

## I.

## First Years

**W**HEN I was six months old, my parents moved from Kesswil on Lake Constance to Laufen, the castle and vicarage above the Falls of the Rhine. This was in 1875. My memories begin with my second or third year. I recall the vicarage, the garden, the laundry house, the church, the castle, the Falls, the small castle of Worth, and the sexton's farm. These are nothing but islands of memory afloat in a sea of vagueness, each by itself, apparently with no connection between them.

One memory comes up which is perhaps the earliest of my life, and is indeed only a rather hazy impression. I am lying in a pram, in the shadow of a tree. It is a fine, warm summer day, the sky blue, and golden sunlight darting through green leaves. The hood of the pram has been left up. I have just awakened to the glorious beauty of the day, and have a sense of indescribable well-being. I see the sun glittering through the leaves and blossoms of the bushes. Everything is wholly wonderful, colorful, and splendid.

Another memory: I am sitting in our dining room, on the west side of the house, perched in a high chair and spooning up warm milk with bits of broken bread in it. The milk has a

6

pleasant taste and a characteristic smell. This was the first time I became aware of the smell of milk. It was the moment when, so to speak, I became conscious of smelling. This memory, too, goes very far back.

Still another: a lovely summer evening. An aunt said to me, "Now I am going to show you something." She took me out in front of the house, on the road to Dachsen. On the far horizon the chain of the Alps lay bathed in glowing sunset reds. The Alps could be seen very clearly that evening. "Now look over there"—I can hear her saying to me in Swiss dialect—"the mountains are all red." For the first time I consciously saw the Alps. Then I was told that the next day the village children would be going on a school outing to the Uetliberg, near Zürich. I wanted so much to go too. To my sorrow, I was informed that children as small as I could not go along; there was nothing to be done about it. From then on the Uetliberg and Zürich became an unattainable land of dreams, near to the glowing, snow-covered mountains.

From a somewhat later period comes another memory. My mother took me to the Thurgau to visit friends, who had a castle on Lake Constance. I could not be dragged away from the water. The waves from the steamer washed up to the shore, the sun glistened on the water, and the sand under the water had been curled into little ridges by the waves. The lake stretched away and away into the distance. This expanse of water was an inconceivable pleasure to me, an incomparable splendor. At that time the idea became fixed in my mind that I must live near a lake; without water, I thought, nobody could live at all.

Still another memory comes up: strangers, bustle, excitement. The maid comes running and exclaims, "The fishermen have found a corpse—came down the Falls—they want to put it in the washhouse!" My father says, "Yes, yes." I want to see the dead body at once. My mother holds me back and sternly forbids me to go into the garden. When all the men had left, I quickly stole into the garden to the washhouse. But the door was locked. I went around the house; at the back there was an open drain running down the slope, and I saw blood and water

7

trickling out. I found this extraordinarily interesting. At that time I was not yet four years old.

Yet another image: I am restive, feverish, unable to sleep. My father carries me in his arms, paces up and down, singing his old student songs. I particularly remember one I was especially fond of and which always used to soothe me, "*Alles schwäge, felder neige . . .*" The beginning went something like that. To this day I can remember my father's voice, singing over me in the stillness of the night.

I was suffering, so my mother told me afterward, from general eczema. Dim intimations of trouble in my parents' marriage hovered around me. My illness, in 1878, must have been connected with a temporary separation of my parents. My mother spent several months in a hospital in Basel, and presumably her illness had something to do with the difficulty in the marriage. An aunt of mine, who was a spinster and some twenty years older than my mother, took care of me. I was deeply troubled by my mother's being away. From then on, I always felt mistrustful when the word "love" was spoken. The feeling I associated with "woman" was for a long time that of innate unreliability. "Father," on the other hand, meant reliability and—powerlessness. That is the handicap I started off with. Later, these early impressions were revised: I have trusted men friends and been disappointed by them, and I have mistrusted women and was not disappointed.

While my mother was away, our maid, too, looked after me. I still remember her picking me up and laying my head against her shoulder. She had black hair and an olive complexion, and was quite different from my mother. I can see, even now, her hairline, her throat, with its darkly pigmented skin, and her ear. All this seemed to me very strange and yet strangely familiar. It was as though she belonged not to my family but only to me, as though she were connected in some way with other mysterious things I could not understand. This type of girl later became a component of my anima.<sup>1</sup> The feeling of strangeness which she

<sup>1</sup> For this and other technical terms which are commonly used by Jung but may be unfamiliar to the reader or no longer fresh in his mind, see the glossary at the end of the book.

conveyed, and yet of having known her always, was a characteristic of that figure which later came to symbolize for me the whole essence of womanhood.

From the period of my parents' separation I have another memory image: a young, very pretty and charming girl with blue eyes and fair hair is leading me, on a blue autumn day, under golden maple and chestnut trees along the Rhine below the Falls, near Wörth castle. The sun is shining through the foliage, and yellow leaves lie on the ground. This girl later became my mother-in-law. She admired my father. I did not see her again until I was twenty-one years old.

These are my outward memories. What follow now are more powerful, indeed overwhelming images, some of which I recall only dimly. There was a fall downstairs, for example, and another fall against the angle of a stove leg. I remember pain and blood, a doctor sewing a wound in my head—the scar remained visible until my senior year at the Gymnasium. My mother told me, too, of the time when I was crossing the bridge over the Rhine Falls to Neuhausen. The maid caught me just in time—I already had one leg under the railing and was about to slip through. These things point to an unconscious suicidal urge or, it may be, to a fatal resistance to life in this world.

At that time I also had vague fears at night. I would hear things walking about in the house. The muted roar of the Rhine Falls was always audible, and all around lay a danger zone. People drowned, bodies were swept over the rocks. In the cemetery nearby, the sexton would dig a hole—heaps of brown, upturned earth. Black, solemn men in long frock coats with unusually tall hats and shiny black boots would bring a black box. My father would be there in his clerical gown, speaking in a resounding voice. Women wept. I was told that someone was being buried in this hole in the ground. Certain persons who had been around previously would suddenly no longer be there. Then I would hear that they had been buried, and that Lord Jesus had taken them to himself.

