



Constructing the collective unconscious

Stefan Gullatz, *Heidelberg, Germany*

Abstract: Innovative attempts at collating Jungian analytical psychology with a range of ‘post-modern’ theories have yielded significant results. This paper adopts an alternative strategy: a Lacanian vantage point on Jungian theory that eschews an attempt at reconciling Jung with post-structuralism. A focused Lacanian gaze on Jung will establish an irreducible tension between Jung’s view of archetypes as factors immanent to the psyche and a Lacanian critique that lays bare the contingent structures and mechanisms of their constitution, unveiling the supposed archetypes’ *a posteriori* production through the efficacy of a discursive field. Theories of ideology developed in the wake of Lacan provide a powerful methodological tool allowing to bring this distinction into focus.

An assembly of Lacan’s fragmentary accounts of Jung will be supplemented with an approach to Jungian theory via Žižek’s Lacan-oriented theory of the *signifying mechanism* underpinning ‘ideology’. Accordingly, the Jungian archetype of the self, which is considered in some depth, can begin to be seen in a new light, namely as a ‘master signifier’, not only of Jung’s academic edifice, but also—and initially—of the discursive strategies that establish his own subjectivity. A discussion of Jung’s approach to mythology reveals how the ‘quilting point’ of his discourse comes to be coupled with a correlate in the Real, a non-discursive ‘sublime object’ conferring upon archetypes their fascinating aura.

Key words: archetypes, Jung and Lacan, ideology, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, Žižek

Subsequent to the split from Freud, Jung founded his ‘analytical psychology’, with its characteristic reliance on myth, its focus on authenticity, the seamless gliding from visual imagery to thought that reveal a powerful tendency to naturalize the constructs of culture. Jung’s transformation of psychoanalysis into a species of religious discourse is uniquely vulnerable to a deconstruction through the spectrum of post-structuralist theory, in particular, a Lacanian critique of ideology.

Let us, however, begin by considering Lacan’s own take on Jung. Interspersed throughout Lacan’s work—from *Seminar I* and *II*, through to the *Écrits* and *Seminar XI*—there are several cursory references to Jung (Lacan 1977, p. 195; 1988, pp. 114–17; 1991, pp. 87, 210; 1994, p. 153). Despite the brevity of these remarks, there is a considerable consistency that allows us to establish the outlines of a Lacanian perspective on Jung with relative ease.

When mentioning Jung, Lacan usually reasserts Freud's rejection of a neutral, non-sexual libido, the conception of libido as a broad psychic 'interest'. In addition, however, Lacan also suggests that behind archetypal theory, we can discern Jung's own entanglement in the lure of the imaginary function. Despite man's higher faculties, the animal's cognition of nature in terms of imaginary forms remains present in him modelling his behaviour: 'Something of the ability to recognize his natural object, so apparent in animals, is present in man. There is being captured by form, being seized by play, being gripped by the mirage of life' (Lacan 1991, p. 87). Consciousness, gripped by the 'mirage of life', falls prey to the lure of reminiscences, of form. What links this primitive tendency to the arena of Jungian thought, if not precisely the theoretical construct of archetypes?

Thus, Jung has fallen into the trap of the Imaginary. During the mirror phase, when the ego is dialectically constructed in reference to the abstracted form, or *Gestalt*, of the m(other), as an *imago* which is taken in as one's own, the stage is set for a continual reciprocal alienation in the *other* that prefigures the later alienation into the symbol. In the field of imaginary symmetries in which it is constituted, the ego constantly requires another—to verify its existence. This structure is extended to the 'objects' of the ego which, too, can never be grasped as whole or self-contained, but always point to something else outside of themselves, as if they were placed into the infinite regress induced by a hall of mirrors. Thus, consciousness at the level of the ego is embedded in a fundamental imaginary matrix, so that man will be inclined to situate his specular objects in terms of the 'echoes' they produce. At this basic level, archetypes (be they Jungian or Platonic) spring from a tendency towards 'reminiscences' that is tied to the dialectical dynamics of the imaginary order. With a view to Platonic archetypes, Lacan notes: 'That is what a theoretical, or theorical, or contemplative, or Platonic thought refers itself to, and it isn't an accident that Plato places reminiscences at the centre of his entire theory of knowledge' (Lacan 1991, p. 87). Archetypal theories are rooted in some *genuine* intuition, in the depths of one's experience of the imaginary order. If the Platonic hypothesis is none the less a misconception, this is because the infinite regress of imaginary symmetries does not finally come to a halt in the Real of a natural phenomenon—the archetype wherein an imaginary fragment that has been placed into the inner 'hall of mirrors' would be anchored. The regress of imaginary semblances can never come to a halt in so far as it remains caught up in its own circuit, unmoored from any direct connection to the Real.

In his *Écrits*, Lacan at one point focuses more specifically upon Jungian archetypes, as well as Jung's characteristic notion of 'Wandlungen der Libido', and he identifies these concepts with the Imaginary within his schema of the subject:

one sees it on our schema stretched between o and o', that is, in the veil of the narcissistic mirage, eminently suited of sustaining with its effects of seduction and

capture whatever is reflected in it. If Freud rejected this mantic, it is at the point at which it neglected the directing function of the signifying articulation, which takes effect from its internal law and from a material subjected to the poverty that is essential to it.

(Lacan 1977, p. 195)

By identifying archetypes with the Imaginary, Lacan clearly denies them any real substance, making them appear as illusory as the imaginary ego itself. From a Lacanian point of view, the central problem with Jung's theory is the way in which he falsely situates the truth of the subject at the level of the (imaginary) ego, whereas this truth is realized 'beyond the wall of words' in the domain of the Other. The constitution of subjectivity is a function of the socio-historic symbolic, which determines, retroactively, the significance of any specular fragments that fall into its purview. Yet any knowledge of this constitutive dimension of the symbolic is ordinarily erased from consciousness, giving rise to a fundamental split in the psyche of the human subject—between the imaginary and symbolic orders—that may have facilitated the illusory ideal of a realm of timeless *archetypes*.

Jung intuitively understood the existential truth of man's alienating captivation in the imaginary register. According to Lacan, however, he proceeded to misconstrue the Imaginary by effectively substantializing it, by anchoring in the Real the fictitious layer of imaginary objectifications, in which man finds a first layer of identity. The Imaginary is by definition impermanent and dynamic, requiring a constant re-constitution in the *other*, yet, according to Lacan, Jung misunderstood this fluid register, structuring consciousness and behaviour, and transformed it into a metaphysical core of the psyche. Held in thrall to this error of perspective, he could then not fail but 'miss' the primacy of the socio-symbolic nexus in which the subject finds his/her 'truth'. It becomes clear why Jung's writing is so mesmerizing, why it could have exerted a hold over so many people: it is colourful and vivid because the image always predominates; Jung's trademark reliance on mythology serves as a perpetual *illustration*, a way in which images are absorbed into his discourse, appropriated and signified by it, so that they finally appear as expressions of an immanent 'essence', of the inner kaleidoscope of an archetypal soul. We may have encountered 'wise old men', in life or fiction, and Jung's appeal to an underlying archetype, that illuminates them with an ineffable transcendent meaning, cannot fail to appeal to our romantic side.

