

PSYCHOLOGICAL STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

lies, as always, with the hero, the individual; he and his transformation are the great human prototypes; he is the testing ground of the collective, just as consciousness is the testing ground of the unconscious.

## D. Centroverson and the Stages of Life

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Pilgrim, Pilgrimage, and Way  
are but Myself toward Myself.

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## *Prolongation of Childhood and Differentiation of Consciousness*

IN PART I we discussed the archetypal phases of conscious development as manifested in the mythological projections of humanity's collective unconscious. In Part II an attempt is made to show how and why the personality comes to be built up in the course of human history, and in what relation it stands to the archetypal phases.

Now, in this concluding chapter, we must show how the basic laws whose operation we have been tracing in the psychic history of mankind are recapitulated, in modified form, in the ontogenetic life history of the individual in our culture.

Only a tentative sketch is possible, because we cannot present the reader with a detailed psychology of childhood and puberty. Nevertheless, it seems important to give a brief outline of this development, because in this way the connection between man's evolutionary history and modern life, and the life of every individual, will become apparent. Indeed, this link between ontogenesis and human history alone gives us the justification for having ranged so far afield in our exposition of the latter subject, and for claiming at the same time that the real concern of this book is the treatment of modern man and his urgent problems.

A psychotherapy of the individual, and a culture therapy of society as a whole, seem to us to be possible only when we have achieved a synoptic view of the origin and significance of consciousness and its history, such as will enable us to diagnose the conscious situation of the individual and of the collective.

The recognition of the crucial importance, for psychology and psychotherapy, of the stages of life, and the discovery of the individuation process as a development which takes place during the second half of life, we owe to the researches of C. G. Jung.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Stages of Life"; also cf. G. Adler, "The Ego and the Cycle of Life," in *Studies in Analytical Psychology*.



The most important factors for the understanding of individual development are the different direction and different effect of centroversion in the two life phases. The first phase, which is one of differentiation, has its historical prototype in the formation of the ego and its development, that is, when the activity of centroversion passes from the psychic totality of the unconscious self and moves towards the ego.

During the first half of life, a period of egocentering which is finalized in puberty, centroversion expresses itself as a compensatory relation between the conscious and unconscious systems, but remains unconscious; in other words, the central organ of centroversion, the ego, has no knowledge of its dependence upon the whole. During the second half of life, however, which is generally ushered in by a psychological change of personality in middle age, there is in the ego a growing awareness of centroversion. The individuation process may then be initiated, resulting in the constellation of the self as the psychic center of wholeness, which no longer acts only unconsciously but is consciously experienced.

The retardation of maturity and the dependence of the individual upon the social group for a period of almost sixteen years are, as we know, pre-eminently characteristic of the human species. This prolonged youth, contrasted with the early development of the rest of the animal world, is the most important prerequisite for human culture and its transmission. The inclusion of a lengthy period of learning and training until full maturity is reached has its counterpart in the unfolding of consciousness throughout human history. During this period the brain is developed up to the level to which man as a species has brought it. The learning period that ends with puberty is devoted to cultural education, consisting in the adoption of collective values and the differentiation of consciousness which facilitates the individual's adaptation to the world and the collective.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In his *Biologische Fragmente zur Lehre vom Menschen*, which became available to me only after the completion of my manuscript, A. Portmann expresses views that coincide to a surprising degree with my own. The fact that we have

Lastly, there also occurs in this period a further differentiation of personality, whose final stage we then find in the adult, and whose development, so far as it follows the patriarchal trend of conscious evolution, we shall briefly outline.

Education and increasing experience of life strengthen the adaptation to reality, which is more or less identical with adaptation to the collective and its demands. Meanwhile the collective compels the individual, however different his orientation may be at the different periods, to develop a one-sidedness which is at all times acceptable to itself.

Various factors collaborate in this adaptation. Their common denominator is the strengthening of consciousness and of its capacity for action, and the simultaneous exclusion of the disruptive forces of the unconscious.

One of these factors is the differentiation of the psychological type. That is to say, every individual will adopt a definite attitude to the world, either extraverted or introverted. Side by side with the habitual attitude there is a further differentiation of one of the main functions of consciousness, which function differs in every individual.<sup>3</sup> This differentiation of type, whether conditioned constitutionally or otherwise, guarantees him the maximum opportunities for adaptation, because the most efficient and congenitally the best function is developed as the main function. Simultaneously with this differentiation there is a suppression of the least efficient function, which, as the "inferior function," remains largely unconscious.

