

# **HORROR VACUI: THE MEANING CRISIS OF THE GLOBALIZED WORLD (THE CASE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION). A JUNGIAN APPROACH**

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## **Abstract**

*In its widest acceptance, globalization amounts to a progressive 'interdependentization' of the various areas, levels and regions of human civilization. On account of globalization we are much more prone to becoming one, i.e. Humanity, than in the previous epochs. But what does this mean or, in other words, what is the envisioned shape of this One humanity is heading toward in the context of globalization? Is there in fact any meaning to it?*

*On closer examination, we might find that the issue of meaning was not very much addressed in the discussions concerning globalization; certainly, it is not a major issue on the agenda of the institutions impactful upon this process. If it did make the object of someone's preoccupations, it was rather only of certain fringe thinkers, political and economic authorities tended to ignore, given that there were always more immediate and practical concerns at hand.*

*However, an unasked question provides no answers and the lack of answers in this respect is very dangerous as it involves the risk of creating, willingly or not, a world without meaning. Socio-cultural arguments in this respect are there to be found by anyone willing to throw an unbiased look at our post-modern history: the industrial and technical revolutions went hand in hand with an over-instrumentalization of our Weltanschauung that, along with its obvious positive consequences, brought along homogenization, massification and alienation, in other words, lack of meaning. The European Union, for example, has just started facing the practical consequences of ignoring this apparently purely theoretical problem: its current legitimacy crisis, in favor of its more traditional state-nationalist counterparts, can be taken as a symptom thereof.*

*This paper is, first, an attempt at asking the question of meaning in the context of globalization and, second, to provide it with an answer (mostly, but not exclusively, on the basis of Jung's analytical psychology). The answer might prove unsatisfactory but, on the other hand, as probably with most meaningful issues, the question itself is much more essential than the answer.*

**Keywords:** Jung, archetype, crisis, globalization, EU.

Motto:

"(...) the basic fact of the human will, its *horror vacui*. It requires a goal—and it will sooner will nothingness than not will."<sup>1</sup>

## **1. Preamble: Meaning, a short characterization**

What is meaning? This is an important question, one to which however I will not try to provide an exhaustive answer in what follows. On the other hand, given that, one way or another, this notion also constitutes the vanishing point of our discussion, an operative characterization could not be superfluous.

In this respect, I have found the etymology of the term especially clarifying. As such, in the etymological regression, the first important semantic node is the Latin term *sensus* – i. *perception, sentiment, intention*, most probably figurate connotations of a proper acceptance referring to ii. *finding one's way, or heading to(ward)*. Further back, the next semantic node (and also the original one, as far as I know) is the one associated with the Indo-European particle – *sent*, meaning, again, on the one hand, *going/heading to(ward)*, on the other, *feeling*, in both affective-emotional sense and perceptual (i.e. *observing*,

*contemplating*). We can find a related etymology in the Germanic languages in association with the verb *sinnan* – *going, heading to(ward), yearning for, bearing in mind, perceiving*<sup>1</sup>.

A short hermeneutical analysis of this etymological context discloses, as essential elements, a semantic subject which is rather active (i.e. *a someone, properly or figuratively heading toward...*) and a semantic object, which can be either passive (by repulsion) or active (by attraction), placed in a vectorial relation. As known, Brentano and Husserl refer to such matters by the notion of *intentionality*, designating that special quality of conscious acts (either personal or collective) by which they are always *of someone – somehow – about something*: the tripartite structure *ego (self-awareness) – noesa* (the aiming manner specific to the given experiential act, i.e. recollection, imagination, sensory perception etc.) – *noema* (the intentional object of the experiential act). Furthermore, in Brentano and, especially, Husserl, we find the anti-positivistic claim that there is no such thing as a purely empirical perceptual act, namely that any sensory matter (*hyle*), in order to become perception,

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Par. 1

<sup>1</sup> Pokorny, Julius, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, B III, Bern, München, Francke Verlag, 1959, pp. 908.

necessarily involves the subject and his/her understanding of the world as a whole, his/her Weltanschauung, if you will. In this context, I have chosen to characterize the notion of *meaning* as the personal or collective representations involved in this quasi-systematic whole of someone's self-understanding against the backdrop of his/her world of belonging (both culturally and existentially), and having a descriptive, explicative and teleological role within the intentional flux of his/her consciousness and interaction with both world and fellows.