In this way, Lacan reveals Jung's central flaw: a failure to apprehend how the subject is, finally, little more than a 'place-holder' in a nexus of socio-linguistic relations and therefore empty, lacking in 'being'. However, we can now develop and extend this perspective by looking at ways in which the genuinely subjective dimension discarded by Jung, according to Lacan, might conceivably re-emerge—surreptitiously—in his work. To do this, we need to take a closer look at Jungian discourse, at the elaborate network of ideas and practices that sustain the community of Jungian scholars, analysts and

clients, and render Jungian theory an effective force in the world, arguably creating ‘Jungian subjects’ in the same way in which religious or socialist discourse creates a singular type of subjectivity. A Lacanian critique of ideology, in particular, will allow us de-construct the Jungian subject. Utilizing this methodology, we can identify two crucial aspects of Jungian archetypes: their contingency upon a symbolic construction and the *a posteriori* production of a non-discursive surplus, a sublime, *real* object that explains the charismatic, numinous aspect of archetypes, their function as a ‘guarantee’ of the consistency of the discursive edifice.

Ideology

It is a commonplace that ideology reduces a multiplicity of contesting views to a ‘totalitarian’ perspective, that it imposes a single hegemonic doctrine. In the wake of Lacan, post-structuralist theorists (Althusser 1984; Žižek 1989) have supplemented this commonplace with a sophisticated theoretical explication that identifies ideology as a ‘closed’ discursive form. Žižek considers the mechanisms that sustain an ideology, establishing its identity beyond any permutations taking place within it. He begins with an initial, ‘proto-ideological phase’, governed by semantic pluralism, which is reified into the totalized structure—or system—when the initial array of scattered, polyvalent terms, the meaning of which is non-determined in advance, is harmonized by the intervention of a ‘master signifier’—a signifier without signified (e.g., God). The master signifier serves to ‘quilt’ the dispersed terms into semantic unity. The difference between the terms of an effective ideological discourse and the initial anarchy of non-aligned, ‘floating’ signifiers could be illustrated apropos of the multiple meanings that are evoked by the emotive term ‘freedom’.

Contemporary capitalist conceptions of freedom hark back to classical liberal thinkers, such as John Stuart Mill, by identifying freedom with the privilege to be left alone, or to be able to choose as one pleases, and accordingly define liberalism in terms of the absence of any constraints on the freedom of movement of capital and labour, and according to the legal-formal framework guaranteeing freedom of expression. Sartre vehemently opposed this bourgeois conception, and instead thought freedom co-extensively with the heavy burden of existentialist self-determination. The Sartrean existentialist needs, precisely, to see through the falsity, or illusion, of bourgeois formal freedom, in order to be able to actualize himself as a free being (Aronson 2002). Hegel, too, emphasized that the (rational) motive of an action and the liberty of its execution are intimately tied. As for the liberal perspective, ‘Hegel thought this an utterly superficial notion of freedom, because it does not probe beneath the surface and ask why individuals make the choices they do’ (Singer 2000, p. 133).

We remain, potentially, outside of ideology, as long as we tolerate a certain level of indeterminacy, as long as we accept the ‘politics’ of debate as to the ‘true’ meaning of freedom. Now assume a master signifier in the Other—such as

‘God’ or ‘Nation’—intervenes in a set of open, semantically floating, terms. The moment we fasten ourselves to this signifier, we are ‘bound into’ the ideological field. The master word ‘quilts’ the field for us, endowing each of the initially polyvalent elements in the set with a metaphorical surplus, thereby unifying the newly over-determined signifiers, binding them into a system.

The master word becomes a central ‘knot’ of meaning, through which the dispersed terms are woven into a totality. Žižek’s example of socialist discourse, widely known through the propaganda machineries in the formerly Communist states of the Eastern bloc (Žižek 1989, pp. 100–04), serves to flesh out these notions. We begin with a set of polyvalent, proto-ideological elements, such as *freedom, democracy, market exchange, war*. The intervention in such a set of ‘Communism’ truncates the nuances from each term, identifying it with a single, fixed signified. Inflected in ‘Communism’, freedom begins to be apprehended, exclusively, as liberation from exploitation, so that the true freedom of the masses may, indeed, require the ‘firm hand’ of the state authorities.

This is poignantly exemplified by Bill Clinton’s visit to China in June 1998. When Clinton was lecturing students at Peking University on freedom and universal human rights, one of the students, echoing the official ideological line, responded, ‘In China, the prosperous development of the nation is actually the free choice of our people’ (*The Independent* 30 June 1998).¹

Further, Marxists regard the liberal pluralist system of elections as a charade, arguing that *democracy* can only be upheld by the robust rule, the ‘dictatorship’, of the proletariat, the only genuine expression of a people’s will. *War* is considered an inherent evil of class society, and only socialist rule can provide lasting *peace*; further, from the socialist perspective, *market exchange* guarantees inequality and has ruthless exploitation at its very core.

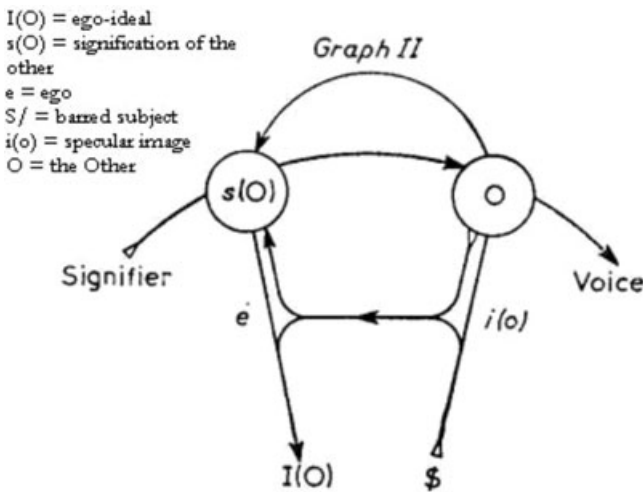
Through this signifying scheme, ‘Communism’, the ‘phallic’ exception within the set of signifiers, imposes an order upon the non-systemized terms, creating the coherent semantic framework of socialist ideology. An alternative semantic field is integrated by ‘Capital’², where, of course, the constituent elements acquire a different metaphorical surplus determination. Arguably, not unlike communism, capitalism involves a ‘garrotting’ of freedom, its corseting in a strictly economic reading, with only the point of reference shifting from the collective to the individual, who may (must) participate in ‘free’ markets, or engage in ‘free’ enterprise.

¹ According to Peter Singer: ‘Karl Popper has seen Hegel as a precursor of the modern totalitarian state. Popper argues that by exalting the rational state and using the concept of freedom in a way that denies that irrational choices are truly free, Hegel made it possible for later authoritarian rulers to justify their tyranny by saying that they must force their citizens to be free’ (Singer 2001, p. 135).

² It should be noted that the integration of the discursive fields of capitalism and communism is asymmetrical, insofar as socialist ideology tends to be openly propagated, whereas the master signifier ‘Capital’ tends to be disguised beneath the official discourses of democratic societies.

As no ideology can be justified by the fictitious *substance* that is invariably claimed for its origin—e.g., God, or Nation—the effectiveness of the ideological field rests exclusively upon the active participation of the subjects that constitute it. An ideology is ‘conceived’ when the collection of subjects composing a social group ‘posit’ the Other, fastening themselves to its master signifier. The effective ‘exercise’ of any social entity requires a communal auto-hypnosis (Sloterdijk 1988; Sloterdijk 1993).

Yet, although the pinning of the subject to the master signifier that represents him to the other is performative, it is crucial for this performative dimension to remain submerged, if the ideology is to extend its control successfully. The subject must fall under the spell of the ‘transferral illusion’, which will ensure that he/she will misidentify his involvement in an ideological discourse, interpret it as the ‘revelation’ of his/her concealed essence, something corresponding to the core of his being, that has ‘always already’ been there. This is the effect of the ideological anamorphosis, by which the imaginary ego is ‘captivated’ in the net of signifiers.³



In the symbolic register, time ‘runs backward’ because the identity of any term in the structure is contingent on the retroactive determination by a particular signifier, the master word that embodies the structure as a whole. Consider Graph II from *Subversion of the Subject and Dialectic of Desire*. The arrow running from left to right represents a signifier chain that signifies only, insofar as it has been subjected to the Other (O), so that it acquires its meaning, the established signification $s(O)$, only after the signifier chain has ‘pierced’ the Other.

