

Jung

A REVIEW OF THE COMPLEX THEORY¹

194 Modern psychology has one thing in common with modern physics, that its method enjoys greater intellectual recognition than its subject. Its subject, the psyche, is so infinitely diverse in its manifestations, so indefinite and so unbounded, that the definitions given of it are difficult if not impossible to interpret, whereas the definitions based on the mode of observation and on the method derived from it are—or at least should be—known quantities. Psychological research proceeds from these empirically or arbitrarily defined factors and observes the psyche in terms of their alteration. The psyche therefore appears as the *disturbance* of a probable mode of behaviour postulated by one or other of these methods. This procedure is, *cum grano salis*, that of natural science in general.

195 It goes without saying that in these circumstances almost everything depends on the method and its presuppositions and that they largely determine the result. The actual object of investigation does, of course, have some say in the matter, yet it does not behave as an autonomous being would behave if left

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undisturbed in its natural conditions. It has therefore long been recognized in experimental psychology, and above all in psychopathology, that a particular experimental procedure does not apprehend the psychic process directly, but that a certain psychic condition interpolates itself between it and the experiment, which one could call the "experimental situation." This psychic "situation" can sometimes jeopardize the whole experiment by *assimilating* not only the experimental procedure but the purpose underlying it. By "assimilation" we mean an attitude on the part of the subject, who misinterprets the experiment because he has at first an insuperable tendency to assume that it is, shall we say, an intelligence test or an attempt to take an indirect look behind the scenes. Such an attitude disguises the process which the experimenter is struggling to observe.

196 Experiences of this kind were very common in the association tests, and it was discovered on these occasions that what the method was aiming at, namely to establish the average speed of the reactions and their qualities, was a relatively subsidiary result compared with the way in which the method was *disturbed* by the autonomous behaviour of the psyche, that is, by assimilation. It was then that I discovered the feeling-toned complexes, which had always been registered before as *failures to react*.

197 The discovery of complexes, and of the phenomena of assimilation caused by them, showed very clearly on what a weak footing the old view—dating back to Condillac—stood, that it was possible to investigate *isolated* psychic processes. There are no isolated psychic processes, just as there are no isolated life-processes; at any rate, no means have yet been found of isolating them experimentally.² Only with the help of specially trained attention and concentration can the subject isolate a process so that it appears to meet the requirements of the experiment. But this is yet another "experimental situation," which differs from the one previously described only because this time the role of the assimilating complex is taken over by the conscious mind, whereas before this was done by more or less unconscious inferiority complexes.

198 Now this does not mean that the *value* of the experiment is

² Exceptions to this rule are the processes of growth in tissues that can be kept alive in a nutrient medium.

put in question in any fundamental sense, only that it is critically limited. In the realm of psychophysiological processes—for instance, sense perceptions or motor reactions, where the purpose of the experiment is obviously harmless—pure reflex mechanisms predominate, and there are few if any assimilations, so that the experiment is not appreciably disturbed. It is very different in the realm of complicated psychic processes, where the experimental procedure cannot be restricted to certain definite possibilities. Here, where the safeguards afforded by specific aims fall away, unlimited possibilities emerge, and these sometimes give rise right at the beginning to an experimental situation which we call a "constellation." This term simply expresses the fact that the outward situation releases a psychic process in which certain contents gather together and prepare for action. When we say that a person is "constellated" we mean that he has taken up a position from which he can be expected to react in a quite definite way. But the constellation is an automatic process which happens involuntarily and which no one can stop of his own accord. The constellated contents are definite complexes possessing their own specific energy. If the experiment in question is an association test, the complexes will influence its course in high degree by provoking disturbed reactions or—more rarely—by hiding behind a definite mode of reaction which, however, can be recognized by the fact that it no longer corresponds to the meaning of the stimulus word. Educated subjects with strong wills can, through verbal-motor facility, screen off the meaning of a stimulus word by short reaction times in such a way that it does not reach them at all. But this only works when really important personal secrets have to be protected. Talleyrand's art of using words to conceal thoughts is given only to a few. Unintelligent people, and particularly women, protect themselves with the help of *value predicates*. This often presents a very comical picture. Value predicates are attributes of feeling, such as *beautiful, good, dear, sweet, friendly*, etc. One often notices, in conversation, how certain people find everything *interesting, charming, good, lovely*, or—if they are English—*fine, marvellous, grand, splendid*, and (a great favourite!) *fascinating*, all of which serve either to cover up their total lack of interest or to hold the object at arm's length. But the great majority of subjects cannot prevent their com-

plexes from picking on certain stimulus words and furnishing them with various symptoms of disturbance, the chief of these being delayed reaction time. One can also combine these experiments with the electrical measurement of resistance, first used by Veraguth,³ where the so-called psychogalvanic reflex phenomenon provides further indications of reactions disturbed by complexes.

¹⁹⁹ The association test is of general interest in that, like no other psychological experiment of comparable simplicity, it reproduces the psychic situation of the *dialogue*, and at the same time makes fairly accurate quantitative and qualitative evaluation possible. Instead of questions in the form of definite sentences, the subject is confronted with the vague, ambiguous, and therefore disconcerting stimulus word, and instead of an answer he has to react with a *single* word. Through accurate observation of the reaction disturbances, facts are revealed and registered which are often assiduously overlooked in ordinary discussion, and this enables us to discover things that point to the unspoken background, to those states of readiness, or constellations, which I mentioned before. What happens in the association test also happens in every discussion between two people. In both cases there is an experimental situation which constellates complexes that assimilate the topic discussed or the situation as a whole, including the parties concerned. The discussion loses its objective character and its real purpose, since the constellated complexes frustrate the intentions of the speakers and may even put answers into their mouths which they can no longer remember afterwards. This fact has been put to practical use in the cross-examination of witnesses. Its place in psychology is taken by the so-called repetition experiment, which discovers and localizes the gaps in the memory. After, say, a hundred reactions, the subject is asked what answers he gave to the individual stimulus words. Gaps or falsifications of memory occur with average regularity in all spheres of association disturbed by complexes.

²⁰⁰ So far, I have purposely avoided discussing the nature of complexes, on the tacit assumption that their nature is generally known. The word "complex" in its psychological sense has

³ Das psychogalvanische Reflexphänomen.

passed into common speech both in German and in English. Everyone knows nowadays that people "have complexes." What is not so well known, though far more important theoretically, is that complexes can *have us*. The existence of complexes throws serious doubt on the naïve assumption of the unity of consciousness, which is equated with "psyche," and on the supremacy of the will. Every constellation of a complex postulates a disturbed state of consciousness. The unity of consciousness is disrupted and the intentions of the will are impeded or made impossible. Even memory is often noticeably affected, as we have seen. The complex must therefore be a psychic factor which, in terms of energy, possesses a value that sometimes exceeds that of our conscious intentions, otherwise such disruptions of the conscious order would not be possible at all. And in fact, an active complex puts us momentarily under a state of duress, of compulsive thinking and acting, for which under certain conditions the only appropriate term would be the judicial concept of diminished responsibility.

201 What then, scientifically speaking, is a "feeling-toned complex"? It is the *image* of a certain psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is, moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of consciousness. This image has a powerful inner coherence, it has its own wholeness and, in addition, a relatively high degree of autonomy, so that it is subject to the control of the conscious mind to only a limited extent, and therefore behaves like an animated foreign body in the sphere of consciousness. The complex can usually be suppressed with an effort of will, but not argued out of existence, and at the first suitable opportunity it reappears in all its original strength. Certain experimental investigations seem to indicate that its intensity or activity curve has a wavelike character, with a "wave-length" of hours, days, or weeks. This very complicated question remains as yet unclarified.

