looking into its own background. It sees its own light there, and when this is clear and pure the whole body is filled with light. Under certain conditions consciousness has a purifying effect. This is probably what is meant by Matthew 6 : 22ff., an idea expressed even more clearly in Luke 11: 33ff.

[594] The eye is also a well-known symbol for God. Hence Böhme calls his “Philosophique Globe” the “Eye of Eternity,” the “Essence of all Essences,” the “Eye of God.”¹⁴⁰

[595] By accepting the darkness, the patient has not, to be sure, changed it into light, but she has kindled a light that illuminates the darkness within. By day no light is needed, and if you don’t know it is night you won’t light one, nor will any light be lit for you unless you have suffered the horror of darkness. This is not an edifying text but a mere statement of the psychological facts. The transition from Picture 7 to Picture 8 gives one a working idea of what I mean by “accepting the dark principle.” It has sometimes been objected that nobody can form a clear conception of what this means, which is regrettable, because it is an ethical problem of the first order. Here, then, is a practical example of this “acceptance,” and I must leave it to the philosophers to puzzle out the ethical aspects of the process.¹⁴¹

Picture 9

[596] In Picture 9 we see for the first time the blue “soul-flower,” on a red background, also described as such by Miss X (naturally without knowledge of Böhme).¹⁴² In the centre is the golden light in the form of a lamp, as she herself stated. The cortices are very pronounced, but they consist of light (at least in the upper half of the mandala) and radiate outwards.¹⁴³ The light is composed of the rainbow hues of the rising sun; it is a real *cauda pavonis*. There are six sets of sunbeams. This recalls the Buddha’s Discourse on the Robe, from the Collection of the Pali Canon:

His heart overflowing with lovingkindness ... with compassion ... with joyfulness ... with equanimity, he abides, raying forth lovingkindness, compassion, joyfulness, equanimity, towards one quarter of space, then towards the second, then towards the third, then towards the fourth, and above and below, thus, all around. Everywhere, into all places the wide world over, his heart overflowing with compassion streams forth, wide, deep, illimitable, free from enmity, free from all ill-will....¹⁴⁴

[597] But a parallel with the Buddhist East cannot be carried through here, because the mandala is divided into an upper and a lower half.¹⁴⁵ Above,

the rings shine many-hued as a rainbow; below, they consist of brown earth. Above, there hover three white birds (*pneumata* signifying the Trinity); below, a goat is rising up, accompanied by two ravens (Wotan's birds)¹⁴⁶ and twining snakes. This is not the sort of picture a Buddhist holy man would make, but that of a Western person with a Christian background, whose light throws a dark shadow. What is more, the three birds float in a jet black sky, and the goat, rising out of dark clay, is shown against a field of bright orange. This, oddly enough, is the colour of the Buddhist monk's robe, which was certainly not a conscious intention of the patient. The underlying thought is clear: no white without black, and no holiness without the devil. Opposites are brothers, and the Oriental seeks to liberate himself from them by his *nirvandva* ("free from the two") and his *neti neti* ("not this, not that"), or else he puts up with them in some mysterious fashion, as in Taoism. The connection with the East is deliberately stressed by the patient, through her painting into the mandala four hexagrams from the *I Ching*.¹⁴⁷

[598] The sign in the left top half is "Yü, ENTHUSIASM" (NO. 16). It means "Thunder comes resounding out of the earth," i.e., a movement coming from the unconscious, and expressed by music and dancing. Confucius comments as follows:

Firm as a rock, what need of a whole day?

The judgment can be known.

The superior man knows what is hidden and what is evident.

He knows weakness, he knows strength as well.

Hence the myriads look up to him.

Enthusiasm can be the source of beauty, but it can also delude.