³ ‘This is a retroversion effect by which the subject becomes at each stage what he was before and announces himself – he will have been – in the future perfect tense’ (Lacan 1977, p. 306).

Signification, according to Lacan, emerges as a retroactive ‘fall-out’, when the movement of a chain of signifiers has been completed, when its ‘significance’ is determined through the intervention of the third term in any linguistic transaction—the Other as the indispensable guarantor of meaning, which does not exist as such, but needs to be ‘posited’ by the participants in any discourse. This movement of semantic retroaction is symbolized here by the arrow that goes back from O to s(O).

Because this time frame has the imaginary ego (e), determined by, and captured in, the significations established by the Other *après le coup*, the subject at every stage ‘becomes what he was before and announces himself—he will have been—only in the future perfect tense’.⁴

Thus, an ideology takes effect when its subjects ‘self-impose’ a set of beliefs, while simultaneously falling under the spell of the transference illusion, as they apprehend themselves as the *addressees* of a call from the Other (in the guise of God, Nation, Communism, etc).

As the symbolic order is without origin, or extra-linguistic support, founded in nothing but its circular enunciation—the very essence of the Symbolic being a ‘synchronous’ network of differential signifiers suspended in a vicious cycle of self-reference—there is a constitutive gap between the Real and its symbolization. There is no language of the Real, so that no signifying mode predominates *naturally* over any other. In other words, the success of any particular ideology—20th century communism in the Soviet Union, capitalism in the West, theocracies in the Middle East etc—is the effect of the dialectics of power struggles, the movement of antagonistic social forces which will facilitate the ‘condensation’ of one particular system into the ruling discourse.

Accordingly, we bear witness to the successful closure of the ‘ideological loop’, when the inherent circularity of signification, its lack of any organic anchor, is missed by the participants in an ideology, when the ideological belief system is perceived as natural, as being, in fact, the antithesis to ideological thought. Suffice it to consider the post-Soviet era view that the new global hegemony of the Western model heralded an ‘end of history’ (Fukuyama), that a post-ideological era, structured quasi *naturally* by capital, had arrived.

As the Other doesn’t exist, signification forever encircles a constitutive void. Any ideological master word, the self-reflexive index of this void, marks the point where the absence of an extra-linguistic source of meaning is inscribed into the symbolic order itself. That is to say, the master signifier designates the site of an inversion of the ‘lacking signifier’ into a ‘signifier of lack’:

The element which represents, in the structure of the utterance, the immanence of its own process of enunciation is experienced as a kind of transcendent Guarantee, the element which only holds the place of a certain lack, is perceived as a point of

⁴ Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, Graph II, from the online site lacan.com, originally in *Subversion of the Subject and Dialectic of Desire in Écrits: A Selection*.

supreme plenitude. In short, pure difference is perceived as Identity exempted from the relational-differential interplay and guaranteeing its homogeneity.

(Žižek 1989, p. 99)

This notion, crucial to any critique of ideology—the central structural function of pure difference, assuming the guise of transcendent Identity—can be brought into focus through comparison with Hegel’s ‘concrete universality’, whose dialectical character forms an analogy to the ambivalence inhering in the master signifier of the symbolic. Take Hegel’s example, ‘God is God’, which reveals how the ‘universal genus’ is inherently split against itself, because it doesn’t pre-exist, but arises dialectically (Žižek 1991, pp. 46–48). Announcing that ‘God is God’ has the effect of ‘splitting’ Him into two, for until the phrase is complete, we expect a loving God, the genus of divine plenitude encompassing all particular elements of creation. However, instead of a set of descriptive adjectives qualifying God, as expected on the basis of ‘God is...’, the subject is then simply repeated. Following Hegel, Žižek shows how the first God is the opposite of the first, an unpredictable, Old Testament God representing the irrational.

‘God is God’ traces the self-deployment of the Absolute, the movement of the universal genus striving for a particular determination, coming across itself on the level of one of its species. God achieves identity-with-himself here, but only at the expense of a contradiction, an absolute difference that deprives Him of any predicates, supplementing the set of His positive particulars with a certain void. According to Lacanian theory, this nothingness is constitutive of the signifying mechanism as such, it is required to subjectify the symbolic order. Assertions such as ‘God is God’, or ‘Law is Law’ point to the original constitution of the symbolic field, which comes into being with a ‘totalitarian’, hegemonic gesture—which is irrational and subjective—rather than through an objective *explanation* of origin. ‘The Law is Law’, indeed, alludes to the cruelty at the base of the sphere of law, however enlightened in principle.

Each individual subject *is* this constitutive void in the symbolic order, and the phallic signifier functioning to fill in this void represents the subject to all the other subjects. For any particular to fill in the void, it must set itself apart from all other particulars in the set [here the range of positive attributes of God], and it can only accomplish this by *embodying* the genus in its negation. In this way, the particular that excepts itself from the structure—the master signifier that is either in surplus or in deficit, in relation to it—functions to represent the structure as a whole. Each master word ambivalently hides and alludes to symbolic lack.⁵

⁵ ‘This void comes into sight in the Hegelian subversion of the ‘principle of identity’: the identity-with-itself as expressed in tautology (‘God is God’, for example) is in itself the purest, absolute contradiction, the lack of any particular determination – where one expects a specific determination, a predicate (‘God is...’) one obtains nothing, the absence of a determination. Far from exhibiting a

The sublime *things* of ideology

The closure of the ideological loop, laid out above, rests on the abstraction of a signifying operation that would ordinarily be insufficient to guarantee the perpetuation of the ideological field, because the hidden difference/lack of the phallic signifier would be intuitively apprehended.

The purely discursive effect is therefore complemented when the symbolic phallus of an ideology acquires an 'objective correlative' in the Real, an object apprehended by the participants in the ideological discourse as an uncanny *surplus*, in which they can find their identity (e.g., literally an object, a notion and/or a set of social practices). The 'empty' master word therefore becomes coupled with a sublime mystery haunting the 'unconscious' of the ideological collective. According to Žižek, 'Therein consists the ultimate paradox of the Lacanian notion of cause qua real: it is produced ('secreted') by its own effects' (Žižek 1993, p. 124).

The sublime *Thing* of an ideological discourse, found to be in excess/deficit of any particular, determinate meaning, provides the subject with a Real anchor for his identity, giving him/her an 'objective correlative' to the merely abstract, semantic sense of self. This sublime object is manipulated by the ideological order in order to support it.

Consider, for example, Lenin's mummified remains in the Lenin mausoleum, a quasi-religious relic embodying and legitimizing Marxist ideology in the Stalin era Soviet Union. Alternatively, there is the terrible, fantasmatic notion of 'blood and toil' in nationalist discourse that supplements the pure, discursive effect with the condensation of a community's *enjoyment*. These sublimated objects of ideology are charged with a community's collective libido and serve to 'seal' the abstract dimension of beliefs—which has no existence in the Real—with a heavy sense of authority.

In reality, they are but a visceral embodiment of the vacuity of the master signifier of discourse.