An important goal of childhood development and education is the utilization of the individual in the sense of making him a useful member of the community. This usefulness, achieved through differentiation of the separate components and functions of the personality, is necessarily bought at the cost of wholeness. The need to renounce the unconscious wholeness of the

arrived at the same conclusions, although approaching from two such different points of departure as biology and depth psychology, speaks not a little for the objectivity of these conclusions.

<sup>3</sup> Jung, *Psychological Types*, defs. 14, 22, 55.



personality is one of the most formidable developmental difficulties for the child, and particularly for the introverted child.

The transition from the "totality orientation" of the small child, from direction by the unconscious activity of the self to an ego-centered consciousness and the necessary division of the whole into two separate systems, forms a special difficulty. In this critical phase the heritage bequeathed to mankind by the hero—the systematic development of consciousness and its protection—must be re-experienced by the childhood ego and made fast in its possession if it is to gain access to the culture of the collective and command a place for itself in the community.

Development in the first half of life is marked by two decisive crises, each of which corresponds to a fight with the dragon. The first crisis is characterized by the encounter with the problem of the First Parents and by the formation of the ego. It is enacted between the ages of three and five, and psychoanalysis has made us familiar with certain aspects and forms of this parental encounter, under the guise of the Oedipus complex. The second crisis is puberty, when the dragon fight has to be fought out again on a new level. Here the form of the ego is finally fixed with the support of what we have called "heaven." That is to say, new archetypal constellations emerge, and with them a new relation of the ego to the self.

Characteristic of the process of differentiation in childhood is the loss and renunciation of all the elements of perfection and wholeness, which are inherent in the psychology of the child so far as this is determined by the pleroma, the uroboros. The very things which the child has in common with the man of genius, the creative artist, and the primitive, and which constitute the magic and charm of his existence, must be sacrificed. The aim of all education, and not in our culture alone, is to expel the child from the paradise of his native genius and, through differentiation and the renunciation of wholeness, to constrain the Old Adam into the paths of collective usefulness.

From the pleasure principle to the reality principle as we have defined it, from the mother's darling to the schoolboy, from uro-

boros to hero, such is the normal course of childhood development. The drying up of imagination and of creative ability, which the child naturally possesses in high degree, is one of the typical symptoms of impoverishment that growing up entails. A steady loss of the vitality of feeling and of spontaneous reactions in the interests of "sensibleness" and "good behavior" is the operative factor in the conduct now demanded of the child in relation to the collective. Increase in efficiency at the cost of depth and intensity is the hallmark of this process.

On the ontogenetic plane there now ensue all the developments which we have described as indispensable for ego formation and the separation of the conscious and unconscious systems. The child's primarily transpersonal and mythological apprehension of the world<sup>4</sup> becomes limited owing to secondary personalization, and is finally abolished altogether. This personalization is necessary for the growth of personality now beginning and is effected with the help of ties to the personal environment upon which the archetypes are at first projected. As the personal ties grow stronger, the archetype is gradually replaced by the imago, in which personal and transpersonal characteristics are visibly blended and active. In this way the transpersonal archetypes are "blocked" by the personal figures of the environment to whom the ego relates. Or, as Rilke says:

... not quite can you call him away from that sinister company.

Truly, he tries, he escapes, and nestles disburdened

into your secret heart, where he takes and is newly begun.

But, did he ever begin himself?

Mother, you made him small, it was you who began him;

to you he was new, and over the young

eyes you bent down a world that was friendly and staved off the strange.

Where, O where are the years when you simply, by stepping in front of it,

screened with your slender figure the seething abyss?

Much you did hide from him thus; the room that was creepy at night

you made harmless, and out of your heart full of refuge

you mingled a humaner space with his night-space.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Jung, Seminar on children's dreams (unpublished); Wickes, *The Inner World of Childhood*; Fordham, *The Life of Childhood*.

<sup>5</sup>R. M. Rilke, Third Elegy.





Then follows the fragmentation of archetypes and the separation of the personal "good" side of the Mother figure from her transpersonal, negative side, or vice versa. The child's fear and feeling of being threatened does not derive from the traumatic character of the world, for no trauma exists under normal human conditions or even under primitive ones; it comes rather from the "night space," or, to be more precise, it arises when the ego steps forth from this night space. The germinal ego consciousness then experiences the overwhelming impact of the world-and-body stimulus, either directly or in projection. The importance of family relationships lies precisely in the fact that the personal figures of the environment who are the first form of society must be able, as soon as the ego emerges from the primary security of the urboric state, to offer it the secondary security of the human world.

