ARAS

THE ARCHIVE *for* RESEARCH
in ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLISM

A Guide to ARAS

for Analysts, Candidates, Artists, Scholars, Students, and Any Others Who Love Symbolic Images

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COVER IMAGE

Standing Priest Baozhi (in Japanese “Hoshi”), carved wood, 11th Century, Heian period.

The sculpture depicts the renowned 5th-6th century Chinese monk Baozhi at the moment his face split open and revealed the eleven-headed Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion.

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INTRODUCTION by Patricia Llosa

Oil painting on canvas by Domenico Remps, *Cabinet of Curiosities,* 1690s, *Opificio delle Pietre Dure,* Florence, Italy.

At the back of our brains is a blaze of astonishment at our own existence. The object of the artistic and spiritual life is to dig for this sunrise of wonder.

— Gilbert K. Chesterton

The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers.

— James Baldwin

This guide extends an invitation.

An invitation into a world.

A collection.

As with any collection, archive, or "cabinet of curiosity," ARAS—The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism—encompasses a world and an attitude toward it. English explorer Francis Bacon described such collections in his *Gesta Grayorum* (1594) as containing "the notion of transformative completeness." This world of images mirrors

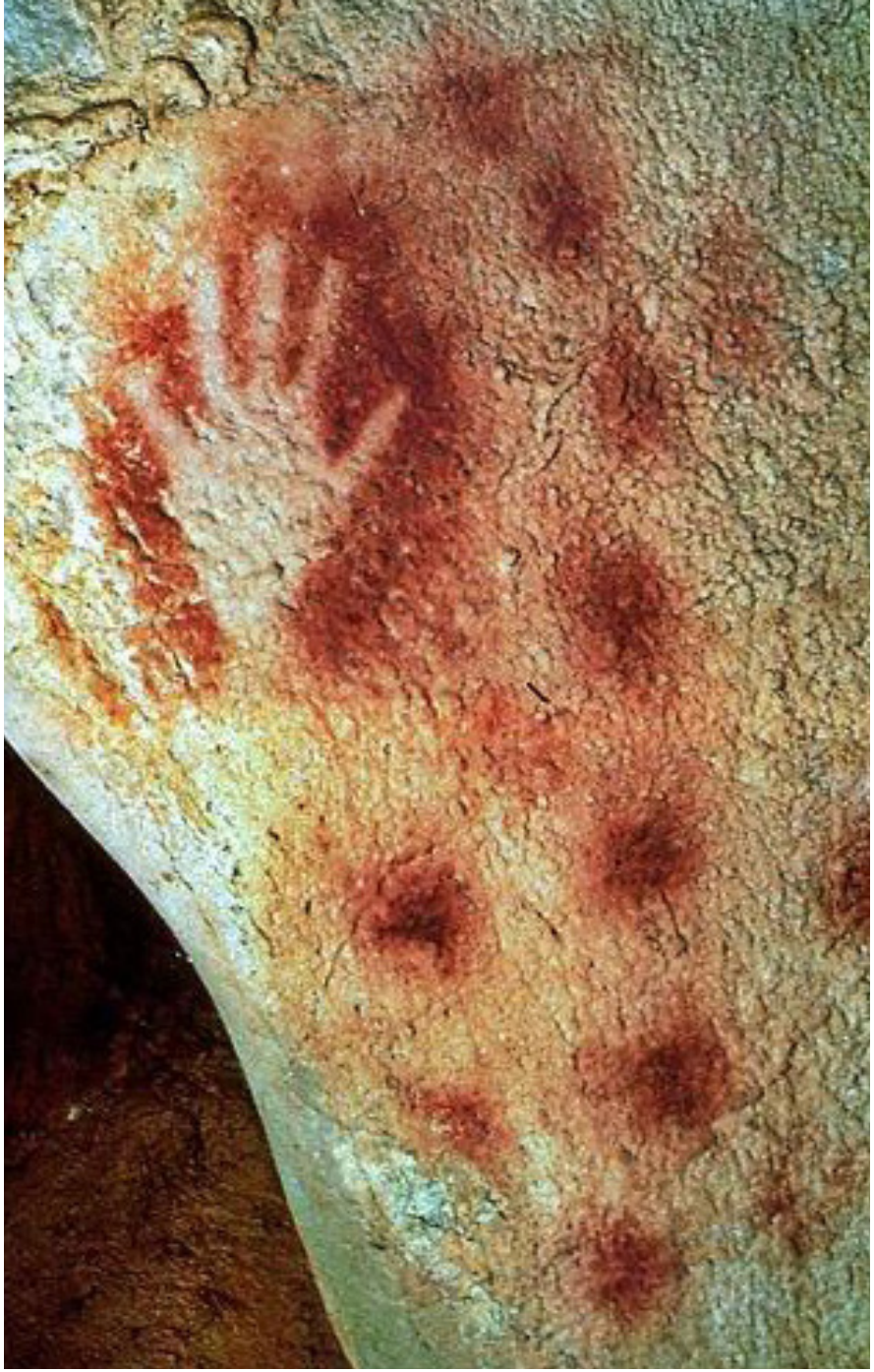
Aby Warburg's panel 39 from the *Mnemosyne Atlas (Bilderatlas Mnemosyne)*, a collage of various artwork images on a board, 1925–1929, The Warburg Institute, London.

many far-flung explorations as well as careful curation and deep reflection. The initial vision was to create a diverse visual archive that would allow for the cross-referencing of cultural images. The collection began in the mid-1930s around the time that intellectual luminaries such as Erwin Panofsky and Aby Warburg established the study of images, *iconology,* as a discipline. The tale of the birth of the archive and how it took form on the shores of Lake Maggiore will be further elaborated in the guide. Suffice it to say that it emerged from a fertile field of interdisciplinary exchanges, gatherings that were at the cutting edge of their time and reminiscent of today's TED Talks. Hosted by artist and spiritual pilgrim Olga Fröbe Kapteyn, prominent scholars and artists met yearly to exchange ideas and "amplify" a central theme. Kapteyn, at the behest of C. G. Jung, would then spend over a decade

traveling and collecting images to bring together under one roof, long before the internet was a vision. The images of the archive, many gathered by her, come from diverse and disparate human cultures and are organized by thematic relevance, time period, locale, mythologies, rituals, and materials. What sets ARAS apart from other visual archives is that the images are accompanied by text, providing interpretations from an archetypal perspective.

The first ever textual description of a visual work of art from the European Classical world can be found in Homer's description of the mythological shield belonging to the Greek hero Achilles: "It had embossed on its surface the entire history of the world and mankind. Its wondrousness derived from the cumulative effect of diverse subjects and details and from the bringing together in one space of apparently dissimilar things."

An interpretation of the Shield of Achilles design described in Book 18 of the *Iliad,* by Angelo Monticelli.



Pech Merle cave.

Similarly, ARAS offers a unique collection that reflects our world in images, from the earliest artistic signature of the human hand silhouetted on the walls of paleolithic caves to a rich multiplicity of images expressing the vitality and complexity of the human imagination. As of now there are 18,000 images, archetypal representations with accompanied text, reaching across time, back into the past and forward into the future. They reflect human engagement with both the material and the immaterial from around the globe.

I first stumbled into the world of ARAS as a museum professional in search of respite from the desert dryness of art historical analysis. The word *museum* comes from the Greek *mouseion,* originally "a seat or shrine of the Muses."[1] The operative word in this definition is *seat,* a static settling. Museums can be experienced as mausoleums or "dungeons of the ideal":[2] ivory towers that enclose and store material culture but do not necessarily give wings to their meaning.

Once, while teaching at the museum, I encountered this dilemma while standing in front of a sculpture of the Mexican serpent god Quetzalcoatl. The curled stone serpent was patterned with intricately carved feathers delineated in high relief on its basalt body. I was attempting to bring the

1 Etymonline, "Museum," https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=museum.

2 Calvin Tomkins, *Merchants and Masterpieces* (Henry Holt & Co., 1989).

sculpture to life by recounting the gods' mythological exploits when a sharply voiced declaration from a small boy resonated throughout the room: "Everything you just said is a lie!" A wave of schadenfreude rippled through the assembled adults. Affronted by the interruption, my delight in the narrative fell away, but a realization emerged. I realized that mythological consciousness was deemed dead to this child, killed off most probably by a scientifically minded parent.

I paused, thinking how best to respect his position without losing the value in mine. I replied carefully: "That may be true ... for you, but perhaps not for the people who made the sculpture ... look how much care the artisan put into making each feather ... have you ever made a sculpture in stone? Do you think it is easy? Why would they spend so much time and effort on a lie or something without worth?"

Lie or not, this story was symbolic of a treasured value that was a part of the sculpture's meaning. Jung describes "that wholly peculiar feeling which arises in us if, amid the noise and tumult of a modern street, we should come across an ancient relic," referring to them as "living breathing keys."[3] ARAS is a resource for this experience, a place where images can be experienced as keys to a greater understanding of the archetypal dimension of the psyche.

Mexican serpent god Quetzalcoatl.

3 Janine Burke, *The Sphinx on the Table: Sigmund Freud's Art Collection and the Development of Psychoanalysis* (Walker, 2006), 268.

ARAS NY card catalog.

ARAS NY card catalog.

ARAS, a well of archetypal wisdom collected and mined over decades by generations of scholars and Jungian analysts, communicates and restores a sense of wonder, enrichment, and soul-making for those who are called to work with the inner world of the psyche. The ARAS Collection contains symbolic images that serve the vital purpose of returning soul to the world. As Jung wrote, "We have stripped all things of their mystery and numinosity, nothing is holy any longer" (CW 18, para. 582).[4] He and others worked tirelessly to remedy this imbalance.

As travelers and users of the archive, we create pathways that accommodate new understandings. We do this by finding affinities, searching for resonances, and discovering visual alliterations through reverie. We encounter unexpected meanings and create new patterns and narratives along the way—what neuro-aesthetics terms *neural couplings,* a crucial and generative action. A recent publication outlining the latest research, *Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us* speaks to the importance of this creative activity for the brain, concluding that there is "mounting evidence that the arts really do help us heal and thrive ... 'acts of art' can enhance your life."[5]

We orient ourselves to this unknown territory by avoiding the monsters hovering in the depths; we turn to a guide, a structure to help us differentiate the known from the unknown. In ancient Roman cartography the term *HIC SVNT LEONES*—"Here be lions"—was used to qualify the dangers of unexplored terrains. Later such medieval globes as the Hunt-Lenox Globe in the New York Public Library used the phrase *HC SVNT DRACONES* ("Here be dragons"). The dragons as hybrid creatures symbolically held the disparities of the known and the mystery.

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4 C. G. Jung, *The Collected Works,* 2nd ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969). All references to Jung's *Collected Works* are given in the text as "CW" with volume number and paragraph in parenthesis.

5 Ivy Ross and Susan Magsmen, *Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us* (Random House, 2023), xi.

Circumambulation, a uniquely Jungian approach to working with such symbols, is thinking that is oriented around a center, and moves radially to and from that center, circumambulating it. It goes back and forth, returning to the central image again and again, building up a rich associative cluster of interconnecting images, something like a spider web. The result of such thinking is a rich tapestry of elaboration around a central image.[6]

In an interview, Jungian analyst James Hillman said, "Yes, fantasies are very precious, they need supportive therapy. Therapy is a kind of mothering, not of the ego, a mothering of the images which anyway mother us, coming to us every night."[7] It is through cultivating and tending these images of psyche that the therapeutic movement occurs. To be renewed in this way, we need to connect to the archetypes, our primordial images.

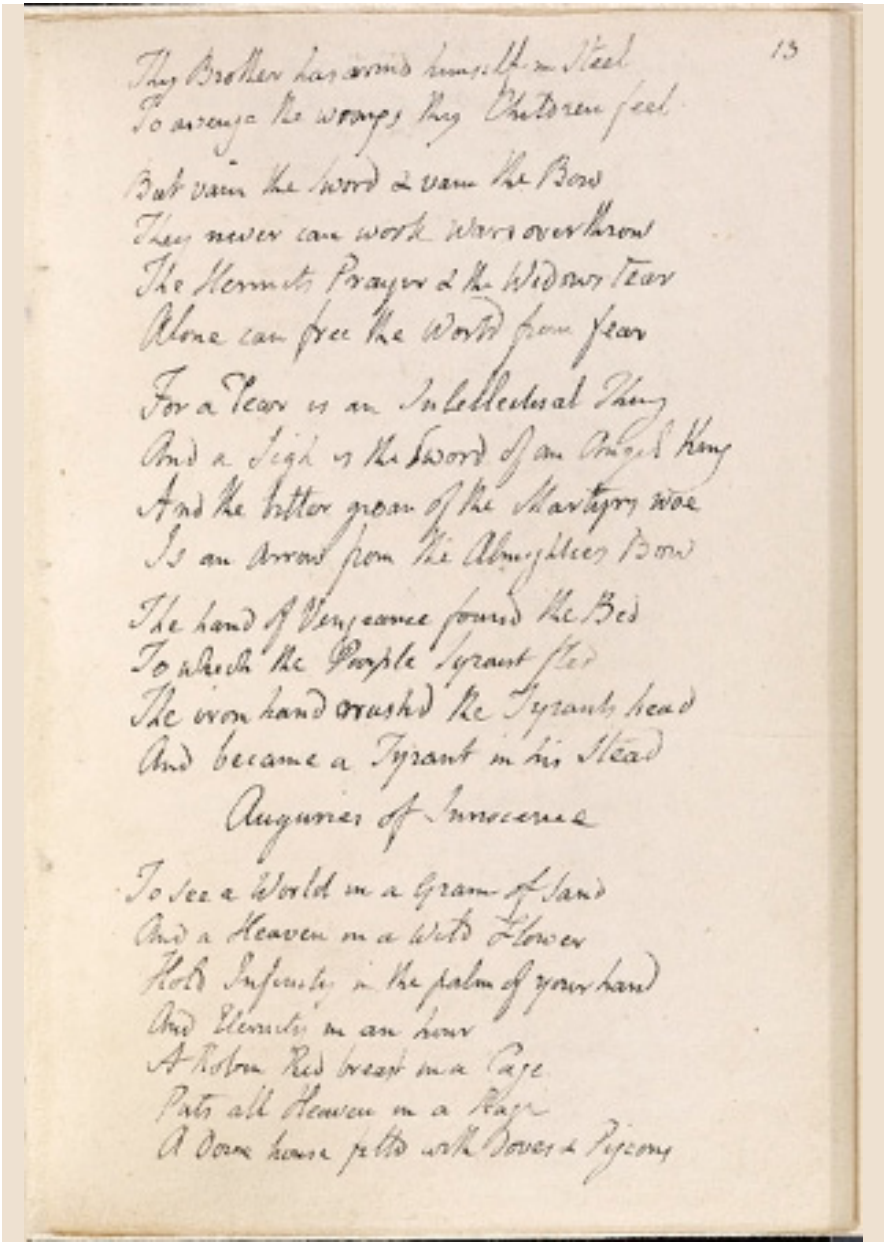
In this day and age we are flooded by images from without. However, the ubiquity of images often reflects an impoverishment of imagination. There is a loss of soul, or a loss of what I would call the "body" of the image, its archetypal valence. It is through incubating and nurturing

Siuhu's House tray, yucca basketry, 1880–1915, Tohono O'odham Reservation, Arizona, USA.

Isis and Horus, Egyptian copper statuette (pl. 38), 2,040–1,700 BCE, from Neumann's *The Great Mother.* Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany.

6 Edward F. Edinger, *The Mysterium Lectures* (Inner City Books, 1995), 20.

7 James Hillman, with Laura Pozzo, *Inter Views: Conversations with Laura Pozzo on Psychotherapy, Biography, Love, Soul, Dreams, Work, Imagination and the State of the Culture* (Harper & Row, 1983), 65.



Original page of *Auguries of Innocence,* by Blake, Morgan Library and Museum. Object 13 (Bentley 126.13), 18.4 X 12.5 cm.

intuitive and perceptual relationships with our own images that we can navigate the waters of our own meaning.

We have gathered in this guide examples of such approaches to working with symbols and images, relevant not only for candidates in Jungian training but also for curious students of psychology. *Psyche,* from ancient Greek, means "soul," and *ology* "the study of." Thus *psychology* is "the study of soul." The information and material included in this document is intended to accompany and further amplify the two online ARAS Guides to symbols and to offer an orientation toward working with the archive's collection.

So here is my invitation to you. I leave you with the perceptive spirit of the mystical poet William Blake's words from *Auguries of Innocence* as a call to your exploration:

To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.

Through your perception and engagement with this guide, it can truly become, as Aristotle said, "more than the sum of its parts."

PART I: What is ARAS?

Untitled photograph by Eugéne Atget, ca. 1924–5. France.

To fathom ARAS's depth and richness, allow yourself to wander, to linger, and to ponder. Do not be afraid to get lost as you meander. Allow yourself to linger, to wander and to get lost as your meanderings may yield surprising delights of imagery and meaning.

— Joseph Henderson

HISTORY / ROOTS

It was 1930. C. G. Jung and Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn met at a conference about the common root of all religions at the Keyserling School of Wisdom in Germany. Fröbe-Kapteyn and Jung shared a common interest in archetypal forces and views on bridging philosophies to unite consciousness of East and West. This led to a relationship that continued throughout their lives.

The deepest things in human life can only be expressed in images.

— Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn (1881–1962)

Born in 1881 in London to Dutch parents, as a young girl, Olga (whose name means “holy”) helped her father, an avid photographer, develop images in the darkroom. She enjoyed being part of that creative process, watching images bloom out of the blankness of the page in that red darkroom light. For her the thrill lay in witnessing something coming into being out of seeming nothingness. This experience later translated into her passion for collecting symbolic images and working with timeless images that arose from the depths of the psyche.

Fröbe-Kapteyn was unique, particularly for her time. She was the first woman to climb Mont Blanc and also a prize-winning skier. She was a skilled equestrienne who rode horses in the circus: a vital, courageous, and physically adept young woman. When still young, she married and became the mother of twin girls. Shortly after giving birth in 1915, her husband died in a plane crash testing an aerial camera for the Austrian army. She had a connection with cameras, photography, and pictures throughout her life.

With the generosity of her father, Fröbe-Kapteyn settled on a beautiful estate named Casa Gabriela, overlooking Lake Maggiore. Its luxuriant terraced garden facing the lake was once a vineyard. She began to study Indian philosophy and meditation and took an interest in theosophy and psychology. Following an inner calling in 1928, she built a lecture house and guest house on the land in the hopes of combining her

Lake Maggiore

gift for bringing diverse and interesting people together with her deep interests in the raising of consciousness and uniting the philosophies of East and West.

In 1932, in what Fröbe-Kapteyn considered a predestined meeting with Rudolph Otto, a German theologian, scholar of mysticism, and comparatist of Eastern and Western religion, she shared her idea of creating a meeting place for conferences, which he enthusiastically supported. He suggested the name Eranos, meaning "shared feast" from the Greek "the spirit of the place."

Each fall beginning in 1933, Fröbe-Kapteyn hosted the Eranos lectures, a gathering of scholars speaking on a central theme of her choosing. The theme provided a common thread uniting diverse cultures and disciplines. The first conference centered around Yoga and Meditation: East meets West. Nourished by open discussion, these gatherings inspired conversation, contemplation, the writing of books, and the giving of lectures in universities and elsewhere. Jung became a regular lecturer.

The lectures centered around the central axis of the *Quest for the Self* and the *Way of the Soul.* Eranos was a burgeoning community of artists and free thinkers. There were very creative and "outside-the-box" individuals, among them Isadora Duncan, Paul Klee, Rudolf Steiner, and Alice Bailey.

The round table at Eranos.

Olga Foebe-Kapteyn and C.G. Jung at Eranos in 1933. Photographer Margarethe Fellerer. © Eranos Foundation, Ascona. All rights reserved.

Attendees found these dialogues evocative as they pointed to something beyond themselves. Eranos provided a banquet, both spiritual and material. Lunches during the conference were held at a round table in the model of King Arthur and his knights where all were equal and "nourishment was taken in: a vital living mandala and creative circle." Many who participated felt a sense of being on the edge of what was known and unknown and strove to speak from that place.

In 1935, inspired by Jung's lecture on the individuation process, alchemy, and the images he shared, Fröbe-Kapteyn conceived a plan, as a complement to Jung's writings, to systematically collect pictures that had a numinous spark and exemplified the archetypes. She shared this idea with Jung, and he charged her with the task of traveling to the great libraries and major museums in Europe and America to gather this material. Their work sought to bridge opposites and invited a life through a union of inner and outer.

