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# Jung's shadow<sup>1</sup>

“I used to think that Carl Jung was a very wise man, that he didn't even need to be reborn. Now I think that he definitely has to be reborn – as a girl, in Ethiopia.” (a woman – in Jungian analysis)

## Introduction

When I was first informed about the theme of the 2002 Anglo-Franco-Belgian Meeting, I was unpleasantly surprised. Why on earth, I thought, dig up an old concept, and – moreover – transplant it into the collective sphere? It reminded me of the 1986 Congress in Berlin, at that time still split by the ‘Wall’, part of the Iron Curtain. That split is healed, is it not? But the reunification of Germany and the liberation of the countries of the Eastern bloc did not bring the long-awaited paradise. Apparently the projected ‘shadows’ have been reshuffled, and new wars and enemies turned up. In the Jungian community too, splits proliferated as never before. Did we learn nothing from the Berlin Congress lectures?

Then I thought: maybe it is *my* shadow that I am projecting. Or is it Jung's shadow, and the shadow of his oeuvre, that bother me? So I decided to redo an exercise which I practised a few times already: I went through Jung's writings, spotting all the places in which he made statements about the shadow. In the same way I earlier studied Gnosis, the ‘transcendent function’ and the *participation mystique*, and in all three cases the results were worthwhile: a lot of contradictions of course, but at the end of the ride the whole, once structured and put in dialectical interplay, made sense; the outcome was even inspiring. In this paper the reader will find the results of my latest investigations. But as a starter I propose two definitions of the shadow as they given by other authors.

## Prelude

The *Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis* (Samuels & al, 1986) provides us with an excellent entry on the shadow:

“In 1945 Jung gave a most direct and clear-cut definition of the shadow: ‘the thing a person has no wish to be’” (1946a, § 470). In this simple statement is subsumed the man-sided and repeated references to shadow as the negative side of the personality, the sum of all the unpleasant qualities one wants to hide, the inferior, worthless and primitive side of man's nature, the ‘other person’ in one, one's own dark side. Jung was well aware of the reality of evil in human life.

Over and over again he emphasises that we all have a shadow, that everything substantial casts a shadow, the Ego stands to shadow as light to shade, that it is the shadow which makes us human.

“Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. If an inferiority is conscious, one has always the possibility to correct it. Furthermore, it is continually subjected to modifications. But if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets corrected, and liable to burst forth suddenly in a moment of unawareness. At all counts, it forms an unconscious snag, thwarting our most well-meant intentions” (1940a, § 131).

It is to Freud that Jung gives credit for calling the attention of modern man to the split between the light and dark sides of the human psyche. Approaching the problem from a scientific angle and innocent of any religious aim, he felt that Freud uncovered the abyss of darkness in human nature that the enlightened optimism of Western Christianity and the scientific age had sought to conceal. Jung spoke of Freud's method as the most detailed and profound analysis of the shadow ever achieved.

Jung professed to deal with the shadow in a way different from the Freudian approach which he said that he found limited. Recognising that the shadow is a living part of the personality and that it 'wants to live with it' in some form, he identifies it, first of all, with the contents of the personal unconscious. Dealing with these involves one in coming to terms with the instincts and how their expression has been subject to control by the collective. Moreover, the contents of the personal unconscious are inextricably merged with the archetypal contents of the collective unconscious, themselves containing their own dark side. In other words, it is impossible to eradicate shadow; hence the term most frequently employed by analytical psychologists for the process of shadow confrontation in analysis is 'coming to terms with the shadow'.

Given the fact that the shadow is an archetype, its contents are powerful, marked by affect, obsessive, possessive, autonomous – in short, capable of startling and overwhelming the well-ordered ego. Like all contents capable of entering consciousness, initially they appear in projection and when consciousness is in a threatened and doubtful condition, shadow manifests a strong, irrational projection, positive or negative, upon one's neighbour. Here Jung found a convincing explanation not only of personal antipathies but also the cruel prejudices and persecutions of our time.

So far as the shadow is concerned, the aim of psychotherapy is to develop an awareness of those images and situations most likely to produce shadow projections in one's individual life. To admit (to analyse) the shadow is to break its compulsive hold" (Samuels & al 1986, 138-139).

The 'Glossary' added to Jung's autobiography is less extensive:

"The inferior part of the personality; sum of all personal and collective psychic elements which, because of their incompatibility with the chosen conscious attitude, are denied expression in life and therefore coalesce into a relatively autonomous 'splinter personality' with contrary tendencies in the unconscious. The shadow behaves in a compensatory way to consciousness; hence its effects can be positive as well as negative.

C.G.Jung: "The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly - for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies (1939b, § 513).

"The shadow is that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors and so comprise the whole historical aspect of the unconscious. (...) If it has been believed hitherto that the human shadow was the source of all evil, it can now be ascertained on closer investigation that the unconscious man, that is, his shadow, does not consist only of morally repressible tendencies, but also displays a number of good qualities, such as normal instincts, appropriate reactions, realistic insights, creative impulses, etc.'" (1951a, § 422-423).

I now invite the reader to a browse through Jung's statements about the shadow. As with most of his principal 'concepts', he never gave a comprehensive description of it. The short chapter in *Aion* (1951a) apparently constitutes an exception to this fact, but it does by no means summarise all the - plentiful - statements he made about the subject.

I classified Jung's remarks under different headings, which by and large correspond to the

elements contained in the Critical Dictionary; there are two exceptions though: the relationship between shadow and splitting, quite often referred to by Jung, is only indirectly mentioned in the Dictionary entry: splitting - the term is not explicitly used - is connected with 'the enlightened optimism of Western Christianity and the scientific age'. The relation between shadow and anima, considered by Jung as the nearly obligatory passage to the collective unconscious, is lacking. The relation between shadow and collectivities is touched upon by the reference to 'the cruel prejudices and persecutions of our time'. Finally I will add two sections: the shadow of the Jews as - horresco referens - described by Jung in 1933 (!), and some statements that Jung made on his own shadow.

I will conclude each chapter with my personal - critical - comments on Jung's shadow conception, at the risk of revealing some of my own shadow sides .... The reader who is familiar with Jung's writings may skip the first part of each chapter altogether, and move right on to the 'comments'.

So this will be the structure of this paper:

- The origins of the concept.
- The shadow as the 'inferior' part of the personality.
- Freud and the personal unconscious.
- Shadow and splitting.
- Shadow and projection.
- Miscellanea (6.1) Positive aspects of the shadow; (6.2) identification with the shadow; (6.3) shadow and typology.
- The shadow, 'complex' or 'archetype'.
- Shadow, anima/animus and collective unconscious.
- Ethical problems.
- Shadow and collectivity.
- The shadow in psychotherapy, the 'transcendent function', individuation and wholeness.
- The shadow of the Jews.
- Jung's shadow.
- Jung about consciousness.
- Tentative conclusions
- The origins of the concept.

## 1.1. General considerations

Jung uses the term 'shadow' in various ways: for the most part it refers to the particular psychic figure ('Gestalt') which he described, but every now and then it is used in its usual signification. To complicate matters there are some passages where it is now clear which of the two meanings is intended; as a matter of fact they overlap every now and then...

I did not succeed in establishing the exact moment in which Jung coined his 'shadow' concept. In 1911 (§ 166) he refers to the shadow as a dream motif, and in 1912 (289) he already mentions the 'shadow side' of the psyche. In his Psychological Types he shows the shadow side of one-sided philosophical systems (1921, § 76); in this work the unconscious is more or less equated with a shadow (1921, § 268), and in his typological descriptions he states that introverted people have an extraverted shadow, and vice versa (1921, § 271). Two texts (1917/1926/1943; 1922/1931) mention the Shadow, but I doubt whether their first versions did.

In 1925, in a letter to Oskar A.H.Schmitz, we find a new reference: Jung discusses the dreams

of Count Keyserling (a practical philosopher, who described his 'individuation' experience in one of his books); he tells his correspondent: "Do you think it was easy for him to bear the shock when he saw his shadow's face? I never met anybody who succeeded in this confrontation without a shiver, and who did not rave a little afterwards" (1925, 63).

In 'Woman in Europe' Jung states that masculinity in women is inferior, and so femininity in men; but these 'shadows' belong to the wholeness of the personality: the weak one must be able to be strong, the smart one dull (1927, § 261). Apparently Jung didn't yet sort out the Shadow from the anima and animus figures.

In 1931 Jung observes that some 'primitive' people tend to identify themselves with their real shadow: treading on somebody's shadow is an insult, and noon is the most dangerous moment of the day, since the shadows are the smallest then (1931, § 665)! The same idea can be found in the *Visions Seminars*: "But that shadow is by no means what we would call a shadow - a lack of light - rather, it is living thing of great mana, great power" (1930-1934, 11).

## 1.2. The Psychology of the Unconscious

'The **Psychology** of the Unconscious' causes a special problem: the text came into being in 1917, under the title *The Psychology of the Unconscious Processes. A Review of the Modern Theory and Method of Analytical Psychology*; it was slightly modified in 1918, revised and extended in 1926 (*The Unconscious in Normal and Pathological Life. A Review of the Modern Theory and Method of Analytical Psychology*); it finally received its definitive form and title in 1943. A comparative study of the different versions would certainly be very interesting in order to study the development of Jung's thought, but unfortunately I do not dispose of the texts of the first drafts.

The lack of information about former versions of Jung's writings in the *Collected Works* is most regrettable. Any historical search becomes extremely difficult, and so it is impossible to establish the genesis of the 'shadow' concept. I did the laborious exercise of comparing two versions of the same text once (Dehing 1982): I thoroughly studied the *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* in their first version (1911a & 1912), of which I much later found the English translation (1912), in comparison with the 1952 edition of *Symbols of Transformation* (1952b). This allowed me to witness the rather drastic way in which Jung uses to treat his former texts; I must admit that this does not facilitate the job of an editor who would try to present a historically sound presentation of the text and its (subsequent) alterations.