202 We have to thank the French psychopathologists, Pierre Janet in particular, for our knowledge today of the extreme *dissociability* of consciousness. Janet and Morton Prince both succeeded in producing four to five splittings of the personality, and it turned out that each fragment of personality had its own peculiar character and its own separate memory. These fragments subsist relatively independently of one another and can

take one another's place at any time, which means that each fragment possesses a high degree of autonomy. My findings in regard to complexes corroborate this somewhat disquieting picture of the possibilities of psychic disintegration, for fundamentally there is no difference in principle between a fragmentary personality and a complex. They have all the essential features in common, until we come to the delicate question of fragmented consciousness. Personality fragments undoubtedly have their own consciousness, but whether such small psychic fragments as complexes are also capable of a consciousness of their own is a still unanswered question. I must confess that this question has often occupied my thoughts, for complexes behave like Descartes' devils and seem to delight in playing impish tricks. They slip just the wrong word into one's mouth, they make one forget the name of the person one is about to introduce, they cause a tickle in the throat just when the softest passage is being played on the piano at a concert, they make the tiptoeing latecomer trip over a chair with a resounding crash. They bid us congratulate the mourners at a burial instead of condoling with them, they are the instigators of all those mad-denying things which F. T. Vischer attributed to the "mischievousness of the object."⁴ They are the actors in our dreams, whom we confront so powerlessly; they are the elfn beings so aptly characterized in Danish folklore by the story of the clergyman who tried to teach the Lord's prayer to two elves. They took the greatest pains to repeat the words after him correctly, but at the very first sentence they could not avoid saying: "Our Father, who art not in heaven." As one might expect on theoretical grounds, these impish complexes are unteachable.

203 I hope that, taking it with a very large grain of salt, no one will mind this metaphorical paraphrase of a scientific problem. But even the soberest formulation of the phenomenology of complexes cannot get round the impressive fact of their autonomy, and the deeper one penetrates into their nature—I might almost say into their biology—the more clearly do they reveal their character as *splinter psyches*. Dream psychology shows us as plainly as could be wished how complexes appear in personified form when there is no inhibiting consciousness to

⁴ Cf. *Auch Einer*.

suppress them, exactly like the hobgoblins of folklore who go crashing round the house at night. We observe the same phenomenon in certain psychoses when the complexes get "loud" and appear as "voices" having a thoroughly personal character.

Today we can take it as moderately certain that complexes are in fact "splinter psyches." The aetiology of their origin is frequently a so-called trauma, an emotional shock or some such thing, that splits off a bit of the psyche. Certainly one of the commonest causes is a moral conflict, which ultimately derives from the apparent impossibility of affirming the whole of one's nature. This impossibility presupposes a direct split, no matter whether the conscious mind is aware of it or not. As a rule there is a marked unconsciousness of any complexes, and this naturally guarantees them all the more freedom of action. In such cases their powers of assimilation become especially pronounced, since unconsciousness helps the complex to assimilate even the ego, the result being a momentary and unconscious alteration of personality known as identification with the complex. In the Middle Ages it went by another name: it was called possession. Probably no one imagines this state as being particularly harmless, and there is in fact no difference in principle between a slip of the tongue caused by a complex and the wildest blasphemies; it is only a difference of degree. The history of language provides innumerable illustrations of this. When some one is in the throes of a violent emotion we exclaim: "What's got into him today?" "He is driven by the devil," "hag-ridden," etc. In using these somewhat worn metaphors we naturally do not think of their original meaning, although it is easily recognizable and points without a doubt to the fact that naïver and more primitive people did not "psychologize" disturbing complexes as we do, but regarded them as beings in their own right, that is, as demons. Later levels of conscious development created such an intense ego-complex or ego-consciousness that the complexes were deprived of their original autonomy, at least in ordinary speech. As a rule a person says: "I have a complex," or the admonishing voice of the doctor says to the hysterical patient: "Your pain is not real, you merely imagine it hurts you." Fear of infection is, apparently, an arbitrary fancy of the patient's, at any rate everybody tries to convince him that he is cooking up a delusional idea.

It is not difficult to see that the ordinary modern conception of the problem treats it as though it were certain beyond all doubt that the complex was invented and "imagined" by the patient, and that it would not exist at all had the patient not gone to the trouble of deliberately bringing it to life. As against this, it has now been firmly established that complexes possess a remarkable degree of autonomy, that organically unfounded, so-called "imaginary" pains hurt just as much as legitimate ones, and that a phobia of illness has not the slightest inclination to disappear even if the patient himself, his doctor, and common speech-usage all unite in asseverating that it is nothing but "imagination."

Here we have an interesting example of "apotropaic" thinking, which is quite on a par with the euphemistic names bestowed by the ancients, a classic example of which is the *πότρος εὐχέματος*, the 'hospitable sea.' Just as the Erinyes ("Furies") were called, cautiously and propitiatingly, the Eumenides ("Kindly Ones"), so the modern mind conceives all inner disturbances as its own activity: it simply assimilates them. This is not done, of course, with an open avowal of apotropaic euphemism, but with an equally unconscious tendency to make the autonomy of the complex *unreal* by giving it a different name. Consciousness behaves like some one who hears a suspicious noise in the attic and thereupon dashes down into the cellar, in order to assure himself that no burglar has broken in and that the noise was mere imagination. In reality he has simply not dared to go up into the attic.

It is not immediately apparent that fear could be the motive which prompts consciousness to explain complexes as its own activity. Complexes appear to be such trivial things, such ridiculous "nothings," in fact, that we are positively ashamed of them and do everything possible to conceal them. But if they were really "nothing" they could not be so painful. Painful is what causes pain—something decidedly unpleasant, therefore, which for that reason is important in itself and deserves to be taken seriously. But we are only too ready to make anything unpleasant *unreal*—so long as we possibly can. The outbreak of neurosis signals the moment when this can no longer be done by the primitive magical means of apotropaic gestures and euphemisms. From this moment the complex establishes itself

on the conscious surface; it can no longer be circumvented and proceeds to assimilate the ego-consciousness step by step, just as, previously, the ego-consciousness tried to assimilate it. This eventually leads to a neurotic dissociation of the personality.

208 Such a development reveals the complex in its original strength, which, as I said, sometimes exceeds even that of the ego-complex. Only then can one understand that the ego had every reason for practising the magic of names on complexes, for it is obvious enough that what I fear is something sinister that threatens to swallow me up. There are, among people who generally pass for normal, a large number who have a "skeleton in the cupboard," the existence of which must not be mentioned in their presence on pain of death, so great is their fear of the lurking spectre. All those people who are still in the stage of making their complexes unreal use any reference to neurosis as proving that this obviously applies only to positively morbid natures, to which category, of course, they do not belong. As though it were the privilege only of the sick person to become sick!

209 The tendency to make complexes unreal by assimilation does not prove their nugatoriness but, on the contrary, their importance. It is a negative admission of the instinctive fear which primitive man has of invisible things that move in the dark. With primitives, this fear does in fact set in with the fall of darkness, just as, with us, complexes are swamped by day, but at night raise their voices all the more clamorously, driving away sleep or filling it with bad dreams. Complexes are objects of inner experience and are not to be met in the street and in public places. It is on them that the weal and woe of personal life depends; they are the *latres* and *pernates* who await us at the fireside and whose peaceableness it is dangerous to extol; they are the "little people" whose pranks disturb our nights. Naturally, so long as the evil falls only on our neighbours, it counts for nothing; but when it attacks us—then one must be a doctor in order to appreciate what an appalling menace a complex can be. Only when you have seen whole families destroyed by them, morally and physically, and the unexamined tragedy and hopeless misery that follow in their train, do you feel the full impact of the reality of complexes. You then understand how idle and unscientific it is to think that a person can

"imagine" a complex. Casting about for a medical comparison, one could best compare them with infections or with malignant tumours, both of which arise without the least assistance from the conscious mind. This comparison is not altogether satisfactory because complexes are not entirely morbid by nature but are *characteristic expressions of the psyche*, irrespective of whether this psyche is differentiated or primitive. Consequently we find unmistakable traces of them in all peoples and in all epochs. The oldest literary records bear witness to them; thus the Gilgamesh Epic describes in masterly fashion the psychology of the power-complex, and the Book of Tobit in the Old Testament gives the history of an erotic complex together with its cure.

210 The universal belief in spirits is a direct expression of the complex structure of the unconscious. Complexes are in truth the living units of the unconscious psyche, and it is only through them that we are able to deduce its existence and its constitution. The unconscious would in fact be—as it is in Wundt's psychology—nothing but a vestige of dim or "obscure" representations, or a "fringe of consciousness," as William James calls it, were it not for the existence of complexes. That is why Freud became the real discoverer of the unconscious in psychology, because he examined those dark places and did not simply dismiss them, with a disparaging euphemism, as "parapraxes." The *via regia* to the unconscious, however, is not the dream, as he thought, but the complex, which is the architect of dreams and of symptoms. Nor is this *via* so very "royal," either, since the way pointed out by the complex is more like a rough and uncommonly devious footpath that often loses itself in the underground and generally leads not into the heart of the unconscious but past it.