Fröbe-Kapteyn gathered more than 6000 images—from ancient cave paintings and carvings to sculptures, folk art, fine art, illuminated manuscripts, contemporary art, and more. She stored a few hundred pictures in her closet at Casa Gabriella for want of space. The images were used to complement Jung's writings as well as those of others, notably Erich Neumann's classic *The Great Mother*. These materials

aided Jung's scholarly research, lectures, and publications, and contributed to Fröbe-Kapteyn's own individuation process.

A formidable woman, over the years she grew the collection of images and written research commentary into a remarkable resource. From the seeds of her early interest in the development of photographs, her passion for archetypal images became essential to the growing archive of images and the evolving themes of the lecture series. She said the lectures and collection of images were all based "on Jung's discovery of the archetypal world, those energies immensely alive and creative, in fact, the creative forces themselves."[8] Following Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, the further development of ARAS has been continued into present times by several remarkable women, including Mary Mellon, Jessie Fraser, and Ami Ronnberg, whose fine article, "The Story of the Three Women Who Created ARAS" offers a history of the pioneering women who created ARAS.

Olga Foebe-Kapteyn

8 William McGuire, *Bollingen: An Adventure in Collecting the Past* (Princeton University Press, 2020), 144.

ARAS ONLINE OFFERINGS AND CURRENT PROJECTS

The ARAS website (ARAS.org) offers an archive of over 18,000 images of symbols in art accompanied by scholarly commentaries. The archive is searchable and allows users to compile lists of favorite images. In addition to the archive itself, the website houses a large library of articles, digital books, and special collections centering on symbols and art. ARAS.org also offers a Concordance of C. G. Jung's *Collected Works,* which allows visitors to search the *Collected Works* by word or topic to find all relevant references.

Aside from the website, ARAS sponsors many initiatives to share our distinctive viewpoint with the world. These innovative projects include the following:

ARAS Summer Program for Teens. ARAS offers an intensive summer program for New York City teenagers. The program is designed to bring students of diverse backgrounds together for the purpose of helping them discover themselves in the art that moves them. Teenagers are inundated daily with images on social media and the internet. We teach our teens to go beyond the shallows and look for meaning in what they are seeing. By the end of the program, the participants see their world in a new, more meaningful way. The teens make connections to images, symbols, and each other as they learn more about their own cultures and the cultures of their peers.

They accomplish these goals through creating original artwork in response to the rich history of a specific symbol of their choice. They also have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of their chosen symbol through research and daily field trips to art spaces, artist studios, and museums across New York City. The end result is that the teens create work that is thoughtful and deeply connected to who they are. On the last day of the program, the students present their work and the research behind it at a celebratory exhibition and reception with family and friends. Similar programs are also hosted in Los Angeles and San Francisco.
https://aras.org/education

In response to the turning-point events of 2020, including the killing of George Floyd, ARAS has produced a special video, **"On Taking a Knee,"** exploring and amplifying the symbolism of "taking a knee." Our hope is that this video broadens understanding and responsiveness to this historic moment.
https://youtu.be/jyWSwN-auwY

Gaia: Then and Now–The Mythopoetics of Climate Change
is a series of webinars that looks at the climate crisis through a number of different lenses. We explore the mythopoetic ways of knowing the nature of the earth and the current crisis of climate change—not by putting itself in opposition to the scientific way of knowing, but rather by offering itself as a complementary way of understanding our dire situation and how we got here.
https://aras.org/gaia-then-and-now

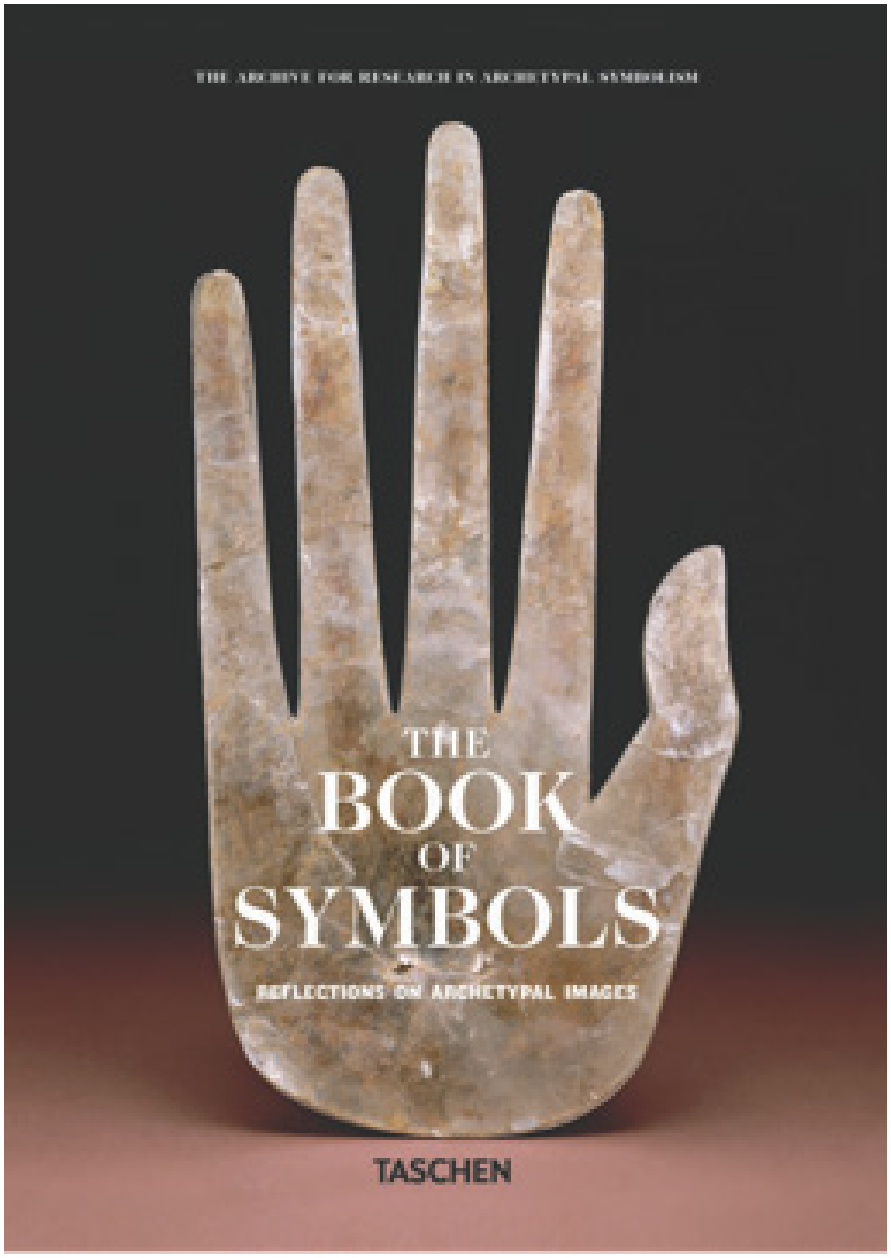
In 2023, we began a collaboration with **#WithUkrainianJungians.** In a bold effort, #WUJ presented a series of webinars that feature well-known Jungians from around the world speaking on topics related to the war in Ukraine. Ukrainian Jungians also presented in each of these webinars, offering a picture of the psyche and life in war-torn Ukraine. In association with this series, ARAS hosts a gallery of images that arose in response to the webinars and to the war in Ukraine.
https://aras.org/wuj

ARAS Connections: Image and Archetype. Our free quarterly online newsletter, *ARAS Connections: Image and Archetype* presents scholarly articles and videos on art, symbolism, and psyche along with news and updates from ARAS on our work.
https://aras.org/connections

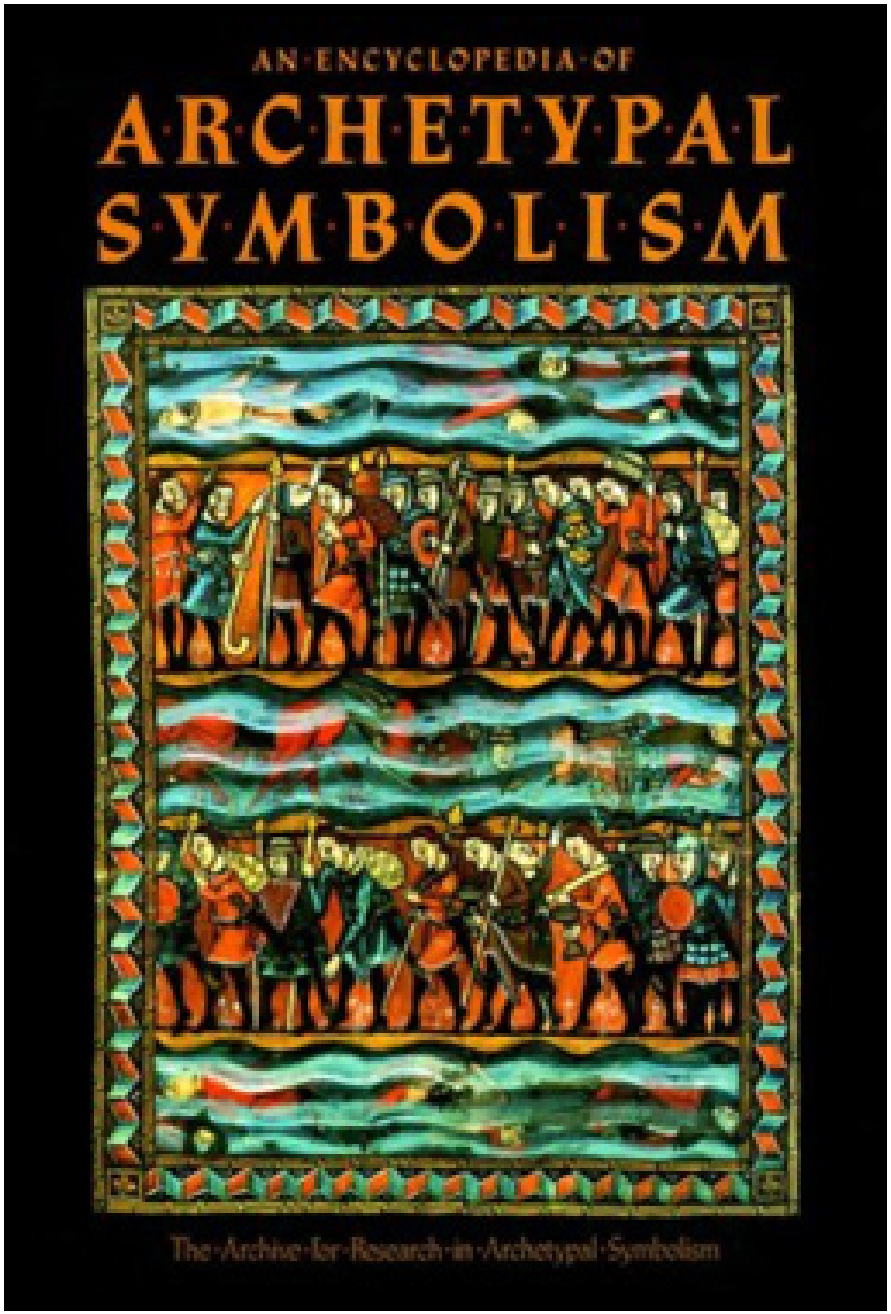
Images: Upper left: Statue of Gaia, Palekastro, Crete, 3rd C. B.C., Upper right: Detail from Omen by Dark Sky Aerial. Bottom left: Demeter and Persephone: 'The Exaltation of the Flower.' Parian Marble Stele, 470-460 BC., Bottom right: Site Profile Flag #3 (Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY), Brooke Singer

ARAS Books

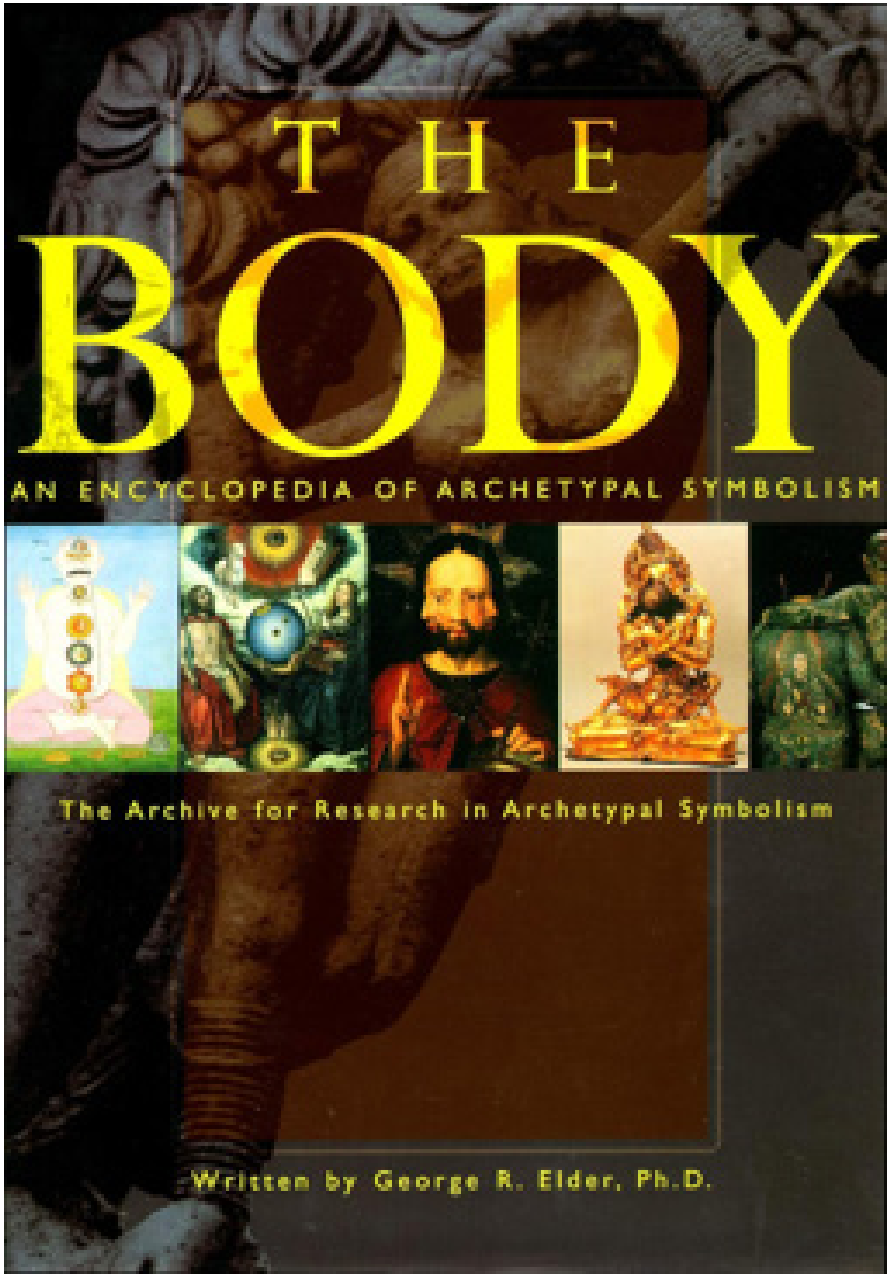
The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images (2010) combines 322 original essays about particular symbols with images from cave art to contemporary art. The thought-provoking texts and almost 800 beautiful full-color images come together in a unique way to convey hidden dimensions of meaning. *The Book of Symbols* illustrates how to move from the visual experience of a symbolic image in art, religion, life, or dreams, to directly experiencing its personal and psychological resonance.



The Encyclopedia of Archetypal Symbolism presents 120 full-page color photographs of art works and artifacts of the sacred traditions of the world, from ancient times to the present. The images are grouped into archetypal themes such as Cosmos and Creation, Sacred Animals, Goddesses, Gods, The Divine Child, Heroes and Heroines, Revelation, and Transformation. Accompanying pictures are essays on historical and cultural context, cross-cultural symbolism, and the psychological meaning of the archetypes, as well as bibliographies, glossaries, and a comprehensive descriptive index.



The Body is a stunning collection of color images and text organized around mythic themes that follow the solar calendar from cosmos and creation to death, transformation, and rebirth. In this second volume, the focus is the human body as a carrier of deep psychological insights and sacred meanings. One hundred stunning color plates detail carved, painted, and sculpted artifacts from prehistory to the recent past, from the caves of France to the temples of East Asia. Images such as the Footprints of the Buddha from India, the ancient Egyptian Eye of Horus, the Cretan Goddess with Bared Breasts, and Delacroix's painting *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* are accompanied by commentaries on their cultural and symbolic significance. An extensive, detailed index is also included.



NAVIGATING ARAS: HOW TO USE THE ARCHIVE

ARAS is a vast and rich resource of symbolic images. Learning to navigate ARAS to explore these images takes time and experimentation. Unlike a sign, a symbol does not signify a single meaning such as a green traffic light authorizing vehicles to proceed through an intersection. A symbol's power lies in its polyvalency. A symbol can evoke many simultaneous emotions and meanings, even contradictory ones. And a symbol can accrue additional meaning over time, such as the American flag, the Christian cross, the Jewish star, or the Nazi swastika, as history adds to its gravitas. A symbol's power to move people comes from its ability to tap the depths of the human psyche, where primitive, nonrational emotions lie dormant, waiting to be roused.

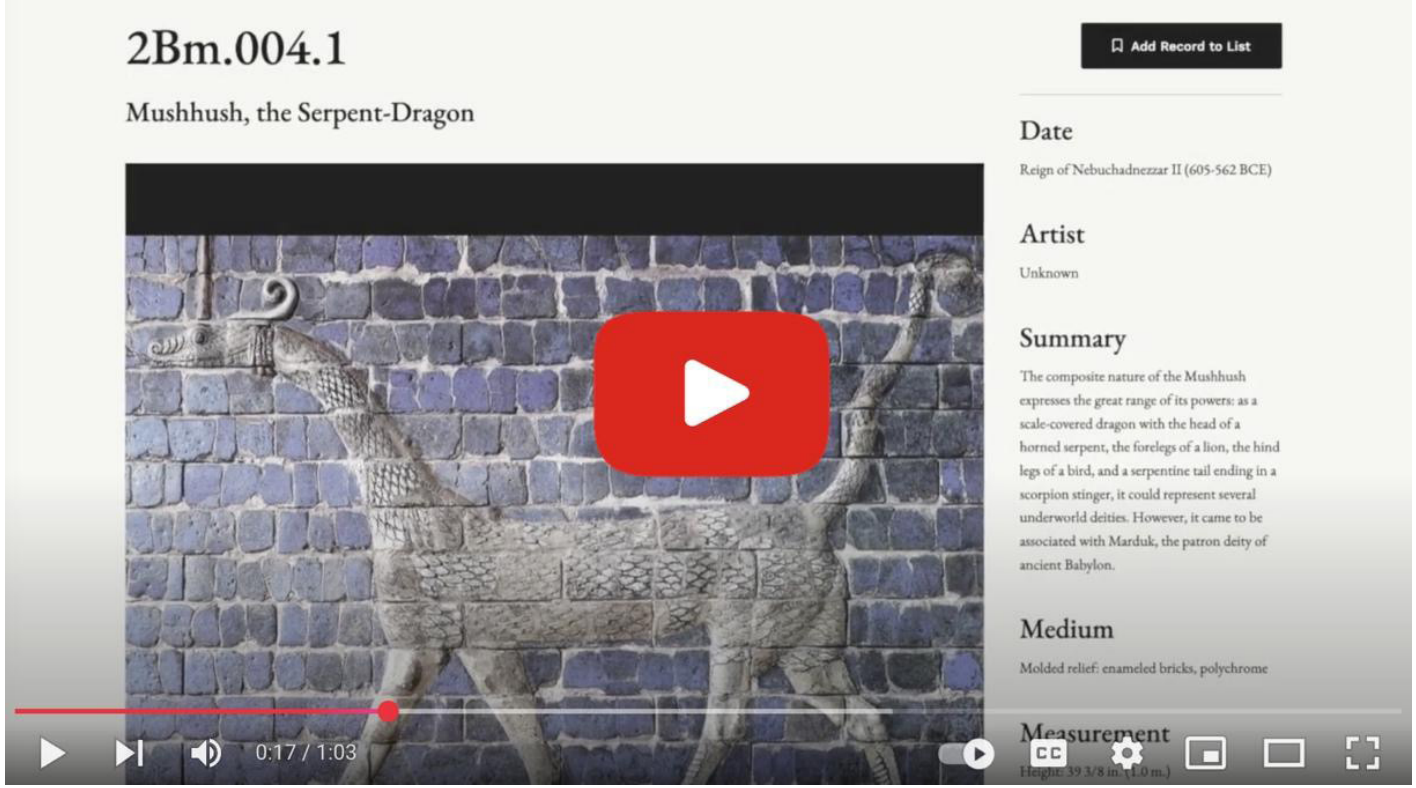
We cannot come to know a symbol in a purely rational way. We can only see or understand some of the facets that make up the whole at any one time. By becoming familiar with many of those facets over time, we can begin to glean a shape and a certain body of experience that contribute to the accrued meaning of the symbol. To aid in this "accruing of meaning" ARAS includes cultural, historical, anthropological, and psychological references and amplifications.