The letter to Oskar A.H.Schmitz (1925) may be considered a milestone in the development of the concept, I suppose that Jung strongly empathised with Count Keyserling: he too must have 'shivered' when confronted with his shadow, and he must have been familiar with the 'raving' that followed such confrontation. But I will return to Jung's own shadow later (13). Anyway, in *The Psychology of the Unconscious* too Jung states that opposites are each other's shadow (1917/1926/1943, § 78); this is especially the case for the pair of opposites introversion-extraversion (1917/1926/1943, § 81). Interestingly the 'shadow side' is linked to the Freudian, sexual factor: unconscious, infantile wishes may constitute an unrecognised side of the personality, an 'autonomous complex' which may cause nervous symptoms (1917/1926/1943, § 27). The recognition of this shadow side requires a moral stand: thus self-knowledge is enhanced, and hypocrisy reduced. The shadow side contains not only weaknesses, but also a positively demonic dynamism: the ascetic morality of Christianity disorganised man's animal nature (1917/1926/1943, § 35). Identification with this shadow may produce a collision with the unconscious, resulting in a Dionysian frenzy (1917/1926/1943, § 41). No wonder that the devil is presented as "a variant of the 'shadow' archetype, i.e. of the dangerous aspects of the unrecognised dark half of the personality"

(1917/1926/1943, § 152).

In dreams, the personal unconscious frequently appears in the shape of a shadow figure (1917/1926/1943, § 103). In a footnote, probably an addition in one of the latter versions, Jung defines the shadow as the ‘negative’ part of the personality, that is the sum of the hidden, unbecoming qualities, the poorly developed functions and the contents of the personal unconscious.

## 1.3. Comments

It seems rather obvious that the ‘shadow’ concept has various roots.

First of all it had to replace, in the language of analytical psychology, the *Freudian* ‘personal’ unconscious, in which the ‘sexual factor’ played a predominant part – as it did in most of Jung’s writings during his ‘psychological’ period. It is not at all clear whether these ‘sexual’ touches were only a concession of Jung towards his Viennese colleague. The Christian repudiation of ‘man’s animal nature’ certainly was a factor that – in Jung’s opinion – contributed to the creation of the shadow.

The ‘*feeling-toned complex*’, an important concept in Jung’s earlier work, seems to have served as a prototype for the shadow: as a matter of fact the ‘complex’ often strikes us by its relative autonomy – and by its ‘inferior, negative’ qualities (at least from the standpoint of consciousness).

Another root of the concept is to be found in his *typological studies*: the pair introversion-extraversion served as a model for the opposites that bring about a splitting of the human soul. The excessive emphasis laid by Western ‘modern’ science (the *Aufklärung*) on (rational) thinking led to a banishment of emotions and irrationality to the realm of the shadow.

All things considered, it appears from our excursion through Jung’s writings that the concept is not univocal – to say the least. But ...”The concepts of complex psychology are no intellectual formalisations, but designations for certain areas of experience; the shadow is an example of it” (1954a, § 485).

## 2. The ‘negative side’

### 2.1. The ‘inferior’ part

“The shadow is that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors and so comprise the whole historical aspect of the unconscious.”(1951a, § 422, quoted in 1961, p.417) The shadow is “a bad guy, a very poor fellow, who needs to be accepted.” Jung links this idea to the message of Christ (1930/1954, § 638), who preached charity for the fellow human being.

Individual consciousness is confronted with its own shadow, that is the inferior part of the personality. This aspect of the human personality is incompatible with the images one has about oneself, and is therefore mostly repressed (1953, § 1850).

The ‘man without a shadow’ is, statistically speaking, the most common human type, who imagines that he is only what he wants to know about himself (1947/1954, § 409). But when Joyce chaotically described, in his novel *Ulysses*, the cold shadow side of existence (1932b, § 169), the sombre greyness of psychic nihilism (1932b, § 172), Jung did not like the book at all: Joyce and Freud are negative prophets, he says; maybe their intervention was necessary in order to awaken their ‘mediaeval’ contemporaries (1932b, § 181), to release consciousness

(1932b, § 186).

One-sidedness is overcome by the realisation of the shadow, by becoming conscious of that inferior part of the personality; this term however – according to Jung – is unsuitable and misleading, whereas the term ‘shadow’ does not presume anything (1947/1954, § 409). Still the term ‘inferior’ appears quite frequently in his writings: ‘inferior’ man, ‘physical’, as opposed to ‘animated by vital breath’, ‘spiritual’<sup>2</sup> (1940b, § 244), inferior man (1952b, § 678), the inferior half of the personality, mostly and for the largest part unconscious (1946b, § 439), a second, puerile and inferior personality, a deficiency phenomenon that affects the conscious personality (1954a, § 469), the inferior of negative personality, as far as it can be empirically established (1955/1956, I, § 125, n.65), the ‘old Adam’, primitive man, the shadow of our present consciousness (1955/1956, II, § 270), the darkness of the unconscious, the inferior personality (1955/1956, II, § 312), the dark side of the personality, inferior wishes and motives, infantile fantasies and resentments, all traits one hides for oneself (1955/1956, II, § 338), the inferior personality, is highly unconscious (1958a, § 714, n 28). The shadow is also related to the fourth – inferior – function (1958a, § 775).

The shadow is closely linked to the body, a quite dubious friend, since it produces things that we don’t appreciate at all: there are so many things that touch the body, about which one cannot speak. Often it is the embodiment of this Ego shadow, the ‘dark point’ that anybody would like to get rid of. This shadow determines the ‘subjective components’ that colour our experience (1935, § 40). By the assimilation of the shadow, man becomes bodily in a certain sense: in this way his animal drives come into the beam of light of consciousness, as well as the primitive and archaic psychic (1946a, § 452).

## 2.2. Comments

‘Negative’, ‘inferior’, ‘bad’, ‘dark’, ‘physical’, imply their opposites: ‘positive’, ‘superior’, ‘good’, ‘light’, ‘spiritual’. The origin of these oppositions appears to be situated in *consciousness*, especially when it is one-sided, which – according to Jung - is more rule than exception: the realisation of the shadow is necessary to overcome the biasedness caused by consciousness.

On the other hand Jung equates Ego-consciousness with ‘superior man’, and shadow with ‘inferior’ man (1952b, § 678), or with the ‘inferior half of the personality’ (1946b, § 439). So the splitting and repressing agency itself is associated with the bright half of the personality, whereas the repressed, ‘negative’ or ‘inferior’, contents are considered to be dark: they are linked to the ‘old Adam’ (before the Fall?), to primitive man, to infantile fantasies and resentments, to the body (that ‘dubious friend’) and to the animal drive world.

Jung introduces some amendments though: on the one hand, the term ‘inferior part of the personality’ is misleading (1947/1954, § 409); on the other hand, instincts and drives are psychic existences too, creations with a symbolic character (1955/1956, II, § 270). Jung comes close here to the psychoanalytical approach to instincts and drives, except that psychoanalysts reserve the term ‘drives’ for the psychological aspects of the instinct.

## 3. Freud and the ‘personal’ unconscious

### 3.1. Freud and the Shadow

We already saw that Jung often equates the shadow with Freud’s ‘personal’ unconscious. Freud started his psychotherapeutic career with the ‘cathartic’ method, in which shadow elements came to the surface. Later he would shift to his ‘interpreting’ method (1929, § 143).

According to Freud, the dream only contains repressed elements, incompatible wishes, incestuous contents, all the filthiness one can think of (1929, § 144). So Freud's method consisted in a meticulous elaboration of the human shadow side; it was an antidote against idealistic illusions about human nature! But, can one account for the human being one-sidedly, proceeding from his shadow side alone? After all, the essential thing is not the shadow, but the body that produces the shadow (1929, § 145). Freud's reductiveness runs the risk of becoming destructive (1929, § 146); can we conceive of the unconscious as a sheer repository of all the nasty shadow aspects of human nature (1929, § 152)?

Adler was just as one-sided as Freud was: they explain neurosis, but also man, proceeding from the *shadow*, that is, from moral inferiority (1951b, § 250). Sexuality and will to power are rationalistic and materialistic interpretations. There is another 'drive': the striving for wholeness and unity, the 'religious' drive (1958a, § 641). Jung claims however that he is continuing in the direction that was inaugurated by Freud (1951b, § 254).

### **3.2. The 'personal' unconscious (Freud)**

"But if you can accept that shadow which is only the apparent non-ego, you will encounter more of the real non-ego in your later development. Of course, after a Freudian or Adlerian analysis, you may assume that you have acquired a full knowledge of yourself, but the next thing that happens is that you fall over an archetype" (1930-1934, 293).

The shadow appears as a well-defined figure, projected onto others, or personified in dreams. It corresponds to Freud's 'personal' unconscious. "The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly – for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies" (1939b, 513).

The shadow is the negative Ego-personality, which contains all the qualities that are painful and unwanted (1944, p.209, n. 120), the chaotic personal unconscious, all the things one would like to forget, the things one doesn't admit, the things one denies, the things one wants to escape from (1948a, § 939), the shadow world of our personal fantasies, that is of the *personal* unconscious (1948a, § 942; 1951a, § 261; 1952b, § 267, n.14). The shadow brother is a personification of the 'personal unconscious' (1952b, § 393), whereas the Old Sage is a personification of the collective unconscious (1955/1956, I, § 124).

In *Symbols of Transformation* (1952b, § 681) Jung stresses the danger of the shadow; interestingly the 1912 version mentioned the danger of 'insufficiently expressed sexuality' (1911-1912, 412).

### **3.3. Comments**

#### **3.3.1. Freud and the shadow**

Freud is praised for his 'meticulous elaboration of the human shadow side'; he revealed 'all the filthiness one can think of': an adequate antidote against idealistic illusions about human nature.

But Freud is criticised too: he and Adler accounted for neurotic phenomena, but they also attempted to explain the whole human being starting from the shadow, that is, from moral inferiority. This reductive attitude runs the risk of becoming destructive. Jung's critique of Joyce's *Ulysses* – a novel he found extremely boring – goes in the same direction: Joyce too is a 'negative prophet', an exponent of psychic nihilism.

