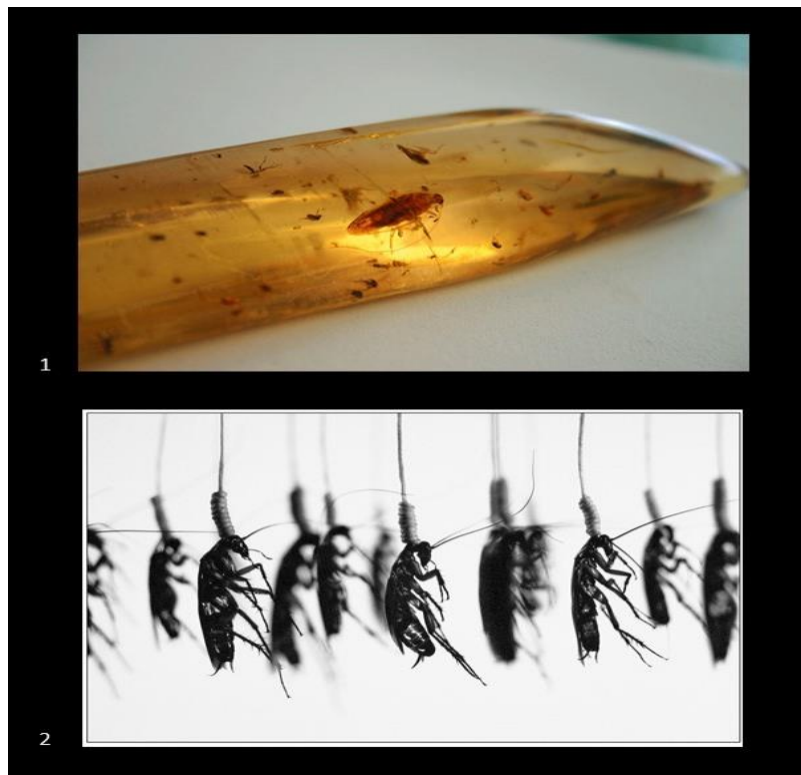


Satan's Mouth or Font of Magic:

What is it about the Anus?

Marybeth Carter

I saw something lying on the ground. I looked closer and realized it was a cockroach, which sprang to life and scrambled up my leg. The roach entered my rectum. I scratched wildly at my anus, trying to remove it. I could not get the cockroach out of me.



Cockroach. Ancient cockroach trapped in amber, approximately 90 million years old. New Mexico, United States. Cockroach2 (ARAS Record 51n.003). Hanging, Execution Series by Catherine Chalmers, gelatin silver print 2000, United States. From *The Book of Symbols*. (ARAS Record oAa.062)

Over the years, patients have brought dreams to therapy with images of the anus and rectum, such as this dream about the cockroach. Male and female dreamers often feel shame about these images in their dreams – so much so that they can hardly endure the shame of telling me the details of what occurred. These images undoubtedly have personal meaning for each dreamer and even for me as the analyst in the *temenos* with them. However, as these images have continued to emerge over months and years, I've questioned the solely negative associations about the anus and rectum that the dreamers and the larger therapeutic community often resort to in relation to these images. In Jungian analysis, the analyst helps by expounding on possible connections of the dream images to the mythological and archetypal realms. I researched the images and discovered that the anus and rectum can be archetypal symbols with unique psychological and psychosocial significance as a site of psychic coniunctio. These positive associations are psychologically powerful and allow for a spectrum of possibilities for advancing psychic wholeness.

The dreams

In some male patients' dreams, they are attempting or completing anal intercourse with girlfriends. In other dreams, women discover their boyfriends having anal intercourse with other women. Other scenarios depict cockroaches scampering up the dreamers' legs, through their anuses and into their rectums. The dreamers respond with disgust and frantic attempts to claw out the cockroaches. One dream mother made tamales in the kitchen and cooked them in her vagina. Shocked by this cooking method, the dreamer was even more horrified when his younger brother shoved a tamale into his rectum, saying,

‘That’s the way we cook the tamales’! All the dreamers denied interest in anal sex. Each of the male dreamers felt the need to explore the possibility of being gay and concluded they were not. The female patients found the images of their boyfriends having anal sex with others disturbing and felt feelings of betrayal. These individuals’ conscious responses to this unconscious material are filled with horror, betrayal and shame. Yet how are these reactions not only representations of the individuals’ attitudes but also of the overlay of cultural complexes that are steeped in shame-invoking psychoanalytic theories?

