

The Self in Jung's Ultimate View
Presented by J. Gary Sparks, Jungian Analyst
Supplementary Information

References in brackets [] refer to Edward Edinger's
Mystery of the Coniunctio unless otherwise indicated

References for Saturday afternoon's presentation:

C.G. Jung, "The Psychology of the Transference," volume 16 in Jung's *Collected Works* [hereafter, CW].

The *Rosarium Philosophorum*, which could be translated as the *The Rose Garden of the Philosophers*¹, was published in Frankfurt in 1550 by an unknown author.²

"this fiery trial" as Jung aptly quotes it from an alchemist's writing.³

Edward Edinger's *The Mystery of the Coniunctio*,⁴

"You have to remember that these symbolic images cannot be approached too precisely. They are slippery; if you try to fix them too definitively they slip right out of your hands, so you have to allow for a certain ambiguity. You have to get used to that, otherwise they just fly away." [92]

Picture 1.

"Here we have a picture of a fountain with a kind of flowerlike decoration on top of it. From its three pipes spout a fluid into a containing basin. It is surrounded by an approximately square structure with a two-headed serpent at the top, each head spouting a vapor. ... [T]he vapors spit out by the serpent then generate four six-pointed stars, one in each of the four corners. ... There is a fifth star in the center which signifies the quintessence ... , created by the unification of the four elements. ... This is ... the fountain of Mercurius, and psychologically it would signify the foundation of the psyche prior to the birth of the ego." [40]

"want, desire, instinct, aggression and determination, ... an agonizing, unredeemed state which longs for union, reconciliation, redemption, healing, and wholeness."⁵

In T.S. Eliot's words, "And the fire and the rose are one." *The Complete Poems and Plays*, "Four Quartets," p. 145.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosary_of_the_Philosophers

² <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/april2009.html>

³ CW 16, par. 513.

⁴ <http://www.innecitybooks.net>.

⁵ CW 16, pars. 406, 405.

“It is a widespread error to imagine that I do not see the value of sexuality. On the contrary, it plays a large part in my psychology as an essential—though not the sole—expression of psychic wholeness. But my main concern has been to investigate, over and above its personal significance and biological function, its spiritual aspect and its numinous meaning, and thus to explain what Freud was so fascinated by but was unable to grasp. My thoughts on this subject are contained in ‘The Psychology of the Transference’ Sexuality is of the greatest importance as the expression of the chthonic spirit. [That is Jung’s important term, “chthonic spirit.” “Chthonic” meaning “in the earth.” Originally the word was applied to such divinities as Poseidon, Hades, and Persephone—divinities that lived below the surface of the earth. A synonym for “chthonic” might be “subterranean” or “underworld.”⁶] That spirit is the ‘other face of God,’ the dark side of the God-image. The chthonic spirit has occupied me ever since I began to delve into the world of alchemy. Basically, this interest was awakened by that early conversation with Freud, when, mystified, I felt how deeply stirred he was by the phenomenon of sexuality.”⁷

Nietzsche’s saying in 1883 that “God is dead.”⁸

“I wanted the proof of a living Spirit, and I got it. Don’t ask me at what a price.”⁹

The fountain is called the Mercurial Fountain.¹⁰

particularly the beginning, middle, and end quality.¹¹

Picture 2.

“Here we have a robed king and queen, each crowned. The king stands on the sun and the queen stands on the moon. [Now comes the tricky part.] They each hold the other’s left hand and in the right hand of each there are long-stemmed flowers which cross. Above them is a six-pointed star. Since this star is central we can assume it derives from that fifth quintessential star of the first picture. Below the star, a dove descends with another flower in its beak which crosses the two other crossed flower stems.” [44]

“Whenever a latent unconscious content pushes up into consciousness, it appears first as a **twofold oneness**.”¹²

“Whenever the archetype of the self predominates, the inevitable psychological consequence is a state of conflict vividly exemplified by the Christian symbol of crucifixion—that acute state of unredeemedness which comes to an end only with the

⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chthonic>

⁷ Jung, *Memories Dreams Reflections*, p. 168.

⁸ Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, tr. Thomas Common, p. 6.

⁹ Letter to Victor White, January 30, 1948, Jung, *Letters, I*, p. 492

¹⁰ See also Jung, CW 16, pars. 402ff.

¹¹ “The Spirit Mercurius,” CW 13.

¹² Von Franz, *Number and Time*, p. 93.

words ‘consummatum est.’¹³ [Christ’s final words on the cross in John 19:30, translated into English as “it is finished” or “it is completed” or “it is consummated.”]

“The left-hand (sinister) [Latin for left] side is the dark, the unconscious side. The left is inauspicious and awkward; ...[it contains] the moral contradictions in human nature that are expressed most clearly in our affective life.”¹⁴

[T]he regression is only apparent. ... [The] kinship [that is, incestuous] character does not point backwards to the group marriage but ‘forward’ to the integration of the personality¹⁵

Aphrodite and Mars surprised by Hephaistos¹⁶

“Psychologically this would mean that the beginning of the coniunctio [the third, the union] is set off by an ardent desire—Aphrodite is the mother of desires—and this desire is at the same time an Annunciation of the Holy Ghost. [Fra Filippo Lippi¹⁷] That the dove descends from the star indicates that it’s a messenger from the transpersonal or cosmic Self.” [46-47]

“You see desire impels us toward an object in anticipation of pleasure, whereas an annunciation is an assignment of a difficult task—it’s an opus. [The annunciation is announcing a new birth—the birth of Christ. Of course we interpret that inwardly.] Those two are actually the same thing, and the way one experiences either depends on the level of psychological development.” [48]

Picture 3.