According to Harrison, Bentham 'dreamed at a young age of founding a sect of philosophers called utilitarians and lived to see his dream fulfilled' (Harrison 2001, p. 123). We learn that 'he also planned that his body when he died should be made into what he called an 'auto-icon' (that is, a representation of itself) so that it could be used as a monument to the founder of the sect'.⁶ An 'auto-icon' is another name for a material correlate to the phallic signifier, so that Bentham himself has assumed the function of indexing his utilitarian creed:

kind of self-sufficient plenitude, tautology thus opens up a void in the Substance, which is then filled in by the Exception: this void is the subject, and the Exception represents it for all the other elements in the Substance. 'God is God' is therefore the most succinct way of saying 'Substance is Subject'. The repetition of the same adds to the divine predicates (wisdom, goodness, omnipotence) a certain 'nothing', a lack of determination which subjectivizes it – this is why only the Judaic-Christian God, the one of the tautology 'I am what I am' can be said to be subject' (Žižek 1991, p. 48).

⁶ Ross Harrison, *op. cit.*

This intention was also fulfilled, so that to this day meetings of Benthamites sometimes take place in the actual presence of Bentham himself (who spends the rest of his time in a glass box in University College London).

(*ibid.*, p. 123)

The Self

Jung gives his best accounts of the archetype of the ‘self’ in *Symbols of Transformation*, *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, and *Aion*, casting the archetype as a numinous image of psychic wholeness that becomes manifest in any authentic mystical or religious experience.

The self is conceived as a sublime ‘*conjunctio oppositorum*’, a paradoxical conjunction of metaphysical contradictions. In his early *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* (Jung 1916), Jung exemplifies the notion through the Gnostic God Abraxas (Lichtgott Luzifer), who comprises within himself both light and darkness, good and evil. In any actualization of the self, the contradictory elements of (human) nature—man’s animal and human nature, consciousness and the unconscious, the diabolic and the divine—are therefore subsumed into a unitary experience of mystical immanence. Any experiential realization of this unity is deemed to be formally prefigured in the collective psyche by the archetype of the self.

Thus, according to Jung, a whole iconographic panoply, pointing to a religious *transcendence*—the mandala, the animistic totem, the cross etc—functions to encode the *immanence* of the self archetype:

The cross, or whatever other heavy burden the hero carries, is *himself*, or rather *the self*, his wholeness, which is both God and animal—not merely the empirical man, but the totality of his being which is rooted in his animal nature and reaches out beyond the merely human towards the divine. His wholeness implies a tremendous tension of opposites paradoxically at one with themselves, as in the cross, their most perfect symbol.

(Jung 1952, para. 460; italics in original)

Accordingly, the ‘quest’ for the self matches a pre-existing unconscious ‘matrix’ that becomes manifest, or actual, in the entire domain of religion and mythology, so that the archetypal quest itself emerges as the one true theme of mythology. Following Jung, Ziolkowski identifies the search for God, or truth, as an ‘archetypal myth’ revealed in a spectrum of disparate mythological ‘motives’: the Argonaut’s search for the Golden Fleece, Captain Ahab’s obsessive hankering after the white whale, Orpheus’ search for Eurydice, or the sinister Faustian quest involving a contract with the Devil (Ziolkowski 1993, p. 169).

Jung’s own far-ranging research of recurring archetypal patterns in mythology is exemplified by his description of Moses as a seeker on a spiritual journey:

The Koran places Moses in the vicinity of the mythical ‘Khidr’ whom Jung deciphers as a projection of the archetypal Self (Jung 1949/1950, paras.

240–251). In the course of his quest, Moses takes to the sea. A fish escapes from his food basket returning to the ocean, whence it came. Jung reads the ocean as a symbol for the source of life, for a limitless residue of instinctual forces, and within this residue the ‘Khidr’ inhabits an island that has arisen from the depths of the sea, precisely where the fish originally disappeared, indicating that the island is symbolically tied to the vanishing of the fish. (A mystical Koran interpretation sets the Khidr in a middle position, between the upper and lower sea.)

Jung then identifies the source of life (sea) with a site of darkness—as the sea is dark in its depth (*Mare Tenebrositatis*)—in line with his theory of a birth of the self out of a primordial darkness. Spinning on his narrative thread, he proceeds from the Khidr, who is suspended between light and darkness, to the alchemical *nigredo* (darkness) which follows in the wake of the *conjunctio*, when the feminine has been subsumed into the masculine. The ‘stone’—alchemy’s symbol of the immortal self according to Jung—arises precisely from the *nigredo*, i.e., out of darkness. Accordingly, sources that liken the appearance of the ‘stone’ to fish eyes (*ibid.*, para. 246) are cited as evidence for an underlying connection between the Khidr and alchemical symbolism.

This stream of analogies creates the impression that both temporally and geographically disparate cultures have sought to express the same underlying archetype, although they have given it a variety of different, culture specific guises. Diverse cultures are thus unified by the collective unconscious of humanity, by the very metaphysical core in which man finds his deepest meaning.

Consider *Symbols of Transformation* where Jung describes the hero figure in various ‘primitive myths’. At first, he identifies the concept of the ‘hero’ in the narratives of the ‘primitives’ with his own archetypal self, and then extends this notion to the central figure of Christian mythology, Jesus. His reading of Christ as a symbol for the self leads him on to a discussion of ‘homoousia’—the question of the extent of Jesus’ identity with God—which he sees reflected in the identity of the personal with the supra-personal Atman (Brahman, the world soul) in the Indian religious tradition. Since ‘Atman’ reflects the universe as a whole, on the scale of the individual soul, the notion lends itself to a Jungian interpretation as an embodiment of the self archetype (Jung 1952, para. 612). Thus, when the Indian sage succeeds in his quest for enlightenment, he will have actualized within himself the timeless matrix of unity prefigured, *in potentia*, in the collective unconscious. Indeed, the assimilation of the self to consciousness, creating a sublimated awareness, conjures up an image of God:

The totality images which the unconscious produces in the course of an individuation process are similar reformations of an *a priori* archetype (the mandala). ...the spontaneous symbols of the self, or of wholeness, cannot in practice be distinguished from the God image.

(Jung 1951, para. 73)

The Jungian self points to the ‘untouchable, divine centre, the numen’ (Weaver 1977, p. 80), and its spontaneous symbols—e.g., the painting of a ‘mandala’ by a mental patient, or the intricate mandala-like shape of many historic town centres—correspond to the depths of the collective unconscious.

Across different cultures, we see the self emerge in differing symbols of an irreducible unity free from all forms of relativity, in symbols of wholeness or totality:

Wholeness is thus an objective factor that confronts the subject independently of him, like anima and animus; and just as the latter have a higher position in the hierarchy than the shadow, so wholeness lays claim to a position and a value superior to those of the syzygy.

(Jung 1951, para. 59)

This exposition of the self archetype may serve as the basis for a new reading, according to a Lacanian critique. The new vantage point opens up as soon as we see how Jungian theory is constituted dialectically, as a discourse, with the self as its *master word*, an empty, phallic signifier that fills in the void opening up when the ‘universal genus’—the posited transcendent totality of the psyche—comes across itself on the level of one of its particulars. Insofar as this ‘exceptional particular’ occupies the (empty) site into which the universal genus is inscribed, it semantically over-determines the others (archetypes and non-archetypal elements of psychic life), thereby integrating them into a meaningful frame. Yet the self also negates them, subsuming them into a diffuse totality. It functions as ‘a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy’ (Jung 1950, para. 634).

