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# The Cat

Marie-Louise von Franz, Honorary Patron

Studies in Jungian Psychology  
by Jungian Analysts

Daryl Sharp, General Editor

# The Cat

## A Tale of Feminine Redemption

Marie-Louise Von Franz



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Marie-Louise von Franz and C.G. Jung, about 1960

## Preface

Nowadays fairy tales are studied from many angles: from the standpoint of the history of literature, from the study of folklore, from ethnology, sociology and last but not least in terms of depth psychology. The latter is the viewpoint of this book, which is intended to teach how to recognize archetypal material and how to handle it from the standpoint of Jungian psychology.

I want to thank Mrs. Alison Kappes for typing the original transcript from the tapes of the seminar. My main and heartiest thanks go to Dr. Vivenne Mackrell without whose help the book would never have been completed, for she did more than editing.



Marie-Louise von Franz at Bollingen

# 1

## Introduction

When you have analysands, you will notice they often have important archetypal dreams which they don't recognize as such. Sometimes people wake up from an archetypal dream deeply shaken and you needn't say anything about it. They themselves feel and know that something essential has happened. The whole transforming emotion has come through. But other times you get dreams where people have very important archetypal motifs and tell them to you in a completely flippant voice. They don't realize in any way that there is something more than the usual in them. The only reaction they have, perhaps, is that instead of being shaken they are a bit puzzled. They laugh a bit and say, "I had a funny dream last night the kind that doesn't connect to anything I know."

In that case, if you don't realize it is an archetypal dream, if you don't notice the depth of it, you miss an enormous chance because, as Jung pointed out, an archetypal experience is the only healing factor in therapy. All the techniques we use help people to open up to the archetypal experience. But only the unconscious sends an archetypal experience and that is an act of grace which we cannot force; we can only wait and prepare for it and hope it will happen. If it doesn't happen, you can't do much. You might see some improvement with good counseling and so on, but there will be no real cure, no real help. Sometimes this helpful archetypal thing happens inconspicuously, so to speak. There's a sneaky little dream people tell with a funny little grin and then you ask, "Any associations?" and they say, "No," or tell you something they already knew, long ago . . . that's something you must be aware of.

More and more I see that people have not learned how to fish for the right associations. Many patients tend to jump at an interpretation instead of giving an association. They have a dream and say, "Oh, it's the negative mother getting me again," or something similar. You must just brush that aside. It is a conscious opinion; it might be right but ninety-five per-

cent of the time it can be wrong. And it is generally even a warding-off gesture of consciousness "Oh, I know all about that" in order to put it in the wastebasket. So you have to say, "No, no, come. Look at it. What do you associate to . . ." whatever is in the dream, and then you will find that with archetypal dreams, if people are not shaken by them, they generally have very few associations or very flat or poor ones. "Fire?" you ask. "Fire burns," they say, or "I once saw a fire," something trivial like that. In other words, the experience doesn't come through, and in that case you have to know the depth and the emotional weight of what is happening, and you have to express it in some form.

Now, it is no use to flood people in therapy with mythological associations. You must know them yourself, but you must not fire them at your patient like a machine gun. You have to know them in order to be amazed and shaken yourself, moved by the motif, and then somehow you will find the right words or the right context to convey what you feel. That can only be done on the spur of the moment. You cannot learn it ahead of time. But you can learn how to deal with archetypal material, to recognize it, to know its depth, and through that be ready for the right reaction. And that is why we practice fairy tale interpretation.

Fairy tales are much more difficult to deal with than local sagas, where the hero or heroine of the story is an ordinary human being. In a saga, a man goes into a destroyed castle at night, say, and suddenly a snake turns up with a golden crown, asks to be kissed and turns into a beautiful maiden and so on. The man who experiences that is an ordinary human being. He is you or me. And the story tells all his reactions, for instance that he thinks, "No, I don't want to kiss such a disgusting cold animal," and he is shivering with fear and then he thinks, "Oh, after all, the poor thing," or whatever else he feels. All that is described. He has human reactions.

The folklorist Max Lüthi has written a book on the differences between a fairy tale and a saga that he has worked out very clearly.<sup>1</sup> You can say that a saga is the tale of a conscious human being who has a numinous experience of the unconscious. And the numinous experience

<sup>1</sup>*Volksmärchen und Volkssagen*, 2nd. ed. (Bern and Munich: Franck Verlag, 1966).

meeting a snake with a golden crown, says described as if it were also reality, but that is because all mythology deals with gods and ghosts and demons as if they were as real as we are. There is always this description of coming to a threshold, an ego that meets something shocking, unusual, exciting, dramatic, and then there's a happy ending, or a failure and/or a dangerous threat; the hero has to escape and return home.

I would say that these sagas closely parallel what still happens today. In primitive and agricultural societies, people still have numinous experiences. In so-called civilized life we chase away the night with electric lights and think we are "enlightened," inwardly and outwardly protected against such things, but as soon as you live in the country where you have a long walk home in the dark, and the trees are rustling and it is completely pitch black, and you have drunk a glass or two too many, then everything can still happen! Just as it always did in the past. And so in sagas you have encounters with the unconscious that are told exactly as they happened. If they are exciting and interesting then the people tell them over and over. "There was once a man in our village and he went up in the night, up there to that old derelict mill, and when he approached it there were lights and he heard a noise and he went in," and so on.

Fairy tales, on the other hand, are an abstraction, as Lüthi calls them. That means you don't have a human ego encountering the world of the unconscious. You have fantasy stories in which fantasy beings or archetypal images of the unconscious deal with each other. That's one way to put it. In a saga there is our world-light of consciousness and the hero, who goes somewhere and meets an archetype or several archetypes. In a saga there is always this going over the threshold and sometimes the fearful running back.

Now in a fairy tale, you have a storyteller that's an ego who tells about the dance of archetypes happening in the unconscious. The hero in fairy tales is not a normal human being and has no human reaction. He is not frightened when he meets the dragon. He doesn't run away when a snake begins to talk to him. He doesn't get the jitters when the princess turns up at night by his bed and tortures him, or whatever happens. He is either intelligent or a Dummling a stupid, dumb person. He's courageous, quick-witted or clever, or something of the kind in a very sche-

matic way. And he just acts through the story bang, bang, bang, according to his nature. If he is courageous he fights everything. If he is witty he always makes a trick out of everything. He has absolutely no psychology, so to speak. He is a schematic figure. And if we look at him closely, we see a purely archetypal figure.

The only ego in fairy tales is the storyteller, who turns up sometimes at the beginning and sometimes at the end, but not in all stories. In certain countries, for instance in Romania, the storyteller might begin, "I once . . .," a kind of conventional formula, or, "At the end of the world, where there is no time and no space, behind the seven mountains and the blind dog, where the world is cluttered up with boards, there was once a king. . .," etcetera. And the storyteller recites that same little verse before every story: "At the end of the world, where the world is cluttered up with boards . . ." That's a sort of little verse. He makes a kind of *rite d'entrée*, and at the end you have a *rite de sortie*, like "I was at the wedding and I was in the kitchen and I stole some of the meat and the wine but the cook gave me a kick in the arse and that's why I've now flown here and told you the story." Or, for instance, the gypsies say, "There was a beautiful wedding and they ate and drank in happiness and I am the poor devil who has nothing to eat," and then go around with a hat collecting money. That is a *rite de sortie*. The storyteller shows first that we are now going into another world and at the end describes coming out of it, generally in a slightly joking way. And in between we hear about something that happened in the other world. So especially with these stories you must not project your own personal psychology and experience into them. You really have to go at them like a naturalist who observes fishes or trees as objectively as possible.

It is very important to learn this because when confronted with a dream, there's always the danger that the analyst will project his or her opinion. For instance, in comes a most effeminate young man who is not married and still lives at home with mama, and then you jump to the conclusion, perhaps even the right conclusion, "Oh, he is a mama's boy." And then he dreams about being eaten by a big snake and you think, "He has a mother complex." But that's not an interpretation. That is really just projecting what you think into the unconscious image. It may be

right if you have good intuition, but it is a very dangerous procedure because the unconscious, the healing process of the unconscious, never goes in a straight way. It always makes the most amazing detours.

You think, for instance, "Here is somebody who should detach from mama," but then perhaps there comes a whole series of dreams pushing him to improve his relationship to his mother. And you must be agile enough, and at the same time objective enough, to say, "This is strange. This doesn't suit me at all. But that is where the unconscious is leading so let's go with it." And you can only do that if you don't project your own opinion. Then in the end there comes a very clever turn of the unconscious, and you see that all the time it was leading up to detaching the young man from his mother, but by an unexpected detour which you would never have been clever enough to think of yourself. That's why you have to try to be objective and not jump to conclusions. You can learn that lesson best from fairy tales. You can read all about psychology but then you just have to look at what is there. What does the story tell apart from my opinion? That's the crucial thing to practice and to learn.

I once had a patient who had a negative mother complex. He came with many dreams, and was very often in a depressive, negative mood. He, as a person, wasn't like that but when he was in the anima he was always pessimistic. He would come to the hour with such a face and say, "The unconscious has criticized me again." And I would say, "Well, let's hear it!" And then he'd tell me a very good dream but with some negative motifs. He just picked on the negative ones. "There, it says again I'm nothing. I'm lost, I am on the wrong track," and on and on. I always just had to brush that aside and say, "Come now, let's begin at the beginning. Let's look at it objectively. Don't have your awful black anima pouring her black stuff on it again before you've even looked at it."

So even the patient may want to seduce you to twist the material according to your own opinions. Ultimately, of course, objectivity is only an approximation. We are bound to project our personality into a fairy tale; we see the things that appeal to us and we overlook things that are not in our makeup. So even a so-called objective interpretation is far from completely objective, but at least one can fight those very primitive ways of projecting and make an attempt in that direction.



Sacred Egyptian Cat, 30 B.C.  
(British Museum, No. 64391)

## 2 The Tale of the Cat

I have chosen a Romanian fairy tale, "The Cat,"<sup>2</sup> to give you some idea of what we can learn about individual psychology from archetypal motifs when we try to look at them objectively.

There was once an emperor and this emperor had so much money that he didn't know what to do with it. But he was, all the same, very unhappy because he had no children. He said to his wife, "Why are you so depressed?" She said, "My dear husband, I would like to take the carriage and go out for a walk." "Wait," he said, "I will build a ship for you." And he ordered a beautiful ship to be built, the most beautiful on earth. One could rather look into the sun without being blinded than look at this ship. And when he had finished it, he said to his wife, "My dear, tomorrow you can leave. The ship is ready." But then he said, "If you don't come back pregnant, you can't stay with me and must never appear before me again."

So she went into the ship with two female servants, and there was a long, long sea journey during which they couldn't see anybody at all on the sea or an island or anything. Then one night there was a terrific mist followed by a storm that shook the ship, and in the morning, when the mist and the storm had disappeared, the empress woke up and saw far away a big palace standing on the sea. The two servants came up and they all looked at it with amazement, and as they had not much more to eat, they stopped at the palace. She sent the servants to go there, and when they came back she asked, "Who lives there?" They said someone had told them the Mother of God lived there, and when they heard that, they didn't dare to go in.

So the empress pushed them aside and went in herself. In the courtyard she saw a beautiful apple tree with golden apples and she had a sudden desire to eat one. She said to the servants, "If I don't have one of those apples, I'll die." The servants tried to get close to the tree but they couldn't.

<sup>2</sup> MDW, *Zigeuner Märchen*, No. 41 (Düsseldorf-Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1962). [MDW refers throughout to *Die Märchen der Weltliteratur* (Fairy Tales of World Literature)]

The empress became very ill, so again the servants went to the apple tree and this time they succeeded in stealing an apple which they brought to her as quickly as they could. The empress ate the apple, vomited, and suddenly she felt as if she were already six months' pregnant. She was incredibly happy. She said, "Let's go home at once, for now my desire has been fulfilled."

But the Mother of God got up at that moment and noticed that the most beautiful apple on her tree was missing. "Who has stolen it?" she asked. Then she spoke a curse: "If a girl is born from this apple, she shall be as beautiful as the sun. One will be able to look in the sun without being blinded but one will not be able to look at her. But in her seventeenth year she shall become a cat. God made her do that. And with all those in her palace she shall be cursed until an emperor's son comes and cuts the head off the cat. Then they will all become human again. But until then, she must remain a cat."

When the empress arrived home pregnant, her husband was absolutely delighted. When the time came, she gave birth to a beautiful little girl and everybody was overjoyed. She grew up like an ordinary human being but on the day she was seventeen years old, at the table at midday, she suddenly turned into a cat and disappeared with all her servants.

Now, in a faraway country there was an emperor with three sons. His wife had died and he had begun to drink. As he wanted to get rid of his children, he called all three sons to him and said, "I will give you some orders. Whoever is capable should bring me linen material that is so thin one can blow through it and pull it through a needle. Every one of you shall bring me something and make me a present and then I shall see who is the biggest hero." They said, "Yes, father," and went to a big castle in the forest where they feasted and were together for the last time. Three times in three nights they drank and ate. Then they separated and each chose the way he wanted to go, promising to meet again in a year.

The eldest chose a way where he would suffer hunger but his horse would have food. The only thing he met was a beautiful little dog. He was away for two months.

The second brother went on a way where he had something to eat but his horse had nothing. He found a little bit of coarse linen that one could pull through the opening of a big needle if one absolutely wanted to do it. One had to pull very hard to get it through.

The youngest brother traveled through a dark forest, and suddenly there came such a heavy rain that he couldn't see anything. He was desperate. For three days and three nights it rained without ceasing and was completely dark. On the morning of the third day there was lightning, and in the light of the lightning he saw a palace before him. He said, "I will go straight to that palace. I can't go on anymore, whatever happens." But the door was closed and around it was a high wall going right up to heaven. "I'm dying from hunger," he said in his loneliness, but nobody heard him. Suddenly at the door he saw a piece of meat hanging and thought, "I'll get that piece of meat. I am so hungry. I've eaten nothing." But in reality that piece of meat was not meat but was made of precious stones and only had the form of meat. He climbed up the wall to get it, and when he touched this bit of meat with his foot he couldn't get away from it.

Suddenly he heard a bell ring and let himself fall down in his terror. When he fell, the door opened but he saw nobody, only a hand that opened the door. So he went in and said, "Well, I will go in whatever will happen." He looked around and saw not a single human being. In one room, finally, he saw a table with a candle and a bed, and said, "Oh well, I'll go in there and rest because I am wet from the rain." Then, as soon as he wanted to sit down on the bed, ten hands appeared but with no human beings attached to them. They beat the hero and pulled all the clothes from his body, but he saw nobody. In his despair he said, "Oh God, who is beating me like this?" They only stopped beating him when he was completely naked. Then he suddenly saw food on the table and beautiful clothes to put on, so he began to eat and put on those clothes.

Now he felt better again and on the second day he went to another room. He wanted to see what would happen and everything happened as before. Again those hands pulled the clothes from his body and beat him and then he got some food. The third day the empress ordered her men cats to lead the young hero into the big room where everything was made of pure gold, and they brought him clothes of pure gold. When he went in, one hundred cats sang and made music. They put the hero onto a throne of pure gold and he thought, "I don't really know who rules here," but then he discovered a beautiful little cat lying in a golden basket.

The empress of the cats pleased the young man until once at midnight, after a festival, she got up from her basket and said, "From now on I am no longer the ruler of this palace. This young man is your master." And all

the cats greeted him as their ruler. The empress of the cats took the hero by the hand and embraced him, saying, "My dear hero, why have you come here?" And he said, "My dear cat, God leads people on different ways and my father has sent me to find some linen which should be so thin that one could blow through it and put it through a needle, and I have come to find that."

His two older brothers were already home again. They had waited for their brother but when they saw he wasn't coming, they went home. The eldest brought the little dog with him and that pleased the father very much. The middle brother brought his bit of coarse linen that went through a big needle. And the father asked, "Where is the youngest one?" And the middle brother says, "Father, I haven't seen him since we separated from each other. He'll probably not come back." So they all thought he had died and they cried and were very sorry.

Now after a while, the cat said one day to the hero, "My dear, don't you want to go home? The year is over when you were to meet again." He replied, "No, no, I don't want to go home. What should I do at home? I'm happy here. I'll stay here until my end." "No, you may not," she said. "If you want to stay here, you must first go back home and you must bring your father what you promised." He said, "But how can I find such thin linen with fine threads?" She replied, "Oh, that's no problem." The hero asked, "Tell me, my dear cat, is it true that three days with you are as much as a year?" "Yes. Even more. Since you left where you came from, nine years have passed." The young hero couldn't believe it and said, "How can one year be nine years? And then how can I go back? It will take me nine years to go back to my father." The cat said, "Give me that whip hanging on the wall. The fire whip." She made a sound with the whip in three directions and a lightning car came. [It's not explained what a lightning car is. It's just a carriage lightning carriage. And later it's called a fire carriage.]

They went into the lightning carriage and she again made a sound with her whip and the carriage went down and then she said, "Now, are you ready? You can go home." Then they were already at the place, now she said, "Take this nut with you, but don't open it till your father asks you to give him the linen."

When the fiery carriage came down from the sky, his brothers and father were quite terrified. The father said, "Have you brought me some-

thing, son? Have you brought the linen?" and he said, "Yes, father." With those words he broke the nut, and in the nut he found a corn of maize. He broke that open and found a corn of wheat. Then he got angry and thought, "The damn cat has cheated me," and said, "To the devil with the cat. She has cheated me." But as soon as he said that, he felt invisible claws scratching his hands and they were covered with blood. So he opened the corn of wheat and he found in it the seed of a weed which grows along the path. When he opened that seed, he got out of it one hundred meters of thin, fine linen, and gave that to his father who said, "My son, you must have the crown because you have found the most beautiful linen." The hero said, "No father, I am rich enough. I already have an empire where I can live and I want to go back there." But the father said "No, you can't go back there. First each of you must find a wife because I must control whom you marry. After that, we will decide." "All right," said the brothers, and they went.

The youngest brother got into the fire carriage with the cat and they went back. When they arrived, the cat asked, "Now, what have you done?" and he told her everything. But now he didn't know how to find a wife. The cat listened very carefully and said not a word. Then he lived with her another month until one day she said, "Don't you want to go home?" "Oh, I don't want to go home. I have no reason."

In time they began to be in love with each other. Then the young hero said one day to the cat, "Why are you a cat?" And she said, "Don't ask me yet. Ask me some other time. I hate to live in the world. Let's go together to your father." Again she took her whip and made a sound with the whip in all three directions and the fiery carriage came, so they arrived at his home in it.

When the father saw them, he said, "Have you no wife? You are not married? Where is your wife?" The young hero showed the cat and said, "Here she is. This cat here." And the cat sat in its golden basket. "Oh Lord, what do you want with a cat? You can't even talk with her." The cat became very angry. She jumped out of the basket and went into another room. There she did a somersault and changed into a beautiful girl.

When she came back, the young hero went toward her and embraced her. His father and brothers were absolutely petrified. The father was so delighted with the beautiful girl that he said, "Truly you have the most beautiful wife. You must become my successor and have my whole em-

pire." But the girl couldn't stay long in her human state. The hero said to the father, "No, father. That won't do. I already have an empire and a crown. So give it to my oldest brother." And while he said that, the cat made another somersault, became a cat again and lay in her golden basket.

So the emperor gave the crown to the eldest son. The young hero left with the cat, but he was angry with her because she was still a cat. She said, "My dear, I will explain to you later why I have to be a cat. There's a curse on me." Then again they lived in their cat empire as before.

One day the cat sharpened three Turkish sabers [a type of sword called a Yatagan]. When the hero came home from hunting, they talked a little and the cat pretended to be sick. "My dear, what's the matter with you?" he asked. "Oh, I'm very sick. If you love me and want to do something good for me, then cut off my tail. It's too big and too heavy. I can't carry it anymore." The young hero was desperate and said, "No, you mustn't die, I would rather die myself. I have a cream, I will heal you with that." But as she insisted more and more that he should cut off her tail, he finally did it. What happened to her? She changed into a girl. But only half. To the hips she was a girl and the other half was still a cat.

When the hero saw this he was delighted, but the cat didn't stop. She said, "I hate life. I don't want to go on living. Please cut my head off. You can have my whole empire." "How can you ask me to cut your head off?" "If you love me and want to do something good for me, then cut my head off." Finally he couldn't resist, so he took one of the Yatagans and cut her head off. In that moment she became totally a beautiful girl, all the cats who were in the palace became human beings and the whole town was redeemed as she was and everybody was delighted. They embraced each other in great happiness and then she said, "From now on you are my husband. I was cursed by the Mother of God until an emperor's son would cut off my head. Now let's go to your father, but be careful of your brothers. They want to kill you."

So they went back to his father who didn't know how to show his delight. But he fell in love with the wife of his son, the cat lady, so he tried to kill his own son to get the young girl. Once he said to him, "Go hunting. I want some game." When the beautiful wife was alone, he went to her room, but on the way there was suddenly a cat in his path. Then he told his daughter-in-law that she should love him, but she hit him in the face and said, "What do you want, you old horror!"

When her husband came home, she told him what his father had done. "We must leave here at once. Let's go home." The son pretended to be friendly to his father and not to have heard anything. "It's nice of you to talk to my wife," he said. But the father wanted to force him and said, "If you don't let me have your wife, I'll hang you." "If I should die this evening," the son answered, "you must know my wife will never let me die." So the father ordered that he should be imprisoned with his wife. When the two heard that, they escaped, and the hero said to his father, "You know, father, you have only to wait a short time, and my wife will punish you." When they got back to their kingdom they mustered an enormous army and declared war on the father. What could the old emperor do? He had to have a battle with the emperor of the cats.

In three days, he had his own army there but the son destroyed the army of his father. Only the father remained alive. When he saw that he was lost and had no more strength, he said to his son, "Please pardon me. I have done nothing wrong in my whole life. Judge rightly and you will rule my empire with justice."

And where I have come from, that I have told you.

Let's look first at the dance of the archetypes. In one place you have an emperor and an empress, and they are barren; they have no children. And then somewhere else we have another emperor and three sons. His wife has died and that's why he begins to drink. Then the youngest son, at the end, marries the cat. We don't hear any more about the cat's parents. At the end the alcoholic emperor is defeated by the hero and asks for mercy when his whole army is overcome. And we can assume that the hero says "Go to hell" and doesn't kill him. The eldest son becomes an emperor. The fate of this whole country is a question mark at the end. It's not clear what happens to it, whether it is incorporated into the cat empire or left with the eldest son who was designed to have the crown. What becomes of the middle son is not known. That whole situation remains completely unsatisfactory. So, at the end we have only the hero with the cat in her palace. The *coniunctio* is the main final motif.

If you have had some experience with fairy tales, you know that different countries sometimes have a very definite fate. One is barren and is renewed; or one is all feminine and another only masculine and they are

united, or something of the kind, so that one can generally make out what these countries mean and what their fate is. This is an atypical fairy tale in that it is not clear what will happen with these countries. There is a kind of blissful two-ness, happiness in the cat empire in the end. A completely new empire. The others seem to fade out of the picture.

We first have to discuss what an emperor and an empress are, and also what these two empires mean, what they have to do, and what's the matter therewith there is this strange mechanism.

Until the end of the First World War Romania belonged to the Habsburg Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Romanian fairy tales, there is always an emperor, never a king. Their concept of a king is an emperor so they always call a king the emperor. But we can simply replace it by the usual fairy tale king. It's only from this Romanian specialty that it's an emperor. And we have two empires; one where the feminine is barren and the other where the feminine has died away.

Now we have to go into the symbolism of the king or emperor. Jung gives a summary of the meaning of the king, especially in Egypt and with it the king in alchemy.<sup>3</sup> But that is only in special realms where the same meaning comes through everywhere. If you want to look first at more simple and primitive material, read J.G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*.<sup>4</sup> There you will find an endless collection of stories of the holy, sacred role of the chief in primitive tribes, the magic meaning of the king. In certain tribes he may not touch the ground. He is always carried about so as not to defile himself by touching the ground. In others, when he has eaten, everything is destroyed. The plates he has eaten from are destroyed so that they are not made profane by being used by other people. Or they have special food, special clothes or have to observe specific taboos and so on.