Alternatively, what are some positive meanings of dream images of the anus and a conjoining in the rectum from a depth-psychological perspective?



Frederic Douglas and Rene d'Harmoncourt. *Indian Art in the United States*. New York (1941). Museum of

Modern Art, p. 102. (ARAS Record 8Cb.150)

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One-sided vs. whole

One approach to interpreting anal-rectum dream images is through Freud's psychosocial stages based on anatomical parts of the body. Each must be successfully traversed to develop into a mature adult. The *anal stage* is the child's relationship to the bowels and the sphincter muscles concomitant with the ability to hold and let go. Freud theorized that the parental stance of encouragement or shaming towards the child during the anal stage creates psychological capacities that range from the highly creative to the pathological, such as the development of the 'anal personality'.

If there is incomplete or malformed development at any of the stages, Freud postulated that individuals regress emotionally and behaviorally to the psychological challenges of that stage. It is the work of analysis to guide individuals to sublimate the instinctual dynamics to become more mature adults. Freud wrote, "Through the overcoming of these resistances, the patient's mental life is permanently changed, is raised to a higher level of development and remains protected against a fresh possibility of falling ill [to depression, hysteria or other mental illness]" (Freud, 1916–17; as cited in Fonagy, 2000, p. 620).

Jung challenged Freud's focus on resistance and regression as one-sided (Jung, 1966, para. 199). He insisted that Freud's theory, which focused on repression related to undeveloped childhood stages, was problematic because it was an 'attempt to connect such an unconscious product (symptoms) with the past, [and] its value to the individual in the present may be lost' (Samuels, 1985, p. 135). Jung's emphasis was not only on the unhealthy psyche that needs healing, as Freud's focus was, but also on the entire psyche in both its healthy and unhealthy aspects as a functioning dynamic system. Jung's emphasis *on what might be lost* shifts Jungian psychology from the past to the present and,

ultimately, towards futurity and the prospective movement of individuation. Although there may be an aspect of the psychological explained by the reductive approach, it cannot be the *sole* explanation: ‘The psyche is not *just* the one or the other [sick or healthy], nor for that matter both together. It is *also* what it has made and will make out of them’ (Jung, 1966, para. 67). The presence of symptoms and images as symbols and their meaning from them are what is important to the individual in their present state of being.

Jung advocated that *Eros* is a more essential theoretical explanation of the psyche. *Eros* gives rise to meaning from the images and symptoms that emerge from the movement – or lack of movement – by the libido. The transmutation of the libidinal propels psychic dynamism towards wholeness (Samuels, 1985). *Eros* generated through the vitality of the libido transforms an individual’s psyche that is now ‘not only something evolved but also continually evolving and creative’ (1971, CW 6, para. 717). The interpretation of dream images of a union, or coniunctio, in the rectum could be viewed as a meaningful representation of the dreamer’s current psychic development. The union of the energetic images is propelling the individual towards wholeness from their current level of consciousness – not back to their former developmental stage. In this way, Jung’s *Eros* theory, related to libido, symbol and union (*coniunctio*) along with the emergence of the ‘third’ – that something more – demands a different attitude towards the symbols that emerge from the unconscious and a process that considers the positive potential of the libido-filled image. Because this movement of libido is neutral, not only sexual as Freud theorized, the rectum, as well as the mouth, the vagina or other body parts are squarely in psychological territory when they become a receptacle for a potential coniunctio.

Transformational unions

An example of a coniunctio with an unexpected body part is in Orthodox Christianity's teaching that the conception of Christ was through the ear of the Virgin Mary (Sanidopoulos, 2017; Tilby, 2017).



Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. *The Western World, Early Renaissance, 15th Century*, MSS.St. (ARAS record 5FK.230)

That the union took place in her ear was necessary for the retention of the belief in her divinity. It also emphasizes faith in the word of God for believers because the pregnancy does not follow the usual biological means of impregnation. Clearly, this is an example of

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how some images spontaneously arise from the collective unconscious, ‘from [that] deep level of the psyche’ (Frey-Rohn, 1974, p. 56). Two dialectical images join and have symbolic and archetypal power with the potential to transform. The psyche can constellate a dialectical union with any two images, such as the wind and an ear, a penis and a rectum or any other bodily orifices as receptacles for potential coniunctio if one represents the conscious attitude and the other the content from the unconscious.



Dragon Eating its Own Tail (copper) alchemical symbol of coniunctio from “De Lapide Philosophico” in “Museum Hermeticum” in the Western World, Reformation and Counter-Reformation, 16th-17th Centuries, figure 6, p. 17 (ARAS Record 5Gs.669)

The dream journal of filmmaker Federico Fellini contains images that illustrate dialectical union via anal coniunctio in sketches he made of two dreams. He sketched one of the images from a dream he had on 25 March 1975 that depicted a voluptuous naked woman,

‘L’, an anima symbol for Fellini. In the dream, ‘L’ arrived on a beach near Fellini’s birthplace, where a tiny war was happening. Using her hands, she separated her buttocks, and out of her rectum came the head and body of King Vittorio Emanuele the Third, who, for 46 years as King of Italy, led them through two world wars (Fellini, 2020, pp. ii/38–9).



Dream sketch by Federico Fellini. *The Book of Dreams* (2020) pp. ii/38–9

This dream coniunctio, of the rectum and the King, helped Fellini’s inner daemon transform from projections onto actresses to ‘his creative daemon, to assist him in his artistic expression’ (Wojtkowski, 2017, p. 10). Prior to the dream of ‘L’ on the beach, there

is an earlier dream entitled “The Ass of “Secrecy”, in which Fellini is confronted with the depths of shadow in a dream woman’s ass that is illuminated by a candle (Wojtkowski, 2017, p. 55). ‘What light does an ass emit? Is it a representation of anal consciousness?’ (p. 56).



Dream Sketch by Federico Fellini. *The Book of Dreams* (2020) p. 56

In the early 1960s, Fellini had begun working with Ernst Bernhard, a Jungian analyst, who recommended that he keep a dream journal and read Jung. Rather than an obsession with fantasies projected onto actresses, Fellini’s creativity further emerged with the insights gained about ‘anima and animus, the role of archetypes and the collective unconscious’ from Jungian psychology (Fellini, n.d.). His surge of creativity is exemplified

in the dream he had of 'L' on the beach with the king's release. In these ways, as depicted in his dreams that included images of the ass and the dark depths of the anus, the anima emerged as the new ruling principle as well as a 'new order of the psyche' within Fellini, where he begins to work in concert with her, shifting him towards being more directive in subsequent dreams and his artform (p. 58). The tiny war in the 'L' beach dream, which could be the tension of the opposites of his consciousness and the unconscious contents, transforms into a new consciousness, resulting in a more resilient egoic structure. In these ways, Fellini's dream sketches exemplify how creative people live, think and imagine in transgressive ways that are as audacious as a coniunctio in the anus giving birth to a new level of consciousness and creativity.

Satan's mouth and dirty cockroaches

Dream images of the anus and a conjoining in the rectum, especially of a penis in the rectum, evoke a potentially transformative numinosity. This is because the penis, anus and rectum are primordial archetypal symbols (Scott, 1966; Literski, 2021). Biologists have discovered 'that anal openings first appeared around 550 million years ago, around the time of the first worm-like creatures' (Westreich, 2021). Allan (2016) pointed out that the anus has utopian potential. It is not exclusive to one gender, sexual orientation, 'one sex, [or] to one type of body' (p. 27).

Furthermore, research has not found an evolutionary preference for the mouth to have primacy over the anus. Some creatures use the same opening to take in food and expel waste. During gestation, some creatures first create the anus and then the mouth. Others

create the mouth and then the anus is formed, while still others create the anus and the mouth at the same time.

Humans create a primitive mouth; then four weeks later, they form a primitive anus. For some creatures, such as the sea cucumber, 'the anus serves as a second mouth ... [and is] rhythmically inflated with seawater via the anus, and [is] considered to have respiratory and excretory functions' (Jaeckle & Strathmann), 2013).