[599] The second hexagram at the top is "Sun, DECREASE" (NO. 41). The upper trigram means Mountain, the lower trigram means Lake. The mountain towers above the lake and "restrains" it. That is the "image" whose interpretation points to self-restraint and reserve, i.e., a seeming decrease of oneself. This is significant in the light of "ENTHUSIASM." In the top line of the hexagram, "But [one] no longer has a separate home," the homelessness of the Buddhist monk is meant. On the psychological level this does not, of course, refer to so drastic a demonstration of renunciation and independence, but to the patient's irreversible insight into the

conditioned quality of all relationships, into the relativity of all values, and the transience of all things.

[600] The sign in the bottom half to the right is “Sheng, PUSHING UPWARD” (No. 46). “Within the earth, wood grows: The image of Pushing Upward.” It also says: “One pushes upward into an empty city,” and “The king offers him Mount Ch’i.” So this hexagram means growth and development of the personality, like a plant pushing out of the earth—a theme already anticipated by the plant motif in an earlier mandala. This is an allusion to the important lesson which Miss X has learnt from her experience: that there is no development unless the shadow is accepted.

[601] The hexagram to the left is “Ting, THE CAULDRON” (No. 50). This is a bronze sacrificial vessel equipped with handles and legs, which held the cooked viands used for festive occasions. The lower trigram means Wind and Wood, the upper one Fire. The “Cauldron” is thus made up of “fire over wood,” just as the alchemical vessel consists of fire or water.¹⁴⁸ There is “delicious food” in it (the “fat of the pheasant”), but it is not eaten because “the handle of the *ting* is altered” and its “legs are broken,” making it unusable. But, as a result of “constant self-abnegation,” the personality becomes differentiated (“the *ting* has golden carrying rings” and even “rings of jade”) and purified, until it acquires the “hardness and soft lustre” of precious jade.¹⁴⁹

[602] Though the four hexagrams were put into the mandala on purpose, they are authentic results of preoccupation with the *I Ching*. The phases and aspects of my patient’s inner process of development can therefore express themselves easily in the language of the *I Ching*, because it too is based on the psychology of the individuation process that forms one of the main interests of Taoism and of Zen Buddhism.¹⁵⁰ Miss X’s interest in Eastern philosophy was due to the deep impression which a better knowledge of her life and of herself had made upon her—an impression of the tremendous contradictions in human nature. The insoluble conflict she was faced with makes her preoccupation with Eastern therapeutic systems, which seem to get along without conflict, doubly interesting. It may be partly due to this acquaintance with the East that the opposites, irreconcilable in Christianity, were not blurred or glossed over, but were seen in all their sharpness, and in spite (or perhaps just because) of this, were brought together into the unity of the mandala. Böhme was never

able to achieve this union; on the contrary, in his mandala the bright and dark semi-circles are turned back to back. The bright half is labelled “H. Ghost,” the dark half “Father,” i.e., *auctor rerum*¹⁵¹ or “First Principle,” whereas the Holy Ghost is the “Second Principle.” This polarity is crossed by the paired opposites “Sonne” and “Earthly Man.” The “Devils” are all on the side of the dark “Father” and constitute his “Wrath-fire,” just as on the periphery of the mandala.

[603] Böhme’s starting-point was philosophical alchemy, and to my knowledge he was the first to try to organize the Christian cosmos, as a total reality, into a mandala.¹⁵² The attempt failed, inasmuch as he was unable to unite the two halves in a circle. Miss X’s mandala, on the other hand, comprises and contains the opposites, as a result, we may suppose, of the support afforded by the Chinese doctrine of Yang and Yin, the two metaphysical principles whose co-operation makes the world go round. The hexagrams, with their firm (yang) and yielding (yin) lines, illustrate certain phases of this process. It is therefore right that they should occupy a mediating position between above and below. Lao-tzu says: “High stands on low.” This indisputable truth is secretly suggested in the mandala: the three white birds hover in a black field, but the grey-black goat has a bright orange-coloured background. Thus the Oriental truth insinuates itself and makes possible—at least by symbolic anticipation—a union of opposites within the irrational life process formulated by the *I Ching*. That we are really concerned here with opposite phases of one and the same process is shown by the picture that now follows.