The well-being and psychological functioning of the chief, as well as his physiological functioning (for instance, his potency is very important

<sup>3</sup>*Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, chapter IV. [CW refers throughout to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* (Bollingen Series XX). 20 vols. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. Ed. H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, Wm. McGuire. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953-1979]

<sup>4</sup> New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966.

in many tribes), guarantee the well-being of the tribe. And therefore any breaking of the taboos, or illness or misbehavior of the chief, is an illomen for the whole tribe. He is the one individual in the tribe, its life center. In certain tribes, when he falls ill he is eliminated, generally sacrificed and replaced by another. In others it is simply a term; after a year, or five years or ten, he is sacrificed. These chiefs know when they become chief that they will be killed, sometimes in a very cruel manner, walled into a hut and starved to death or sacrificed in some way.

The idea is obviously that the chief represents what we would psychologically call the Self, the life center or nucleus of the collective psyche. He is a symbol of the Self. That remained so with the king in Egypt, and you can also find beautiful material in Needham<sup>5</sup> or in Marcel Granet<sup>6</sup> where the emperor in China had this same role, only there it was much more spiritualized. It was not so much his potency or physical well-being that decided the fate of the empire, but his being in Tao. If the emperor was out of himself, or if he did something wrong, lost his inner balance, then the old Chinese believed that the whole Chinese Empire was in disorder. When there were droughts or catastrophes or the Yangtze River flooded or something like that, the emperor always had to do some soul searching to find out where he was wrong, and he then had to fast and do penitence to put the empire right again.

What is striking in this Chinese variation is that it is completely psychological. It's not the physical well-being of the emperor or what he does. Physically, he had no duties. The emperor in China was not supposed to govern, to give orders or do anything. He had to speak a little and to keep all the rules but to speak as little as possible and mainly attend to his own inner balance. In that way he was much more a priest-king, or a priest-emperor, because his being in contact with the Tao was the essential factor that guaranteed the well-being of China. There you see clearly that he represents the Self.

Now, all over the world you find this motif, that the king-emperor has

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954).

<sup>6</sup> Marcel Granet, *La Pensée Chinoise* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1968).

to be sacrificed or exiled after a while. In later Egypt it was humanized. The king, who represented the sun god, was no longer sacrificed, but he went through the Sed festival every five years, a festival in which he was symbolically sacrificed and renewed. In the liturgy it was said, "You are new again, you are renewed, you are again the young king," and so on. So it was transformed into a psychological death and rebirth ritual instead of the actual killing of the king. But the feature that either he has to be actually killed or deposed or go through a renewal, this you find all over the world, in the most primitive documents as well as in such complex civilizations as China or Egypt.

That shows, as Jung explained, that symbols of the Self, collective symbols of the Self, wear out. Religions, convictions, truths, they all age. Everything that has been talked about too much and which has for a while ruled human society is deficient in the sense that it ages. It becomes mechanical, too well known, a possession of consciousness. People feel that by knowing about it they have it. And this affects the highest values most because smaller things do vary after a while and it doesn't matter. But if the highest values wear out, if they lose their shattering numinous quality, then naturally there is a great danger. And that's why, for instance, keeping taboos degenerates into simply keeping formalities without seeing any meaning in them. One is no longer moved by the myth which is behind every taboo. "Oh, that damn old story again, I've heard it twenty times. So what!" That again comes from this negative quality of human consciousness in that it becomes blasé; it becomes the owner of truth, and if you can own a truth, if the truth does not own you but you own the truth, then the situation is the wrong way round. That is partly a deficiency of human consciousness and another part is naturally that human situations change. That is the inner reason for the renewal of the kingdom, of the need for the renewal of the kingship.

Generally, there are also outer reasons. The lives of people or the requirements which a tribe or a whole empire has to meet change; there are modernizations, outside influences from other angles. Now, for instance, the Western world is enormously influenced by Eastern spirituality. The East, on the other hand, is influenced by our Western industrial goals, and in such moments there is a need for readaptation. You cannot go on

in the old ways. Your whole universe has changed and with it you have to answer with a new truth. So outer reasons also contribute to the fact that kingdoms and rulers age, and with that what they stand for, namely a religious truth, which presupposes also a certain political outlook, a certain judicial outlook, certain social customs and prejudices. Every great civilization is a block united by one spirit, and that one spirit is the king. That falls apart and there you have the reason for the several kingdoms in many fairy tales.

Here we have two kingdoms, the cat-daughter kingdom and the drunken father kingdom. In Grimm's "The Golden Bird,"<sup>7</sup> there are even four kingdoms the hero goes from one kingdom to the other and unites them all in the end. So, first of all we have to ask what those many kingdoms are? That happens only if something is wrong in a kingdom. In one kingdom there are only daughters and in another only sons that's the most common factor and they must marry because both are incomplete. In general, one kingdom has attributes compensatory to those in the other. But that already sketches a situation where a civilization is no longer united, where the ruling principle, which Jung calls "the dominant of collective consciousness," has fallen into compartments.

For instance, for two thousand years in Western culture the dominant of collective consciousness has been the figure of Christ. Most of the rulers of this culture have been representatives of Christian civilization. They had to see that in their empire or kingdom the Christian rules were kept. They stood for that, so to speak. (We had unfortunately in Europe in the Middle Ages this battle between Pope and kings which was *Sacerdotium* versus *Imperium* that has never been quite decided who is on top and who installs kings or doesn't but that's a special situation.)

Nowadays, with the Christian kingdom certainly in very bad shape, badly in need of sacrifice and renewal, you can see that it is falling apart, into compartments, in the sense that certain areas of life are no longer ruled by any religious spirit. They are looked at as purely technical. For instance, our laws are still mostly based on Christian ideas but even that is now changing. People want to replace certain Christian principles by

<sup>7</sup>*The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1944), p. 272.

ideas of justice which are not based on Christian ideas of justice but on a more modern, enlightened idea of justice. Education has nearly completely slipped out of the Christian grip. For instance, in our state schools you are no longer taught the Christian religion. Only in private schools do they still have prayers at the beginning of the morning and such things. In the state schools, there are children from different religions and backgrounds, so you can't have that anymore.

There you see how certain areas of collective life are no longer in that empire. These are little empires that build within the larger one. There are sub-empires everywhere. That is a dangerous situation which always means something is wrong with the main symbol of the Self. Something is wrong with the central religious ideas of this civilization because they no longer have the power to keep the whole thing unified. A symbol of the Self also means oneness. And the idea of a king or an emperor is always to unite. You still have that a bit in the United Kingdom where the members of the Commonwealth are independent but the king and the queen, as symbols, still hold them together. That's the oneness; it keeps the Commonwealth together symbolically although the individual countries are independent. They would never submit to the English parliament, but the king and the queen are symbols, and to a symbol people submit. That's the importance of a symbol: it stands for something more than just political rights and considerations. It stands for an archetypal idea of the Self, of oneness. And the most amusing thing is that when you analyze the Swiss, they constantly have dreams about the English queen. The unconscious longs so desperately for a symbol that it borrows a queen from another country. That shows the power of a symbol.

So, these two empires in our story show that there is a compartmentalization of collective life. We must now look at their different characteristics. One has no children and the other has no wife. Let us go first to the one that has no children.

Before a hero child is born you often have a period of barrenness or some difficulty in getting children. You have this beginning in fairy tales a hundred times. For instance, in an Austrian tale, "The Black Princess,"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> MDW, *Deutsche Märchen aus dem Donaulande* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1926), p.

*(footnote continued on the next page)*

a king and queen have no children and the queen goes over a bridge and prays to the statue of Christ. That doesn't help, so she thinks, "Oh well," and she prays to the statue of the devil instead and then she promptly becomes pregnant. But later there is a curse on the child. It's a parallel to our story because also when the princess is sixteen, she suddenly says, "Father and mother, I have spoken until now, but I will never speak again. Bury me in a cathedral in a coffin," and then she becomes a black demon in the church. They have men standing guard by the coffin and she tears into them, beats them every night, until a hero comes and redeems her from that awful state. There too you have the theme that the parents have no children for a long time. And the devil is the godfather of that black princess.

There is also a Norwegian fairy tale about a queen who can't have children.<sup>9</sup> A wise old woman tells her to wash and then to pour the dirty wash water under the bed, where two flowers will grow, a dark and a light one. She should eat only the light one. But the queen is greedy and eats both, and then naturally she has two children instead of one, a light child and a dark one. And so it goes.

Thus, the sentence in a fairy tale saying the queen can't have any children always leads up to the special hero child. Now what would that mean psychologically? Why is there such a long barrenness before the hero child is born?

Generally, first there is this period of depression, of emptiness, of nothing going on, and the longer this lasts, the more you can reckon that an enormous amount of energy accumulates in the unconscious. For something important to come up, you need this period of nothing happening, so to speak, in consciousness. I notice this for instance when I write an article. If I just think, "Oh, that's interesting," and go and write it, then it is superficial blather. But when I first fall into a depression and can't do anything for a long time, the longer that lasts, the more something will come out that is a bit better. So I even distrust what I write

*(footnote continued from the previous page)*

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<sup>9</sup> MDW, *Norwegische Volksmärchen*, No. 32, "Zottelhaube" (Düsseldorf-Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1967).

when I don't have a depression before. I know that it's just cheap stuff, not truly from the belly, so to speak; for something good you first have to go down for a long period. This can either take the form of a depression or just that nothing happens. Life goes on; one eats one's breakfast, does one's work, has no interesting dreams and it's just utter boredom. Barrenness. Nothing is going on.

Once I had such a period and became very impatient and thought, "Well, this is the end. I'm getting senile. I'm finished," and so on. Then in a dream I saw a cut through the earth and above stood an explanation, a very scientific explanation, about how a spring comes into life. There was first grass, then earth, then ground, and then some solid clay. There were big drops of rain falling. And then somebody explained the rainfall: it comes through here, accumulates there, and then after a time, suddenly, a source will gush out as a spring. That was the explanation in the dream. I thought, "Oh well. Now I know why I have to wait for the rain," so to speak. It was a wonderful experience. I had gone to bed and said to the unconscious, "I have no dreams, nothing is happening. Life is a bore. Please, give me a dream to explain the situation."

Another time I dreamt that I went to the main train station and there they were shunting, and a man with a red cap was just going under and hooking two wagons together. Then he came out, grinned at me and said, "It always takes a long time till a new composition can go out of the station." You see, the unconscious cannot just produce on command. There is a long process going on in the unconscious, as if it is collecting and balancing its forces. If you think of the psyche as a self-regulating system, it seems that the energies must all be in the right place before something new can emerge.

Now, in our fairy tale the empress is unhappy. She wants to go for a walk but the emperor says no, she shouldn't take a walk, she should take a ship. And then he says, "If you don't come back pregnant, you can't stay with me."

Obviously, something is not quite right in the marriage. I would guess she is bored, or else why doesn't she stay with him? He's not too happy with her either, since he says he won't take her back if she doesn't become pregnant. So there is this allusion that the marital situation between

emperor and empress, the male and the female principle in this story, though not in a battle, are not in harmony either. That also has to do with the barrenness. There's a kind of truce; probably they're polite to each other but there's no real eros between the two. That adds to the barrenness. And then she wants to walk, which is unusual in such tales. Generally she just sits in her palace and waits for a frog or an old wise woman or something to come and give her good advice. It is an unusual or abnormal motif, that she wants to roam and leave the palace. So one has to ask what is wrong with the feminine principle. Well, it seems the empress feels confined, which would mean that in this kingdom the feminine principle cannot move around in the right way, and therefore it becomes restless. She wants to take a carriage, but the emperor says, "No, I will build you a ship."

Now we will go to the initial situation in the other kingdom, namely that there is an emperor with three sons who has lost his wife and taken to drink. What is wrong in that compartment? We can assume that these are compartments of Christian civilization in Romania but we don't know the date. I think it's not a very old story, perhaps the fourteenth or fifteenth century, something like that. The feminine has died in the second empire. So we must consider how a civilization looks when the feminine has died.

If one visits places where there are pure male societies, freemasons or the army, one can see how the world looks when men are only among themselves. In boys' schools, for example, there is a certain tendency toward a hierarchy. It is very often purely intellectual. In armies it's not so much intellectual but very objective. There are no subjective considerations; the rules must be kept according to the rules. They are never related to the person, and the men pride themselves on this. Women tend to be more subjective; if they like a man they let him through the rules, but if they don't, the rules are firm. Just because you have such a nice face, the rules don't apply to you. A woman's world is usually flexible, while a man's world is more rigid.

Khomeini was a good example of wanting to restore a purely male world. There you see what can happen. But both have their advantages. Think of what it's like when women are grouped together without men.

A girls' school, a nunnery, a hospital full of female nurses, or here in Switzerland we had a girls' school called "The Ape Box." Instead of a hierarchy and aggressive fighting, you have a malicious playing of tricks, whispering against each other, playing spider tricks on each other, exchanging love letters and giggling. Naturally the power thing goes on, but it's played with a weapon of poison, not with brutality or aggression. It's done with needling and little jealousies and so on. Positively, there is a certain realism. For instance, if you look at a male doctors' society talking about a patient and a female nurse group talking about a patient, the doctor group is likely to say, "That's an interesting cancer. I've never seen such a thing before." And the nurses will say, "I don't like that man, but I think he is unhappy at home. I saw his wife visiting him and I didn't feel they . . ." So, the women are interested in making a diagnosis on the personal level, which is just as justified, and the men tend to make it on the objective level. Too much of one or too much of the other is, to my mind, detrimental. They are two complementary worlds which are meant to belong together.

Now, in our empire the feminine has died away so we can say there must be too much masculinity of some kind. And here there is a special hint, namely that the emperor took to drink when he lost his wife. I've never found a king who drinks. It's a unique story.

Alcoholism is a famous abandonment syndrome. Many cases of alcoholism are due to either imagined or real abandonment. Every alcoholic will talk about feeling unloved, alone, and so on, but sometimes it's not true. Sometimes there are people who care for them but they still feel that way. Others really are abandoned and drink for that reason. Abandonment is an element that always comes with alcoholism, so you have to look for it. That is why Alcoholics Anonymous is so successful. The intense personal care is absolutely necessary to get over this abandonment syndrome. To ensure the person really feels cared for, somebody must care daily, so to speak. Otherwise one can't pull people out of it.

I would say that largely it is a love problem, a partner problem, an eros problem. With women alcoholics it is generally a man problem. In men it naturally takes the form of an anima problem, their eros problem, a woman problem. Something doesn't function with their anima; they

don't have the right contact with her. And vice versa for women, contact with the animus is poor. The way to the unconscious is blocked. So there is a longing for an ecstatic religious experience. And that leads to alcoholism or other drugs. Addiction in general, you can say, is a longing for an ecstatic religious state because life is dreary, meaningless and boring. One's work has no meaning, or the home life is cold and unsympathetic. Then there is this longing for an ecstatic state. The dryness is not always in outer circumstances. Sometimes the dryness is also in the individual. I have known cases where the person couldn't touch their own emotion. It was blocked, so to speak, imprisoned in a rational attitude and could not come out. And in one case, a normally very shy woman drank because then she could be outgoing, and she enjoyed it, being emotional and talking to people, so she drank all the time to be able to do so. It was a means to make the bridge to the unconscious.

So we see the emperor is not only cut off from the feminine, but also from the unconscious. We can say that is a dried-out situation, which would mean that ruling in this country is one area of Christian civilization that has lost its inspiration, its inspired feeling, and has probably just become a kind of routine duty. Thus there is a compensatory longing for an ecstatic experience. In the other empire, it's just plain no more love and no fertility and therefore, in the feminine realm, a kind of restless roaming about to find a solution.

All the movement in this story happens through the feminine. The empress goes over the sea. Then the cat takes the initiative. The cat tells the hero to go home or back again. The cat tells the hero how to redeem her. The cat rules the whole story. So, all the action is initiated by the feminine. The story shows how the feminine principle brings up a healing compensation by becoming active. The men just follow the orders of the women. That is clearly compensating a too patriarchal conscious situation. One must understand that such fairy tales emerge to compensate the ruling attitude.



The Black Madonna of Einsiedeln, Switzerland  
(See below, pages 4041)

## 3

## The Journey to the Virgin Mary

To return to our story, at the beginning the emperor and the empress have no children and the wife wants to roam about. The emperor builds her a ship to do so, such a beautiful ship that there is nothing else on earth of the kind: "One could rather look into the sun without being blinded than look at this ship." When it is finished, he says, "Tomorrow you can leave, but if you don't come back pregnant, you can't stay with me and must never appear before me again." And with that ship she goes over the sea and comes to the palace of the Virgin Mary.

First of all, the ship is a feminine vessel, universally referred to as "she." The ship is very often associated with the moon and moon goddesses, and also sometimes with the sun, for instance in Egypt, as the barge that carries the sun across the sky. It facilitates communication, commerce and cultural diffusion. Here again it seems to be feminine in that it makes connections and brings people together. The ship is a symbol based on the idea of a human construction, for it is a human invention to go where one normally cannot go by foot, to go over the water. That is the basic fact and miracle of the ship, so to speak, which is then associated with all these archetypal symbols, the feminine and the moon and fertility and the womblike quality of the ship.

So, I think therefore that the meaning of the ship as an institution, for instance as the Buddhist law, the Dharma, or to represent the Church or the Ark of Salvation, Noah's Ark and so on, is the basic, most important meaning, because these also are human constructions. But they are not constructions in our modern technological sense of the word. All these archaic inventions of man the carriage, the ship, implements for agriculture, the plow, all these first inventions always had a miraculous meaning for man. Their inventors always felt they were based on revelation. They didn't feel as a modern inventor feels: "I, with my clever wits, have invented a new machine." The ancient inventor always felt that a godhead had revealed or had provided something miraculous. Therefore

these first technical inventions, bridges, ships, carriages, always had a sacred meaning first. They were believed to have been given to man by the gods.

A most beautiful story of invention is found among the Australian aborigines who tell how they found the bow and the arrow. They say the Rainbow Man, one of the original archetypal beings of the Dream Time, came down to earth and his wife embraced him, hanging around his neck. That was the string, and the Rainbow Man together with the embrace of the wife were the bow and the string. By coming down and showing themselves in that position, they enabled the Australians to invent the bow. The Rainbow Man and his wife disappeared into the earth and from then on Australians used the bow and arrow.<sup>10</sup> That is a beautiful illustration of how early man felt about an invention. It was always magic. The melting of iron, the making of swords, was also surrounded by enormous magic rituals and was always looked on as a sacred, divine thing, a miracle.<sup>11</sup>

So the ship has this quality of being a miraculous human invention, but one which stems from the gods and actually is a revelation of a form of a goddess, which man has then imitated with his mind. Therefore it still carries this numinous quality. The ship goes over the waters of the unconscious. We know that water generally is a symbol of the collective unconscious, therefore the ship has always had the meaning of being something that keeps you afloat and makes it possible for you not to drown in the unconscious. Any philosophy, religious teaching or cultural tradition is such a thing, like a ship that protects us. If we were to go into the unconscious unprepared, we would drown.

Jungian psychology is another such ship. Jung made a ship by creating certain hypotheses to which one can cling when one doesn't know up from down. When one is in danger of drowning in the unconscious, of having a huge inflation or something of the kind, falling into a possession or being overwhelmed by an affect, then such psychological con-

<sup>10</sup> Information from a lecture given by John Layard.

<sup>11</sup> See Mircea Eliade, *The Forge and the Crucible*, chapters 1 and 2 (trans. Stephen Corbin; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

cepts as Jung's can help. The analyst can tell you, for instance, "Now you have fallen into an inflation," or by using dream interpretation we try to keep ourselves and the patient afloat. All teachings and traditions have some value in preventing one from complete disorientation, which is a typical effect when one touches the unconscious; one becomes disoriented and that's the drowning.

Now, our empress first wanted to go with a carriage, which is a similar symbol. The carriage also has a feminine meaning; it is associated with the sun and the moon, and there are many traditions where the sun and the moon and the stars go in carriages or boats across the sky. In ancient Greece you have the ship-carriage. The Thospis carriage in which Dionysus revealed himself in Athens was a boat, a boat with wheels that was brought into the town. The interesting thing is that the empress wants to go over land with a carriage, but the emperor says no and has a special boat built for her. We said earlier that the empress was strangely restless. Generally, when a woman becomes pregnant she wants to stay put, but instead of that the empress wants to roam. We have said that she probably feels confined and has to search for something. One can say, it's like an unconscious drive to go on a quest. Actually she goes on the night sea journey.<sup>12</sup> But she wants to go over land and the emperor says no, she must go in a ship. What does that mean?

If she goes over land, she remains on the field of consciousness, for land is generally what we can stand upon, known territory. So, if she wants to go around the park in a carriage, it means she wants to remain in the known territory of consciousness. But the emperor has better intuition. He knows that something more must happen, that something from the unconscious has to come in. This is a strange idea because it is much more dangerous to send his wife over the sea in a ship. But he wants the bigger risk. He even says she must come back pregnant! We have spoken about that; perhaps he wanted to get rid of her. At the very least it shows

<sup>12</sup> [Jung writes: "The night sea journey is a kind of *descensus ad inferosa* descent into Hades and a journey to the land of ghosts somewhere beyond this world, beyond consciousness, hence an immersion in the unconscious." ("The Psychology of the Transference," *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, CW 16, par. 455) See also *Symbols of Transformation*, CW 5, pars. 308ff.Ed.]

an ambivalent attitude toward her. But he certainly has the right insight, that stronger medicine is needed, a night sea journey, something of the unconscious. The sea is full of monsters and gods and leads to unknown mythic shores, unknown islands where gods or demons live. So he seems to have had a hunch. We need an excursion into that area of reality, into the numinous, the unknown, if we want to become fertile, to be renewed, because the child of the king always represents the possibility of renewal.

Before we go further into the ship, I want to link it up with the next symbol, the palace of the Virgin Mary. At the time when the gospel history begins, she had her home in Galilee, in Nazareth. Of her parentage nothing is recorded in any extent historical document of the first century. In early life she became the wife of Joseph and the mother of Jesus Christ; that she later had other children is a natural inference from Matthew 1:25. The Scriptures regarding her show that she followed our Lord. She was present at the Crucifixion, where she was commended by Jesus to the care of the apostle John (John 19:26-27), Joseph having apparently died before this time. Mary is mentioned in Acts 1:14 as having been among those who continued in prayer with the apostles at Jerusalem during the interval between the Ascension and Pentecost. There is no allusion in the New Testament to the time or place of her death.

The doctrine of Mary's Perpetual Virginity was, to say the least, of no importance in the eyes of the evangelists, and there is no evidence of its having been anywhere taught within the pale of the Catholic Church of the first three centuries. On the contrary, to Tertullian the fact of Mary's marriage after the birth of Christ is a useful argument for the reality of the Incarnation against Gnostic notions, and Origen relies upon the references to the Lord's brethren as disproving Docetism with which he had to contend. The doctrine of perpetual virginity, though very ancient, is in reality of non-Catholic origin. The *Protevangelium Jacobi* was written, it is generally admitted, within the second century. According to this very early source, which seems to have formed the basis of the later *Liber de Mariae et Christi salvatoris* and *Evangelium de nativitate Mariae*, the name of Mary's father was Joachim. From her third to her twelfth year, "Mary was in the Temple as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel." When she became of nubile

age the priests sought a guardian for her among the widowers of Israel, "lest she should defile the sanctuary of the Lord":<sup>13</sup> and Joseph, an elderly man with a family, was indicated for this charge by a miraculous token. Some time afterward the Annunciation took place.

When the Virgin's pregnancy was discovered, Joseph and she were brought before the high priest, and though asserting their innocence in all sincerity, were acquitted only after they had been tried with "the water of the ordeal of the Lord" (Num. 5:2). The physical virginity of Mary became important to the leaders of the Church only in the fourth century, as for example to Ambrose, who sees in Ezekiel 44:13 a prophetic indication of so great a mystery.<sup>14</sup>

While much of the apocryphal literature of the early sects, in which she is repeatedly spoken of as "undefiled before God," would seem to encourage such a doctrine of her absolute sinlessness, many passages from the acknowledged Church Fathers could be cited to show that it was originally quite unknown to Catholicism.