Sea Cucumber (*Actinopyga echinites*) by François Michonneau - d2008-Kosrae-0084.jpg, CC BY 3.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=20189778

Thus, for the sea cucumber, both its mouth *and* its anus breathe. In these various ways, the anus and the rectum have a close relationship in the alimentary canal, some shared functionality and a long-standing history. They have numinous qualities because of their archetypal nature within the collective unconscious.

Despite these incredible facts about the anus and rectum, along with their archetypal qualities, the dominant Western cultural associations to the anus and the buttocks are ones of forbidden contact and filth. Allan (2016) confirmed this association:

The anus is a key part of the human body, a remarkably complex organ that has significant symbolic potential, not least because of the numerous ways in which we have desperately tried to keep it repressed. It is also the organ that most makes many of us rather uncomfortable because of its alignment with abjection, dirtiness, shame, and, in our homophobic culture, male homosexuality ... This observation that the anus is gay – rightly or wrongly – does not quite make sense. After all, it seems to be fair enough to suggest the obvious: we all have one. (p. 27)

Everyone has an anus, and gay men are not the only ones who enjoy engaging in anal sex, though it is cast as the *sine qua non* of male homosexuality.



Attic red-figure crater, ca 470 B.C.E. *Greed*. (ARAS record 3JA.039)

In their complex relationship with homosexuality, both Freud and Jung (with some exceptions) paired homosexuality and homosexual sex with a lack of mature development. They promoted heterosexism and posited sex with the opposite gender by inserting the penis into the vagina as the ultimate in psychological development. This supremacy of heterosexism was advanced even though, in cultures worldwide, there is historical

evidence of persons with many genders and many expressions of sexual orientation.

For centuries, sexual orientation and gender expression have been under siege. One of the many condemnations of the diversity of sexual expression was when the 'European missionaries and colonists, upon encountering indigenous two-spirit persons in North America, imposed the derogatory label of berdache (i.e., sodomite) upon them and engaged in a campaign of extermination' (Williams, 1986; Literski, 2021). In the 1600s, this extermination campaign extended to women accused of being witches and working with the devil as part of their witchcraft. The exterminators insisted that even the devil has an anus called 'Satan's mouth'. In Europe and the United States, those who practiced non-Christian religions or herbalism, even successful community members, were accused of being witches and attacked. A fantastical lie was created called the 'kiss of shame' (*osculum infame*), an illustration of which is in Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* in 1608 CE (ARAS record 5GT.244; *The Book of Symbols*, 2010, p. 364).



The Kiss of Shame. Woodcut. *The Western World, Reformation and Counter-Reformation, 16th-17th Centuries*. Bibliotheque Sainte-Genevieve, Paris France. (ARAS Record 5Gt.244)

The *Kiss of Shame* depicts a woman, who is supposedly a witch, eagerly kissing the devil's anus. This imagery was a weapon to accuse and humiliate women, instill compliance and create revulsion towards those in what might be called, in modern parlance, alternative communities.

This imagery is a sad commentary on patriarchal culture.

The cockroach is another archetypal image that is reviled by our culture. The word *cockroach* can also be pondered given its combination of the words 'cock' and 'roach', which reveals another way of becoming aware of phallic symbolism evoked by the unconscious for consideration by a dreamer. Dream cockroaches crawl up the body through the anus and enter the dreamers' rectums. Like associations to the anus, negative scatological associations are often given to cockroaches. Cockroaches are associated with the 'bowels of the earth', the 'criminal element' of nature and the fear of the chthonic aspect of the 'Great Mother's "underside" of witchcraft and destruction' (*The Book of Symbols*, 2010, p. 224). This is despite the World Health Organization (WHO) review in 2008, which concluded that 'definitive evidence that cockroaches are vectors for human disease is still lacking' (Ray, 2018).

