

C.G. JUNG'S THEORY OF ARCHETYPES

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The concept of psychological archetypes which was advanced by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, is in the centre of this article. In Jung's psychological framework, archetypes are innate, universal prototypes for ideas and may be used to interpret observations. A group of memories and interpretations associated with an archetype is a complex (e.g. a mother complex associated with the mother archetype). Jung treated the archetypes as psychological organs, analogous to physical ones in that both are morphological constructs that arose through evolution. At the same time, it has also been observed that evolution can itself be considered an archetypal construct. An archetype is a collectively-inherited unconscious idea, pattern of thought, image, etc., that is universally present in individual psyches, as in Jungian psychology; or a constantly recurring symbol or motif in literature, painting, or mythology (this usage of the term draws from both comparative anthropology and Jungian archetypal theory).

Key words: archetype, construct, Jung, pattern, model.

Концепция психологических архетипов, которая была выдвинута швейцарским психиатром Карлом Юнгом, находится в центре внимания этой статьи. По Юнгу, архетипы – это врожденные, универсальные прототипы идей и могут быть использованы для интерпретации наблюдений. Группа воспоминаний и интерпретаций, связанных с архетипом, является комплексом (например, комплекс мать, связанный с архетипом мать). Юнг рассматривал архетипы как психологические органы, аналогичных физическим тем, что они оба являются морфологическими конструкциями, которые возникли в процессе эволюции. В то же время, было также отмечено, что развитие само по себе может считаться архетипическим конструктом. Архетипы – это коллективные универсальные модели (паттерны), например, модель мышления, образа и т.д., или постоянно повторяющиеся символы или мотивы в литературе, живописи, или мифологии (это использование термина взято из сравнительной антропологии и теории архетипов Юнга).

Ключевые слова: архетип, констукт, Юнг, паттерн, модель.

Концепція психологічних архетипів, яка була висунута швейцарським психіатром Карлом Юнгом, знаходиться у центрі уваги цієї статті. По Юнгу, архетипи – це універсальні вроджені прототипи ідей і можуть бути використані для інтерпретації спостережень. Група спогадів та інтерпретацій, пов'язаних з архетипом, є комплексом (наприклад, комплекс матір, пов'язаний з архетипом матір). Юнг розглядав архетипи як психологічні органи, аналогічні тим, що вони обидва є морфологічними конструкціями, які виникли в процесі еволюції. Також було відзначено, що розвиток сам по собі може вважатися архетипічним конструктом. Архетипи – це колективні універсальні моделі (патерни), наприклад, модель мислення, способу і т.д., або постійно повторювані символи або мотиви в літературі, живопису, фбо міфології (це використання терміну взято з порівняльної антропології та теорії архетипів Юнга).

Ключові слова: архетип, конструкт, Юнг, патерн, модель.

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961) first proposed the theory of archetypes. Like his mentor, Sigmund Freud, Jung believed that all people possess an unconscious mind containing personal forgotten and repressed contents which Jung called complexes. Unlike Freud, however, Jung believed that the personal unconscious acted as a superficial layer of a much larger and deeper layer of the unconscious “which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn” (Jung, Archetypes 3). Jung called this deeper layer the collective unconscious, and its contents he called archetypes [2]. The archetypes form a dynamic substratum common to all humanity, upon the foundation of which each individual builds his own experience of life, developing a unique array of psychological characteristics. Thus, while archetypes themselves may be conceived as a relative few innate nebulous forms, from these may arise innumerable images, symbols and patterns of behavior. While the emerging images and forms are apprehended consciously, the archetypes which inform them are elementary structures which are unconscious and impossible to apprehend. Being unconscious, the existence of archetypes can only be deduced indirectly by examining behavior, images, art, myths, etc. They are inherited potentials which are actualized when they enter consciousness as images or manifest in behavior on interaction with the outside world [4].

Carl Gustav Jung was born July 26, 1875, in the small Swiss village of Kessewil. His father was Paul Jung, a country parson, and his mother was Emilie Preiswerk Jung. He was surrounded by a fairly well educated extended family, including quite a few clergymen and some eccentrics as well. The elder Jung started Carl on Latin when he was six years old, beginning a long interest in language and literature – especially ancient literature. Besides most modern western European languages, Jung could read several ancient ones, including Sanskrit, the language of the original Hindu holy books.