In the fourth century, Mary's peculiar relation to the Godhead, which specially fits her for successful intercession on behalf of mankind, is met with frequently, for instance in Eusebius, Athanasius, Didymus and Gregory of Nazianzus. If its use was first recommended by a desire to bring into prominence the divinity of the Incarnate Word, there can be no doubt that later the expression came to be valued as directly honorable to Mary herself.

One can refer to the first sermon of Proclus, preached at Constantinople about the year 430, or to that of Cyril of Alexandria delivered in the Church of the Virgin Mary at the opening of the Council of Ephesus in 431. In the former, the orator speaks of "the holy Virgin and Mother of God" as "the spotless treasure-house of virginity, the spiritual paradise of the second Adam; the workshop in which two natures were welded to-

<sup>13</sup> Book of James, p. 42, viii, 1 and 2, in M.R. James, trans., *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945).

<sup>14</sup>*De Inst. Virg.*, "quae est haec porta nisi Maria? . . . per quam Christus intravit in hunc mundum, quando virginali fusus est partu et genitalia virginitatis claustra non solvit." ("What is this gate if not Mary? . . . through which Christ entered this world when he came forth from a virginal birth and did break the closed genitals of virginity.")

gether . . . . the one bridge between God and men."15 In the latter she is saluted as the

mother and virgin . . . through whom the Trinity is glorified and worshipped, the cross of the Saviour exalted and honored, through whom heaven triumphs, the angels are made glad, devils driven forth, the tempter overcome, and the fallen creature raised up even to heaven.

After the decision of the Council of Ephesus, which declared her to be Theotokos, Mother of God, her cult spread like wildfire. Justinian in one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire, and he inscribes the high altar in the new Church of St. Sophia with her name. Narses looks to her for directions on the field of battle. The emperor Heraclius bears her image on his banner. John of Damascus speaks of her as the sovereign lady to whom all creation has been made subject by her son. Peter Damian recognizes her as the most exalted of all creatures, and apostrophizes her as deified and endowed with all power in heaven and in earth, yet not forgetful of our race. In a word, popular devotion gradually developed the entire system of doctrine and practice.

What you see here is a striking divergence from the Bible, where the Virgin Mary appears in only a very few places, to an enormous spiritual development later, slowly increasing in importance. First the declaration that she was Theotokos, Mother of God, then the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and then the newest dogma of the Assumption. Though the Assumption has been generally believed since about the eleventh or twelfth century, it was only finally confirmed in 1950 by Pius XII.

This is an amazing development if you think of the strictly patriarchal character of the original Christian teachings. After all, the dove of Mary is the bird of the goddess Venus. Of course there were hesitations. There were sects that believed the Holy Ghost was feminine, and that therefore a natural family, father, mother and son, resided in heaven. These beliefs were repressed very early and Church councils decided that the Holy Ghost should be considered masculine. And as Jung points out in his es-

15 Labbé, Conc. iii. 51. Considerable extracts are given by Augusti (*Denkw. Iii*); see also Milman (*Lat. Christ. I. 185*), who characterizes much of it as a "wild labyrinth of untranslatable metaphor."

say on the Trinity,<sup>16</sup> this perspective values reflection over experience. It is not a natural family in heavenfather, mother, sonbut an intellectual construction: father, son and the mysterious force that unites them. So, on one side we have a development which insisted on the masculine and the view of the Trinity as a masculine triad, and on the other side we see an increasing development of the cult of the Virgin. As you know, in many Latin countries, in the day-to-day life of the people, the Virgin Mary actually plays a much greater role than even the Godhead Himself.

The early Christians rarely invented new art motifs. As was usual in the art of antiquity, one always copied and recopied certain types. For instance, angels in pictorial or sculptural form were borrowed from the statues of Nike, Goddess of Victory. And on early Christian coffins, you sometimes find winged beings giving a crown to a human in the middle. That is the dead person receiving the crown of victory over death. But it is completely represented or copied from the schema of Nike, who crowned combatants in the Olympian Games. And so, in that way, all the different Christian themes have been translated, so to speak, from typical clichés of antiquity.

Now, the Virgin Mary's earliest found representation is simply a copy of Isis and her child Horus. The archaeologists had great trouble deciding if it was not just an Isis statue, and possibly it is, which was then used in a Christian church to represent the Virgin Mary. And so the Virgin Mary in art, and even deeper than only art, really inherited all the main traits of the Egyptian goddess Isis, who in the Late Roman Empire played an enormous role. The Isis mysteries were linked up with the Mithraic mysteries. There are many Mithraic sanctuaries that have both Mithraic imagery and imagery from the Isis mysteries. You find the same thing in Apuleius's *Golden Ass*,<sup>17</sup> where Lucius is initiated into the Isis mysteriesthey melt completely into one mystery initiation form.

Isis was specially associated with boats and seafaring. In *The Golden*

<sup>16</sup> "A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity," *Psychology and Religion*, CW 11.

<sup>17</sup> See von Franz, *The Golden Ass of Apuleius* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1992), chapter 12.

Ass, there is also the spring festival where one puts the boats into the sea again after having been on land over the winter. Isis, as the protectress of seafarers and ships, was worshipped at this festival, at which Lucius was initiated after the great Isis procession. The Virgin Mary has inherited, absolutely wholesale, all this symbolism. That's why in folklore and also in the Liturgy in some places she is called Stella Maris, Star of the Sea, and there she too is the protectress of ships and sailors.

When you think of the official image, you see that what is stressed about Mary is her spiritual aspect: the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption into heaven, into the heavenly Thalamus or bridal chamber but Isis had a much richer theme. Isis was represented as the highest divine spirituality, but she was also worshipped as the underworld goddess, ruler of the dead, of ghosts and the nightspooks and evil. Isis was a black goddess, not only black in the sense of evil but also in the sense of nocturnal, earthy. Isis in the late Egyptian tradition was mixed up with both the lion goddess Sekmet and the cat goddess Bastet. She was a mother goddess who comprised, or contained in her image, the highest spirituality: she is the Mother of God, the new sun god Horus, and wife of the reborn Osiris and also the darker chthonic aspects of the Great Mother. She unified them all. She inherited or attracted to herself all the traits of many other Mediterranean mother goddesses, like Derceto-Atargatis and Anat. She melded them into one great late-antique mother goddess. The Virgin Mary inherited those traits, but in the official teaching she inherited only the sublime and spiritual, the attributes of purity and so on. The other aspects, of earth fertility and the dark side, were never officially recognized.

However, among the peasant population in agricultural countries, you see that all those traits that have not been recognized officially by Church dogma are completely alive in the worship of the Virgin Mary. When people are healed by a saint or by the Virgin, there's the habit of making little *ex votos*, a model of your broken leg or your broken arm or whatever, and you hang it up to give thanks for having been cured. There is even a Virgin Mary toad in Bavaria where the toad was believed to represent the womb. The women who bore children couldn't very well hang up a wombit was in too bad taste, to hang up little wombs of wax. So

they put little toads of wax around the statue of the Virgin Mary. But that simply meant thanksgiving for having had a child. Especially the black madonnas, like the ones here in Einsiedeln or in Riedern in Uri, were believed to help in childbirth and to help sterile women have a child. It's still practiced today and believed to work.

So the Virgin Mary in such local cults in peasant countries reacquired or kept (we don't know which) all the traits of the chthonic goddess, of fertility, of the earth goddess, of the dark goddess. And if you read the excuses for black madonnas, it's most amusing. In Einsiedeln, they say that once the monastery burnt down and since then she has been black, but if you look at the statue that is obviously not the case at all. There are no traces of burning. That story is just a cover-up of the fact that she is a black madonna and was so from the beginning. Most likely she just inherited or replaced in ancient time an Isis statue, because generally, in places where there was a sanctuary of Isis, the early Christians then built a sanctuary of the Virgin Mary. And obviously, in Einsiedeln, it was thought that to keep the continuity she was black and has remained black. Wherever the Roman Empire spread, there the Isis cult rooted. There you find black madonnas. They occur more or less exactly in those areas. One doesn't make a case out of it. One just tolerates it or invents a little story. She became black because the monastery burnt down or something like that, a way to make it harmless and tolerated. There are interesting parallels, for instance in South America where you have the Madonna of Guadalupe, who has very clearly inherited all the attributes of the Indian mother fertility goddesses.

Wherever the cult of the Virgin Mary and the Catholic mission has spread, the Virgin Mary has always picked up, or taken on, the local characteristics of the great fertility goddesses. Therefore, on the level of folklore, she is not only immaculate and spiritualized and carried away to heaven, she is also the great mother of the earth, the protectress of nature.

Then she has still another way of relating to the dark side, for she protects sinners. In many Catholic countries in Europe, you find a statue of the Virgin Mary where she holds out her cloak, and under it are a lot of little people the sinners praying and above is God the Father with an angry face and a bow and arrow aiming at them. That would mean

that God would destroy them in his wrath, but Mary intercedes. She puts her cloak over them and says to Him, "Come now, don't be so angry. They aren't so bad, after all." She mediates. That's why she's the mediatrix and why people pray for her intercession. She's believed to be more benevolent toward the shortcomings of mankind. This is typically feminine just as in a family, very often the father thunders around and the mother intercedes. It's the same pattern.

Now in our story the Mother of God also has an ambiguous character, for she curses the future child of the queen. If you look for parallels, the only people who do that in other fairy tales are witches. If you look for a goddess cursing a female child you will find only examples of witches or evil fairies. So here the Virgin Mary takes on the role of an evil fairy or witch. The official Church image of the Virgin is incomplete, you see, and therefore the people provide the necessary compensation. That is one reason why it is so important to know folklore and fairy tales, because it is like knowing the compensating dream-life of a civilization. In the study of any civilization, you can study either their sacred books or their sacred teachings, which give you their conscious tradition. But you must always ask, "And what is their folklore?" Then you get the unconscious compensation for the collective tradition. I mean compensation not just in the sense of saying the contrary, for compensation is also very often complementation, filling in the gaps to bring up what is lacking in the official teaching. And in certain civilizations there is a tremendous gap between the official teaching and the folklore.

For instance, in ancient Greece there was the official teaching about the Olympic gods, which was far from what the peasantry believed. They had a more animistic, primitive nature cult, far distant from what you learn in school to be Greek religion, which was only the religion of the priest caste and the elite townspeople. You find this hierarchy in every civilization, an elite who carry a spiritual tradition the teaching taught in schools and institutions in some traditional form; the conscious structure, so to speak and then you have an undercurrent of unconscious complementary fantasies. We see them in the dreams of the people, but also when you study civilizations and ask what the simple person in the street believes and thinks and worships. The simple person in the street

gives vent to fantasies uninhibitedly.

You know all the Catholic teaching about sexuality, that you should have no sexual intercourse before marriage and so on. Well, I was once most amused by a very widespread little Bavarian song which goes, "I went to Mama and said may I kiss the girl, and Mama said, No, if you kiss the girl that is a sin. So I went to the priest and said, may I kiss the girl, and the priest said, if you kiss the girl, you will end in Hell. So I went to God himself and said, may I kiss the girl, and God roared with laughter and said, 'Obviously. It's for boys that I made the girls!' "Full of impertinence, the young peasant boys sing these old songs. They are good Catholics and go to Mass every Sunday, but they sing that song and they practice what it says, not the other. There you can see compensatory, correcting attitudes of simple people, which are also in fairy tales. In fairy tales people let themselves tell stories about the Virgin Mary which would shock the priest who took them seriously. And that is one of the great values of such stories.

We can now interpret the ship a bit better because the ship was constructed by the emperor. That means he had an idea that the transcendental realm, beyond the waters of the unconscious, the unknown, should come in that something supernatural or miraculous was needed to help this sterile situation. He had better intuition than his wife. He entrusted her to a structure, to a system, a feminine vessel that carried her on a night sea journey over the waters of the unconscious to the palace of the Virgin Mary. And now we come to some very strange geography.

The Virgin Mary doesn't live as she ought to, in heaven. Although she officially went to heaven only in 1950, she really was believed to live there since about the eleventh or twelfth century, and even before. But in our story she doesn't live in heaven. She lives in a palace that stands on the water of the sea. She's not on land or on earth, and she is not where the Trinity is. So what does it mean that she lives in a palace? Aristocrats rule or live in such places. In fairy tale language, the king or queen, rulers or high aristocrats, live in a palace, but not God. So here the palace again stresses a different quality. This is not the Church's Virgin Mary. She would live in a chapel or in a church, but this one lives in a palace.

One must put oneself in the situation of a simple Romanian peasant.

For such a person, the emperors of Austria, the Habsburgs, lived in a palace; or, in Italy, the Borromini lived in a palace. They are the highest, to whom one bows and thinks they are the great ones, those who have something to say and rule worldly affairs. I want to stress that it is not a church. So in our tale the Virgin is taken out of her immediate religious context. She is more a ruler, a queen of an unknown realm. She's not the queen of the earth and not, as she is officially, queen of heaven. She is a queen on the surface of the sea, which means in the unknown of the unconscious a ruling principle that has no footing in human conscious reality, or in the area where these people projected their religious ideas. She is projected, so to speak, into an unknown third. And that seems to me interesting because it also shows that here the Virgin Mary, the archetype of the Virgin Mary, is still developing.

You know, archetypes have histories over the centuries. Jung tried to write some of the archetypal history of Christianity in his essay on Job,<sup>18</sup> and there you see that archetypes constellate themselves, develop, age, bring up their opposite; there is a whole play that goes on over hundreds and hundreds of years. And you can say there are certain archetypes that recede. They have played a great role but then they fade. People lose interest in them. They are no longer constellated, no longer active in the collective unconscious. They become forgotten. And there are other archetypes that are coming, in the making, on the way up, so to speak, to realization. They cause excitement, new ideas. As long as popular fantasies amplify an archetypal image, then it is still in the making. A spontaneous process of amplification reveals new traits all the time, whereas if an archetype is fading or receding, then one only goes on teaching what one knows until now about it. It's no longer fertile; it doesn't inspire people to have new ideas.

Now, the fact that the Virgin Mary in our story is so "out there" in the collective unconscious, in a palace and represented as a ruler, as something dominating that inspires respect and also uncanny feelings, means that this archetype is still on the rise, coming up over the horizon of the collective unconscious. For instance, it is interesting to note that after the

<sup>18</sup> "Answer to Job," *Psychology and Religion*, CW 11.

Pope declared the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, there was a wave of Catholic priests wanting to marry, and women wanting to be allowed to be priestesses. The funny thing is, in not one of those movements did they refer to the Declaration of the Assumption, though for a psychologist it is the obvious consequence.

Why do the priests not say, "Since the Virgin Mary entered the bridal chamber, therefore there is a marriage in heaven. Well, you don't go into the bridal chamber and do nothing there." The priests want to marry. It is in accordance with the archetype. And the women say, "Now we want to be priestesses. We want to be admitted to the holy of holies." It's an obvious psychological connection and nobody mentions it, but there you see how an archetype is active even if people don't know it. They don't know why they suddenly want to marry or why they suddenly want to be priestesses. It is really the archetype of the feminine that is rising in the collective unconscious, still on the way up. And suddenly there are strange movements among people who don't realize what they're doing.

If you watch from afar you see they are in complete accord with what's happening in the collective unconscious. The feminist movements too. That all hangs together, although among each other they may have little in common. But again, you see, if you study these deeper processes going on in the collective unconscious, you have in a nutshell what is essentially happening underneath and then you are not caught in the surface waves of all these polemics, like, "Should women be priestesses? Should priests marry?" That's all surface waves from something happening deep down in the ocean of the collective unconscious. The important thing is that this feminine image wants to come up. And if you look into fairy tales, you can read what is really behind it.

So here we have the Virgin Mary in a palace, which shows that this fairy tale doesn't go further back than Christian times, probably not further than the Middle Ages, and that it is picking up a process in the collective unconscious still valid today.

The empress comes to the palace and someone tells her servants that the Mother of God lives there. The servants dare not go in so the empress goes herself and sees an apple tree with golden apples, and she absolutely has to have one. She says, "If I don't have one of those apples, I'll

die." The servants try to steal one, but they can't. Then the empress becomes seriously ill because she is now so passionate about getting one of those apples. The servants try harder and finally steal an apple and bring it to her. She eats it and vomits. Then she suddenly feels as if she were already six months' pregnant.

That's a unique motif. Normally in fairy tales, when you eat such a sacred apple you get pregnant. But in our story she doesn't get pregnant from the golden apple. She only discovers, or realizes, that she is pregnant, and already for six months. So the child has most likely come from the emperor and is quite all right as far as being legitimate. But the empress had not realized it. She was pregnant and not pregnant. Only when she ate the apple and vomited did she realize it, so the greater part of the pregnancy was already over. But before we go into that strange and unique motif I have never found a parallel for it I want to discuss the apple tree.

The most obvious association in our mythology is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in Paradise, which wasn't specifically called an apple tree, but Christian mythology says it was. Eve stole an apple, and thereby brought to mankind the possibility of consciousness and the certainty of death. Life becomes real only when it is delineated by death.

Another major apple tree is that of the Golden Apples of the Hesperides. These also have to be stolen. The Hesperides lie in the west where the sun sets, in the direction of death and entry into the unconscious. Those apples, unlike the fruit in Paradise, are golden like the apple in our story. In some versions the tree was given to Hera by Mother Earth as a wedding present. Getting the golden apples of the Hesperides was Hercules' eleventh labor and the only one in which he had to use his wits; he had to outwit Atlas in order to get the apples. This brings a sense of consciousness and knowledge through death and rebirth.

In Norse mythology Iduna has golden apples that rejuvenate the gods and thus confer eternal life. Avalon, which is also the island of apples (the word apple is derived from the Breton *aval*), is where King Arthur goes at the end of his life rather than the place where one comes from. And it was with the apple of this court that I first understood the value of conflict, the conflict of death as the bringing of consciousness. The god-

ness of discord and strife, Eris, was not invited to a marriage feast on Olympus. So she threw in a golden apple, which said on it, "For the fairest." The final choice lay between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite. Zeus washed his hands of the whole matter and passed it on to Paris, Priam's son, who had been sent to take care of sheep because Priam had been told he was going to cause trouble for Troy. Hera offered power, Athena military victory and Aphrodite offered the most beautiful women in the world. He chose Aphrodite, who then helped him to steal Menelaus's wife, Helen, and of course the Trojan war ensued. In that story, different qualities of femininity become differentiated through the fight and, through the apple, consciousness becomes a little more clear.

What I would like to pick up on first is this strange relationship of the apple to the land of death, because we had that already with the boat, with boat burials. But now it becomes clearer that the boat has a strong death quality in itself and so does the apple. This is clearly a problem of fertility, of having a child a woman wanting to have a child and now death is lurking.

When you analyze pregnant women, you find that many of them have death fantasies and a great fear of death. Naturally, you must not forget that until the beginning of the nineteenth century a large percentage of women died in childbirth, and if you read biographies of men of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they always have about fifteen children and three wives because they had no contraceptive pill. The women had children all the time and often died in childbirth, or became worn out by constant childbearing. So giving birth and death were for them archetypal events and also quite concrete problems. I still notice that many modern women, especially with their first child, often develop quite a fear of the birth and fantasies of death. But that again is only the surface ripples of something much deeper. Even if the birth goes perfectly, if there has been no danger and they come through it absolutely okay, still there are strange death motifs in their dreams. It is as if the virgin has to die or the unmarried, the unbound woman, has to die a form of the woman has to die, and for a woman birth is also a rebirth of herself. She is different afterward. She is not the same woman. She's transformed. She goes through a death and rebirth process, symbolically,

and also the actual danger of death.

Then there is a third motif which is so mystical that you might laugh and think I am a mystic, but I have to mention it. Pregnant women very often dream that in the realm of the dead, things guard them. For instance, threads or materials are guarded and enter them and make the child. Now, if you want a rational, reductive interpretation, you can say, "Yes, obviously. That's the genetic substance from the dead ancestors, from the great-great-grandfather, and in the woman it is now weaving a child. That genetic substance, the DNA, is weaving a new child in her body from the bodies of millions of dead ancestors. Those cells have survived death." That's if you take it purely reductively, biologically.

But there seems to me to be something psychologically equivalent. For Indian people who believe in reincarnation it's very easy. Out of the land of the dead, out of the Bardo where they have gone, they are reincarnated. I have not made up my mind about reincarnation, if it happens or not. I can only say that I have been amazed by such dreams of pregnant women, that a child is conceived or fabricated motifs of weaving, of manufacturing something in the realm of the dead, the realm of the ancestors, and which is now, through the womb of this woman, going to enter life. It is as if the woman were instrumental in bringing something out of the land of the dead back into life, in a wider sense than just the biological explanation.

For instance, the Eskimos, when a child is born, assemble the grandparents, if they are still alive, and watch to see who the child smiles at, and then they give the child the same name. And if the grandparents are dead, they give the child the name of one of the grandparents. If the child doesn't blossom and whines a lot, they say, "That's wrong," and give it the name of another ancestor until they feel it fits. That's the one who is reborn in that child. Even if the other isn't dead, that child is the grandparent's continuation. So there too is this idea that from the past something flows into the child. The pregnant woman is the vessel for that mysterious process; she carries that mystery in her. Therefore in her fantasies and also in certain moods or feelings she comes very close to death. When I first analyzed pregnant women I sometimes became quite frightened. I thought something would go wrong, some complication.

But now I have noticed it so often, and with absolutely healthy births, so I say, "No, this closeness to death has some other meaning." It is a closeness to the beyond, to that unknown source from which life comes and to which life returns after death, to put it poetically.

This dual function of the apple, to create strife and conflict, is also in our story because the whole tragedy, the overall problem, is that the girl is turned into a cat and has to be redeemed, and this wouldn't have happened without the episode with the apple. So here, too, a catastrophe happened. But naturally, the closest parallel is the story of the Garden of Eden. God alone knows good and evil but by eating the apple you will be like God; you too will know good and evil. So there is the element of becoming conscious of the conflict, conscious of the opposites in the Godhead. We can only go deeper into that when we have discussed the cat, because we will see that the cat (I anticipate a bit here) is the dark side of the Mother of God.

So just as Eve and Adam became aware that God has a light and dark side, that there is a conflict in the Godhead between good and evil, so here too this conflict between light and dark becomes apparent by the empress eating the apple. The dark side of the Virgin Mary suddenly manifests, the dark side of the feminine, with all the conflict that results from that. So there is an immediate parallel between the two motifs.

Jung has written about the philosophical tree of the alchemist, which bears silver and golden apples, and very often only golden apples.<sup>19</sup> The making of gold in alchemy was sometimes represented as planting a tree and attending to it, which then slowly grows golden apples and these golden apples are the equivalent of the Philosophers' Stone. So gold in that connection means immortality. Rejuvenation is another form of being immortal or keeping one's immortality, and so it is associated with eternity, the eternal, the incorruptible. In alchemy gold mainly represents the incorruptible substance.

It is a strange thing that by eating that incorruptible substance, death and conflict come into the world. Conflict, death and the incorruptible are immediately connected. They belong together. That is the painful

<sup>19</sup> "The Philosophical Tree," *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13.

psychological truth we have to swallow. And that the tree in our story is a tree of knowledge, of becoming more conscious, is even expressed in words, because now the empress becomes conscious that she is pregnant. She does not *become* pregnant. She becomes conscious that she is pregnant. So the apple really has the function of conveying consciousness.

There's another interesting motif the strange craving of the empress, who becomes quite ill and claims she can't go on living without one of those apples. This forces the servants to steal one for her. There is a parallel in a famous Grimm story called "Rapunzel."<sup>20</sup> A man and a woman live in a house behind which there is a garden belonging to a witch, and in it grows *Rapunseln*. That's a kind of lettuce, a plant with four stars, green leaves arranged in a quaternity. The pregnant woman says she must have some of that lettuce and she's going to die if she can't have it. Now it is well known, and an actual fact, not mythological, that pregnant women sometimes have such funny desires. It is well known in popular tradition too that they develop a desire for something they have to eat in large quantities. It's probably physiologically conditioned; there really is something lacking that they instinctively look for. But it has also become a folklore tradition that pregnant women have such cravings, and by that they attract fate. In "Rapunzel," for instance, the husband goes and steals the lettuce. Then the witch who owns the garden takes the child away when she is twelve years old, and imprisons her in a tower. Later, a prince has to come to redeem her and deliver her out of the clutches of the witch.