"After all, the essential thing is not the shadow, but the body that casts the shadow" (1929, §

145). This may be true – although the argument is somewhat specious. We could just as well say that the light – that is: consciousness – is the very first cause of the shadow. This will be *my* contention: human nature is cursed with a phenomenon that we presume to be absent from non-human beings: discriminating consciousness. And I tend to share Freud's (and Joyce's) pessimism: in my opinion the human being never gets rid of the consequences of this original sin, and so he can only be 'neurotic', torn up by the innumerable oppositions introduced by his discriminating consciousness. So we are doomed 'to make the best of a bad job', as Bion put it.

### 3.3.2. The 'personal' unconscious

In at least ten quotes, dated from 1939 to 1958, Jung equates his 'shadow' with Freud's 'personal' unconscious, which he defines as the sum of the *repressed* contents. In my opinion this view oversimplifies a very complex relation; it does not do justice, neither to his own concept, nor to the 'unconscious' of psychoanalysis.

The shadow, according to Jung's own statement, is much more than the mere repository of repressed elements: it behaves like an 'autonomous complex', it is an 'archetype' (a point which I will discuss later), and it paves the way to other archetypes, such as anima/ animus, and to the collective unconscious; moreover it contains 'positive' elements that have never been repressed.

In psychoanalysis, the notion of 'unconscious' went through quite an evolution. Freud himself departed from a very 'Jungian' unconscious in his *Traumdeutung*. At the time of his correspondence with Jung however he had narrowed his view: 'unconscious' was then synonymous with 'repressed'. After the rift – partly in response to Jung's pertinent critiques and questions – he postulated the *Id*, that 'seething cauldron' which contains non-repressed elements too; on the other hand he repeatedly flirted with the idea of a 'phylogenetic heritage', contained in the *Id*, and of "'primal phantasies (*Urphantasien*), that organise fantasy life, whatever the personal experiences of the subject are; the universality of these fantasies is accounted for by the fact that they constitute a genetically transmitted patrimony"<sup>3</sup> (Laplanche & Pontalis 1971, 157). So Freud came very close to Jung's archetypal structures, at least when they are correctly defined (I will return to this topic later). Bion has the merit of having clarified the psychoanalytic standpoint with regard to the unconscious. On the one hand he introduced the inborn 'pre-conception', quite comparable to the archetypal structure (he even – reluctantly – admitted that both were one and the same thing – a view with which I now disagree; see later). On the other hand he made a distinction between alfa-elements, psychic contents that acquired the status of mental representation and that can be repressed, and beta-elements, raw sensorial data, fit for acting out and projective identification, but not suitable for repression. He thus clearly distinguished a 'deeper' unconscious layer composed of beta-elements, and a more superficial stratum made up of alfa-elements, repressed psychic representations submitted to the play of metaphor and metonymy. The beta-element itself is closely linked to the pre-conception: no sensorial impression is possible if there is no pre-conception to support it. So Bion provides us with a theory that accounts for the way in which innate archetypal structures acquire psychic existence. I will come back to this rather tricky issue.

The beta-elements are definitely 'personal': they are the result of the meeting of a pre-conception with an (absent, frustrating) object. So the 'personal' unconscious is by no means limited to the sole repressed (alfa-elements) contents.

Another question arises: how come that our Freudian colleagues apparently can do without the shadow, not to mention the fact that I personally meet with the phenomenon rather rarely in my practice? Their 'unconscious' – to the extent they still use the concept – contains,

besides the already mentioned alfa- and beta-elements, 'object relations': interiorised representations of relations with important 'objects'. The consequence of this approach is that the 'inferior', 'negative', 'infantile' contents do not have to hypostatise into an 'interior' figure; they are externalised in the transference, in which patient and analyst will alternately embody one of the poles of the object relation. The 'bad' part may be projected onto (or *into*) the analyst, and so may the judging – and condemning – part.

In his analysis of Jung's *On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena* (1902), Goodheart (1984) showed how Jung, in his spiritistic sessions with his niece Héléne Preiswerk (Helly), bluntly dismissed; ignored, and even denied any significant statement by Helly of personal, emotional or erotic feelings towards him. Curiously, the powerful repression and splitting of these contents led to the appearance of 'sub-personalities'. Jung regards these merely as the expression of the 'autonomous' psyche and fails to see that they represent compromise solutions arising from his interaction with Helly. While it is quite fascinating to see how inventive the psyche can be, how ingeniously it seeks to let the imagination communicate at least some repressed emotions, the experience must certainly have been destructive and alienating for Helly. This is because it is equally true, as Jung himself stresses from time to time, that the 'objective', autonomous psyche can develop only in interaction with others: this constitutes the archetypal basis of the transference process<sup>4</sup>. So we could imagine that a failure to appreciate a negative transference is likely to produce a quite impressive shadow...

The 'clinical' approach tends to privilege the object relations (mainly established during infancy), the 'symbolic' approach will focus on the autonomous figures arising from the unconscious. I wonder to what extent both attitudes may be compatible with each other. Another question is: to what extent does the 'clinical' analyst wrong the symbolic potential of the unconscious, and, conversely, what are the consequences of the 'symbolic' therapist's neglect of intersubjective phenomena?

I will conclude this section by selecting one Jungian pearl, worthy of Bion too: "Thinking is difficult, that's why most people judge" (1958a, § 641). This little phrase emphasises the importance of *thinking* (another reminder of Bion's ideas) in order to overcome the effects of discriminating consciousness, which can only judge and split.

## 4. About splitting

### 4.1. Shadow and splitting

Jung repeatedly links the shadow with the splitting of the human mind. The first statement comes straight from the romantic tradition: Goethe's *Faust* gave evidence of the split (in German: '*Spaltung*', the very word used by Freud when he discusses splitting of the Ego in perversion): "Two souls – oh – are living in my breast!" Jung distinguishes sensual and spiritual, Ego and its shadow. Neurosis is a splitting of the personality (1932a, § 522). Three years before, he stated that in neurosis a *complex* is split off from the personality (1929, § 134). Romanticism longed for the mending of this painful split, and actually hoped to succeed in overcoming it.

The issue of the opposites is directly linked with the shadow (1944, 53). This dissociation of opposites brings about the splitting of the personality; the shadow then becomes the part of which one 'knows nothing' (1945, § 424).

The lines along which the splitting occurs are not always clear: now the 'opposites' seem to operate outside the Ego, which is thus reduced to a 'plaything' (1946a, § 399), now a split off part of the personality may associate with the shadow, giving rise to a double personality

(1951a, § 185). But mostly the split is situated between (Ego-)consciousness and unconscious ((1945/1954, § 480; 1951a, § 390, n.84; 1954a, § 474; 1955/1956, I, § 121; 1955/1956, I, § 123; 1955/1956, I, § 134; 1955/1956, I, § 170; 1955/1956, II, § 177): when the distance between consciousness and unconscious increases, the Great Mother falls apart into opposites; a Manichaeic dualism ensues (1939a, § 189).

The shadow simply belongs to human nature; only in the night there is no shadow (1942/1954, § 286).

Another line of splitting described by Jung runs between rational and irrational, intellect and feeling, culture and nature. The loss of a natural human function produces a general disturbance. The victory of goddess Reason entailed a dissociation (which Jung compares to the splitting of the world – the ‘Cold War’), a neurotisation of modern man. The classical neurotic is unconscious of the other side of himself, the shadow. So is the ‘normal’ person (1957, § 544). The cultivated human being is split off from his instinctual nature. This brings on a conflict between conscious against unconscious, mind against nature, knowing against believing. This splitting (*‘Spaltung’*) becomes pathological because consciousness cannot neglect or repress the instinct anymore (1957, § 558). There is a disproportion between intellect and feeling (1957, § 569).

The splitting of the soul has consequences for our perception of the world anything that separates is based on the splitting of the opposites in the soul; if there were a general consciousness of this fact, one would know where to seize the problem (1957, § 575).

Consciousness is slowly waking up to the fact that the split which traverses metaphysics is in fact a split (*‘Spaltung’*) of the human soul: the battle between light and darkness removes its stage to the internal world. Jung quotes Ignatius of Loyola’s *Exercitia Spiritualia* as an example of this shift (1943a, § 293).

In these dynamics the shadow represents a vulnerable spot in man, his weakness and unconsciousness, which entail a dangerous sensitivity to suggestion, which works by provoking an unconscious dynamic. Psychic infection and mass psychosis are the results (1951a, § 390, n. 84). At the same time it exerts a compensating function (1955/1956, I, § 134).

The shadow comes into being, first because nobody likes to confess his inferior sides, second *because logic forbids to call something white black*. But a ‘good’ man has bad qualities, just as a ‘bad’ one has ‘good’ qualities (1955/1956, I, § 324).

Sometimes Jung holds (Christian) religion responsible for the splitting of the human soul; at other times he denounces the denial of the split in theology itself. Christian religion professes its belief in a God that is infinitely good. Jung violently opposed this view, in which evil has been argued away by means of the *privatio boni* theory: evil would not exist in itself, it is only a (more or less big) lack of good (1942/1954, § 247). By this fallacy the opposition good against evil is denied. Jung, inspired by Gnosis and its Manichaeic dualism, introduces the shadow of the Redeemer: a diabolic destroyer, Lucifer, the anti-divine will (1922/1931, § 119). This shadow – according to Jung – clearly appears in the Apocalypse (1952a, § 706, § 732).

Jung paid a great deal of attention to the shadow of Christ (1951a, § 75, 79 & § 167), of Trinity (1958c, § 1683), and of Christianity (1955/1956, II, § 364).

In order to have a separate existence from the Creator, and to be able to take ethical decisions, man must have a will of his own, which may be contrary to his Creator’s will, and qualities which may be different too (1942/1954, § 290). But, being equal to God arouses the evil in man, the shadow (1945, § 439). Elsewhere I argued that the myth of Eden metaphorically describes the origin of discriminating consciousness.