My mother had taught me a prayer which I had to say every evening. I gladly did so because it gave me a sense of comfort in face of the vague uncertainties of the night:

*Spread out thy wings, Lord Jesus mild,  
And take to thee thy chick, thy child.  
"If Satan would devour it,  
No harm shall overpower it,"  
So let the angels sing!<sup>2</sup>*

Lord Jesus was comforting, a nice, benevolent gentleman like Herr Wegenstein up at the castle, rich, powerful, respected, and mindful of little children at night. Why he should be winged like a bird was a conundrum that did not worry me any further. Far more significant and thought-provoking was the fact that little children were compared to chicks which Lord Jesus evidently "took" reluctantly, like bitter medicine. This was difficult to understand. But I understood at once that Satan liked chicks and had to be prevented from eating them. So, although Lord Jesus did not like the taste, he ate them anyway, so that Satan would not get them. As far as that went, my argument was comforting. But now I was hearing that Lord Jesus "took" other people to himself as well, and that this "taking" was the same as putting them in a hole in the ground.

This sinister analogy had unfortunate consequences. I began to distrust Lord Jesus. He lost the aspect of a big, comforting, benevolent bird and became associated with the gloomy black men in frock coats, top hats, and shiny black boots who busied themselves with the black box.

These ruminations of mine led to my first conscious trauma. One hot summer day I was sitting alone, as usual, on the road in front of the house, playing in the sand. The road led past the house up a hill, then disappeared in the wood on the hilltop. So from the house you could see a stretch of the road. Looking up, I saw a figure in a strangely broad hat and a long black garment coming down from the wood. It looked like a man wearing women's clothes. Slowly the figure drew nearer, and I could now

<sup>2</sup> *Breit' aus die Flügeln beide,  
O Jesu meine Freude  
Und nimm dein Kichlein ein.  
Will Satan es verschlingen,  
Dann lass die Engel singen:  
Dies Kind soll unvertetset sein.*

see that it really was a man wearing a kind of black robe that reached to his feet. At the sight of him I was overcome with fear, which rapidly grew into deadly terror as the frightful recognition shot through my mind: "That is a Jesuit." Shortly before, I had overheard a conversation between my father and a visiting colleague concerning the nefarious activities of the Jesuits. From the half-irritated, half-fearful tone of my father's remarks I gathered that "Jesuits" meant something specially dangerous, even for my father. Actually I had no idea what Jesuits were, but I was familiar with the word "Jesus" from my little prayer.

The man coming down the road must be in disguise, I thought; that was why he wore women's clothes. Probably he had evil intentions. Terrified, I ran helter-skelter into the house, rushed up the stairs, and hid under a beam in the darkest corner of the attic. I don't know how long I remained there, but it must have been a fairly long time, because, when I ventured down again to the first floor and cautiously stuck my head out of the window, far and wide there was not a trace of the black figure to be seen. For days afterward the hellish fright clung to my limbs and kept me in the house. And even when I began to play in the road again, the wooded hilltop was still the object of my uneasy vigilance. Later I realized, of course, that the black figure was a harmless Catholic priest.

At about the same time—I could not say with absolute certainty whether it preceded this experience or not—I had the earliest dream I can remember, a dream which was to pre-occupy me all my life. I was then between three and four years old.

The vicarage stood quite alone near Laufen castle, and there was a big meadow stretching back from the sexton's farm. In the dream I was in this meadow. Suddenly I discovered a dark, rectangular, stone-lined hole in the ground. I had never seen it before. I ran forward curiously and peered down into it. Then I saw a stone stairway leading down. Hesitantly and fearfully, I descended. At the bottom was a doorway with a round arch, closed off by a green curtain. It was a big, heavy curtain of worked stuff like brocade, and it looked very sumptuous. Curri-

ous to see what might be hidden behind, I pushed it aside. I saw before me in the dim light a rectangular chamber about thirty feet long. The ceiling was arched and of hewn stone. The floor was laid with flagstones, and in the center a red carpet ran from the entrance to a low platform. On this platform stood a wonderfully rich golden throne. I am not certain, but perhaps a red cushion lay on the seat. It was a magnificent throne, a real king's throne in a fairy tale. Something was standing on it which I thought at first was a tree trunk twelve to fifteen feet high and about one and a half to two feet thick. It was a huge thing, reaching almost to the ceiling. But it was of a curious composition: it was made of skin and naked flesh, and on top there was something like a rounded head with no face and no hair. On the very top of the head was a single eye, gazing motionlessly upward.

It was fairly light in the room, although there were no windows and no apparent source of light. Above the head, however, was an aura of brightness. The thing did not move, yet I had the feeling that it might at any moment crawl off the throne like a worm and creep toward me. I was paralyzed with terror. At that moment I heard from outside and above me my mother's voice. She called out, "Yes, just look at him. That is the man-eater!" That intensified my terror still more, and I awoke sweating and scared to death. For many nights afterward I was afraid to go to sleep, because I feared I might have another dream like that.

This dream haunted me for years. Only much later did I realize that what I had seen was a phallus, and it was decades before I understood that it was a ritual phallus. I could never make out whether my mother meant, "That is the man-eater," or, "That is the *man-eater*." In the first case she would have meant that not Lord Jesus or the Jesuit was the devourer of little children, but the phallus; in the second case that the "man-eater" in general was symbolized by the phallus, so that the dark Lord Jesus, the Jesuit, and the phallus were identical.

The abstract significance of the phallus is shown by the fact that it was enthroned by itself, "thyphallically" (*ἰθῆς*, "upright"). The hole in the meadow probably represented a grave.