211 Fear of complexes is a bad signpost, however, because it always points away from the unconscious and back into consciousness. Complexes are something so unpleasant that nobody in his right senses can be persuaded that the motive forces which maintain them could betoken anything good. The conscious mind is invariably convinced that complexes are something unseemly and should therefore be eliminated somehow or other. Despite overwhelming evidence of all kinds that complexes have always existed and are ubiquitous, people cannot bring them-

selves to regard them as normal phenomena of life. The fear of complexes is a rooted prejudice, for the superstitious fear of anything unfavourable has remained untouched by our vaunted enlightenment. This fear provokes violent resistance whenever complexes are examined, and considerable determination is needed to overcome it.

²¹² Fear and resistance are the signposts that stand beside the *via regia* to the unconscious, and it is obvious that what they primarily signify is a preconceived opinion of the thing they are pointing at. It is only natural that from the feeling of fear one should infer something dangerous, and from the feeling of resistance something repellent. The patient does so, the public does so, and in the end the analyst does so too, which is why the first medical theory about the unconscious was, logically, the theory of repression worked out by Freud. By drawing conclusions *a posteriori* from the nature of complexes, this view naturally conceives the unconscious as consisting essentially of incompatible tendencies which are repressed on account of their immorality. Nothing could offer a more striking proof that the author of this view proceeded purely empirically, without being in the least influenced by philosophical considerations. There had been talk of the unconscious long before Freud. It was Leibniz who first introduced the idea into philosophy; Kant and Schelling expressed opinions about it, and Carus elaborated it into a system, on whose foundations Eduard von Hartmann built his portentous *Philosophy of the Unconscious*. The first medico-psychological theory of the unconscious has as little to do with these antecedents as it has with Nietzsche.

²¹³ Freud's theory is a faithful account of his actual experiences during the investigation of complexes. But since such an investigation is always a dialogue between two people, in building up the theory one has to consider not only the complexes of the one partner, but also those of the other. Every dialogue that pushes forward into territory hedged about by fear and resistance is aiming at something vital, and by impelling the one partner to integrate his wholeness it forces the other to take up a broader position. He too is impelled towards wholeness, for without this he would not be able to push the dialogue deeper and deeper into those fear-bound regions. No investi-

gator, however unprejudiced and objective he is, can afford to disregard his own complexes, for they enjoy the same autonomy as those of other people. As a matter of fact, he *cannot* disregard them, because they do not disregard *him*. Complexes are very much a part of the psychic constitution, which is the most absolutely prejudiced thing in every individual. His constitution will therefore inexorably decide *what* psychological view a given observer will have. Herein lies the unavoidable limitation of psychological observation: its validity is contingent upon the personal equation of the observer.

²¹⁴ Psychological theory therefore formulates, first and foremost, a psychic situation that has come about through a dialogue between one particular observer and a number of observed persons. As the dialogue moves mainly in the sphere of resistances set up by complexes, the character of these complexes will necessarily become attached to the theory, that is to say it will be, in the most general sense of the word, offensive, because it works on the complexes of the public. That is why all the views of modern psychology are not only controversial in the objective sense, but provocative. They force the public to react violently either for or against and, in scientific discussions, give rise to emotional debates, outbursts of dogmatism, personal vituperation, and so forth.

²¹⁵ It can easily be seen from all this that modern psychology with its investigation of complexes has opened up a psychic taboo area riddled with hopes and fears. Complexes are the real focus of psychic unrest, and its repercussions are so far-reaching that psychological investigators have no immediate hope of pursuing their work in peace, for this presupposes some consensus of scientific opinion. But complex psychology is, at present, far indeed from any such agreement, much further, it seems to me, than even the pessimists suppose. For, with the discovery of incompatible tendencies, only *one* sector of the unconscious has come under review, and only *one* source of fear has been revealed.

²¹⁶ It will no doubt be remembered what a storm of indignation was unleashed on all sides when Freud's works became generally known. This violent reaction of public complexes drove Freud into an isolation which has brought the charge of dogmatism upon him and his school. All psychological theoreticians in this

field run the same risk, for they are playing with something that directly affects all that is uncontrolled in man—the *numinosum*, to use an apt expression of Rudolf Otto's. Where the realm of complexes begins the freedom of the ego comes to an end, for complexes are psychic agencies whose deepest nature is still unathomed. Every time the researcher succeeds in advancing a little further towards the psychic *tremendum*, then, as before, reactions are let loose in the public, just as with patients who, for therapeutic reasons, are urged to take up arms against the inviolability of their complexes.

217 To the uninited ear, my presentation of the complex theory may sound like a description of primitive demonology or of the psychology of taboos. This peculiar note is due simply to the fact that the existence of complexes, of split-off psychic fragments, is a quite perceptible vestige of the primitive state of mind. The primitive mind is marked by a high degree of dissociability, which expresses itself in the fact, for instance, that primitives assume the existence of several souls—in one case, even six—besides an immense number of gods and spirits, who are not just talked about, as with us, but are very often highly impressive psychic experiences.

218 I would like to take this opportunity to remark that I use the term "primitive" in the sense of "primordial," and that I do not imply any kind of value judgment. Also, when I speak of a "vestige" of a primitive state, I do not necessarily mean that this state will sooner or later come to an end. On the contrary, I see no reason why it should not endure as long as humanity lasts. So far, at any rate, it has not changed very much, and with the World War and its aftermath there has even been a considerable increase in its strength. I am therefore inclined to think that autonomous complexes are among the normal phenomena of life and that they make up the structure of the unconscious psyche.

219 As can be seen, I have contented myself with describing only the essential features of the complex theory. I must refrain, however, from filling in this incomplete picture by a description of the problems arising out of the existence of autonomous complexes. Three important problems would have to be dealt with: the therapeutic, the philosophical, and the moral. All three still

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THE TRANSCENDENT FUNCTION¹

Prefatory Note

This essay was written in 1916. Recently it was discovered by students of the C. G. Jung Institute, Zurich, and was brought out in a private edition in its first, provisional form, in an English translation. In order to prepare it for publication, I have worked over the manuscript, while preserving the main trend of thought and the unavoidable limitedness of its horizon. After forty-two years, the problem has lost nothing of its topicality, though its presentation is still in need of extensive improvement, as anyone can see who knows the material. The essay may therefore stand, with all its imperfections, as an historical document. It may give the reader some idea of the efforts of understanding which were needed for the first attempts at a synthetic view of the psychic process in analytical treatment. As its basic argument is still valid today, it may stimulate the reader to a broader and deeper understanding of the problem. This problem is identical with the universal question: How does one come to terms in practice with the unconscious?

¹ [Written in 1916 under the title "Die Transzendente Funktion," the ms. lay in Professor Jung's files until 1953. First published in 1957 by the Students Association, C. G. Jung Institute, Zurich, in an English translation by A. R. Pope. The German original, considerably revised by the author, was published in *Geist und Werk . . . zum 75. Geburtstag von Dr. Daniel Brody* (Zurich, 1958), together with a prefatory note of more general import specially written for that volume. The author has partially rewritten the note for publication here. The present translation is based on the revised German version, and Mr. Pope's translation has been consulted.—Editors.]

This is the question posed by the philosophy of India, and particularly by Buddhism and Zen. Indirectly, it is the fundamental question, in practice, of all religions and all philosophies. For the unconscious is not this thing or that; it is the Unknown as it immediately affects us.

The method of "active imagination," hereinafter described, is the most important auxiliary for the production of those contents of the unconscious which lie, as it were, immediately below the threshold of consciousness and, when intensified, are the most likely to erupt spontaneously into the conscious mind. The method, therefore, is not without its dangers and should, if possible, not be employed except under expert supervision. One of the lesser dangers is that the procedure may not lead to any positive result, since it easily passes over into the so-called "free association" of Freud, whereupon the patient gets caught in the sterile circle of his own complexes, from which he is in any case unable to escape. A further danger, in itself harmless, is that, though authentic contents may be produced, the patient evinces an exclusively aesthetic interest in them and consequently remains stuck in an all-enveloping phantasmagoria, so that once more nothing is gained. The meaning and value of these fantasies are revealed only through their integration into the personality as a whole—that is to say, at the moment when one is confronted not only with what they mean but also with their moral demands.