The self shapes the collective psyche, giving it the outline of a systematic structure; it functions to integrate this structure as its ‘organizing dominant’ (Jung). By designating the self, not without ambivalence, as a central point by which everything is arranged, and as sublime energy, Jung unknowingly unveils the ‘architecture’ guiding/underlying his discursive edifice: he delineates both the element that functions as the pivot from which the structure is suspended, and hints at the left-over of this operation of quilting the semantic field, an elusive ‘object’ denoting *jouissance*, associating the self with its radiant quality. To Jung, the self was a ‘sacred *numen*’, irreducible to further explanation, something that will remain a mystery, forever resisting any attempts at an adequate description—for as he noted—when we try to conceive this spiritual essence from within our Western rationalistic framework, we will face a vanishing point. In *Aion*, Jung conceives of the self’s characteristic coincidence of opposites as paradox, suggesting that this union can be apprehended only in terms of their annihilation. He regards paradox to be characteristic of all transcendent situations, because ‘it alone gives expression to their indescribable nature’ (Jung 1951, para. 124). This emphasis on paradox, as a ‘vanishing point’ of rational description, is crucial, for it can be seen to be a key factor

in accomplishing the ideological anamorphosis. Paradox denotes a certain semantic breakdown, a failure of transparent, or consistent, signification, and, as we have seen, Jung uses this notion strategically, to convey a sense of 'pregnant' meaning, a nameless state beyond words. Thus placed *beyond* hermeneutic access, the self acquires its transcendent quality. Here a critique of ideology needs to accomplish little more than a simple shift of perspective: away from viewing this archetype in terms of the 'mystique' of paradox, towards its apprehension as a self-reflexive inscription of radical impossibility. This would allow one to see how (Jungian) ideology elevates the symbolic order's *central void* of meaning, indexed by a purely functional, performative signifier, into its sublime object, the very object guaranteeing the homogeneity of discourse.

In analytical psychology, the sublime object typically materializing this void is the mandala. This mythic *thing* holds the status of an 'ex-timate' object representing enjoyment, the *jouissance* that has been retroactively 'secreted' through the interstices of the (Jungian) discursive edifice. If we but look at this apparent noumen slightly askew, we sense, beneath the appearance of sublime identity, the play of tautology dissolving into absolute contradiction. A Lacanian gaze thus transforms the semantic deadlock of paradox—entailing an apparent transcendence—into the self-reflexive 'phallic' tautologies described earlier, 'God is God' or 'Law is Law', that entail an 'obscene' indexing of the pure immanence of discourse.

Hence, we identify within the self-archetype the two slopes of the Lacanian symbolic phallus. This entity functions, in the first instance, to integrate the structural edifice by providing its nodal point, the knot of meaning '*to which everything is related*'. At this level, it represents the universal structure, acting as the 'envelope' that has been inscribed into the 'letter' as one of its elements. For this signifying operation to be effective, it needs to be coupled with a real-material correlate, an object appearing to embody a supreme Identity that transcends the differential opposition governing the other terms, e.g. the anima/animus pair. The self, a signifier of lack, represents the 'immanence of its process of enunciation': *the self is the self*. There is little reason why this element, along with its co-extensive sublime objects/practices), should not yield to the same critical deconstruction that has been applied to the sublime objects of other ideologies: the nationalists' 'blood and earth', or the wine and bread of the Eucharist, the sublime-real thing of Catholicism, its 'flesh and blood', the very element that supports the Catholic subject's identity beyond his adherence to dogma.

As we have seen, the 'master signifier' in the Other functions to transform the mythic, pre-subjective individual into a subject. When addressed with an ideological call, he/she (the mythic, pre-subjective subject) fastens himself to the signifier that represents him to the other(s) and, in this way, is integrated into the community of subjects, into an 'ideology' as a network of ideas that must be socially 'activated'. It can be shown that to Jung this process of subjectification culminates the moment a person actualizes the archetypal self.

To demonstrate how the injunction to actualize the self issued from within, almost like a primordial law, Jung once invoked the Greek terms *Daimon* and *Daimonion* which express ‘a determining power which comes upon man from the outside, like providence or fate, though the ethical decision is left to man’ (Jung 1951, para. 51). Jung regarded the self as an underlying potential, an archetypal matrix that exists ‘only in principle’, and that has to be assimilated to consciousness, actualized in a painful quest for ‘*individuation*’. This notion of individuation is evocative of the Lacanian nodal point of subjectification, the primordial law of the Name(No)-of-the-Father, intervening in the symbiotic mother-child dyad to construe the child as a differentiated social subject.

In *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*, which Jung wrote under the pseudonym Basilides, a Gnostic philosopher, we find an early example of this fateful interpellation. In *Septem Sermones*, Basilides addresses a group of dead people who return from Jerusalem where they ‘could not find what they have sought’. The return from Jerusalem represents not only the failure of the Christian tradition, but also the attempt of the dead—a cipher for those who have not attained understanding—to be enlightened by Gnostic wisdom. The seven speeches delineate a Jungian metaphysics stressing the importance of an individual path to salvation that requires an active quest. This call to return to one’s true inner roots may have been inspired in part by Schopenhauer’s distinction between the superficial level of linguistic terms and their systemization in creeds that could never lead to authentic knowledge on the one hand, and true visionary insight that reveals the essence of our being on the other. In this spirit, Basilides admonishes the dead. Had the dead not failed in their duty to develop their potential by actualizing their essential being (*Wesen*): ‘Difference is not in your intellect but in your being. Thus you should not strive for distinction in the way you think but in the way you are’ (Jung 1916 in Michels 1993, pp. 26–27; author’s translation).

Basilides intervenes between the dead and their expected blissful union with God that would have submerged their separate individual selves in the amorphous flux of the divine. In this way, he symbolically ‘castrates’ the Christian believer, cutting him off from a dyadic union with God; in so far as they join the herd of believers who take the dead, empty word of dogma at face value, they are ‘lost’. Instead, they must embark on an individual quest that will lead them to the true essence of their being. Isn’t Basilides (Jung) thereby designating the site where the mythic, pre-subjective individual is faced with a call from the big Other, ‘interpellated’ into a subject proper? Isn’t the mysterious ‘essence’ beyond dogma but a master word that allows an individual to pin him/herself to the symbolic order?

The very process of enunciation by which Basilides addresses his followers belies the alleged radical immanence. Those who take the mandate of self-actualization upon themselves do so in a dialectical response to the ‘word’. They become what they are, non-dogmatic seekers of their own inner spiritual

essence, in response to Basilides' sermon, and they proceed this way only because Basilides appears to be endowed with the authority of Other, because he speaks with a gravity of demeanour typical of 'the subject supposed to know'. Yet, because of the circular timeframe of the identificatory loop, because of the excision of any awareness of the constitutive nature of their 'act', what Jungians fail to see is how their '*truth arises from misrecognition*' (Žižek 1991), how their quest for individuation does not lead them to a discovery of their innermost being, but rather constitutes their identity in a field of signifying relations. In other words, the Self comes into being when a community of Jungians collectively pins itself to the master word.

It is always only through this 'synchronization' of a community in its relation to the Other that the social field acquires its efficacy in the real world (Sloterdijk 1988, 1993).

For the master signifier of the self to acquire any concrete efficacy, empirical individuals—positing the Other as its underlying guarantee—need to identify with it, they need to make the notion of individuation, of a psychic maturation leading to 'wholeness', their primary goal. One obvious route towards this constitution of a Jungian subjectivity is a Jungian therapy. Ordinarily, the therapist will begin by confronting the patient with the 'lower' archetypes, the shadow or the anima etc, trying to lead him to a realization of their pernicious role in his relationship dramas. The patient must be brought to an understanding that allows him to 'withdraw' his projections from empirical others in order to restore a vision of inner wholeness, prefigured in the collective unconscious by an underlying archetype, the self. Consider Hermann Hesse, a talented and internationally successful, yet also vulnerable writer, who subjected himself to an analysis by the Jungian therapist Dr. Lang in 1916/1917, following a nervous collapse (see Michels 1993). Hesse, who had been made aware of Jung's *Septem Sermones* by Lang, subsequently wrote a fictionalized memoir of his analysis, *Demian* (Hesse 1919), a work which espouses the realization of the self as the only authentic goal, superseding any other objectives, such as the political struggle. This work, along with numerous other texts by Hesse, such as *Zarathustras Wiederkehr*, had been deeply influential in the post WWI era, and beyond. Suffice to recall the Hesse renaissance in late 1960s, which contributed to the creation of a community of self-seeking individualists.