There is a close parallel in these two stories. Only in the Romanian story there is this strange twist that the Virgin Mary plays the role of the witch. But also fate is attracted by the empress's greed. Here it attracts the curse of the Virgin Mary. If the empress had become pregnant by eating the apple, there would be any number of folklore parallels. There are many where there is a king with an infertile queen, and then she has to eat something special, for instance two flowers that grow under her bed out of her wash water. Or a frog tells her what to eat and so on. And only then the queen becomes pregnant.

<sup>20</sup>*The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, p. 73.

So, there is the motif of the supernatural fertilization of the woman, the supernatural birth which, with due respect, can be compared with the birth of Christ. The child is of divine origin, like most heroes in fairy tales. But our child is a very special child because she is not supernatural. She is clearly the child of human parents, the emperor and empress, and the supernatural element comes in only as an addition. She does not have, like Christ, a human mother and a divine father. Or, like many fairy tale heroines and heroes who have a nonhuman parent, half human and half a frog, or a tree or a fruit, which means something nonhuman. She's essentially and normally human. The human aspect prevails and the superhuman or divine aspect is only added to her personality. But she could never be seen, as Christ is in our tradition, as being truly God and truly man. She's really truly human, but a human who has to carry a divine fate. The problem of a divine shape has been imposed upon her, and that makes her different from any other fairy tale heroine. She is essentially human and that is different from the many male heroes in fairy tales where generally the superhuman side, and the superhuman birth, are stressed. And such beings are much more ghostlike or archetypal. Our cat-girl is not very ghostlike or archetypal. She is even a domesticated animal and her behavior reflects this.

In the total context of a story, if it tells about a human being, it means the problem is not very far from consciousness. If a hero or heroine is already human, it means that it is already close to consciousness. It is the same with dream motifs. If your shadow appears as a panther, then it means it's rather far from consciousness. But if your shadow appears as Mrs. So and So, then you can be pretty sure you ought to know what that is. When the shadow or animus appears in human form, then I usually insist, "You ought to know that," or "Don't you know where that is in you?" because I think there the possibility is given. It's already in the realm of human realization. As long as it appears in other forms, it means it is far away and needs certain theoretical exercises, so to speak, to get at it or to find where it is within oneself. Now if the patient says, "Your interpretation is very interesting but it doesn't click with me. I don't see it," then, if it is not a human motif, you must not insist. Wait till it comes closer. So in our story it means that the problem is not very far from con-

sciousness. It is something the Romanian people must even have had a hunch about.

We have dwelt mainly on the empress transcending the taboo of the apple tree and how she, like Adam and Eve, committed the sin of becoming conscious. She takes a step toward becoming more conscious, and specifically more conscious of the feminine, in a feminine way, and of the feminine realm of life. So, the first result is that the empress becomes conscious that she has been pregnant for a while.

If you study primitive societies, you see that having a child belongs to the religious mysteries of the tribe into which the girls are initiated. Generally, at their first menstruation, they go through certain initiation rites like the men, but they are mainly initiated into the mysteries of childbirth, which gives childbearing a religious frame. Childbirth is not something ordinary, biologically outside religion, as it is in Christianity. In Christianity, for instance in the Catholic Church, sexuality is not banished or considered evil. But it is looked on as having to give nature its due; one has to give the body and the natural life its due. Therefore sexuality should only be lived in an orderly way within a marital situation, if possible only for having a child, and having a child is wonderful and all right, and there is nothing sinful about it if it's within the institution, but it has no religious meaning. And the highest state of affairs is to become a nun and have no children. That is seen as a better kind of life.

Because these experiences are banished from the religious realm, there are, for instance, no sacraments for the blessing of childbirth, no rituals to support a woman in childbirth. If she dies she gets the Last Rights, but otherwise there is no ritual. That shows that it is not the affair of religion. It's considered to be profane, outside religion. That robs this part of feminine life of all its psychological depth and importance. It's seen as a banal, biological affair and even enlightened women today still look at it that way. I have met women who were proud of the fact that they carried on their profession and had a child on the side, as they say, and without fuss. And it even functioned. The child was born normally, but these women robbed themselves of a tremendous amount of deep realizations, religious, sacred, archetypal realizations. They never came up. The child remained a kind of desirable banal addition to their life.

I am sure that it is not good for a child to be born under such conditions. It is not received properly into the world. At least, if you analyze pregnant women, you see that their unconscious makes a big, archetypal, and I would call it numinous, affair of having a child. And pregnant women, as I have told you, have this whole proximity to death, proximity to the archetypal world, mysterious dreams about the origin of man and suggestions that ancestral spirits are being reincarnated. All those dreams show that there are mysteries, psychological mysteries, and possible archetypal, inner realizations connected with childbirth, which many women miss out on in our culture. That is due to the patriarchal tradition and to the fact that the image of woman is robbed, so to speak, of her biological, natural underhalf.

The empress now becomes conscious but that is impinging on the sacred realm of the Virgin Mary, and therefore the Mother of God is furious and she curses the unborn child. If you look for parallels, I have not, in my knowledge of fairy tales, ever found a single one where the Virgin Mary curses a child. You have fairy tales where the Mother of God acts rather coolly and so on, naturally compensatory to her wholly merciful role according to the official teaching. But I have never found this one. You find the very frequent motif, the most famous being in Grimm's "Rapunzel," where a pregnant mother has a craving such as our empress has and wants some special food and then attracts the curse of a witchlike being. But here, suddenly, the Mother of God acts like a witch. It is as if her witch side comes to the foreground and she delivers that curse.



Bastet, the cat-goddess  
(Bronze, Ptolemaic period; British Museum, No. 25565)

## 4 The Cat in Mythology

Now we should consider the cat and its amplifications both mythologically and materially. One of the most striking things about the cat as a symbol is its ambivalence. Like the serpent, its image oscillates between beneficence and malevolence.

Historically, the cat was first endowed with archetypal power at the time when in Egypt it came to be regarded as a sacred animal. Its sanctification meant that it was virtually purified of the dark aspects of its nature, and was connected with man's spiritual life. In Egypt, from very early on, the cat was considered to be sacred to Isis. But it was as the daughter of Isis and her husband Osiris that the great cat goddess Bastet emerged in the twenty-second dynasty and took precedence over all other goddesses. She was known as the Lady of Bubastis and her temple stood at the center of the city, surrounded by water.

Although conceived as a female, Bastet was often identified with her father, Ra. Here Osiris, Ra and Horus very often merge, as the gods do in Egypt. In her identification with Ra, god of life, the sun cat was believed to engage every night in a struggle of cosmic proportions with Apophis, the serpent of darkness. Thus the cat takes its place among the solar heroes of all mythology who fight with the devil in various forms.

The cat was also worshipped as lunar. It was believed that during the hours of darkness, when the rays of the sun were invisible to humans, they were reflected in the phosphorescent eyes of the cat, as the light of the sun is reflected in the moon. So here we have the kind of feminine consciousness about which we have spoken already.

During the late period in Egypt, Bastet was identified with Artemis the huntress, virgin goddess of nature, linked with fertility and the feminine presiding over childbirth. According to one myth, when the Greek gods fled to Egypt pursued by Typhon, Artemis transformed herself into a cat and in this form took refuge in the moon. And Hecate also turned herself into a cat. Together with Freya, the Teutonic fertility goddess married to

the sun, whose carriage was drawn by two cats, Hecate also represents the evil side of the feminine, the witch, the Terrible Mother, responsible for madness and obsession.

Finally, in the Middle Ages, the cat came to be predominantly endowed with the power of the devil. Some women, it was said, had the power to put their souls into black cats. These were witches, dedicated not any more to the light powers but to the dark powers, to the devil. The Catholic dissociation from the instincts, sexuality and generally speaking from the feminine natural element, probably has much to do with this development of the cat as a destructive, instinctual feminine symbol. In fact, the black cat may be seen as the shadow side of the Virgin Mary, a projected unconscious desire for revenge against the Church. So we see, very schematically, how the polarity of the cat archetype was established. Now, briefly, let us look at some characteristics associated with both the light and the dark aspects of the cat.

The cat is closely linked with consciousness and all creative processes. The sexual orgies of Bastet were believed to increase vegetable, animal and human fertility. On the other hand, the black cat's orgies, practiced on moonless nights, were virtually sterility rites. Intercourse with the devil, who often took the form of a cat, bore no fruit, produced hail, rain and storms, destruction of crops, death of animals and sterility or impotence in humans. The white cat was a healer and a nurse. She destroyed poison, counteracted irritation and strengthened people's powers of recuperation. Her tail was widely used to cure blindness and, generally speaking, the cat's power appeared to be located in the tail which is also believed to be an organ of balance. On the other hand, the black witchcat poisoned people's minds, infected their bodies with disease and inflicted them with blindness. The devil used the tail of his incarnation to bewitch people and bind them to his will.

In folklore and fairy tales, the white cat is the liberator of the oppressed, and helper of impoverished or underprivileged young men. It uses its cunning and resourcefulness to overthrow the powers of darkness and brings wealth, power and honor. The black cat is often an omen of misfortune, bringing poverty and frustration. It oppresses and tortures. It is a traitor and a thief. The solar cat, the light of the world, is to be seen

at the foot of Christ, while the demonic cat sits at the foot of Judas. On the positive side, the cat is associated, like the serpent, with immortality. It curls up in a circle and is said to possess nine lives. On the negative side, it suggests the "vicious circle." Because of its unblinking eyes, and due to the fact that it sees in the dark, the cat is also a seer. It possesses foresight and insight. On the negative side, the cat's eyes suggest the power of fascination. They can paralyze their victims. Because of its independence and freedom, the cat has been linked to the Virgin, but also, as we have seen, to the witch. The cat is a healer and a servant to men; it protects their houses and crops from rodents and snakes, and has also been seen as a curser, a bewitcher and a vampire.

We now have to consider another aspect of the cat which places it between the extreme polarities which have been seen so far the cat as medium. According to a Gnostic belief, there was a cat in the Garden of Eden, guarding the tree of life with its knowledge of good and evil. In the same way, the Egyptian solar cat was associated with the Persea tree, which was also a tree of life and consciousness. There is also a Celtic legend that tells how an oracular shrine, located in a certain cave, was found occupied by a slender cat reclining on a silver couch. The cat was thus seen as a medium. It formed a bridge between good and evil, with knowledge of both. It acted as a mediator between them as well as between interior and exterior life, god and supernatural forces and man. Because it has access to, and is at home in, both spheres, it has much prophetic wisdom to impart and can teach us how to hold conflicting values in balance. As a symbol of consciousness, it is a psychic entity that knows the way provided we learn to trust it, honoring, obeying and following wherever it leads.

And to end up, a brief remark about cat sacrifice. The meaning of cat sacrifice appears to have been the destruction of human projections onto the animal, whether they were of dark or light psychic experience. Cat sacrifice was a necessary compensation for great unconsciousness. It constituted an act of recovery from any form of archetypal possession. Thus we find rites of cat sacrifice in Roman Catholic France as well as in England and elsewhere, and we also find the white cat at the foot of the cross where, as a symbol of light, healing and salvation, it represented

Christ himself, and like him had to be sacrificed in order to be reborn. In connection with the sun, the cat is a tom cat. Also the cat that helps the hero in fairy tales, as in "Puss in Boots," is a male cat and has, if we want to circumscribe it, mercurial qualities. In such fairy tales he is the knower of the way, the soul guide. He is associated with the sun, and like Mercurius is always helping with the sun, which is rather different from the she cat. The she cat is on the line of the moon, Bastet fertility and so on.

Cats originated in Egypt. All cats are ultimately of Egyptian descent. There were no cats before. In Egypt it was a sacred animal, and seems still to be considered beneficent. There's an amusing autobiographical novel by Agatha Christie, whose second husband was an archaeologist who took her to do excavations in Egypt.<sup>21</sup> They lived in a small hut and the plague of mice and rats was so terrible that they seriously thought of leaving. They put down poison and tried everything but they couldn't get rid of them. Finally they complained to their Arab Sheik, who said, "Oh, that's very simple." The next evening he arrived with an enormous cat and said, "That will settle it." The whole night they heard thumps and squeaks and within three days there were no more mice. Agatha Christie was absolutely overwhelmed by what the cat has really done for man, and that makes us understand this sacred animal. She is a real protector and helper, in the dark and at night when one feels helpless. So, for our connections, I would rather stress the place of the female cat, the moon quality, the protectress.

Bastet, in Egypt, has no witch traits at all. Her dark side has to do with the land of the dead and of the moon (which is also the land of the dead). But she has no devilish qualities. She's an extremely positive archetypal figure. She has to do with fertility, with folk festivals, and also with music. The sistrum, musical instrument of Isis, was always associated with the cat and excavations in Egypt have discovered many cats with a sistrum. That is because of those beautiful love songs they sing in the night, though they're not quite for our ears.

Bastet was always supposed to be very musical. For instance, at her festival, the people went on barges down the Nile and the women turned

<sup>21</sup>*An Autobiography* (London: Collins, 1977).

their backs, lifted their skirts and showed their behinds to the applauding masses on the shore. That was the kind of fun they had in honor of Bastet. Fertility, sexual rites, even lasciviousness and so on were part of it, but all on the positive side. She had no dark witch traits. In Germanic mythology, as mentioned, the cat is associated with the goddess Freya, who was an extremely positive goddess.

The whole devilish aspect of the cat, its witch aspect, has only come into the foreground since the time of Christianity. That has to do with the patriarchal banishing of the feminine shadow. Then you have the cat as a witch's animal, a devil's animal or a vampire. There were rituals of evil cat hangings, similar to witch persecutions. One thought naturally they had the means of getting rid of evil, but first one projected evil onto the cat and then hung it. Also, cats are exceedingly tough. They survive the most amazing accidents, very often unharmed. They can fall from high places and always land on their feet. They are very vital animals. I grew up with both cats and dogs; with a dog we were often at the vet's, but with a cat, never. They always survived the most terrible things.

Something else one should mention about the cat is its independence. The dog has become a touching, sentimental friend of humans, and very loyal. Most dogs, if you drive them out in the wild, will perish or at least become very, very unhappy and miserable, while a cat can more easily resume a wild life away from humans. The cat has never associated with man as closely as the dog has. I was always amused in my youth how the cat was a flatterer. For instance when it asked for food or when it wanted to be stroked, it just came and rubbed itself this way and that with its tail up, and sometimes if I didn't have time, I said, "Go away. I have to read." Then the cat said, "Okay," and began to rub itself against the chair, as if to say, "If you don't stroke me, I stroke myself." "That's okay too." A dog would be hurt in his deepest heart and look at you reproachfully; you couldn't do such a thing to a dog. But a cat, "Oh, never mind." It never gives its soul into our hands. It's friendly and makes use of us, but remains independent.

You often see cat dreams in women who have no independence, who are too doggishly attached to their husband and children, and then I always stress what a cat does. A cat goes its own way. It knows what it

wants and goes its own way. A cat comes for certain feeding times, and then it's really friendly. But when it wants to leave, "Meeow," you have to let it out. It's very cruel to imprison a cat. You can keep a dog in a flat but to keep a cat inside a flat and never let it out is really cruel, because it needs the independence; it needs to roam about and have its own life. This can be a nuisance if they run wild and overbreed. Then there are plagues of cats. They become destructive because there are too many. So this negative side of the cat goes very much with the witch persecution.

We therefore have to ask ourselves, "What has the Virgin Mary to do with the witch persecutions?" Jung has explained that in *Psychological Types*.<sup>22</sup> Before the rise and spread of the cult of the Virgin Mary, there was the phenomenon of courtly love, the so-called love courts. In the love courts men began to develop a relationship to women and women to men; that was the start of individual love relationships with the other sex. As you know, the knight chose a lady and did all his great deeds for her. This chosen lady was probably generally an anima type of woman; we know some of these famous ladies. And naturally, this courtly love wasn't always platonic. So in those high aristocratic circles a lot of illegitimate children were born. They were the children of Count So and So and Princess So and So. And that naturally created a lot of difficulties. So the Church then decreed, as a conscious policy, that the men should not choose an individual lady for their love, but they should dedicate their arms and their heroic deeds to the Virgin Mary.

That was propagated and altogether the Church fought courtly love, because things began to slip out of its hands. And at the moment of the abolishing of courtly love and the rise of the cult of the Virgin Mary to replace it, the witch hunts began. Jung says that is because in courtly love, the anima of man and the individuality of woman were recognized. It was an individual thing. It was this knight and this lady. He could learn something about his anima since the lady was of his own choice, and the woman could also develop her individuality. So by replacing individual choice with a collective archetypal symbol, the Virgin Mary, the personal element was lost. Only the collective feminine image was preserved.

22 CW 6, par. 399.

That was still better than Protestantism, where there is not even a collective feminine image, but it was a suppression of feminine individuality. Then the witch persecutions began, and if you read accounts of these trials you see that generally women who had a certain originality were accused of being witches. Some were poor crazy creatures. The last witches in Switzerland, for instance, were obviously schizoid, funny old women who always muttered to themselves and were a bit off the beaten track, and thus caught the projection as witches. But in former times, beautiful women were also persecuted, or women who were otherwise very attractive to men. Naturally the jealousy of other women and the fears of the men were mobilized, and such a woman was then persecuted. So women who had a certain outstanding individuality, who were a bit different from the average, generally carried the witch projection and then were destroyed.

Over time the persecution of witches became coupled with persecuting the individual element in women. And persecuting also the fact that the man could realize the individual quality of his anima, not only as an archetypal schema such as he could realize through the Virgin Mary. That led to the persecutions, and with it went, historically, absolutely simultaneously, the vilification of the catcalling it a witch animal, destructive, a bringer of bad luck and so on. The projection fell especially onto the black cat, which is still felt to bring bad luck when it crosses one's path. Thus the cat has also very much to do with the independent individuality of the feminine.

So now we see that the cat is a shadow of the Virgin Mary. It is that part of feminine nature that the Virgin Mary did not represent but which would belong to a complete image of the feminine. Therefore you could say that the Virgin Mary herself has a cat shadow, and in our story, in eating the apples the empress penetrates into the mystery of good and evil within the feminine. The tension is not so much the tension between good and evil, but between the impersonal, collective sublime and what is personal, individual, vital and natural. It's another polarity which is typical of the feminine realm. And Mary therefore curses the unborn girl and says she has to become a cat.

In fairy tales the established powers God, the Trinity, the Virgin

Mary and very much also the Devil in Hell always act against children. That means they want to block future development, and that inertia is typical. Established god-images, established religious archetypal systems and images, are liable to prevent further development and that's why the curse of the Virgin Mary does not fall on the empress. She could have cursed the empress for having stolen the apples, but instead of that she curses her child. That means she does not want a new form of femininity to develop. And so the girl becomes a cat, which is just the new form of femininity.

Along with the curse, the Virgin decrees that the child will be bewitched with all her servants and not take part in human life until a prince comes and cuts off her head and her tail. We will come back to the tail later on when the lady's tail is cut off. I think that is very interesting, that the tail has the real power, so to speak. It is naturally not very individual; for instance, the fox's tail and the wolf's tail are also considered powerful magic. The tail of many animals is the source of magic power.

Now, in spite of the curse, our cat girl is not unhappy. She is not forced into a miserable life. She has all her servants in a palace in the woods; she has life, but she is banished from her human shape, cut off from human contact, dehumanized. She's banished into nature. And that we can now understand more fully. It is typical of what happened in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: the individual feminine element was banished from the official forms of human life and went underground.

So, the empress comes home and the emperor is delighted to find her pregnant. She gives birth to such a beautiful girl and everybody is glad. You could look in the sun without being blinded, but when you looked at the girl, you were blinded by her beauty. She grows up quite normally, but when she is seventeen years old, suddenly, sitting with her father at the midday meal, she turns into a cat and disappears with all her servants.

There are many parallels in fairy tales. Some years ago I studied a Greek fairy tale where a princess was similarly cursed, so that when she was sixteen she would be carried away into the desert. That happens and then all her suffering begins and finally her redemption, but before that age things were all right. That would be the age, at that time, when one began to make marriage plans for a girl. Then at that moment she turns

into a cat. If she has an independent eros personality, then at the moment when she should marry the conflict becomes visible, and if she is meant to be a cat, that would mean she is meant to be an individuated woman, a personality in her own right.

An emperor's daughter naturally had no chance to marry according to her own choice; it was a family arrangement in those high-up circles at that time. So she finds herself in a conflict and therefore she disappears. She cannot be pressed into the marriage scheme of her parents, because she is meant to have something to do with the individuation process of the feminine which cannot be forced into those conventional patterns. Naturally, it also has to do with the problem of sex. And in a way, by turning into a cat it means nothing other than that she would be, if we imagine her now as a real human being, an unsophisticated, naturally individual and naturally feminine girl who grows up in a conventional environment and is generally liked until the love problem arises. Then she realizes that love is something individual.

Love is a question of one's personal fate, for good or ill. One can also make bad choices, but love is a personal fate. It is not a collective arrangement and then comes the conflict. So the princess is represented as a symbolic feminine figure, one who, like her cat, follows or is forced to follow, her own individual inclination, and therefore disappears from the human realm. As we see, she then lives in a palace in the midst of a forest. She disappears into the unconscious.

The forest is especially associated with the bodily unconscious. According to Jung in "The Spirit Mercurius," it has to do with the psychosomatic realm of the psyche.<sup>23</sup> In fairy tales one has to be careful because if somebody disappears into the sea, they disappear into the collective unconscious. If they disappear into the sky, they also disappear into the unconscious. If they drown in a river, again they disappear into the unconscious. So we have to take it specifically and say, "What aspect of the unconscious does she disappear into?"

Now, the forest in general has to do with vegetation. As Jung points out in that essay on Mercurius, vegetation is that life which springs im-

<sup>23</sup>*Alchemical Studies*, CW 13.

mediately from inorganic matter and feeds on it. It's the first form of life, and therefore it generally symbolizes the vegetative realms of the psyche where it melts with the material processes of the body what we now call psychosomatic, where we can no longer say something is purely psychic, nor can we say it is purely physical. There is an in-between realm which is still very little explored. You sink into your body and only vegetate. If she were a real human being but she isn't, she's an archetype she would sink into a kind of inaccessible, depressed apathy. But as she is an archetype, it means that the archetype disappears into a vegetative state. It goes underground, sinks into the body of people, or the nearly-body, and lives there unredeemed.

## 5 The Kingdoms

At the moment when the girl turns into a cat and disappears with all her servants, the fairy tale abruptly stops and goes to the masculine kingdom, and a new theme is introduced:

Now, in a faraway country there was an emperor with three sons. His wife had died and he had begun to drink. As he wanted to get rid of his children, he called all three sons to him and said, "I will give you some orders. Whoever is capable should bring me linen material that is so thin one can blow through it and pull it through a needle. Every one of you shall bring me something and make me a present and then I shall see who is the biggest hero."

That sets the three sons off on their adventures. Now we have to analyze what that other realm would mean, a male quaternity where the wife has died and the father has taken to drink. In general the emperor would be a ruling collective principle, a dominant of collective life. Now here there is another dominant. I showed earlier that sometimes in a story you have different kingdoms, which means that a civilization has already fallen apart and there are different realms that have different dominants. So you can simply say, at the time the fairy tale originated, there is another dominant of collective life where there's not a sterile feminine principle as in the first part, but rather a lack of the feminine.

The empress has died. What could that mean? The Virgin Mary clearly makes it a fairy tale of the Christian age. It could be the Protestant Church but in Romania that plays no role. In those countries, Protestantism has never really been taken in. You have on the one side a sterilization of the feminine and on the other an elimination of the feminine. I would say that would be a development within the Church that was hostile toward the feminine even in the form of the cult of the Virgin. There was a tremendous uproar in certain Church circles; many thought there was already too much fuss made of the Virgin Mary, and

one should not encourage Mariology in the Church. For instance, many of the scholastic teachers, such as the Jesuits, did not encourage the cult of the Virgin. There were two quite different directions, so in our story I would take the second kingdom rather as a dominant male religious consciousness within the Church, but one which moved even further away from the feminine.