Finally, a third danger—and this may in certain circumstances be a very serious matter—is that the subliminal contents already possess such a high energy charge that, when afforded an outlet by active imagination, they may overpower the conscious mind and take possession of the personality. This gives rise to a condition which—temporarily, at least—cannot easily be distinguished from schizophrenia, and may even lead to a genuine "psychotic interval." The method of active imagination, therefore, is not a playing for children. The prevailing undervaluation of the unconscious adds considerably to the dangers of this method. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that it is an invaluable auxiliary for the psychotherapist.

Kischnak, July 1958 / September 1959

C. G. J.

¹³¹ There is nothing mysterious or metaphysical about the term "transcendent function." It means a psychological function comparable in its way to a mathematical function of the same name, which is a function of real and imaginary numbers. The psychological "transcendent function" arises from the union of conscious and unconscious contents.

¹³² Experience in analytical psychology has amply shown that the conscious and the unconscious seldom agree as to their contents and their tendencies. This lack of parallelism is not just accidental or purposeless, but is due to the fact that the unconscious behaves in a compensatory or complementary manner towards the conscious. We can also put it the other way round and say that the conscious behaves in a complementary manner towards the unconscious. The reasons for this relationship are:

(1) Consciousness possesses a threshold intensity which its contents must have attained, so that all elements that are too weak remain in the unconscious.

(2) Consciousness, because of its directed functions, exercises an inhibition (which Freud calls censorship) on all incompatible material, with the result that it sinks into the unconscious.

(3) Consciousness constitutes the momentary process of adaptation, whereas the unconscious contains not only all the forgotten material of the individual's own past, but all the inherited behaviour traces constituting the structure of the mind.

(4) The unconscious contains all the fantasy combinations which have not yet attained the threshold intensity, but which in the course of time and under suitable conditions will enter the light of consciousness.

¹³³ This readily explains the complementary attitude of the unconscious towards the conscious.

¹³⁴ The definiteness and directedness of the conscious mind are qualities that have been acquired relatively late in the history of the human race, and are for instance largely lacking among primitives today. These qualities are often impaired in the neurotic patient, who differs from the normal person in that his threshold of consciousness gets shifted more easily; in other words, the partition between conscious and unconscious is much more permeable. The psychotic, on the other hand, is under the direct influence of the unconscious.

¹³⁵ The definiteness and directedness of the conscious mind are

extremely important acquisitions which humanity has bought at a very heavy sacrifice, and which in turn have rendered humanity the highest service. Without them science, technology, and civilization would be impossible, for they all presuppose the reliable continuity and directedness of the conscious process. For the statesman, doctor, and engineer as well as for the simplest labourer, these qualities are absolutely indispensable. We may say in general that social worthlessness increases to the degree that these qualities are impaired by the unconscious. Great artists and others distinguished by creative gifts are, of course, exceptions to this rule. The very advantage that such individuals enjoy consists precisely in the permeability of the partition separating the conscious and the unconscious. But, for those professions and social activities which require just this continuity and reliability, these exceptional human beings are as a rule of little value.

¹⁹⁶ It is therefore understandable, and even necessary, that in each individual the psychic process should be as stable and definite as possible, since the exigencies of life demand it. But this involves a certain disadvantage: the quality of directedness makes for the inhibition or exclusion of all those psychic elements which appear to be, or really are, incompatible with it, i.e., likely to bias the intended direction to suit their purpose and so lead to an undesired goal. But how do we know that the concurrent psychic material is "incompatible"? We know it by an act of judgment which determines the direction of the path that is chosen and desired. This judgment is partial and prejudiced, since it chooses one particular possibility at the cost of all the others. The judgment in its turn is always based on experience, i.e., on what is already known. As a rule it is never based on what is new, what is still unknown, and what under certain conditions might considerably enrich the directed process. It is evident that it cannot be, for the very reason that the unconscious contents are excluded from consciousness.

¹⁹⁷ Through such acts of judgment the directed process necessarily becomes one-sided, even though the rational judgment may appear many-sided and unprejudiced. The very rationality of the judgment may even be the worst prejudice, since we call reasonable what appears reasonable to us. What appears to us unreasonable is therefore doomed to be excluded because of its

irrational character. It may really be irrational, but may equally well merely appear irrational without actually being so when seen from another standpoint.

¹⁹⁸ One-sidedness is an unavoidable and necessary characteristic of the directed process, for direction implies one-sidedness. It is an advantage and a drawback at the same time. Even when no outwardly visible drawback seems to be present, there is always an equally pronounced counter-position in the unconscious, unless it happens to be the ideal case where all the psychic components are tending in one and the same direction. This possibility cannot be disputed in theory, but in practice it very rarely happens. The counter-position in the unconscious is not dangerous so long as it does not possess any high energy-value. But if the tension increases as a result of too great one-sidedness, the counter-tendency breaks through into consciousness, usually just at the moment when it is most important to maintain the conscious direction. Thus the speaker makes a slip of the tongue just when he particularly wishes not to say anything stupid. This moment is critical because it possesses a high energy tension which, when the unconscious is already charged, may easily "spark" and release the unconscious content.

¹⁹⁹ Civilized life today demands concentrated, directed conscious functioning, and this entails the risk of a considerable dissociation from the unconscious. The further we are able to remove ourselves from the unconscious through directed functioning, the more readily a powerful counter-position can build up in the unconscious, and when this breaks out it may have disagreeable consequences.

¹⁴⁰ Analysis has given us a profound insight into the importance of unconscious influences, and we have learnt so much from this for our practical life that we deem it unwise to expect an elimination or standstill of the unconscious after the so-called completion of the treatment. Many patients, obscurely recognizing this state of affairs, have great difficulty in deciding to give up the analysis, although both they and the analyst find the feeling of dependency irksome. Often they are afraid to risk standing on their own feet, because they know from experience that the unconscious can intervene again and again in their lives in a disturbing and apparently unpredictable manner.

¹⁴¹ It was formerly assumed that patients were ready to cope

with normal life as soon as they had acquired enough practical self-knowledge to understand their own dreams. Experience has shown, however, that even professional analysts, who might be expected to have mastered the art of dream interpretation, often capitulate before their own dreams and have to call in the help of a colleague. If even one who purports to be an expert in the method proves unable to interpret his own dreams satisfactorily, how much less can this be expected of the patient. Freud's hope that the unconscious could be "exhausted" has not been fulfilled. Dream-life and intrusions from the unconscious continue—*mutatis mutandis*—unimpeded.

¹⁴² There is a widespread prejudice that analysis is something like a "cure," to which one submits for a time and is then discharged healed. That is a layman's error left over from the early days of psychoanalysis. Analytical treatment could be described as a readjustment of psychological attitude achieved with the help of the doctor. Naturally this newly won attitude, which is better suited to the inner and outer conditions, can last a considerable time, but there are very few cases where a single "cure" is permanently successful. It is true that medical optimism has never stinted itself of publicity and has always been able to report definitive cures. We must, however, not let ourselves be deceived by the all-too-human attitude of the practitioner, but should always remember that the life of the unconscious goes on and continually produces problematical situations. There is no need for pessimism; we have seen too many excellent results achieved with good luck and honest work for that. But this need not prevent us from recognizing that analysis is no once-and-for-all "cure"; it is no more, at first, than a more or less thorough readjustment. There is no change that is unconditionally valid over a long period of time. Life has always to be tackled anew. There are, of course, extremely durable collective attitudes which permit the solution of typical conflicts. A collective attitude enables the individual to fit into society without friction, since it acts upon him like any other condition of life. But the patient's difficulty consists precisely in the fact that his individual problem cannot be fitted without friction into a collective norm; it requires the solution of an individual conflict if the whole of his personality is to remain viable. No rational solution can do justice to this task, and there is abso-

lutely no collective norm that could replace an individual solution without loss.

¹⁴³ The new attitude gained in the course of analysis tends sooner or later to become inadequate in one way or another, and necessarily so, because the constant flow of life again and again demands fresh adaptation. Adaptation is never achieved once and for all. One might certainly demand of analysis that it should enable the patient to gain new orientations in later life, too, without undue difficulty. And experience shows that this is true up to a point. We often find that patients who have gone through a thorough analysis have considerably less difficulty with new adjustments later on. Nevertheless, these difficulties prove to be fairly frequent and may at times be really troublesome. That is why even patients who have had a thorough analysis often turn to their old analyst for help at some later period. In the light of medical practice in general there is nothing very unusual about this, but it does contradict a certain misplaced enthusiasm on the part of the therapist as well as the view that analysis constitutes a unique "cure." In the last resort it is highly improbable that there could ever be a therapy that got rid of all difficulties. Man needs difficulties; they are necessary for health. What concerns us here is only an excessive amount of them.