“God had told Adam: ‘But the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die’ (Gen.2, 17); but the serpent said to Eve: “[...]”

in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3, 5). And indeed, having eaten of the tree of discriminating consciousness, ‘natural man’ died. The devil adroitly exploited human hubris when promising ‘godlike’ quality to the brand-new mutant: but ‘knowing good and evil’ turned out to be source of all human misery; the delusion of omniscience would soon become part of man’s defensive battery. *Homo sapiens* not only lost Eden, but also his natural link with Reality.” (Dehing 2000, 218).

## 4.2. Comments

One quote goes right to the heart of my thesis: “When the distance between consciousness and unconscious increases, the Great Mother falls apart into opposites; a Manichaeism ensues” (1939a, § 189). I would say: when discriminating consciousness makes its entrance, the mother – and with her the whole world, including the self – falls apart into opposites: Melanie Klein’s ‘paranoid-schizoid’ position makes its appearance.

Discriminating consciousness goes hand in hand with classical logic, which ‘forbids to call something white black’: the opposites must remain antithetical, *tertium non datur*...

All the oppositions that we find, both in the external world and in metaphysics, are created by our discriminating consciousness. Jung is conscious of this: “Anything that separates is based on the splitting of the opposites in the soul.” And he adds a pious hope: “If there were a general consciousness of this fact, one would know where to seize the problem” (1957, § 575). I am afraid though that we must consider this conditional mode as an expression of wishful thinking...

## 5. Shadow and projection

### 5.1. Jung’s statements

The patient tends to project his negative qualities on the object, which is then hated and cursed, he has to recognise that he is projecting his own inferior side, his so-called shadow. Freud, according to Jung, only dealt with his ‘objective’ aspect (1935, § 367). The shadow is that dark half of the soul, of which we like to get rid by projection (1944, 45). This was quite obvious in the case of Hitler for instance (1945, § 418). Jung reminds us of the metaphor for the beam and the mote (1955/1956, I, § 335).

About the *mechanisms* of projection, Jung rightly notices: “The projecting agency is not the conscious subject, but the unconscious. *Therefore one finds the projection in front of oneself, and one does not make it.* As a consequence of projections the *subject becomes isolated* towards the environment. Projections change the environment in one’s own, but unknown face. Finally they will lead to a auto-erotic or autistic condition, in which a world is dreamt, whereas its reality remains inaccessible. This causes a ‘*sentiment d’incomplétude*’, or worse, a feeling of sterility...” (1951a, § 17).

The unconscious is always projected, since it cannot be observed in a direct way: for it does not, like the shadow, belong to the Ego – it is collective (1946a, § 469).

*Anima and animus* projections are much more tenacious. The shadow represents the personal unconscious in the first place; but if it appears as an archetype, one is confronted with the same difficulties as with anima and animus: finally one has to face the absolute Evil (1951a, § 19).

The *retrieval of projected contents* is difficult: “an extraordinary moral achievement may be required” (1951a, § 16). The shadow can only be realised through a relation with a vis-à-vis,

and anima and animus only through a relationship with the other sex, because that's where their projections are active (1951a, § 42). Growing psychological insight more and more prevents projection, and the increased recognition logically leads to the problem of the union of opposites (1955/1956, I, § 196). Recognition of the shadow produces an 'enlightenment', a broadening of consciousness, by the integration of personality components that were unconscious up to then (1955/1956, I, § 335).

Jung is not always consistent with these views. In a letter to a female analysand, he writes: "Of course Mrs X constellates your shadow, and this provides you with a thus far pretty healthy feeling of inferiority. Don't take it too serious, however [...]. Don't criticise yourself too much [...] Rather criticise Mrs X. That's better." (1943c, 417).

Projections occur on the individual level, but they can also be observed in the world (Jung is mainly referring to the 'Cold War', the 'Iron Curtain'). Ideologies, philosophies of life are linked with psychological approaches (1957, § 544).

## 5.2. Comments

Jung's statements about projection of the shadow are sometimes surprisingly Kleinian, although he probably never read her work. Rumours about a meeting between Jung and Klein before her move to England (as a apocryphal Jung letter appeared to attest), have not been confirmed. The quote (1951a, § 17) for instance gives a very nice description of Klein's projective identification! Quote (1946a, § 469) however is logically inconsistent the shadow too is unconscious, and before necessarily appears in projected form. It cannot be 'observed in a direct way' any more than the 'collective' contents: our psychic functioning always operates indirectly, by means of re-presentations.

The recognition and the taking back of projections always played an important part in Jung's work. In certain vulgarising works on analytical psychology this retrieval of projections is sometimes presented in a rather caricatural way: whenever a fellow human being strongly annoys you, you must ask yourself what shadow part of yourself you are projecting. One would forget that every now and then this fellow being just *is* annoying. I suggest that especially people presenting a (malignant) narcissistic personality disorder are masters in the art of making appear their own projections as projections of the other; a rather confusing state of affairs, which may for instance complicate the evaluation of candidates for analytic training.

## 6. Miscellanea

### 6.1. Positive aspects

The repressed tendencies of the shadow are not only bad. As a rule, the shadow is merely something that is nasty, primitive, unadjusted and precarious, but not absolutely evil. It contains childlike and primitive qualities that may animate and embellish our human existence (1940a, § 134), good qualities, such as normal instincts, appropriate reactions, realistic insights, creative impulses, etc."(1951a, § 423, quoted in MRD, 417), instincts and other forces that lie dormant in the soul (1957, § 582).

The unconscious contains much archaic material, the ghastly darkness of an animal drive world. Instincts and drives have a biological/physiological aspect, but they are *psychic existences* too, creations with a symbolic character. The drive is associated with a certain psychic conception or interpretation (1955/1956, II, § 270).

The shadow is not only composed of inferior character traits; it also represents the whole

unconscious. This means that, as a rule, the shadow is the first figure under which the unconscious makes itself known to consciousness. Freud's psychology addressed exclusively this aspect, so to speak. After the shadow follow the deeper layers of the unconscious; as far as we know these consist in archetypal, resp. instinctive structures, the 'patterns of behaviour' (1953, § 1850).

## 6.2. Identification with the Shadow

Some people live their own shadow, their own negation; usually they appear as people pursued by bad luck (1935, § 41).

But things are not always so simple; in a letter to an analysand, Jung writes: "When your shadow does not show any inferior features, you can be certain that the consciousness lives in the shadow, that it has the negative role. One doesn't necessarily have to be pursued by bad luck. It only means that your consciousness is not yet able to consider the development to Not-Being as something positive. Thus the shadow acquires a positive value." (1938a, 305)

## 6.3. Shadow and typology

A typological diagnosis is difficult to establish. One attitude belongs to the Ego personality, the other belongs to the shadow, or the secondary personality. It often happens that both personalities appear in succession of one another in the course of life. Either one starts one's life with the shadow to switch later on the real personality, or the other way round (1941b, 376).

## 6.4. Comments

Inborn possibilities that were condemned and rejected are likely to make up the 'dark' aspects of the shadow. Other innate qualities may have remained unrecognised and unsupported, and so did not develop their potential: they too may be found in the 'shadow', but without the mark of 'badness'. In my opinion it is very important that the analyst be very attentive to manifestations of such 'positive' contents; they do not need an interpretation, but just an acknowledgement – and possibly an unobtrusive reinforcement. This type of intervention is lacking in the little inventory we proposed ten years ago (Dehing 1992).

The shadow also represents the whole unconscious, and – as a rule – will be the first figure under which the unconscious makes itself known to consciousness (1953, § 1850). This statement is surprising: up to now we say that Jung stressed the fact that the shadow represented the *personal* part of the unconscious. This is a nice sample of Jung's 'symmetrical' thinking, in which he blandly equates the whole and the part (see Dehing 2002). This assertion defies classical logic, but is quite in agreement with the strange laws of the unconscious.

The 'identification with the shadow' appears to constitute another example of its 'positive' aspects, but here too classical logic lets us down: some of the people identified with the shadow are failures, pursued by bad luck (1935, § 41); in others there would be a remarkable inversion, by which consciousness is relegated to living in the shadow – since "it is not yet able to consider the development to Not-Being as something positive" (1938a, 305). As I understand it, Jung is inviting his correspondent to renounce discriminating consciousness, the Buddhist ideal of enlightenment...

## 7. 'Complex' or 'archetype'?

## 7.1. Jung's statements

The dark personality traits and inferiorities that build up the shadow have an emotional nature and a certain autonomy: therefore they have an obsessing, or – better – a possessing character. Emotion is not an activity, but an occurrence that happens to somebody (1951a, § 15). The shadow – like all the other figures of the unconscious (Self, anima, animus) – has a relative autonomy and reality (of psychic nature) (1951a, § 44). The archetype too is *autonomous* (1951c, § 560).

Jung's slovenliness in dealing with the archetype concept is notorious. Some definitions are rather coherent though: archetypes are typical ways or forms in which collective phenomena are experienced; they have a causal effect; they also exert a compensating action (1946c, § 447). They are modes of behaviour, which express themselves in certain motives, figures, etc. (1951b, § 254).

Sometimes he stresses that archetypes are *no* inherited representations (1947, § 1127; 1951b, § 254). But more often than not these 'typical figures', that appear in dreams, myths and fairy tales, 'shadow', 'anima', 'animus', 'Old Sage', 'child', 'Mother', etc. (1941a, § 309), and that express the archetypal patterns, are improperly called archetypes themselves: "A figure which is common to both sexes is the so-called shadow, a personification of the inferior personality parts. The three figures (shadow, anima and animus) appear very frequently in dreams of normal neurotic and schizophrenic people. Less frequent are the archetypes of the 'Old Sage', and the 'Earth Mother'" (1948b, § 1158) "The contents of the personal unconscious are acquisitions of individual life; the contents of the collective unconscious on the contrary are the *archetypes*, which are always present and given a priori. The archetypes that influence - and disturb - the Ego in the most frequent and intensive way are the *shadow*, the *anima* and the *animus*. The shadow is the most accessible, since its nature deduced from the contents of the personal unconscious." (1951a, § 13)"[...] archetypes, such as anima, animus, Old Man, Witch, Shadow, Earth Mother, etc., and the organising dominants (the four functions)." (1952b, § 611).