The grave itself was an underground temple whose green curtain symbolized the *meadow*, in other words the mystery of Earth with her covering of green vegetation. The carpet was *blood-red*. What about the vault? Perhaps I had already been to the Munt, the citadel of Schaffhausen? This is not likely, since no one would take a three-year-old child up there. So it cannot be a memory-trace. Equally, I do not know where the anatomically correct phallus can have come from. The interpretation of the *orficium urethrae* as an eye, with the source of light apparently above it, points to the etymology of the word phallus (*φαλλός*, shining, bright).<sup>8</sup>

At all events, the phallus of this dream seems to be a subterranean God "not to be named," and such it remained throughout my youth, reappearing whenever anyone spoke too emphatically about Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus never became quite real for me, never quite acceptable, never quite lovable, for again and again I would think of his underground counterpart, a frightful revelation which had been accorded me without my seeking it. The Jesuit's "disguise" cast its shadow over the Christian doctrine I had been taught. Often it seemed to me a solemn masquerade, a kind of funeral at which the mourners put on serious or mournful faces but the next moment were secretly laughing and not really sad at all. Lord Jesus seemed to me in some ways a god of death, helpful, it is true, in that he scared away the terrors of the night, but himself uncanny, a crucified and bloody corpse. Secretly, his love and kindness, which I always heard praised, appeared doubtful to me, chiefly because the people who talked most about "dear Lord Jesus" wore black frock coats and shiny black boots which reminded me of burials. They were my father's colleagues as well as eight of my uncles—all parsons. For many years they inspired fear in me—not to speak of occasional Catholic priests who reminded me of the terrifying Jesuit who had irritated and even alarmed my father. In later years and until my confirmation, I made

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Symbols of Transformation* (CW 5), p. 220. CW refers to the Collected Works of C. G. Jung, published by Princeton University Press. For a list of these works, see pp. 403-410.

every effort to force myself to take the required positive attitude to Christ. But I could never succeed in overcoming my secret distrust.

The fear of the "black man," which is felt by every child, was not the essential thing in that experience; it was, rather, the recognition that stabbed through my childish brain: "That is a Jesuit." So the important thing in the dream was its remarkable symbolic setting and the astounding interpretation: "That is the man-eater." Not the child's ogre of a man-eater, but the fact that *this* was the man-eater, and that *it* was sitting on a golden throne beneath the earth. For my childish imagination it was first of all the king who sat on a golden throne; then, on a much more beautiful and much higher and much more golden throne far, far away in the blue sky, sat God and Lord Jesus, with golden crowns and white robes. Yet from this same Lord Jesus came the "Jesuit," in black women's garb, with a broad black hat, down from the wooded hill. I had to glance up there every so often to see whether another danger might not be approaching. In the dream I went down into the hole in the earth and found something very different on a golden throne, something non-human and underworldly, which gazed fixedly upward and fed on human flesh. It was only fifty years later that a passage in a study of religious ritual burned into my eyes, concerning the motif of cannibalism that underlies the symbolism of the Mass. Only then did it become clear to me how exceedingly unchild-like, how sophisticated and oversophisticated was the thought that had begun to break through into consciousness in those two experiences. Who was it speaking in me? Whose mind had deceived them? What kind of superior intelligence was at work? I know every numbskull will babble on about "black man," "man-eater," "chance," and "retrospective interpretation," in order to banish something terribly inconvenient that might sully the familiar picture of childhood innocence. Ah, these good, efficient, healthy-minded people, they always remind me of those optimistic tadpoles who bask in a puddle in the sun, in the shallowest of waters, crowding together and amiably wriggling their tails, totally unaware that the next morning the puddle will have dried up and left them stranded.

Who spoke to me then? Who talked of problems far beyond my knowledge? Who brought the Above and Below together, and laid the foundation for everything that was to fill the second half of my life with stormiest passion? Who but that alien guest who came both from above and from below?

Through this childhood dream I was initiated into the secrets of the earth. What happened then was a kind of burial in the earth, and many years were to pass before I came out again. Today I know that it happened in order to bring the greatest possible amount of light into the darkness. It was an initiation into the realm of darkness. My intellectual life had its unconscious beginnings at that time.

I no longer remember our move to Klein-Hünningen, near Basel, in 1879. But I do have a memory of something that happened several years later. One evening my father took me out of bed and carried me in his arms to our porch, which faced west. He showed me the evening sky, shimmering in the most glorious green. That was after the eruption of Krakatoa, in 1883.

Another time my father took me outside and showed me a large comet on the eastern horizon.

And once there was a great flood. The river Wiese, which flowed through the village, had broken its dam, and in its upper reaches a bridge had collapsed. Fourteen people were drowned and were carried down by the yellow flood water to the Rhine. When the water retreated, some of the corpses got stuck in the sand. When I was told about it, there was no holding me. I actually found the body of a middle-aged man, in a black frock coat; apparently he had just come from church. He lay half covered by sand, his arm over his eyes. Similarly, I was fascinated to watch a pig being slaughtered. To the horror of my mother, I watched the whole procedure. She thought it terrible, but the slaughtering and the dead man were simply matters of interest to me.

My earliest memories of art go back to those years at Klein-Hünningen. The house where my parents lived was the eighteenth-century parsonage, and in it there was a dark room.

Here all the furniture was good, and old paintings hung on the walls. I particularly remember an Italian painting of David and Goliath. It was a mirror copy from the workshop of Guido Reni; the original hangs in the Louvre. How it came into our family I do not know. There was another old painting in that room which now hangs in my son's house: a landscape of Basel dating from the early nineteenth century. Often I would steal into that dark, sequestered room and sit for hours in front of the pictures, gazing at all this beauty. It was the only beautiful thing I knew.

About that time—I must still have been a very little fellow, no more than six years old—an aunt took me to Basel and showed me the stuffed animals in the museum. We stayed a long time, because I wanted to look at everything very carefully. At four o'clock the bell rang, a sign that the museum was about to close. My aunt nagged at me, but I could not tear myself away from the showcases. In the meantime the room had been locked, and we had to go by another way to the staircase, through the gallery of antiquities. Suddenly I was standing before these marvelous figures! Utterly overwhelmed, I opened my eyes wide, for I had never seen anything so beautiful. I could not look at them long enough. My aunt pulled me by the hand to the exit—I trailing always a step behind her—crying out, "Disgusting boy, shut your eyes; disgusting boy, shut your eyes!" Only then did I see that the figures were naked and wore fig leaves. I hadn't noticed it at all before. Such was my first encounter with the fine arts. My aunt was simmering with indignation, as though she had been dragged through a pornographic institute.

When I was six years old, my parents took me on an excursion to Arlesheim. On this occasion my mother wore a dress I have never forgotten, and it is the only dress of hers that I can recall: it was of some black stuff printed all over with little green crescents. My earliest recollection of my mother is of a slender young woman wearing this dress. In all my other memories she is older and corpulent.