¹⁴⁴ The basic question for the therapist is not how to get rid of the momentary difficulty, but how future difficulties may be successfully countered. The question is: what kind of mental and moral attitude is it necessary to have towards the disturbing influences of the unconscious, and how can it be conveyed to the patient?

¹⁴⁵ The answer obviously consists in getting rid of the separation between conscious and unconscious. This cannot be done by condemning the contents of the unconscious in a one-sided way, but rather by recognizing their significance in compensating the one-sidedness of consciousness and by taking this significance into account. The tendencies of the conscious and the unconscious are the two factors that together make up the transcendent function. It is called "transcendent" because it makes the transition from one attitude to another organically possible, without loss of the unconscious. The constructive or synthetic method of treatment presupposes insights which are at least potentially present in the patient and can therefore be

made conscious. If the analyst knows nothing of these potentialities he cannot help the patient to develop them either, unless analyst and patient together devote proper scientific study to this problem, which as a rule is out of the question.

146 In actual practice, therefore, the suitably trained analyst mediates the transcendent function for the patient, i.e., helps him to bring conscious and unconscious together and so arrive at a new attitude. In this function of the analyst lies one of the many important meanings of the *transference*. The patient clings by means of the transference to the person who seems to promise him a renewal of attitude; through it he seeks this change, which is vital to him, even though he may not be conscious of doing so. For the patient, therefore, the analyst has the character of an indispensable figure absolutely necessary for life. However infantile this dependence may appear to be, it expresses an extremely important demand which, if disappointed, often turns to bitter hatred of the analyst. It is therefore important to know what this demand concealed in the transference is really aiming at; there is a tendency to understand it in the reductive sense only, as an erotic infantile fantasy. But that would mean taking this fantasy, which is usually concerned with the parents, literally, as though the patient, or rather his unconscious, still had the expectations the child once had towards the parents. Outwardly it still is the same expectation of the child for the help and protection of the parents, but in the meantime the child has become an adult, and what was normal for a child is improper in an adult. It has become a metaphorical expression of the not consciously realized need for help in a crisis. Historically it is correct to explain the erotic character of the transference in terms of the infantile *eros*. But in that way the meaning and purpose of the transference are not understood, and its interpretation as an infantile sexual fantasy leads away from the real problem. The understanding of the transference is to be sought not in its historical antecedents but in its purpose. The one-sided, reductive explanation becomes in the end nonsensical, especially when absolutely nothing new comes out of it except the increased resistances of the patient. The sense of boredom which then appears in the analysis is simply an expression of the monotony and poverty of ideas—not of the unconscious, as is sometimes supposed, but of the analyst,

who does not understand that these fantasies should not be taken merely in a concretistic-reductive sense, but rather in a constructive one. When this is realized, the standstill is often overcome at a single stroke.

147 Constructive treatment of the unconscious, that is, the question of meaning and purpose, paves the way for the patient's insight into that process which I call the transcendent function.

148 It may not be superfluous, at this point, to say a few words about the frequently heard objection that the constructive method is simply "suggestion." The method is based, rather, on evaluating the symbol (i.e., dream-image or fantasy) not *symptomatically*, as a sign for elementary instinctual processes, but symbolically in the true sense, the word "symbol" being taken to mean the best possible expression for a complex fact not yet clearly apprehended by consciousness. Through reductive analysis of this expression nothing is gained but a clearer view of the elements originally composing it, and though I would not deny that increased insight into these elements may have its advantages, it nevertheless bypasses the question of purpose. Dissolution of the symbol at this stage of analysis is therefore a mistake. To begin with, however, the method for working out the complex meanings suggested by the symbol is the same as in reductive analysis. The associations of the patient are obtained, and as a rule they are plentiful enough to be used in the synthetic method. Here again they are evaluated not semiotically but symbolically. The question we must ask is: to what meaning do the individual associations A, B, C point, when taken in conjunction with the manifest dream-content?

149 An unmarried woman patient dreamt that *someone gave her a wonderful, richly ornamented, antique sword dug up out of a tumulus*. [For interpretation, see p. 76.]

150 In this case there was no need of any supplementary analogies on the part of the analyst. The patient's associations provided all that was necessary. It might be objected that this treatment of the dream involves suggestion. But this ignores the fact that a suggestion is never accepted without an inner readiness for it, or if after great insistence it is accepted, it is immediately lost again. A suggestion that is accepted for any length of time always presupposes a marked psychological readiness which is merely brought into play by the so-called suggestion.

This objection is therefore thoughtless and credits suggestion with a magical power it in no way possesses, otherwise suggestion therapy would have an enormous effect and would render analytical procedures quite superfluous. But this is far from being the case. Furthermore, the charge of suggestion does not take account of the fact that the patient's own associations point to the cultural significance of the sword.

151 After this digression, let us return to the question of the transcendent function. We have seen that during treatment the transcendent function is, in a sense, an "artificial" product because it is largely supported by the analyst. But if the patient is

ASSOCIATIONS	ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION	CONSTRUCTIVE INTERPRETATION
Her father's dagger, which he once flashed in the sun in front of her. It made a great impression on her. Her father was in every respect an energetic, strong-willed man, with an impetuous temperament, and adventurous in love affairs. A Celtic bronze sword.	Patient has a pronounced father complex and a rich tissue of sexual fantasies about her father, whom she lost early. She always put herself in her mother's place, although with strong resistances towards her father. She has never been able to accept a man like her father and has therefore chosen weakly, neurotic men against her will. Also in the analysis a violent resistance towards the physician-father. The ancient tradition, runes, signs of ancient wisdom, herit-ory, this would immediately point to a phallic fantasy.	It is as if the patient needed such a weapon. Her father had the weapon. He was energetic, lived accordingly, and also took upon himself the difficulties inherent in his temperament. Therefore, though living a passionate, exciting life he was not neurotic. This weapon is a very ancient heritage of mankind, which lay buried in the patient and was brought to light through excavation (analysis). The dream digs up her wish for her father's "weapon." The rest is clear. In the means of attack and defence, her father's weapon was a passionate, unbridling will, with which he made his way through life.

Up till now the patient has been the opposite in every respect. She is just on the point of realizing that a person can also will something and need not merely be driven, as she had always believed. The will based on a knowledge of life and on insight is an ancient heritage of the human race, which also is in her, but till now lay buried, for in this respect, too, she is her father's daughter. But she had not appreciated this till now, because her character had been that of a perpetually whining, pampered, spoilt child. She was extremely passive and completely given to sexual fantasies.

Interpretation of dream (see par. 149)

to stand on his own feet he must not depend permanently on outside help. The interpretation of dreams would be an ideal method for synthesizing the conscious and unconscious data, but in practice the difficulties of analyzing one's own dreams are too great.

152 We must now make clear what is required to produce the transcendent function. First and foremost, we need the unconscious material. The most readily accessible expression of unconscious processes is undoubtedly dreams. The dream is, so to speak, a pure product of the unconscious. The alterations which the dream undergoes in the process of reaching consciousness, although undeniable, can be considered irrelevant, since they too derive from the unconscious and are not intentional distortions. Possible modifications of the original dream-image derive from a more superficial layer of the unconscious and therefore contain valuable material too. They are further fantasy-products following the general trend of the dream. The same applies to the subsequent images and ideas which frequently occur while dozing or rise up spontaneously on waking. Since the dream originates in sleep, it bears all the characteristics of an "abaissement du niveau mental" (Janet), or of low energy-tension: logical discontinuity, fragmentary character, analogy formations, superficial associations of the verbal, clang, or visual type, condensations, irrational expressions, confusion, etc. With an increase of energy-tension, the dreams acquire a more ordered character; they become dramatically composed and reveal clear sense-connections, and the valency of the associations increases.

153 Since the energy-tension in sleep is usually very low, dreams, compared with conscious material, are inferior expressions of unconscious contents and are very difficult to understand from a constructive point of view, but are usually easier to understand reductively. In general, dreams are unsuitable or difficult to make use of in developing the transcendent function, because they make too great demands on the subject.

154 We must therefore look to other sources for the unconscious material. There are, for instance, the unconscious interferences in the waking state, ideas "out of the blue," slips, deceptions and lapses of memory, symptomatic actions, etc. This material is generally more useful for the reductive method than for the

constructive one; it is too fragmentary and lacks continuity, which is indispensable for a meaningful synthesis.