Picture 10

[604] In Picture 10, begun in Zurich but only completed when Miss X again visited her motherland, we find the same division as before into above and below. The “soul-flower”¹⁵³ in the centre is the same, but it is surrounded on all sides by a dark blue night sky, in which we see the four phases of the moon, the new moon coinciding with the world of darkness below. The three birds have become two. Their plumage has darkened, but on the other hand the goat has turned into two semi-human creatures with horns and light faces, and only two of the four snakes remain. A notable innovation is the appearance of two *crabs* in the lower, chthonic hemisphere that also represents the body. The crab has essentially the same

meaning as the astrological sign Cancer.¹⁵⁴ Unfortunately Miss X gave no context here. In such cases it is usually worth investigating what use has been made in the past of the object in question. In earlier, prescientific ages hardly any distinction was drawn between longtailed crabs (*Macrura*, crayfish) and short-tailed crabs (*Brachyura*). As a zodiacal sign Cancer signifies *resurrection*, because the crab sheds its shell.¹⁵⁵ The ancients had in mind chiefly *Pagurus bernhardus*, the hermit crab. It hides in its shell and cannot be attacked. Therefore it signifies *caution* and *foresight*, *knowledge of coming events*¹⁵⁶. It “depends on the moon, and waxes with it.”¹⁵⁷ It is worth noting that the crab appears just in the mandala in which we see the phases of the moon for the first time. Astrologically, Cancer is the house of the moon. Because of its backwards and sideways movement, it plays the role of an unlucky animal in superstition and colloquial speech (“crabbed,” “catch a crab,” etc.). Since ancient times cancer (*καρκίνοη*) has been the name for a malignant tumour of the glands. Cancer is the zodiacal sign in which the sun begins to retreat, when the days grow shorter. Pseudo-Kallisthenes relates that crabs dragged Alexander’s ships down into the sea.¹⁵⁸ “Karkinos” was the name of the crab that bit Heracles in the foot in his fight with the Lernaean monster. In gratitude, Hera set her accomplice among the stars.¹⁵⁹

[605] In astrology, Cancer is a feminine and watery sign,¹⁶⁰ and the summer solstice takes place in it. In the *melothesia*¹⁶¹ it is correlated with the *breast*. It rules over the *Western sea*. In Propertius it makes a sinister appearance: “Octipedis Cancrī terga sinistra time” (Fear thou the ill-omened back of the eight-footed crab).¹⁶² De Gubernatis says: “The crab ... causes now the death of the solar hero and now that of the monster.”¹⁶³ The *Panchatantra* (V, 2) relates how a crab, which the mother gave to her son as apotropaic magic, saved his life by killing a black snake.¹⁶⁴ As De Gubernatis thinks, the crab stands now for the sun and now for the moon,¹⁶⁵ according to whether it goes forwards or backwards.

[606] Miss X was born in the first degrees of Cancer (actually about 3°). She knew her horoscope and was well aware of the significance of the moment of birth; that is, she realized that the degree of the rising sign (the ascendent) conditions the individuality of the horoscope. Since she obviously guessed the horoscope’s affinity with the mandala, she introduced her individual sign into the painting that was meant to express

her psychic self.¹⁶⁶

[607] The essential conclusion to be drawn from Picture 10 is that the dualities which run through it are always inwardly balanced, so that they lose their sharpness and incompatibility. As Multatuli says: “Nothing is quite true, and even that is not quite true.” But this loss of strength is counterbalanced by the unity of the centre, where the lamp shines, sending out coloured rays to the eight points of the compass.¹⁶⁷