We came to a church, and my mother said, "That is a Catholic church." My curiosity, mingled with fear, prompted me to slip away from my mother and peer through the open door into the interior. I just had time to glimpse the big candles on a richly

adorned altar (it was around Easter) when I suddenly stumbled on a step and struck my chin on a piece of iron. I remember that I had a gash that was bleeding badly when my parents picked me up. My state of mind was curious: on the one hand I was ashamed because my screams were attracting the attention of the churchgoers, and on the other hand I felt that I had done something forbidden. "Jesuits—green curtain—secret of the man-eater. . . . So that is the Catholic Church which has to do with Jesuits. It is their fault that I stumbled and screamed."

For years afterward I was unable to set foot inside a Catholic church without a secret fear of blood and falling and Jesuits. That was the aura or atmosphere that hung about it, but at the same time it always fascinated me. The proximity of a Catholic priest made me even more uneasy, if that were possible. Not until I was in my thirties was I able to confront Mater Ecclesia without this sense of oppression. The first time was in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna.

Soon after I was six my father began giving me Latin lessons, and I also went to school. I did not mind school; it was easy for me, since I was always ahead of the others and had learned to read before I went there. However, I remember a time when I could not yet read, but pestered my mother to read aloud to me out of the *Orbis Pictus*, an old, richly illustrated children's book, which contained an account of exotic religions, especially that of the Hindus. There were illustrations of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva which I found an inexhaustible source of interest. My mother later told me that I always returned to these pictures. Whenever I did so, I had an obscure feeling of their affinity with my "original revelation"—which I never spoke of to anyone. It was a secret I must never betray. Indirectly, my mother confirmed this feeling, for the faint tone of contempt with which she spoke of "heathens" did not escape me. I knew that she would reject my "revelation" with horror, and I did not want to expose myself to any such injury.

This unchildlike behavior was connected on the one hand with an intense sensitivity and vulnerability, on the other hand—and this especially—with the loneliness of my early youth. (My sister was born nine years after me.) I played alone, and

in my own way. Unfortunately I cannot remember what I played; I recall only that I did not want to be disturbed. I was deeply absorbed in my games and could not endure being watched or judged while I played them. My first concrete memory of games dates from my seventh or eighth year. I was passionately fond of playing with bricks, and built towers which I then rapturously destroyed by an "earthquake." Between my eighth and eleventh years I drew endlessly—battle pictures, sieges, bombardments, naval engagements. Then I filled a whole exercise book with ink blots and amused myself giving them fantastic interpretations. One of my reasons for liking school was that there I found at last the playmates I had lacked for so long.

At school, I also discovered something else. But before I go into this I should first mention that the nocturnal atmosphere had begun to thicken. All sorts of things were happening at night, things incomprehensible and alarming. My parents were sleeping apart. I slept in my father's room. From the door to my mother's room came frightening influences. At night Mother was strange and mysterious. One night I saw coming from her door a faintly luminous, indefinite figure whose head detached itself from the neck and floated along in front of it, in the air, like a little moon. Immediately another head was produced and again detached itself. This process was repeated six or seven times. I had anxiety dreams of things that were now small, now large. For instance, I saw a tiny ball at a great distance; gradually it approached, growing steadily into a monstrous and suffocating object. Or I saw telegraph wires with birds sitting on them, and the wires grew thicker and thicker and my fear greater until the terror awoke me.

Although these dreams were overtures to the physiological changes of puberty, they had in their turn a prelude which occurred about my seventh year. At that time I was sick with pseudo-croup, accompanied by choking fits. One night during an attack I stood at the foot of the bed, my head bent back over the bed rail, while my father held me under the arms. Above me I saw a glowing blue circle about the size of the full moon, and inside it moved golden figures which I thought were angels. This

vision was repeated, and each time it allayed my fear of suffocation. But the suffocation returned in the anxiety dreams. I see in this a psychogenic factor: the atmosphere of the house was beginning to be unbreathable.

I hated going to church. The one exception was Christmas Day. The Christmas carol "This Is the Day That God Has Made" pleased me enormously. And then in the evening, of course, came the Christmas tree. Christmas was the only Christian festival I could celebrate with fervor. All others left me cold. New Year's Eve alone had something of the attractiveness of Christmas, but definitely took second place; Advent had a quality about it that somehow did not fit in with the coming Christmas. It had to do with night, storms, and wind, and also with the darkness of the house. There was something whispering, something queer going on.

I return now to the discovery I made in the course of associating with my rustic schoolmates. I found that they alienated me from myself. When I was with them I became different from the way I was at home. I joined in their pranks, or invented ones which at home would never have occurred to me, so it seemed; although, as I knew only too well, I could hatch up all sorts of things when I was alone. It seemed to me that the change in myself was due to the influence of my schoolfellows, who somehow misled me or compelled me to be different from what I thought I was. The influence of this wider world, this world which contained others besides my parents, seemed to me dubious if not altogether suspect and, in some obscure way, hostile. Though I became increasingly aware of the beauty of the bright daylight world where "golden sunlight filters through green leaves," at the same time I had a premonition of an inescapable world of shadows filled with frightening, unanswered questions which had me at their mercy. My nightly prayer did, of course, grant me a ritual protection since it concluded the day properly and just as properly ushered in night and sleep. But the new peril lurked by day. It was as if I sensed a splitting of myself, and feared it. My inner security was threatened.

I also recall from this period (seven to nine) that I was fond

of playing with fire. In our garden there was an old wall built of large blocks of stone, the interstices of which made interesting caves. I used to tend a little fire in one of these caves, with other children helping me; a fire that had to burn forever and therefore had to be constantly maintained by our united efforts, which consisted in gathering the necessary wood. No one but myself was allowed to tend this fire. Others could light other fires in other caves, but these fires were profane and did not concern me. My fire alone was living and had an unmistakable aura of sanctity.

In front of this wall was a slope in which was embedded a stone that jutted out—my stone. Often, when I was alone, I sat down on this stone, and then began an imaginary game that went something like this: "I am sitting on top of this stone and it is underneath." But the stone also could say "I" and think: "I am lying here on this slope and he is sitting on top of me." The question then arose: "Am I the one who is sitting on the stone, or am I the stone on which *he* is sitting?" This question always perplexed me, and I would stand up, wondering who was what now. The answer remained totally unclear, and my uncertainty was accompanied by a feeling of curious and fascinating darkness. But there was no doubt whatsoever that this stone stood in some secret relationship to me. I could sit on it for hours, fascinated by the puzzle it set me.