¹⁵⁵ Another source is spontaneous fantasies. They usually have a more composed and coherent character and often contain much that is obviously significant. Some patients are able to produce fantasies at any time, allowing them to rise up freely simply by eliminating critical attention. Such fantasies can be used, though this particular talent is none too common. The capacity to produce free fantasies can, however, be developed with practice. The training consists first of all in systematic exercises for eliminating critical attention, thus producing a vacuum in consciousness. This encourages the emergence of any fantasies that are lying in readiness. A prerequisite, of course, is that fantasies with a high libido-charge are actually lying ready. This is naturally not always the case. Where this is not so, special measures are required.

¹⁵⁶ Before entering upon a discussion of these, I must yield to an uncomfortable feeling which tells me that the reader may be asking dubiously, what really is the point of all this? And why is it so absolutely necessary to bring up the unconscious contents? Is it not sufficient if from time to time they come up of their own accord and make themselves unpleasantly felt? Does one have to drag the unconscious to the surface by force? On the contrary, should it not be the job of analysis to empty the unconscious of fantasies and in this way render it ineffective?

¹⁵⁷ It may be as well to consider these misgivings in somewhat more detail, since the methods for bringing the unconscious to consciousness may strike the reader as novel, unusual, and perhaps even rather weird. We must therefore first discuss these natural objections, so that they shall not hold us up when we begin demonstrating the methods in question.

¹⁵⁸ As we have seen, we need the unconscious contents to supplement the conscious attitude. If the conscious attitude were only to a slight degree "directed," the unconscious could flow in quite of its own accord. This is what does in fact happen with all those people who have a low level of conscious tension, as for instance primitives. Among primitives, no special measures are required to bring up the unconscious. Nowhere, really, are special measures required for this, because those people who are least aware of their unconscious side are the most influenced

by it. But they are unconscious of what is happening. The secret participation of the unconscious is everywhere present without our having to search for it, but as it remains unconscious we never really know what is going on or what to expect. What we are searching for is a way to make conscious those contents which are about to influence our actions, so that the secret interference of the unconscious and its unpleasant consequences can be avoided.

¹⁵⁹ The reader will no doubt ask: why cannot the unconscious be left to its own devices? Those who have not already had a few bad experiences in this respect will naturally see no reason to control the unconscious. But anyone with sufficiently bad experience will eagerly welcome the bare possibility of doing so. Directedness is absolutely necessary for the conscious process, but as we have seen it entails an unavoidable one-sidedness. Since the psyche is a self-regulating system, just as the body is, the regulating counteraction will always develop in the unconscious. Were it not for the directedness of the conscious function, the counteracting influences of the unconscious could set in unhindered. It is just this directedness that excludes them. This, of course, does not inhibit the counteraction, which goes on in spite of everything. Its regulating influence, however, is eliminated by critical attention and the directed will, because the counteraction as such seems incompatible with the conscious direction. To this extent the psyche of civilized man is no longer a self-regulating system but could rather be compared to a machine whose speed-regulation is so insensitive that it can continue to function to the point of self-injury, while on the other hand it is subject to the arbitrary manipulations of a one-sided will.

¹⁶⁰ Now it is a peculiarity of psychic functioning that when the unconscious counteraction is suppressed it loses its regulating influence. It then begins to have an accelerating and intensifying effect on the conscious process. It is as though the counteraction had lost its regulating influence, and hence its energy, altogether, for a condition then arises in which not only no inhibiting counteraction takes place, but in which its energy seems to add itself to that of the conscious direction. To begin with, this naturally facilitates the execution of the conscious intentions, but because they are unchecked, they may easily assert them-

selves at the cost of the whole. For instance, when someone makes a rather bold assertion and suppresses the counteraction, namely a well-placed doubt, he will insist on it all the more, to his own detriment.

¹⁶¹ The case with which the counteraction can be eliminated is proportional to the degree of dissociability of the psyche and leads to loss of instinct. This is characteristic of, as well as very necessary for, civilized man, since instincts in their original strength can render social adaptation almost impossible. It is not a real atrophy of instinct but, in most cases, only a relatively lasting product of education, and would never have struck such deep roots had it not served the interests of the individual.

¹⁶² Apart from the everyday cases met with in practice, a good example of the suppression of the unconscious regulating influence can be found in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*. The discovery of the "higher" man, and also of the "ugliest" man, expresses the regulating influence, for the "higher" men want to drag Zarathustra down to the collective sphere of average humanity as it always has been, while the "ugliest" man is actually the personification of the counteraction. But the roaring lion of Zarathustra's moral conviction forces all these influences, above all the feeling of pity, back again into the cave of the unconscious. Thus the regulating influence is suppressed, but not the secret counteraction of the unconscious, which from now on becomes clearly noticeable in Nietzsche's writings. First he seeks his adversary in Wagner, whom he cannot forgive for *Parzifal*, but soon his whole wrath turns against Christianity and in particular against St. Paul, who in some ways suffered a fate similar to Nietzsche's. As is well known, Nietzsche's psychosis first produced an identification with the "Crucified Christ" and then with the dismembered Dionysus. With this catastrophe the counteraction at last broke through to the surface.

¹⁶³ Another example is the classic case of megalomania preserved for us in the fourth chapter of the Book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar at the height of his power had a dream which foretold disaster if he did not humble himself. Daniel interpreted the dream quite expertly, but without getting a hearing. Subsequent events showed that his interpretation was correct, for Nebuchadnezzar, after suppressing the unconscious regulating influence, fell victim to a psychosis that contained the very

counteraction he had sought to escape: he, the lord of the earth, was degraded to an animal.

¹⁶⁴ An acquaintance of mine once told me a dream in which *he stepped out into space from the top of a mountain*. I explained to him something of the influence of the unconscious and warned him against dangerous mountaineering expeditions, for which he had a regular passion. But he laughed at such ideas. A few months later while climbing a mountain he actually did step off into space and was killed.

¹⁶⁵ Anyone who has seen these things happen over and over again in every conceivable shade of dramatic intensity is bound to ponder. He becomes aware how easy it is to overlook the regulating influences, and that he should endeavour to pay attention to the unconscious regulation which is so necessary for our mental and physical health. Accordingly he will try to help himself by practising self-observation and self-criticism. But mere self-observation and intellectual self-analysis are entirely inadequate as a means to establishing contact with the unconscious. Although no human being can be spared bad experiences, everyone shrinks from risking them, especially if he sees any way by which they might be circumvented. Knowledge of the regulating influences of the unconscious offers just such a possibility and actually does render much bad experience unnecessary. We can avoid a great many detours that are distinguished by no particular attraction but only by tiresome conflicts. It is bad enough to make detours and painful mistakes in unknown and unexplored territory, but to get lost in inhabited country on broad highways is merely exasperating. What, then, are the means at our disposal of obtaining knowledge of the regulating factors?

¹⁶⁶ If there is no capacity to produce fantasies freely, we have to resort to artificial aid. The reason for invoking such aid is generally a depressed or disturbed state of mind for which no adequate cause can be found. Naturally the patient can give any number of rationalistic reasons—the bad weather alone suffices as a reason. But none of them is really satisfying as an explanation, for a causal explanation of these states is usually satisfying only to an outsider, and then only up to a point. The outsider is content if his causal requirements are more or less satisfied; it is sufficient for him to know where the thing comes

from; he does not feel the challenge which, for the patient, lies in the depression. The patient would like to know what it is all for and how to gain relief. *In the intensity of the emotional disturbance itself lies the value, the energy which he should have at his disposal in order to remedy the state of reduced adaptation.* Nothing is achieved by repressing this state or devaluing it rationally.