The archive is especially rich for those interested in amplifying images that emerge in dreams. The process begins when we are struck by a particular image, wondering why that particular image was chosen and what it means. We learn over time that the choice of specific images and characters appearing in our dreams seems to be well chosen by the psyche or who or whatever is the casting director of dreams. These choices can communicate specific information about the dreamer's state of development and core issues with uncanny specificity. In dreams the symbolic image often becomes the key to unlocking a door, leading to greater knowledge or consciousness within the dreamer. ARAS can give the dreamer the keys to many doors that help expand their understanding of individual, cultural, and archetypal levels of reality. And our evolving relationship to the symbol can bring about deep change and transformation of our being.

To use the archive, it is best to start with a specific symbolic image: from a dream or from an idea to use in an artistic creation, or for a cultural study, or simply to enjoy the richness of the archive. As you search you will come up with multiple examples that demonstrate how the same image is expressed in various times and cultures. Sometimes a symbol will take on quite different meanings within the same culture or from one culture to another. Exploring these contradictions as well as commonalities (for example, the snake: deadly poisonous or healing) can help expand the meanings of the symbolic image. The search may lead you off on various tangents, as you circumambulate the image, fleshing it out as you come to a deeper understanding of what it means to you.

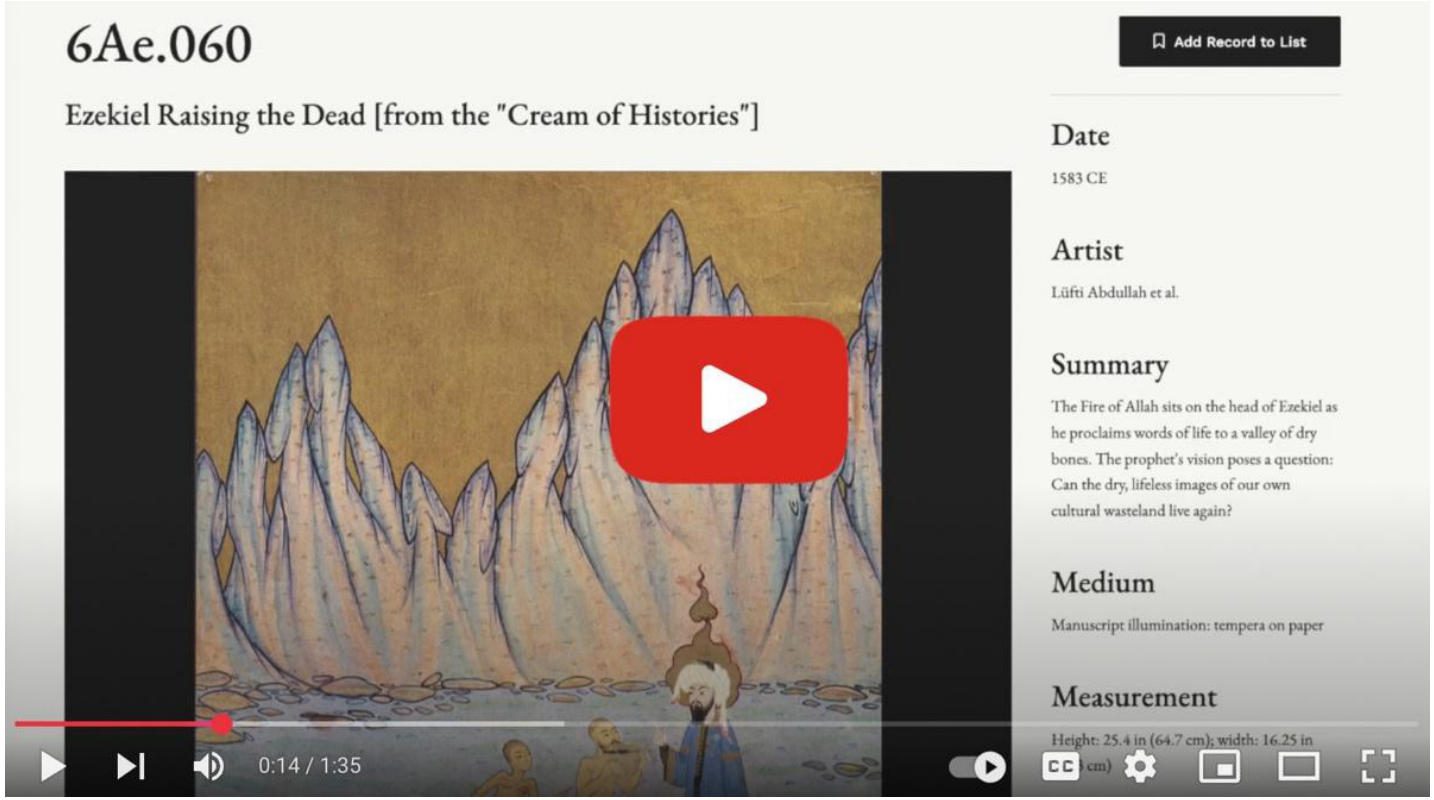
While no one can tell you the "right" path to follow through the archive, ARAS has developed a series of videos to help our users get the most out of ARAS.org.

How to compile groups of images for presentations or personal collection:



https://youtu.be/IImCNYP2nps

How to use our Concordance of Jung's Collected Works:

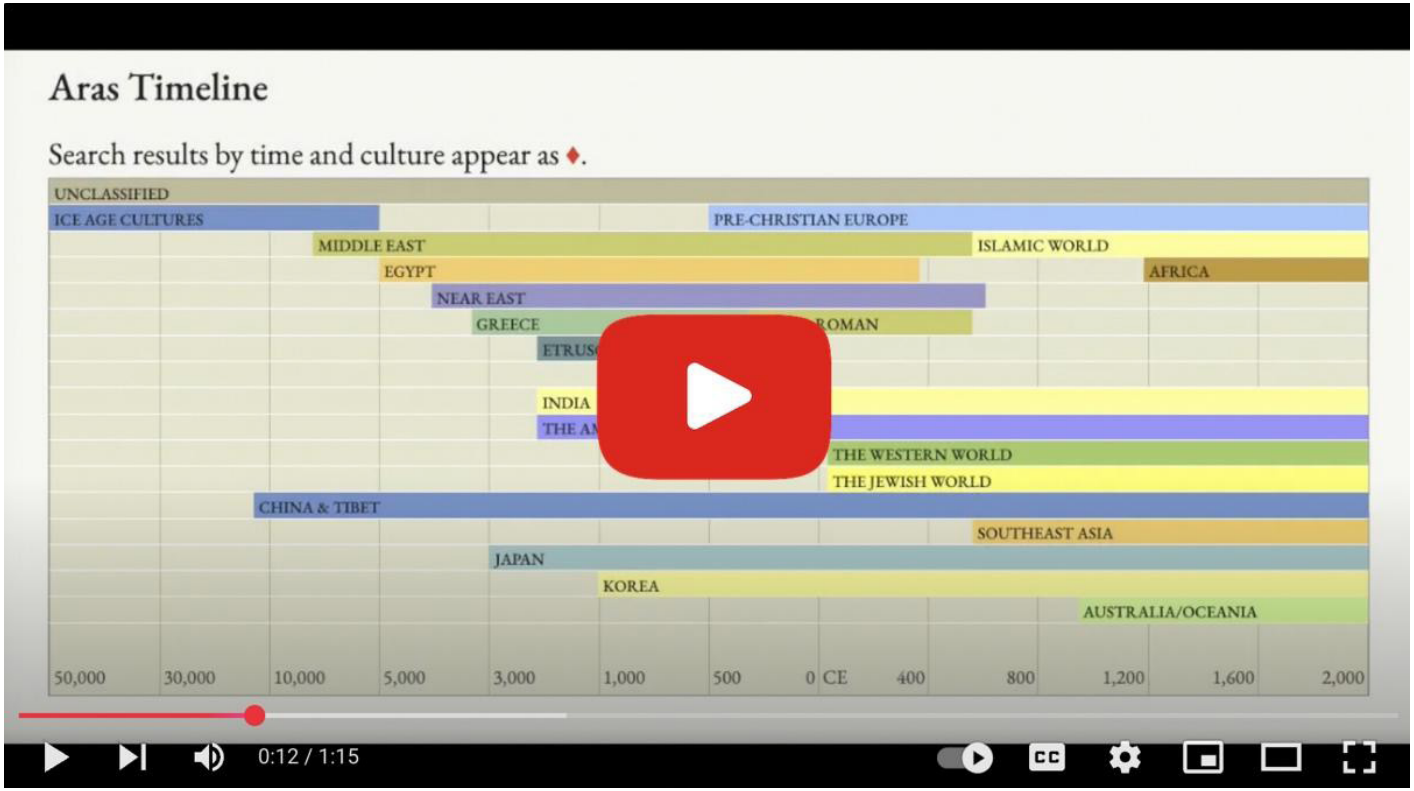


https://youtu.be/2JGiZC6y6YE

Learn about the parts of an ARAS record:

https://youtu.be/stBkxBdeTJo

Learn how to use our timeline feature:



https://youtu.be/Og2gHB6P_DM

And here are a series of specific instructions on how to search the archive.

Amplification of Dream Images

1. Type in a search word, like the name of an image from a dream, for example, **cow.**
2. A timeline will appear with a list of found images of **cows.**
3. You can narrow the search by clicking on the triangle corresponding to a specific historical or cultural timeframe or scroll through the list of found images.
4. When you have located an image of interest, click the image to enlarge it and to access the accompanying cultural and psychological commentary.
5. You can enlarge the image, rotate it, or print it or the commentary.
6. You may then want to move on to explore the next image. Simply move back or forward to the next image in the archive or return to the original list of images.
7. When you have finished research on the image of the **cow,** you may want to save the images of interest for future use and begin another search.

Cultural Studies

1. To explore and study a specific culture, type in the name of the culture in the search box. A timeline appears showing the duration of that particular culture. Click a triangle on the timeline to access any image from that culture.
2. ARAS is organized by numbers that move sequentially through cultures. Use the **next/prev** buttons to visit other images in that culture.
3. When finished, the images can be saved for future use.

Researching Art and Artists

1. To locate a specific piece of art or artist, type the name in the search box.
2. The image of the art or all the images of a particular artist's work will appear.
3. Click the image to open the record, enlarge it, and retrieve the commentary.
4. Images can be saved or printed, or you can move onto another search.

Locating Specific Images

1. Similar to searching for art, enter the image name or ARAS number.
2. Saving ARAS numbers can save you time if you continue your search at a later time.
3. The images can be saved or printed.

Citing the Archive

To cite an ARAS Online record, we recommend the following format:

"Image Name - Record number." ARAS Online [online archive]. The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism; available from www.aras.org; accessed date.

"Penitence of David - Record 5Ck.009." ARAS Online [online archive]. The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism; available from www.aras.org; accessed March 30, 2025.

For images without names, just put the ARAS record number itself at the beginning of the citation. Examples:

"Record 2Bp.029." ARAS Online [online archive]. The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism; available from www.aras.org; accessed September 5, 2024.

Indian girls swimming in a lotus pond, buoyed by airtight jugs. Watercolor on paper, ca. 1790, India.

PART II: Fundamental Aspects of the ARAS Approach to Symbolic Images

Minoan Deity or Worshipper. Terracotta. Origin: Pre-Hellenic Era, Crete, Post Palace Period, Late Minoan IIIa, b, c (Achaeans in Crete). ARAS Record 3Ce.002. Courtesy of Archeological Museum Heraklion, Crete, Greece.

EXPLORING ARCHETYPES AND SYMBOLS

The creation of the Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism was motivated by the wish to explore Jung's notion of the "archetype." However, the use of ARAS goes well beyond Jungian psychology.

ARAS owes a tremendous debt to Jung's basic intuition about the depths of archetypal reality and the collective unconscious. Jung was a pioneer in developing a broadly archetypal point of view about the nature of the psyche. He perceived common human, transpersonal, and symbolic potentials and patterns that transcend cultural and theological boundaries.

Jung's elaboration of the archetypal foundation of the psyche created the essential framework for the nomenclature developed to categorize the ARAS image content. The term *archetype* means "original pattern from which copies are made," and it appeared in European texts as early as 1545. It derives from the Latin noun *archetypum* and from the Greek noun *arkhetypon*, meaning "pattern or model," and the adjective *arkhetypos*, meaning "firstmolded."

Jung probed how the collective unconscious, humankind's shared psychic inheritance, rests on "archetypes" or "primordial images" (CW 8, para. 229). Jung was not the first to discover and formulate the idea of the archetype; he acknowledged his debt to Plato, describing archetypes as "active living dispositions, ideas in the Platonic sense, that perform and continually influence our thoughts and feelings and actions" (CW 8, para. 154).[9]

For Plato, "ideas" were collective in the sense that they embody the general characteristics of groups of individuals rather than the specific peculiarities of one. Thus, a particular dog has qualities in common with all dogs (which enable us to classify it as a dog) as well as peculiarities of its own (which enable its master to recognize it). So it is with the archetypes: they are common to all humankind, yet each culture and individual experiences them in a unique and personal way.

The German astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) believed that his delight in scientific discovery was due to the mental exercise of matching ideas or images already implanted in his mind by God with external events perceived through his senses. Kepler's "inner ideas," which lie "under the veil of potentiality" and are "derived from a natural instinct

The Goddess Tlazolteotl. Aplite speckled with garnets, 20.2612 cm. Provenance: Mexico. Origin: Mexico, Aztec. ARAS Record 8Bd.017. # Dumbarton Oaks, Pre-Columbian Collection, Washington, DC.

9 Anthony Stevens, *Archetype: A Natural History of the Self* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 39.

and are inborn," are clearly akin to Jung's "primordial images."[10] It is speculated that Jung may have been influenced in his thinking about archetypes by the German ethnologist Adolf Bastian (1826–1905), who studied the myths, folklore, and customs of humankind all over the world. Bastian was impressed by the similarities between many of the themes and motifs he encountered no matter where he went. He noticed, however, that these universal themes, which he called *Elementargedanken* (elementary ideas), invariably manifested themselves in local forms peculiar to the group of people he happened to be studying: these he called *Volksgedanken* (ethnic ideas).[11]

Archetypes transcend culture, race, and time. Thus, in Jung's view, the mental events experienced by every individual are determined not merely by personal history, but also by the collective history of the species. This history is biologically encoded in the collective unconscious, reaching back into the primordial mists of evolution. Jung made it a point to distinguish between the archetype-as-such and the archetypal images, motifs, and ideas to which the archetype gives rise. One cannot "see" the archetypes themselves, only their indirect manifestation in or as images, motifs, and ideas associated with or stemming from the archetypes. In his writings, Jung thought about archetypes in the following ways:

- We must constantly bear in mind that what we mean by "archetype" is in itself irrepresentable, but has effects which make visualizations of it possible, namely, the archetypal images and ideas. (CW 8, para. 417)
- The term "archetype" is often misunderstood as meaning a certain definite mythological image or motif. On the contrary, [it is] an inherited tendency [i.e., ability, potential] of the human mind to form representations of mythological motifs—representations that vary a

10 Stevens, 45–46.

11 Stevens, 40.

great deal without losing their basic pattern. This inherited tendency is instinctive, like the specific impulse of nest-building, migration, etc. in birds. One finds these *representations collectives* practically everywhere, characterized by the same or similar motifs. They cannot be assigned to any particular time or region or race. They are without known origin, and they can reproduce themselves even where transmission through migration must be ruled out. (CW 18, para. 523; emphasis in original)

- ... besides [the intellect] there is a thinking in primordial images, in symbols which are older than the historical man, which are inborn in him from the earliest times, and, eternally living, outlasting all generations, still make up the groundwork of the human psyche. (CW 8, para. 794)
- As the products of imagination are always in essence visual, their forms must, from the outset, have the character of images and moreover of typical images, which is why ... I call them "archetypes." (CW 11, para. 845)
- [Tribal] lore is concerned with archetypes that have been modified in a special way. ... Another well-known expression of the archetypes is myth and fairytale. (CW 9i, para. 5,6)

It is the manifold expressions of these archetypal images and symbols that make up the ARAS collection. The collection probes the universality and specificity or particularity of archetypal themes and provides a testament to the deep and abiding connections uniting the disparate factions of the human family.

Harry Prochaska, who served as the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco's ARAS curator from 1978–1992, defined *symbol amplification* as the elaboration of the historical and cultural matrices of a symbol in its variant forms so that one develops a larger sense of its multiple meanings. This process is different from subjective association. Association stems from one's personal biography projected onto the symbol. In the associative process, symbolic meaning

may be legitimately and absolutely personal, carrying a value that no one else shares nor needs to share. *Amplification,* however, leads to significant clues that lie in the cultural unconscious, for each of us is born into a culture as well as into a family. Amplification and association are parallel pathways to symbolic meaning.[12] Prochaska quotes Mircea Eliade who states that "The essential problem is to know what is revealed to us not by any particular version of a symbol, but by the whole of the symbolism."[13]

Circumambulation, "a walk around the image," is a term used to describe the process of coming to know a symbolic image by reflecting on it from different points of view. Circumambulation differs from free association in that it is circular, not linear. Where free association leads away from the original image, circumambulation stays close to it. Jung uses the term circumambulation in his commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower,*[14] where he defines it as a "psychological circulation" or "movement in a circle around oneself" so that all sides of the personality become involved (CW 1, para. 38). In the mandala, Jung saw a uniting symbol or an archetype of wholeness.

German physicist and Nobel laureate Wolfgang Pauli (1900–1958) offered a related description of the creative method of scientific discovery, when he talked about "continuously taking up an issue, thinking about the object, then putting it back down again, then gathering new empirical material, and continuing this, if necessary, for years. In this way, the subconscious is stimulated by the conscious, and only in this way, if at all, can something come of it."[15]

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12 Harry W. Prochaska, *Amplifications of Symbols* (Purveyors of Fine Prints & Fine Music, 1998), 78–79

13 Prochaska, 79; quoting Mircea Eliade, *The Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (Harper Torchbooks, 1958), 160.

14 Richard Wilhelm, *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life* (Arkana Penguin Books, 1984).

15 Ernst Peter Fischer, "Going Bravely into the Unexplored," Max Planck Research 1 (2006): 18.

Ami Ronnberg, in 1979, continued Jessie Fraser's work in the New York ARAS office on the classification of the archive's images and became curator in 1984. She describes how the interconnectedness of symbols often guides the imagination in the process of circumambulation: "Begin with a thread, follow a lead, look up similar ideas, and move intuitively around a symbol or a dream."[16]

16 Torben Gronning, "An Interview with ARAS Curator Ami Ronnberg," ARAS Newsletter, no. 1 (2006), available online.

Circumambulation by Bruce Parent

Understanding the term *circumambulation* could begin with its definition, from which we could elaborate and then locate examples in Jung's writing. This route is useful and will be explored. Yet because *circumambulation* is a term for a dynamic that resists the logic of sequential authority and narrative structure, this essay will be an experiment in illuminating the idea by using the process of circumambulation. It is an unusual way to proceed but can be helpful as an example of a method Jung deployed to engage symbolic material in his writing and in the practice of analysis.

I begin with an assumption: that once Jung realized the value of it, he took circumambulation as a core principle in his working methods because it is a way to think dimensionally. Edinger noted that Jung's thinking could be considered as "directed," "fantasy," or "cluster thinking." Edinger's pointing to these differences is helpful, but I want to emphasize that the "cluster" idea can mask the movement in Jung's third form of thinking. A circulatory, repetitive going round a symbolic image—with minute differences at each transit—often renders Jung's work difficult and dense. Yet precisely because he resists making one point, Jung holds several in suspension and circles round the image and through the material to illuminate its symbolic content.

Fractal image of circumambulation (© Fraxial M, 2012. fraxialmadness3.devianttart.com)

Circumambulation is a way to move our point of view over the material; it is a cycling that creates viewpoints that augment a one-point perspective. Ironically in this, Jung was working like Braque or Picasso, like an analytic cubist. The image is built of the accumulated views that accrue from circling around an image. These views are then woven together into an imaginative dynamic image. A cubist still-life shimmers in the illogical vibration of multiple views just as symbolic material shimmers in a numinous multiplicity in Jung's work. Circumambulation was a discovery to Jung. His own natural process of transit psychic interiority was an experience of being lost until he realized it was meaningful. It led him to an intimation of an unseen sacred center. The process required trust: cycling in paradox and unknowing is neither fast, easy, nor a familiar experience of progress. It was a key realization.