Thirty years later I again stood on that slope. I was a married man, had children, a house, a place in the world, and a head full of ideas and plans, and suddenly I was again the child who had kindled a fire full of secret significance and sat down on a stone without knowing whether it was I or I was it. I thought suddenly of my life in Zürich, and it seemed alien to me, like news from some remote world and time. This was frightening, for the world of my childhood in which I had just become absorbed was *eternal*, and I had been wrenched away from it and had fallen into a time that continued to roll onward, moving farther and farther away. The pull of that other world was so strong that I had to tear myself violently from the spot in order not to lose hold of my future.

I have never forgotten that moment, for it illuminated in a

flash of lightning the quality of eternity in my childhood. What this meant was revealed soon afterward, in my tenth year. My disunion with myself and uncertainty in the world at large led me to an action which at the time was quite incomprehensible to me. I had in those days a yellow, varnished pencil case of the kind commonly used by primary-school pupils, with a little lock and the customary ruler. At the end of this ruler I now carved a little manikin, about two inches long, with frock coat, top hat, and shiny black boots. I colored him black with ink, sawed him off the ruler, and put him in the pencil case, where I made him a little bed. I even made a coat for him out of a bit of wool. In the case I also placed a smooth, oblong blackish stone from the Rhine, which I had painted with water colors to look as though it were divided into an upper and lower half, and had long carried around in my trouser pocket. This was *his* stone. All this was a great secret. Secretly I took the case to the forbidden attic at the top of the house (forbidden because the floorboards were worn-eaten and rotten) and hid it with great satisfaction on one of the beams under the roof—for no one must ever see it! I knew that not a soul would ever find it there. No one could discover my secret and destroy it. I felt safe, and the tormenting sense of being at odds with myself was gone. In all difficult situations, whenever I had done something wrong or my feelings had been hurt, or when my father's irritability or my mother's invalidism oppressed me, I thought of my carefully bedded-down and wrapped-up manikin and his smooth, prettily colored stone. From time to time—often at intervals of weeks—I secretly stole up to the attic when I could be certain that no one would see me. Then I clambered up on the beam, opened the case, and looked at my manikin and his stone. Each time I did this I placed in the case a little scroll of paper on which I had previously written something during school hours in a secret language of my own invention. The addition of a new scroll always had the character of a solemn ceremonial act. Unfortunately I cannot remember what I wanted to communicate to the manikin. I only know that my "letters" constituted a kind of library for him. I fancy, though I cannot be certain, that they may have consisted of sayings that particularly pleased me.



The meaning of these actions, or how I might explain them, never worried me. I contented myself with the feeling of newly won security, and was satisfied to possess something that no one knew and no one could get at. It was an inviolable secret which must never be betrayed, for the safety of my life depended on it. Why that was so I did not ask myself. It simply was so.

This possession of a secret had a very powerful formative influence on my character; I consider it the essential factor of my boyhood. Similarly, I never told anyone about the dream of the phallus; and the Jesuit, too, belonged to that mysterious realm which I knew I must not talk about. The little wooden figure with the stone was a first attempt, still unconscious and childish, to give shape to the secret. I was always absorbed by it and had the feeling I ought to fathom it; and yet I did not know what it was I was trying to express. I always hoped I might be able to find something—perhaps in nature—that would give me the clue and show me where or what the secret was. At that time my interest in plants, animals, and stones grew. I was constantly on the lookout for something mysterious. Consciously, I was religious in the Christian sense, though always with the reservation: "But it is not so certain as all that" or, "What about that thing under the ground?" And when religious teachings were pumped into me and I was told, "This is beautiful and this is good," I would think to myself: "Yes, but there is something else, something very secret that people don't know about."

The episode with the carved manikin formed the climax and the conclusion of my childhood. It lasted about a year. Thereafter I completely forgot the whole affair until I was thirty-five. Then this fragment of memory rose up again from the mists of childhood with pristine clarity. While I was engaged on the preliminary studies for my book *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*,<sup>4</sup> I read about the cache of soul-stones near Arlesheim, and the Australian *churingas*. I suddenly discovered that I had a quite definite image of such a stone, though I had never seen any reproductions. It was oblong, blackish, and painted into an upper and lower half. This image was joined by that of the

<sup>4</sup> Translated as *Psychology of the Unconscious*, 1917; revised edition, retitled *Symbols of Transformation* (CW 5), 1956.

pencil box and the manikin. The manikin was a little cloaked god of the ancient world, a Telesphoros such as stands on the monuments of Asklepios and reads to him from a scroll. Along with this recollection there came to me, for the first time, the conviction that there are archaic psychic components which have entered the individual psyche without any direct line of tradition. My father's library—which I examined only very much later—contained not a single book which might have transmitted any such information. Moreover, my father demonstrably knew nothing about these things.

When I was in England in 1920, I carved out of wood two similar figures without having the slightest recollection of that childhood experience. One of them I had reproduced on a larger scale in stone, and this figure now stands in my garden in Kismacht. Only while I was doing this work did the unconscious supply me with a name. It called the figure *Atnavictu*—the "breath of life." It was a further development of that fearful tree of my childhood dream, which was now revealed as the "breath of life," the creative impulse. Ultimately, the manikin was a *kabir*, wrapped in his little cloak, hidden in the *kista*, and provided with a supply of life-force, the oblong black stone. But these are connections which became clear to me only much later in life. When I was a child I performed the ritual just as I have seen it done by the natives of Africa; they act first and do not know what they are doing. Only long afterward do they reflect on what they have done.

## II

There is no better means of intensifying the treasured feeling of individuality than the possession of a secret which the individual is pledged to guard. The very beginnings of societal structures reveal the craving for secret organizations. When no valid secrets really exist, mysteries are invented or contrived to which privileged initiates are admitted. Such was the case with the Rosicrucians and many other societies. Among these pseudo-secrets there are—ironically—real secrets of which the initiates are entirely unaware—as, for example, in those societies which borrowed their “secret” primarily from the alchemical tradition.