If we approach the problem from a Lacanian angle, which holds that there is no metalanguage, that the Other doesn't exist as substance, but is pure structural difference and has to be actively posited by the subject to be effective, then the Self does not exist as the a priori 'nucleus of meaning' envisaged by Jung. But in so far as it is posited by a Jungian subject against the background of the Other, stabilizing the socio-symbolic community of patients, analysts and scholars, it is the effective pivot of a discursive field from which is retroactively secreted a sublime objective correlative in the Real—in which the subject finds his support, in which his being is condensed.

Mythology

Septem Sermones, of course, is but a chapter in a wider story. In his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung revealed how the piece emerged: in the wake of an uncanny experience (Jung 1961, pp. 215–16) typical of the time of inner tension and disorientation that followed the publication of *Symbols of Transformation*, and the subsequent traumatic fall-out with Freud—roughly the years from 1912 to 1921. In the chapter ‘Confrontation with the unconscious’, Jung vividly evokes a contemplative turn away from the world, in favour of a deliberate surrender to a stream of potent phantasmagoria. Jung glossed this confrontation with a wide range of mythologically informed dreams and fantasies, seemingly emanating from the depths of the (collective) unconscious, as a ‘scientific experiment’ (ibid., p. 202). As he acknowledges, this experiment, stretched over so many years, entailed a potential for psychic chaos and dissolution, which he managed to contain, precisely, when he discovered that human development has a teleology, or goal: the self. A ‘numinous dream’ involving Liverpool, the ‘pool of life’ in Jung’s reading (ibid., p. 222), seems to have been another catalyst for the discovery of the central, or ‘centering’, function of the notion of psychic wholeness, of the ‘self’ as the endpoint of a process of psychic growth that is prefigured in the collective unconscious. Jung characterizes this discovery as the apotheosis of a dangerous biographical stage, and as the condition for his return to psychic equilibrium: ‘I knew that in finding the mandala as an expression of the self I had attained what was for me the ultimate. Perhaps someone else knew more, but not I’ (ibid., p. 222).

This designation of the mandala/self couple as his ‘ultimate’ possible insight, and a stabilizing reference point that allowed him semantically to order, and contain, the stream of imagery from the unconscious, enables us, not only to locate the *original source* of Jung’s master signifier, but also the point of transition from a mode of subjectivity to the incipient system, to the evolving discourse of his analytical psychology. That his own identification with ‘individuation’ genuinely manifests a perceived interpellation into subjectivity is underscored by how Jung sought to view his prolonged confrontation with the unconscious ‘*sub specie aeternitatis*’ (ibid., p. 219). It is significant that he felt this dramatic phase—including his withdrawal from university life, for the sake of his explorations, with all the risks involved etc—could be justified, if he viewed his life at this point *sub specie aeternitatis*, from the impossible vantage point, that is, of a metaphysical ‘outside’. In other words, Jung’s psychological lifeline during this period of contemplation and ‘self discovery’ was constituted by positioning himself *vis-à-vis* a transcendent Other. This recalls *Septem Sermones*.

The relation between Jung’s own identification with ‘individuation’ and wholeness, and his academic discourse, becomes evident at the end of the chapter ‘Confrontation with the unconscious’, as he explains that the ‘stream of lava’, the ‘primal stuff’, or ‘incandescent matter’ he uncovered in his

unconscious, he subsequently 'distilled' into 'the vessel of (his) scientific work' (ibid., p. 225). Fittingly, 'Confrontation with the unconscious' is followed by 'The work'. This, in turn by 'The tower'. The latter is a reference to the home Jung began to build for himself and his family in 1922 in Bollingen. Jung characterizes the relation between his work and the tower thus:

Gradually, through my scientific work, I was able to put my fantasies and the contents of the unconscious on a solid footing. Words and paper, however, did not seem real enough; something more was needed. I had to achieve a kind of representation in stone of my innermost thoughts and of the knowledge I had acquired. Or, to put it in another way, I had to make a confession of faith in stone.

(ibid., p. 250)

In a first approach, the terminology adopted in this statement, particularly the reference to 'faith', underscores the fundamental homology between the interpellation into subjectivity underlying religious discourse/ideology, and Jung's central point of identification with 'psychic wholeness'. Yet the statement also serves as an almost textbook illustration of the ideology-critical notion that 'the pure discursive effect' *per se* is insufficient to sustain an ideological edifice, that a real, non-discursive kernel of enjoyment, crystallizing in a 'sublime object', must be added to endow the edifice with ontological consistency. While this sublime object is often the mandala, in Jung's writing, another 'objective correlative' to the master signifier of psychic maturation emerges here, the Tower.

From the beginning I felt the Tower as in some way a place of maturation—a maternal womb or a maternal figure in which I could become what I was, what I am and will be. It gave me a feeling as if I were being reborn in stone. It is thus a concretization of the individuation process, a memorial *aere perennius*. During the building work, of course, I never considered these matters. I built the house in sections, always following the concrete needs of the moment. It might also be said that I built it in a kind of dream. Only afterwards did I see how all the parts fitted together and that a meaningful form had resulted: a symbol of psychic wholeness.

(ibid., p. 252)

Yet what is at stake here is precisely *not* a symbol—since we do not assume the existence of what is supposed to be symbolized—but rather a real correlate to Jung's 'phallic' metaphor, the self. This fascinating building will have been perceived by Jung as a sublime *object* corresponding to the *narrative* of the totality of the self, of what he 'was, is and will be'. This material correlate, however, is not to be taken as the tower itself, as a physical entity, but rather an object that is deemed to be in the tower 'more than the tower itself'—the kernel of impossible *jouissance* it is held to give substance to, which lends it its aura as a 'sublime object of ideology'.

Around this kernel, Jung 'constructed' the edifice of the collective unconscious. As Jung himself suggested, the strategies of identification elaborated

here underlie his scientific discourse. In the following, it will become clear how the notion of archetypes, Jung's personal nodal point, came to guide the microstructure of his approach to mythology.

Jung once likened his archetypes to the axial system of a crystal, the only element that remains constant amidst the mutations in the crystal's shape: 'The only thing that remains constant is the axial system, or rather the invariable geometric proportions underlying it. The same is true of archetypes. In principle, it can be named and has an invariable nucleus of meaning—but always only in principle, never as regards the concrete manifestation' (Jung 1938/1954, para. 155). As archetypes elude any direct phenomenological analysis, Jung was forced to embark on a painstaking search for their manifold 'projections', both in terms of individual psychology and in a wide range of mythologies, in order to find a confirmation for his theory. Perhaps this explains Lacan's remark on Jung's methodology: 'Freud isn't Jung. He doesn't spend his time finding all the echoes' (Lacan 1991, p. 131). Jung spent his time finding all the echoes.

Accordingly, his comparisons of cross-cultural material, aimed at confirming the assumption of an archetypal constitution of our psyche, were astonishing in scope, and he devoted a substantial portion of his career to an in-depth research of mythological sources. To assess this meticulous analysis of mythology, a brief reference to Lévi-Strauss, whose structural anthropology is based on very different principles, yet which is similarly aimed at decoding a variety of myths, might prove useful.