¹⁶⁷ In order, therefore, to gain possession of the energy that is in the wrong place, he must make the emotional state the basis or starting point of the procedure. He must make himself as conscious as possible of the mood he is in, sinking himself in it without reserve and noting down on paper all the fantasies and other associations that come up. Fantasy must be allowed the freest possible play, yet not in such a manner that it leaves the orbit of its object, namely the affect, by setting off a kind of "chain-reaction" association process. This "free association," as Freud called it, leads away from the object to all sorts of complexes, and one can never be sure that they relate to the affect and are not displacements which have appeared in its stead. Out of this preoccupation with the object there comes a more or less complete expression of the mood, which reproduces the content of the depression in some way, either concretely or symbolically. Since the depression was not manufactured by the conscious mind but is an unwelcome intrusion from the unconscious, the elaboration of the mood is, as it were, a picture of the contents and tendencies of the unconscious that were massed together in the depression. The whole procedure is a kind of enrichment and clarification of the affect, whereby the affect and its contents are brought nearer to consciousness, becoming at the same time more impressive and more understandable. This work by itself can have a favourable and vitalizing influence. At all events, it creates a new situation, since the previously unrelated affect has become a more or less clear and articulate idea, thanks to the assistance and co-operation of the conscious mind. This is the beginning of the transcendent function, i.e., of the collaboration of conscious and unconscious data.

¹⁶⁸ The emotional disturbance can also be dealt with in another way, not by clarifying it intellectually but by giving it visible shape. Patients who possess some talent for drawing or painting can give expression to their mood by means of a picture. It is

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not important for the picture to be technically or aesthetically satisfying, but merely for the fantasy to have free play and for the whole thing to be done as well as possible. In principle this procedure agrees with the one first described. Here too a product is created which is influenced by both conscious and unconscious, embodying the striving of the unconscious for the light and the striving of the conscious for substance.

¹⁶⁹ Often, however, we find cases where there is no tangible mood or depression at all, but just a general, dull discontent, a feeling of resistance to everything, a sort of boredom or vague disgust, an indefinable but excruciating emptiness. In these cases no definite starting point exists—it would first have to be created. Here a special introversion of libido is necessary, supported perhaps by favourable external conditions, such as complete rest, especially at night, when the libido has in any case a tendency to introversion. (" 'Tis night: now do all fountains speak louder. And my soul also is a bubbling fountain." ²)

¹⁷⁰ Critical attention must be eliminated. Visual types should concentrate on the expectation that an inner image will be produced. As a rule such a fantasy-picture will actually appear—perhaps hypnagogically—and should be carefully observed and noted down in writing. Audio-verbal types usually hear inner words, perhaps mere fragments of apparently meaningless sentences to begin with, which however should be carefully noted down too. Others at such times simply hear their "other" voice. There are, indeed, not a few people who are well aware that they possess a sort of inner critic or judge who immediately comments on everything they say or do. Insane people hear this voice directly as auditory hallucinations. But normal people too, if their inner life is fairly well developed, are able to reproduce this inaudible voice without difficulty, though as it is notoriously irritating and refractory it is almost always repressed. Such persons have little difficulty in procuring the unconscious material and thus laying the foundation of the transcendent function.

¹⁷¹ There are others, again, who neither see nor hear anything inside themselves, but whose hands have the knack of giving expression to the contents of the unconscious. Such people can

² [Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, XXXI; Common trans., p. 156.—Editors.]

profitably work with plastic materials. Those who are able to express the unconscious by means of bodily movements are rather rare. The disadvantage that movements cannot easily be fixed in the mind must be met by making careful drawings of the movements afterwards, so that they shall not be lost to the memory. Still rarer, but equally valuable, is automatic writing, direct or with the planchette. This, too, yields useful results.

¹⁷² We now come to the next question: what is to be done with the material obtained in one of the manners described. To this question there is no *a priori* answer: it is only when the conscious mind confronts the products of the unconscious that a provisional reaction will ensue which determines the subsequent procedure. Practical experience alone can give us a clue. So far as my experience goes, there appear to be two main tendencies. One is the way of *creative formulation*, the other the way of *understanding*.

¹⁷³ Where the principle of creative formulation predominates, the material is continually varied and increased until a kind of condensation of motifs into more or less stereotyped symbols takes place. These stimulate the creative fantasy and serve chiefly as aesthetic motifs. This tendency leads to the aesthetic problem of artistic formulation.

¹⁷⁴ Where, on the other hand, the principle of understanding predominates, the aesthetic aspect is of relatively little interest and may occasionally even be felt as a hindrance. Instead, there is an intensive struggle to understand the *meaning* of the unconscious product.

¹⁷⁵ Whereas aesthetic formulation tends to concentrate on the formal aspect of the motif, an intuitive understanding often tries to catch the meaning from barely adequate hints in the material, without considering those elements which would come to light in a more careful formulation.

¹⁷⁶ Neither of these tendencies can be brought about by an arbitrary effort of will; they are far more the result of the peculiar make-up of the individual personality. Both have their typical dangers and may lead one astray. The danger of the aesthetic tendency is overvaluation of the formal or "artistic" worth of the fantasy-productions; the libido is diverted from the real goal of the transcendent function and sidetracked into purely aesthetic problems of artistic expression. The danger of

wanting to understand the meaning is overvaluation of the content, which is subjected to intellectual analysis and interpretation, so that the essentially symbolic character of the product is lost. Up to a point these bypaths must be followed in order to satisfy aesthetic or intellectual requirements, whichever predominate in the individual case. But the danger of both these bypaths is worth stressing, for, after a certain point of psychic development has been reached, the products of the unconscious are greatly overvalued precisely because they were boundlessly undervalued before. This undervaluation is one of the greatest obstacles in formulating the unconscious material. It reveals the collective standards by which anything individual is judged: nothing is considered good or beautiful that does not fit into the collective schema, though it is true that contemporary art is beginning to make compensatory efforts in this respect. What is lacking is not the collective recognition of the individual product but its subjective appreciation, the understanding of its meaning and value for the *subject*. This feeling of inferiority for one's own product is of course not the rule everywhere. Sometimes we find the exact opposite: a naïve and uncritical overvaluation coupled with the demand for collective recognition once the initial feeling of inferiority has been overcome. Conversely, an initial overvaluation can easily turn into depreciatory scepticism. These erroneous judgments are due to the individual's unconsciousness and lack of self-reliance: either he is able to judge only by collective standards, or else, owing to ego-inflation, he loses his capacity for judgment altogether.

¹⁷⁷ *One tendency seems to be the regulating principle of the other; both are bound together in a compensatory relationship.* Experience bears out this formula. So far as it is possible at this stage to draw more general conclusions, we could say that aesthetic formulation needs understanding of the meaning, and understanding needs aesthetic formulation. The two supplement each other to form the transcendent function.

¹⁷⁸ The first steps along both paths follow the same principle: consciousness puts its media of expression at the disposal of the unconscious content. It must not do more than this at first, so as not to exert undue influence. In giving the content form, the lead must be left as far as possible to the chance ideas and associations thrown up by the unconscious. This is naturally some-

thing of a setback for the conscious standpoint and is often felt as painful. It is not difficult to understand this when we remember how the contents of the unconscious usually present themselves: as things which are too weak by nature to cross the threshold, or as incompatible elements that were repressed for a variety of reasons. Mostly they are unwelcome, unexpected, irrational contents, disregard or repression of which seems altogether understandable. Only a small part of them has any unusual value, either from the collective or from the subjective standpoint. But contents that are collectively valueless may be exceedingly valuable when seen from the standpoint of the individual. This fact expresses itself in their affective tone, no matter whether the subject feels it as negative or positive. Society, too, is divided in its acceptance of new and unknown ideas which obtrude their emotionality. The purpose of the initial procedure is to discover the feeling-toned contents, for in these cases we are always dealing with situations where the oneness of consciousness meets with the resistance of the instinctual sphere.

179 The two ways do not divide until the aesthetic problem becomes decisive for the one type of person and the intellectual-moral problem for the other. The ideal case would be if these two aspects could exist side by side or rhythmically succeed each other: that is, if there were an alternation of creation and understanding. It hardly seems possible for the one to exist without the other, though it sometimes does happen in practice: the creative urge seizes possession of the object at the cost of its meaning, or the urge to understand overrides the necessity of giving it form. The unconscious contents want first of all to be seen clearly, which can only be done by giving them shape, and to be judged only when everything they have to say is tangibly present. It was for this reason that Freud got the dream-contents, as it were, to express themselves in the form of "free associations" before he began interpreting them.