Protective spirits and font of magic

In addition to these negative associations with cockroaches, the cockroach can have positive associations such as 'a protective spirit ensuring good fortune, a mentor of heroic

adaptation to everything from merely onerous circumstances to nuclear upheaval, an emblem of continuity and an embodiment of the tough, survivalist spirit of those culturally treated like vermin' (*Book of Symbols*, 2010, p. 224). Despite Western culture's disgust, the cockroach is a food source for some people. For instance, Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches 'have a taste and texture like greasy chicken' (Martin, n.d.). Ecologically, the cockroach provides the vital function of producing compost from the leaves and droppings from trees. With these polarities of meaning, the cockroach can be viewed as not only a symbol of regression but also a symbol of creative aspects, good fortune, and potentiality. These positive associations should also be considered if a cockroach enters a rectum during a dream.

Neumann (1973) wrote extensively about the positive aspects of the anus, bowels and digestive system – the organs that comprise the alimentary canal. He viewed the anus as representing the unconscious through the chthonic aspect versus the mouth and head as the conscious aspect. The anus, in his view, was as integral a part of the primal relationship as the mouth. Together, they form a mother-infant oneness in a person's early life that he called the *alimentary ouroboros*. He proposed that upon the separation of the infant from the mother-infant oneness, a psychological polarization occurred when the child began to stand, creating distance from the anal end of the pole, which results in negativity and filth-filled associations. The separation between the head and the butt redirects the child's focus away from the anal area and its smells. In this way, the problematic negative association with the anus begins.

Neither the smells nor substances connected with the anal zone are disgusting in any

primary sense; this disgust is cultivated, quite consistently to be sure, by the patriarchal world which stresses everything 'upper', spiritual and nonsensuous, and rejects everything that is 'lower', bodily and earthy. (Neumann, 1973, pp. 125-6).

Neumann (1973) asserted that our sense of smell contains vestiges of the chthonic symbolism of the anal pole. Unlike dogs, we may not be greeting each other by sniffing our behinds, but we still use our 'psychic' noses when we want to assess someone in these contemporary times for our safety and well-being, just as in ancient Roman times. This relief of a lion goddess breathing life into the deceased Pharaoh Sneferu reminds us that "we today must 'have a nose' for some sacred animal spirit if our psyches are to remain alive." (ARAS record 2Ad.026)



Relief of a lion goddess breathing life into the deceased Pharaoh Sneferu reminds us that "we today must 'have a nose' for some sacred animal spirit if our psyches are to remain alive." (ARAS record 2Ad.026).

The word *distrust* is often interchanged with the phrase 'I smell a rat' (*Thesaurus.Plus*,

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n.d.). We ‘smell’ or sense someone. We distrust a person if we ‘can’t smell them’ – or if we can’t suss them out. We utilize this psychic knowing to assess whether it is okay to trust or whether we are in danger (Neumann, 1973). Distrust, danger and trust are also closely related to magic through the conjoining of ‘smell, air, and spirit’ (Neumann, 1973, p. 125). Vestiges of magic transform from child’s play to superstitious beliefs and paganistic practices in later life. Jung (1959) stated that ‘the ancients did not know of the existence of the psyche, so not being able to call anything psychic, they used the word magic’ (p. 71). These connections are closely related to the primal relationship at birth when the anal pole is positively integrated; then they are lost as we age.

Notably, Neumann advocated that not just as a child *but also in adult life*, we should keep a connection to the anal aspect and not relegate it only to the act of defecation or the oneness with the mother.

Neumann viewed this lost connection to the ‘earthly world’ as the source of humanity’s oppressive stance towards the feminine and the archetypal energies related to the Great Mother, which has, in turn, split modern humans from vital psychological aspects of ourselves and alienated us from our earthly aspect. He thought that the loss of connection to the feminine that projects a negative stance towards the anal area creates fear about the dynamic of its symbolism. Instead of a cause for fear, he viewed the symbolism of the anal pole as related to wholeness because of its association with the archetypal energies of the feminine and the oneness first known through the mother-child alimentary ouroboros. From this perspective, the anal-rectal dream images and the objects that enter them could

be viewed as nudging dreamers towards a more integrated relationship with the feminine, bringing healing and renewal. The dreamers' reactions of shame might be the defeat of the ego when confronted with the numinous qualities of these feminine-oriented images.