You see that for instance in scholastic philosophy, which is purely male. There's no feminine eros in it and then it is a power organization like certain orders, the order for the persecution of the heretics and so on. They really gave up eros. Even more, they went right into purely male power politics, or into intellectualism. Within the Church there were those two streams. Even when the Pope declared the Assumption there was quite a revolt among certain cardinals and bishops. They turned against the Pope and expressed their regrets that such a thing had been done. Their attitude was stern, "That's not what we need now in the Church. That softens our position. We must be like a granite block standing for the confession," and so on.

So the second kingdom would be a world where the feminine has become lost and the emperor drinks. In the Inquisition, for instance, the men who persecuted heretics and witches were drunk with a wrong spirituality. If you read the reports of that time, those men were most self-righteous. They were convinced they were cleansing the world of something terrible. So this wrong spirituality and alcoholism mostly has to do with having lost a connection with the real spirit, and therefore grabbing desperately at a surrogate spirit of some kind is the operative image: a drunkenness that has to do with power and with the deterioration of the anima.

In the late stages of drinking, you have probably seen such tragic cases: men become sentimental, effeminate, full of resentments, complaining, making poisonous remarks, mentally dissolved. They present a picture of anima possession, completely at the mercy of their moods, and when they are not drinking they are depressed and resentful. Then also the abandonment complex: nobody loves me, I drink because nobody loved me, I drink because I am so sad that I drink all a kind of perverse anima stuff. Of course that's only in tragic, extreme cases, but you see

how the anima deteriorates, so to speak, through the drinking. But without the anima they can't relate, and so they lose all their relationships. One doesn't know if the deterioration of the anima causes the drinking or is caused by drinking, but whichever comes first they always go together. So this emperor wants to get rid of his children.

Very often a king or emperor gives tasks to his sons but generally he does it because he doesn't know to whom he should leave his kingdom. He sets such tasks to settle the decision of who shall be his successor. Our emperor also does that later, but here he doesn't. He is probably so drunk that he hasn't even a purpose in mind. So it is said he just gives them the task to get rid of them. He's no longer a husband, and he's also no longer a real father. Probably the sons have sometimes said, "Come father, don't drink so much," and taken the bottle away, and so he wants to get rid of them. That would again be this old principle, being stuck, and no longer wanting to cooperate with the possibility of the future, wanting to block it, wanting to suppress anything that leads toward or into the future. But he still has an original fantasy, namely that they should bring him some very fine linen.

Linen is a pure vegetable fiber and was therefore used for the garments of priests and magicians in antiquity. It was also used in Germanic courts, for instance in Norway and in Gaelic countries, as an apotropaic substance. It was said that ghosts, especially water spirits, were washing and bleaching linen. In some tales linen dresses are worn by dwarfs and forest maidens, and sometimes linen is a precious gift from them, or linen patches transform into gold pieces. If linen is a gift of a female water spirit, then it doesn't end when used, but only one yard is left, because a little spirit in frog shape is sitting in it. Very often linen is a symbol of a light cloud which also shows a spiritual quality. Linen has healing power, for instance in Ireland where particular remedies have to be wrapped in pure linen before using. Linen pieces also serve directly as a remedy or as a means to transfer illness. One passes linen over warts or some other diseased spot of the body, and then puts the linen into a coffin. In Brandenburg, a newborn child has to be wrapped in pure linen and no other cloth because otherwise it might run after the other sex later on!

Among the Czechs the child is wrapped in linen and then put under

the table so that it will be intelligent. In northern Germany, someone takes white linen, which is often inherited or is a sheet of the dead, to investigate the future on New Year's night. Dreams of white things and therefore also of linen, point to death. In Romanian tradition, a dream of linen refers to a journey wherein it is important whether the linen is seen spread out or rolled up.

So, referring to our fairy tale, we might say that the white linen is a textile belonging to the realm of spirits, related to the spiritual world. This is also shown by the emphasis on its transparency and delicacy. In addition, there is an accentuation of the feminine spirits who are connected with linen, so that we can also look at it as the requisite of the mother goddess. One has only to think of spinning and weaving as a special feature of the Great Mother, for instance the three Norns or Parce who weave the fates. So the linen in our story points to a special fate also, a fate woven in the spiritual realm with a spiritual goal, which in the form of fine linen can cure the illness of the times.

There is a Grimm fairy tale, "The Three Feathers,"<sup>24</sup> where the king gives his sons the getting of linen as a task and the one who brings the finest will have the kingdom. But then when they bring the linen he says that was only a beginning, and now they must bring the most beautiful bride. So, the linen in that story is just the initial connection with the feminine. It is only a thread, which then leads to the feminine figure. Well, here it gets interrupted, that motif doesn't really come through.

How would we interpret the fact that this drunken emperor who no longer has a wife wants linen? Linen has to do with fate, with destiny, with the feminine; it is vegetative in contrast to wool which is an animal product. That points to its purity. The Pythagoreans, for instance, dressed only in linen clothes, nothing from sheep, and then it also has to do with permeability. You can transfer illnesses or you can exorcise with it. That always means that things which are very pure are also very easily contaminated. You have the same idea in the folk belief that the innocent young sheep are the most easily bewitched, and so on. The most frequently bewitched thing in agricultural countries is milk, which is a sym-

<sup>24</sup>*The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, p. 319.

bol of innocence and innocent thinking.

So, the linen has on the one side the idea of innocence and a strange connection with the possibility of being contaminated or bewitched. Thus the anima fantasy of our drunken emperor, which confirms what we thought about him, is mainly too pure. It is too far from reality, too fine, too ideal, too beautiful, not contaminated with evil, and that fits with the Inquisition and the persecution of the witches and so on. If you could have talked to the persecutors, they would have said a woman must be pure, a woman must be chaste, a woman must obey her husbandsome absolutely demanding, inhuman ideal of femininity, and any woman who doesn't fit into that is a witch. That also shows that the more one has such a fantasy, a wrong fantasy of purity, the more can the devil and death and evil get into it. You have that not only in the medieval church; you could say the same for instance about the nineteenth century in higher English and Anglo-Saxon circles. It is the ideal of the lady. A lady doesn't curse or get angry and a lady doesn't even know that she has a belly and genitals. One doesn't speak about such things; the word "belly" is forbidden. A lady doesn't use that word and on and on and on. That's linen. That's an anima fantasy of men, and most painful for women if they have to perform according to such a pattern. But many of us perhaps will also still have been taught that we ought to be ladies. A most depressing affair.

And behind it is a lecherous old man, an evil drunkard, who, when he has a beautiful daughter-in-law, knows nothing more intelligent than to just go and stretch his paws out after her. That fits the lady fantasy of such gentlemen. They are full of dirt themselves and, as you see, at the end of the story he behaves absolutely like a dirty old man, but he has these sentimental lady fantasies. I think that needs no comment. The pure, ideal lady fantasy predominated during late Christian development. At the same time, there was a whole underground culture of prostitution where those men lived the other side of their anima. They married a lady and then they went to a brothel! Because with a lady it was obviously not interesting. So there is this absolute split of the feminine image in our civilization and in a man's anima. It splits the anima in men and splits the women because the women cannot be themselves. They have to per-

form according to such collective ideas.

In itself anything woven can be a pattern. In German we have the expression, "a woven way of life." We say "the thread of destiny, the thread of life," but what is that in psychological terms? Eros weaves connections between us and others but the connections can also be internal. Connection is a good word for it. For instance, we speak of a web of associations, where all the amplifications of an archetype form a web. They all link up with each other and are interwoven. That is why Jung says the archetypes are contaminated. *Contaminare* in Latin means interwoven. So, our mental processes are like a web, a web of associations. Our feeling processes are like a web. We make connections, but mainly with our fantasy. Mostly weaving has to do with fantasy work, which is also a form of association and making connections. Creative fantasy is a web. If you do an active imagination you weave a cloth and that is why it has to do with the idea of destiny, because the unconscious fantasies of people are their destiny.

The web of destiny really is the fabric of one's unconscious fantasies. You see that for instance when people in analysis complain of bad luck all the time. They find the wrong partner, they get into the wrong position, they make wrong choices, and then when you go into it deeper you find that they say to themselves, "I always knew it would go wrong, I knew that." Their animus, or anima, had already woven the fantasy that they were unlucky and always would be. That is like a curse, a destiny that makes them do all the wrong things. When they go from one bad situation to another, they always have that feeling inside, "I knew it would all turn out wrong. With me it could not be otherwise. With me it will go wrong again." If you can fish up such a destructive fantasy from the back of their mind, make it conscious, then you can sometimes break the spell and stop that run of bad luck. So weaving has to do with unconscious associations, unconscious fantasies that have a suggestive influence. And you can apply that to all the amplifications I have made.

Now, in our story the three sons go away, but first they have a feast to say good-bye and to be together, and then each chooses his own way. The first goes where he has to be hungry and gets nothing to eat, but he has a horse and with that he got along. There are parallels. In one, a Rus-

sian fairy tale,<sup>25</sup> the three sons of the Czar go out and come to a notice which says, "He who rides to the right side will remain hungry, but his horse will have enough to eat. He who goes to the left side will have enough to eat but his horse will be hungry. He who goes straight ahead will suffer death." The eldest goes to the right and brings a copper snake back to his father and gets chased away. The second eldest goes to the left and falls into a brothel, gets caught by a prostitute and never comes home again. The youngest, who rides straight ahead, goes through terrible difficulties and finally becomes the czar; and he is the hero of the story. The death he goes through is naturally a symbolic death, he is not actually killed.

This motif in our story is really the same as in that Russian fairy tale, but is not very clear. The oldest went one way where he went hungry because he had nothing to eat, but he had a horse and the horse could eat. Therefore he went on, and he only found the little dog. The second brother had something to eat but his horse was hungry, and he finds a little bit of linen that could go through a needle if one tried really hard. The third gets lost in a terrible rain storm in the forest. This third son would correspond to the Russian hero who also gets into trouble but finds the princess, the beautiful Maria. The one on the right has nothing to eat but his horse is fed, and he finds not much. The other goes to the left and has food, but his horse has nothing to eat and he doesn't find much either.

Rider and horse symbolize a person carried by instinctual vital forces. Our substructure, our body, is an animal. The horse has to do with the vitality of this substructure. Very often after people dream that horses are hurt or in bad shape, they fall ill; something is the matter with their bodies, because symbolically it is the horse-body that carries the soul. It also has to do with vitality. We still measure the force of our cars by horsepower, so very often in modern dreams the car takes over the role of the carrying substructure. Once I dreamt, at the end of a semester when I was very tired, that I saw my old car rolling, with somebody else driving it,

<sup>25</sup> MDW, *Russische Volksmärchen*, No. 41 (Düsseldorf-Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1959).

and there were black clouds coming out of the back, and I thought, "Oh, the poor thing must go in a garage and be repaired." Then I knew that was the moment for a holiday. If I went on working, then I would get the flu or something. So the unconscious had just chosen the car to illustrate the horse.

Now, if you go to the right, it means you follow consciousness. The eldest brother has nothing to eat but his horse eats. He consciously starves himself and keeps his horse going. I think the choosing of the way, incidentally, means the choosing of a way of life how to go on from now and since he chooses not to eat but to have his horse well fed, I would say he chooses a materialistic way. He sees that he has money and health and that his horse is well fed; his body, his physical being, is well fed, but he starves his spiritual side. That would mean *ubi ben ibi patri* where it is good, there I have to live. That is the main thing and spiritual things are unimportant. And accordingly, this brother finds only a little dog. That fits the picture.

The second brother has something to eat but the horse has nothing; he would be the aesthete. He would say that the important things are spiritual values and human relationships, and neglect his physical and material needs. He finds some linen, but it is rather coarse. That confirms that the linen has to do with a high-up, aristocratic anima ideal, an aesthetic and ascetic anima ideal, the lady ideal of the feminine. When a man is married to a lady, his horse may have nothing to eat, but it's still very nice to present her to others in a drawing room. So he has something for this side of his personality, even though his horse goes hungry.

Then comes the youngest and he goes the middle way; he just goes ahead, so he remains between the opposites. He doesn't let himself be seduced into falling into the one-sidedness of either the physical or the spiritual, neither the white nor the black. He just continues straight on his way, between the opposites. At once this takes him into a dark forest, and that is where he will find the cat palace. He goes deep into the unconscious, the vegetative realm of the unconscious, and there he is taken by surprise by a terrific rain, so that he can't even see his own fingers. He is desperate. It rains for three days and three nights and all the time it is pitch black. On the third morning lightning lights up the whole area, re-

vealing a palace. He says, "I will go straight to that palace. I can't go on anymore, whatever happens."

Now we come to the symbolism of the rain. The most famous terrible rain most of us know is the great flood described in the Bible, caused by the wrath of God, who wanted to destroy mankind. If somebody dreams there is a flood, at first you may conclude that God is angry, but what does that mean in psychological terms? What happens if somebody dreams God is angry? First, we call the God-image the Self. I would say that the whole collective unconscious is in an upheaval, that there is disharmony in the conscious behavior of the collective and that the unconscious is brooding on destruction. That is our situation now. The unconscious toys with the idea of destroying us, which is why, for instance, if you analyze many people you see an enormous amount of terribly destructive dreams, of atom bomb explosions and the end of the earth.

Such dreams have to be taken seriously because either they might be prophetic and mean that the end is coming or, at least, if we escape once more, then it could mean that the collective unconscious has been so badly treated by our not understanding it that it has turned destructive against us, against the collective. Because nobody heeds the collective unconscious, the unconscious is angry. That's the anger of God, the kind of anger that erupted to cause the flood, because the Jewish people didn't keep His commandments. If we translate this idea into our modern idiom, it would mean that they hadn't followed the meaningful trends of the unconscious. They did not follow the energies of the collective unconscious. They had sinned against the unconscious, so they were flooded by it. If you sin against the unconscious, the unconscious possesses you. When somebody dreams of a flood, it means either that that person will fall into a depression or a disorientation, a drowning but quite as often into a possession, an ideological obsession, for instance, an "ism." That is also a drowning. Khomeini was a drowned man, a man who had his head under water.

I wanted first to show the negative side of rain, but there are also positive associations in the idea of *solutio*, of fertilization. Then the rain is interpreted more as a fertilization, like the Nile which floods each year and supports abundant crops. The Greeks interpreted the rain as a loving

embrace of Zeus and Demeter, the sky god and the earth, a uniting of the opposites. And in the I Ching, for instance, you have many oracles where it says, "When the rain falls, good luck," so literally, when the rain falls, there is a solution. Solution in the play of the words, the alchemical solution, the dissolution which is also the solution of a problem—the melting of the opposites which have hardened against each other, and have built up tension. It is the release of a tension. That's why one feels so wonderful after a thunderstorm. When you walk out in nature after a thunderstorm you feel physically relieved. I always think of how, before a storm, you feel nervous, the dog is restless, you have a headache and so on, and then comes the rain, and afterward, after the rain, you go out into the sunshine; it's just like a rebirth of everything. You feel it and the whole country seems to be reborn. The storm in our story has thunder and lightning, so here we have an even greater release of tension. The opposites come together, create a solution, and the tension dissolves.

Seeing a flash of light means to have an insight. It can be into the whole structure of the universe or the structure of the Godhead; in a flash of lightning you see it all. Jakob Boehme had such a lightning experience and it took him years and years to write out in his works what he actually saw, condensed in one moment, in a flash.<sup>26</sup> So it has to do with revelation, a sudden insight from the unconscious. That's why shamans are always connected with the idea of lightning. For instance, in certain Eskimo tribes, if somebody is hit by lightning and survives, or if somebody is very nearly hit by lightning, if it strikes just beside him, that is a sign he is called to be a shaman.

So to be struck by lightning or have lightning coming quite close to you means that the spirits, the ghosts or the gods aim at you. Zeus and Jupiter were always throwing lightning bolts. It is a sign, an action from the highest God, and many still see it so. There is the famous story that when Jung was away on holidays in Sarnen in the Berner Oberland, lightning struck the church there and then they went around and begged for money to pay for a new church and one peasant said, "I'm not going

<sup>26</sup> See "A Study in the Process of Individuation," *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW 9I, pars. 534f.

to pay Him for a new church if He sets fire to His own house!" So there is still the idea that it is a manifestation from God, a sign of His wrath or blessing, or electing or enlightening somebody.

In our story it clearly has the quality of enlightenment because the young man suddenly sees the cat palace. Later you see that the cat arrives in lightning at the court; she always comes in a thunderstorm. In a thunderstorm a cat's skin becomes electric. They were the animals of sailors who apparently brought cats onto their ships, and when something went wrong there was a big storm which was brought about by cats. People dream of thunderstorms and we say one goes "thundering through the house" or father "thundered" at the table, and so on. A thunderstorm is an outbreak of affect. That goes together with being enlightened. Generally, when one is in a terrific emotional upheaval, then one has sudden insights. They go together. How is the cat, the dark feminine, connected with that? What must women do to help men develop?

There is a favorite story of the Hopi, who once lived under the earth and there was an overpopulation problem. The Hopi men did nothing about it but then the women became so intolerable that the Hopis made up their mind to climb a level higher. Then they settled again and everything went right, and then again there was overpopulation, and the men did nothing. They would have gone on like that forever if the women hadn't become so impossible, making scenes from morning till night. Then the men got going. That is still true. And that is why the doctrine of a lady, who should never raise her voice and always be like the Virgin Mary, really causes her husband to remain sleep about his anima problem. If she doesn't make a thunderstorm from time to time, he generally doesn't wake up, he just doesn't see.

So, our hero suddenly sees the palace of the cat in the thunderstorm, in the upheaval, and realizes he absolutely must go to it. There he finds a very strange thing, a piece of meat, like the leg of a deer or something, and it's hanging on a wall. In reality it's not meat but consists of emeralds and other precious stones. He climbs up to get the meat and he gets caught by his foot, it acts like a trap. At that moment he hears a bell and he is afraid he will fall down. The door opens and somebody comes and so on. So he was really attracted by a false piece of meat, made of pre-

precious stones. But he is hungry. He thinks he wants to have meat, but he gets hold of precious stones. He gets caught with his foot in those precious stones and then he enters the cat palace.

We have not yet put the earlier part into perspective, what it really means. One can interpret motifs in midair, so to speak, and get all the connections between them and it looks as if you are following the context of the story, but then you must ask yourself, "Now what does that mean in practical life? What is it that actually happened?" But first I will discuss this strange motif of a chunk of meat which is like a bait that captures our hero when he comes to the palace, and then go back and look at what leads up to this strange and unique motif that I have never found in any other fairy tale. So he is terribly hungry and he climbs up to get to it and when he comes near he sees that it isn't meat, it is a chunk of precious stones, but he has touched it with his foot and gets caught in it, and there he is hanging, caught like a fish. Then he falls, a door opens below the wall and he is pulled into the cat palace.

It is unfortunate that in English one makes a distinction between flesh and meat. In German there is only one word, *Fleisch*, so it's quite clear what it is because the Bible speaks about it all the time fleshly desires, living in the flesh and so on. Anglo-Saxons call a pig a pig but when you eat it they call it pork, and they call sheep sheep and then when they eat it they call it mutton. I think that's hypocrisy because they are just trying to conceal the fact that they are really eating pigs and sheep. But mutton, that's dead, objective, there's no murder in it. The French also have that difference, *viande* for meat and *chair* for flesh. But in German it is the same and actually in fact it *is* the same. It is a bit of flesh, an animal's flesh, flesh from which we live. It's one of our basic nourishments. At some time our ancestors on the ape level changed from being vegetarians to being omnivorous, eating everything, and we have kept to that.

If you think of the amplifications of flesh, then I think we needn't say much more about it, though you will see that the flesh contains a mystery. It isn't so simple, but if you take it at face value, it is simply the physical, fleshly reality, our body reality. And our prince is tremendously hungry for that. Now if you think our story is about having to redeem the feminine, mainly the feminine shadow of the Virgin Mary, then it be-

comes more interesting that flesh is used as bait. The Virgin Mary has no contact with the flesh. She is never represented naked in sacred pictures. She is always well veiled and her body is not visible. Her flesh is discreetly hidden. So that is one part of the unredeemed shadow side of the feminine from a Christian standpoint. Our hero is quite naively and naturally hungry for that flesh and so far that would be easy. You could say the cat catches him by his physical desires and that, in a way, if we take it from a man's standpoint, is natural because generally the anima first appears in a man as physical desire, for instance a sexual fantasy. Then, when he goes after it, he finds it isn't flesh but only a mirage of flesh and is actually a lot of precious stones.

It is a tantalizing situation and I'll jump ahead now to say that we know the story from the man's standpoint is about the assimilation of the anima, her redemption, and from a woman's standpoint redemption of the feminine. The dead flesh is only a tease, a mirage, which the unconscious uses as bait but then takes away. We have to put the accent on the dead aspect. The anima and the feminine body is of no value if the man looks at it as being dead meat he can eat. If a man treats a woman as a good beefsteak to eat, then he misses the anima. As our hero is meant to redeem the anima, the unconscious quite rightly takes it away from him, attracts him with it but then takes it away. It teases him in order to make him realize that it looks like what he wants but it isn't. The unconscious says, "Look, the real thing is a precious stone," but in the mood he is in, hungry and wanting to eat, he just feels irritated. Then comes the strange detail that his foot is caught on those jewels. Naturally one would imagine he says, "Oh damn. That's no use to me in my situation. Good-bye." But then he is magically caught and can't get away, like a fish on a baited hook. Now we have to amplify that.

There is a Grimm fairy tale where a Dummling receives a golden goose.<sup>27</sup> He walks through a village and everybody wants to touch the goose to see if it is alive or not; they are attracted by the gold. First the innkeeper's daughter comes and touches the goose, then her sisters follow and then the parson comes and touches the last girl, then others come

<sup>27</sup> "The Golden Goose," *The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, p. 322.

and they all become stuck to each other. So they march one after the other all magically attached to the golden goose. The story is about a king whose daughter is always sad, so he sets a competition and whoever can make his daughter smile will inherit the kingdom. And when the Dummiling arrives with that queue of people all attached to the golden goose, the princess howls with laughter and is redeemed. It's a funny, not so significant fairy tale. It is important in our present connection because there is this idea of the magic attachment.

Psychologically the attachment is an unconscious fascination, by which one loses one's freedom of choice, becoming attached to the most crazy things under certain circumstances, and there you see already the deeper meaning of what the anima can do. The anima is the goddess Maya, illusion, and now she catches him with an unconscious fascination. He can't get away. His foot is not free. Though he has found what he does not want, he can't pull away. So he is as in the Tarot Card, the hung-up Fool; that means also his strong point is, "I have my feet on the earth and want now a good chunk of meat because I am hungry." Then they are precious stones, and suddenly he is turned over in the wrong direction, which he doesn't like, but he's caught.

At that moment he hears a bell and he lets himself fall down; a door opens and a hand pulls him in, so he says, "Well I will go in whatever will happen." He goes around and sees only a table with one candle and a bed. And he says, "Oh well, I'll go in there and rest because I am wet from the rain." Then come all these initiation tortures where he comes closer to the cat lady.

So now that we have this bit of the story, I would like to go back and say what it all is. We saw that the emperor who drinks says that his sons should bring him a bit of linen which is so fine and so subtle that it goes through a needle. And we had come so far as to say such a bit of textile has to do with unconscious fantasy, the creative unconscious fantasy which is the web of destiny, which is really fantasized by our own inner life. Now, this drunken old emperor has a very sublime fantasy; a bit of linen so fine that it can go through the eye of a needle would be a sublime, very subtle fantasy. Linen is a feminine symbol, so this web of associations, a creative fantasy web, is a feminine symbol such as the web

of Maya in Hindu philosophy. Going back, we remember that the old emperor does not have the fantasy, he only wishes for the wishes for the right fantasy. However, as we know from the end of the story, he behaves very badly and has to be defeated and is possibly even killed, or if not, at least reduced to powerlessness. So, it is insufficient to have that positive fantasy. But it sets the sons going.

How does one interpret the old principle, the king being the old principle of consciousness, having a right kind of wishful fantasy but being reduced to not getting it, and failing his task all the same? It's clear what it means, but how would it look in daily life if the ruling principle has the right kind of desire, but when the fantasy fulfills itself, so to speak, then he misbehaves? Well, one could say that we are now in such a situation.