Carl was a rather solitary adolescent, who didn't care much for school, and especially couldn't take competition. He went to boarding school in Basel, Switzerland, where he found himself the object of a lot of jealous harassment. He began to use sickness as an excuse, developing an embarrassing tendency to faint under pressure. Although his first career choice was archaeology, he went on to study medicine at the University of Basel. While working under the famous neurologist Krafft-Ebing, he settled on psychiatry as his career. After graduating, he took a position at the Burghoeltzli Mental Hospital in Zurich under Eugene Bleuler, an expert on (and the namer of) schizophrenia. In 1903, he married Emma Rauschenbach. He also taught classes at the University of Zurich, had a private practice, and invented word association at this time!

Long an admirer of Freud, he met him in Vienna in 1907. The story goes that after they met, Freud canceled all his appointments for the day, and they talked for 13 hours straight, such was the impact of the meeting of these two great minds! Freud eventually came to see Jung as the crown prince of psychoanalysis and his heir apparent.

But Jung had never been entirely sold on Freud's theory. Their relationship began to cool in 1909, during a trip to America. They were entertaining themselves by analyzing each others' dreams (more fun, apparently, than shuffleboard), when Freud seemed to show an excess of resistance to Jung's efforts at analysis. Freud finally said that they'd have to stop because he was afraid he would lose his authority! Jung felt rather insulted.

World War I was a painful period of self-examination for Jung. It was, however, also the beginning of one of the most interesting theories of personality the world has ever seen. After the war, Jung traveled widely, visiting, for example, tribal people in Africa, America and India. He retired in 1946, and began to retreat from public attention after his wife's death in 1955. He died on June 6 1961, in Zurich [3].

Theory of archetypes. The archetype is a crucial Jungian concept. Its significance to analytical psychology has been likened to that of gravity for Newtonian physics. Jung's theory divides the psyche into three parts. The first is *the ego* which Jung identifies with the conscious mind. Closely related is *the personal unconscious* which includes anything which is not presently conscious, but can be. The personal unconscious is like most people's understanding of the unconscious in that it includes both memories that are easily brought to mind and those that have been suppressed for some reason. But it does not include the instincts that Freud would have it include. But then Jung adds the part of the psyche that makes his theory stand out from all others: *the collective unconscious*. You could call it your "psychic inheritance". It is the reservoir of our experiences as a species, a kind of knowledge we are all born with. And yet we can never be directly conscious of it. It influences all our experiences and behaviors, especially the emotional ones, but we only know about it indirectly, by looking at those influences.

There are some experiences that show the effects of the collective unconscious more clearly than others: the experiences of love at first sight, of *deja vu* (the feeling that you've been here before), and the immediate recognition of certain symbols and the meanings of certain myths, could all be understood as the sudden conjunction of our outer reality and the inner reality of the collective unconscious. Grander examples are creative experiences shared by artists and musicians all over the world, or the spiritual experiences of mystics of all religions, or the parallels in dreams, fantasies, mythologies, fairy tales, and literature.

A nice example that has been greatly discussed recently is the near-death experience. It seems that many people, of many different cultural backgrounds, find that they have very similar recollections when they are brought back from a close encounter with death. They speak of leaving their bodies, seeing their bodies and the events surrounding them clearly, of being pulled through a long tunnel towards a bright light, of seeing deceased relatives or religious figures waiting for them, and of their disappointment at having to return to their bodies. Perhaps we are all "built" to experience death in such a way [3].

The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*. Jung also called them *dominants, images, mythological* or *primordial images*, and a few other names, but archetypes seem to have won over these. An archetype is an unlearned tendency to experience things in a certain way [3]. The origins of the archetypal hypothesis date back as far as Plato. Jung himself compared archetypes to *Platonic eidos*. Plato's ideas were pure mental forms that were imprinted in the soul before it was born into the world. They were collective in the sense that they embodied the fundamental characteristics of a thing rather than its specific peculiarities. In fact many of Jung's ideas were prevalent in Athenian philosophy. The archetype theory can be seen as a psychological equivalent to the philosophical idea of forms and particulars [4].

According to Jung, the archetype has no form of its own, but it acts as an "*organizing principle*" on the things we see or do. It works the way that instincts work in Freud's theory: at first, the baby just wants something to eat, without knowing what it wants. It has a rather indefinite yearning which, nevertheless, can be satisfied by some things and not by others. Later, with experience, the child begins to yearn for something more specific when it is hungry [3]. Jung listed five main forms of archetypes: 1) the Self; 2) the Shadow; 3) the Anima; 4) the Animus; 5) the Persona.

The ultimate pattern is *the Self*. For Jung it is the God image. Human self and divine self are incapable of distinction. All is Spirit. Images of Spirit abound. Wind and breath being two very common ones. The Spirit descends as a Dove upon Jesus in the wilderness. The voice declares to him: "You are my Son, my Beloved". This is an archetypal drama of the Self [1].