Jung's journey into the depths, recorded in his Black Books, is a record of Jung finding his way into a labyrinth of elliptical paths and encounters via active imaginations. It is a gift that these records are available to us. Likewise, Jung's *Collected Works* are a storehouse of material; and it was a gift from Thornton Ladd to ARAS to create the active indexing—Concordance—of *The Collected Works,* which gives ready access to Jung's invaluable contributions. So here is a start on *circumambulation:*

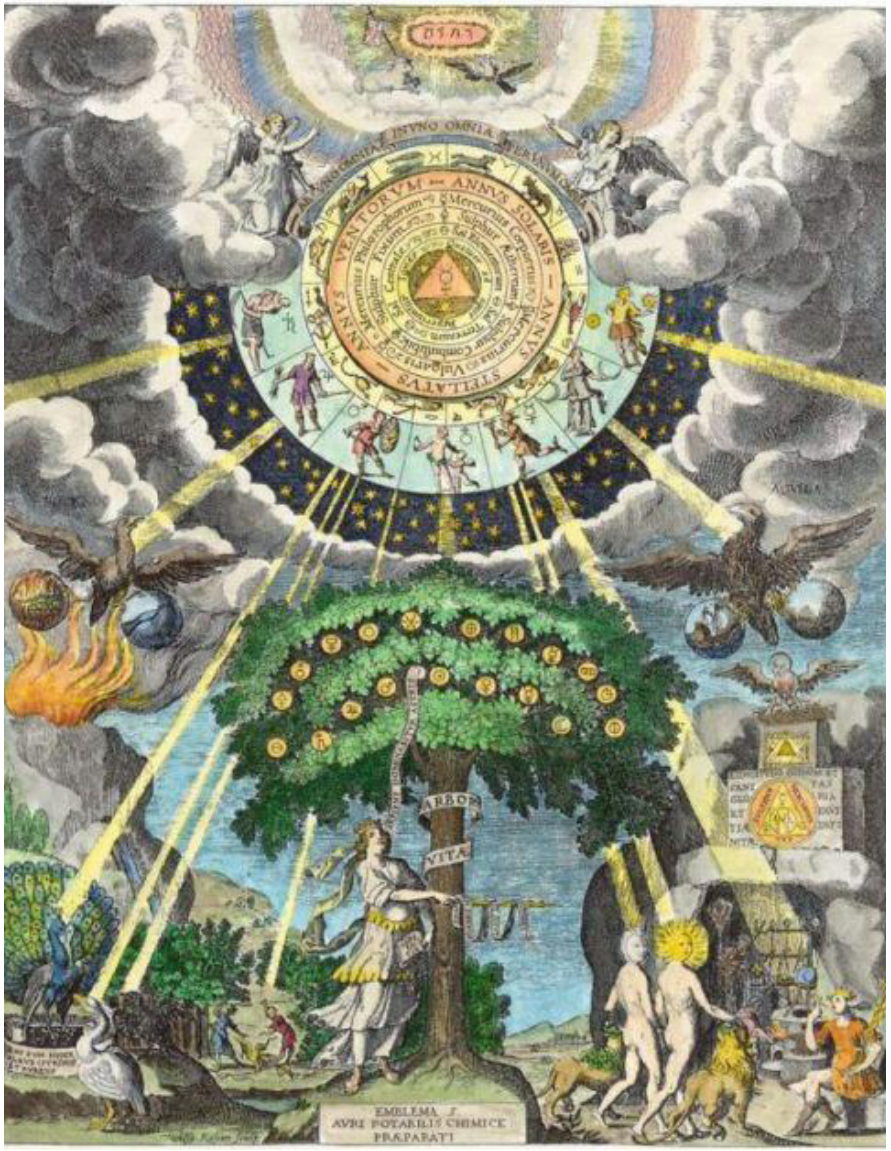
> The way to the goal seems chaotic and interminable at first, and only gradually do the signs increase that it is leading anywhere. The way is not straight but appears to go round in circles. More accurate knowledge has proved it to go in spirals. ... We might draw a parallel between such spiral courses and the processes of growth in plants; in fact the plant motif (tree, flower, etc.) frequently recurs in these dreams and fantasies and is also spontaneously drawn or painted. In alchemy the tree is the symbol of Hermetic philosophy."[17]

17 Jung, see Concordance: "Goal seems Chaotic ..."

If we bear in mind that Jung's reports of his critical insight about the circumambulation of a center came with a humble spontaneous drawing of a circle that he recognized as a mandala, in 1916, we can appreciate the understatement of his confession: "the way to the goal seems chaotic and interminable at first ..." Jung's "at first" was years long and came in the depths of a psychological trial.

Circumambulation as cyclical movement is as simple and magical as a circle. The circle is a pure form whether as a child's earliest drawing or as a Zen brush drawing. It is symbolic, a link to an unknowable quality expressed as both image and movement. One simple drawing gave Jung a meaningful overview of what was underway in his inner life as a process and a goal. The paradox is embedded in gesture and image: it takes an instant and a lifetime. As an image of circumambulation, the circle in two dimensions is referencing a multitude of dimensions. Its magic is implied: endlessly cyclical, yet each transit unique. It expresses time that is neither linear, logical, nor chronological. It requires intention but is not directed thinking. It is paradox as process.

Jung's 1916 image is a two-dimensional image of a mandala; but mandalas can be multidimensional. A mandala in one dimension is a point; in two dimensions, it is a circle; in three a sphere. Each variation may represent a process that is a



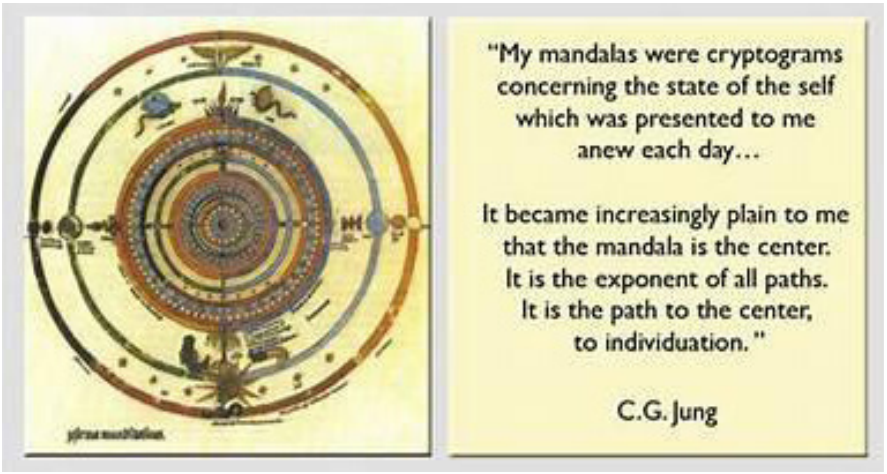
The alchemical tree, standing under the influences of the heavens. 17th century engraving. Emblem 5 ("Auri potabilis chimice preparati") from *Microcosmus Hypochondriacus* by Malachias Geiger, engraving, Munich, Germany. Colored version by Adam Mclean, 2001.

variation on cycling: one is tight, bound, and sudden as an epiphany—we get the point; circling repeatedly over ground eventually may lead to a realization; or it can spin out of plane and become a three-dimensional form—a sphere, such as in the Tibetan meditation practice of "building" a temple from two-dimensional plans in an imaginative practice.[18]

A pearl would be example of a three-dimensional natural mandala. Constructive repetitive layers "grow" a pearl. Seen as lines, the movements of these layers mimic the lines of a 16th-century astrolabe, or Bohr's model of the atom. It has symbolic value in that a multilayered form of countless circulations and accretions—initiated by an irritant — becomes a center. Circumambulations are meaningful movements in matter or when transits are immaterial or implied or abstract, as in dance or as a processional or meditative and imaginal movement. In each case the focus is on circulating a point of view.

In analytic practice this core process may be seen as an autonomous dynamic with a tempo that is reflected in a recurring image, symptom, or theme. Jung noting that circumambulation is like the growth rings of a tree is useful to bear in mind when considering the process and goal of individuation, healing, and transformation. Epiphany in a

"Enso" by Torei Enji, sumi ink on paper, middle to late 18th century, Japan. ARAS 7Nm.032



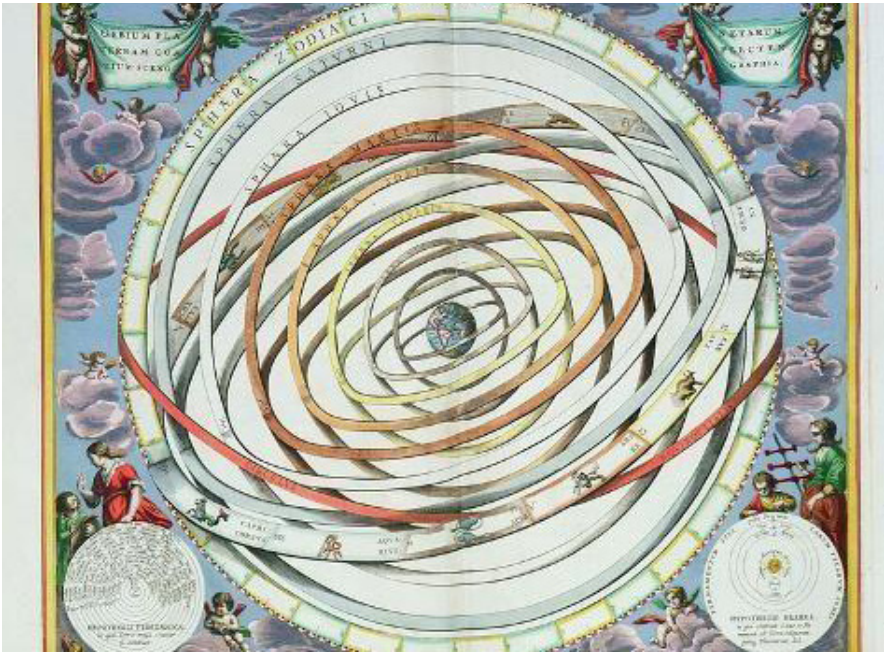
Mandala by Carl Gustav Jung, painting, 1916. ARAS 5Za.001. Combination of the image and quotation from https://carljungdepthpsychologysite.blog/2020/02/22/mandalas-5/

18 "The Mandala in Tibetan Buddhism," Martin Brauen, Rubin Museum, 2009.

process of circumambulation may be sudden—or a slowly unfolding meaning of symptoms, dreams, and symbols; and it may take place at the pace of a walk as one circles the wound or irritant or what is found to be numinous. Artists and their processes have parallels to the process of circumambulation.

In trying to find the goal in the chaotic and interminable, we repeat our steps and leave a trail to mark our path and stay oriented. Jung made images and notes in his journal to keep oriented. The sculptor Auguste Rodin used a style of notation in building form as he circled his sculptural works, adding "notes" of small bits of clay to suggest what needed to be moved, developed, or added. The parallel to this approach, in Jung's work, may be seen in his cue: "stick to the image."

Like Rodin's circling his sculptures and making "notes," the repetition is how the work develops. Likewise, we "stick to an image" and circle it as we would with a symbol or dream or symptom in order to see it more fully and dimensionally. Some of Rodin's work was cast with these notations still visible. It is a way to see the work in progress. It was not "complete" when cast as much as it was in a process of becoming. This value of the incomplete "sketch" links us to Jung's recognition that neither perfection nor completion was the "goal." The process of psychological development as individuation or consciousness was similarly not about a goal of completion. Wholeness was a direction, not a destination.



Scenography of the Planetary Orbits Encompassing the Earth, from the Celestial Atlas (*Harmonia Macrocosmica*) by Andreas Cellarius, 1660, Netherlands. ©The Barry Lawrence Ruderman Map Collection, Stanford University Libraries.

Completeness, like "knowing" the fullness of a symbol, is an exquisite impossibility. Telos pulls movement into circumambulation.

Rodin and Jung shared in a Romantic ethos. Process as goal was more important than what is "finished" or perfect. For Jung, wholeness was a process; and for Rodin, form was process. The point for both was consistent: the goal was the process. Circumambulation expresses this ethos. A symbol in Jung's lexicon was alive when not exhausted of meaning and numinous energy. If a symbol was "known," that is, no longer capable of generative meaning—it was dead. As a living image the symbol is a fountain flowing without end. The action of working with and understanding an image or following an intuition or exploring a deep theme was not to be completed—but enjoined. The method of enjoining it was a circumambulation.

Jung's insight about the mandala was a realization that his transit and confrontation with the unconscious was reflected back in the simple image of a circle. He realized it was an archetypal image of a process of cycling around an unseen yet sacred center, and the stress here is that it was a process of cycling. The consequences of this insight echoed throughout Jung's work:

> Time and again the alchemists reiterate the *opus* proceeds from the one and leads back to the one, that it is a sort of circle like a dragon biting its own tail. For this reason the *opus* was often called *circulare* (circular) or else *rota* (the wheel). Mercurius stands at the beginning and at the end of the work: he is the *prima materia,* the *caput corvi,* the *nigredo:* as dragon he devours himself and as dragon he dies, to rise again as the *lapis* ... (CW 12, para. 404).

Jung's methods for exploring and expanding his relationship to his inner experience marked how he engaged images, dreams, and themes. An "intimation" of a center was a way to and an experience of Self. It was also an analogous process for understanding symbolic images as links to unknowns that were not exhausted by a process of finding new levels of meaning

by circumambulating the images. Jung defined a *symbol* as a link between a conscious point of view and a meaning that is transcendent to that point of view. Jung experienced that as a movement to engage an unknown—even when it was chaotic it was a process in which meaning was realized. Circumambulation is the cycling. As image it is the uroboros. Repetition returns the cycling each time to a variation on the themes in dreams, symptoms, or in the persistence of a story or compulsion, exhausting and at times terrible. To meet what is difficult to bear—time and again—yields meaning.

Circumambulation has a source of energy for the constant revolutions around that which is deeply attractive. Freud noted that there is "that which makes demands upon the mind for work." Circumambulation is a form of such work, fueled from a depth or an unseen center that is not limited to analytic practice. Complex examples of it may be seen as mainsprings in Jung's work in *Aion* (CW 9ii) and *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (CW 14).[19] Neither work is laid out as in a legal brief or scientific report; nor are they polemics or philosophy. They do not argue; they propose and they circle—a symbolic form, an image, a theme, a conundrum. These works are complex proposals to look and look again as Jung cycles over

Uroboros, from the alchemical manuscript *Parisinus graecus,* 1478. © Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France.

19 I think that the reference to "the secret" in the first Lambspringk picture implies that a crucial part of the secret is the nature of the opposites, as this is a picture of the opposites. The whole of *Aion* is a kind of circumambulation of "the secret" Lambspringk intended to convey through his picture of the two opposed fishes.

reflections upon themes, images, intuitions, existential problems, numinous relationships, and rich synchronicities. Then he returns and repeats so the embedded becomes manifest in a process of circling an unknown.

At Eranos Jung had the opportunity to work with brilliant soulful scholars engaged in comparative studies in myths and religion. The fields of study and the approaches were new, and Jung's contribution was also new. He was forging a psychological view that relied on being intuitive, aesthetically adept, empirical, and poetic. Jung was deeply interested in translating the symbolic images and myths into psychological language. The methods he drew upon to engage the images and the mythological material reflected his trust that both could be meaningfully translated through a process that honored the scholastic values of research and amplification and then featured circumambulation.

It can be a challenge to find a cogent, well-argued thesis and proof in Jung's work. Jung was neither a trained nor traditional scholar. It may be nearer to say that Jung valued cycling an image or a topic rather than a practice of defining, theorizing, positing, or proving. His way meant to honor the psychological fact that the unknown—as symbolic or numinous forms—is not sufficiently grasped by logic or a single-point perspective. The *unknown* or *unconscious* are terms for living mysteries. Jung saw symbols as links to what was unknown. The sacred or numinous quality of this relativized the ego. It was a living mystery, not to be fully known, exhausted, or harvested by logical inquiry. With circumambulation Jung countered Freud's civilizing maxim: "where Id was ego shall be." A poetic, elliptical process that moves ego to explore and express the complexity, contradictions, tensions, and richness of psychic material humbles ego.

If we accept Jung's thesis that typological functions represent ways to understand how we tend to perceive, process, and express life, then the process of circumambulation may be nested in

the realms Jung thought were unconscious, feminine, and illogical functions. Circumambulation is not the logic of thinking or judgment, but it is a way to perceive and understand. Jung's methods often deploy this process and movement. Jung's grasp of alchemy as a system of symbols is replete with realizing the images are about processes—specifically symbolic expressions of the processes of psychic life. A core process was transformation of matter, which included the process of movement and circumambulation. A psychological and spiritual crisis drew Jung deep into the realization that circularity was the way to a port in the storm.

Circumambulation was simple in Jung's early drawing. It was a humble circle, a mandala, and a refrain; it was also an image of the alchemical snake:

The dragon symbolized the visionary experience of the alchemist as he works in his laboratory and "theorizes."

> The dragon in itself is a *monstrum*—a symbol combining the chthonic principle of the serpent and the aerial principle of the bird ... (variant of Mercurius ... the sovereign psychopomp ... a world creating spirit concealed or imprisoned in matter) ... The dragon is probably the oldest pictorial symbol in alchemy of which we have documentary evidence. It appears as ... the tail eater, in the *Codex Marcianus* which dates from the 10th or 11th century, together with the legend: of (the One, the All). (CW 12, para. 404)

Uroboros (*Marcus Graecus* MS 299) illustration with the words ἓν τὸ πᾶν ("The All is One") from *Codex Marcianus,* 10-11th century, Venice, Italy. © Biblioteca Marciana, Venice, Italy.[20]

20 Wikimedia Foundation, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chrysopoea_of_Cleopatra_1.png.

So let us return to where we began. Circumambulate has several definitions.
In Merriam Webster:

> **Circumambulate:** to circle on foot, especially ritualistically. It is the modest act of taking a walk, or it is "beating around a bush."

In the Oxford English Dictionary:

> **Circumambulate** v. 1656. cf. late L. (circumambulare.) To walk round about. Also intr. Fif. To beat about the bush. 1837.

The walk is usually around a sacred object or numinous ground. It is a humble, numinous, and yet simple action to engage what is sacred. Whether it is a physical, metaphorical, or spiritual walk around what is unknown, it is a way to understand something through a relation with the object of contemplation. It is a way to understand that the "walking" matters: circumambulation opens to understanding. Jung's work is a method to engage dreams, symbolic images, symptoms, and intuitions. It is a "walk" that weaves reflections into a matter of psychic fact.

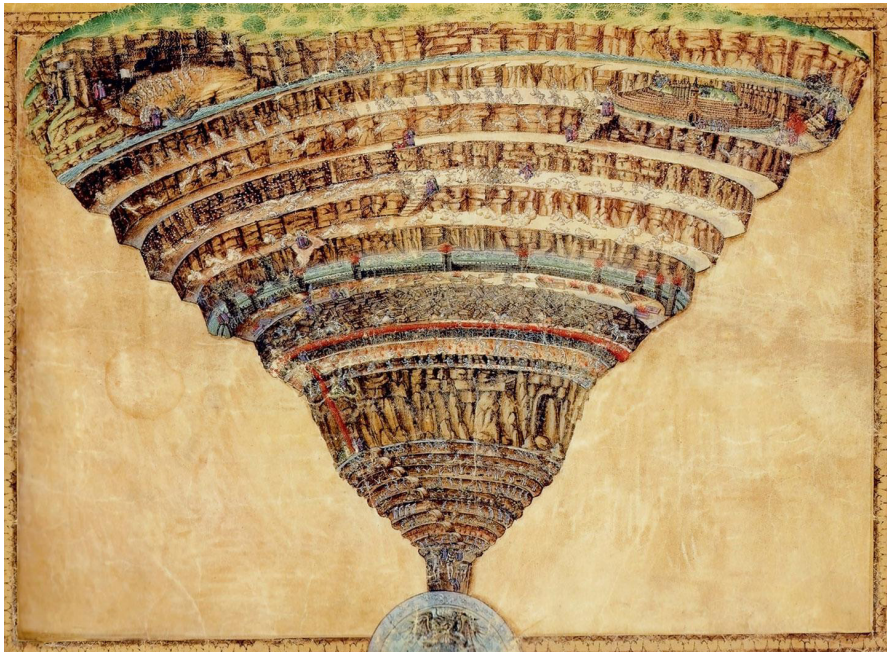
> Since the number of possibilities is limited, one soon comes to a frontier, or rather to frontiers which recede behind one another presumably up to the point of death. The experience of these frontiers gradually brings the conviction that what is experienced is an endless approximation. The goal of this approximation seems to be anticipated by archetypal symbols, which represent something like the circumambulation of a centre. With increasing approximation to the centre there is a corresponding depotentiation of the ego in favour of the influence of the "empty" centre, which is certainly not identical with the archetype but is the thing the archetype points to. As the Chinese would say, the archetype is only the name of Tao, not Tao itself."... (JL /O JUNG to Pastor Walter Bennett [Concordance citation])

The process that is sacred to many peoples and for many centuries is an archetypal process that has many variations on a central theme: ambulating around an image, structure, sculpture, object, or place—especially in a clockwise direction—creates a form of meaning via a process of imagining and intuiting form. In the East there are two-dimensional mandalas that function as floorplans for temples that are to be erected in the mind by cycling around the plan in imaginative mediation. The complexity of these plans and the results are in a paradox with its simplicity.

