

Psychology Jung - Auszug

4.2.3 The Jungian Model

Jung has never presented a comprehensive summary of his model. His findings are scattered across the twenty volumes of his Collected Works. Therefore, our short review of his model must rely on a restricted selection of some of his texts and on other sources (Jung, 1972; Jacobi, 1973; Gray, 1996; Mazzarella, 2001).

When considering the Jungian model we should distinguish between structure, dynamics and function of the different elements of the psyche.

Concerning structure, the models of Jung (Fig. 13) and of Freud (Fig. 12) have several essential features in common, in particular the distinction between the conscious and the unconscious, the concept of ego as psychic structure with an unconscious and a conscious part and as interface for our interaction with the real world (actions, reactions). Yet there are also significant differences. Jung's concept of the unconscious is quite different from that of Freud. Though Jung divides the unconscious in two parts as well as Freud, the function of these parts is defined differently. Jung presents the personal unconscious as the domain of the complexes which form the unconscious part of the Ego. The other part, the collective unconscious, is the space of the archetypes, the central element of the Jungian model for which there is no equivalent in Freud's model. While the personal unconscious is specific to each individual, the collective unconscious is common to all human beings independently of their ethnic or racial affiliation. The complexes are the result of the interaction of the archetypes with psychic contents which "have split off from consciousness" (Jacobi, 2003, p. 45) or have reached the unconscious from the outside world by bypassing the consciousness. The personal unconscious is constantly updated by such contents. The unconscious is not accessible by directed thought.

The dynamics is maintained by the libido, the archetypes, and "enantiodromia". In the literature, very confusing definitions of libido are given. Most authors define libido as psychic energy. However, Jacobi distinguishes between psychic energy and psychic force (p. 57), but does not define what both are. From the point of view of a physicist, it seems appropriate to distinguish between psychic force and psychic energy as follows: an individual may have a strong will of realization, but a low psychic potential energy which is quickly consumed in a burst of effort. Hence it seems justified to retain both definitions. Contrary to Freud, Jung sees libido not restricted to sexual behavior, but as a generic psychic agent which can be active either in a constructive or a destructive way. The fact that libido is tied to genetic factors and the condition of the endocrinian system is, at present, uncontested.

Gray (1996) has characterized the role of the archetypes as that of "an unconscious infrastructure of psychic life" (p. 69). They act as psychic templates upon which the psychic activity builds in a non-transparent way. They manifest themselves indirectly as "primordial images" (Jung, Vol. 6: Definitions) or "as patterns of meaning that appear universally in myths, dreams and legends" (Gray, p. 50). They are "concentrators of libidinal energy, inherited predispositions to action and perception, possibilities of expression". Their function is to order and coordinate psychic contents and "to provide meaning to sensuous or inner perceptions" (p. 51), i.e. to present them to consciousness. They may also attract contents of consciousness and transform or interpret them according to unconscious biological or psychic needs of the individual (p. 51).

Enantiodromia, "Running in opposite direction", is a discovery of Jung based on the empirical observation that the different functions of the psyche compensate each other, e.g. a coercion on consciousness may provoke a compensatory counter-movement by the unconscious. The psychic functions form a self-regulating system similar to the endocrinian system of physiology, for instance, libido and existential anxiety are a compensatory couple.

After discussing the general characteristics of the Jungian psychology, what are the functions of specific archetypes?

- **Persona:** the "mask" which we present to others or the outside world in order to subsist and to be recognized. The persona reflects our relation to others and the world. On the one hand, the persona is essential for individuals in order to integrate themselves into society. On the other hand, if the persona dominates the ego, the individual may become either narcissic or tyrannic. A balanced psyche requires the control of the persona by the Self.
- **Shadow:** the dark side of the psyche; elements of our character which we hide unconsciously to

others and to ourselves and which are not acknowledged by the persona or the ego; the repressed elements are projected onto external circumstances, persons or institutions; when the individual is confronted with these repressed contents it may become aggressive, violent, criminal or unjust. The shadow reflects the state of the personal unconscious. Both Jacobi and Gray have pointed out that the shadow may be either personal or collective (Jacobi, p. 113). The shadow may also hide positive, undeveloped traits of a person.

- Animus/Anima: the component of the opposite sex in the psyche. It determines sentiments, moods, intuitions, creativity, relation to the other sex; projection of the contrasexual part of the psyche onto a person of the other sex. A woman is attracted by the rationality of a man, a man is attracted by the spirituality of a woman. As "inner guide" anima/us combine with the Self to guide the individuation process (see below).
- Self: the Self is both archetype as well as guiding instance of the totality of the psyche. As guiding instance it structures and orders the psyche and controls the balance between conscious and unconscious (reconciling paradoxes); as archetype it provokes and guides the individuation process; negative aspect: inflation (see below). The Jungian notion of the Self has no equivalent in the Freudian psychology
- Ego: the Ego is not an archetype, but grows out of the Self as consciousness. Ego (consciousness) and Self (as unconscious archetype) are complementary. The Ego is the center of consciousness. The fact that the unconscious keeps locked certain psychic contents limits the extent of consciousness. During adolescence Ego development has priority. However, if this process takes place out of control by the Self, it is doomed to failure. Thus, psychic health is characterized by an intact Ego-Self-axis (Edinger, 1992). If the contact with the Self gets lost, the individual is at the mercy of his unconscious, i.e. the archetypes deploy their destructive potential. The psyche of the individual will remain fragile. He will lack self-confidence and personal identity and suffer from existential anxiety.