[608] Although the attainment of inner balance through symmetrical pairs of opposites was probably the main intention of this mandala, we should not overlook the fact that the *duplication motif* also occurs when unconscious contents are about to become conscious and differentiated. They then split, as often happens in dreams, into two identical or slightly different halves corresponding to the conscious and still unconscious aspects of the nascent content. I have the impression, from this picture, that it really does represent a kind of solstice or climax, where decision and division take place. The dualities are, at bottom, Yes and No, the irreconcilable opposites, but they *have* to be held together if the balance of life is to be maintained. This can only be done by holding unswervingly to the centre, where action and suffering balance each other. It is a path “sharp as the edge of a razor.” A climax like this, where universal opposites clash, is at the same time a moment when a wide perspective often opens out into the past and future. This is the psychological moment when, as the *consensus gentium* has established since ancient times, synchronistic phenomena occur—that is, when the far appears near: sixteen years later, Miss X became fatally ill with cancer of the breast.¹⁶⁸

Picture 11

[609] Here I will only mention that the coloured rays emanating from the centre have become so rarified that, in the next few pictures, they disappear altogether. Sun and moon are now outside, no longer included in the microcosm of the mandala. The sun is not golden, but has a dull, ochrous hue and in addition is clearly turning to the left: it is moving towards its own obscurity, as had to happen after the cancer picture (solstice). The moon is in the first quarter. The roundish masses near the sun are probably meant to be cumulus clouds, but with their grey-red hues

they look suspiciously like bulbous swellings. The interior of the mandala now contains a quincunx of stars, the central star being silver and gold. The division of the mandala into an aerial and an earthy hemisphere has transferred itself to the outside world and can no longer be seen in the interior. The silvery rim of the aerial hemisphere in the preceding picture now runs round the entire mandala and recalls the band of quicksilver that, as *Mercurius vulgaris*, “veils the true personality.” At all events, it is probable that the influence and importance of the outside world are becoming so strong in this picture as to bring about an impairment and devaluation of the mandala. It does not break down or burst (as can easily happen under similar circumstances), but is removed from the telluric influence through the symbolical constellation of stars and heavenly bodies.

Picture 12–24

[610] In Picture 12 the sun is in fact sinking below the horizon and the moon is coming out of the first quarter. The radiation of the mandala has ceased altogether, but the equivalents of sun and moon, and also of the earth, have been assimilated into it. A remarkable feature is its sudden inner animation by two human figures and various animals. The constellation character of the centre has vanished and given way to a kind of flower motif. What this animation means cannot be established, unfortunately, as we have no commentary.

[611] In Picture 13 the source of radiation is no longer in the mandala but outside, in the shape of the full moon, from which rings of rainbow-coloured light radiate in concentric circles. The mandala is laced together by four black and golden snakes, the heads of three of them pointing to the centre, while the fourth rears upwards. In between the snakes and the centre there are indications of the spermatozoon motif. This may mean an intensive penetration on the part of the outside world, but it could also mean magical protection. The breaking down of the quaternity into 3 plus 1 is in accord with the archetype.¹⁶⁹

[612] In Picture 14 the mandala is suspended over the lit-up ravine of Fifth Avenue, New York, whither Miss X in the meantime returned. On the blue flower in the centre the *coniunctio* of the “royal” pair is represented by the

sacrificial fire burning between them. The King and Queen are assisted by two kneeling figures of a man and a woman. It is a typical marriage quaternio, and for an understanding of its psychology I must refer the reader to my account in the “Psychology of the Transference.”¹⁷⁰ This inner bond should be thought of as a compensatory “consolidation” against disintegrating influences from without.

[613] In Picture 15 the mandala floats between Manhattan and the sea. It is daylight again, and the sun is just rising. Out of the blue centre blue snakes penetrate into the red flesh of the mandala: the enantiodromia is setting in, after the introversion of feeling caused by the shock of New York had passed its climax. The blue colour of the snakes indicates that they have acquired a pneumatic nature.