This development is paralleled by the exhaustion of emotional components and the outgrowing of the early accentuation of the body, and this in turn leads to the gradual building up of a superego through the demands and prohibitions of the environment.

Another general feature of conscious development, namely the deflation of the unconscious, can be traced in the normal growth of the child, when the primordial, unconscious world of childhood, the world of dream and fairy tale, and also of children's drawings and children's games, fades in increasing measure before the reality of the external world. The libido accruing from the activated unconscious is now employed to build up and extend the conscious system. The implementation of this process marks the transition from playing to learning. School in our culture is the architect whom the collective has commissioned to erect, systematically, a bastion between the deflated unconscious and a consciousness orientated towards collective adaptation.

The patriarchal line of conscious development with its watchword "Away from the Mother-world! Forward to the Father-world!" is enjoined upon male and female alike, although they

may follow it in different ways. To be a mother's darling is a sign of not having accomplished the initial dragon fight which brings infancy to a close. This failure makes entry into school and the world of other children impossible, just as failure in the rites of initiation at puberty precludes entry into the adult world of men and women.

We come now to the formation of those components of personality whose discovery we owe to the analytical psychology of Jung: the persona, the anima and animus figures, and the shadow. They are produced by the differentiation processes we have already described, which occur during the first half of life. In all of them, personalistic and individual features are combined with archetypal and transpersonal ones, and the personality components which ordinarily exist in the structure of the psyche as potential psychic organs now become amalgamated with the fateful, individual variants realized by the individual in the course of his development.

The development of the persona is the outcome of a process of adaptation that suppresses all individually significant features and potentialities, disguising and repressing them in favor of collective factors, or those deemed desirable by the collective. Here again, wholeness is exchanged for a workable and successful sham personality. The "inner voice" is stifled by the growth of a superego, of conscience, the representative of collective values. The voice, the individual experience of the transpersonal, which is particularly strong in childhood, is renounced in favor of conscience. When paradise is abandoned, the voice of God that spoke in the Garden is abandoned too, and the values of the collective, of the fathers, of law and conscience, of the current morality, etc., must be accepted as the supreme values in order to make social adaptation possible.

Whereas the natural disposition of every individual inclines him to be physically and psychically bisexual, the differential development of our culture forces him to thrust the contrasexual element into the unconscious. As a result, only those elements which accord with the outward characteristics of sex and which



conform to the collective valuation are recognized by the conscious mind. Thus "feminine" or "soulful" characteristics are considered undesirable in a boy, at least in our culture. Such a one-sided accentuation of one's specific sexuality ends by constituting the contrasexual element in the unconscious, in the form of the anima in men and the animus in women, which, as part souls, remain unconscious and dominate the conscious-unconscious relationship. This process has the support of the collective, and sexual differentiation, precisely because the repression of the contrasexual element is often difficult, is at first accompanied by typical forms of animosity towards the opposite sex. This development, too, follows the general principle of differentiation which presupposes the sacrifice of wholeness, here represented by the figure of the hermaphrodite.

Similarly, as we saw, the formation of the shadow, the dark side of the personality, is partly determined by adaptation to the collective conscience.

The training of the will and the pursuance of directed and disciplined action at the cost of unconscious, instinctive reactivity is equally necessary for the adaptation to reality demanded of the growing child. Once more there is a repression of emotional components. The passion and affectivity of the small child give way to the control of affects and the repression of feeling observable in well-brought-up children.

The formation of all these "authorities" strengthens the ego, consciousness, and the will, and, by more or less insulating the instinctual side, leads to an increased tension within the personality. The identification of the ego with consciousness robs it of contact with the unconscious and thus of psychic wholeness. Consciousness can now claim to represent unity, but this unity is only the relative unity of the conscious mind and not that of the personality. Psychic wholeness is lost and is replaced by the dualistic principle of opposites which governs all conscious and unconscious constellations.

In a sense, therefore, the development and cultivation of consciousness required by the collective constitute at the same time

a process of uprooting. The inner collective tie to the instincts must in large measure be given up, and, as a secondary security for the ego, new roots must be sunk in the subsoil of the collective and in its ruling canon of cultural values. This process of transplantation means moving from instinct-centeredness to ego-centeredness, and any failure here brings a crop of developmental disorders and illnesses.