The activity of the archetypes causes some typical patterns of behavior which require a closer look:

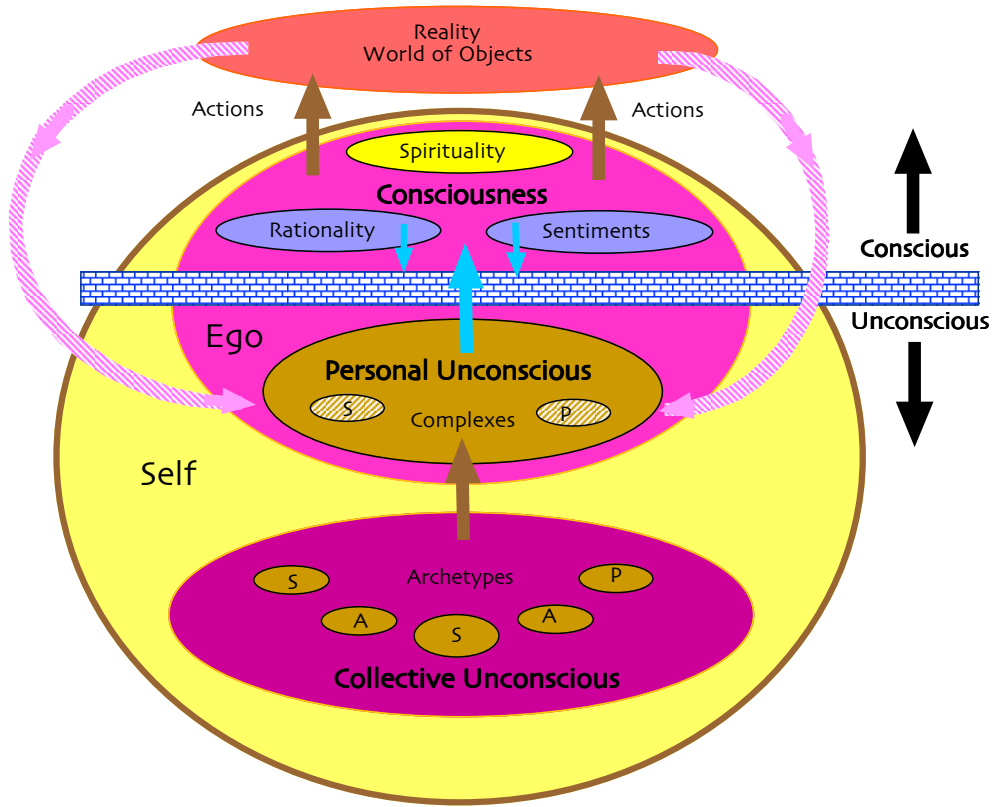
- Projection is a mechanism associated with the shadow archetype and existential anxiety. The mechanism of projection corresponds somewhat to "attack is the best defense". We project onto others our faults, frustrations or undominated problems which we do not want to recognize. Projection plays a key role in the relation of the individual with both himself and the others. Projection can take different forms depending on whether the libido is weak (passive response) or strong (active response). The passive response corresponds to the refusal of responsibility, e.g.:
 - refusal to take notice of reality, or to escape into illusions, distraction, consumerism
 - refusal to admit mistakes, omissions, hiding or deforming compromising facts, lying
 - addiction to drugs, alcohol, sex, playing with the iPhone, computer games, Internet, etc.
 - claiming „tokens of love“ from others: repeated visits in the medical practice or to the psychotherapist, asking members of the family to spend time with or ask friends to render a service more frequently than normal, provoking incidents requiring assistance or social welfare.

The active response corresponds to a kind of „attack is the best defense“. Note that not all of the active responses have a negative connotation:

- Seeking admiration by the public as cinema star, football player, solo musician, etc.
- Seeking a position of domination as manager, administrative officer, politician, army officer, police agent, eventually trying to exert their domination by creating germs of „participation mystique“ (see below)
- Attacking persons which are believed to have an intact Ego-Self-axis: verbal attacks, defamation, spreading of rumors, mobbing, triggering a scape-goat scenario, racism, denying a job to a person or giving notice to an employee for invalid reasons, exerting pressure on others by imposing undue rules and laws which limit their freedom
- violence, crime

Most people are affected by these symptoms only in certain domains of their behavior. In others they think and behave normally according to „common sense“. In all these cases, rational intelligence is at the service of the unconscious. The victims have little chance to defend themselves against what is done to them, because the aggressors are not aware that they are manipulated by their unconscious and, therefore, are convinced to be right. Since the symptoms described are not only at the origin of personal problems of people, but infect also their social relations, they also disturb profoundly the functioning of social systems. Projection becomes a problem for society, if the projecting person is endowed with power.