The need for ostentatious secrecy is of vital importance on the primitive level, for the shared secret serves as a cement binding the tribe together. Secrets on the tribal level constitute a helpful compensation for lack of cohesion in the individual personality, which is constantly relapsing into the original unconscious identity with other members of the group. Attainment of the human goal—an individual who is conscious of his own peculiar nature—thus becomes a long, almost hopeless process of education. For even the individuals whose initiation into certain secrets has marked them out in some way are fundamentally obeying the laws of group identity, though in their case the group is a socially differentiated one.

The secret society is an intermediary stage on the way to individuation. The individual is still relying on a collective organization to effect his differentiation for him; that is, he has not yet recognized that it is really the individual's task to differentiate himself from all the others and stand on his own feet. All collective identities, such as membership in organizations, support of “isms,” and so on, interfere with the fulfillment of this task. Such collective identities are crutches for the lame, shields for the timid, beds for the lazy, nurseries for the irresponsible; but they are equally shelters for the poor and weak, a home port

for the shipwrecked, the bosom of a family for orphans, a land of promise for disillusioned vagrants and weary pilgrims, a herd and a safe fold for lost sheep, and a mother providing nourishment and growth. It would therefore be wrong to regard this intermediary stage as a trap; on the contrary, for a long time to come it will represent the only possible form of existence for the individual, who nowadays seems more than ever threatened by anonymity. Collective organization is still so essential today that many consider it, with some justification, to be the final goal; whereas to call for further steps along the road to autonomy appears like arrogance or hubris, fantasticality, or simply folly.

Nevertheless it may be that for sufficient reasons a man feels he must set out on his own feet along the road to wider realms. It may be that in all the garbs, shapes, forms, modes, and manners of life offered to him he does not find what is peculiarly necessary for him. He will go alone and be his own company. He will serve as his own group, consisting of a variety of opinions and tendencies—which need not necessarily be marching in the same direction. In fact, he will be at odds with himself, and will find great difficulty in uniting his own multiplicity for purposes of common action. Even if he is outwardly protected by the social forms of the intermediary stage, he will have no defense against his inner multiplicity. The disunion within himself may cause him to give up, to lapse into identity with his surroundings.

Like the initiate of a secret society who has broken free from the undifferentiated collectivity, the individual on his lonely path needs a secret which for various reasons he may not or cannot reveal. Such a secret reinforces him in the isolation of his individual aims. A great many individuals cannot bear this isolation. They are the neurotics, who necessarily play hide-and-seek with others as well as with themselves, without being able to take the game really seriously. As a rule they end by surrendering their individual goal to their craving for collective conformity—a procedure which all the opinions, beliefs, and ideals of their environment encourage. Moreover, no rational arguments prevail against the environment. Only a secret which the

individual cannot betray—one which he fears to give away, or which he cannot formulate in words, and which therefore seems to belong to the category of crazy ideas—can prevent the otherwise inevitable retrogression.

The need for such a secret is in many cases so compelling that the individual finds himself involved in ideas and actions for which he is no longer responsible. He is being motivated neither by caprice nor arrogance, but by a *dira necessitas* which he himself cannot comprehend. This necessity comes down upon him with savage fatfulness, and perhaps for the first time in his life demonstrates to him *ad oculos* the presence of something alien and more powerful than himself in his own most personal domain, where he thought himself the master. A vivid example is the story of Jacob, who wrestled with the angel and came away with a dislocated hip, but by his struggle prevented a murder. In those fortunate days, Jacob's story was believed without question. A contemporary Jacob, telling such a tale, would be treated to meaningful smiles. He would prefer not to speak of such matters, especially if he were inclined to have his private views about the nature of Yahweh's messenger. Thus he would find himself willy-nilly in possession of a secret that could not be discussed, and would become a deviant from the collectivity. Naturally, his mental reservation would ultimately come to light, unless he succeeded in playing the hypocrite all his life. But anyone who attempts to do both, to adjust to his group and at the same time pursue his individual goal, becomes neurotic. Our modern Jacob would be concealing from himself the fact that the angel was after all the stronger of the two—as he certainly was, for no claims were ever made that the angel, too, came away with a limp.

The man, therefore, who, driven by his daimon, steps beyond the limits of the intermediary stage, truly enters the "untrodden, untreadable regions,"<sup>12</sup> where there are no charted ways and no shelter spreads a protecting roof over his head. There are no precepts to guide him when he encounters an unforeseen situation—for example, a conflict of duties. For the most part, these

<sup>12</sup> Faust, Part Two.

sallies into no man's land last only as long as no such conflicts occur, and come swiftly to an end as soon as conflict is sniffed from afar. I cannot blame the person who takes to his heels at once. But neither can I approve his finding merit in his weakness and cowardice. Since my contempt can do him no further harm, I may as well say that I find nothing praiseworthy about such capitulations.

But if a man faced with a conflict of duties undertakes to deal with them absolutely on his own responsibility, and before a judge who sits in judgment on him day and night, he may well find himself in an isolated position. There is now an authentic secret in his life which cannot be discussed—if only because he is involved in an endless inner trial in which he is his own counsel and ruthless examiner, and no secular or spiritual judge can restore his easy sleep. If he were not already sick to death of the decisions of such judges, he would never have found himself in a conflict. For such a conflict always presupposes a higher sense of responsibility. It is this very quality which keeps its possessor from accepting the decision of a collectivity. In his case the court is transposed to the inner world where the verdict is pronounced behind closed doors.

Once this happens, the psyche of the individual acquires heightened importance. It is not only the seat of his well-known and socially defined ego; it is also the instrument for measuring what it is worth in and for itself. Nothing so promotes the growth of consciousness as this inner confrontation of opposites. Quite unsuspected facts turn up in the indictment, and the defense is obliged to discover arguments hitherto unknown. In the course of this, a considerable portion of the outer world reaches the inner, and by that very fact the outer world is impoverished or relieved. On the other hand, the inner world has gained that much weight by being raised to the rank of a tribunal for ethical decisions. However, the once unequivocal ego loses the prerogative of being merely the prosecutor; it must also learn the role of defendant. The ego becomes ambivalent and ambiguous, and is caught between hammer and anvil. *It becomes aware of a polarity superordinate to itself.*

By no means every conflict of duties, and perhaps not even a

single one, is ever really "solved," though it may be argued over, weighed, and counterweighed till doomsday. Sooner or later the decision is simply there, the product, it would seem, of some kind of short-circuit. Practical life cannot be suspended in an everlasting contradiction. The opposites and the contradictions between them do not vanish, however, even when for a moment they yield before the impulse to action. They constantly threaten the unity of the personality, and entangle life again and again in their dichotomies.