Progression through the archetypal phases, the patriarchal orientation of consciousness, the formation of the superego as the representative of collective values within the personality, the existence of a collective value-canon, all these things are necessary conditions of normal, ethical development. If any one of these factors is inhibited, developmental disturbances result. A disturbance of the first two factors, which are specifically psychic, leads to neuroticism; a disturbance of the other two, which are cultural, expresses itself more in social maladjustment, delinquency, or criminality.

The average child not only survives this process of uprooting, but derives from it an enhanced inner tension. Relative loss of unity, polarization into two psychic systems, insulation of the inner world and the building up of authorities within the personality may be productive of conflict, but they cannot be said to lay the foundations of any neurotic development. They are on the contrary normative, and it is their absence, or rather their incompleteness, that leads to illness.

A certain one-sidedness of development favorable to consciousness is largely characteristic of our specifically Western psychic structure, which therefore includes conflict and sacrifice from the start. At the same time, however, such a structure has the innate capacity to make the conflict fruitful and to endow the sacrifice with a meaning. Centroversion expresses itself in the psyche as a striving for wholeness which, as life goes on, balances the one-sidedness of the first half by a compensatory development during the second half. The tensional conflict between conscious and unconscious, provided that the natural compensatory tendencies of the unconscious are at work, leads



to a steady growth of personality; and, with an intensification of the conscious-unconscious relationship in such a maturing personality, the original conflict is replaced by an ever richer and more complete synthesis.

But, to begin with, the differentiation and division which we found to be necessary in the development of mankind are also necessary for the individual, who in his own development retraces the old paths that mankind has trod. The tension arising from his inner psychic polarization forms the personality's energy potential and relates him to the world in two ways.

As ego consciousness increases there is a progressive transference of libido to the world, a cumulative "investment" of it in external objects. This transference of libido derives from two sources: on the one hand from the application of conscious interest by the ego, and on the other hand from the projection of unconscious contents. Whenever the energy-charge of unconscious contents becomes excessive, they discharge themselves from the unconscious and are projected. They now approach the conscious mind as world-animating images, and the ego experiences them as contents of that world. In this way projection results in an intensified fixation to the world and to the carriers of the projection.

This process is particularly noticeable in puberty. Activation of the unconscious, which at this period occurs as a parallel symptom to psychophysical change, manifests itself in the increased activity of the collective unconscious and of the archetypes; it far exceeds the activation of the sexual sphere, and its manifestations consist not only in the danger of invasion, as evidenced by the frequency of psychoses at this period, but more particularly in a newly fledged and passionate interest in everything suprapersonal, in ideas and ideals of universal import, which many people evince only at this period of heightened activity in the collective unconscious. Puberty is further characterized by a change of emotional tone, a feeling for life and the world more akin to the universal oneness of the dawn than to the mood of the modern adult. This lyrical animation

and the relatively frequent emergence of mythological motifs in the dreams and poetic compositions of this period are typical symptoms of the activation of the collective unconscious layer.

But since the compensatory working of consciousness is also heightened in puberty, it is only with markedly introverted or creative natures that there is any direct perception of the movement in the unconscious. Generally it passes off behind the dividing wall between the ego and the unconscious, and only faint radiations reach the conscious mind. Besides radiating out into interest and feeling, the activated unconscious also makes itself felt through "fascinating" projections which initiate and guarantee the next stage of normal development.

The most important projections at this period are of the anima or animus, the contrasexual imagos lying dormant in the unconscious, which now become activated. These glamorous images are projected into the world and sought there, thus constellating the problem of a partner, the main theme during the first half of life.

### *Activation of Collective Unconscious and Ego Changes in Puberty*

The detachment from the parental imagos, i.e., from the real parents, which has to be effected in puberty, is caused, as the primitive rites of initiation show, by the activation of the archetype of the transpersonal or First Parents. This activation is utilized institutionally by and for the collective, in the sense that the latter requires and assists the projection of parental archetypes upon transpersonal contents which are also recognized as transpersonal realities. That is to say, the relation to the figure of the master, teacher, and leader—in a word, the *mana personality*<sup>6</sup>—is, as a projection of the father archetype, no less important than the projection of the mother archetype upon one's country, or upon the community, the Church, or a political

<sup>6</sup> Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious."





movement. Henceforward the life of the adolescent who has emerged from the family circle into the collective will largely be claimed and used by these contents.