But Jung does not bother too much about this confusion: after all, the concepts of complex psychology are no intellectual formalisations, but designations for certain areas of experience (1954a, § 485)!

Archetypes all have a life of their own, which follows a biological pattern (1958c, § 1683).

## 7.2. Comments

I already argued (1.3.) that the 'feeling toned complex' served as a prototype for the shadow. This complex-like quality accounts for the emotional nature and the (relative) autonomy of the shadow: it may have an obsessing of - better - a possessing character (1951a, § 15). But mostly the shadow is referred to as an *archetype*.

"The archetype is a mode of psychical behaviour, a factor that is invisible in itself. In the same way as the crystal lattice that organises the molecules in the mother liquor, it unconsciously organises psychical elements resp. contents, so that they appear in typical configurations." (1948b, § 1158).

This coherent definition comes from a lexicon article. It clearly shows the difference between Jung's *archetype* and Bion's *pre-conception*: the archetype operates on the psyche, in a kind of solipsistic way, whereas the pre-conception is in search of an external 'realisation'. In fact, Jung is more in tune with Melanie Klein's conception of 'unconscious fantasies', and we know that Bion had to free himself from Klein's domination in order to come to his own - intersubjective - formulations.

Elsewhere Jung jeers at people who "still labour under the preconceptions that archetypes are

inherited representations” (1947, § 1127), while he did everything possible to maintain this misunderstanding.

So he repeatedly states that *figures* such as shadow, anima/animus, ‘Old Sage’ and ‘Earth Mother’, which frequently appear in dreams, are archetypes. This is inconsistent with this statement that archetypes are ‘invisible’ in themselves; how then can they ‘appear’ in dreams images? Theoretical propriety would require a clear distinction between archetypal *structures* (invisible organising factors) and archetypal *images* or *representations* (or configurations)! Sometimes Jung himself defends this coherency (1951b, § 254).

So I would say that the shadow is *not*, cannot be an archetype; it is a figure, a typical configuration, composed of mostly split off or repressed contents (that are easily projected). It is most certainly supported by archetypal organising structures (as is any psychological phenomenon). It could more rightly be described as a ‘complex’, originated by the clash between unconscious ordering structures and personal experiences.

The comparison with the ‘patterns of behaviour’, borrowed from biology, appears quite regularly in Jung’s later writings. Continuing on this line it should be noticed that the pattern of behaviour - in biology - is always triggered by an *external* element: the ‘innate’ virtual knowledge has - to use Bion’s wording - to be *realised* by the environment. This dependency on an external object is not to be found in Jung’s work; he was too devoted to the *autonomy* of the archetype. I have wondered whether the quite disappointing way in which he experienced his principal ‘objects’ (mother, father, Freud..) played a role in his later disavowal of the external object.

Archetypes are supposed to exert a *compensating* action. Jung confirms this - precisely after having depicted the devastating of archetypal effects in the Third *Reich*: primitivity, violence and cruelty on the one hand, the promise of a new Order on the other (1946c, § 447).

Anyway, Jung’s ‘compensation’ theory seems dangerous to me. I have the impression that he is saying that archetypes have ‘good’ intentions - provided that they be integrated by consciousness. It is only when consciousness does not accept and contain them, that they become ‘bad’ and destructive. In my opinion Jung is applying the theory of the *privation boni* which he so fiercely opposed to in his debate with Christian theologians.

Elsewhere Jung defines the archetypes as *contents* of the collective unconscious, always present and given a priori (1952a, § 716); once again he is confusing organising patterns, structures (which indeed I believe are innate and given a priori) with representations: as soon as an archetypal structure becomes manifest, visible, it is no longer an archetype, but - at most - an archetypal image.

I end this section with an interesting remark: “The archetype in itself is neither good nor bad. It is a morally indifferent *numen*, that only becomes one or the other by the clash with consciousness: it becomes an opposite two-ness. This decision - good or evil - is brought about, willy-nilly, by the human attitude.” (1922/1931, § 120) Paraphrasing this statement we could once again say that discriminating consciousness, as a typical human quality, lies at the basis of any opposition.

## **8. Anima/animus and collective unconscious**

### **8.1. Shadow and anima/animus**

Shadow, anima/animus are frequently bracketed together (sometimes the Old Sage, the child and the Earth Mother also abide in their company); as we already saw. They are often referred to as ‘archetypes’: shadow and anima are two twilight figures that appear in dreams, or - that possess the Ego (1940b, § 222). A concept such as ‘shadow’ of ‘anima’ is absolutely

not an intellectual concoction, but a name given to empirically demonstrable complexes or facts; these can be observed by anybody who takes the trouble and who is prepared to put aside his prejudices. Experience shows that this appears to be difficult. How many people for instance still labour under the preconception that archetypes designate inherited representations (1947, § 1127).

Jung often compares shadow and anima/animus with each other. The confrontation with the shadow is less difficult than the confrontation with the anima (the 'masterpiece'!) (1934/1954, § 61). Shadow, anima and the Old Wise Man express the symbolism of the Self (1934/1954, § 86). The confrontation ('*Auseinandersetzung*') with the unknown man (in men) is personified by the *shadow*, the unknown woman appears as the *anima*. The Old Sage refers to mana-personality. These three figures are symbols of the Self (1944, 116). The shadow personifies the inferior half of the personality; the anima on the contrary personifies the collective unconscious. She possesses the shadow, or she is possessed herself (1946b, § 439). As a rule, the shadow is associated with a negative feeling value, whereas the anima is usually accompanied by a positive feeling tone. The feeling tones of the shadow are mostly clear and demonstrable, those of anima and animus are less easy to define (1951a, § 53). The shadow provokes fear; anima and animus arouse panic (1951a, § 62). The shadow figure already belongs to the realm of immaterial schemes, not to speak of anima and animus, which anyway only seem to appear as projections on fellow men (1951a, § 57).

About Christiana Morgan, the patient discussed in the Vision Seminars, Jung gives the following ornate description:

"She is divorced from her shadow, and because of that her animus has married the shadow and gone to hell. For that gives the animus power to behave as he wants to behave ... If you want to control your anima or animus, you have to bring the shadow close to consciousness and so liberate it from anima or animus possession. If consciousness goes without a connection with the shadow, then violation of the blood occurs, that is, people live beyond their means, they live in an unnatural imaginary way, above their own heads [...]" (1930-1934, 93).

## 8.2. Shadow and collective unconscious

The encounter with the shadow reminds us of our helplessness; it confronts us with problems which we cannot resolve under our own power. The shadow brings us into contact with helpful forces in our deeper nature: the reaction of the collective unconscious will generate archetypal representations (1934/1954, § 44-45), but ... the confrontation with the shadow may bring about an upsurge of archetypal contents; this may create a dangerous situation (1944, 48).

"The collective unconscious is the real non-ego, and it makes its appearance first as an opposite, just as the shadow qualities do" (1930-1934, 11).

The confrontation with the unconscious usually starts in the domain of the personal unconscious, that is the personally acquired contents that constitute the ('moral') shadow. The process continues with the appearance of archetypal symbols which represent the collective unconscious (1945/1954, § 481).

The shadow comprises that part of the collective unconscious that enters the personal sphere, thus creating the *personal unconscious*. In a sense the shadow forms the bridge to the anima figure, which is personal in a limited way, and further to the impersonal figures of the collective unconscious. The Self - an essentially intuitive concept - comprises Ego-consciousness, shadow, anima and collective unconscious (of which the extent cannot be determined) (1955/1956, I, § 125, n.65). The personal shadow is a descendant of a numinous

collective figure (1954a, § 469).

The shadow is the still living and real primitive in cultivated man, and our cultural reason doesn't mean anything to him. The shadow exerts a dangerous fascination; one can only protect oneself against it by another *fascinosum* (1955/1956, I, § 335).

The wholeness of the Self is, by definition, always a *complexion compositorum*; the more consciousness ascribes to itself lightness to itself, and in doing so claims moral authority, the more the way in which the Self appears will be darker and more threatening (1952a, § 716).

The wholeness of the soul, namely the Self, is a composition of opposites. Without the shadow the Self cannot be real. It always has two aspects, a lighter and a darker, like the pre-Christian representation of God in the Old Testament (1958a, § 640).

In *Psychology and Alchemy* we find a remarkable statement: “*Man as a whole throws a shadow* (reason enough for some anxiety)!” (1944, 230) Maybe this corresponds to an alchemical saying: “*Fundamentum artis est Sol, et eius umbra.*”<sup>5</sup> (1944, 108, n.107)

*Mysterium Coniunctionis* contains analogous statements: there is no light without shadow. In a way any shadow emanates from the sun. The alchemical *Sol* sometimes even appears as black. Alchemy is antinomian (1955/1956, I, § 114).

### 8.3. Comments

As the shadow, the anima/animus is - according to Jung - an “empirically demonstrable complex of facts, which can be observed by anybody who takes the trouble and who is prepared to put aside his prejudices” (1947, § 1127). Once again Jung hypostatizes a figure, claiming that one should not view it as an intellectual concept. Moreover his argument is casuistic: maybe the facts are ‘empirically demonstrable’ (although postmodernism taught us that ‘facts’ always depend on our preconceptions and the conditions under which we create our inquiry) but the way in which we combine them may largely differ from one investigator to another. Freudians never ‘observe’ anima-like figures, although they may be interested by the Jungian metaphor.

“The wholeness of the soul, namely the Self, is a composition of opposites.”(1958, § 640)

This may be true from the standpoint of Ego-consciousness, but without discriminating consciousness there would be no opposites (as Jung himself noticed). I wonder whether the search for wholeness does not express the yearning of the human being to overcome the split that estranged him from his original unity with nature. *Carl Gustav Jung* personally experienced that split in a most painful way; in his autobiography he describes the bitter struggle between his ‘personalities’ nr. 1 and nr. 2, his ‘natural’ being and his socially and culturally well-adapted part. Isn't his analytical psychology an attempt to re-integrate these lost parts of oneself, his ‘individuation process’ an endeavour to recover the lost wholeness?