I think all the leading powers in the world would agree that what we need is greater protection of nature, more love among people, all these ideals, a better relationship to nature and we mustn't exploit our planet, and on and on and on. Our technology is too inhuman. You read in every newspaper that we should go back to a more austere life. We should reevaluate human relationship, reevaluate creative individual fantasy and we should have more individual freedom. The State should not be so overpowering. It's absolutely no achievement to have those wishful fantasies. Everybody has them, even the old system has them; it's not just the young who have those idealistic demands. You can analyze people of eighty and they will all say those things too. The old are generally full of reasonable wishful fantasies, but they don't know how to go about it. The disease of the old emperor is that when he comes to facts, he doesn't know how to go about it because his wife is dead.

Now what does it mean that his wife is dead? What is the feminine? If we take it that his anima is dead, then that would be a male society and the feminine would be the anima quality. Mainly I would say that the anima in a man and the feminine in a woman is what brings things into reality. If a man has no wife, then it means that he may have the most marvelous fantasies but when it comes to realizing them, he is lost. The feminine is what carries them out, just as a man generates a child but the woman brings it to birth, into life. So if a man's anima is dead, if he has no relationship to his inner femininity, then he might be the greatest ide-

alist in the world and have marvelous plans to reform the world situation, but when it comes to putting them into reality, he will be at a loss.

That is typical of the old emperor, who despairs at having lost his wife and begins to drink. Like a disappointed idealist, so to speak. If a man has developed his anima, he sees opportunities where he can put his ideals into reality because he is personally related. He sees not only committees, he also sees people. You can only realize things through individuals, not through committees and newspaper articles. That is developing the feminine principle and then the man has the right fantasy. He sees the opportunities in reality which evolve into personal relationships.

You can have the best system for the world but if the people are not related in it, if you have for instance a marvelous team of scientists and they all hate each other, they will never produce anything. If the anima is deficient, there is always sterility. Think of the fairy tale mentioned earlier, "The Three Feathers," where the king first gives his three sons the task of finding such very fine linen, and when they bring it, he says, "Now I want each one to bring the finest bride." So there, the old king leads on from the fantasy into reality, as if he would say, "First we must have a web, a creative fantasy, but then we must also put it into reality." There it ends harmoniously while in our story it does not, because as soon as the emperor sees the beautiful woman he wants her for himself and ruins the whole situation. But we will come to that later.

If we look at this web the old emperor wants as an ideal fantasy which is on the right track, but because of losing his wife he lacks the possibility of realizing it, then you can understand what happens to the eldest son who finds a coarse web, a coarse bit of textile, and the middle one who finds a dog. These two brothers do not play much of a role later. Why does one find a coarse bit of linen, which means something like what the father wants but not as good, and why does the other find a dog?

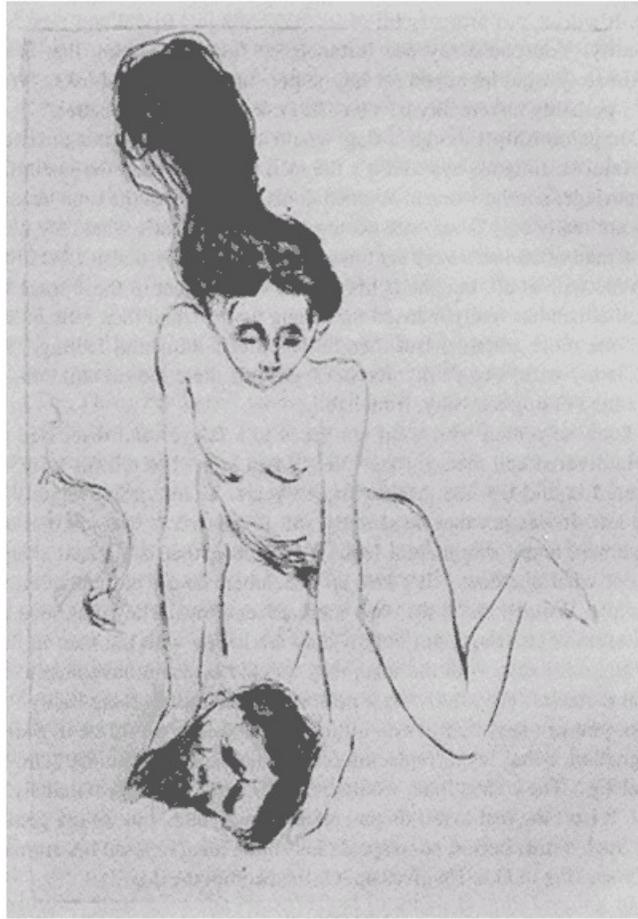
Remember that the direction of the story, the goal, is the redemption of the feminine. I would say that this coarse bit of linen, if you compare it with the ideal linen the emperor had in mind, is only keeping to the coarse outlines of life. For instance, a politician who has a marvelous, beautiful fantasy of how things should be, and then says, "Oh well, in politics one has to be realistic; let's just do the best we can." Then it's

kind of coarsely applied, and loses its true value because there is no soul in it. It's dead. An ordinary bit of linen. That's just trivial and it ends in triviality. You could say, for instance, he finds something that is approximately what he hoped for but he puts up with it and thinks, "Well, that's probably how reality is. You can't ask for something better."

Companionship through a dog would be a kind of blind uncritical faithfulness. Jung always said it's the men who believe in the institution of marriage, not the women. Women doubt marriage all the time because they are really only passionate about relationships, that's what they want. But a man often has a very sentimental idea; he really doesn't get along with his wife at all, but she is his wife. I've seen that in those tragedies where a man has really married the wrong woman, and then falls in love with one more suitable. But then he has this sentimental feeling, "My wife is my wife, I can't divorce her." Even if there are no children. He has a kind of dog's loyalty, from habit.

I knew of a man who went ten times to a lawyer and discussed the whole divorce and then got the jitters when he had to tell his wife. He wavered to and fro like that for fifteen years. There was absolutely no love left. It was not that he secretly still loved her. It was just the dog attachment and a sentimental feeling. "Divorce, that is a social shame, it's not what one does." It's also an attachment to the old conventional principle. Women are in that way more adventurous. They may love the institution of marriage, but only if they are happy with the man in it. If they are not happy with the man, they quickly begin to have unconventional fantasies. They throw over personal considerations more easily.

So, you can say, both ways, to the right and left, would be triviality, resignation, being loyal, replacing real relatedness by thinking, "Oh, we get along." The coarse linen would be, "Oh, we get on approximately all right. It isn't the real love I dreamt about in my youth, but we are getting on." Such a man buries, so to speak, his anima ideal or what his anima is really seeking in him. He gives up. Or then comes the dog.



*The Cat*, etching by Edvard Munch (Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, California Palace of the Legion of Honor)

## 6 The Palace of the Cat

Our youngest prince, the one trapped by the meat-jewels, first comes into a thunderstorm, which we have interpreted as a clash of opposites that leads to a solution, the rain being the dissolving event and the lightning being the clash of opposites. Now we can be more specific and name the opposites. The linen fantasy he carries and for which he is going on the way, and the reality which doesn't look like that at all, clash in him. There he sees, "But I'm chasing my father's ideal fantasy and where does it get me? Lost." Wandering in the vegetative realm of the psyche, he experiences the clash of the opposites, and then he comes to this problem of the flesh. But at the moment he's caught, a bell rings and that makes him drop to the floor, like waking him up or taking him away from the bait, and then he is grabbed and taken into the palace.

Bells are used in many religious ceremonies. There are the church bells in Christianity, the little bell used in the Mass, bells in the Tibetan religion, in Buddhism and so on. In every religion there are specific connotations, but the general meaning you find everywhere is keeping demons away. The devil hates the ringing of a bell, he can't stand it. Another aspect is that it concentrates attention on an important event. In the Mass it marks a transition point. It marks the point when the transubstantiation is immanent, rather like an alarm that says, "Now watch out, the transcendental event is coming." That's why I call it a concentrating, or summoning, of the attention.

Bells on the church tower that ring every hour mark off divisions in temporal time, which has to do with the desacralization of time. When clocks were first invented and came into general use in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, you actually had them only in monasteries and churches. If you read Nicolaus Cusanus, for instance, you will see that there the clock was thought to be an image of the cosmos and even of God because it's a mandala, a time mandala. The idea was that it marks the sacred times. That's why there were sacred hours of the

day and sacred events, funerals and births and so on.

Then slowly, but only after Descartes, came the image of the clock universe as a machine which just runs its course mechanically, and that's what Einstein was defending against with quantum physics. God's freedom is nowhere in a clockwork universe where everything is predestined. Descartes still had God in it but he said, "God made those rules and He's not going to break them anymore." So God has once made a mechanism and now He has caught Himself in it. He can't change it. But in the Middle Ages God could constantly interfere with clocks. In the Bible, Joshua made the sun stand still, and when Hezekiah was ill, Joshua stopped the clock for fifteen hours, and so on. God or the divine miracle could always interfere with time. Time was not a mechanical tick tock tick, just marking time into eternity. So there's a long development of modern clock time which is a desacralizing process. In villages the bell in its original meaning tolls death, marriage, birth, all the archetypal situations, indicating that now something from eternity, something archetypal, is happening. The idea was that everybody at that moment should stop work and say a short prayer, think of the dead or think of the woman who is now giving birth or whatever; it called their attention.

It's difficult to circumscribe in psychological language. You could say it is an exteriorization of an inner voice or an inner signal. You know sometimes you have the experience that you go through life and all the daily events are trivial and then the telephone rings and suddenly something says to you, "Now watch out! Something is going to happen!" And then if you don't answer you miss something really important. You have a bell inside that kind of rings and says, "Something important is about to happen." I would call it the voice of the Self, a signal which says, "Don't miss the fact that this is an archetypal event." One can easily miss archetypal events. Especially if one has a hectic day and a lot to do, then only later, when one goes to bed, one thinks, "What happened today? Ah, this morning at nine o'clock, that was important!" But you missed it.

It is like that when someone dies. That lifetime stops and very often clocks actually do stop. It is a parapsychological thing. A best friend of my father, a very sober, military man who didn't believe in miracles, witnessed it himself when his wife died. They had a big clock in the

room where she was dying. She was in a semicoma and began to fantasize a face onto the face of the clock, talking to it, and at the moment she died, there was a terrible noise in the clock, and the clock stood still. After some months he took the clock to a clockmaker who said, "But what's happened? There's not one part in the clock that's whole. I can't repair it. It is as if somebody took a hammer and smashed up all the works." He said sorry, he couldn't fix it. My father's friend just took his pipe out and said, "I can't explain it, but that's how it happened."

Such stories are quite frequent. A clock has this magical aspect. Many people have such a connection with their clock. I experienced this several times when something archetypal or very important happened to me and a few hours later I saw that my watch had stopped exactly when it happened. That was what Jung described as infinity or eternity coming into clock time, so to speak. Eternity interrupts. It is as if there is a plane where there is clock time and then eternity puts its hand in for a minute and you have an archetypal experience. You have a feeling of what Jung said was "the infinite," and then very often the watch reacts to that.

To come back to its meaning in our story. The bell unites the opposites. It's a symbol for totality because it unites masculine clapper and feminine bell. It's like the yoni and lingam in India. To say this is an approach of the unity of masculine and feminine goes a bit far but I think it is legitimate. One can say that. And also that it is the moment of eternity, when something important is happening. What is interesting is that it loosens the fascination. He falls down from the chunk of jewels, or meatjewels, to which he was attached, so the bell frees him. He falls down and then is taken into the palace. If we take the bell to mean we chase away demonic fascination, it would mean that when he hangs there by his foot, he's fascinated in a rather demonic way. He's caught, which is a negative state of being, and the bell frees him as if to say, "This is only a prelude, now the important thing is happening." And so he wakes up, he becomes more conscious.

Through that he is freed from his fascination and falls into where he really belongs. Namely, he has to go into the palace. There he comes to a room with a table and a candle and a bed, and he thinks, "I'm going to rest here." When he goes to sit on the bed, suddenly hands appear with-

out bodies, only the hands; they grab him and beat him and tear all his clothes off. He doesn't know where the hands come from. He sees nobody, only the hands, and in his despair he cries out, "Oh God, who is beating me like this?" The beating stops and the hands disappear only when he is completely naked, not one bit of clothing on his body. Then there is suddenly a lot of food on the table and beautiful clothes which he puts on. After eating the food he feels better and forgets about the beating. The next day he goes into another room and the whole thing is repeated. On the third day, something else happens. Twice he is beaten by invisible hands. Apparently it is the cat's servants who are doing it, because on the third day it is said that the cat empress orders them to take the young hero into a big room where everything was made of pure gold.

The closest parallel I could find to this is in the Grail legend, in Chrétien de Troyes and in Robert de Boron, where there is the motif of the terrible bed. Sir Gawain sat on that bed and right away a lot of bells began to ring and then a lion came into the room and attacked. Gawain naturally overcame the lion and then the ladies from the palace came and thanked him for freeing them and he was a great hero.<sup>28</sup> Then there are, for instance, magicians who have beds; when you lie in the bed it suddenly flies away with you or goes into hell or under the sea. They are demonic beds.

We should consider the symbolic meaning of a bed. We have proverbs in German. We say, for instance, how you arrange your bed, that's how you lie afterward, and in English, "You made your bed, now you have to lie in it," which means everybody gets what he deserves. You make love in bed, you sleep, you relax. For many people it's a place where you let yourself go into fantasies, hypnogogic visions and so on, through the relaxing. It's a place of *abaissement de niveau mental*, where you connect with your unconscious, with your instincts and with your body.

Naturally those miraculous beds in the Grail legend have mainly to do with the love problem. If the knight sits on a bed and a lion attacks him, that would mean that the moment he touches the bed there is a sex prob-

<sup>28</sup> See Emma Jung and Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Grail Legend* (trans. Andrea Dykes; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), p. 230.

lem. He's overwhelmed by his greed, by animal greed, overwhelmed by his instincts. He loses control, and that would be the lion. The bed is where all our instinctual life fulfills itself birth, death, love-making, where we get in touch with our instincts and with the unconscious. Under the bed, a place where one never likes to sweep, if people are not very clean there are always clouds of dust. So the place under the bed is generally the place where demons of the personal unconscious live. I've often found in dreams that devils live under the bed and lizards too, spiders and mice and so on, and they have always to do with the personal unconscious, what is right under the surface. As soon as you relax, the mice under the bed begin to scratch. That means all your obsessive complexes begin to bother you.

The table with the candle indicates the beginning of some light on the situation. There are many other fairy tales where the hero is tortured in darkness in order to redeem the anima, but this is not one of them. There is some light. So, that is again teasing him, as with the meat and the precious jewels. Because he needs light he gets it, but he needs meat and that he does not get. It's again giving him the sublime when he is really in dire need of satisfying his physical needs.

That happens often in reality. I remember a case of a young man who wanted to have an affair and he always picked very pious, well-educated girls who were afraid of mama and teased him. They were always very nice and went out with him, went to dinner and so on, but when he wanted to bring up his dire needs, then they took off. It happened five times, with five different girls, and I finally said, "Why do you pick such girls? I mean, there must be something behind that because there are enough others nowadays."

The poor man felt absolutely as if the unconscious was teasing him most cruelly. When one doesn't understand a motif, one always has to ask what is the conscious attitude of the person the unconscious teases in such a way, and just what does it compensate? He was certainly ambivalent and neurotic. He despised the flesh. He wanted the fleshly woman, but due to his education he despised it. He had a split anima. He had an anima who was partly romantic and was therefore attracted to unawakened, goody-goody girls because he himself was a goody-goody

little boy.

Of course, he had urgent fleshly needs, but he disapproved of them. He would be the kind of man who when he seduced a girl would despise her for it. Many men do that. They have their way with a woman and then think, "Oh, she's only a whore." So in a way he did not value the flesh in the right way. He wanted it but he did not value it. He did not have the right attitude toward it. He was still caught in the Christian prejudice against the flesh. It is not enough for a man to say, "I'm not going to believe in that Christian idealistic thing. I'm going to have a real woman, a concrete woman, in bed," for if he secretly still despises her body, her physical being, then he is caught in the old prejudice. Then, if he is not meant to make that mistake, the unconscious just teases him all the time until he realizes what he is doing, that he is behaving in a split manner. He wants it but despises himself for that, or after having had the woman, hates her and begins to doubt her. "She must be a prostitute, probably she goes with other men too," and on and on, all this aftermath. With such a split attitude, he naturally falls in with split women; they go together like clockwork.

So in our story the split isn't yet healed and that's why this teasing goes on. And the teasing is partly that he is beaten up, but what is emphasized more is that all his clothes are torn away until he is absolutely naked. The nakedness is again a unique motif, otherwise the beating up is very widespread. It's called the "three torture nights." In many sagas and fairy tales, in order to redeem a princess who is a snake or a toad or something like that, there is a hero who has to suffer, to be tortured by evil ghosts or black men or black cats for three nights in order to redeem the princess or lady from her animal form. That is the motif of the three torture nights. It is always a man who has to endure that. Women are also tortured, but in other ways, not physically. It is always male heroes in fairy tales who are physically tortured and, as far as I know, always in the service of redeeming the feminine.

You see, this compensates masculine consciousness which believes in action. The man has to suffer, which means he has to take a passive feminine attitude, just stand and suffer and not burst into action. For a virile man it is very difficult to passively suffer, simply to endure, be-

cause his natural temperament says, "I must do something about it. I must break out of this situation. I'll fight. Where is my enemy? Let me fight the enemy." I notice this when I have to say to men, "Well, you can't do anything. You just have to suffer the conflict," there's always the question, "Yes, but can't I do *something*?" I say, "You can do nothing. Just nothing." That's terribly hard. But that is how the feminine side in a man is redeemed and the feminine principle in general as well.

The same is true if a woman has for some reason to redeem her own femininity. Then her animus, her masculine side, will say, "What can I do? What shall I do?" instead of redeeming the feminine through suffering. Jung once went so far as to say, "If a woman asks, 'What can I do?' she is already in the animus and I won't answer." That's maybe going a bit far, but there is something to it. A woman caught in a masculine attitude wants to take action; she wants to fight, to do something, and in that she is moving away from her femininity. So if it is a question of redeeming her femininity, she has to learn to suffer without always thinking, "What can I do?" or "What must I do?"

Naturally that also compensates the mainly Western patriarchal active outlook we have on life. That's worse for instance in analysis; many people can't understand it. That's why they sometimes leave a Jungian and go to a psychiatrist who gives them a pill. If you ask why, they say, "At least he does something! You tell me only that I should suffer. But I think something should happen. Something must be done!" Now, of course, like all psychological truths, there are always half-truths. There are many situations where one has to do something. But there are other situations where the real deed, the really heroic deed, is to stand the suffering and not do anything.

Then comes this additional motif which is not frequent, namely that the hands beat him and take away all his clothes so that he stands naked. Afterward he is given food and clothing. Clothes represent a cultural attitude, and nakedness always has the meaning of the naked truth. In many primitive rituals people have to be naked. In the ancient mysteries and certain baptismal cults, people had to enter the water naked and come naked from the font again. The idea is always to get rid of all cultural or educated or acquired attitudes, to be one's own naked truth. Any

outlook one has acquired through culture is taken away. Our hero has to come to a point where he is just himself and nothing else. And there, in his despair, he finally says, "Who is it who beats me?" He asks the personal question, "Who is it?" then the hands give up and suddenly he sees food and new clothes, but that lasts only for one day and then the whole thing begins again, more teasing.

These scenes remind one of typical initiation rituals. We know very little about antique initiation rituals and mysteries, but for instance those who have been in Pompeii in the Villa of Mysteries have seen that people were beaten and had to appear naked. So there was physical torture as part of the initiation, and probably in the Mithraic mysteries there were too. It's basically the same as the tortures you still have in primitive societies, where the young men, when they are initiated, are very often beaten or mutilated; they have to stand great suffering and often go naked into a large animal skin to be reborn.

So there nakedness has also to do with rebirth, with being reduced to the state in which one was born. "Naked as one was born," we say in German. In Germany they had these rites in student organizations; they beat one another too, which is also a male initiation ritual. We do not have it officially, but we have it in the Boy Scouts. In many Boy Scout groups the elders used to terrorize the youngsters in the night, not so much by beating but by making them jump into cold water, or suddenly appearing in a bedroom to pull them out and throw them into a cold lake, all sorts of such masculine initiations. Parents never hear about that, or only with horror ten years later. But it seems to be such an instinctual archetypal pattern that it always revives itself in groups. In certain schools too, sometimes they do that and in perverse ways.

On the third day, our hero receives what he needs. At last he can eat. At first he is just teased, but then he gets to eat. Earlier we said his hunger was for the flesh; he had fleshly desires, and at first he is teased about that but now he receives it because he is purified, probably through his new clothes. They have taken away, for instance, his patriarchal despising of the flesh, a cultural, habitual, collective attitude. One can even experience it, though I think it is symbolic here. Probably he receives what he really needs for his body also not only on the oral level, but it is a rare

experience for those of us who always have enough food.

We know from ethnology that in all primitive civilizations the plants and animals that are the main food of a tribe are considered divine. They are sacred. The caribou for the Eskimo, or the wheat for farmers, is a god, and so on. I had learned that, but I had never experienced it until once, when I was young and had no money, I went for long days marching in the mountains, sleeping in the hay and bathing in cold rivers, eating only once a day in order to save money. One evening, after the third day, I was so hungry and miserable that finally I went to an inn and ordered a plate of spaghetti. I did that with some friends. And then I passed out. I had a blackout, and when I came back to consciousness I had a feeling of warmth and ecstasy. When I kind of reopened my eyes, the others looked at me and said, "Well, well," because I had just eaten that spaghetti like an animal, absolutely unconscious in a mental black-out. I woke up as from a dream, and I felt this warm food going down in my body and I felt, "I'm alive again. I've died and now I'm alive again."

To me, and I still feel it, it was really like a ritual death and rebirth, and since then I know what it is to be hungry and to experience the god who gives you back life by letting himself be eaten by you. Primitive populations always live on the brink of starvation, and one feels death in one's bones, so to speak, when one is that hungry. One feels, now I can't drag myself around anymore, I can't walk, I have become so weak. And then, when suddenly this enormous flood of life comes back into you, you feel that a god has given you back life. I could have worshipped that spaghetti, or rather the wheat god who made the spaghetti. I can worship him now. It is life. It is the mystery of life. And that made me understand what Jung once said: "Freud is wrong. I don't believe that sex is the strongest drive in mankind. Hunger is. Hunger is problem number one, and sex comes only after hunger is satisfied."

On the third day the empress suddenly the cat lady is called the empress orders her cat servants to lead the young hero into a big hall decorated all over with gold. Everything in it is made from pure gold. Ten hands come and bring him a garment of pure gold. They put it around him, and then he sees a hundred cats who make music and sing beautifully. He is led onto a throne of purest gold and he thinks, "I don't

really know who rules here." Then he sees before him a beautiful little cat in a golden basket. This empress of the cats pleases him very well, until after a festival, at midnight, the cat gets out of the basket and says to the whole assembly, "From now on I am no longer the ruler of this palace. This young man is your master." The cats all come and kiss his hands and greet him as their ruler. So in other words he becomes emperor or king of the cat kingdom.

We have had the important motif of the cat, and now we should look at the round golden basket. It's a mandala, a symbol for the Self and it shows that the cat is a unity of the Self and the anima. In *Psychology and Alchemy*, Jung gives dreams of an anima figure whose head shines like the sun, and there he says that at that stage the anima and the Self are contaminated; they are still one.<sup>29</sup> So here we have a symbol that unites the symbol of the Self, the totality, with the highest form of the anima, if we take it from the point of view of a man's psychology. If we look at it from a woman's situation, then it would mean that her cat aspect, the cat aspect of the feminine principle, is the real total aspect. The Virgin Mary does not have that basket, the cat has it. She really is the potential totality, and in that, greater than everything else.

After a big festival the young man becomes the lord or master of the cat kingdom and indirectly, naturally, the bridegroom of the cat lady. This is a *coniunctio*; the feminine has now made room for the masculine. Also, you see, it shows that the dark or instinctual side of the feminine is in no way hostile or negative to the masculine principle. One should tell that to anybody who joins feminist movements, that when the feminine is liberated, when the cat principle is liberated, it unites in peace and love with the masculine and is not hostile. The idea is that the cat is the love principle, which accepts the hero in his masculine form and he, being the prince, represents a coming new form of masculine consciousness which is now accepted and embraced by the feminine. In other words, the great hostility between the masculine and the feminine principles is overcome.