Turning to the "right" or to the "left" matter; the latter leads to descents such as into Dante's Inferno, whereas the former leads to ascending forms such as Paradiso, temples, wholeness, or enlightenment. The complexities of the circumambulation are inherent in the paradox and the practice, so this symbolic action provided Jung with a symbolic act to express the process of individuation—a cycling around the intimation of a "center" that is expressed by the action and the complexities of the cycling. It also provided an image for a method that engaged and elaborated images, dreams, active imaginations, and even large complex works that was meaningful and soulful but did not rely upon logical discourse or the skills of rational reasoning.

Sometimes, it is not easy to tell the difference given the "chaos" that marks the territory. Sometimes it is key to descend into

Pilgrim circumambulation, Labrang Monastery, Xiahe Tibet. © David Sanger. www.davidsanger.com.



Painting by Sandro Botticelli illustrating "Inferno" in Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* 1481, Italy. Apostolic library, Vatican.

the realm of depression and the blues to find what was lost, or what is true but unspoken and unlived. The idea of "direction" in walking may have to do with the attitude of the pilgrim. It is important that there be a "right" attitude, marked by an open empirical humility. Arrogance and egoisms and darker impulses are dangerous companions and precursors to being misled into a wrong turning of mind and heart. For Jung the defining quality was embedded in the question of whether the movement served consciousness—or not.

> The Eastern and more particularly the lamaistic mandala usually contains a square ground-plan of the stupa (fig. 043). We can see from mandalas constructed in solid form that the stupa is meant to be a building. In these the figure of the square gives the idea of a house or temple, or of an inner walled-in space. According to ritual, stupas must always be circumambulated to the right, because a leftward movement is evil. The left, the "sinister" side, is the unconscious side. Therefore a leftward movement is equivalent to a movement in the direction of the unconscious, whereas a movement to the right is "correct" and aims at consciousness. (CW 12, ¶166)

Circumambulation at last is also a pattern present in many forms of life from patterns of movement such as wind, water, or globe to the patterns seen in the inorganic to the organic—it is constant such as Fibonacci's spiral–it is an archetype. When viewed through the lens of typology what occurs in circumambulation may be located as sense, feeling and intuitive functions. The perception and expressions are not led by a thinking so much as guided by aesthetics and intuition rather than argument. A "right" choice elicits a resonance of understanding—Jung's "aha." It is an empirical psychic fact. not a proven point. It is as if what we see in circumambulation relies on a creative humility and movement that are unconsciously guided as it transits within and around images and symbols.

Jung knew the relative values of closely defining and understanding the etymology of words, and he knew the values of comparative research to illuminate and amplify the meaning of a

word or image as it appeared in a wide variety of forms across time and culture. To these Jung added the value of making and rendering the images as best as possible as a means to expand upon their meaning. The simplicity of a cycling adds another element to the relationship to images and dreams or active imaginations. It is an admission of and a move into unknowing. The action moves and relativizes ego in a circumambulation of what is sacred. What is to be realized by being in a "right" attitude to what is "sacred" arises from the two walking together.

Jung's subsequent moves to deeply explore and expand on his relation to his inner experience are parallel processes to how he engaged images, dreams, and themes. In this way the circumambulation is within a labyrinthine mind. *Inside* and *outside* are relational terms and can help us understand where our point of view , or where an analysand's point of view is when engaged with something numinous, symbolic, sacred. It helps navigate in the seas of a living symbol, a deeply valuable "source" to inspire meaning that is not exhausted. It is path turning upon itself as a process of engaging what cannot be fully known.

The Chartres labyrinth, Chartres Cathedral, France. © Sylvain Sonnet/Corbis.[21]

21 "Mary and the Chartres Labyrinth,"—Pray with Jill At Chartres, praywithjillatchartres.com.

Mythopoeisis: Images in Action

by Betty Sue Flowers

Mythopoeia or, more commonly, *mythopoeisis,* literally means "myth-making." Novelists like Tolkien, poets like Blake and T. S. Eliot, songwriters like Bob Dylan, and filmmakers like George Lucas and Stanley Kubrick are all engaged in creating stories, poems, songs, and films that rely on ancient myths and mythological motifs for their imaginative power. The scholars of myths are careful to separate one culture's myths from another's; the users of myths take common patterns or archetypes found in myths and create new stories based on them.

This chapter explores two forms of mythopoeisis: the hero's journey and the descent of initiation. In general, the hero's journey traces the development of the ego, of agency in the world. Most of the examples and images associated with it are of males leaving home, having adventures and undergoing trials, and returning with something to give to the community.

The myth of initiation appears to predate the hero's myth, reaching back to a time when the Great Goddess was the archetypal image that united communities, creating meaning from the eternal round of birth and death, the waxing and waning of the moon, the planting and harvesting of the food of life, and the disappearance of life into winter's fallow ground, to appear again, like Venus in the morning sky.

Star Wars poster from the book *Star Wars: The Magic of Myth,* by Mary Henderson.

Heracles fighting Hydra (one of the twelve labors); image from *Digital Exhibits: Ancient Art 203*, by Danielle Bennett.

The heroine's journey. Katniss Everdeen shooting an arrow. Film still from *The Hunger Games* (2012).



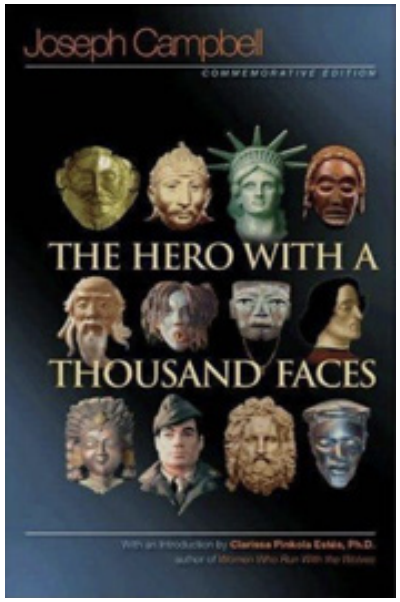
Great Goddess images (from left)
1 - Egyptian priestess/goddess figurine, clay with pigment, ca. 3,650–3,300 BCE, Predynastic period, Egypt. Brooklyn Museum.
2- Chang'e (Heng'e), Chinese moon goddess. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, made during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981.4.2.
3 - Selene, Greek Goddess of the Moon, ARAS: 3Ja.018; color image from www.thoi.com. Attic vase, kylix, red-figure, 500–475 BCE, Vulci, Greece.

Iacchus leads a procession of initiates into the Mysteries. The Ninnion Tablet, 370 BCE, red clay.

Myth-Making and the Hero's Journey

The mythologist Joseph Campbell started his career by working on a dissertation exploring the Arthurian legend. But when he began to read widely, he discovered that stories from many cultures followed the same basic pattern, which he called "the hero's journey." Ignoring differences while finding similarities is more of a creative than a scholarly endeavor, so when he was not allowed to "follow his bliss," as he would put it, he dropped out of graduate school and eventually published the best-selling *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Scholars continue to criticize Campbell's Jung-influenced generic thinking; creators continue to use it.

One reason creators use the hero's journey as a model for storytelling is that audiences respond to it at a deeply emotional level. To be called to an adventure, to accept the call or not, to have a wise teacher or helper, to face trials, to have a big trial, then, when you think you've finally escaped and are in the clear, to face yet another trial; and then to understand what you've gained at the end and what gift or legacy you have left—almost everyone has experienced some version of this journey.



Book cover for *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell.

Arthur drawing the sword (Excalibur) from the stone. Manuscript image, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Yoda (wise teacher) and Luke (hero/protagonist) from the film *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

Using the Hero's Journey Mythopoetically—Research and a Personal Account

In 2023, an article in the *APA Journal of Personality and Social Psychology (APA JPSP)* reported that "eight studies reveal that the Hero's Journey predicts and can causally increase people's experience of meaning in life."[22] For purposes of these studies the hero's journey was distilled from Campbell's seventeen steps into seven key elements from which a "Hero's Journey Scale" was created. This tool was then used to assess "the perceived presence of the hero's journey narrative in people's life stories." A "re-storying intervention" was also developed to lead people to see the events of their lives as a hero's journey. "This intervention causally increases meaning in life (Study 5) by prompting people to reflect on important elements of their lives and connecting them into a coherent and compelling narrative (Study 6)." The ten authors concluded that the studies "provide initial evidence that enduring cultural narratives like the hero's journey both reflect meaningful lives and can help to create them."

As a futurist working with scenarios in corporations, governments, and nonprofits, I'm intensely aware of the power of stories because the future is always and only a story. Among other uses, a set of two to four equally plausible stories of the future can serve to loosen the grip of the official story of the future that leaders hold in their heads, which is often simply an extrapolation of events in the past. Powerful leaders tell a story of the future that transforms the present—Moses saw the promised land; Martin Luther King said, "I have a dream."

Stories of the future can vary—but so can stories of the past, even though it's common for individuals to treat their stories as fixed. Unexpected events can happen in stories of the future whereas the past is already populated with events. This fixed

The power of stories. *Scheherazade and the Sultan* by Iranian painter, Sani al Mulk c. 1849–1856.

Martin Luther King Jr. Image source: *Duluth News Tribune*/Wiki Commons.

22 Benjamin A Rogers, et al., "Seeing Your Life Story as a Hero's Journey Increases Meaning in Life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 125, no. 4 (2023): 772.

set of past events leads many people to tell the stories of their past and present lives in the same familiar way, following a pattern set by their families or their culture. The assumption is that you can be free in telling stories about the future; but if you want to be truthful, the story of the past is already set.

Although this assumption about the fixed nature of the past is accurate in terms of the facts, it is not accurate when it comes to the understanding of these facts—the narrative in which the facts are embedded. In workshops, I often lead an exercise in which I divide the room into groups of two and ask each of them to use actual events from their lives to tell their partner the stories of their lives as a victim story and then tell the stories of their lives as a hero story. The discussion that follows is always intensely interesting because the same facts can form two very different narratives. Almost everyone finds it easier to tell a story within one narrative over another.

Once during an executive seminar at the Aspen Institute, I led this exercise before lunch for a group of executives (all men) and their wives. No one had trouble telling a short version of their lives as a story—that seems natural to most people. But when I asked what story, hero or victim, seemed easiest to tell, the answers reflected a stark division between male and female. Every one of the executives felt more comfortable telling the hero story, and a couple of them even refused to engage in the exercise of telling the victim story. All the wives felt more comfortable telling the victim story. This result was so shocking to participants that several of the couples skipped lunch to go walking together to discuss the implications of what they had heard.

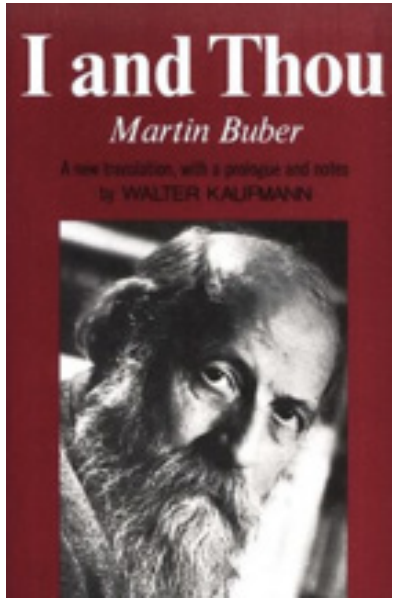
If we want to be truthful, we are not free to change the facts of the past. But we are free to shape the narrative. The narrative we tell about reality shapes our experience and contributes to our sense of meaning.

Mythopoeisis and the Hero's Journey—Working with Images in Action

Within the hero's journey narrative, symbolic images can deepen meaning and insight at every step. In the following suggested exercises, I use the *APA JPSP* seven-part distillation of Campbell's elements of the hero's journey to show how images can be used in action—the movement through time of narrative and life.

Working with the stories of our lives as a hero's journey is an act of the imagination, not of belief. We don't have to believe we are heroes to act as if we are following a hero's path. Belief that we are special heroes may actually prove harmful because we are sure to disappoint ourselves. From this perspective, everyone's narrative can be told as a hero's journey.

The key practice is first to choose an image for the stage of the journey and then to establish a relationship with the image. The theologian Martin Buber distinguishes between two types of relationships: "I-It" and "I-Thou." In an I-It relationship, the other exists as an object; in an I-Thou relationship, the other exists as an equal subject. Since an image is not a living subject, treating it as such requires an act of imagination akin to what children do when they endow a favorite doll or stuffed animal with subjectivity. An I-Thou relation with an image means you don't look at it as a picture but let it speak to you as part of yourself. What this dialogue with the image produces is not the "meaning" of the image, as might be found in an academic exposition or critique, but a sense of meaningfulness in a relationship with the image.



Book cover for *I And Thou* by Martin Buber.

Stages of the Hero's Journey—Seven Exercises

1. PROTAGONIST

The initial step in this imaginative journey is to accept the role of protagonist—the hero of the story. For those who habitually think of themselves as "ordinary," or as victims of circumstances beyond their control, this assumption of agency is a difficult step to take. Reality

is much darker, they feel, and it's smarter to be pessimistic, cynical, or at least skeptical. Young people, especially, tend to rank the author of a positive opinion as less intelligent than the author of a negative opinion—even if that negative opinion is an exact copy of the positive opinion, slightly edited to produce a negative judgment. To make up an example: the author of "the blue in this painting is ugly" is judged to be more intelligent than the author of "the blue in this painting is beautiful."

In describing the following exercises, I shall use the word hero as a deliberate provocation to practice thinking in those terms, even if thinking of oneself as a hero seems strangely naïve or inflated. The image selected for this stage need not be a knight in shining armor or a sword or any symbol of the usual hero's adventure. It can be anything that represents the self—because anything, no matter how lowly, can assume symbolic agency.

I was once given a tiny little Guatemalan doll who was known as *mujeres quitapenas,* the woman who takes away cares, which she will do if you put her under your pillow while you sleep. In science, we call the potential power of anything "the placebo effect."

Mujeres quitapenas from Guatemala.

2. SHIFT

For this element of the hero's journey, the academic researchers have moved away from the original "call to

adventure" to the idea of "shift," meaning a change in setting or life circumstances and an attitude of openness to new experiences. Answering the question "What calls you to change?" or "What represents the change you want to make?" can lead to the selection of an image for "shift" that evokes a sense of relatedness to the unknown—connected to you but outside of who you are now. An image of the sun, for example, may call you to express more of the outgoing light and warmth in yourself than you might normally do. Or it may feel like a warmth and light that you want to move toward. It's as if something is meant for you that you don't have yet. Or, rather than a call you respond to, the image might represent something that plunged you into a different world, like the loss of a loved one or an illness or a positive experience like falling in love.

Jung's drawing from *The Red Book* depicting a shift of consciousness or spark.

Like the difference between a sign and a symbol, an image that "represents" this shift in this hero's journey does not necessarily look like or depict the shift but appeals to the intuition—it feels as if it's connected in some way. Even if you don't know how it's connected, you trust your knowing that it is connected.

3. QUEST

Sometimes you know what the quest is. But even if you do, selecting an image for this aspect of the journey means not so much choosing a representation of the end goal as dwelling on an image of what this journey means on the inside. To take a simple example: if you are on a quest for sobriety, an empty glass might represent an external aspect of the journey. It's a kind of sign. But the inner feeling of what that quest involves might be evoked by an image of a vast ocean under a cloudy sky with menacing waves—or a butterfly—or a bridge. In that case, the image becomes a symbol.

The point of a quest is connecting to a purpose, even if you have no idea how to answer a question like, "What is your purpose?" The image of the quest might be a forest thick with

trees, without a path. Even if you don't know what the path is, you can always take the next step, oriented in response to a sense of knowing with an object of that knowing. As a hero, you are called to adventure, to take the next step, however small or tentative, without necessarily knowing what dragons will confront you along the way.

4. ALLIES

I once told a literature class that in civilization's progress toward a scientific approach to the world, which was a good thing, we had left some of the ancient ways of experiencing the world behind. In many cases, our primal ancestors felt sacred spirits all around and felt these spirits could talk with them and guide them.

"You don't have to believe this to act as if it were true," I said. Then I asked the students to perform an "as if" exercise—ask a question you deeply care about, and then go outside the classroom and walk around campus, expecting the universe to answer the question. Come back in ten minutes to report.

One student asked if her boyfriend really loved her. She sat down under a tree, but when ten minutes had passed, she had received no answer. When she got up, she discovered she had been sitting on a piece of paper that was shaped like a heart. Another student asked if it was possible for him to get an architecture degree while also having a family. He walked over

Yellow brick road in the movie *The Wizard of Oz.*
Image from Everett Collection/Rex feature

to the architecture building and saw two children playing in the courtyard. A third student loved literature but, in order to please her parents, was earning a degree in accounting. She opened the door of the classroom to go on her walk and came right back in and sat down. When she had opened the door, she had seen a glass case across the hall that contained a bust of Shakespeare—something she had never noticed before. She became a bookkeeper for a theater company. A fourth student thought the assignment was ridiculous and simply sat on a bench outside the classroom to wait for the ten minutes to pass. He idly picked up an engineering textbook that had been left on the bench beside him and opened it at random to a chapter on plumbing. He said he laughed because this synchronicity had pointed to his "shitty" attitude about the assignment.

I tell this story about the four students to point out there is no one way to recognize the allies as they show up. Like the subject-subject relationship with an archetypal image, the recognition of an ally has to do with a mindset. The girl student who saw the heart was looking for a sign of love—someone else may not have seen a heart shape in a mere scrap of paper; the student who saw the children outside the architecture building interpreted them as an answer to his question; the student who encountered the bust of Shakespeare noticed something she had not noticed before

Snow White and her allies from the Disney film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,* 1937.

because she was expecting to see something meaningful and realized in response that she could incorporate her love of literature into her life as an accountant; the student who opened the engineering book at random was in the mindset of the "as if" assignment, even in resisting it, and opened to his own humorous judgment on himself.

"I'm alone in this world" may seem like a realistic observation, but the hero's journey always involves an ally, in one form or another—a Merlin, a fairy godmother, seven dwarves, Obi-Wan Kenobi. ... But the ally has to be recognized. Fairy stories that illustrate the importance of mindset often involve three brothers, with the younger one being called something like "Dumb Hans" or "Stupid Jack." The older brothers are worldly wise, cynical, cool. When their father, the king, sends them on a quest and they come across an old woman in the road, the older brothers say, "Get out of my way, old woman, we're on a quest" and then keep going on the path. The "stupid" brother says, "Can I help you?" and engages with her. Of course, she always has the key to the castle or knows the magic word or gives a helpful warning.

Labyrinth with Theseus and Ariadne, British Museum.

5. CHALLENGE

There are always, always challenges. Without challenges, there's no story. The call to adventure that begins the hero's journey is the call to set out on a "road of trials." The poet W.

B. Yeats goes further and says we are called to do "the hardest things among those not impossible."

The hero might ask, "Why am I called to do a hard thing?" Because without the challenge of the journey, he won't discover who he is. The nature of adventure is to realize the hero within, who often starts out as a poor, abandoned orphan and discovers he is the son of a king or the rightful partner of a prince.

Dwelling on an image of the challenge can produce the surprising result of an identification with it—as if that were the very challenge you had chosen for yourself. This identification is not the relatedness produced by the subject-subject interaction with the protagonist image. But it has within it the possibility of a recognition of one's power—as if you had chosen the hardest antagonist to wrestle with.

6. TRANSFORMATION

To undertake the hero's journey is not to be a victim of the dragon but to choose to fight the dragon—even if you seem to be losing. On this journey, the only way to fail the challenge is not to engage with it. That's because the goal is not success but transformation. As the poet G. M. Hopkins puts it when he talks about self-making: "What I do is me: for that I came."

Aphrodite coming out of the bath rejuvenated. Greek marble relief, ca. 460–450 BCE, Museo Nazionalle delle Terme, Rome.