The most basic potential for patterning is *the Shadow Archetype*. This is the potential of experiencing the unconscious side of our unique personalities. As we move deeper into the dark side of our personality personal, identity begins to dissolve into "latent dispositions" common to all men. We experience the chaos which indicates that we are drawing close to the material structure of psychic life. This "Other Side" may be manifested in a wealth of images. The image of "wilderness" is fundamental. The Shadow is the easiest of the archetypes for most persons to experience. We tend to see it in "others". That is to say, we project our dark side onto others and thus interpret them as "enemies" or as "exotic" presences that fascinate. The Shadow is the personification of that part of human, psychic possibility that we deny in ourselves and project onto others. The goal of integration is to integrate the rejected, inferior side of life into our total experience and to take responsibility for it [1].

The second most prevalent potential patterning is that of *the Soul* (*Anima* is the female name for soul; *Animus* is the male name for soul). Here we meet our inner opposite. Males meet their Anima; females their Animus [1]. Jung saw men as having

one dominant Anima, contributed to by female members of his family, whilst women have a more complex, variable Animus, perhaps made of several parts [5]. *The Anima* may appear as an exotic dancing girl or a weathered old hag; the form generally reflects either the condition or the needs of our soul presently. *The Animus* may appear as an exotic, sensual, young man or as an old grouch [1]. The Anima/Animus represents our true self, as opposed to the masks we wear every day and is the source of our creativity [5]. Jung theorized the development of the Anima/Animus as beginning with infant projection onto the mother, then projecting onto prospective partners until a lasting relationship can be found [5].

The Persona represents our public image. The word is, obviously, related to the word person and personality, and comes from a Latin word for “mask”. So the Persona is the mask you put on before you show yourself to the outside world. Although it begins as an archetype, by the time we are finished realizing it, it is the part of us most distant from the collective unconscious. At its best, it is just the “good impression” we all wish to present as we fill the roles society requires of us. But, of course, it can also be the “false impression” we use to manipulate people’s opinions and behaviors. And, at its worst, it can be mistaken, even by ourselves, for our true nature: sometimes we believe we really are what we pretend to be! [3]

Jung said that there are a large number of archetypes. These are often linked to the main archetypes and may represent aspects of them. They also overlap and many can appear in the same person. For example:

1) Family archetypes: *The Father* - stern, powerful, controlling; *The Mother* - feeding, nurturing, soothing; *The Child* - birth, beginnings, salvation; 2) Story archetypes: *The Hero* - rescuer, champion; *The Maiden* - purity, desire; *The Wise Old Man* - knowledge, guidance; *The Magician* - mysterious, powerful; *The Earth Mother* - nature; *The Witch* or *Sorceress* - dangerous; *The Trickster* - deceiving, hidden; 3) Animal archetypes: *The Faithful Dog* - unquestioning loyalty; *The Enduring Horse* - never giving up; *The Devious Cat* - self-serving.

Archetypes seek actualization within the context of an individual’s environment and determine the degree of *individuation*. Jung also used the terms “*evocation*” and “*constellation*” to explain the process of actualization. Thus for example, the Mother archetype is actualized in the mind of the child by the evoking of innate anticipations of the maternal archetype when the child is in the proximity of a maternal figure who corresponds closely enough to its archetypal template. This Mother archetype is built into the personal unconscious of the child as a mother complex. *Complexes* are functional units of the *personal unconscious*, in the same way that archetypes are units for the collective unconscious [4].

Jung proposed that the archetype had a dual nature: it exists both in the psyche and in the world at large. He called this non-psychic aspect of the archetype *the “psychoid” archetype*. He illustrated this by drawing on the analogy of the electromagnetic spectrum. The part of the spectrum which is visible to us corresponds to the conscious aspects of the archetype. The invisible infra-red end of the spectrum corresponds to the unconscious biological aspects of the archetype that merges with its chemical and physical conditions. He suggested that not only do the archetypal structures govern the behavior of all living organisms but that they were contiguous with structures controlling the behavior of organic matter as well. The archetype was not merely a psychic entity, but more fundamentally, a bridge to matter in general. Jung used the ancient term of *unus mundus*; to describe the unitary reality which he believed underlay all manifest phenomena. He conceived archetypes to be the mediators of the *unus mundus*, organizing not only ideas in the psyche, but also the fundamental principles of matter and energy in the physical world. It was this psychoid aspect of the archetype that so impressed Nobel laureate physicist Wolfgang Pauli. Embracing Jung’s concept, Pauli believed that the archetype provided a link between physical events and the mind of the scientist. In doing so he echoed the position adopted by J. Kepler. Thus, the archetypes which ordered our perceptions and ideas are themselves the product of an objective order which transcends both the human mind and the external world [4].

