

## **Images of the unconscious**

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In these post-conference reflections I would like to outline the position of analytical psychology and Jungian Studies in the context of a bigger picture. Jungian psychology and its practitioners and researchers do not seem to be enthusiastically accepted within the official academic establishment. Moreover, as one of the speakers noticed, the higher one attempts to move up in the hierarchy of administrative power the heavier the resistance gets. There is an opinion that this state of affairs is in large part a consequence of the inevitable oppression from the technology-oriented culture and prevailing rational mentality, which have a strong tendency to devalue and to deplore, without much consideration, anything related to notions of transcendental/transrational, intuitive and spiritual. This opinion may however be misleading. There is a great deal of rational research and scholarship forced to the periphery of mainstream science as well, suggesting that the rational mentality and orientation on technology are not *per se* the reasons why analytical psychology has to fight for its existence, acceptance and development. I suggest that the real cause of the oppression is the Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm underlying our technological culture, our thinking and our world perception. This mechanistic and reductionist paradigm resides in individual minds, normally outside of awareness, as a core of the habitual mental framework we use to interpret and model the objective world as our subjective representation. The Newtonian worldview constitutes a paradigmatic template on which generations of individual minds have been molded through upbringing, education and living in the environment of technology-driven society.

When one tries to move up in the hierarchy of administrative power (carrying forward the Jungian legacy) in an attempt to gain access to the positions where decisions are made as to the funds distribution, professional appointments, choice of programs and projects to be realized, and ideas supported as worthy of research, one quickly runs into people whose individual minds are physical carriers of the Newtonian-Cartesian image of the world, which disregards/deplores all what is associated with transcendental and non-rational. Their individual minds are being unconsciously and continuously synchronized in their attitudes and thinking by this shared image, as they interact with each other through their business and social relationships. These decision-makers share a certain corporate ideology, if you will, which constitutes a basis for their

decisions and attitudes defining what will be taught and what will not, what is to be considered legitimate and respectable, and what should be suppressed through ostracism and stigma. And it is not a conspiracy theory – most of these people are hardly aware of the real reasons underlying their opinions, values and behavior. They judge and act out of their unconscious. Which is not to say that many of them do not profit very consciously from their positions of power to make those decisions.

Think about human society as one immense, slowly evolving network of individual human minds that are linked through their relationships/transactions of psycho-socio-economical nature. The nodes of power are those positions (interactively and paradigmally connected) in the structure of the network where the decisions and choices are made as to what will be eventually realized as our objective world and what, on the other hand, is destined to sink into “the shadows of the unspoken”. Activities of these nodes are synchronized and coordinated by the vested, and often pecuniary, interests of the managing nodes/minds running the network and by the worldview they share and represent. *A whole of individual minds represents the collective unconscious. A particular constellation of synchronized minds is one of the images of the collective unconscious.* What is being realized today, by means of our own activity organized, managed and directed by the nodes of power, is a Newtonian-Cartesian image of the world. The consequences of realization of this image, which affect today almost every facet of our lives, grow increasingly appalling. The problems we face today are all interconnected and interdependent as parts of one image. Degradation of natural resources and habitats, climate change, extinction of species and declining diversity of life, deterioration of human health, epidemics, poverty, degradation of our cultural and physical environment etc. are signs of the inadequacy of the decision-making process based on the dominating worldview, or, in other words, they are the signs of the inadequacy of our current image of the world. The good news is that the collective unconscious is able and does generate alternative and potentially more adequate images of the world in the form of constellations of individual human minds synchronized by the ideas, values and images they share, through the establishment and maintenance of psycho-socio-economical interactions/transactions/connections between them. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the IASP is an example of a short blink of an image in the collective unconscious. The world we live in is realized as a result of our own actions and this very realization constitutes at the same time an image of the collective unconscious. We are free to

change any inadequate image for a more adequate one through our own organized actions. In fact we are to change it if we wish to survive on this planet.

As a community the Jungian psychologists are not alone in their perception of the world. You would be surprised to learn how many individuals and informal organizations share a novel emerging paradigm of the world, which is reflected so brilliantly in the works of Jung and his followers. At present, however, these individuals and organizations are mostly unaware of each other. They emerge and evolve independently as isolated communities locked within a specific study/activity field by the specific phenomenology/language each of them develops. It is time for them to open, to connect and to synchronize with the alike - they are disconnected only because of their differences in form, not in content. Do not get sedated, however, by the intellectual euphoria of shared ideas, images and values. Remember that the latter are only virtual models/images emerging within the individual consciousness (in the form of concrete physical activities of synchronized neuronal populations at the cellular scale). Images of the collective unconscious, which is the world we live in, are realized through our concrete organized actions on our human scale, here and now. The world can only be changed through action and organization of new and adequate, with respect to our time, structures both in our minds and in our society. In order to succeed, these new structures/images must overcome the resistance of the existing old and obsolete structures, proponents of the old paradigm, both in our minds and in our society.

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