The criterion of being "grown up" is that the individual is led out of the family circle and initiated into the world of the Great Life-Givers. Accordingly, puberty is a time of rebirth, and its symbolism is that of the hero who regenerates himself through fighting the dragon. All the rites characteristic of this period have the purpose of renewing the personality through a night sea journey, when the spiritual or conscious principle conquers the mother dragon, and the tie to the mother and to childhood, and also to the unconscious, is severed. The final stabilization of the ego, toilsomely achieved stage by stage, has its counterpart in the final dispatch of the mother dragon in puberty. Just as the detachment of the anima from the mother is effected in real life at this point in ontogenetic development, and the mother's importance is eclipsed by that of the soul-partner, so this time normally sees the conclusion of the fight with the mother dragon. The reborn is reborn through the father principle with which he identified himself in the initiation. He becomes the father's son without a mother, and, inasmuch as he is identical with the father, he is also the father of himself.<sup>7</sup>

Through the prepubertal period the ego has gradually been taking up a central position; now, in puberty, it finally becomes the carrier of individuality. The detachment from the unconscious—so far as this is necessary for the production of tension between the two systems—is complete. The puberty initiations are an expression of the activated collective unconscious, which is now linked to the community, since, in these rites, the archetypal canon is handed down as the spiritual world of the collective by the elders who represent "heaven." In this way the neophyte, even when not vouchsafed a personal revelation, as he is in the "guardian spirit" initiations among the North Ameri-

<sup>7</sup> The partial relegation of these puberty rites to early childhood is a typical sign of patriarchally toned cultures. Here the mother is replaced by the father at the very beginning of life, in the rites of circumcision and baptism, so that the maternal sphere is consciously and decisively narrowed.

can Indians, is led to a new experience of his central position within the collective. Being initiated and being grown up mean being a responsible member of the collective, for from now on the suprapersonal significance of the ego and the individual is built into the culture of the collective and its canon.

### *Self-Realization of Centroversion in the Second Half of Life*

The first condition of this development is the successful termination of the hero fight, when the victor unites himself with the suprapersonal forces which appear to him in the spiritual world of initiation. The neophyte feels himself to be the heir to this world, for whose sake he takes up the earthly struggle. Whether he effects his separation from the world of the unconscious by giving recognition to the world of religion and ethics, or by his acceptance of taboos and religious laws, is a matter of secondary importance.

Victory means the self-generation of masculinity, and, like the dragon slayer, the victor is rewarded with the princess. Now that he has reached adulthood, and sexuality has become admissible, the beloved takes the place of the mother. He now has a sexual role to play, and he has at the same time to pursue an individual as well as a collective aim.

The first half of life is largely taken up with adapting to the powers of the outside world and their suprapersonal demands. The projection of the archetypes of the First Parents, and of the anima and animus, alone makes it possible for consciousness to develop in a worldly direction. It is the fascination of the archetypal images operative "behind" the lure of external reality that gives the psyche its outward gradient, a characteristic feature of all normal development in this phase.

This phase of development is marked by the gradual unfolding of consciousness and the multiplication of relationships to reality. The underlying trend is given by nature herself, and it





corresponds to those inborn instincts and psychic mechanisms which promote the growth and stabilization of consciousness. The very fact that the unconscious, as it becomes activated in puberty, is literally turned "inside out" through the natural processes of assimilation and projection is an instance of this same trend.<sup>8</sup>

After puberty, the normal adult has a firm but resilient ego consciousness with a relatively large amount of free libido at its disposal, well insulated against the inroads of the unconscious without being incapsulated, and, in proportion to its capacity and libido-charge, positively orientated to a greater or lesser portion of the objective world. Consciousness and personality are formed, in extraverts and introverts alike, by their progressive mastery of the world and adaptation to it. An exception is the creative individual, in whom there is a surcharge of unconscious activity but whose conscious capacity is able to withstand this surcharge, and the neurotic in whom, for whatever reason, conscious development is disturbed.

The absence in our culture of rites and institutions designed, like the rites of puberty, to smooth the adolescent's passage into the world is one reason for the incidence of neuroses in youth, common to all of which is the difficulty of facing up to the demands of life and of adapting to the collective and to one's partner. The absence of rites at the climacteric works in the same way. Common to the climacteric neuroses of the second half of life is the difficulty of freeing oneself from worldly attachments, as is necessary for a mellow old age and its tasks. The causes of these neuroses are therefore quite different from, indeed the opposite of, those occurring in the first half of life.