Insight into the dangers and the painfulness of such a state might well decide one to stay at home, that is, never to leave the safe fold and the warm cocoon, since these alone promise protection from inner stress. Those who do not *have* to leave father and mother are certainly safest with them. A good many persons, however, find themselves thrust out upon the road to individuation. In no time at all they will become acquainted with the positive and negative aspects of human nature.

Just as all energy proceeds from opposition, so the psyche too possesses its inner polarity, this being the indispensable prerequisite for its aliveness, as Heraclitus realized long ago. Both theoretically and practically, polarity is inherent in all living things. Set against this overpowering force is the fragile unity of the ego, which has come into being in the course of millennia only with the aid of countless protective measures. That an ego was possible at all appears to spring from the fact that all opposites seek to achieve a state of balance. This happens in the exchange of energy which results from the collision of hot and cold, high and low, and so on. The energy underlying conscious psychic life is pre-existent to it and therefore at first unconscious. As it approaches consciousness it first appears projected in figures like mana, gods, daimons, etc., whose numen seems to be the vital source of energy, and in point of fact is so long as these supernatural figures are accepted. But as these fade and lose their force, the ego—that is, the empirical man—seems to come into possession of this source of energy, and does so in the fullest meaning of this ambiguous statement: on the one hand he seeks to seize this energy, to possess it, and even

imagines that he does possess it; and on the other hand he is possessed by it.

This grotesque situation can, to be sure, occur only when the contents of consciousness are regarded as the sole form of psychic existence. Where this is the case, there is no preventing inflation by projections coming home to roost. But where the existence of an unconscious psyche is admitted, the contents of projection can be received into the inborn instinctive forms which predate consciousness. Their objectivity and autonomy are thereby preserved, and inflation is avoided. The archetypes, which are pre-existent to consciousness and condition it, appear in the part they actually play in reality: as a priori structural forms of the stuff of consciousness. They do not in any sense represent things as they are in themselves, but rather the forms in which things can be perceived and conceived. Naturally, it is not merely the archetypes that govern the particular nature of perceptions. They account only for the collective component of a perception. As an attribute of instinct they partake of its dynamic nature, and consequently possess a specific energy which causes or compels definite modes of behavior or impulses; that is, they may under certain circumstances have a possessive or obsessive force (numinosity!). The conception of them as *daimonia* is therefore quite in accord with their nature.

If anyone is inclined to believe that any aspect of the *nature* of things is changed by such formulations, he is being extremely credulous about words. The real facts do not change, whatever names we give them. Only we ourselves are affected. If one were to conceive of "God" as "pure Nothingness," that has nothing whatsoever to do with the fact of a superordinate principle. We are just as much possessed as before; the change of name has removed nothing at all from reality. At most we have taken a false attitude toward reality if the new name implies a denial. On the other hand, a positive name for the unknowable has the merit of putting us into a correspondingly positive attitude. If, therefore, we speak of "God" as an "archetype," we are saying nothing about His real nature but are letting it be known that "God" already has a place in that part of our psyche which is

pre-existent to consciousness and that He therefore cannot be considered an invention of consciousness. We neither make Him more remote nor eliminate Him, but bring Him closer to the possibility of being experienced. This latter circumstance is by no means unimportant, for a thing which cannot be experienced may easily be suspected of non-existence. This suspicion is so inviting that so-called believers in God see nothing but atheism in my attempt to reconstruct the primitive unconscious psyche. Or if not atheism, then Gnosticism—anything, heaven forbid, but a psychic reality like the unconscious. If the unconscious is anything at all, it must consist of earlier evolutionary stages of our conscious psyche. The assumption that man in his whole glory was created on the sixth day of Creation, without any preliminary stages, is after all somewhat too simple and archaic to satisfy us nowadays. There is pretty general agreement on that score. In regard to the psyche, however, the archaic conception holds on tenaciously: the psyche has no antecedents, is a *tabula rasa*, arises anew at birth, and is only what it imagines itself to be.

Consciousness is phylogenetically and ontogenetically a secondary phenomenon. It is time this obvious fact were grasped at last. Just as the body has an anatomical prehistory of millions of years, so also does the psychic system. And just as the human body today represents in each of its parts the result of this evolution, and everywhere still shows traces of its earlier stages—so the same may be said of the psyche. Consciousness began its evolution from an animal-like state which seems to us unconscious, and the same process of differentiation is repeated in every child. The psyche of the child in its preconscious state is anything but a *tabula rasa*; it is already performed in a recognizable individual way, and is moreover equipped with all specifically human instincts, as well as with the a priori foundations of the higher functions.

On this complicated base, the ego arises. Throughout life the ego is sustained by this base. When the base does not function, stasis ensues and then death. Its life and its reality are of vital importance. Compared to it, even the external world is secondary, for what does the world matter if the endogenous im-

pulse to grasp it and manipulate it is lacking? In the long run no conscious will can ever replace the life instinct. This instinct comes to us from within, as a compulsion or will or command, and if—as has more or less been done from time immemorial—we give it the name of a personal daimon we are at least aptly expressing the psychological situation. And if, by employing the concept of the archetype, we attempt to define a little more closely the point at which the daimon grips us, we have not abolished anything, only approached closer to the source of life.

It is only natural that I as a psychiatrist (doctor of the soul) should espouse such a view, for I am primarily interested in how I can help my patients find their healthy base again. To do that, a great variety of knowledge is needed, as I have learned. Medicine in general has, after all, proceeded in like manner. It has not made its advances through the discovery of some single trick of healing, thus phenomenally simplifying its methods. On the contrary, it has evolved into a science of enormous complexity—not the least of the reasons being that it has made borrowings from all possible fields. Hence I am not concerned with proving anything to other disciplines; I am merely attempting to put their knowledge to good use in my own field. Naturally, it is incumbent upon me to report on such applications and their consequences. For certain new things come to light when one transfers the knowledge of one field to another and applies it in practice. Had X-rays remained the exclusive property of the physicist and not been applied in medicine, we would know far less. Then again, if radiation therapy has in some circumstances dangerous consequences, that is interesting to the physician; but it is not necessarily of interest to the physicist, who uses radiation in an altogether different manner and for other purposes. Nor will he think that the physician has poached upon his territory when the latter points out certain harmful or salutary properties of the invisible rays.