### 9.1. The Shadow as an ethical problem

The shadow confronts us with an ethical problem (1947/1954, § 410). *The question of evil in nature* cannot be resolved with rationalistic arguments or intellectual drivel. The ethical responsibility of the individual *may* give a valid response. But there are neither recipes nor licences. One has to traverse the shadow world of the personal fantasies, that is of the *personal* unconscious (1948a, § 942). The basic moral rules are clear and univocal for the Ego-consciousness; but they lose their persuasiveness, and thus their applicability, when we take into account the *compensating shadow* from the viewpoint of ethical responsibility. A person with any ethical talent cannot avoid this problem (1949a, § 1410). The discovery of the unconscious entailed an enormous revolution of our concepts (1949, § 1411).

The integration of the shadow makes great demands upon the individual's moral: the

‘acceptation of evil’ means no less than the questioning of moral existence. The wholeness of the soul must manifest itself (1949a, § 1414). The shadow forces one to recognise the truth (1950, § 560). No development is possible if one does not accept the shadow (1950, § 600). The shadow is a moral problem, that challenges the whole of the Ego-personality; nobody can realise his shadow without a considerable application of moral determination (1951a, § 14).

Any ultimate truth confronts us with an antinomy, if we really consider it thoroughly. Our statements about the unconscious are ‘eschatological’ truths, that is, borderline concepts (1949a, § 1413). Nobody is beyond good and evil. The normal human being stands in between the opposites; he knows he cannot lift them, as long as things are going well. As there is no evil without good, there is no good without evil either. The clash of duties forces into an examination of conscience, and renders the discovery of the shadow possible. The shadow on his turn forces into a confrontation with the unconscious, and its integration (1949a, § 1417). Light and shadow are equally divided in human nature (1951a, § 76). Once more Jung opposes the theory of the *privatio boni*: as long as evil is *nobody will take the shadow seriously*. Then Hitler and Stalin will remain cases of a ‘fortuitous lack of perfection’. *The future of humanity will depend to a large extent on the recognition of the shadow*. Evil is - psychologically speaking - *terribly real* (1949b, 169).

Maybe the patient *has to* experience and bear evil and its force, because that is the only way to finally abandon his phariseism towards other people. Man sees his shadow, his inclined plane, but he averts his eyes, flees and avoids the confrontation (1958b, § 867). Confronting a human being with his shadow also means showing him his light. When one has experienced this a couple of times, when one’s judgement stands *between* the oppositions, then one inevitably senses what is meant with the own Self (1958b, § 872).

## 9.2. Comments

Jung repeatedly stresses the ethical consequences of the confrontation with the shadow, both for the individual and for mankind in general. “*The future of humanity will depend to a large degree on the recognition of the shadow*. Evil is - psychologically speaking - *terribly real*.”(1949b, 169) But ...

“it is not known whether there is more good than evil, or whether good is stronger than evil. We can only hope that good prevails. If we equate good with constructive, then it is possible that life will continue in a more or less bearable form; if destructiveness were dominant, the world would certainly have perished by itself since a long time. This has not been the case up to now; we may therefore assume that positive exceed negative. That is why psychotherapy too starts from the optimistic hypothesis that becoming conscious of the available good has more influence than the darkening evil. Becoming conscious is actually a reconciliation of opposites; therefore it gives rise to a higher third” (1955a, 490-491).

Jung’s standpoint is optimistic, in spite of all the destructiveness he witnessed. Consciousness, in his opinion, is a useful invention of nature (1937b, 303). I am not so sure. Discriminating consciousness certainly did make its appearance at a certain moment of our evolution. But what if human species were a grotesque error of nature? The destructive consequences of this error may then increase in an exponential way, and eventually lead to the deletion of this error, the extinction of the human species. This hypothesis is much less optimistic than Jung’s, and surely less flattering for human narcissism than Teilhard de Chardin’s view of the human being as an indispensable and precious link in an ongoing evolution towards point ‘omega’.

## 10. Shadow and collectivity

### 10.1. Jung's view

Human nature also has a dark side, and so do all human activities, institutions and convictions, even the most pure and holy views! High is always founded on deep. *Les extremes se touchent* (1929, § 146). One cannot eradicate man's war instincts (1946c, § 456). The dualism of the human being brings about a dangerous shadow. On the one hand we find an individual devoid of meaning, at the mercy of uncontrollable powers, on the other hand the shadow, the invisible assistant of the dark machinations of politics (1957, § 576). Nobody can escape the heavy collective shadow of humanity - it belongs to human nature (1957, § 572).

“What occurs in the individual, will after some time occur within the nations, by natural summation. [...] If the individual is growing too much to the height, his roots will go down too deeply. This means that his shadow will overtake him after some time, however quickly he proceeds. Then anybody will find enough work to do in his own place. In the individual this is called conflict; in nation we call it civil war or revolution” (1933, 170). Collectivities are accumulations of individuals (1940a, § 134). The psychopathology of the crowd is rooted in the psychology of the individual (1946c, § 445).

Identity with the collective unconscious leads to mass psychosis and to catastrophic developments. This identification is to be prevented by the acknowledgement of the shadow and of the existence and meaning of the archetypes (1947/1954, § 426). It is necessary to recognise the own shadow and its dark machinations. If we were able to see our shadow, we would be immunised against moral and mental infection and undermining (1951c, § 562).

When people amass to form crowds, in which the individual is submerged, the shadow (of the individuals) are mobilised, and – as history demonstrated – also personified and embodied (1954a, § 478). An accumulation of individuals who are ‘split’ (see ‘Shadow and splitting’) brings about a mass movement which presents itself as an advocate of the repressed; the solution is sought from outside. A reversal occurs, and the shadow appears. The devil is driven out – with the help of Beelzebub. The root of evil remains untouched; only the counterposition comes to light. Communism (as practised in the Soviet Union) is considered by Jung to be an example of this mechanism (1957, § 558).

Western man is in danger of losing his shadow altogether (1957, § 559): it is then projected onto the ‘others’: the face of our own shadow is grinning at us from behind the Iron Curtain, which acts like a neurotic dissociation (1951c, § 561).

The trickster is a collective shadow figure (1954c, 387), the summation of all the individual inferior character traits; it arises from the individual shadow (1954a, § 484). In carnival we find a rest of the collective shadow figure (1954a, § 469).

### 10.2. Comments

Jung's view on the relations between individual and collectivity appears simplistic to me (I do not agree with Freud's standpoint either<sup>6</sup>, but it certainly has the merit of being more sophisticated). Jung fails to recognise that a group is not simply the sum of its members. Jung compares the cold war, with its radical splitting of the western world, dramatically symbolised by the Iron Curtain, with a neurotic dissociation (1951c, § 561). He argues that it is necessary that we all recognise our shadow: so we would be immunised against moral and mental infection and undermining (1951c, 562). Acknowledgement of the shadow would prevent identity with the collective unconscious, mass psychosis and other catastrophes

(1947/1954, § 426). This may be true, but I am afraid that the power will anyhow be sized in the first place by people who do *not* bother about their shadow. Jung is conscious of this problem; some of statements about the *Führer* for instance come close to Bion's description of the (chosen) leader of a group: "The leader will be found in the individual who displays the least resistance, the smallest responsibility, and – by virtue of his inferiority – the strongest hunger for power." (1946c, § 449).

In my opinion analytical psychologists have little to say about collective problems. They specialised in a special form of dual relationship; they may be very good at it, and handle the transference-countertransference entanglements very skilfully indeed. But they are not entitled to transpose their findings and theories to larger groups. Suffice it to point at the numerous splits occurring in analytical societies, or to consider Hillman's exclamation: "One hundred years of psychoanalysis, and the world isn't one bit better!"

Jung however perseveres at drawing a simple parallel. If the confrontation with the shadow is eschewed, problems will arise: "In the individual this is called conflict; in the nation we call it civil war or revolution." (1933, 170)

Of course there is some truth in these assertions, but they pass over the great complexity of group phenomena. And – what is most important in my opinion – these sermon-like admonitions have little if any therapeutic efficiency.

## 11. The Shadow in psychotherapy

### 11.1. Jung's statements

The first stage of psychotherapy should be a 'catharsis', a purification, marked by a return of repressed and lost contents. This is a painful experience: the inferior and even the unwholesome belong to me, and give me reality and body; they are my *shadow*. How can I be real, when I do not cast a shadow (1922/1931, § 119)?

This is the advice that Jung gives to his patient:

"You can protect [the anima] by trying to grasp the unconscious contents that come to the surface from your own depths. Try to get acquainted with your fantasies, however unbecoming they may appear to you, that is your blackness, your shadow, which you have to swallow" (1932c, 131).

The illness is not a superfluous and therefore meaningless burden, it is [*the patient*] *himself*. Himself as the 'other' which one tries to shut out, out of infantile laziness for instance, or out of fear. Thus the Ego – as Freud rightly pointed out – become a 'place of fear'. This would not be the case if we did not defend ourselves against ourselves, in a neurotic way. The depreciating, unravelling undermining technique of 'psychoanalysis' is chiefly concerned with this feared 'other': it hopes to paralyse the adversary in a permanent way (1933/1934, § 360). Jung's standpoint is different: *it is not neurosis that is cured, neurosis cures us*. The illness is nature's attempt to cure the patient (1933/1934, § 361).

Is there a *technique* for the confrontation with the shadow? No, it has more to do with diplomacy or politics. Only the attitude counts. In the first place one has to accept the existence of the shadow, and to take it into account. Secondly, it is necessary to come to terms with its qualities and intentions. Thirdly, long and painstaking negotiations will be necessary. Nobody can know what the outcome will be. More often than not the shadow's apparently impossible intentions are merely threats, as a response to the Ego's refusal to really pay attention to it. Such threats decrease if one considers them seriously (1937a, 297).