Whereas in the first half of life the central position of the ego does not allow the workings of centroverson to come to consciousness, the middle period is characterized by a decisive change of personality. Centroverson becomes conscious. The ego is exposed to a somewhat painful process which, starting

<sup>8</sup> The naturalness of this development is also proved by the analysis of developmental difficulties and neurotic disturbances in adult life.

in the unconscious, permeates the entire personality. This psychological mutation with its symptomatology and symbolism Jung has described as the individuation process, and he has amplified it with a wealth of material in his works on alchemy.

We can say, then, that with the phenomenon of the second half of life the personal development of centroverson enters upon a second phase. Whereas its initial phase led to the development of the ego and to the differentiation of the psychic system, its second phase brings development of the self and the integration of that system. But, although the transformation process runs in the opposite direction to the development which took place during the first half of life, the ego and consciousness are not disintegrated; on the contrary, there is an expansion of consciousness brought about by the ego reflecting upon itself. It is as though the ego were restored to its original position: it emerges from its monomaniac self-obsession and becomes once more the vehicle of the totality function.

The unconscious activity of the self dominates the whole of life, but it is only in the second half that this activity becomes conscious. While the ego is being built up in early childhood there is a gradual centering of consciousness, with the ego as the representative organ of wholeness. In puberty the individual, as an ego, feels himself to be the representative of collective wholeness. He becomes a responsible member of the collective, and between them there exists the same creative relationship as between the ego and the unconscious. From puberty up to the time of the climacteric, a period of active expansion which goes into reverse at the onset of the second half of life, the outward dialectic is conducted between individual and collective. Then, with individuation, comes the mastering of the inner dialectic between the ego and the collective unconscious.

In the integration process the personality goes back along the path it took during the phase of differentiation. It is now a question of reaching a synthesis between the conscious mind and the psyche as a whole, that is, between the ego and the self, so that a new wholeness may be constellated between the hitherto



diametrically opposed systems of conscious and unconscious. All the differentiations and personality components that were built up during the first half of life, when consciousness was developing, are now un-built. However, this does not take the form of a regression such as occurs in the phenomenon of mass recollectivization (see Appendix I), but is an integration in which the expansion and development of consciousness are simply continued in a new direction.

In this transformation process—which not only occurs in the conscious form of the individuation process, but, through the self-regulation of the psyche, also governs the maturation of all personality—the ego reaches consciousness of the self. With the growing self-awareness of the ego, the self evolves out of its unconscious activity and arrives at the stage of conscious activity. The path of transformation followed by the individuant resembles the hermetic process in alchemy; it is a new form of dragon fight culminating in a qualitative change of consciousness. The mythological stage which we called "Transformation, or Osiris," becomes a psychological reality when the conscious mind experiences the unity of the psyche.

In contrast to the previous deflation of the unconscious, differentiation, and the formation of an outward gradient to the collective, we now have deflation of the world, integration, and the formation of an inward gradient to the self. During the first half of life the impersonal and unconscious life of childhood had to mold itself into the personal life of the adult, who, while maintaining his position in the collective, must give a central place to the ego sphere, whether this be the sphere of personal achievement, human relationships, power, or creative work. This phase of personality development, dominated by the ego, is followed by another in which the assimilation of transpersonal and supra-personal contents leads to a shifting of the center from the personal ego, the center of consciousness, to the self, the center of the total psyche.

The integration of all the authorities of the personality within this total psychic unity joins to the conscious mind those parts

which were split off or had never been attached to it at all; and this process activates the emotional components as well as putting an end to secondary personalization. Although this development normally proceeds without impairing the integrity of consciousness, the crises and dangers involved are similar to those which threaten the primitive ego and may, in unlucky cases, even destroy the personality. Here, too, emotional and archetypal invasions threaten the ego as, on its heroic journey to the underworld, it voluntarily discards the limitations and defenses of conscious development. For instance, behind the parental imagos there now loom the primary archetypes, and the figures encountered become more various, more complex, more enigmatic and equivocal as the journey progresses. Just as the personality gives up the primacy of its specific sexuality and, by assimilating the anima or animus, regains its original hermaphroditism, so the archetypes lose their unambiguous character in a multiplicity of contradictory meanings. In contrast, however, to the primitive situation there is now a consciousness capable of experiencing them in all their polyvalency and paradoxicality, whereas formerly they would have led to its extinction. In the evolution of mankind the spontaneous expression of the unconscious through the natural symbol took precedence; but now, concurrently, we meet the phenomenon which Jung designates with the name of the "uniting symbol" and the "transcendent function."<sup>9</sup>