Additional positive interpretations of the anal aspects lie in shamanism and mythology, where the bowels of the earth and the human body are associated with transformation and rebirth (Neumann, 1973). This association is especially relevant because the shamanic process is often cited as a model for Jungian analysis and the individuation process. Neumann hailed the alimentary ouroboros as connected to 'the highest levels of spiritual life' and as related to 'creation and transformation' (1973, p. 37). Related to spirituality and transformation are the lives of shamans. In his book *Shamanism*, Eliade (1964) wrote multiple accounts of shamanic initiates undergoing dismemberment and having their bowels removed as essential to a spiritual transformation. An old shaman or spirit helper will commonly place a crystal or an animal part, such as a snake's head, inside the initiate's body during the initiation process, which parallels the cockroaches entering the rectums of dreamers. The shamanic initiate is given healing skills from these animal parts and then is 'reborn', complete with a 'renewal of the organs', including new bowels (Eliade, 1964, pp. 47–5; 108). For the Ngadju Dyak people of Borneo, the shamans (basir) serve as intermediaries between the earth and the sky because they 'combine in their own person the feminine element (earth) and the masculine element (sky)' (p. 352). A coniunctio in the rectum, including the penetration by a cockroach, might enliven dormant and ancient archetypal spiritual qualities to assist dreamers in their individuation process. The shamanic initiation and Neumann's theories provide opportunities to connect positive healthy meanings, not only regressive unhealthy

meanings, to the phenomenological emergence of anal and rectal images in dreams.

Even earlier than Neumann's association of the nose, magic and the earth with the anus and rectum is the face of a Babylonian mythological being from the 2nd century BCE (or earlier) called Humbaba (also known as Huwawa). Humbaba's face is a 'continuous line of entrails' (ARAS). It would not be too far of a stretch to conclude that embedded in Humbaba's face is an anus, or possibly that his face is an anus. (ARAS record 2Bk.001)



Humbaba.Babylonian; 8th-6th century B.C. or according to more recent writers, Larsa period, early 2nd millennium B.C. The Ancient World, The Middle East, Post Kassite Period (ARAS Record 2Bk.001)

The mask of Humbaba was used to divine the omens when the entrails of sacrificed

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animals were examined. It was considered prescient when the animal's intestines were wound in their body in a way that mirrored Humbaba's face. A relationship between divination and intestines parallels Neumann's writings about magic and the nether region. Other associations to Neumann's theories lie in the 'Epic of Gilgamesh', where Humbaba is assigned to guard the cedar forest. In this tale, this intestinal being is connected with Nature, reinforcing Neumann's point about the anal pole's association with the chthonic underworld, the feminine and the Great Mother.

Thus in the first phase of the primal relationship with the anal pole is positively integrated, but later on it becomes the object of a moral devaluation and exclusion stemming from the symbolic hostility of the sky-heaven world to the earthly world (Neumann, 1973, p. 126). Understood from this perspective, a dream about a union in the rectum might be trying to evoke the archetypal energies of the intestinal region and the possibility that good fortune lies ahead or a greater connection with Nature and the feminine needs to occur. This amplification of the symbol of the nether region is quite an alternative to the symbolism of the image of Satan's mouth.