7. LEGACY

Almost everyone wants to make the world at least a little better—or sing their song—or feel they've left something for their children or grandchildren. Suicidal thoughts often come as a result of not believing this legacy is possible. The narrative in this case is a story of judgment or victimhood: "I'm worthless" or "The world would be better off if I were dead," or "No one appreciates what I have to give." This is a story of the little that an individual life means.

But everyone has potential access to telling the story of their lives as a hero's journey, even if the dragon triumphs every time you wrestle with it. Campbell once said that we weren't looking for the meaning of life but for the experience of "the rapture of being alive." On this hero's journey, engaging with archetypal symbols deepens the experience of the meaningfulness of whatever we encounter along the way.

Mythopoeisis and the Initiatory Journey into the Underworld[23]

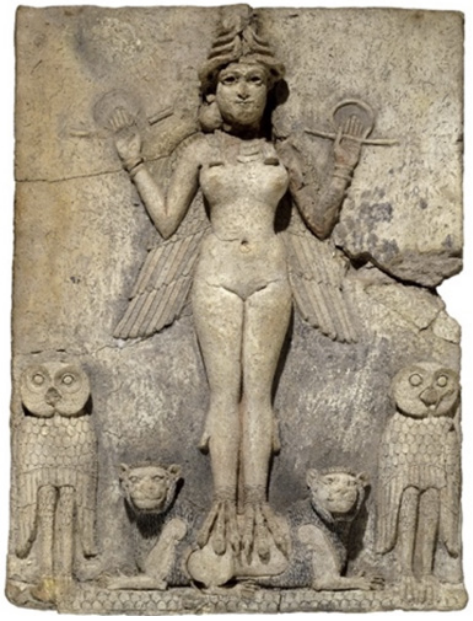
Initiation comes in two general forms: the rituals through which youths are introduced into adult society; and the solitary journey into the underworld that takes us out of

Casper D. Friedrich's painting *Woman Before the Rising Sun,* 1818-20, Museum Folkwang, Germany.

23 See Joseph L. Henderson, *Thresholds of Initiation* (Wesleyan University Press, 1967); and Sylvia Brinton Perera, *Descent to the Goddess: A Way of Initiation for Women* (Inner City Books, 1981), among others, for explorations of initiation.

society into the deepest parts of the soul. In primal cultures throughout the world, young people do not choose to undergo the ritual of youth into adulthood—the entire age cohort must participate, sometimes very publicly. But the solitary journey of self-analysis and understanding is a chosen path, not an imposed one.

One of the earliest myths of initiation comes to us from ancient Sumer, where the great goddess Inanna heard a "call from below" that she responded to by leaving behind her earthly throne and descending into the underworld. The tales of Inanna, which includes this story, are significant in part because they illustrate differences between the hero's journey and the initiatory journey into the underworld. Inanna's heroic adventures in founding her city, Sumer, are remarkably cinematic—action-packed, with chase scenes, humor, and narrow escapes. Inanna steals the attributes needed to build a city by drinking her father under the table and sailing off with these attributes, accompanied by her best friend. Together they fight off the giants, sea-monsters, and other creatures her father sends after them and finally reach the site of Sumer, which Inanna then establishes. In this case, the hero not only returns to the city with a gift, as in the archetypal hero myth, but also actually establishes the city itself as her legacy.



Inanna/Ereshkigal surrounded by two lions and two owls.

The hero's journey is dangerous and sometimes even fatal. But even so, there is a sense of triumph in the end. The sense of agency that comes through identifying with a hero story is empowering.

Years pass between Inanna's hero's journey and her descent into the underworld. The two journeys are quite different, so it is not surprising that the stories of initiation often happen to older, more mature protagonists. Initiation often involves giving up the successes of the ego and sometimes even the ego itself—or at least the sense of the "self" that the ego accepts as its identity. When Inanna knocks on the door of the underworld, the gatekeeper

asks, "Why has your heart led you on the road / From which no traveler returns?"[24] To be initiated is to cross a threshold into another state of being, from which, indeed, one cannot return.

In Inanna's case, as she descends to the underworld in answer to the call to face her dark double, she gives up her powers, one by one, beginning with her crown, then her jewelry, then her female attractiveness, symbolized by her breastplate called "Come, man, come!" Her measuring rod and line are removed and finally her royal robe, until "naked and bowed low" she comes to the throne of the underworld where her mirror queen, Ereshkigal, rules.

The journey of initiation is not the collection of powers, degrees, positions, and other proofs of success, but the painful process, step by step, of stripping away aspects of what you identified as who you are to find a different kind of essential Self. Inanna descends to meet a shadow figure, who is her dark double in the underworld. This queen of the underworld fixes on Inanna "the eye of death" and kills her.

After three days, thanks to the intervention of little creatures who show empathy for the dark queen's pains, Inanna is raised from the dead. When she returns to the upper world, her whole being is changed, especially in relation to her husband, which might be interpreted as her relation to her animus.

Initiation journeys are often characterized by mystery and secrecy. Profound internal changes of this sort are difficult to explain and might not even be visible from the outside. Heroes need their achievements to be recognized by tangible rewards and the applause of the crowd—glory. The Iliad begins with Achilles sulking in his tent, refusing to fight,

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde movie poster, 1931.

24 This and other quotes are taken from Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer, *Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer* (Harper & Row, 1983).

because Agamemnon has stolen his war prize. But the results of the journey of initiation are internal.

The Eleusinian Mysteries of ancient Greece involved nine days of activities centered on the myth of Persephone's abduction into the underworld and her mother Demeter's cursing of the earth, causing all the grain to die, while she searched for her daughter. All levels of society participated in this initiation, from emperors to slaves, and the effects were profound. Cicero famously said of the Eleusinian Mysteries that Athens had given to humankind "nothing finer..., and as they are called an initiation (initia), so indeed do we learn in them the basic principles of life, and from them acquire not only a way of living in happiness but also a way of dying with greater hope" (De legibus, 2.36).[25]

We don't know many details of these rites because initiates swore not to reveal anything about them on pain of death. But some speculate that at a particular point in the ritual—perhaps at the end—a young woman representing Persephone simply held up a sheaf of wheat. In that moment, the image becomes a powerful symbol, activating an understanding too deep for words to express.

25 See "Mysteries at Eleusis: Images of Inscriptions," Cornell University Library Digital Collections, https://digital.library.cornell.edu/collections/eleusis. Retrieved 30 April 2024.

Darshan: Seeing and Being Seen

Thoughts on a Unique way of Understanding Image and Symbol based on the work of Al Collins and Elaine Molchanov

Darshan is the word for seeing in Sanskrit. This unique, Indian way of "seeing" allows the viewer to be drawn into the symbolic image. At the same time, the figures within the art object are related to each other. The viewer becomes part of the symbolic image, and this participation is actually anticipated in the creation of the image. Darshan, as a form of participating in symbolic images, is related to the ARAS notion of how archetypal images affect us.

A full discussion of these points is contained in a later section of this guide: "Seeing and Not Seeing the Symbol: Greta Thunberg, the Indian Devotee, and Jung's Virgin Sophia," by Al Collins and Elaine Molchanov.

The concept of *yantra* expresses the notion of darshan well. A yantra literally means "a machine," which is a strange title for the symbolic image, but the point is that it actually does something. It isn't just an aesthetic thing that you look at. It is something that has an effect, that harnesses psychic energy and puts it to work. This is very much in line with what a symbolic image does for Jung and in the ARAS approach to images.

Red, yellow, and pink Sri Yantra design. Includes chakra-shaped flower petals around the core design.
Source: http://geekfromthewest.blogspot.com/2016/01/sri-yantra-artwork.html.

The word *yantra* is similar to the word *symbol*. It can harness and intensify psychic energy. One can meditate on the sri yantra, and it moves the meditator to a higher psychological state, which typically means the meditator is closer to the original outflow of energy. For Jung, this might mean he is closer to the collective unconscious or the very source of psychic energy and its symbolic images.

Indian images work like yantras. They aim to do something. They are not just for contemplation; they are not pretty; they are not even necessarily beautiful or profound. They are images that cause something to happen in the psyche when a person works with them. So you could say a yantra is a visual representation of a mantra. It is a practice.

A particular group of symbols or images that involve darshan is highlighted between gods and demons. Demons are prominent in Indian art. They typically represent the viewer because we are all demonic to some extent, and we all need to be transformed through our work with the gods. What we discover in Indian art is that the demon is typically oriented toward the god. The demon is quite interested in god even when the demon hates god—maybe even especially when the demon hates god. You can see that in the following images.

So our question in looking at these images is what do the figures in the images see. What are they seeing? And what do we see through them? There are two sides of darshan—the darshan within the image (people or gods looking at each other or thinking about each other, focusing on each other) and then us looking at the whole image (how we relate to that image). What is their darshan and what is our darshan? Try to imagine the experience of the divine and the demon in these images. What is the god seeing? And what does it mean for us to be seeing the divine?

Here's an example. Below is the god Vishnu asleep on the snake, Ananta, floating on the waters between the destruction of one world and the creation of the next. Vishnu is visualizing the

world to come and his darshan is the world that will come. The serpent's name is *Ananta*—meaning infinite, endless, without an end, eternal, boundless.

Below is another image in a stone carving of the same thing—Vishnu is lying on the snake visualizing the world to come and, at the same time, imagining himself seeing the coming world. Vishnu is looking at the god Brahma, the small god emerging from the navel, who is himself visualizing the world to come. In that sense Vishnu is visualizing the world to come and, at the same time, is himself a visualization of Brahman's visualization of the world to come. And we are visualizing both of these levels of visualization.

This framing is essential in Indian art. One thing is framed inside another thing and the more frames you get, typically the deeper and more powerful the archetypal content will be. Very often, like in the *Mahabharata,* there are seven or eight levels of storytelling. One story is about another story about another story about another story.

So what do these images do? Our basic assumption in this discussion is that the art is performative. It is used in worship and in pilgrimage. The images aim to cause us to change if we will allow them and sometimes even if we don't want to allow it. And that is the position that the demon is often in. The demon doesn't want to change, but the god is going to make sure that the demon changes anyway.

Vishnu Padmanabha, gold, 16th century. Padmanabhaswamy Temple, Trivandrum, Kerala, India.

The darshan notion presents a perspective that may help people change the way they consult ARAS images. How does the image penetrate and change us? Collins and Molchanov have developed a theory about the darshan notion of seeing and the ARAS way of approaching a symbolic image:

> The viewer looks outwardly to an image that usually tells a story. We see in the image that the god is imagining something inwardly. From this we can also imagine what is happening. The entire image is being projected by the divine level, which is behind or inside the image we see. This is the reason that the god's eyes are often closed or in meditation. The god is meditating, imagining the image, sometimes asleep as Vishnu was on the serpent. We enter the scene by looking at the image, and then through that process we pass through the image into the divine consciousness behind what is being emitted. Our gaze is drawn through the image into the god's creative imagination. We are held in her vision and we see through her eye.

This is a theme that is found in the Bhagavad Gita. *We see that image within the god and within ourselves through the god's vision that is loaned to us in the process of seeing the image. That's why this is worship.*

In pilgrimage, people will travel hundreds of miles on a festival day for the moment when the cloth is taken off the image of

The Ananthashayami Panel/Reclining Vishnu. Stone carving, Late 7th century. Mahisha-suramardini Temple, Tamil Nadu, India.

the god. They have darshan with the god and are essentially brought within that world of the god, transformed, taken into another level. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna the god, allows Arjuna, his disciple, for a moment to have his *divya-caksus,* which means "divine eye." Krishna gives the divine eye to Arjuna and allows Arjuna to see through him to the great cosmic reality of who Krishna really is. Arjuna would never have been able to see that otherwise. He has to have the divine eye. This is precisely what happens when participating in Indian art. If we are in the right state of mind, we are given the divine eye to see beyond the image to the god's nature and also our own nature. Typically, we participate in this vision as if we are the demon or the devotee or both. The demon and the devotee are often the same.

We do not just see. We are also seen. At right is an image of the baby seeing the god for the first time and also, the god seeing the baby for the first time. The silver image that the baby is looking at would be hidden all the time, and it is just opened up for a moment so that the baby can have that *divya-caksus.* The baby can see the divine image and be seen by the god. This is an initiation of this child who is entering a divine world at this moment.

When we look at Indian art through the "darshan" way of seeing, we get deeper into the image the more we look at it. Clearly, darshan is unique to the Indian way of seeing

An Indian man holding a baby toward a goddess statue. Arubathimoovar festival, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

symbolic images. But this might find a parallel in the ARAS approach to looking at symbolic images. In the Jungian notion of individuation, we are not just trying to look at images. We are also trying to transform ourselves through these interactions with the unconscious. The ARAS images connect us to the realm of the archetypes, which are akin to a relationship with the gods. We see the archetypal image and the image feeds us, meaning it is evoked from the unconscious, which then fuels increased consciousness. We see the image and the image sees and feeds us if we are open to receiving.

An initial approach would be to scan through all the symbolic images on a particular subject. Eventually, or instantaneously, you may come upon an image that you have an affinity with. In India this would be called the *ishta devata,* or the "chosen divinity," the one that you feel a connection with. By sitting with that image for twenty minutes or so, you can write down your experience. This is a form of active imagination. And then, if you want to, you can do it with another image if you feel drawn to move on and the process continues. Perhaps in time, it will become its own form of darshan, in which you see through the eyes of the archetype or god, and are seen by the archetype or god as well. Related to this idea, in the image below, Siva is dancing on the demon *Apasmara* (forgetfulness) who looks up at the god receiving darshan.

Nataraja/Dancing Shiva (close up). Copper alloy sculpture, Ca.950-1000. Tamil Nadu, India. LACMA (M75.1).

In India, symbolic art is contemplated at a temple or a festival. Stone images abound in the temples and bronzes are carried around on poles for festivals. They manifest a sacred geography that is coded to the great stories of India. So the whole physical world around the temple and around the festival is brought into the experience; the whole world is brought into the darshan experience. Transformation and darshan occur in the temples and in the festivals.

An important question in our modern world is how to keep the images alive online? For example, at the Art Institute of Chicago they have all of the Indian images in one hallway and people just walk through it without putting anything back into them. It feels like it is depleting them. But, if you put your heart into it, there is a giving back to the image that adds shakti to the image. A danger is that we do not spend enough time with the image. We have to be disciplined. This is not surfing.

Nataraja (Dancing Siva) in a black & white photograph.

Looking and Seeing Inside-Out: Sensations and Perceptions as the Foundation of Image Creation by Stefano Carta

The perspective that I take in this chapter, which is based on the work I have been carrying out lately,[26] refers to the foundation of our biological life. It is not the only perspective possible but another side of the same beautiful, complex prism that Jung or Hillman approached from other perspectives. Nevertheless, it is the same prism. Therefore, in the next few pages I will offer a concise idea of the nature and difference between "extroverted" images and "introverted," symbolic *imagines* (I decided to use this Latin word, whose singular form is *imago,* that, during the Italian Renaissance, indicated special images). In fact, if the latter *seem* very similar to the former, they actually have a profoundly different nature *and origin.* Whereas images are representations of perceived *objects, imagines* are *presentations of felt emotions,* which at their core express in differentiated ways that special kind of feeling that Walter Otto called *numinosum.*[27]

As I will point out, these two types of images—the extroverted and the introverted—may shed light on the relationship between contemporary cognitive sciences (for instance, the use of cognition in cognitively oriented psychotherapies) and analytical psychology.

The starting point for this brief discussion may be the explication of the differences between perceptions and sensations.

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26 Alcaro, A. Carta, S. Panksepp, J. (2017). 'The Affective Core of the Self: A Neuro-Archetypical Perspective on the Foundations of Human (and Animal) Subjectivity'. *Front Psychol.;* Alcaro, A. Carta, S. (2019). 'The "Instinct" of Imagination. A Neuro-Ethological Approach to the Evolution of the Reflective Mind and Its Application to Psychotherapy'. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 12:422481; Carta, S. Alcaro A. (2022) "Una casa di 3 piani + 1. Il sogno di Jung e le omologie archetipiche cervello-mente in una prospettiva evolutive". *Studi Junghiani.* vol. 28, n. 1; Carta, S., (2025). *A Jungian and Evolutionary approach to Psychology and Culture: The Infinite Ladder.* London: Routledge. Carta S. (2025). *From Biology to Psychology in Jungian Psychology and Evolutionary Theory: The Infinite Ladder.* London, New York: Routledge.

27 Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (Oxford University Press, 1968).

1. Perceptions and Sensation

Recently, the American evolutionary psychologist Nicholas Humphrey[28] has taken up and developed an idea proposed in 1785 by Thomas Reid[29] who dealt with the problem of sensible perception and the conditions necessary for it to occur. Reid proposed a significant distinction between two representational modes: perception, which presupposes reference to external objects and their effect on the body; and sensation, on the other hand, which does not imply such an incidence.

Here is how Reid presents this distinction:

> If I suffer a pinprick, is the pain I feel a sensation? Undoubtedly. ... But is the pin also a sensation? I am obliged to answer that it is not a sensation and bears no resemblance to it. The pin has a determined length, thickness, figure and weight. A sensation possesses none of these qualities. ... However, the pin is a sensible object; and I am sure that I perceive its shape and hardness with my senses, just as I am sure that I feel pain when I am pricked by it.[30]

Sensations have a hedonic character—they can be pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent and give us a conception and an irresistible belief in the existence of external objects. Perception always implies an external object, and the object of my perception, in Reid's case, is that the shape and hardness of the pin, which I perceive when I am pricked, causes in me the painful and, therefore, unpleasant sensation when I am pricked. As I already said, this sensation has no relationship or resemblance to the object that produced it. It is the result of an internal process

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28 Nicholas Humphrey, *Seeing Red: A Study in Consciousness* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006).

29 Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers Of Man* (John Bell and D. G. G. J. & J. Robinson, 1785). Italian translation: *Ricerca sulla mente umana e altri scritti,* a cura di Antonio Santucci (UTET, 1975).

30 Reid, 421.

that refers me to the intuition that out there, beyond my body, there is something external affecting and causing it to respond with a movement of some sort.

Giorgio Vallortigara writes:

> The scent of the rose that we can smell for itself, without reference to the rose-object, constitutes the sensation. It exists as long as someone can smell it. As Bishop Berkeley would say, its "existing" consists in being perceived (esse est percepi). But the smell of the rose also arouses in us the recognition of the external object; that is, the smell acts as a signal of one of the qualities of the external object. The correlation with the object can be easily verified, because if I move that specific rose, that specific object, away from me, its fragrance will become fainter and fainter, until it disappears.[31]

We may rephrase the same concepts as follows: perceptions are *images* of external objects, whereas sensations are subjective experiences that do not refer to external objects. As Jung maintained in *Psychological Types,* at the most archaic phylogenetic and ontogenetic level, sensations and affects are fused together. Along with the phylogenetic and ontogenetic development of consciousness, feelings will differentiate and arise from pure sensory sensations and take the primary form of affects, which at this level still carry very intense somatic correlates. The ultimate stage of such development is, for Jung, the quality of consciousness of the feeling type, whose feelings have a minimal relationship with her somatic correlates, like breathing, sweating, heartbeats, and so on.

2. Efference Copy

How do we discriminate perceptions coming from outer objects that may produce a sensation—like the pin that I quoted before—in the most relevant way for our ontogenetic

31 Giorgio Vallortigara, *Pensieri della mosca con la testa storta* (Adelphi, 2021), 98.

growth? Consider the mother's handling of the baby's body, which, as Winnicott points out, makes possible the "indwelling" of the psyche in the soma. The neurobiological mechanism involved in this crucial process has been known since the 1950s and was identified by Eric von Holst, who was a collaborator of Konrad Lorenz, along with one of his students, Horst Mittelstaed.[32] It is called *efference copy.*

It may be that, when I touch myself and the brain sends a signal, which is a motor command to the muscles, a second signal is also sent to the sensory system itself, to alert it to the fact that the stimulation that is shortly to be felt is produced by my own movement. This signal is called *efference copy* and is, so to speak, a carbon copy of the motor signal, called *corollary discharge.* This second signal cancels out the first. For example, when I move my arm and hands and try to tickle myself, a carbon-copy of the motor command is sent also to the somatosensory cortex, and I have a particular sensation without a perception of an object outside myself. For this reason, someone cannot tickle himself, whereas someone who is schizophrenic can. This indicates not only an impairment of the differentiation between subject and object but, as it will be now clear, a confusion between dreaming and wakefulness.[33] Thus, the mechanism of *efference copy* informs me that the movement was done by myself, and this will prevent me from feeling the touch as a tickle. Hence, distinguishing internal sensations from external perceptions—that is, external (extrovert) images from internal (introvert) images—the mechanism of efference copying could be at the origin of the transformation of perceptions into sensations, that is, subjective experiences.