- Inflation and alienation (Edinger, 1992) - At birth, the new-born is in a state of wholeness, i.e. the Self and the Ego form an undifferentiated whole. During infancy and adolescence and, to some extent, during the first half of life the Ego differentiates out of the Self. During this phase of life, the psyche can take two opposite wrong turns, inflation or alienation. Inflation can occur, if the individual encounters no resistance against its actions or thoughts. It starts to overestimate its possibilities and forces. If the person is endowed with power, the result on the social plane can be tyranny, repression, violence or injustice. On the contrary, if the inflation encounters opposition and is frustrated, the Ego cannot develop and the individual finds himself in a psychic no-mans-land (alienation). The result is despair, depression, or addiction. The two states form a bistable system: the individual can switch from one to the other without notice. In both cases, the Ego-Self-axis is damaged or broken and the individual loses the contact with his Self. In a first instance, it is the task of education to find the right balance between freedom to allow the development of the Ego on the one side, and constraint to avoid inflation on the other. Later, the psychic constellation of the individual, in particular, the strength of his libido, becomes decisive for whether the individual is capable to maintain the contact with his Self or not. By the way, societies, too, may develop inflation or alienation.
- Participation mystique - Each individual is permanently exposed to the contradictory requirements of integrating himself into society on the one hand, and developing his individual identity on the other. Social integration is related to Ego development whereas development of individuality is related to the Self. Individuals with an intact Ego-Self-axis maintain their individuality and independence inside groups. Individuals with a fragile psyche (damaged Ego-Self-axis), however, suffer from existential anxiety and, therefore, try to compensate their deficiency by seeking confirmation by others. They try to join groups of people which are in the same condition. The affiliation to a group may still be beneficial for the individual, but it also means that the individual delegates the control of his destiny to the group. He is no longer capable to take decisions rationally and hence to assume the responsibility for his actions. If the behavior of the group takes a pathological turn, he gets automatically involved. The typical pathology of such groups is collective projection, i.e. the group can become vulnerable to manipulation by gurus or dictators, or it degenerates into violence (mobbing, search for a scapegoat, hooliganism, etc.). In these cases, the frustration is projected onto selected victims or institutions. The members of the group mutually encourage themselves to transgress the social norms, a behavior they would never dare to adopt individually. Participation mystique is an ubiquitous phenomenon in human social systems. It is the main problem of social systems.
- Individuation process - As life progresses, the priority changes from Ego to Self development. Some individuals may be endowed with a sane relationship with their Self during their whole life. Others lose the contact with the Self. This rupture of the Ego-Self-axis causes a complex of inferiority associated with a feeling of weakness which engenders existential anxiety. Without contact with the Self, a state of wholeness of the psyche is not possible, because the individual loses the contact with himself, i.e. with his inner world. Existential anxiety is the most important complex of the human being and, as we will see later, on the collective level, also of human society. It is the merit of Jung to have discovered that this development can at least partly be reversible. Suddenly, e.g. after critical situations, the Self claims its rights. It emits a signal to the mind by dreams, visions or simply by insights surging from nowhere. These requests may occur several times during life and may constitute a long term "logic" sequence with the goal to bring Ego and Self together again in a harmonious relationship. However, the requests are only initiating "can-openers". The individual becomes able to see some critical contents of his unconscious, not the unconscious as a whole. Then starts the cumbersome ethical work to overcome the corresponding behaviors, e.g. to withdraw the projections. A strong libido is required and a certain maturity, intelligence or simply common sense are helpful to progress on this path. If successful, the individual will overcome the existential anxiety and reach a state of inner peace. It can be supposed that Self and individuation have developed in order to compensate the fear of death which is more or less unique to man. However, the path of individuation is also lured by ambushes. An individual may be overwhelmed by the problems caused by the confrontation with the contents rising from the unconscious and may require psychotherapeutic help. Jung was aware of this problem and believed that, for persons in this situation, it would be best not to respond to the call of the Self and to ignore the messages linked to it. Incidentally, they may do so anyway unconsciously. In literature, music and art, marvellous descriptions of the individuation process exist. Dante's Divine Comedy is the most complete description of all the phases of the process (Mazzarella, 2001). Other examples are Homer's Odyssey or Mozart's "Enchanted Flute". With the notion of individuation, Jung has introduced an element of hope into the otherwise rather pessimistic note of the models of the psyche. Thus, the archetypal space becomes bipolar.



The Jungian Model of the Human Psyche