What might be lost

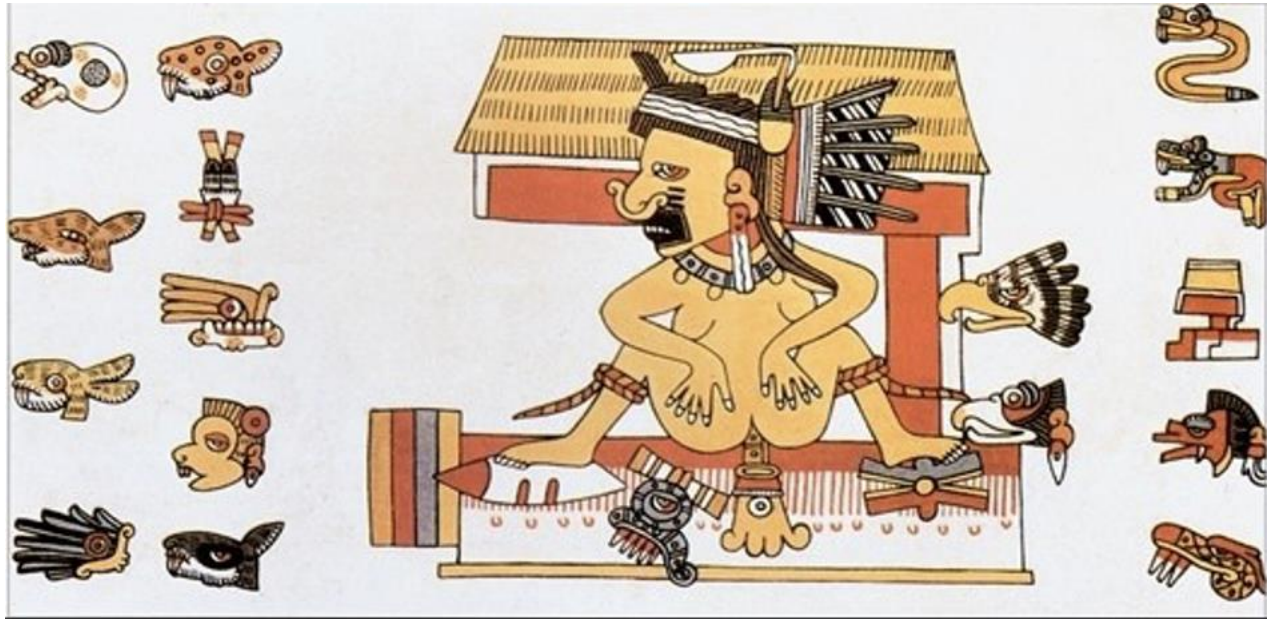
Humbaba, shamans, cockroaches as protective spirits and the nose that senses the anal pole and intuit magic – these examples are positive, powerful symbols that can amplify the dream images of the anus. They reveal how dream images of a union in the rectum can bring a prospective dynamism by moving an individual towards wholeness. To provide these images and their individuation-inducing power with psychological significance,

Jung's admonition must be kept in mind that the coniunctio is representative of the psyche's message about the dreamer's present situation *and the potential of something more emerging*. A coniunctio should not be collapsed into *only* an interpretation of reductive psychosocial stages. Too often it is – or it is intimated that it is, merely a minor *coniunctio* rather than a powerful, alchemically numinous union in the *rectal temenos*.

Collapsing into one-sidedness is partially due to the tendency to conflate. Like Jung, who often conflated 'gender into bodily sex' (Rowland, 2002, p. 45), there is a similar tendency to conflate dream images and behaviors related to the anus or a union in the rectum to anal personalities that are not fully developed or to stereotypes about homosexuality. This conflation can also occur when an association to the alchemical turning 'shit into gold' (alluding to the alchemical process of turning base metals into gold) is made. Turning 'shit into gold' is a dynamic movement of something created *after* a coniunctio has occurred – but first the analytic focus should be on making a full range of associations to the symbolism of the union. A tamale cooked in the rectum might represent necessary nutritive and generative energy to empower the individual and the power of cultural connection. For instance, tamales are made of corn (maize), which has significant symbolic and cultural meaning related to the Aztec goddess Chicomecóatl. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (2020) explained,

Chicomecóatl, (Nahuatl: 'Seven Snakes') also called Xilonen ('Young Maize-Ear Doll', Aztec goddess of sustenance and, hence, of corn (maize), [is] one of the most ancient and important goddesses in the Valley of Mexico. The number seven in her name is associated with luck and generative power. She was often portrayed as the consort of the corn god,

Centéotl. Chicomecóatl is depicted in Aztec documents with her body and face painted red, wearing a distinctive rectangular headdress or pleated fan of red paper. She is similarly represented in sculpture, often holding a double ear of corn in each hand. (Editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica).



Excrement. Caption: The Aztec goddess Tlaolteotl—known as the “Eater of Filth”—squats down to defecate in a traditional position for giving birth. Her excrement is shown falling from her rectum in the form of a flower. (ARAS Record 8Bd.019).