32 E. von Holst and H. Mittelstaedt, "Das reafferenzprinzip," Naturwissenschaften 37 (1950):464–476.

33 In 1907, Jung wrote, "Let the dreamer walk about and act like a person awake, and we have the clinical picture of dementia praecox" (CW 3, para. 174).

3. Perceptions Without Sensations, and Vice Versa

The seminal observations by Humphrey[34] followed a rhesus monkey, Helen, from whom the striate cortex was almost totally removed. Studied intensively over a period of eight years, she regained an effective, though limited, degree of visually guided behavior. The evidence suggests that while Helen suffered a permanent loss of "focal vision" she retained the (initially unexpressed) capacity for "ambient vision." This means that Helen was having *perceptions without sensations.* Helen's case is coherent with all the findings from split-brain patients studied by Roger Sperry and Michael Gazzaniga. As Sperry wrote:

> ... "both the left and the right hemisphere may be conscious simultaneously in different, even in mutually conflicting, mental experiences that run along in parallel." This means that something conscious for one hemisphere may be unconscious for the opposite one, and, therefore, prove the existence of unconsciously conscious processes.[35]

On the other hand, there is a special condition in which we experience sensations without perceptions. As strange as this may seem, this happens all the time; we just need to close our eyes. We constantly lose the present perceived object; and, often through a process of mourning its lost presence, we must transform it into an introverted representation—a memory. This is the very fabric of the intrinsically tragic nature of our lives, made up of a constant flow of painful losses out of which meaningful transformations bloom.

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34 Nicholas K. Humphrey, "Vision in a Monkey without Striate Cortex: A Case Study," Perception 3, no. 3 (1974): 241–255.

35 J. M. S. Pearce, "The 'Split Brain' and Roger Wolcott Sperry (1913–1994)," *History of Neurology (Revue Neurologique)* 175, no. 4 (2019): 217–220.

> While the very experience of time intrinsically is the experience of an incessant passing away, yet this experience as such also marks an eternal blueprint of all that passes away, leaving behind an unexpected gift. This gift resembles what in the II century Chinese treatise *Huainanzi* is called *xin,* 馨, to indicate the resonance of the musical stone that the God hits—the resonance that, like the fragrance of the ever passing eternal rose, fills the world in waves. This gift, which permeates our most intense experiences, emanates precisely from what is no more: it is its most highly intensified presence; the expanding fragrance and resonance of the very life of what once had been, and that we now may very well call *meaning—beauty.*[36]

The pure, original form of such sensations without perceptions occurs in active imagination or when we are engrossed in a creative activity, but they reveal themselves in their purest form when we dream.

From the perspective of the efference copy, it is no surprise that in the dreaming state the subject is paralyzed, that her eyes are shut to perceptual vision. It seems also highly significant that while dreaming the sex motivational system is turned on.[37] Because the body's temperature is not regulated as homeotherm mammals, we regress to the cold-blooded form of regulation

36 Stefano Carta, "Beyond Oedipus," in *Transformation: Jung's Legacy and Contemporary Clinical Practice,* eds. Martha Stevns, Alessandra Cavalli, and Lucinda Hawkins (Routledge, 2013), 230.

37 In my opinion, if in the animal world perceived images (more precisely, perceptual stimuli) are at the service of sex, as they serve as sexual triggers, for us humans it is the other way around—it is the sexual motivational system that serves imagination. Sex without imagination is, for us, virtually impossible. Seen this way, Freud's opinion on the role of sexuality for psychic activity is wholly justified.

typical of reptiles.[38] All these factors indicate that the formation of these kind of images is an ancestral form of psychic activity connected to the development of consciousness from a purely affective (*a-noetic*) one, to an imaginal (*noetic*) one.

In fact, the images that arise from dreams are *radically* different from those that are produced by the perception of external objects. I propose to call those sensations without perception that we experience in dreams *imagines*. Their origin is introverted, and they are meaning carriers. On the contrary, I would keep the word *image* for the images of perception, whose origin is extroverted.

Imagines are far from being carbon copies of the perceived images supposedly represented or stored within the mind from experience as memories. In fact, no memories are realistic because, as we know, memory is a *creative* and productive, not a reproductive, process.[39] This confirms the dispositional nature of the mind-brain, for which the brain does not respond to the outer stimuli but works as an anticipatory and predictive organ to *interpret* them according to their meaning.[40] In fact, even when we try to represent a perception in the mind in the most faithful way possible—when we try to remember "by heart"—the inner image that we retrieve

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38 "Originally, the imaginative function was essentially an 'offline' process that takes place in REM sleep (reptiles). With the evolution of endotherms, the 'Default Mode Network' resting-state patterns is attuned in a 'transitional space' where internally generated fantasies and external communicative actions overlap. In the human species, such transitional space realizes its vast potential due to the evolution of linguistic communication, a tremendous jump that separated our species from other animals and that is the base of all forms of human civilization" (Alcaro and Carta, "The 'Instinct' of Imagination," 9).

"Interestingly, during the REM phase, endothermic animals lose their thermoregulatory capacity, so the body is left without its usual metabolic controls, while the brain instead becomes metabolically hyperactive especially in certain MTL regions. The 'regression' to a metabolic pattern similar to the ectothermic state supports the view that dreams represent an evolutionary archaic mode of functioning of the brain-mind and express a primary form of consciousness, or proto-consciousness" (Alcaro and Carta, 6).

39 This implies that the analytical process in psychotherapy is also an essentially creative, "artistic" endeavor, closer to dreaming than evidence-based facts-checking.

40 Maurizio Corbetta and Gordan L. Shulman, "Control of Goal-Directed and Stimulus-Driven Attention in the Brain," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 3 (2002): 201–215. Debra A. Gusnard and Marcus E. Raichle, "Searching for a Baseline: Function-al Imaging and the Resting Human Brain," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 2, no. 10: 685–694.

will be fundamentally different from the original perception; the mind always *intrinsically* transforms perceptions into conceptions, into inner images teleologically imbued with meaning. What we should remember is that such an affective meaning that imbues all possible sets of representations that we experience has been selected and accumulated throughout our phylogenetic history. When we are awake, we perceive the present world; when we dream or imagine it, we represent it *through* our whole phylogenetic historical nature.

The radical difference of such *imagines* does not have anything to do with their being pictorially dissimilar from the perceptions. *Imagines* do not need to look different or strange, like, for instance, when we dream something that has really happened, so that the images might be pictorially the same as the original perceived ones. *Imagines* may be practically identical with the images we perceived when we were awake. The wholly different nature of imagined images—the *imagines*—both the recalled ones and the ones that are really imagined, actually has to do with their different origin and function. In fact, these formations do not reproduce real perceptions; they *simulate* them in the human species mostly visually. To do so, they borrow from the perceptive apparatus, mostly the visual one, but it may well be also the acoustic one for its function to confer a form to experience.[41]

Hence, introverted *imagines* do not represent perceived outer "factual objects," but *represent their core emotional meaning by presenting themselves,* hence their radically different nature. This emergent self-representation of the introverted *imagines*—these sensations without perception—may be retrieved from memory; however, like in dreams or active imaginations or through creative activity (as in the analytical situation), they may also arise spontaneously. These are the cases that interest us most, as they involve the images that ARAS collects.

41 Stefano Carta, "Music in Dreams and the Emergence of the Self," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 54, no. 1 (2009): 85–102.

So far, I have very briefly indicated *what* images are, differentiating them between perceived, extroverted images interpreted as coming from an outer object by the efference copy mechanism. Introverted, meaningful, symbolic *imagines* are self-produced by the psyche, especially when the ego, whose structure mostly derives from the sensory apparatus, undergoes an *abaissement du niveau mental*—that is, the "mind-wandering" state produced by the so-called Default Mode Network, most of all, during dreaming.[42]

Now we may ask the question: if images are extroverted representations of objects, what do the imagines represent?

4. Extroversion, Introversion

According to the cognitive science approach, sensory-cognitive appraisal determines the activation of an emotion. If I see a crawling thing (perception) that falls into the perceptual "snake" category and I am on the island of Sardinia (my place of origin, where there are no poisonous snakes), I will probably not experience an emotion of alarm. If, on the other hand, I am in the Saguaro desert in Arizona, the same image will probably elicit an emotion of alarm. This is used as proof that emotions are elicited by cognitive appraisal.

Although it is very likely that the cognitive categories themselves are dispositionally preformed—the so-called ontological categories—and, therefore, ultimately this perspective is dispositional, this explanation, nevertheless, tends to be extroverted. The image is the perception of an external object that has an effect on the organism. This circuit may make one

42 The intrinsic self-referential dynamism of the "brainmind" originated from REM sleep arousal and then evolved in what is described as a "resting-state activity" of a complex of cortico-limbic midline brain structures, also called the Default Mode Network. From a neuro-ethological perspective, it is sustained by an "introverted" *seeking* activity leading to the subjective exploration of internally constructed virtual scenarios. This "mind-wandering" function, implicated in dreaming, fantasy processing, remembering, and thinking, is the essence of the imaginative function and constitutes the first form of reflection, where intentions and drives gain a primordial form of conscious (but not yet self-conscious) representation.

believe that empirical sensory experience and cognition governs emotion, and that emotion is produced by the contact with a cognitively categorized external world.

Jung, as early as his word association experiments, demonstrated the opposite—that affectivity confers value to sensory experience and cognition of the objects that we "perceive" and categorize—so much so that we select and interpret them on complex-oriented emotional grounds. Here *complex* should be interpreted in a nonpsychopathological sense. Introverted *imagines* are *symbolic* meaning-givers to the extroverted images. It is the dream that produces meaningfulness to reality, not vice versa.

In short: we dispositionally search for objects—images—that are cognitively interpreted as representations of affective values. Only these images will be stored in memory; the meaningless ones will tend to disappear in the psychic depths. Considering that for William James and Jung "real" is what "affects us" (that is, affectivity), the images that we perceive from our object-world, and that are meaningful and salient for us, are "really real" because they are the images whose meaningful origin is in the introverted *imagines*. They re-present affects and emotions in a differentiated perceptible form. Their imaginal form is produced by the activation of the same senses that are also used extrovertedly for perception. Such a transformation confers upon them a proper "shape" necessary to provide integration to the mind.

This process is one of the possible descriptions of the individuation process as the ongoing emergence of a singularity—the individual. Spinoza might have called this *natura naturata*—from the collective unconscious, which may be described as a field of potentialities or, as Gilbert Simondon writes, a system of "internal singular resonance"[43]—what (also) Spinoza, referring to his God/Nature, called *natura naturans.*[44]

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43 Gilbert Simondon, *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information* (The University of Minnesota Press, 2020).

44 From Latin, "naturing nature" and "natured nature."

Through this infinite emerging process of the living individual, images arise and, together with them, the differentiation between inner experiences (affective sensations) and outer experiences (salient perceptions).

> What is first is this system of internal singular resonance, this system of the Allagmatic relation [the Greek word *allagma* can mean change or vicissitude, but it can also mean that which can be given or taken in exchange. Note by S.C.] between two orders of magnitude. In terms of this relation, there is the intrinsic and the extrinsic, but the individual is truly this relation and not the intrinsic, which is merely one of the concomitant terms: the intrinsic, the interiority of the individual, would not exist without the ongoing relational operation that the ongoing individuation is.[45]

For what concerns us here, this means that the symbolic image is the re-collection and synthesis of an unbroken pre-individual potentiality (what may be called *Unus mundus,* or *Pleroma*) of a (extroverted) perception *and* a (introverted) sensation out of which the individual emerges as a singularity in time and space, that is, in history.

In human terms, this potentiality may be grasped intuitively, but it may be fully lived only through an emotional, *numinous* experience. In my opinion, the *imagines* are the perceptible revelation through feelings of the fundamental energetic nature of reality as an infinite potentiality for creation. I think that this is what Jung had in mind with his reference to libido in *Symbols of Transformation* (CW 5).

The *imagines* that ARAS is concerned with are radically different from extroverted images of perception. In fact, these introverted meaningful *imagines* are closer to the phylogenetic and ontogenetic origin of cognition and experience itself, which, in its nascent stage, does not elicit emotions as cognitive sciences maintain; but is itself produced by ancestral affects

45 Simondon, *Individuation in Light,* 50.

on their way to becoming primary and secondary emotions. In fact, if in the extroverted, cognitive perspective, an image is perceived as an external object and produces an emotion, in the introvert perspective, it is the opposite: it is the affect that represents itself as an image, which, in turn, can develop into a more abstract concept, a category, or a proposition. In fact, imagistic representation *is* equivalent to psychic structural organization.

5. *Imagines* and Affects

As I said, strictly speaking, the imagines are not re-presentations of objects; they are spontaneous, autonomous, emerging *presentations* of affects and emotions that borrow their structure from the senses, and, most of all, from vision. In fact, at the origin of phylogenesis, all organisms, starting from bacteria,[46] function by selecting those environments that are favorable for their survival and reproduction and therefore express an activity that is highly selective. This happens by the appraisal of which perceptions are "good," "bad," or neutral (these are the vast majority), so much so that they might not even produce any subjective sensation.

At first, these endogenous, dispositional, teleological, homeostatic processes work at a purely organic, pre-psychic level—already in extremely primitive organisms such as bacteria—but soon they will re-present themselves as inner *imagines* throughout phylogenesis. This is the case with reptiles and, definitely, with birds. At this point the organism still functions thanks to purely unconscious, subjective dispositional sensations, imbued with a teleological aim—homeostasis. Further on, throughout phylogenesis, such sensations will be felt as sensations-feelings, which, once again, the psyche presents to itself under the form of introverted, meaningful *imagines*.

46 Antonio Damasio, *The Strange Order of Things: Life, Feeling, and the Making of Cultures* (Vintage, 2019).

To turn toward affectivity and its relations to sensoriality is to refer not only to the ontogenetic origins of the formation of the mind. As the fundamental homeostatic organizer of all biological life is the affect and sensation its precursor, it is also to sink into ancestral, phylogenetic history and into the *archè* of the collective unconscious. It is precisely because I wish to underscore the archaic, primary origin of the introverted *imagines,* and therefore of what Jung called the "collective unconscious," that I am referring to the phylogenetic strata of the psyche-soma and phylogenesis.

Therefore, we may say that those images that we perceive, hence the outcomes of our own empirical experience, do not produce what I am calling *imagines*. I argue that the process is exactly reversed. Life is *first* imagined from the ancestral depths of our body-mind, and then *selected and perceived* throughout our empirical experiential life.

If these sensations without perception, these *imagines*, are the endogenous representations of the affects that confer meaning and sense to our life as our "individuation process," their archaic, fundamental core-affective quality is the *numinosum*, which Jung expressly said was the foundation and at the same time the goal of life and of the individuation process. I agree with him.

The imagines that ARAS collects are those introverted, emotionally meaningful *imagines* that have survived throughout time, history, and space. Such a selective survival of these *imagines* throughout history indicates that they *ipso facto* have an essential, highly relevant affective meaning. It is an affective meaning that is organized precisely by their imaginal, visual form, and which may be subsequently referred to in extroverted, empirically differentiated cultural contexts. Hence, ARAS's "archetypal" images on one side express the phylogenetic ancestral foundation of particular sets of affects and emotions—the *archè-typical* meanings—while, on the other, they give historical shape and form to those specific conditions that each human

being and every human group has to face in their historical predicaments. They produce an indefinite number of variable and differentiated cultural meanings.

6. Some Examples of What I Mean

As Nicole Janigro argues,[47] Alfred Wolfsohn was a singing teacher who, after the traumatic experience as a stretcher-bearer in the trenches of World War I, invented an original music therapy where the practice of singing through cathartic vocalizations "expels psychological bacilli." After the war, his teaching influenced the theatrical work of Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski. Wolfsohn had read Jung, and attended the two-day seminar on archetypes Jung gave in Berlin in September 1937. Many of his philosophical ideas are inspired by Jung, as we can now infer from his *Orpheus on the Way to the Mask,* written in the late 1930s. In Wolfsohn's reading, Orpheus is a singer who has lost his voice and must descend into the underworld before he can return to the human world with a new voice. The symbolic death allows him to get in touch with his soul. And it allowed Wolfsohn himself to process his experience of the Great War that had left him voiceless for a while. He said that he was able to cure himself by vocalizing in his imagination the memories of the terrible screams of his fellow soldiers who were dying and whom he had failed to save. I believe that he was saving himself through imagination—through the wonderful, endless process of transforming libido into symbols. Looking *beyond the facts,* he saw what life was really showing him about himself and about itself. At that moment, I believe Wolfsohn went mad and thus was able to heal. He became a Perseus before the serpentine Gorgon, whose psychotic hisses shouting from her living hair were transformed by Athena into song.

47 Nicole Janigro, "Vita, Teatro, Arte e Terapia," *Rivista di Psicologia Analitica* 56, no. 108 (2024).

Here are the two images:

The image. This is what Wolfsohn's eyes perceived. This perception pierced his heart because it was emotionally and deeply impactful.

The *imago*. This is the real image that Wolfsohn perceived through his feelings, his heart. This is the true image, closer to its archetypal meaning, of which the image is a perceptual copy. The myth of Perseus of which this image is part and parcel indicates its meaning and the possible ways to transform it. (The sculpture is by Michele Marini, made around 1575–1599. Kept at the Museum of Rome, Palazzo Braschi. Rome.)

If, as I maintain, the *imago* is the image closer to reality (since reality is what affects us), the analytical process must proceed from it, and not from the factual perceived experience. Obviously, moving the ego-perceived reality to its archetypal imaginal nature—dreaming while awake—is like going crazy. So, as I wrote somewhere else, one may imagine this conversation between Wolfsohn and his analyst:

> "Doctor, am I crazy? I think I am Perseus, and something in me turns horror into song!"
> "Yes. You are crazy. Teach me how to do it."

This scant example may provide an example of what I am trying to say. In closing, I would like to give another example for a simple comparison between an image and an *imago*.

In your opinion, which image is more real? The answer is not an easy one. As for the first example, my point is that, *for Chagall*, the perceived image of his village (the photograph, following page) may be seen, in a somehow dissociated way, by his eyes or through his heart. In such a dissociated situation, the perceived image and its object are mere facts, *fetishes*. The photograph becomes a psychologically real and meaningful image if and when it represents the painting, and not the other way around. This is valid for *any* perceived image, provided the psyche is integrated enough and the senses, like the eyes, are connected with the heart. As Jung stated,

> Apperception is a psychic process by which a new content is articulated with similar, already existing contents in such a way that it becomes understood, apprehended, or "clear." We distinguish *active* from *passive* apperception. The first is a process by which the subject, of his own accord and from his own motives, consciously apprehends a new content with attention and assimilates it to other contents already constellated; the second is a process by which a new content forces itself upon consciousness either from without (through the senses) or from within (from the unconscious) and, as it were, compels attention and enforces apprehension. In the first case the activity lies with the *ego* (q.v.); in the second, with the self-enforcing new content. (CW 6, para. 683)

The *imago*. Marc Chagall, *My hometown and I* (1911).

The perceptual image of a village that might resemble Chagall's hometown.

This integration of the senses with feelings triggers a spiral relationship between perceptions and sensations, which is another way to describe the relationship between extroversion and introversion—the two fundamental, structural orientations of consciousness. This never-ending spiral process points to consciousness's ultimate teleological aim—to re-collect the deep, essential nature of the *Unus mundus* through the discrimination of its infinite, meaningful parts. In fact, as we know, the initial undifferentiated, unconscious oneness of the *prima materia* at the beginning of the alchemical opus corresponds to the final realization of its differentiated integrity as *lapis philosophorum.* It is at this point that perceptions and sensations, dreams and wakefulness are the same. This is the other side of craziness—the moment in which the uniqueness and the blessing of the human species shines forth through the wonderful gift of *imaginatio* vera.

PART III: In Greater Depth

Abstracts and Links to Full Examples of How Analysts, Candidates, and Others Use the ARAS Approach to Explore Personal, Cultural, and Archetypal Themes Through Symbolic Images

This section of the ARAS Guide is devoted to all the different ways that ARAS can be used to explore the many different themes that interest clinicians and others drawn to the symbolic life—from the imagery arising in analytic or psychotherapeutic practice to exploring the cultural and archetypal themes that arise both in the consulting room, in the inner world of individuals, and in the outer world of society and different cultures. You can use ARAS as a source of knowledge and inspiration about yourself, your patients, your culture, and other cultures, from the microcosmic to the cosmic. The examples in this section range from short individual vignettes to more detailed descriptions of personal and clinical relevance, to elaborate studies of cultural myths and their living symbolic reality in the psyches of individuals and groups. Links to the full papers described here are provided at the end of each example.