Jung said once that most novels and films, except the very modern ones, have a happy ending, and most fairy tales do too, because life is not

<sup>29</sup> CW 12, pars. 107f.

like that. In actual life men and women are a terribly conflicting pair of opposites, so their union, the peaceful loving union of masculine and feminine, is an achievement. It is an achievement of individuation, of consciousness. Marriages in past societies usually had nothing to do with love. They were family and clan arrangements so that when one wanted the male and the female to get on, or to cooperate for the sake of having children and so on, one excluded the factor of love. One put two people together, this man and this woman, according to clan rules and taboos, and how they got along was their business. Marriage was to a great extent not an affair of romantic love, but a matter of reasonably putting up with each other. That's why, in many primitive societies, men and women hardly talk at all. The men go about their businesswar, cattle herding and huntingand the women sit at home, bring up the babies, talk with the other women and keep order in the house. From time to time the man goes home, rests, makes a baby and leaves again, but they rarely talk to each other.

If you look at African fairy tales, there are many stories where a young man and a young girl love each other and it doesn't suit the clan. It's the Romeo and Juliet problem. They don't love according to the clan rules. They love somebody from another clan which is taboo, and these stories always end tragically. For instance, the two drown and from then on, sometimes on shiny moonlit nights, you see their ghosts over the water. It's always a tragic, unhappy love. Deep, romantic, personal feeling is discouraged by such stories; it is as if people who want to live in that way want something impossible, as if to say, "You are trespassing in the realm of the gods. Love fulfillment is for the gods. On earth you have to keep the clan rules, just put up with your husband or wife, however they are."

So what we are trying to do now, seeking to establish a personal feeling relationship between men and women, is a new situation. It began in the Middle Ages with courtly love. That was the first attempt. Then it was discouraged by society, so we can say that we are really treading on absolutely new grounds, grounds that poetry and religious rules until now have called tragic and impossible, something that never ends well. It is really a new task for both sexes. One should not forget that Jung was

the first to show a way and to promote it, long before there was Women's Lib and such things; showing that we now have to try, for the first time in history, to establish a real relationship between men and women beyond the blind attraction through the projection of animus and anima. Of course that attraction is always at first mixed up with it in some way. Nobody has really integrated anima or animus to a degree that that doesn't come in. But to be able to hold on and go beyond it into a real love relationship, whatever that is, that's the great mystery anticipated in this story, in this meeting.

The festival comes to an end and everybody goes home. The empress of the cats led the young man to his bedroom, embraced him and asked, "My dear hero, why have you come here?" And he answers, "My dear cat, God leads people on different ways and my father has sent me to find some linen which should be so thin that one could blow through it and put it through a needle, and I have come to find that."

One might expect another answer, or hope for a better *coniunctio*, but at this point he is still too masculine, so he just gives an objective answer to her seductive question. One sees he is still a bit tied to his father, to the old world, that he still has this purpose in mind, this ideal of his father. As we have shown, the ideal anima fantasy the father is longing for is not wrong, so in a way it is not wrong either that the young man remembers or carries it, but what he does not see is that right in front of him is the cat who can fulfill it. He doesn't make the connection.

The story skips here to another part, a continuation. His two brothers have gone home. They had waited for him until the year had passed, but when they thought he wasn't coming, they went back to the father. The oldest brought the little dog and the father was quite pleased. The middle one brought the linen that went through a thick needle, but the father asked where the youngest was. So the father is moderately pleased but still doesn't have what he wants. He obviously hopes for something better because he asks, "Where is the youngest one?" And one brother answers, "Father, I haven't seen him since we separated from each other. He's gone. He'll probably not come back." And they all thought he had died, so they cried and were very sorry. There you have again a hint that this father was not altogether evil; he really cares a little for his son, but

he is weak. He is like alcoholics are. They cry very easily.

The youngest brother, meanwhile, is still living with the cat and one day she says, "My dear, don't you want to go home? The year is over when you were to meet again." "No, no. I don't want to go home. What should I do at home? I'm happy here. I'll stay here until my end." The cat says, "No, you may not. If you want to stay here, you must first go back home and you must bring your father what you promised." And he says, "But how can I find such thin linen with fine threads?" The cat tells him that's no problem, she'll see to it. Then the hero says, "Tell me, my dear cat, is it true that three days with you are as much as a year?" And she says, "Yes. Even more. Since you left where you came from, nine years have passed." The hero can't believe his ears. "How can one year be nine years? And then how can I go back? It will take me nine years to go back to my father." In other words, he takes time as distance, as if it would take him nine years to walk back. The cat says, "Give me that whip," and with that magic whip she summons the carriage that overcomes this time/space problem.

Now here we have two motifs to look at. First, he wants to stay there and never return home. What would that mean psychologically? You know, if you remember the beginning of the story, we have the emperor and the empress and they produce a girl who becomes a cat, and the cat goes into the forest. Then we have the emperor with his three sons and the youngest goes to the cat in the forest. What happens in the end is that they do remain there. That is the new kingdom. Nothing is brought back into either of the initial situations, which just fade away. Therefore, this cat kingdom is the new kingdom, the new place to stay. It is the definite solution, whatever that means. But what would it mean if he had stayed there without going home?

The whole thing is very ambiguous. One can interpret it two ways. This palace in the forest seems to hint at the fact that it is in the collective unconscious and therefore, if they stay there at the end of the story, it would mean they really disappear in the collective unconscious. But since he does go home, and for other reasons, it isn't quite like that. The going home, you see, is very important. In most fairy tales the hero has to go home, and very often on the way home he runs into a tremendous

amount of new difficulties. Here he runs into one kind of difficulty, but there are others where, for instance, the brothers are jealous and attack the hero; they take away his treasures and pretend they have found them themselves. That's very frequent. Or he kisses his mother and forgets his bride, or all sorts of catastrophes happen along the way.

After having gone into the depths one has to reconnect with the old reality, with conscious reality, otherwise it remains a kind of timeless dream in the unconscious. One has to bring one's new awareness into daily life. For instance, if you read Jung's biography, you know that after his separation from Freud he went deep into the unconscious and he did these very long active imaginations which he wrote down in what he called the Red Book.<sup>30</sup> He knew he could not publish them, and even today the Red Book is not published. Then came the next thing: "Now I should bring humanity what I have found. I have to find a form in which to take it to others."

There Jung ran into great difficulty because he knew he couldn't publish his active imaginations as they were. He always looked for some form in which to convey his experiences, searching for a vessel to convey them and it was only when he discovered alchemy that he found it. "Alchemy. That's the vessel in which I can convey them. I can pour my personal inner experiences into the language of alchemy because there the same problems are discussed. There it is in an objective, historical and collective form, with thousands of texts. I can in that way make other people partake of my experiences." That would be Jung's "bringing home" and for several years he lived in great agony, after having brought his active imaginations to a satisfactory end, not knowing how to bring them home, to reconnect them with life. He could do this quite naturally in his practice. He simply told his patients about his experiences, but he couldn't publish them. He knew that if he told of them as naked as they are in the Red Book, he would have been called a confused mystic, crazy and so on. He saw quite clearly that that wouldn't do. He couldn't expose the treasure he had found in the depths of the psyche to an unprepared

<sup>30</sup>*Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (ed. Aniela Jaffé, transl. Richard and Clara Winston; New York: Vintage Books, 1989), chapter 6.

world. He had to find a form to convey it to the collective.

That is always the difficulty in bringing things back. Whenever one has found a treasure in the depths, an experience of the Self, there seems to be a need to convey it in some way to others. I don't know why that is so, but you find it too in shaman stories; when the shaman has made his great journey to the Polar Star, or to the Underworld, when he comes back he must shamanize. That means he must bring something to his tribe. There is one story where a shaman is a reindeer hunter and he doesn't like to shamanize, so he always slips away to just hunt reindeer because it's his favorite occupation. But every time he does that he falls ill. He finally gives in and says, "No, I have to serve my people. With my inner experiences, I have to serve my people. I can't live a private life as a happy reindeer hunter anymore."

This necessity also arises in our story, because the prince is called upon to change the existing collective order and therefore he has to bring his experience back. So it is interesting that the cat insists he should go home and take that linen to his father, that he could only legitimately stay with her after having reconnected with the world of collective consciousness he came from.

Then comes this funny discussion, where the hero asks, "Is it true that three days with you are as much as a year?" And the cat says, "Yes. Even more. Since you left where you came from, nine years have passed." There you have an example of the relativity of space/time in the collective unconscious. You can keep that in mind whenever you have to prove to somebody what Jung, for instance, in his paper on synchronicity,<sup>31</sup> just presupposes or mentions, that in the deeper layers of the unconscious space and time become completely relative. You see here a beautiful example and there are thousands of such stories, where always when you are in the magic realm, in the depths, time becomes distorted. It gets longer or shorter, generally longer.

There is the famous story of Rip van Winkle who plays skittles with some giants one evening, and then when he comes back his village has

<sup>31</sup> "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle," *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CW 8.

disappeared and he discovers that he is a decaying, white-haired old man. Nobody remembers him anymore. He thinks he has only been away one evening but he has been away a hundred years. And there are many stories where somebody goes to Paradise for one day, and when he comes back nobody remembers him, the village has gone, and then somebody says, "Yes, yes. There is a rumor that three hundred years ago there was once a man and he disappeared," and when he hears that he falls to ashes and dust. He suddenly dissolves. So Paradise is timeless. In Ireland it is generally the fairy hills; somebody goes into a hill for what he thinks is a few hours or an evening feast, and when he comes back everything is gone and hundreds of years have passed.

This relativity of space/time in the unconscious accounts for why, in the realm of the archetypes, our ordinary clock time is not valid. So when one goes into the deeper layers of the unconscious, one sometimes has telepathic dreams; we can see the future or we dream about the past, or we see in a dream something that actually happens far away. Fairy tales often speak of such parapsychological phenomena. In this case it also shows that our hero has not fallen into the animal level, in the ordinary sense of the word, but into a supernatural, archetypal realm of the psyche which is connected with the instinct but has a real spiritual aspect.

Then the cat takes a whip, snaps it in three directions, and a lightning carriage comes a *Blitzwagen*, a funny word in German. At some later time she does that again where it is called *Feuerwagen* so the fire carriage comes and in it they go to the hero's home in no time. It doesn't take nine years.

Now, we should amplify the lightning or fire carriage of the cat lady. The sun god Helios, in Greek mythology, has a fiery carriage and when Phaeton, his son, steals it from him he crashes because it is reserved for the gods. In Germanic mythology, Donar or Thor has a carriage drawn by two he-goats and when he runs over the sky in that carriage it causes thunder and lightning. In general we can say that in all mythologies such a carriage is reserved for the gods, miraculous carriages of lightning or fire, solar carriages and so on. In India, the gods are very often moved through the town in processions on carriages, so there the carriage is also a symbol of what carries the god. In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, Jung

quotes a beautiful comment on this from an alchemical text:

Take the serpent, and place it in the chariot with four wheels, and let it be turned about on the earth until it is immersed in the depths of the sea . . . . And there let the chariot with the wheels remain, until so many fumes rise up from the serpent that the whole surface . . . becomes dry.<sup>32</sup>

What is so important about the carriage is the four wheels. The carriage is a mandala with four wheels around it, and that can be compared to the chariot vision of Ezekiel. You can say that the total structure of consciousness is the carriage, because it is man-made. It doesn't have much to do with instinct. As the structure of consciousness the carriage serves the gods. Through the vehicle of ego-consciousness the gods are incarnated or actualized. They cannot move a finger if human consciousness does not carry them. That, for instance, is the deeper reason for these processions where the gods are moved through the crowds on carriages; it is to remind people that the god is in a way banished in his temple, and he can't do anything if he doesn't move. He has to be carried by the consciousness of the people. That's why in India, still today, sometimes people throw themselves under the carriage. That would be an unconscious gesture, as if to say, "I sacrifice my life to serve a consciousness that promotes the life of the gods." That's more or less what that gesture means. "I have to give up my ego. I sacrifice myself so that the gods can move, can go on living."

In many religions you find that realization. People know that a god in whom nobody believes anymore, and of whom nobody is conscious, is a dead god. A god nobody believes in, or prays to or thinks about is nothing, nonexistent. For instance, the Egyptians always took their god statues to the Nile and washed them, put cream over them and then carried them back into the temple. That was their way of saying, "If we don't do something, if the gods are not renewed by our activity, then they would just rot away in a corner of the temple. They would be nothing." It's our consciousness that is necessary. That's why it is so important to be conscious of the life of the archetypes, because if we are not conscious of the

32 CW 14, par. 260.

autonomous life of the archetypes in the psyche, then they are seemingly nonexistent and, in fact, even destructive. That is why in a society where the archetypes are no longer honored in any way, believed in or taken care of consciously, you have surrogates, morbid political ideas, isms of all kinds, or drugs. You have all the destructive powers overtaking people, because the gods cannot move without humans. They are paralyzed if we don't carry them.

So, to come a long way back to her, if our cat is capable of calling up a fire or lightning carriage with the crack of a whip, she reveals in that moment that she's a goddess and not just a cat. She is a goddess and she is the Virgin Mary's shadow, not a woman. And now you see more what the jewels behind the meat are. Our hero wanted the flesh and instead he fell into the jewels, the eternal or the divine. He has to realize the divine aspect of the flesh. It is not enough for instance, for a Christian who has up until now despised the flesh, to say, "Now I'm going to throw my prudish prejudices overboard. I'm going to have juicy sex and enjoy it." That would be eating the flesh. That's nothing. If he does that he doesn't move one inch out of the old kingdom, he's still caught in it. He only adds the dimension of so-called sin to it. But nothing has happened. He has to realize that the flesh is a form of the divine, a divine revelation, and that sexuality is something divine.

That's what Jung fought with Freud about. He agreed completely with Freud that sex should be liberated and should be lived, not treated with prudish repression, but he wanted to say that sex is a religious experience as in Tantra. And if you live it, therefore, only with the idea, "That's very healthy for my hormones and makes me physically feel better," then you have missed the whole point. Then you have eaten dead meat, rotten meat. The redemption of the feminine means not the redemption of the flesh; it means the redemption of the divinity of the flesh, of the divine, archetypal, godlike aspect of the flesh, and the implications of that are very difficult and complicated to explain in practical language.

In interpreting such a fairy tale, you see how important it is to amplify in detail. One could very easily say, "Oh, this cat story is just the Christian prejudice against the feminine and against the animal bodily side, and here we have the compensatory story coming up and it's an integra-

tion of the dark feminine." If you did that, you wouldn't be completely wrong, only approximately right. But you would have missed the point of the whole story, which you can only get if you really go into every bit of the detail why the meat is turned into jewels, why the cat has a divine carriage that normally only gods use, and so on. Only by looking at those details absolutely accurately and amplifying them can you get the real story behind it. Otherwise you just have an intuitive overview, a kind of outline of something you know already that patriarchal Christianity is wrong about the feminine and the physical instincts. That's trivial. You don't need a fairy tale to find that out, everybody knows it. But this story was wonderful details that help us to see much deeper.



Disenchantment: Cutting off the cat's head and tail  
(From *The White Cat*, by Mme. D'Aulnoy, Edinburgh, 1847)

## 7 The Return

On their way to the hero's home, the cat says to him, "Take this nut with you, but don't open it till your father asks you to give him the linen." When he comes to where his father and his two other brothers are he just descends from heaven in this fiery car. The father and the brothers are terrified by his arrival but he greets them politely and then the father asks, "Have you brought me something, son?" The boy says, "Yes, father," and with these words he breaks the nut the cat had given him and finds inside it a corn of maize, and within the corn of maize there is a corn of wheat, and when he sees that he becomes really angry and thinks the cat has cheated him. "To the devil with the cat," he says, and suddenly feels invisible claws scratching him and sees blood running down his hand. Then he squashes the corn of wheat and finds the seed of a weed. And when he breaks that open, finally out comes a hundred meters of thin fine linen, which he gives to his father.

So here the cat gives him what he has to bring to the father in a very strange form. First a nut, then a maize corn, then a wheat corn, then a weed seed, and finally the linen. Four forms and then as a quintessence comes the linen. Now we have to amplify the problem of what a nut in general represents.

Nuts frequently appear in mythological literature. They are famous for the fact that they are outwardly hard and inedible and if you don't know how to penetrate their thick shell you can starve, but finally within there is a sweet kernel rich in vitamin and fat and very nourishing. It is one of the foods people can keep for a relatively long time and even preserve them for the winter. You can collect them in the autumn and eat them all winter long. It's one of those very original foods of mankind. In medieval mythology the nut was called a symbol of Christ, of His Teaching, because it is outwardly hard and difficult to penetrate, but if one gets into it then it is sweet and nourishing. That's how the Church Fathers in the Middle Ages interpreted the nut. The same archetypal idea applies to

anything that from outside appears impenetrable, but inside is of positive value. I will leave it at that for the moment and go to the next bit, the corn of maize.

Corn is a product of the earth mother and so is associated with fertility. But it has the color of the sun, so it's like a union of opposites. It has a solar quality, but it grows out of the earth and belongs to the great earth mother and fertility, like wheat. Maize in North American Indian mythology has very much the same role as wheat, the food of Demeter, in Greek mythology. Only I haven't found in American Indian material the additional quality wheat has attributed to it, which is that wheat is always associated with death and resurrection. You even have in the Bible, "If that corn of wheat doesn't die . . ."33 and so on. That alludes to the Eleusinian mysteries where the dead were believed to go back into the womb of mother earth, just like corn is planted in the earth, and therefore it has a meaning of resurrection. The Greeks kept pots in their households containing a kind of honey jam with wheat corns in it. Those pots were a kind of symbolic home symmetry, a symbol of the underworld and the dead in it. At a feast similar to what is now our *Fastnacht* in Switzerland, the Greeks opened those pots and assumed that then the ghosts, as the underworld was opened, came back, roaming around and making contact with the living for those three days. Afterward, one cleansed the house with sacred twigs and so on, and said to the dead, "Return to the underworld," and closed the pots again.

So the pots with those wheat corns were really the underworld with the dead resting within the womb of mother earth. They were a symbol of that. And the dead were also called *Demetrioï*, the people of Demeter or those who belong to Demeter. The spiritual symbolic aspect of the wheat is more developed than that of the maize but basically they have the same meaning, of belonging to the Great Mother, being the basic food of man, the fertility of the earth and the life of man, so to speak. Only the wheat has this transcendent resurrection meaning as well.

Our hero thinks the cat has cheated him, but I will address this inter-

33 [John 12:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (King James)Ed.]

mezzo afterward. The next time, when he crushes the wheat corn, he finds the seed of a weed, something completely useless. I have not found any amplification of that weed so I can only assume from the hero's anger that it is a symbol of complete uselessness, of something one wants to pull out at all costs, a sheer nuisance. After he opens that he finds the linen, the thing he was looking for, the thing he had to bring to his father, which we amplified already.

Now what does that mean? That can give one a headache. Why does the cat give him that sequence of symbols: nut, maize, wheat, weed and then the treasure of a quintessence?

The nut can be associated with the Self in some ways, or an aspect of the Self, or an aspect of the totality of the unconscious. Now in German and English too we speak of cracking nuts as solving problems. "A difficult nut to crack," we say, a ticklish problem, something difficult to handle, something that resists a solution. One has to crush it or bite through. All containers, anything that serves as a container, have a feminine connotation. But that would be the nutshell. The nut as a whole is not just the feminine. It is a symbol of totality, a feminine container with nourishing content. Then you have the maize, which would be basic human food, the nourishment of mother earth and all we have said about nourishment and what that means, and then we have the wheat which is again a basic nourishment but with a spiritual and transcendent connotation, and then there's something completely useless the fourth naturally is the useless one, that must be so and then comes the quintessence, the searched-for material.

What I think is that those four steps are like the stages of the process of individuation, leading to the transcendent function. When we first approach the unconscious, it is a hard nut for us to crack. We can't penetrate it, we don't understand our dreams and so on; we have to bite through to understand dreams and we are repelled until we get into them and find there is a message within, something that nourishes. You often see that in analysis. People who have a heavy depression or some other problem, generally, if they have had other types of analysis before, or never had any analysis, at first are bewildered by our Jungian methods. We say, "Any dreams?" and then we begin to nut-crack dream symbols,

and they wonder what that has to do with their marital problem or depression until they discover for themselves that yes, their dreams have a life-giving message, and then they begin to realize the nourishing aspects of the unconscious. For instance, they leave the analytic hour feeling better; they came into the hour depressed and they haven't understood much yet, but they feel better, more hopeful. They come in contact with the nourishing aspect of the unconscious, the nut and the maize, and this begins to give some vitality to consciousness, to impart some hope. Wheat would be the next stage. When people begin to notice that in the unconscious there is a numinous spirituality, that the dreams are not only good advisers for marital, professional or sex problems, that would be the resurrection aspect of the wheat, its spiritual, transformative aspect.

And then suddenly comes the weed. It is an enantiodromia. First it's always something better, then suddenly comes something useless. The weed is certainly in the same row as the other things, as if there is always something more precious and then there is something that is not precious but which must therefore, at least to my feeling, be precious through its not being precious. If you think of the Romanian population, then that weed is simply what is useless, but the useless must be precious. Now in what way is the uselessness of the unconscious precious?

First the unconscious is difficult to penetrate, to get at its core, then you are nourished by it, then you profit from the spiritual enlightenment the unconscious can give, and that brings a certain spiritual resurrection. Then you proceed to uselessness, which means that one has to give up the idea of using it for ego purposes. It is the sacrifice of relating to the unconscious for profit. That comes relatively late in analysis because, naturally, every analysand first learns to relate to the unconscious in order to profit from it, to have his or her neurosis cured, to get advice for unsolved problems and so on. But after long contact with the unconscious, the day comes when one has to give this up, stop treating the unconscious as a mother who advises one what to do. If you always think, "I can't make up my mind, I have to ask the unconscious," then the unconscious gives ambiguous advice, and that's when people say, "The unconscious has cheated me, the unconscious has deceived me."

Jung always said that the longer one analyzes, over ten or fifteen

years, say, and if you go on with the analysis, then the dreams become much much more difficult and complicated. For instance, many old-time colleagues come to me from time to time and I love to see them, but I hate it because they bring such complicated dreams (naturally they would interpret the others themselves). They know themselves what they could mean, and they are so ticklish and if I didn't have this comforting expression, "Well, you know, when you have analyzed for such a long time it gets so complicated, you can't really use it," it could be difficult. I think part of the trick of that is that the unconscious wants to wean the analysand from this child-mother or child-parent attitude toward the unconscious, wanting to make use of its advice. It becomes like a cryptic riddle. Then if you can penetrate those seemingly useless dreams, they have much more to do not with insight but with simply being, teaching people to be, teaching people not to have insight or to realize things, but teaching them just how to be.

The best parallel or illustration I know is in Zen Buddhism where, after the great enlightenment, in the famous series of the Ten Ox-herding Pictures you have finally the picture of *satori* the image of the old man with a beggar's bowl going about the market and the description, "He has forgotten the gods, he has forgotten the enlightenment, he has forgotten everything, but wherever he walks, the cherry tree blossoms."<sup>34</sup> That means he's become completely unconscious again. Another Zen Master once said, "After the enlightenment, you can just as well go into an inn and get drunk and carouse around and just live an ordinary life. Forget all about it again." But naturally this forgetting is not a regression. It is not simply a return to the previous unconsciousness. It's still progress. It's a progression into Taoist uselessness, to just being. And the whole intellectual aspect of the analysis, that one always searches for insight and for instruction from the unconscious, to a great extent goes away. That would be the higher aim, therefore I think it is right that it is

34 J. Marvin Spiegelman and Mikusen Miyuki, *Buddhism and Jungian Psychology* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1985), p. 113. [The illustration also appears in von Franz, *Alchemy: An Introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1980), p. 161.Ed.]

useless but at the same time it is a uselessness that is a higher achievement than the stages before.

After the hero finds the linen the emperor says that whichever of his three sons chooses the most beautiful girl, that one shall be emperor. The brothers agree and the youngest just sits in his fiery car and goes back with the cat.