“We have the same two crowned figures standing on the sun and the moon and now their clothing is removed. The nature of their connection is also different. [Now we will watch the process evolve.] No longer are they holding left hands which signifies an unconscious connection. [Their right hands are connected through the flower and so are their left hands] Instead, they are connected by the two flowers they mutually hold. The dove is still above with its additional flower crossing the other flowers. The star is missing and is replaced by its earthly embodiment, the sixfold star-flower which connects the two figures. ... As I understand it, the six-pointed star from the first two pictures has translated itself from the upper region to the space between the two figures.” [50]

“The left-handed relationship is no more: the two hands of both are now connected with the ‘uniting symbol.’”¹⁸

¹³ CW 9i, par. 125.

¹⁴ CW 16, par. 410.

¹⁵ Ibid., par. 440f.

¹⁶ Alexandre Charles Guillemot, 1827, <http://www.imamuseum.org/collections/artwork/mars-and-venus-surprised-vulcan-guillemot-alexandre-charles> “Mars and Venus Surprised by Vulcan.”

¹⁷ Between 1445 and 1500, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Annunciation,_Rome_-_Fra_Lippi.jpg

¹⁸ CW 16, par. 451.

Picture 4.

“Here we have a picture of a basin filled with water, a hexagonal basin, so the sixfold nature of the star and of the arrangement of the flowers is again duplicated on the lower level of the fountain. ... The encounter has gone a step further and the two figures are now united not only by the flowers they held but also by the medium of the water. They have begun a state of mutual solutio ... that has the effect of dissolving the solid, ordered structures of the ego.” [54]

“Another important feature of intense personal relationships is well revealed by Picture 4. In this kind of configuration the innate Self that is potentially available to each individual is constellated in the vessel of the relationship.” [60]

“In our picture the immersion is effected by the rising up of the fiery ... sexual libido which engulfs the pair and is the obvious counterpart to the heavenly dove. ... Thus the pair are united *above* by the symbol of the Holy Ghost and it looks as if the immersion in the bath were also uniting them *below*”¹⁹

“[T]he six-pointed star descends to the level of the six-pointed flower pattern and then descends all the way into the bath as the six-sided basin. This tells us that the transpersonal factor potentially available to each is being initially constellated in the relationship—it’s not yet individualized. Each partner then has the experience of wholeness in the relationship, and that’s a very valuable event.” [60]

Picture 6.

“[T]here is a certain regularity to conunctio [union] being followed by mortificatio [that is the death]. ... Picture 6 ... represents the death of the ego upon encounter with the Self. ... [W]hen the union takes place ... the opposites die in the course of giving birth to the higher totality that transcends them, and if the ego is identified with one of those parts, it will share that death experience.” [69-70]

“The alchemists assert that death is at once the conception of the *filius philosophorum* [the son of the philosophers or goal of the alchemical opus]”²⁰

Picture 7.

“Now things become a little more complex. More elements enter the picture. We have the same slab tomb with the united body lying on it, but in addition a tiny little figure is ascending from the body into a cloud that has appeared above the tomb.” [74]

“The cloud is one of the age-old symbolic images of transpersonal reality; it’s how the numinosum manifests. ... For instance, in antiquity, Zeus was represented as seated on a

¹⁹ CW 16, par. 455.

²⁰ Ibid., par. 473.

cloud. For the Israelites, during their wanderings in the wilderness, Yahweh went before them, in day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way Yahweh came to Moses in a cloud on Mount Sinai.” [80]

Picture 8.

“[a] sign of divine intervention, it is the moisture that heralds the return of the soul.”²¹

“This shows what can follow the death, and despair, and hopelessness represented by Pictures 6 and 7. [85]

The dew signals a new light of understanding, a new way of understanding, is about to appear.²²

Gerhard Adler discussed, in his book *The Living Symbol*, that we have to “provoke the gods to do their part.”²³

Picture 9. We meet some new terms:

“This is a picture of the second stage of the coniunctio The *unio mentalis* is now reuniting with the body from which it had been separated [*unio corporalis*]. Some of you may know the wonderful William Blake illustration of this event.” [88]

The alchemist Gerhard Dorn (sixteenth century)²⁴ described the alchemical process as a three-step process in these terms: *unio mentalis, unio corporalis, unus mundus*.²⁵

As Jung puts it, we have to impart “an abiding value to anything we have understood.”²⁶

Picture 10.

The *united body*, combining king and queen, is now alive and erect, standing on the moon, above the earth. In the right hand is a goblet that contains three serpents, or one serpent with three heads, and *each head is crowned*. [94, emphasis added]

“The transference phenomenon is without doubt one of the most important syndromes in the process of individuation... . By virtue of its collective contents and symbols it transcends the individual personality and extends into the social sphere, reminding us of those higher human relationships which are so painfully absent in our present social order, or rather disorder. ... It is as though the psyche were the indispensable instrument in the reorganization of a civilized community as opposed to the collectivities which are so much in favour today, with their aggregations of half-baked mass-men. ... What our

²¹ Ibid., par. 487.

²² Ibid., par. 493.

²³ *The Living Symbol*, p. 321.

²⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerhard_Dorn

²⁵ CW 14, section VI; Edinger, *The Mystery Lectures*, pp. 275 through the end of the book.

²⁶ CW 16, par. 488.

world lacks is the *psychic connection*; and no clique, no community of interests, no political party, and no State will ever be able to replace this.”²⁷

²⁷ CW 16, par. 539.