Although the term “archetype” did not originate with Jung, its current use has been influenced by his conception of it. The idea of innate psychic structures, at one time a relative novelty in the humanities and sciences has now been widely adopted. Related concepts arguably include the work of Claude Levi-Strauss, an advocate of structuralism in anthropology, the concept of “social instincts” proposed by Charles Darwin, “the faculties” of Henry Bergson and the isomorphs of gestalt psychologist Wolfgang Kohler. In 1965 Noam Chomsky’s ideas of human language acquisition being based on an “innate acquisition device” became known to the world. Melanie Klein’s idea of unconscious phantasy is closely related to Jung’s archetype, as both are composed of image and affect and are a-priori patternings of psyche whose contents are built from experience.

Archetypal pedagogy was developed by Clifford Mayes. Mayes’ work also aims at promoting what he calls archetypal redlectivity in teachers; this is a means of encouraging teachers to examine and work with psychodynamic issues, images, and assumptions as those factors affect their pedagogical practices [4].

Archetypal psychology was developed by James Hillman in the late XXth century. It is in the Jungian tradition and most directly related to analytical psychology, yet departs radically. Archetypal psychology relativizes and deliteralizes the ego and focuses on the psyche, or soul, itself and the archai, the deepest patterns of psychic functioning, “the fundamental fantasies that animate all life”. Archetypal psychology is a polytheistic psychology, in that it attempts to recognize the myriad fantasies and myths – gods, goddesses, demigods, mortals, and animals – that shape and are shaped by our psychological lives. The ego is but one psychological fantasy within an assemblage of fantasies. Hillman was trained at the Jung Institute and was its Director after graduation. The main influence on the development of archetypal psychology is Carl Jung’s analytical psychology. It is strongly influenced by Classical Greek, Renaissance, and Romantic ideas and thought. Influential artists, poets, philosophers, alchemists, and psychologists include: Nietzsche, Henry Corbin, Keats, Shelley, Petrarch, and Paracelsus. Though all different in their theories and psychologies, they appear to be unified by their common concern for the psyche – the soul.

Criticism of Jungian Understandings. The French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Jacques Lacan, in his “return to Freud”, took issue with that aspect of “the thought of Jung, where the relation between the psychical world of the subject and reality are embodied under the term archetype”. He argued that “Jungianism – in so far as it makes of the primitive modes of articulating the world something that survives, the kernel, he says, of the psyche itself - is necessarily accompanied by a

repudiation of the term libido". Freud himself however had been well prepared to accept the existence of "a primitive kind of mental activity ... [on] the single analogy - and it is an excellent one - of the far-reaching instinctive knowledge of animals"; and it was indeed on the basis of "what Freud called 'archaic remnants' - mental forms whose presence cannot be explained by anything in the individual's own life ... inherited shapes of the human mind" that Jung had explicitly built his theory of archetypes. His specific and contrasting claim was that they were "not in any sense lifeless or meaningless 'remnants'. They still function, and they are especially valuable ... just because of their 'historical' nature". [4]

More general criticism of the concept of archetypes can perhaps be placed in two broad categories. There are those who deny any possibility of inherited ideas as unscientific - a point met (at least to some degree) by Jung when he insisted that it was instead the inherited propensity to generate representations that made the archetypes "the unconscious organizers of our ideas". But those who could accept such inherited propensities still found "a basic ambiguity in Jung's various descriptions of the collective unconscious. Sometimes he seems to regard the predisposition to experience certain images as understandable in terms of some genetic model ... about the way human beings experience the world. But he is also at pains to emphasize the numinous quality of this experience and there can be no doubt that he was attracted to the idea that the archetypes afford evidence of communion with some divine or world mind". Jung's last statements on that subject remained however firmly agnostic. "Many people would agree with me if I stated flatly that such ideas are probably illusions ... [but] the denial is as impossible to 'prove' as the assertion". [4]

A more technical objection derives from therapeutic practice, with the possibility arising that "an explanation of the archetypal situation ... may lead to inflation, if it is not linked to specific and personal emotional experiences". Some would go further, arguing that because "in Jungian theory, the psychologist's task is to lead others to see the timeless archetypal reality behind their personal psychological experiences ... using abstract, archetypal forces to explain human psychology", the result must inevitably be "a psychology which downplays the significance of human relationships". The patient is thus brought to realise that "what I did then, what I felt then, is only the reflection of that great archetypal dream, or epic story ... free of the individual pain of it", but at the price of individuality and human relationship, sacrificed for an unwillingness to "leave the safety of myth" [4].

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