Now, the incident I postponed discussing earlier is when he gets angry opening the nut. He finds the maize and the wheat and says. "The damn cat has cheated me." Then he's scratched by invisible claws and suddenly discovers that his hand is bleeding. The cat is obviously invisibly present. She has come with him but not in visible form and that proves, like the fiery carriage, that she is divine. She has the invisible omnipresence of a divine factor. She's not an ordinary cat. It all underlines that she is really a divine cat. Bastet could do that, a goddess could do that, but an ordinary cat could not.

When they arrive back the cat asks him, "Now, what have you done?" He tells her everything and that he should now have a girl because the son who brings the most beautiful bride shall have the empire. The cat listens very carefully but says not a word. So, he lives with the cat again for a whole month until one day she says, "Don't you want to go home?" "Oh, I don't want to go home. I have no reason," he replies. Gradually they had fallen in love. Then one day the young hero asks the cat, "Why are you a cat?" She answers, "Don't ask me yet. Ask me some other time. I hate to live in the world. Let's go together to your father." She takes the whip again and makes a sound with it in three directions; the fiery carriage appears and they both go to his home.

Here again the cat is promoting the process. The man is quite satisfied with the situation as it is but she isn't, because, as we see from this allusion, she is really unhappy to be a cat. She suffers in her cat state and now she betrays it. Before she seemed to be quite cheerful and all right in her cat state, but now she says she's unhappy and hates living in this world. That goes together with the fact that, for the first time, it is said, "In time they began to be in love with each other." Before, the cat was living in the woods, seemingly happily; she accepts him and she makes him the emperor and her lord. They live together but now the cat is sud-

denly not content. They are developing a human feeling; it's beginning to become a human attachment, a human relationship, and that creates a problem for the cat. Before it seemed the cat hadn't known there was such a thing or hadn't missed it, but now, by falling in love with the hero and he with her, she begins to long to become human.

It is the impulse of the divine to be incarnated, and that would mean, if the man's anima is still in a deer or a cat, or some other animal, it is more powerful and more magical but it lacks human qualities. A man who has a divine cat anima, or for that matter a divine bear or deer anima, is in love with a fantasy, with a fascination. These animals are fascinating. When something is divine it is numinous, and the *numinosum* is always fascinating. That would mean he is overwhelmed, fascinated by, the feminine, but he cannot relate humanly to it. He is, in a way, too overwhelmed and too fascinated to have a real relationship. He adores the woman or he runs after her; he hunts her like a deer, like an animal of prey, but he has not yet any understanding of her as a human being. Now, therefore, and quite rightly, the archetypal figure wants to become less divine and more human, wants to incarnate in human form to establish a human relationship.

So, for the second time, they go home to the old emperor and this time when they arrive the emperor says, "Have you no wife? You are not married? Where is your wife?" And the young hero shows the cat in her golden basket and says, "Here she is." The emperor says, "Oh Lord, what do you want with a cat? You can't even talk with her." The cat is angered by these words so she jumps out of the basket and escapes into another room. There she does a somersault and turns into the beautiful girl she was before, so beautiful that you could look into the sun, but you couldn't look at her without being blinded by her beauty.

That seems to be a standard fairy tale description of something supernaturally beautiful. It's a wonderful way to describe the *numinosum*; one just has to shut one's eyes because it is too overwhelming. It shows again that even now, when she takes on human form, she is still overwhelmingly divine, divinely beautiful. Here the emperor makes a silly remark, she gets annoyed and that makes her do her somersault, and at least temporarily become human.

The emperor, as we have seen, represents the conventional Christian principle of consciousness, which toward the animal has the attitude that she is nothing but a cat. That is a collision between the herethe new form of consciousnesswho is experiencing the divinity of his animal side, the mysterious spiritual divinity of animal instinct, and the old emperor who does not see the divinity of the instinct. He is the old principle with the old prejudice: "Nothing but a cat. You can't talk to a cat!"

In Italy, for instance, if one scolds people when they torture animals, beat their donkeys or kick the cat, they very often answer, "*Non é christiano*," it's not Christian. That shows the real scorn a certain Christian teaching has taught us. That scorn developed because in earlier times animals were seen as divine and therefore they had to be depreciated. They were pagan gods and had to be put down. It was not hatred of animals that made the early Church Fathers talk so scornfully about them, but because they had witnessed animal worship they had to put it down. That is what has bred a certain scorn for the animal. It was all a strong ascetic spiritual reaction against the too unconscious, too indulgent life of the late pagan world, which had already lost its spirituality and was a decaying civilization. So in compensation there was this stressing of the spiritual, which did harm to the instinctual, animal world.

Our emperor, being blind to the divinity of the cat, now shows this scorn, which irritates her and prompts her to turn into a human being. he teases her into showing her power. So one could say that this scornful remark is not altogether negative because it brings out the other side. By insulting the cat, by despising her, he forces her out. "I'll show you," she say, and out she comes. It shows that this Christian development of going against the animal gods had a certain meaning: it created a tension out of which a greater humanization could then emerge. Her somersault is a complete overturning of the standpoint. The head goes down, the feet go up, and then you come back.

I once heard of a man with a compulsion neurosis, a theologian's son, who had been brought up very, very strictly Christian in a repressive and negative way. He had all sorts of obsessions and neurotic symptoms and couldn't fall sleep. Then he developed a ritual when he couldn't sleep at night. In bed after his prayer, when the light had been put out, he first

made a somersault one way and then a somersault the other. Without that ritual he couldn't fall asleep. In a Festschrift for C.A. Meier, you'll find an article by Dr. Sonja Marjasch on the somersault,<sup>35</sup> with a lot of amplifications and see that basically it is this turning upside down. This man's compulsion said, in effect, he should give up his present standpoint, turn it completely around, then reverse it again, and then he'd be cured.

Every compulsion, though it is destructive and negative in its concrete form, has a symbolic message. If somebody has to wash their hands nervously, they really should clean up their act, but psychologically, not by washing their hands two thousand times until the skin is off. So that somersault is of course absolutely just a stupid ritual and a very sick ritual, but it expresses what should be done psychologically. He should completely change his standpoint, twice, before he would be capable of living. For instance, he should go completely against his parents' strict Christian upbringing and then reacquire it on a living level, on his own personal level, reacquire the same standpoint but differently. Then he would be cured. With compulsive symptoms you must always ask what the symptom really says. And that's exactly what should happen.

Very often in fairy tales, a somersault is a way to transform. It is also a ritual of resurrection, for instance at the Egyptian funerals. You find in the tombs paintings of dwarfs turning somersaults, doing all sorts of gymnastics but especially somersaults, and that was to help the resurrection of the king. The idea is that resurrection is a kind of somersault. You go down and then you come up again in a new form. It might also have to do with the fact that, as you know, the baby in the mother's womb, if it is born normally, often makes a somersault before birth and comes out head first. So the somersault can denote a birth process, and possibly the observation of this fact led the Egyptians to have clowns and clowning dwarfs probably they were bushmen prisoners really do somersaults along the route of the funeral procession of the king, which according to the texts was meant to support the king's resurrection process.

So the cat enacts this rebirth or transformation ritual and appears as a

<sup>35</sup> "Eine Freundesgabe," in *Der Purzelbaum Spectrum Psychologiae* (Zurich: Rascher Verlag, 1965), pp. 9196.

beautiful girl. Then she comes out of the room and goes right to our hero, the youngest son, and embraces him. When the father and the two brothers see that they are absolutely petrified. Then the father becomes very enthusiastic and says to his son, "Truly you have the most beautiful wife and you must have my whole empire." But the girl can't stay long in this state and while the hero says, "No, father. I already have an empire and a crown," she again does a somersault and returns to her cat state and to her little golden basket. Then the emperor takes the crown and puts it on the head of his oldest son.

The young hero leaves with the cat and they return to their own home. But on the way he scolds her for not remaining a beautiful woman, for returning to a cat state. Now why do you think she can't stay long in the state of a beautiful woman? She has to return to her cat state because the young son hasn't done anything yet for her transformation. The old emperor has teased her into a transformation, by opposition, but the hero hasn't yet done anything for her redemption. On the contrary, he wants to return with her to the cat kingdom. We can say he suffers from inertia. He reproaches her for not staying a beautiful girl, but so far he hasn't taken any steps and she needs his cooperation to transform permanently. But now he is teased enough and she says, "I will explain to you later why I have to be a cat. There's a curse on me." So they return home and live again as before.

One day, while the hero is out hunting, the cat sharpens three sabers and when he comes back, after they have talked a little, she pretends to be ill. And then, as you remember, she asks that he cut off her tail and cut off her head and that is the final transformation. So, you see the cat goes about it very slowly, because even when they come home she doesn't tell him immediately how she can be redeemed, but only after they live together again for a while. Then she carefully prepares the sword and pretends to be ill in order to make the hero do something about it. Only then does she ask him to cut off her tail and her head.

Why does she go about this so carefully? Well we must imagine the situation of the young hero, not forgetting that the cat is a kind of psychologist and that she has to prepare him psychologically. He is not even capable of sharpening the sword. She has to prepare the situation because

he won't do it. If she asked him straight out to cut off her tail he just wouldn't, and if she asked him to behead her, he would never do that either. He loves her much too much in her cat state, so she really has to prepare him psychologically, prepare the weapons and then make him suffer by her illness, till she thinks now maybe he is desperate enough to do what she asks. So you see how the cat is superior. But we can only understand why that preparation is so long if we go into the problem of what the beheading and cutting off of the cat's tail and head means.

The cat pretends to be ill and he asks, "My dear, what's the matter with you," and she says, "Oh, I'm very sick If you love me and want to do something good for me, then cut off my tail. It's too big and too heavy. I can't carry it anymore." And the young hero begins to complain, "No, you mustn't die, I would rather die myself. I have a cream, I will heal you with that." And when she insists that he should cut off her tail, he finally does and what happens? She changes into a girl but only halfway, to the hips, while the other half remains a cat. And then he makes the same objection when she wants her head cut off. So, let's first look at the cat's tail.

Dogs too, but cats especially, express moods with their tail. Most animals have a face at the front, the head, and behind is another face, the tail. Konrad Lorenz writes a lot about that "hind-face" of animals, the tail, with which they express their moods, and this is especially true of cats.<sup>36</sup> They are marvelous. When they are happy they put their tail up with a little curl on top, and then they lie down; and when they get irritated, they beat a little with the tail and then suddenly when they've had enough they attack. You need never be clawed by a cat. She always warns with her tail first, with this kind of nervous banging. So, she expresses her moods, her emotions, her love, her aggression, irritation, friendliness, with her tail. Now, if her tail is cut off, what would that mean psychologically?

Here we have a divine cat anima, a goddess, and in order to become human her tail must be cut off. One can say, in general, that if something turns human then one can integrate it. If in a dream something appears in

<sup>36</sup>*Man Meets Dog* (trans. M.K. Wilson; Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1969).

a human personification, then you can tell the analysand that he should be able to integrate it, but as long as it appears in a nonhuman form, then you can't expect that. He just can't yet. He has to see it and to become aware of it, but he can't yet integrate it. So becoming human means the possibility of integrating the anima. But she must first become human. If the tail is the expression of unconscious emotions, then cutting off the tail would mean analyzing, discriminating and differentiating to dissolve it into bits, which would mean a man has first to separate his emotions, the animal emotions in him, and then isolate them so to speak, say to himself, "Now, what is *that* about?"

Take, for instance, a man who suddenly feels irritated with his girlfriend. If he doesn't cut the tail off his cat he will just take that mood out on his girlfriend. If he holds the irritation back and continues to talk on a human level, asking himself, "Why am I so irritated? Why do I feel this way?" that's cutting off the tail, isolating one's irritation and then analyzing it. "Why does it get my goat when she does this or that?" That's how a man would analyze his own anima tail. By asking himself why his anima suddenly goes thump, thump! why he gets such feelings.

You generally find quite deep, complex problems behind the irritation. For a man, the best way to catch his anima, so to speak, and to begin to integrate it, is to question his moods, his autonomous moods. For instance, "Why did I wake up ill-tempered this morning?" You wake up and you are just in a foul mood. Already breakfast is cold and you could shout at everybody but then, if you analyze that "Why did I wake like that? Where did that come from? When did it begin? What does it really express?" you can come to what is happening inside.

Our cat goddess becomes human now up to the hips, but above she still remains a cat. So now she looks like some depictions of the goddess Bastet. She no longer looks like an animal, but like a goddess. So the tail obviously has to do not with the goddess aspect but with the animal aspect. That would be the physical, the instinctual, all the animal reactions. The tail is the hind end, the animal end of her, and the head would be the divine end. First he has to cut off the tail end. That would mean he has to analyze his physical and emotional reactions, including naturally his sexual reaction everything that comes from his animal nature. When his

anima wags her tail in all her different ways, that's what he has to analyze, and then she's humanized.

That's an interesting thing in this story. I have never met it before. She is humanized from below upward. She's not humanized from above downward, but from the tail up. That would mean if a man wants to make his cat anima conscious, he has to begin with the tail, with all his animal reactions. I would not confine it to sex; it includes any animal reaction, which means physical instinctual reactions such as aggression, sex fantasies, irritations, fascinations, everything that comes up from the body as well as sensations and moods he has during sexual intercourse. That is becoming aware of the anima and all the fantasies that go with her. But then she is only half humanized. She is de-animalized but she is still divine because now she looks like the goddess Bastet, portrayed by the Egyptians as a human being with a cat head.

Now our cat-goddess complains again and asks that her head be cut off, and then she becomes totally human. So let us look at what that means psychologically.

We project into the head the seat of intelligence, of sight, of insight, of awareness. In an animal it wouldn't be scientific thinking, but there are all the senses, smell, the eyes and ears, the seat of awareness of the world. We don't make contact by looking and sniffing at the behind of an animal. We make contact by looking at the face. Contact with the psyche of human beings and animals is generally by looking into the eyes or by looking at the facial expression. So, what would that be if now he has to cut off the cat face?

You see, that is the great mystery. What is animal in us has a divine and an instinctual aspect. By cutting off the tail, a man becomes aware of the instinctual aspect. But then he must become aware of the divine aspect of cat thinking. Never mind what really goes on in an ordinary cat's head, but what do we project into a divine cat's head, into Bastet's head? Does Bastet think? Remember what we said about Bastet, that she thinks of festivity, fertility, music, magic. Magic is very important because it is a spiritual activity/pleasure, the pleasure principle, communion in the village community and so on. Those are the thoughts of Bastet, the spiritual content of Bastet. Perhaps you could sum it up by saying that

the magic of life resides in Bastet's head.

Now, in a man, the positive anima is the magic of life. That's why a man who is not in contact with his anima is dry, dull, intellectual and rather lifeless. I have sometimes even defined the anima as the stimulus to life. Everything that stimulates a man or fascinates him comes from the positive anima. That's why if a man has a negative relationship to his anima he becomes depressed, finds no pleasure in anything and criticizes everything. You know those gentlemen who come to the table and criticize their wive the soup isn't salty enough, the meat is stringy and so on, and they just take up their paper. That's the negative anima. They have no contact with their cat.

So the positive anima, the divine Bastet anima, would be the stimulus, the magic of life. In order to humanize the anima, a man has to cut that off and analyze it. Why? Because otherwise he projects it onto women and always expects them to produce the stimulus and magic of life, just because he can't do it himself. There are men who can only be happy if a warm, friendly, beautiful woman looks after them, and as soon as the woman is away, or has something else to do, or has the flu, they fall into a dark hole. They have an infantile dependence on the projected anima. So in order to humanize their anima they must not expect the magic of life from their partner. They must find it in themselves and know that this is the divine aspect of the inner anima. They must separate it from the human anima with which he relates to the woman. Then he is capable of relating to the woman as she is and no longer possessed by a subhuman or superhuman anima. By cutting off the head and the tail, he cuts off, so to speak, the subhuman and superhuman aspects of the anima. He brings her to human size and then he can integrate his feelings and express them in relationship with his partner.

The hero takes the second sword and cuts off the cat's head, and a beautiful girl appears. All the other cats in the palace become human again and the whole town looks as it had before. Everybody hails the empress and he takes that beautiful girl in his arms, kisses her and is happy. She says to him, "From now on you are my husband. I was cursed by the Mother of God until an emperor's son would cut off my head. Now let's go to your father, but be careful of your brothers. They want to

kill you." So then they go back to the father.

That's very odd. Why, since she knows his brothers want to kill him, do they go back? His father is absolutely beside himself with delight and falls in love with his son's beautiful wife. He thinks of killing his son in order to have the girl for himself. He says to his son, "Go hunting. I want some game." When he is gone, the emperor goes to the cat lady's room, but on his way there a cat appears in his path. He says to his daughter-in-law that she should love him, but she just gives him a slap on the face and says, "What do you want, you old horror!" When her husband comes home she tells him what her father-in-law has done and says, "We must leave here at once. Let's go home."

Obviously the cat has still not quite lost her divine, magic qualities, because she knew ahead of time that the situation would be dangerous, and again after the old man has attacked her she says, "We must leave at once." So, she still functions with the right instinct, the magic knowledge of what should be done, but apparently she says one thing and does another. She knows it's dangerous, that they must watch out, but they go to the court of the old man anyway, and she lets her husband go hunting though she surely knows that the old emperor wants to sexually attack her. How can one understand this strange kind of action?

I have the feeling she wants to challenge the old principle in order to have a justification for overcoming it. If they just lived happily ever after in their redeemed cat palace in the woods, then the old emperor with his two eldest sons would continue to rule in the other kingdom. As a result of what happens, he is destroyed. So I think it is typical cat mentality. Something must have teased her into saying, "It's very dangerous," and into going there to provoke or to seek a confrontation. That's also why she slaps the old emperor in the face. Now what would that mean, if the old emperor wants to have his daughter-in-law for himself?

There are parallels but not as tough as this one. There is, for instance, a Grimm fairy tale called "Ferdinand the Faithful and Ferdinand the Unfaithful."<sup>37</sup> There the king sends a hero to find a beautiful princess for him and when the hero brings the beautiful princess into the court, quite

<sup>37</sup>*The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, p. 566.

willing to hand her to the king, the princess says, "No, I don't want to marry that old gentleman. I want to marry the man who conquered me." And then with a trick she kills the old king and marries the hero. There is also a kind of rivalry between the old king, who wants the anima, the beautiful new woman, for himself, and the hero. It's not so bad because, after all, the hero had fetched her in the service of the king. But here the cat lady is the legitimate wife of the son, and the old emperor tries to just jump in and take her.

The old emperor is the old conscious Christian attitude. And if the old conscious attitude now wants to have that newly redeemed feminine for himself, that would look like Susannah and the elders, the lecherous old men; that's a common theme of art and literature. Concretely it exists. We all know it exists. If you take it as symbolic, it's the new wine in old bottles. The emperor symbolizes the old principle of consciousness that wants to integrate or to profit from the renewal of life that has come forth in another domain. He wants to assimilate it and would kill it if he could. That poor cat lady would be like an unhappy old hag within a year if she married the old man.

One sometimes sees people of fifty and sixty who dress like hippies and go on drug trips, doing all those things that the revolution of the 60s and 70s brought in. One has a sense that they are the old kings trying in a naive kind of way to live it out, and to me that just looks ridiculous. But there are more tricky ways. For instance, I have sometimes been invited by Christian academies of dry theologians who had no success with their congregations, asking me to lecture on Jungian psychology to bring people back, to fill the pews again. Then when the church is full, they push me aside, attack Jungian psychology, and give a long sermon in the old fashion, as if they would try to use the new life to refill their empty temples. They deliver the same old stuff they have always delivered, which no cat would ever tolerate.

An old professor of theology once went to Jung and asked for a private interview. Jung received him and the theologian said, "Now come. All the women admire you. Tell me the trick. I want to know about it." Jung said, "It's just much knowledge and much hard work. Good-bye professor!" But the man didn't give up. He thought Jung had a trick, so

then he invited attractive female students to his studio, and always appeared with his pants nearly open or bare feet or something, thinking, "Oh, perhaps it's that." That's the old emperor.

First the emperor wants to have the cat lady, but she resists, so he throws the couple into prison. But they escape and put together a large army and declare war on the father. We know the cats have now turned into human beings, but they are still called cats, probably just to denote the army of those who had once been cats. The son overcomes the father, destroys his whole army, and the father alone survives. When he sees that he is completely lost, and has no more strength, he says to his son, "Please pardon me. I have done nothing wrong in my whole life. Judge rightly and you will rule my empire with justice." Then there is that last line, "And where I have come from, that I have told you." It is the *rite de sortie* of the storyteller, which has nothing to do with the story anymore.

The cat is still very wise and has magic power and the son is still a bit weak. He is not yet a complete man, and that's why she still has that magic power over him and why she slyly, in a cat way really, arranges and provokes this confrontation between father and son. She has the intention of making him a man and forcing him to take an absolute stand against the old emperor, not just to go away from it but to really say what is what. That is absolutely on the mark of what I feel too, namely that something new must not be peacefully inserted into the old habits. There are certain new things that one must have the honesty to call new and to stand up for, because otherwise the new energy is lost.

Jung once said something to me after I had been to visit a lot of old relatives and had a catastrophic dream that night. Now consciously I thought they were all old horrors and I made fun of them and went home, but that wasn't enough. The unconscious said, "No, this is really dangerous," and Jung said, "Yes. If one does not constantly walk forward, the past sucks one back. The past is like an enormous sucking wind that sucks one back all the time. If you don't go forward you regress. You have constantly to carry the torch of the new light forward, so to speak, historically and also in your own life. As soon as you begin to look backward sadly, or even scornfully, it has you again. The past is a tremendous power." So the overcoming of the old emperor means to be ab-

solutely inexorable, ruthless about what is different and new.

That's what I feel we have to say about Jungian psychology. That's why, to the great annoyance of certain of my colleagues, I am against making a cocktail of a bit of Jung and bits of other things, watering the whole of Jungian psychology down until it is again nineteenth-century philosophy, and no longer the shocking newness which I feel Jungian psychology is. It is really shockingly new. But one can also suck it back into the old system and say, "Oh, that . . ." Jungian psychology has a history, it has not fallen from heaven, so to speak, and of course Jung had a lot of historical forerunners. But his way of looking at the unconscious, and even more, the practical way of living with it, in the way he taught it, is completely different from any other school. It's something completely new, and it should not be watered down into past things.

But that can happen with anything new. The early Christians, for instance, had the same trouble. Very soon certain pagan mystery cults said, "Oh, Jesus Christ. He's the same as Orpheus and Dionysus." They have even excavated a mystery cult grotto where there is a mosaic on the ground with grapes in the mosaic and an inscription "Jesus Dionysius." There was a tremendous tendency to reunite the whole thing with the past, to retranslate the new message into the past message and not vice versa. So the new message and the past message are very similar and then the question is, shall we translate it that way or this way? The early Fathers therefore always insisted on saying, "Although Christ is similar to Dionysus, Orpheus and so on, he is different. It is something new. It is another way of life. It is not just a variation of what is already known." And that is important because otherwise the life goes out of it again; it's just the old stuff and then becomes a tired dull thing. That's what the old emperor always tries to do with the new possibilities of life.

Now on a personal level it is the same. People regress. Children who have left home, when they visit again, go back to their home town or to their old profession and old surroundings, they experience these regressions. The past catches them and many have not the hardness or the guts to make a break. In certain situations one has to make a cut with the past and say, "It's finished, done." In my own life, for instance, the most painful thing was that after I had been in analysis with Jung for a while, I

outgrew a lot of my former friends. They weren't really great friends, but acquaintances with whom I went out and enjoyed going out and so on. And suddenly they bored me to tears. I had gone beyond them. I couldn't communicate but they wanted to go on in the same old way, the same superficial way it had been. There, to have the firmness to just get rid of that past can seem very cruel and unfeeling. I had a tremendous conflict in certain cases. Some of my old friends, naturally, who were real friends, I have kept. That's obvious. But there were many people with whom I had just done the silly old-fashioned things, and there was no life in it anymore.

There is a sense in this fairy tale that she, the cat, is the linen which the old emperor had yearned for and sent his sons out to find. The old order knows in some unconscious or fantasy way what it lacks, and when it comes into view it wants to take it over and claim it for its own, even though a generation has come between. There one has to leave the old emperor alone. One has to leave the past to itself. "Let the dead bury their dead," as Christ said.<sup>38</sup>

38 Luke 9:60 (King James).

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