The uniting symbol is a product of a special situation in which, instead of the creativity of the unconscious predominating, as it does wherever natural symbols appear, the crucial factor is rather the attitude of the conscious ego, its stability in face of the unconscious. As a product of the transcendent function, the uniting symbol resolves the tension—of energy and content—existing between the ego stability of consciousness and the contrary tendency of the unconscious to overwhelm it.

The uniting symbol is therefore a direct manifestation of centroversion, of the individual's wholeness. Under the creative

<sup>9</sup> *Psychological Types*, def. 51.



influence of new and hitherto inactive elements the conscious and unconscious positions are overcome, i.e., "transcended." The uniting symbol is the highest form of synthesis, the most perfect product of the psyche's innate striving for wholeness and self-healing, which not only "makes whole" all conflict—provided that it is taken seriously and suffered to the end—by turning it into a creative process, but also makes it the point of departure for a new expansion of the total personality.

Jung observes: "The stability and positiveness of individuality, and the superior power of unconscious expression, are merely tokens of one and the same fact."<sup>10</sup> Stability and positiveness of individuality: that means the strength and integrity, also the moral integrity, of the conscious mind, its refusal to let itself be cast down by the demands of the unconscious and of the world. But the "superior power of unconscious expression" is the transcendent function, the creative elements in the psyche which can overcome a conflict situation not soluble by the conscious mind, by discovering a new way, a new value or image. Both together are an expression of the fact that a total constellation of the psyche has been reached, in which the creativeness of the psyche and the positiveness of the conscious mind no longer function like two opposed systems split off from one another, but have achieved a synthesis.

This synthesis of the psyche is frequently accompanied by symbols representing the new unity of opposites, such as the symbol of the hermaphrodite. The hermaphroditic nature of the uroboros reappears here on a new level.

As in alchemy the initial hermaphroditic state of the *prima materia* is sublimated through successive transformations until it reaches the final, and once more hermaphroditic, state of the philosophers' stone, so the path of individuation leads through successive transformations to a higher synthesis of ego, consciousness and the unconscious. While in the beginning the ego germ lay in the embrace of the hermaphroditic uroboros, at the end the self proves to be the golden core of a sublimated uro-

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

boros, combining in itself masculine and feminine, conscious and unconscious elements, a unity in which the ego does not perish but experiences itself, in the self, as the uniting symbol.

In this process there is a "sublimation" of the ego as it realizes its connection with the self, a connection which appears more than once in the paradoxical identity of Horus and Osiris. In the self the ego knows itself immortal, and in itself mortal; the connection between the two comes out in the Talmudic saying "Man and God are twins,"<sup>11</sup> and also in the symbolism of the father-son and mother-daughter identity. By ceding its pretensions to uniqueness and its central position to the self, the ego, as its indirect representative, becomes "king of this world," just as the self is "king of the spirit-world."

The first phase of this process of "Osirification" and transformation, which is equivalent to the individuation process, still lies within the domain of the hero archetype; it is the phase of the dragon fight and of the *hieros gamos* with the anima. These two together constitute the preliminary stage of transformation which ends with the production of the self, of unity, as an inward act of self-generation and glorification. The introjection of the hero archetype, the union with the soul, the founding of the kingdom that "is not of this world," and the birth of the king are as much the mysteries of alchemy as of the individuation process.<sup>12</sup>

The act of self-generation which takes place right at the beginning of life, when ego consciousness frees itself from the devouring embrace of the dragon of the unconscious, has its counterpart in this rebirth of the ego as the self, when, in the second half of life, it breaks free from the embrace of the world dragon. The dragon fight of the first period begins with the encounter with the unconscious and ends with the heroic birth of the ego. The night sea journey of the second period begins with the encounter with the world and ends with the heroic birth of the self.

This last phase of conscious development is no longer

<sup>11</sup> Talmud, Sanhedrin 46 b.