One must not submit to the unconscious however. If this were the only right attitude, nature would not have invented consciousness, and animals would be the ideal embodiments of the unconscious (1937b, 303).

A dialectical confrontation (*'Auseinandersetzung'*) is necessary (1944, 45). Becoming conscious of the conflict between the opposites entails a special experience, namely *the recognition of a strange other within me*, an objectively existing agency with a different will (1945/1954, § 481). The alchemists called this stage of confrontation with the shadow *'nigredo'*, the first step in the alchemical process. *'Melancholia'* indicates a coinciding with the shadow (1944, 52). Without a thorough confrontation (*'Auseinandersetzung'*) with a vis-à-vis the resolution of the infantile projections is generally just impossible (1946a, § 420). The shadow is fundamentally opposed to the conscious personality. Psychic energy arises from the tension of the opposition (1955/1956, II, § 366). The confrontation with the shadow at first causes an equilibrium, a standstill, which prevents any moral decision. Everything becomes doubtful; this is *'nigredo'*, a condition of division and splitting (1955/1956, II, § 367).

The retrieving of the projections leads to an integration of the personality. The shadow contains the inferior and therefore hidden aspects of the personality, the weakness that belongs to any strength, the night that comes after the day, the evil of the good (1946a, § 420).

“In so far as analytical treatment makes the ‘shadow’ conscious, it causes a cleavage and a tension of opposites which in their turn seek compensation in unity. The adjustment is achieved through symbols. The conflict between the opposites can strain our psyche to the breaking point, if we take them seriously. The *tertium non datur* of logic proves its worth: no solution can be seen. If all goes well, the solution, seemingly of its own accord, appears out of nature. Then and then only is it convincing. It is felt as a ‘grace’” (1961, 367).

## 11.2. Comments

Jung’s treatment of the shadow does not involve an analysis of transference-countertransference dynamics. The therapist ought to encourage the patient to let the *'catharsis'* occur, by trying to grasp the unconscious contents that come to the surface from his own depths, and by getting acquainted with his fantasies, even when they are *'black'* (1932c, p.131). Sometimes, though, he insists on the fact that the resolutions of infantile projections necessitates a thorough confrontation with a vis-à-vis (1946a, § 420), but it is unclear whether this *'vis-à-vis'* functions either as a moral censor or as a participant in a painful intersubjective process. The metaphor of the alchemical bath suggests the latter possibility.

Jung describes psychoanalysis as a *'depreciating, unravelling, undermining technique'* by which the shadow, this *'feared other'*, is confronted; in doing so neurosis is cured. But Jung takes another standpoint: *neurosis cures us*, and the illness is nature’s attempt to heal the patient (1933/1934, § 360-361). This may be (partly) true, but such statements imply a denial of the destructive forces that we see at work in certain forms of neurotic suffering. Here Jung seems to adhere to the theory of the *privation boni* which he vehemently repudiates on other occasions.

There is no *technique* for the confrontation with the shadow, it has more to do with diplomacy or politics. Jung describes the three necessary steps: (1) *Geschehenlassen*, to accept the existence and the manifestations of the shadow, (2) *Betrachten*, coming to terms with its qualities and intentions, and (3) *Auseinandersetzung*, *'long and painstaking negotiations'* (1937a, 297). This is not by no means the same as a mere submission to the

unconscious (1937b, 303)!

One passage from a letter reminded us of the '*transcendent function*':

"Parts of opposites have a natural tendency to meet on the halfway line, but this 'halfway' is never a compromise devised by the intellect and extorted by the contending parties. The solution rather arises from the conflict, which has to be worked through. Conflicts are never solved by smart tricks of intelligent lies, but by bearing them. They have to be heated as it were, up to the point where the tension becomes unbearable: then the opposites will slowly merge. It is a kind of alchemical procedure, all but a rational choice and decision. Suffering is the necessary part. A real solution is only found by intensive suffering. The suffering shows us to what extent we are unbearable to ourselves. 'Reach an agreement with your enemy' - external and internal!" (1937a, 297).

"Moral differentiation is a necessary step on the path to *individuation*. Without a thorough knowledge of 'Good and Evil', of Ego and shadow, there is no knowledge of the Self, but at the very most an involuntary and therefore dangerous identification with it" (1954b, 177).

The ultimate goal is to achieve *wholeness*: "*Wholeness is not so much perfection as completeness*"<sup>7</sup>. (1946a, § 452). On the path to wholeness, crucifixion cannot be avoided: : For [the analysand] will infallibly run into things that thwart and 'cross' him: first, the thing he has no wish to be (the shadow); second, the thing he is not (the 'other', the individual reality of the 'You'); and third, the psychic non-ego (the collective unconscious) "(1946a, § 470).

## 12. Jews and the Shadow

In 1933 - quite a sensitive epoch - Jung wrote his notorious paper on 'The Meaning of **Psychology** for Modern Man'. In it he states that Freud and Adler saw the shadow very clearly: Jews - says Jung - are physically weaker, like women, and therefore much more conscious of human weaknesses and shadow sides. This makes them less vulnerable. Their culture is much older and like the Chinese, they have a broader consciousness. We on the contrary (the 'Aryans') still foster illusions about ourselves; our ideals and convictions and beliefs are more one-sided. The Aryan unconscious contains tensions and creative germ of a future that still has to come to fruition: new cultural shapes still lie dormant in the darkness of the unconscious. The Jew, as a relative nomad, never created a civilisation of his own - and he probably never will. All his instincts and talents presuppose a more or less civilised guest people for their development (1933/1934, § 353).

Apparently Jung is kind to Jews when he states that their civilisation is older, and their consciousness broader. But they are weaker, and - last but not least - they are parasites who thrive on other civilisations...

Jung continues: the Jewish race, as a whole, has an unconscious that is only comparable to the Aryan one to a limited extent. Apart from certain creative individuals the average Jew is far too conscious and too differentiated to be full of the tensions of an unborn future. The Aryan unconscious has a higher potential: these are the pros and cons of a youthfulness that did not yet become completely alienated from the barbarian. Therefore it is a mistake to apply Jewish categories onto Christian Germans or Slavs. This is why the (Aryan) creative psychic basis, full of premonitions, was declared by (Jewish) psychoanalysis to be an infantile-banal quagmire, while Jung's warning voice was discredited for decades, under the pretext that he be anti-Semitic. Freud originated this imputation (1933/1934, § 354).

But the fact remains that Jung's text is both racist and anti-Semitic. Racist arguments are used

to support his idea of a collective unconscious, arguing that the latter would be more or less exhausted (or realised) in Jews. Anyway, the argument is specious: why would people that are so highly differentiated attach such importance to the ‘infantile-banal quagmire’?

### **13. Jung’s ‘shadow’**

In a letter to Theodor Bovet, Jung reveals the personal roots of his shadow concept:

“I would hardly have been able to formulate the concept ‘shadow’, if its existence had not been my greatest experience, and most certainly not alone in others, but in myself... In fact, my shadow is so big, that I was not able to overlook it in my life plan. Yes, I had to consider it as a necessary part of my personality, draw the consequences from this insight, and take responsibility for it. Through many bitter experiences I learnt that the sin which one has or is, may lead to remorse, but cannot be lifted. I don’t believe in the tiger who is definitively converted to vegetarianism and who feeds on apples only. My consolation has always been Paul: he did not think it beneath his dignity to admit that he carried a thorn in his flesh. My sin became my dearest task I do not leave it to others, so that I can appear as the Messiah, who always knows what is good for others” (1955b, 518).

One can wonder to what sin Jung is referring to. I would guess that he is hinting – on the conscious level – at his ‘polygamic’ components which he first discovered in his relationship with Sabina Spielrein:

“[...] my intentions have always been pure. You know of course that the devil can use the best things to produce dirt. I learnt an unspeakable number of things, on that occasion, about the philosophy of marital life. Indeed, in spite of all auto-analysis, before this experience I had only quite an inadequate knowledge of my polygamic components. Now I know where and how one sizes the devil. Exactly these painful and yet highly salutary insights have assured me, so I hope, of the moral qualities that will be very advantageous in my future life. My relationship with my wife gained a great deal of assurance and depth” (1909, 283).

In his autobiography, Jung reveals some ‘shadow’ figures that appeared in his dreams: a “small, brown-skinned savage who accompanied me and had actually taken the initiative in the killing.”(1961, 205), “two psychiatrists [...], first and second editions of the shadow, father and son”(1961, 245).

Some of his dreams do not lack a certain grandeur: “Faust, the inept, purblind philosopher, encounters the dark side of his being, his sinister shadow, Mephistopheles, who in spite of his negating disposition represents the true spirit of life as against the arid scholar who hovers on the brink of suicide. My own inner contradictions appeared here in dramatised form [...]”(1961, 262).

He even dreams of an ‘ethnic’ shadow: “The Arab’s dusky complexion marks him as a ‘shadow’, but not the personal shadow, rather an ethnic one associated not with my persona but with the totality of my personality, that is, with the self” (1961, 273).

### **14. Jung about consciousness**

Before coming to my - tentative - conclusions, I will make a brief excursion into the problem of consciousness, which appears to be extremely difficult to define. Freud considered it as “an unprecedented fact can neither be explained nor described [...]. However, when one

speaks about consciousness, anybody knows immediately, by experience, what it is about” (quoted in Laplanche & Pontalis 1971).

Jung’s ‘official’ definition (in *Psychological Types*) reads: “the relation of psychic contents to the ego, in so far as this relation is perceived as such by the ego. [...] Consciousness is the function or activity which maintains relation of psychic contents to the ego. Consciousness is not identical with the *psyche* [...]” (1921, § 700). The ego on its turn is defined as “a complex of ideas which constitutes the centre of my field of consciousness and appears to possess a high degree of continuity and identity” (1921, § 706). The ‘definition’ is obviously circular – and therefore tautological. Moreover: consciousness maintains a relation between psychic contents and the ego (the centre of consciousness); it is not only ‘a function or activity’ which makes this relation possible, but also the *consciousness* of that relation.