If I, for example, apply historical or theological insights in psychotherapy, they naturally appear in a different light and lead to conclusions other than those to which they lead when restricted to their proper fields, where they serve other purposes. The fact, therefore, that a polarity underlies the dynamics of

the psyche means that the whole problem of opposites in its broadest sense, with all its concomitant religious and philosophical aspects, is drawn into the psychological discussion. These aspects lose the autonomous character they have in their own field—inevitably so, since they are approached in terms of psychological questions; that is, they are no longer viewed from the angle of religious or philosophical truth, but are examined for their psychological validity and significance. Leaving aside their claim to be independent truths, the fact remains that regarded empirically—which is to say, scientifically—they are primarily *psychic phenomena*. This fact seems to me incontrovertible. That they claim a justification for themselves is in keeping with the psychological approach, which does not brand such a claim unjustified, but on the contrary treats it with special consideration. Psychology has no room for judgments like “only religious” or “only philosophical,” despite the fact that we too often hear the charge of something’s being “only psychological”—especially from theologians.

All conceivable statements are made by the psyche. Among other things, the psyche appears as a dynamic process which rests on a foundation of antithesis, on a flow of energy between two poles. It is a general rule of logic that “principles are not to be multiplied beyond the necessary.” Therefore, since interpretation in terms of energy has proved a generally valid principle of explanation in the natural sciences, we must limit ourselves to it in psychology also. No firm facts are available which would recommend some other view; moreover, the antithetical or polaristic nature of the psyche and its contents is verified by psychological experience.<sup>18</sup>

Now if the dynamic conception of the psyche is correct, all statements which seek to overstep the limits of the psyche’s polarity—statements about a metaphysical reality, for example—must be paradoxical if they are to lay claim to any sort of validity.

The psyche cannot leap beyond itself. It cannot set up any absolute truths, for its own polarity determines the relativity of its

<sup>18</sup> Cf. “On Psychic Energy,” in *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* (CW 8).

statements. Wherever the psyche does announce absolute truths—such as, for example, “God is motion,” or “God is One”—it necessarily falls into one or the other of its own antitheses. For the two statements might equally well be: “God is rest,” or “God is All.” Through one-sidedness the psyche disintegrates and loses its capacity for cognition. It becomes an unreflective (because unreflectable) succession of psychic states, each of which fancies itself its own justification because it does not, or does not yet, see any other state.

In saying this we are not expressing a value judgment, but only pointing out that the limit is very frequently overstepped. Indeed, this is inevitable, for, as Heraclitus says, “Everything is flux.” Thesis is followed by antithesis, and between the two is generated a third factor, a lysis which was not perceptible before. In this the psyche once again merely demonstrates its antithetical nature and at no point has really got outside itself.

In my effort to depict the limitations of the psyche I do not mean to imply that *only* the psyche exists. It is merely that, so far as perception and cognition are concerned, we cannot see beyond the psyche. Science is tacitly convinced that a non-psychic, transcendental object exists. But science also knows how difficult it is to grasp the real nature of the object, especially when the organ of perception fails or is lacking, and when the appropriate modes of thought do not exist or have still to be created. In cases where neither our sense organs nor their artificial aids can attest the presence of a real object, the difficulties mount enormously, so that one feels tempted to assert that there is simply no real object present. I have never drawn this overhasty conclusion, for I have never been inclined to think that our senses were capable of perceiving all forms of being. I have, therefore, even hazarded the postulate that the phenomenon of archetypal configurations—which are psychic events *par excellence*—may be founded upon a *psychoïd* base, that is, upon an only partially psychic and possibly altogether different form of being. For lack of empirical data I have neither knowledge nor understanding of such forms of being, which are commonly called spiritual. From the point of view of science, it is immaterial what I may *believe* on that score, and I must accept

my ignorance. But insofar as the archetypes act upon me, they are real and actual to me, even though I do not know what their real nature is. This applies, of course, not only to the archetypes but to the nature of the psyche in general. Whatever it may state about itself, it will never get beyond itself. All comprehension and all that is comprehended is in itself psychic, and to that extent we are hopelessly cooped up in an exclusively psychic world. Nevertheless, we have good reason to suppose that behind this veil there exists the uncomprehended absolute object which affects and influences us—and to suppose it even, or particularly, in the case of psychic phenomena about which no verifiable statements can be made. Statements concerning possibility or impossibility are valid only in specialized fields; outside those fields they are merely arrogant presumptions.

Prohibited though it may be from an objective point of view to make statements out of the blue—that is, without sufficient reason—there are nevertheless some statements which apparently have to be made without objective reasons. The justification here is a psychodynamic one, of the sort usually termed subjective and regarded as a purely personal matter. But that is to commit the mistake of failing to distinguish whether the statement really proceeds only from an isolated subject, and is prompted by exclusively personal motives, or whether it occurs generally and springs from a collectively present dynamic pattern. In that case it should not be classed as subjective, but as psychologically objective, since an indefinite number of individuals find themselves prompted by an inner impulse to make an identical statement, or feel a certain view to be a vital necessity. Since the archetype is not just an inactive form, but a real force charged with a specific energy, it may very well be regarded as the *causa efficiens* of such statements, and be understood as the subject of them. In other words, it is not the personal human being who is making the statement, but the archetype speaking through him. If these statements are stifled or disregarded, both medical experience and common knowledge demonstrate that psychic troubles are in store. These will appear either as neurotic symptoms or, in the case of persons who are incapable of neurosis, as collective delusions.

Archetypal statements are based upon instinctive preconditions and have nothing to do with reason; they are neither rationally grounded nor can they be banished by rational arguments. They have always been part of the world scene—*représentations collectives*, as Lévy-Bruhl rightly called them. Certainly the ego and its will have a great part to play in life; but what the ego wills is subject in the highest degree to the interference, in ways of which the ego is usually unaware, of the autonomy and numinosity of archetypal processes. Practical consideration of these processes is the essence of religion, insofar as religion can be approached from a psychological point of view.