[614] From Picture 16 onwards, the drawing and painting technique shows a decided improvement. The mandalas gain in aesthetic value. In Picture 17 a kind of *eye motif* appears, which I have also observed in the mandalas of other persons. It seems to me to link up with the motif of *polyophthalmia* and to point to the peculiar nature of the unconscious, which can be regarded as a “multiple consciousness.” I have discussed this question in detail elsewhere.¹⁷¹ (See also [Fig. 5.](#))



Fig. 5. Mandala by a woman patient

Aged 58, artistic and technically accomplished. In the centre is the egg encircled by the snake; outside, apotropaic wings and eyes. The mandala is exceptional in that it has a pentadic structure. (The patient also produced triadic mandalas. She was fond of playing with forms irrespective of their meaning—a consequence of her artistic gift.)

[615] The enantiodromia only reached its climax the following year, in Picture 19.¹⁷² In that picture the red substance is arranged round the golden, four-rayed star in the centre, and the blue substance is pushing everywhere to the periphery. Here the rainbow-coloured radiation of the mandala begins again for the first time, and from then on was maintained for over

ten years (in mandalas not reproduced here).

[616] I will not comment on the subsequent pictures, nor reproduce them all—as I say, they extend over more than ten years—because I feel I do not understand them properly. In addition, they came into my hands only recently, after the death of the patient, and unfortunately without text or commentary. Under these circumstances the work of interpretation becomes very uncertain, and is better left unattempted. Also, this case was meant only as an example of how such pictures come to be produced, what they mean, and what reflections and observations their interpretation requires. It is not intended to demonstrate how an entire lifetime expresses itself in symbolic form. The individuation process has many stages and is subject to many vicissitudes, as the fictive course of the *opus alchymicum* amply shows.

Conclusion

[617] Our series of pictures illustrates the initial stages of the way of individuation. It would be desirable to know what happens afterwards. But, just as neither the philosophical gold nor the philosophers' stone was ever made in reality, so nobody has ever been able to tell the story of the whole way, at least not to mortal ears, for it is not the story-teller but death who speaks the final "consummatum est." Certainly there are many things worth knowing in the later stages of the process, but, from the point of view of teaching as well as of therapy, it is important not to skip too quickly over the initial stages. As these pictures are intuitive anticipations of future developments, it is worth while lingering over them for a long time, in order, with their help, to integrate so many contents of the unconscious into consciousness that the latter really does reach the stage it sees ahead. These psychic evolutions do not as a rule keep pace with the tempo of intellectual developments. Indeed, their very first goal is to bring a consciousness that has hurried too far ahead into contact again with the unconscious background with which it should be connected. This was the problem in our case too. Miss X had to turn back to her "motherland" in order to find her earth again—*vestigia retro!* It is a task that today faces not only individuals but whole civilizations. What else is the meaning of the frightful regressions of our time? The tempo of the development of consciousness through science and technology was too rapid and left the

unconscious, which could no longer keep up with it, far behind, thereby forcing it into a defensive position which expresses itself in a universal will to destruction. The political and social isms of our day preach every conceivable ideal, but, under this mask, they pursue the goal of lowering the level of our culture by restricting or altogether inhibiting the possibilities of individual development. They do this partly by creating a chaos controlled by terrorism, a primitive state of affairs that affords only the barest necessities of life and surpasses in horror the worst times of the so-called “Dark” Ages. It remains to be seen whether this experience of degradation and slavery will once more raise a cry for greater spiritual freedom.

[618] This problem cannot be solved collectively, because the masses are not changed unless the individual changes. At the same time, even the best-looking solution cannot be forced upon him, since it is a good solution only when it is combined with a natural process of development. It is therefore a hopeless undertaking to stake everything on collective recipes and procedures. The bettering of a general ill begins with the individual, and then only when he makes himself and not others responsible. This is naturally only possible in freedom, but not under a rule of force, whether this be exercised by a self-elected tyrant or by one thrown up by the mob.