Any thinker<sup>8</sup>, Jung would later say, tends to consider consciousness, since it is directly given, as something known: no further objective experience is necessary.... It is difficult to get rid of the original naïve view that the soul is the best known of all things (1947/1954, § 343). “It is man’s capacity to be conscious that makes him human” (1947/1954, § 412).

- Sometimes Jung is lyrical when he speaks about consciousness: “When one reflects upon what consciousness really is, one is profoundly impressed by the extreme wonder of the fact that an event which takes place outside in the cosmos simultaneously produces an internal image, that it takes place, so to speak, inside as well, which is to say: becomes conscious.” (*Basel Seminar*, privately printed, 1934, p.1, quoted in 1961, p.413) “Why should man attain a higher consciousness – *à tort et à travers*”? Jung admits that the answer to this question is a bit difficult; he can only profess his belief: the beauty of the world and the cosmos would never have *existed* without human consciousness. Man is the first being who knew, that all these things *are*. So any small step on the path of becoming conscious creates the world (1939a, § 177).
- *But consciousness is only a part of the psyche*; it develops from the unconscious, the limits of which we do not know. “In this whole, consciousness is contained, maybe like a smaller circle in a bigger one” (1941/1954, § 390). Thus consciousness is dependent on the unconscious: “For indeed consciousness does not create itself – it wells up from unknown depths. In childhood it awakens gradually, and all through life it wakes each morning out of the depths of sleep from an unconscious condition. It is like a child that is born daily out of the primordial womb of the unconscious” (1943b, § 935).
- *Consciousness discriminates*: “There is no consciousness without distinction of opposites. That is the paternal *Logos* principle [...]. Unconsciousness is the primal sin, evil itself, for the *Logos*” (1939a, § 178). Consciousness is creative; it produces – through conflict – light. Jung compares it with ‘that force, which always wants evil and always produces good’ (1939a, § 181). By becoming conscious, the ego will distinguish itself from the mother (1939a, § 188). “The more a human being is unconscious, the more he will follow the general canon of psychic events. But the more he becomes conscious of his individuality, the more his difference from other subjects comes to the fore, and the less he will correspond to the general expectation” (1947/1954, § 344). As a consequence, consciousness should be distinguished from simple *awareness* (in which the discriminating aspect is absent).
- *Consciousness entails great losses*: “Consciousness tends to forget the fact that it falls victim to the *verbal concepts which it created*. [...] The progress to *Logos* is a great achievement indeed, but one has to pay for it with a loss of instinct and reality, to the extent that one sticks in a primitive way to the bare words” (1941/1954, § 442). “The

rupture of the contact with the unconscious and the subjection to the tyranny of the word entail a great damage”(1941/1954, § 443): the original feeling of unity with the unconscious psyche is lost. “The world of consciousness inevitably is a world full of limitations and walls that block the roads. It is always a necessary one-sidedness, which corresponds to the very being of consciousness”(1939c, § 897).

- *Consciousness is relative, and limited*: there is a consciousness in which the unconscious predominates, just as there is a consciousness in which consciousness prevails; there are *no conscious contents, that are not unconscious in another respect*; maybe there are no unconscious psychic elements either, that are not at the same time conscious (1947/1954, § 385). Consciousness, a system of observation *par excellence*, can be compared to the perceptible range of sound and light: it has not only an inferior, but also a superior limit (1947/1954, § 367).

Once again Jung lives up to his name: on the one hand he grossly overvalues consciousness, that ‘extreme wonder’, which – in his view – creates the whole world (certainly a most subjectivist standpoint!); on the other hand he stresses its dependency on the unconscious, and the limitations which it entails: onesidedness, subjection tot the tyranny of the word, loss of the feeling of unity, of nature and instinct.

According to Samuels & al., “Jung at various times equated consciousness with awareness, intuition and apperception, stressing the function of reflection in its achievement” (Samuels & al., p.36). I will stress the *discriminating* function of consciousness: by it reality is split into opposite poles. Language too is based on a set of antithetical propositions. Some of the most important of these splittings are: good against bad, love against hate, and ... conscious against unconscious! I reserve the term ‘awareness’ for a form of consciousness which does *not* discriminate.

## 15. Tentative conclusions

I already criticised the lack of historical precision in Jung’s *Collected Works*. Jung is not to blame for this, although his ideology might have contributed tot the editors’ laxity. The unconscious may be timeless, its expressions - as in the life and work of C.G.Jung - are *not*. “My life is a story of the self-realisation of the unconscious. “(1961, 17). Jung would say. This unremitting evolution involved quite a lot of other people. But: “All other memories of travels, people and my surroundings have paled besides these interior happenings. [...] Recollections of the outward events of my life have largely faded or disappeared. But my encounters with the ‘other’ reality, my bouts with the unconscious, are indelibly engraved in my memory” (1961, 18).

This is - in my opinion - the most important shadow of Jung and of his work: he was so infatuated with the (collective) unconscious and its manifestations that he neglected the personal - human-all-too-human - facets of the unconscious dynamics. Not only the relationship to the other became secondary, subordinate tot the phenomenology of the unconscious, every now and then it was scotomised altogether. As Emma Jung wittily noticed, once interrupting a discussion between Carl Gustav and Michael Fordham: “You know very well that you are not interested in anybody, unless he exhibits archetypes” (Fordham 1993, 117).

Any psychological theory, Jung used to say, is in the first place the expression of its author’s psychology. Jung’s analytical psychology, is in large part a generalisation of his own experiences on the path of individuation; he tended to hypostatic the figures which he encountered on this journey: shadow, anima/animus, etc.. Understandably he tries to corroborate his findings: Gnosticism, alchemy, Christianity, a horde of other mythologies,

both oriental and occidental, and other 'collective' sources provided him with ample confirmation of the plausibility of his theory; he would even advance them as irrefutable proofs.

In this respect it is important to note that Jung was not - like Freud for instance - a (more or less) 'healthy' neurotic: his major crisis (after the rift with Freud and psychoanalysis) verged rather on psychosis. He managed to maintain his balance though, and eventually came out of his 'creative disease', with a good deal of brilliant discoveries. But the very brilliance of the light which he so detected casts a huge shadow too, especially if its elements are generalised and hypostatised, out of contact with the personal, historical and relational sphere. His utterings about Jewish psychology show how far he could go (while completely denying the historical context) in order to prove his right.

Jung said a great many things which are right. He threw light on a lot of psychological phenomena. But, as a human being, he was bound to be trapped by the limitations of discriminating consciousness: whatever 'truth' he professed inevitably casts shadow, a 'counter-truth'. When he was in an anti-dogmatic mood he would say so himself: if something is (psychologically) true, its opposite must be true too... This is why I refuse to consider analytical psychology as being "more than a science, [...] a meeting point, a life style, a power of transformation of collective consciousness". If analytical psychology is a science (this issue depends on the way in which we define 'science', and to what extent this science should be 'evidence based'), it cannot be dogmatic, and each and every of its assertions have to be submitted to critical inquiry again and again.

The psychoanalytic paradigm underwent very important - even revolutionary - changes the last decades. Some of his dogms have finally been abandoned: the necessity to lift 'infantile amnesty', the analyst as a 'blank screen', interpretation as the sole mutative agent, to name only a few. Of course some dogmatic bulwarks resist these changes, but on the whole a fresh wind is blowing, and many former 'heretics' are re-discovered - including Jung. I subscribe to his pluralistic approach: human mind is so many-faceted, and our discriminating consciousness is so limited, that we cannot hope to grasp the whole psyche in one single theory.

This is for me the most important lesson that can be drawn from the shadow concept: every (psychoanalytical) truth is relative, and every theory is bound to have its shadow. It should be a moral obligation for any author who proposes a new psychoanalytical theory, to submit it to a thorough examination: what are the shadow sides of the advanced thesis? It is surprising that Jung never considered his analytical psychology in this critical way. Freud and Adler were one-sided, so he said, but he tended to present his own psychology as all-encompassing and final. He also wrote that

"theories in psychology are the very devil. It is true that we need certain points of view for their orienting and heuristic value; but they should always be regarded as mere auxiliary concepts that can be laid aside at any time. We still know so very little about the psyche that it is positively grotesque to think we are far enough advanced to frame general theories. [...] No doubt theory is the best cloak for lack of experience and ignorance, but the consequences are depressing: bigotry, superficiality, and scientific sectarianism" (Jung 1938b, 7).

I will end by emphasising the intimate relationship between shadow and discriminating consciousness: the shadow is the immediate consequence of the splitting activity of discriminating consciousness. In my opinion, it is more important to overcome these splittings (Jung's 'transcendent function') than to 'integrate' the shadow. Maybe it boils down to the same thing, but the second option remains in the discriminating sphere, whereas the first one 'transcends' it - partially and temporarily. I do not think that the human being

can ever achieve 'wholeness'; he can just yearn for it, make efforts to achieve it without ever succeeding, except for very rare and short moments in which he may approximate to it.

## Noten

1. Text written in preparation of the Anglo-Franco-Belgian Meeting of May 2002. This paper is by no means finished, but the author still hopes that it may stimulate the debate.
2. The term has a shadow though: it means 'asthmatic' and 'flatulent'!
3. "Structures fantasmatiques typiques [...] que la **psychoanalyse** retrouve comme organisant la vie fantasmatique, quelles que soient les expériences personnelles des sujets; l'universalité de ces fantasmes s'explique, selon Freud, par le fait qu'ils constitueraient un patrimoine transmis génétiquement."
4. I quote partly from Dehing 1992.
5. God too is supposed to have a shadow. See for instance 1950, par.579.
6. *Massenpsychologie und Ichanalyse* (1921).
7. The English translation mitigates the meaning of the German text which says, literally translated: "Wholeness is *not* perfection, *but* completeness." In the German edition the sentence is italicised, in the English it is not.
8. In this section I will borrow from a very old text of mine (Dehing 1975)
9. "Von jener Kraft, die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft". (Faust, I. Teil, Studiezimmer).

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