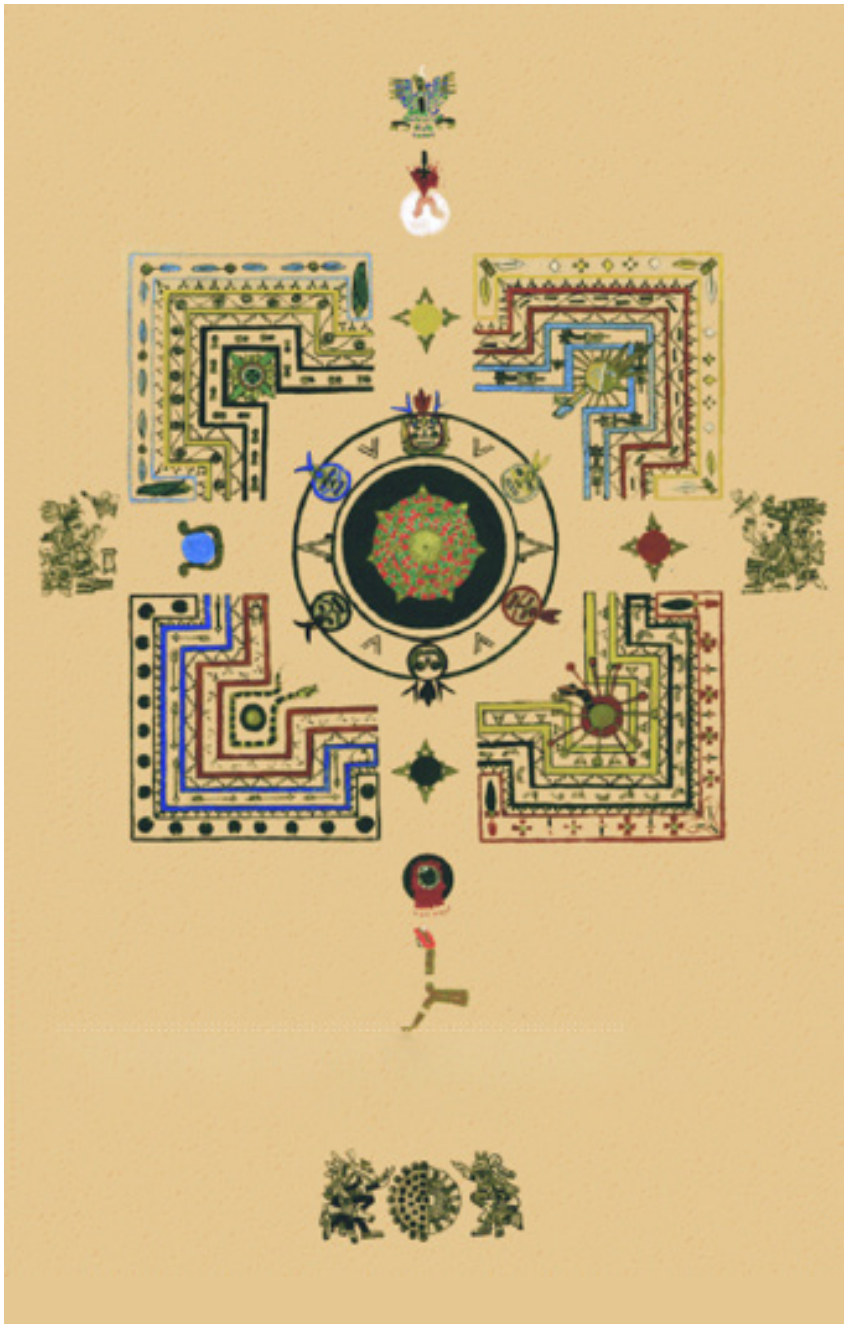
Hildegard of Bingen's (1098–1179) illuminated vision of the spark of creation. From Liber Scivias (Know the ways of the Lord), Book II, from a facsimile, 12th century, Germany.

In the Footsteps: The Story of an Initiatory Drawing by Dr. Joseph Henderson

by Thomas Singer

It is most fitting that we begin this section of examples of using the ARAS approach to symbolic imagery in clinical practice, unfolding psychological development and cultural/archetypal themes, with a paper devoted to the symbolic imagery that came to Joseph Henderson at a pivotal moment in his life. Dr. Henderson was a major contributor to the structure and development of ARAS. The mandala that is the focus of this paper was drawn by Dr. Henderson from dreams that compelled him to seek additional consultation from C. G. Jung after stumbling in his preparations to apply to medical school. In addition, Dr. Henderson's story of the creation of his mandala is a perfect example of how an individual can engage in mythopoeisis. This highly synthetic process allows the individual to participate in the creation of their own myth that may reflect or borrow from the myths of many different traditions.

In the Footsteps: The Story of an Initiatory Drawing by Dr. Joseph Henderson by Thomas Singer



Examples from Candidates of the Jungian Psychoanalytic Association in New York City (JPA)

The JPA (Jungian Psychoanalytic Association) in New York City has a program that encourages Jungian analytic candidates to explore ARAS and its method of approaching symbolic images. Diane Fremont has championed this project and offers examples of candidates using ARAS to explore the chariot and the mermaid. Encouraging analytic candidates to explore symbolic imagery that emerges from their own dreams or from their patient's material is the best way to learn how to use the ARAS archives.

"Candidate Studies" Diane Fremont

From the time I started training as a Jungian analyst, I began to visit ARAS to research themes and images that would not only come up in my readings but also in clinical material and dreams. During many courses throughout my training, we were required to give audio-visual presentations on an image or theme, so stopping in at the ARAS library, which was housed in the same building as the institute, to research images became a regular and delightful habit.

Images from the archive were available for creating a slideshow or PowerPoint presentation, which brought themes to vivid life in the classroom. I continue to use the online archive frequently, both as a supplement when I teach and as a resource when I write and give public presentations. When I teach candidates in training, I frequently send my students to the archive or the website to amplify images that they come across in their readings and clinical work. I then have them share these amplifications in class with PowerPoint presentations, along with the clinic material that they are amplifying. This is often the most enjoyable and enriching aspect of classes, for both the candidates and the instructor.

Here you will find examples of the kind of historical and psychological amplification of the images two candidates presented during their training.

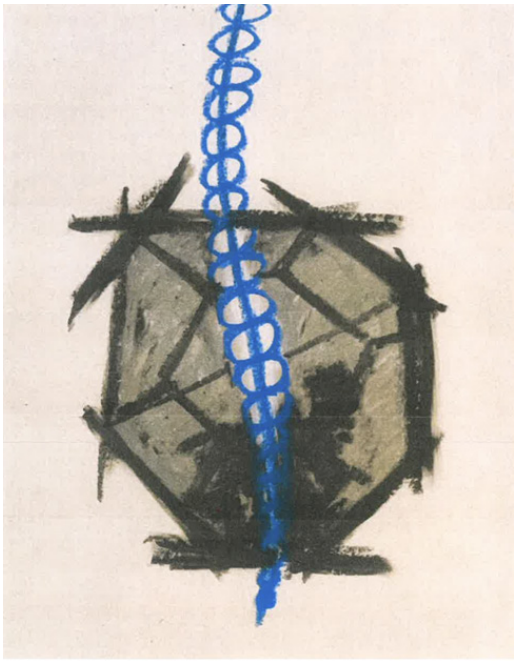
Amplification of the Chariot by Anita Morse

Reflections on Mediating the Analytic Process as Imaged in the Mermaid by Tracy Sidesinger, PsyD

Examples from Candidates' Studies of Archetypal Images from the C. G. Jung Institute in Los Angeles

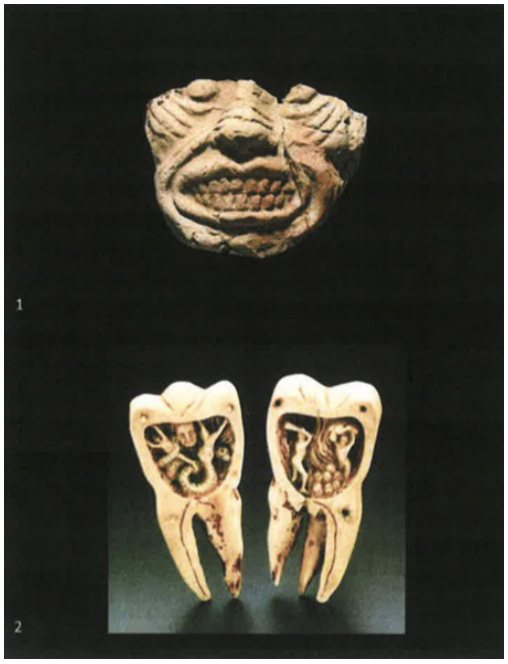
The C. G. Jung Institute in Los Angeles has a similar program to the JPA in New York where analytic candidates become familiar with the ARAS symbolic approach by using the archives to explore material from their own lives and dreams as well as those of their patients. Here are four examples from the Los Angeles Jungian community.

The Bat by CC



The Spine by Leyla Salmassian Bell

The Bridge by Bridget Morpurgo



The Monster Within by Naomi Buckley

Eagles and Jaguars: Archetypes and Myths in Gang-Entrenched Latinx Men

Abner Flores

As published in *Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche,* vol 14, no. 4.

There are direct archetypal relationships between Mesoamerican/pre-Columbian native myths and the beliefs and behaviors of gang-entrenched Latinx youth and men. These include relationships between warrior imagery and sacrifice in gang activity, the Virgin of Guadalupe and male-female relationships, and ancestral connections to the land and the love of the neighborhood. Within psychotherapy, centralizing the beliefs and experiences of gang-entrenched Latinx youth and men allows for an increase in trust and for the roles and goals of treatment to be assessed critically.

Eagles and Jaguars: Archetypes and Myths in Gang-Entrenched Latinx Men by Abner Flores

The Archetypal Power of Images in Videogaming

Robert Tyminski

Symbolic archetypal imagery can be used and manipulated to create addictive behavior in young people as revealed in this study by Robert Tyminski. The numinous, mesmerizing energies of these images exert a deep pull on the psyche and can be used for both creative and destructive purposes.

The Archetypal Power of Images in Videogaming by Robert Tyminski

Amplification: A Personal Narrative

Thomas Singer

In this example, Thomas Singer explores the notion of amplification in symbolic images. The paper originates in a personal dream about a boy, a large snake, and a mother. It moves to a consideration of the symbol in every widening and deepening circles of cultural and archetypal realities.

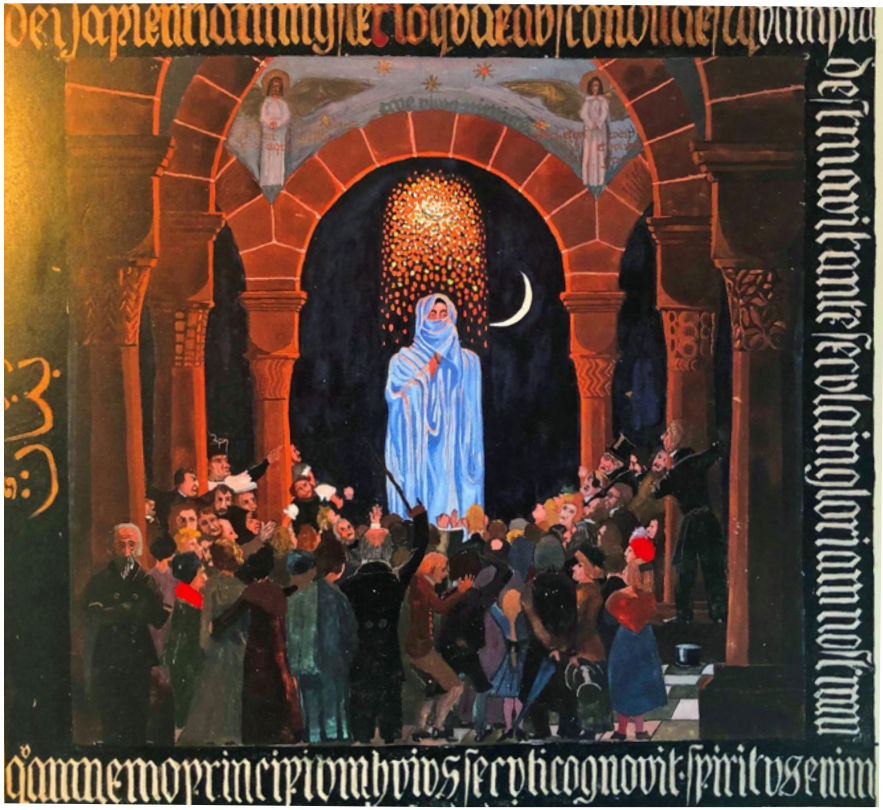
Amplification: A Personal Narrative by Thomas Singer, MD

Seeing and Not Seeing the Symbol: Greta Thunberg, the Indian Demon Devotee, and Jung's Virgin Sophia

Al Collins and Elaine Molchanov

The authors explore the experience of darshan (Sanskrit for "seeing") as imagined in a few examples of Indian sacred art and especially in the demon devotee theme. Second, they look at the Red Book for soul and God symbols, and Jung's struggle to understand the refusal or inability to see them when they appear in three paintings and the "Seven Sermons." Third, the authors turn to the remarkable Greta Thunberg. While an actual person, Thunberg is an image of symbolic power that climate change deniers have consistently demeaned and ridiculed. The authors uncover the psychological and symbolic meaning of this young person and amplify it with Red Book materials and the vision found in Indian art and literature.

Seeing and Not Seeing the Symbol: Greta Thunberg, the Indian Demon Devotee, and Jung's Virgin Sophia
by Al Collins and Elaine Molchanov



What Is a Jungian Analyst Dreaming When Myth Comes to Mind? Thirdness as an Aspect of the *Anima Media Natura*

August J. Cwik

Listening analytically is not only listening to what is said but also listening to what is just below the surface waiting to be said. This paper looks at Jung's insight into a "third thing" being created intra-psychically and within the analytic encounter. Ogden's concept of an "analytic third" is used to describe the clinical aspects of this thirdness. This paper explores how the state of thirdness is created and accessed through use of reverie and associative dreaming, and how the material emerging from it is used in a *from* or *about* manner. The eventual fate of the third in a successful analysis is examined through plates four and ten of the *Rosarium*. The focus is on the awareness and possible meanings of mythological motifs appearing in the mind of the analyst while in session. Thirdness can be viewed as the interpersonal aspect of the *anima media* natura and functions in a way that informs us of permeability in and between individuals, while the operation of the *anima mundi* means that there is always an inseparability of the individual with the world.

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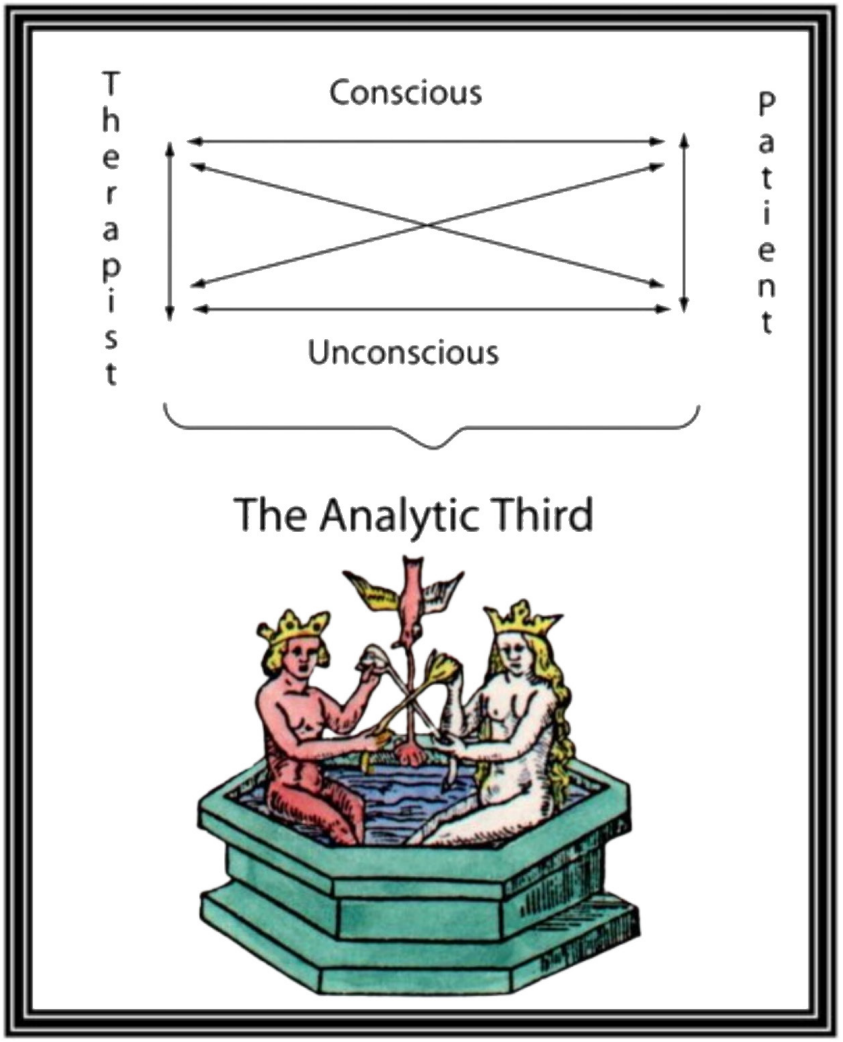

Satan's Mouth or Font of Magic: What Is It about the Anus?

Marybeth Carter

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.

Satan's Mouth or Font of Magic: What Is It about the Anus? by Marybeth Carter

Dying to Be an Analyst

Elizabeth Schofield-Bickford

In this evocative exploration, Elizabeth Schofield-Bickford traces the symbolic arc of the scorpion as it emerges from the depths of her personal and professional journey. What begins as a private emblem becomes an initiatory talisman—an image charged with archetypal force that mirrors her inner transformation during candidacy and the rigorous path toward becoming a Jungian analyst. The scorpion, in its paradoxical nature as both destroyer and healer, embodies the alchemical tensions of death, rebirth, and psychic metamorphosis that define the individuation process. Woven through dream imagery, mythological motifs, astrological resonance, and scientific insight, the scorpion takes on multiple dimensions, each echoing the profound demands of analytic formation. Through this lens, Schofield-Bickford invites readers to consider how symbolic life insists that we descend into the underworld to emerge transformed.

Dying to Be an Analyst by Elizabeth Schofield-Bickford

Blood and the Liquid "I": Carl Jung's Black Books

Constance Hamilton Jameson

Carl Jung's *The Black Books* (1913–1932) are rich with thousands of images that inspired, affected, and took over Jung's psyche, transporting him to a new realm of consciousness. As raw psychic creativity, *The Black Books* demand a different type of *Auseinandersetzung,* or confrontation, than standard text. For Jameson, the blood image—and the power of a text written in blood—has a living presence "as a transpersonal wound and womb with well-defined tension of opposites that points beyond itself to the unknown."[48]

In 1913, Jung experienced visions of a sea of blood that would become the beginning of his personal transformation and the birth of analytical psychology. He could not ignore these horrific images that led to his journey of descent recorded in *The Black Books*. As a sustained imaginal gaze, this paper traces the blood image throughout *The Black Books*: how it appears, reflects various contexts in which the image presents itself, and how it connects to other images. As we follow the image of blood circulating through the bloodlines of *The Black Books*, we come to experience being swept into an imaginal journey that loosens the limits of perception and takes us outside of time and boundaries, flowing and changing as if the "I" were re-created in the poiesis.

Blood and the Liquid "I" Carl Jung's Black Books
by Constance Hamilton Jameson

48 Notes from Sylvester Wojtkowski, *The Origins of C.G. Jung's Psychology Project: The Black Books,* Parts 1 and 2, Seminars, 2021.

Permeability

Margot McLean and James Hillman

The artist's path of poetic reverie is as valued an approach to ARAS as the more analytic approach to the meaning of symbolic imagery. The poetic reverie of the artist at work is at the heart of this wide-ranging essay which emphasizes the primacy of permeability in the psyche's relationship to the inner and outer world. Permeability—the degree to which a solid allows the passage of fluid through it—is explored in a dialogic meditation between the analytical psychologist James Hillman and the artist Margot McClean. Hillman and McLean argue in words and images that the capacity to be permeable to what goes on in the world inside us and outside us is essential to our well-being and creativity. Following on Jung's notion that "the psyche is not in you, you are in the psyche" Hillman says, "The composer, the painter, the writer are not special human exceptions. They are the subtle more vulnerable examples—not of "weak ego," but of the essential nature of the human mind, that it is membranous, osmotic, susceptible, suggestible, seducible, seditious, hysterical." This essay is a passionate argument for the virtues of becoming comfortable with uncertainty and receptivity to the inner and outer world. This essential quality of permeability to which Hillman and McClean give such elegant witness is built into the very foundations of the ARAS approach to archetypal images.

Permeability by Margot McLean and James Hillman