[619] The initial pictures in our series illustrate the characteristic psychic processes which set in the moment one gives a mind to that part of the personality which has remained behind, forgotten. Scarcely has the connection been established when symbols of the self appear, trying to convey a picture of the total personality. As a result of this development, the unsuspecting modern gets into paths trodden from time immemorial—the *via sancta*, whose milestones and signposts are the religions.¹⁷³ He will think and feel things that seem strange to him, not to say unpleasant. Apuleius relates that in the Isis mysteries he “approached the very gates of death and set one foot on Proserpina’s threshold, yet was permitted to return, rapt through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining as if it were noon; I entered the presence of the gods of the underworld and the gods of the upper world, stood near and worshipped them.”¹⁷⁴ Such experiences are also expressed in our mandalas; that is why we find in religious literature the best parallels to the symbols and moods of the situations they formulate. These situations are intense inner experiences

which can lead to lasting psychic growth and a ripening and deepening of the personality, if the individual affected by them has the moral capacity for *πίστις*, loyal trust and confidence. They are the age-old psychic experiences that underlie “faith” and ought to be its unshakable foundation—and not of faith alone, but also of knowledge.

[620] Our case shows with singular clarity the spontaneity of the psychic process and the transformation of a personal situation into the problem of individuation, that is, of becoming whole, which is the answer to the great question of our day: How can consciousness, our most recent acquisition, which has bounded ahead, be linked up again with the oldest, the unconscious, which has lagged behind? The oldest of all is the instinctual foundation. Anyone who overlooks the instincts will be ambuscaded by them, and anyone who does not humble himself will be humbled, losing at the same time his freedom, his most precious possession.

[621] Always when science tries to describe a “simple” life-process, the matter becomes complicated and difficult. So it is no wonder that the details of a transformation process rendered visible through active imagination make no small demands on our understanding. In this respect they may be compared with all other biological processes. These, too, require specialized knowledge to become comprehensible. Our example also shows, however, that this process can begin and run its course without any special knowledge having to stand sponsor to it. But if one wants to understand anything of it and assimilate it into consciousness, then a certain amount of knowledge is needed. If the process is not understood at all, it has to build up an unusual intensity so as not to sink back again into the unconscious without result. But if its affects rise to an unusual pitch, they will enforce some kind of understanding. It depends on the correctness of this understanding whether the consequences turn out more pathologically or less. Psychic experiences, according to whether they are rightly or wrongly understood, have very different effects on a person’s development. It is one of the duties of the psychotherapist to acquire such knowledge of these things as will enable him to help his patient to an adequate understanding. Experiences of this kind are not without their dangers, for they are also, among other things, the matrix of the psychoses. Stiffnecked and violent interpretations should under all circumstances be avoided, likewise a patient should never be forced into a development that

does not come naturally and spontaneously. But once it has set in, he should not be talked out of it again, unless the possibility of a psychosis has been definitely established. Thorough psychiatric experience is needed to decide this question, and it must constantly be borne in mind that the constellation of archetypal images and fantasies is not in itself pathological. The pathological element only reveals itself in the way the individual reacts to them and how he interprets them. The characteristic feature of a pathological reaction is, above all, *identification with the archetype*. This produces a sort of inflation and possession by the emergent contents, so that they pour out in a torrent which no therapy can stop. Identification can, in favourable cases, sometimes pass off as a more or less harmless inflation. But in all cases identification with the unconscious brings a weakening of consciousness, and herein lies the danger. You do not “make” an identification, you do not “identify yourself,” but you experience your identity with the archetype in an unconscious way and so are possessed by it. Hence in more difficult cases it is far more necessary to strengthen and consolidate the ego than to understand and assimilate the products of the unconscious. The decision must be left to the diagnostic and therapeutic tact of the analyst.