Central to structural anthropology is a notion of myth as an intricate structure, an elaborate system of differences, on the basis of which a given myth signifies. Lévi-Strauss (1973) thought that one of the ways of establishing the signification of a myth lay in determining the minute differences to the myths from neighbouring peoples. In a similar vein, Barthes (1970) conceived of mythology as a 'semiological system' that would only yield to a decoding according to structuralist principles. Structural anthropology, like structural linguistics, pivots on *difference* as the factor establishing meaning. This meaning does not, crucially, exist prior to the operation of the signifier, thereby excluding the possibility of archetypal properties. From a structuralist perspective, there is another key reason why archetypes do not enter into consideration: the number of conceivable permutations of mythic signifiers, with a corresponding number of signifieds, by far exceeds Jung's small set of archetypes, so that the signifying strategies upholding a given myth would elude a Jungian reading.

Yet Jung hoped to extract, from underneath the apparent heterogeneity of mythology, a limited set of universal, archetypal significations. His technique consisted in distilling a wide range of 'mythological themes' from the source texts relating to nature religions, classical Greek, Egyptian, Roman and Gnostic texts, medieval alchemy, Christian scripture and Far-Eastern philosophical texts etc, in order to, then, invariably, identify the mythological theme he had extracted with a particular archetype from the collective unconscious. There is

a revealing passage in *Symbols of Transformation* that demonstrates a circular mechanism essential to the Jungian method as far as the treatment of mythology is concerned:

Hitherto, the myth-interpreter has found himself in a somewhat unenviable position, because he only had exceedingly doubtful points at his disposal, such as astronomical or meteorological data. Modern psychology has the distinct advantage of having opened up a field of psychic phenomena, which are themselves the matrix of all mythology—I mean dreams, visions, fantasies and delusional ideas. Here the psychologist not only finds numerous points of correspondence with myth motifs, but also has an invaluable opportunity to observe how such contents arise . . . We can, in fact, discover the same multiplicity of meanings and the same apparently limitless interchangeability of figures in dreams. On the other hand, we are now in a position to establish certain laws, or at any rate rules, which make dream interpretation rather more certain . . . Furthermore, investigation of the products of the unconscious yields recognizable traces of archetypal structures which coincide with the myth-motifs, among them certain types which deserve the name dominants. These are archetypes like anima, animus, wise old man, witch, shadow, earth mother and the *organizing dominant, the self* . . .

(Jung 1952, para. 611; author's emphasis)

This reflection, denoting Jung's endeavour to set his theory in the context of a history of mythological research, gives us an intriguing insight into the structure of his thought. Prior to Jung, the 'myth-interpreter' has to resign himself to virtually insurmountable chaos, which he tries to unravel, vainly, because his application of doubtful, ad hoc techniques—correlating the mythological material with astronomical and meteorological data etc—from the outset precludes any consistent formalization, any *science* of mythology. Following on from the initial, failed endeavours of his predecessors, Jung introduces archetypal theory into the study of myth. He is confident that this step marks a milestone, that he has brought about a profound, qualitative change.

The distinction consists, precisely, in the universal range of the Jungian method, in its totalizing character. For in discovering the 'matrix of all mythology', Jung gives his explanation something akin to the conclusive character of Hegel's account of history. In the manner of Hegel or Schelling, who deemed that the unfurling of the absolute, its self-deployment in time, reached its destined apotheosis only when it became fully self-reflective in their own thought, Jung treats mythology as if it has, finally, become transparent through him. Whenever we read a mythological source text *with* Jung, it is as if we can thereby discern the authentic, underlying meaning that has always already been the true *raison d'être* of the text. In this way, the hitherto submerged 'intention' of the text—to reflect an element of the unchanging, archaic, kernel of our collective unconscious being—is again brought to light.

Note how adroitly Jung navigates between the particular and the universal. In identifying 'recognizable traces of archetypal structures' with myth-motifs, Jung closes a loop he opened up when he first decreed that the 'field of psychic phenomena' is the 'matrix of all mythology'. He effectively integrates a welter

of disparate perspectives into a unified semantic field. Within this field, a rich iconic diversity—the Khidr, the stone of alchemy, Christ and the Tao etc—begins to function as projections, or expressions, of an underlying archetype. The original openness of a wide range of possible, alternative meanings is closed, once Jung has totalized the hitherto ‘floating’ myths as embodied archetypes. In this way, mythology *does* acquire new contours that appear to speak to us of an underlying matrix, related to the collective unconscious. But this is the result of the curious temporality of the symbolic process, its retroaction, whereby the semantic determination of the mythic image [mythological theme] is established after the fact.

Yet, because the action of the signifier erases its own traces, we become receptive to the illusion of an archetypal essence hidden beneath the phenomenal surface of Jung’s mythological source texts. The mirage of the collective unconscious appears on the horizon, imposing itself as the truth of myth. In this way, the de-formation of the ‘text’ becomes a discovery.

The idea that mythology conveys a metaphysical inheritance of mankind is compelling and ‘makes sense’, but only within the global context of the already established discourse, for the appearance of archetypes within the mythological text is an effect that occurs ‘after the fact’. Thus, Jungians remain blind to the way in which archetypes simultaneously designate *and* constitute myth-motifs. This can be further illustrated with a reference to Lupton’s investigation of ‘motif’ in literary history. According to Lupton, the identification of a motif by literary critics is always performative. *Motif* retroactively constitutes a literary tradition, a telos that does not exist prior to the construction of a theme. Accordingly, ‘in terms of literary history, a later text causes earlier texts through the repetition and formalization of a motif thereby constituting a tradition of which it is the telos’ (Lupton/Reinhard 1993, pp. 150–51). Thus, she identifies this ‘*nachträgliche* construction of a cause’ as ‘the effect . . . of a radical failure of historical and linguistic connection and influence’ (ibid.).

Lupton here treats the concept of ‘cause’ in literary history synonymously with the pathological symptom in the Lacanian sense, such as a nervous tic, or a lapsus of speech, which is experienced as an eruption of the impossible-real, a traumatic gap in ordinary discourse. It is precisely the intrusion of the irrational that forces the subject to consider *why* it happened, to confront the issue of ‘cause’. Lupton shifts between the anatomy of an individual neurosis and a consideration of the way in which motifs in the ‘psychopathology’ of discourse are formalized, arguing that a literary tradition is *caused* by objectifying the traumatic gaps within it, gaps that, if looked at more closely, reveal a failure of relation prior to the *establishment* of telos. And in this precise sense, archetypes do not denote any underlying identifiers of the myths, but rather give a positive form to their failure of connection. Archetypal myth motifs are constitutive, they *cause* the discourse of Jungian mythology.

‘Archetype’ is at first merely an empty signifier integrating a set of dispersed mythological texts, yet subsequently it becomes, precisely by sublimating, or

materializing the ‘void’ of their non-relation, something else: an unattainable surplus, something ‘in the myth more than the myth itself’, which henceforth will connote mythology with an uncanny, sublime quality. Thus, the construction of Jungian discourse is non-symmetrical. In ‘secreting its cause qua real’, the operation produces a surplus of the real that escapes the net of signification. This intangible excess over meaning, a sublime substance presumed to inhabit the interstices of Jungian discourse, serves as the glue that holds his edifice together.

TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

Des tentatives innovantes de rapprochement de la psychologie analytique jungienne et d’autres théories « post-modernes » se sont avérées fructueuses. Le présent article adopte cependant une stratégie alternative; un point de vue lacanien sur la théorie jungienne qui ne cède pas à la tentation de réconcilier Jung et le post-structuralisme. Bien au contraire, ce point de vue lacanien ici adopté établit une tension irréductible entre la vision jungienne des archétypes en tant que facteurs inhérents à la psyché, et une critique lacanienne qui dévoile les structures et mécanismes présidant à leur constitution et postule à partir de l’effectivité de son champ discursif, la production *a posteriori* des archétypes. Les théories de l’idéologie développées dans le sillage de Lacan fournissent un puissant outil méthodologique qui rend possible la mise en lumière d’une telle distinction.