<sup>12</sup> Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, index, s.v.





archetypal, i.e., collectively conditioned, but is individual. Archetypal materials may have to be assimilated as well, but they are assimilated consciously and by an individual who attains self-experience through his unique and idiosyncratic union with the transpersonal worlds within and without. It is no longer the unconscious, purely collective world of the uroboros that now dominates the ego, nor the conscious, purely collective world of the community, but both are combined and assimilated in a unique way. Whereas the fragmentary ego finds itself a mere atom tossed between the vast collective worlds of objective psyche and objective physis, the ego united with the self experiences itself anthropomorphically as the center of the universe.

After passing through all the phases of world-experience and self-experience, the individual reaches consciousness of his true meaning. He knows himself the beginning, middle, and end of the self-development of the psyche, which manifests itself first as the ego and is then experienced by this ego as the self.

This self-experience of the ego, however, is bound up with "everlastingness," with immortality, as in the Osiris myth. The wholeness that comes into being as a result of the individuation process corresponds to a profound structural change, a new configuration of the personality. Whereas in the first half of life there was a tendency to differentiation and ever-increasing tension at the expense of wholeness, the integration process tends towards increased stability and a lowering of tension. This trend of development is in accord with the natural maturation of all living structures. It has biological as well as physical equivalents. The genesis, stabilization, configuration, and consolidation of the personality are therefore associated with a symbolism whose ingredients are perfect form, balance, harmony, solidity. The mandala, whether appearing as the circle, sphere, pearl, or symmetrical flower, contains all these elements; while diamond, stone, or rock, as symbols of the self, represent the indestructibility and permanence of something that can no longer be split apart by the opposites.

But where the accent does not lie so much on indestructi-

bility, eternity, and immortality, the stability of the psyche appears to be that of a living organism which grows, develops, and renews itself. Hence the decrease of tension between the opposites points rather to the agreement and harmony of the forces at work, to a qualitative change rather than to a quantitative diminution of their power. Here as everywhere, maturity denotes a transformation of quantitatively stronger tensions into qualitatively higher and more stable structures.

Structural wholeness, with the self as center of the psyche, is symbolized by the mandala, by the circle with a center, and by the hermaphroditic uroboros. But this uroboric circle now has the luminous core of the self for a center. Whereas in the beginning the uroboros existed at the animal level only, so that the ego germ contained in its midst was almost hidden, in the unfolding flower of the mandala the animal tension of opposites is overcome, transcended by a self which blossoms forth into a corolla of opposites. At the beginning of the development, consciousness was all but extinguished by the crushing superiority of the unconscious; at the end, it is broadened and strengthened by its connection with the self. This combination of the self with the stability of the ego serves to subdue and bind in a magic circle all contents, whether of the world or the unconscious, outside or inside.

The self-differentiating structure of the psyche is reflected in a world cleft asunder by the principle of opposites into outside and inside, conscious and unconscious, life and spirit, male and female, individual and collective. But to the maturing psyche, slowly integrating itself under the sign of the hermaphroditic world, too, assumes the appearance of the hermaphroditic ring of existence, within which a human center takes shape, be it the individual who comes to self-realization between the inner and outer worlds, or humanity itself. For humanity as a whole and the single individual have the same task, namely, to realize themselves as a unity. Both are cast forth into a reality, one half of which confronts them as nature and external world, while the other half approaches them as psyche and the unconscious,





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spirit and daemonic power. Both must experience themselves as the center of this total reality.

We began with the ego in the womb of the parental uroboros dragon, curled up like an embryo in the sheltering fusion of inside and outside, world and unconscious. We end, as in an alchemical picture, with the hermaphrodite standing upon this dragon: by virtue of its own synthetic being it has overcome the primal situation, above it hangs the crown of the self, and in its heart glows the diamond.

But only when the conscious development of mankind as a whole, and not merely of single individuals, has reached this stage of synthesis, will the supra-individual uroboros situation truly be overcome, and with it the collective danger of the dragon. The collective unconscious of mankind must be experienced and apprehended by the consciousness of mankind as the ground common to all men. Not until the differentiation into races, nations, tribes, and groups has, by a process of integration, been resolved in a new synthesis, will the danger of recurrent invasions from the unconscious be averted. A future humanity will then realize the center, which the individual personality today experiences as his own self-center, to be one with humanity's very self, whose coming to birth will finally vanquish and cast out that old serpent, the primordial uroboric dragon.

## APPENDICES