ARAS Archives explained this goddess’ function in even more detail,

“The filth that the goddess Tlazolteotl is seen endlessly swallowing and excreting in Aztec codices paradoxically polluted her and purified her, for her own bodily waste emerged as a flower, a Central Mexican glyph symbolizing female sensuality and, by suggestion, childbirth, over which she presided. The human waste that Aztecs collected to fertilize their fields decayed into humus or tlazollalli (“earth filth”) that they believed generated in her bowels in the subterranean land of the dead, an

unspeakable place that ironically gave birth to life-sustaining corn. Her name derives from the root *tlazolli*, meaning not just filth, but also vice and disease, since the Aztecs confessed their sexual misdeeds to her on their deathbeds, shameful stories that she greedily consumed in the form of excrement. The Aztec's word for disgrace literally meant to be smeared in excrement, yet their words for "gold" meant "divine excrement" or "the sun's excrement." With similar paradox, alchemy claimed, and psychology supports, that the gold of transformation "is found in filth," in those very aspects of one's substance the ego tends to dismiss as inferior. (ARAS record 8Bd.019)

A coniunctio of a tamale in the rectum associated with the feminine aspects of the goddess Chicomecóatl might bring fertile generative energies to a conscious attitude that is fatigued or stagnated. This association contrasts to the interpretation of the alchemical turning of shit into gold, or Freud's anal theories, which have become the predominant analytical views whenever the nether region appears in images or therapeutic content. Interpreting in *only* these latter ways of reduction and stereotypes causes the 'something more' that Jung insisted is vital to health and wholeness to be lost. What a waste!

Since it is easy to fall into reductive approaches or stereotypes in relation to dream material when the content includes images of the anal region of the body, we might instead reflect on our biases. Some questions listed in an ARAS entry are helpful to support the deepening approach that Jung advocated when working with anal-rectum images. This entry describes the 'kiss of shame' and then asks several questions to help bring consciousness to personal attitudes and prejudices:

How do I ... secretly despise in the night of my unconsciousness the goatlike [devil as the

goat] process of nature? How do I find it difficult to ‘kiss’ my earthy ‘backside’? Am I willing to embrace the difficult modern problem of the terrible ‘backside’ of God? Am I willing to risk the accusation of having imparted the ‘kiss of shame’? (ARAS record 5GT.244) As Neumann proposed, the nether region is not an area to outgrow and leave behind. This transgressive body area is filled with archetypal symbolism and essential instinctual knowledge. Jungians welcome the transgressive because it can lead to wholeness. The union of the vertical pole with the anal pole ‘remains the foundation of our existence even after our consciousness [has] grown independent [of the mother]’ (Neuman, 1977, p. 33; italics added). In other words, images of the anus are not just about regressive childhood issues or homosexuality.

Homosexuality, which the American Psychiatric Association in 1973 adopted as a valid, healthy form of sexual and relationship expression, must be decoupled from concepts of immature or incomplete development that make it too easy to engage in (unconscious) heterosexist interpretations and viewpoints.

Contemplating these questions from the ARAS entry about the dream images of the anus and a coniunctio in the rectum will help access the dialectical nature of the images and foster the tension that can lead to greater consciousness, creativity and transformation. Acknowledging the presence of the other – the polar opposite of the ego’s attitude – that has shown itself through symbolic images to join with the conscious attitude will help set the stage for the constellation of the transcendent function and the union that is engendered.

Employing Jung's recommendation to hold the tension of the opposites to create the coniunctio induces the emergence of that 'something more' that brings new levels of consciousness while resolving neuroses and trauma. His focus on the wholeness of the psyche furthers individuation instead of lapsing into stereotypes or only resorting to reductive theory, which induces shame, humiliation and even death from the dominant paradigm of fear and loathing related to the anus and rectum. Like other forms of uninvited control of the human body by others, negative attitudes about the anus and punishments related to it are, in fact, anti-feminine, anti-receptive and anti-coniunctio. Refashioning our thinking about the nether region to include its role in coniunctio experiences that lead to psychic wholeness will increase the psychological power of this symbolism.

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Abstract

This article explores the archetypal aspects of dream images of the anus and the alimentary canal including their psychological and psychosocial significance as a site of psychic coniunctio. Freudian anal regression theory and Jungian alchemical interpretations are discussed in both their illumination and obfuscation of these symbols as well as their expression of a possible heterosexist ideologue. Positive meanings of the anal-coniunctio union, reflecting on patient dreams and fantasy material concerning anal penetration and its possible psychic significance, are described. The author argues that the disavowal of the anal-coniunctio union is an instance of othering that precludes fertile considerations.

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