Ainsi, nous compléterons la compilation des allusions fragmentaires de Lacan à Jung par une approche d’orientation lacanienne de la théorie jungienne. Il s’agit de la théorie de Žižek du *mécanisme signifiant* sous-tendant l’« idéologie ». L’archétype jungien du Soi, envisagé à un certain niveau de profondeur, peut être considéré sous un nouveau jour, à savoir comme un « signifiant maître », non pas seulement de l’édifice théorique jungien mais aussi—et avant tout—des stratégies discursives qui fondent sa propre subjectivité. Une discussion de l’approche mythologique de Jung révèle comment le « point de capiton » de son discours forme un couplage avec un corrélat dans le Réel, un « objet sublime » non discursif, qui confère aux archétypes leur aura fascinante.

Das Bestreben, mit innovativen Ansätzen Konvergenzen zwischen C.G. Jungs Analytischer Psychologie und einem breiten Spektrum postmoderner Theorien aufzudecken, hat, wie die Literatur zeigt, durchaus signifikante Ergebnisse erbracht. Dieser Aufsatz verfolgt eine alternative Strategie: einen an Lacan geschulten Blickwinkel auf die Theorie von Jung, der jeden Versuch einer Vereinbarung Jungs mit dem Poststrukturalismus bewusst vermeidet. Es wird ein theoretischer Ansatz gewählt, der, Lacans Diskurskritik folgend, die *kontingenten* Strukturen und Mechanismen, welche die Konstitution von Archetypen bedingen, offenlegt und den *a posteriori* Charakter der scheinbaren Archetypen als Produkte eines Diskursfeldes aufscheinen läßt, was den irreduziblen Gegensatz zu Jungs Sicht der Archetypen als der Psyche immanente Faktoren aufzeigt. Ideologiekritische Theorien, die in der Folge von Lacan entwickelt wurden, liefern dabei ein wirkungsvolles analytisches Instrument, um diesen Gegensatz zu erschließen.

Der Aufsatz ergänzt also eine Zusammenstellung von Lacans fragmentarischen Kommentaren zu Jung mit einer Herangehensweise an Jung, die sich auf Žižeks an Lacan orientierter Theorie der semantischen Strukturen beruft, die jeder Ideologie zugrunde liegen. Entsprechend erscheint der Jungsche Archetypus des Selbst, der eingehend betrachtet wird, dann in einem neuen Licht, nämlich als ‘master signifier’, nicht nur des akademischen Diskurses von Jung, sondern auch—und ursprünglich—der diskursiven Strategien, die seine eigene Subjektivität begründen. Eine Betrachtung von Jungs Haltung zur Mythologie zeigt dann, wie der ‘point de capiton’ seines Diskurses ein Korrelat im Realen findet, ein nicht-diskursives ‘erhabenes Objekt’, das den Archetypen ihre auratische Dimension verleiht.

I nuovi tentativi di mettere insieme la psicologia analitica junghiana con una serie di teorie ‘postmoderne’ hanno ottenuto risultati significativi. In questo lavoro si adotta una strategia alternativa: un punto di vantaggio lacaniano sulla teoria junghiana che si astiene dal tentare di riconciliare Jung con il post-strutturalismo. Al contrario, uno sguardo lacaniano focalizzato su Jung stabilirà una tensione irriducibile tra il punto di vista junghiano che considera gli archetipi come fattori immanenti alla psiche, e una critica lacanianiana che mette a nudo le strutture contingenti e i meccanismi della loro costituzione rivelando la presunta costruzione a posteriori degli archetipi attraverso l’efficacia di un campo deduttivo. Le teorie dell’ideologia, sviluppatesi sulle orme di Lacan, forniscono un potente strumento metodologico che permette di mettere a fuoco tale distinzione.

Così un montaggio dei resoconti frammentari di Jung su Lacan verrà incrementato da un approccio alla teoria junghiana tramite la teoria di Žizek orientata in senso lacaniano del *meccanismo significante* sottostante l’ideologia’. Di conseguenza si può iniziare a veder l’archetipo del sé, considerato a una certa profondità, sotto una nuova luce, precisamente come un ‘significante principale’ non solo dell’edificio accademico junghiano ma anche—e inizialmente—delle strategie deduttive che stabiliscono una sua propria soggettività. Una discussione sull’approccio junghiano alla mitologia rivela in che modo ‘il punto di tessitura’ del suo discorso si incontra con un correlato nel Reale, un non-deduttivo ‘sublime oggetto’ che conferisce agli archetipi la loro aura affascinante.

Иновационные попытки сопоставления Юнгианской аналитической психологии с рядом «постмодернистских» теорий привели к значительным результатам. В этой статье применяется альтернативная стратегия: лаканианская точка зрения на юнгианскую теорию, сторонящаяся попыток примирить Юнга с пост-структурализмом. Напротив, сосредоточенный лаканианский взгляд на Юнга порождает непреодолимое напряжение между воззрениями Юнга на архетипы как факторы, имманентные психике, и лаканианской критикой, разоблачающей случайные, непредвиденные факторы и их составные механизмы, таким образом разоблачая продуцирование предполагаемых архетипов а posteriori через эффективность дискурсивного поля. Теории идеологий, развившихся в кильватере Лакана, предоставляют мощный методологический инструмент, позволяющий привнести это различие в поле зрения.

Так, сорание фрагментарных отзывов Лакана о Юнге будет дополнено попытками контакта с Юнгианской теорией через ориентированную на Лакана теорию Жижика о «значимых механизмах», поддерживающих «идеологию». Соответственно, Юнгианский архетип самости, считающейся некой глубиной, можно начать рассматривать в новом свете, а именно как «основное означающее», и не только в свете академической доктрины Юнга, но также и—изначально—в свете дискурсивных стратегий, давших начало его собственной субъективности. Обсуждение подхода Юнга к мифологии раскрывает, как «подбивка» его дискурса оказывает—ся—соединенной с коррелятом в Реальном, не-дискурсивном «тонком объекте», придавая архетипам их притягательную ауру.

Las novedosas tentativas de cotejar la psicología analítica Jungiana con una gama de teorías ‘postmodernas’ ha rendido resultados significativos. Este papel adopta una estrategia alternativa: una visión ampliada desde la perspectiva Lacanian de la teoría Jungiana propone una tentativa que evite reconciliar a Jung con el post-estructuralismo. Por el contrario, una mirada lacanian enfocada sobre Jung establecerá una tensión irreductible entre la visión de Jung de los arquetipos como factores inmanente de la psique, y la crítica Lacanian que yace bajo las estructuras y los mecanismos contingentes de su constitución, descubriendo el supuesto a de la producción de los arquetipos *a posteriori* por la eficacia del campo discursivo. Las teorías ideológicas desarrolladas tras Lacan proporcionan un poderoso instrumento metodológico que permite focalizar esta distinción.

Así, el ensamblaje de cuentas fragmentarias de Lacan sobre Jung será suplementada con un enfoque a la teoría Jungiana a través de la concepción de la teoría lacanian de Žižek, que establece *el mecanismo significante* oculto en la ideología. Por consiguiente, el arquetipo Jungiano del Self, considerado con alguna profundidad, puede empezar a ser visto bajo una nueva luz, a saber como un ‘significante magistral’, no sólo en el edificio académico de Jung, pero también—y en principio—como parte de las estrategias discursivas que establecen su propia subjetividad. Una discusión del enfoque de Jung sobre la mitología revela cómo el tejido de su discurso puede ser emparejado con lo Real, un ‘Objeto Sublime’ no discursivo que confiere a los arquetipos su aura fascinante.

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