180 It does not suffice in all cases to elucidate only the conceptual context of a dream-content. Often it is necessary to clarify a vague content by giving it a visible form. This can be done by drawing, painting, or modelling. Often the hands know how to solve a riddle with which the intellect has wrestled in vain. By shaping it, one goes on dreaming the dream in greater detail

in the waking state, and the initially incomprehensible, isolated event is integrated into the sphere of the total personality, even though it remains at first unconscious to the subject. Aesthetic formulation leaves it at that and gives up any idea of discovering a meaning. This sometimes leads patients to fancy themselves artists—misunderstood ones, naturally. The desire to understand, if it dispenses with careful formulation, starts with the chance idea or association and therefore lacks an adequate basis. It has better prospects of success if it begins only with the formulated product. The less the initial material is shaped and developed, the greater is the danger that understanding will be governed not by the empirical facts but by theoretical and moral considerations. The kind of understanding with which we are concerned at this stage consists in a reconstruction of the meaning that seems to be immanent in the original "chance" idea.

181 It is evident that such a procedure can legitimately take place only when there is a sufficient motive for it. Equally, the lead can be left to the unconscious only if it already contains the will to lead. This naturally happens only when the conscious mind finds itself in a critical situation. Once the unconscious content has been given form and the meaning of the formulation is understood, the question arises as to how the ego will relate to this position, and how the ego and the unconscious are to come to terms. This is the second and more important stage of the procedure, the bringing together of opposites for the production of a third: the transcendent function. At this stage it is no longer the unconscious that takes the lead, but the ego.

182 We shall not define the individual ego here, but shall leave it in its banal reality as that continuous centre of consciousness whose presence has made itself felt since the days of childhood. It is confronted with a psychic product that owes its existence mainly to an unconscious process and is therefore in some degree opposed to the ego and its tendencies.

183 This standpoint is essential in coming to terms with the unconscious. The position of the ego must be maintained as being of equal value to the counter-position of the unconscious, and vice versa. This amounts to a very necessary warning: for just as the conscious mind of civilized man has a restrictive effect on the unconscious, so the rediscovered unconscious often has a really dangerous effect on the ego. In the same way that the

ego suppressed the unconscious before, a liberated unconscious can thrust the ego aside and overwhelm it. There is a danger of the ego losing its head, so to speak, that it will not be able to defend itself against the pressure of affective factors—a situation often encountered at the beginning of schizophrenia. This danger would not exist, or would not be so acute, if the process of having it out with the unconscious could somehow divert the affects of their dynamism. And this is what does in fact happen when the counter-position is aestheticized or intellectualized. But the confrontation with the unconscious must be a many-sided one, for the transcendent function is not a partial process running a conditioned course; it is a total and integral event in which all aspects are, or should be, included. The affect must therefore be deployed in its full strength. Aestheticization and intellectualization are excellent weapons against dangerous affects, but they should be used only when there is a vital threat, and not for the purpose of avoiding a necessary task.

¹⁸⁴ Thanks to the fundamental insight of Freud, we know that emotional factors must be given full consideration in the treatment of the neuroses. The personality as a whole must be taken seriously into account, and this applies to both parties, the patient as well as the analyst. How far the latter may hide behind the shield of theory remains a delicate question, to be left to his discretion. At all events, the treatment of neurosis is not a kind of psychological water-cure, but a renewal of the personality, working in every direction and penetrating every sphere of life. Coming to terms with the counter-position is a serious matter on which sometimes a very great deal depends. Taking the other side seriously is an essential prerequisite of the process, for only in that way can the regulating factors exert an influence on our actions. Taking it seriously does not mean taking it literally, but it does mean giving the unconscious credit, so that it has a chance to co-operate with consciousness instead of automatically disturbing it.

¹⁸⁵ Thus, in coming to terms with the unconscious, not only is the standpoint of the ego justified, but the unconscious is granted the same authority. The ego takes the lead, but the unconscious must be allowed to have its say too—*audiat ut altera pars*.

¹⁸⁶ The way this can be done is best shown by those cases in which the "other" voice is more or less distinctly heard. For

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such people it is technically very simple to note down the "other" voice in writing and to answer its statements from the standpoint of the ego. It is exactly as if a dialogue were taking place between two human beings with equal rights, each of whom gives the other credit for a valid argument and considers it worth while to modify the conflicting standpoints by means of thorough comparison and discussion or else to distinguish them clearly from one another. Since the way to agreement seldom stands open, in most cases a long conflict will have to be borne, demanding sacrifices from both sides. Such a rapprochement could just as well take place between patient and analyst, the role of devil's advocate easily falling to the latter.

¹⁸⁷ The present day shows with appalling clarity how little able people are to let the other man's argument count, although this capacity is a fundamental and indispensable condition for any human community. Everyone who proposes to come to terms with himself must reckon with this basic problem. For, to the degree that he does not admit the validity of the other person, he denies the "other" within himself the right to exist—and vice versa. The capacity for inner dialogue is a touchstone for outer objectivity.

¹⁸⁸ Simple as the process of coming to terms may be in the case of the inner dialogue, it is undoubtedly more complicated in other cases where only visual products are available, speaking a language which is eloquent enough for one who understands it, but which seems like deaf-and-dumb language to one who does not. Faced with such products, the ego must seize the initiative and ask: "How am I affected by this sign?"³ This Faustian question can call forth an illuminating answer. The more direct and natural the answer is, the more valuable it will be, for directness and naturalness guarantee a more or less total reaction. It is not absolutely necessary for the process of confrontation itself to become conscious in every detail. Very often a total reaction does not have at its disposal those theoretical assumptions, views, and concepts which would make clear apprehension possible. In such cases one must be content with the

³ [Cf. *Faust: Part I*, Wayne trans., p. 46.]

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wordless but suggestive feelings which appear in their stead and are more valuable than clever talk.

189 The shutting to and fro of arguments and affects represents the transcendent function of opposites. The confrontation of the two positions generates a tension charged with energy and creates a living, third thing—not a logical stillbirth in accordance with the principle *tertium non datur* but a movement out of the suspension between opposites, a living birth that leads to a new level of being, a new situation. The transcendent function manifests itself as a quality of conjoined opposites. So long as these are kept apart—naturally for the purpose of avoiding conflict—they do not function and remain inert.

190 In whatever form the opposites appear in the individual, at bottom it is always a matter of a consciousness lost and obstinately stuck in one-sidedness, confronted with the image of instinctive wholeness and freedom. This presents a picture of the anthropoid and archaic man with, on the one hand, his supposedly uninhibited world of instinct and, on the other, his often misunderstood world of spiritual ideas, who, compensating and correcting our one-sidedness, emerges from the darkness and shows us how and where we have deviated from the basic pattern and crippled ourselves psychically.

191 I must content myself here with a description of the outward forms and possibilities of the transcendent function. Another task of greater importance would be the description of its *contents*. There is already a mass of material on this subject, but not all the difficulties in the way of exposition have yet been overcome. A number of preparatory studies are still needed before the conceptual foundation is laid which would enable us to give a clear and intelligible account of the contents of the transcendent function. I have unfortunately had the experience that the scientific public are not everywhere in a position to follow a purely psychological argument, since they either take it too personally or are bedevilled by philosophical or intellectual prejudices. This renders any meaningful appreciation of the psychological factors quite impossible. If people take it personally their judgment is always subjective, and they declare everything to be impossible which seems not to apply in their case or which they prefer not to acknowledge. They are quite incapable of realizing that what is valid for them may not be

valid at all for another person with a different psychology. We are still very far from possessing a general valid scheme of explanation in all cases.

192 One of the greatest obstacles to psychological understanding is the inquisitive desire to know whether the psychological factor adduced is "true" or "correct." If the description of it is not erroneous or false, then the factor is valid in itself and proves its validity by its very existence. One might just as well ask if the duck-billed platypus is a "true" or "correct" invention of the Creator's will. Equally childish is the prejudice against the role which mythological assumptions play in the life of the psyche. Since they are not "true," it is argued, they have no place in a scientific explanation. But mythologems *exist*, even though their statements do not coincide with our incommensurable idea of "truth."

193 As the process of coming to terms with the counter-position has a total character, nothing is excluded. Everything takes part in the discussion, even if only fragments become conscious. Consciousness is continually widened through the confrontation with previously unconscious contents, or—to be more accurate—could be widened if it took the trouble to integrate them. That is naturally not always the case. Even if there is sufficient intelligence to understand the procedure, there may yet be a lack of courage and self-confidence, or one is too lazy, mentally and morally, or too cowardly, to make an effort. But where the necessary premises exist, the transcendent function not only forms a valuable addition to psychotherapeutic treatment, but gives the patient the inestimable advantage of assisting the analyst on his own resources, and of breaking a dependence which is often felt as humiliating. It is a way of attaining liberation by one's own efforts and of finding the courage to be oneself.