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[622] This paper is a groping attempt to make the inner processes of the mandala more intelligible. They are, as it were, self-delineations of dimly sensed changes going on in the background, which are perceived by the “reversed eye” and rendered visible with pencil and brush, just as they are, uncomprehended and unknown. The pictures represent a kind of ideogram of unconscious contents. I have naturally used this method on myself too and can affirm that one can paint very complicated pictures without having the least idea of their real meaning. While painting them, the picture seems to develop out of itself and often in opposition to one’s conscious intentions. It is interesting to observe how the execution of the picture frequently thwarts one’s expectations in the most surprising way. The same thing can be observed, sometimes even more clearly, when writing down the products of active imagination.¹⁷⁵

[623] The present work may also serve to fill a gap I myself have felt in my exposition of therapeutic methods. I have written very little on active

imagination, but have talked about it a great deal. I have used this method since 1916, and I sketched it out for the first time in “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious.” I first mentioned the mandala in 1929, in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.¹⁷⁶ For at least thirteen years I kept quiet about the results of these methods in order to avoid any suggestion. I wanted to assure myself that these things—mandalas especially—really are produced spontaneously and were not suggested to the patient by my own fantasy. I was then able to convince myself, through my own studies, that mandalas were drawn, painted, carved in stone, and built, at all times and in all parts of the world, long before my patients discovered them. I have also seen to my satisfaction that mandalas are dreamt and drawn by patients who were being treated by psychotherapists whom I had not trained. In view of the importance and significance of the mandala symbol, special precautions seemed to be necessary, seeing that this motif is one of the best examples of the universal operation of an archetype. In a seminar on children’s dreams, which I held in 1939–40,¹⁷⁷ I mentioned the dream of a ten-year-old girl who had absolutely no possibility of ever hearing about the quaternity of God. The dream was written down by the child herself and was sent to me by an acquaintance: *“Once in a dream I saw an animal that had lots of horns. It spiked up other little animals with them. It wriggled like a snake and that was how it lived. Then a blue fog came out of all the four corners, and it stopped eating. Then God came, but there were really four Gods in the four corners. Then the animal died, and all the animals it had eaten came out alive again.”*

[624] This dream describes an unconscious individuation process: all the animals are eaten by the one animal. Then comes the enantiodromia: the dragon changes into pneuma, which stands for a divine quaternity. Thereupon follows the apocatastasis, a resurrection of the dead. This exceedingly “unchildish” fantasy can hardly be termed anything but archetypal. Miss X, in Picture 12, also put a whole collection of animals into her mandala—two snakes, two tortoises, two fishes, two lions, two pigs, a goat and a ram.¹⁷⁸ Integration gathers many into one. To the child who had this dream, and to Miss X likewise, it was certainly not known that Origen had already said (speaking of the sacrificial animals): “Seek these sacrifices within thyself, and thou wilt find them within thine own soul. Understand that thou hast within thyself flocks of cattle ... flocks of

sheep and flocks of goats. ... Understand that the birds of the sky are also within thee. Marvel not if we say that these are within thee, but understand that thou thyself art even another little world, and hast within thee the sun and the moon, and also the stars.”¹⁷⁹

[625] The same idea occurs again in another passage, but this time it takes the form of a psychological statement: “For look upon the countenance of a man who is at one moment angry, at the next sad, a short while afterward joyful, then troubled again, and then contented. ... See how he who thinks himself one is not one, but seems to have as many personalities as he has moods, as also the Scripture says: A fool is changed as the moon. ...¹⁸⁰ God, therefore, is unchangeable, and is called one for the reason that he changes not. Thus also the true imitator of God, who is made after God’s image, is called one and the selfsame [*unus et ipse*] when he comes to perfection, for he also, when he is fixed on the summit of virtue, is not changed, but remains alway one. For every man, whiles he is in wickedness [*malitia*], is divided among many things and torn in many directions; and while he is in many kinds of evil he cannot be called one.”¹⁸¹

[626] Here the many animals are affective states to which man is prone. The individuation process, clearly alluded to in this passage, subordinates the many to the One. But the One is God, and that which corresponds to him in us is the *imago Dei*, the God-image. But the God-image, as we saw from Jakob Böhme, expresses itself in the mandala.