In the same sense, more pragmatically put however, Zaki Laïdi claims that the notion of *meaning* necessarily implies the convergence of three aspects: a ground, a feeling of unity and a final purpose, at the same time stating that, in terms of this definition, in the post- Cold War era, we cannot speak of a meaning of the international relations, given that, to paraphrase, *the political actions of Europe do not aim at a systematic construction based on a futurally oriented projection, but strictly on a pragmatic administration of current, ordinary problems and needs*. And he goes on by saying: "the need to project ourselves into the future has never been so strong, while we have never been so poorly armed on the conceptual front to conceive this future, which leaves a wide gap between the historic rupture that confronts us and our difficulty in interpreting it<sup>2</sup>."

What Laïdi claims here is, in fact, something that Nietzsche had anticipated more than a century ago, namely that, beyond purely economic and political considerations, most of the current problems of Europe (and especially EU) derive from the fact that it does not have the necessary culture for the envisioned unity. This because, firstly, cultural aspects have been mostly disregarded in favor of more pragmatic and immediate issues, secondly, because, as much as they have been considered, they have been conceived and developed by analogy with the cultural models already used in the historic construction of the national state. However, it is not yet the time to go further with this discussion.

## 2. Globalization and EU – socio-cultural background

I think it would not be far-fetched to say that the notion of globalization, in its widest sense, basically refers to the progressive increase in the degree of interdependence between the various international actors on a global scale: states, international organizations, corporations, ethnic, cultural, religious groups etc.. Edward Lorenz's *Butterfly Effect* begins to have a noticeable impact on the globalized international relations, fact which became even more apparent after the end of the Cold War. For the better or worse, as the

newly-arrived states that emerged on the global scene in the context of either the world wars or decolonization, set about on the path to modernization, they got ever more drawn within the global market economy. As such, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist block the possibility of opting out of this global market faded gradually. This is what Francis Fukuyama referred to, back in 1989, as the *end of history* (understood, in a Hegelian tradition, as the temporal evolution of civilization determined by the tension between opposed socio-cultural systems). The IT and media revolutions, especially the Internet, obviously accelerated this process.

But what does this ever increasing global interdependence mean? Some voices disapprove of this process on the grounds that it would allegedly bring about an *Americanization* of the world, as such seeing in it a dissimulated form of cultural materialism made over through the rhetoric of the freedom as choice and of choice as acquisitive option. Other voices ask to what extent the globalized cultural products still reflect the content of their original culture, in other words, *to what extent McDonalds, for example, can still be taken as a mere American exported phenomenon, and not as a product of globalization as such?* These latter voices associate globalization with a new form of social existence of humanity as a whole, allegedly unseen before the 20<sup>th</sup> century: mass society, i.e. a society in which, under the impact of planetary demographic outburst (gregarization) and of the universalization of flow production, which is, by nature, instrumental and all-pervasive, everything and everyone became so standardized and uniform that they lost any aspect of individual specificity, as such being dissolved within an undifferentiated mass. Among those sharing this concern for the future of humanity is also Martin Heidegger. He writes in this respect:

"The *world wars* and their character of "totality" are already a consequence of the abandonment of Being. They press toward a guarantee of the stability of a constant form of using things up. Man, who no longer conceals his character of being the most important raw material, is also drawn into this process. Man is the most important raw material because he remains the subject of all consumption. He does this in such a way that he lets his will be unconditionally equated with this process, and thus at the same time become the *object* of the abandonment of Being<sup>3</sup>."

On the other hand, the West became, during this process, much more permeable and vulnerable to what happens in the non-Western world, as the recent phenomena related to massive migration or, worse, terrorism show.

All these aspects were, I think, well captured by Marshall McLuhan's metaphor of *the Global Village* (1968), the conclusion of the book being even more

<sup>2</sup> Zaki Laïdi, *A World Without Meaning: The Crisis of Meaning in International Politics*, trans. June Burnham and Jenny Coulon, London: Routledge, 1998, pp.76.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics", in *The End of Philosophy*, tr. Joan Stambaugh, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2003, pp. 103-104/Par. 26

appropriate for our times. To sum it up: *in the age of globalization we cannot speak any more of problems of one isolated nation, alliance or political entity; to an ever greater extent, the problems 'in the world' became problems 'of the world' as a whole, and failing to undertake coordinated collective steps in addressing these issues might run the risk of global annihilation.*

The European Union constituted, at least for the Western World, one of the most serious attempts at mobilizing and articulating such a collective effort. In this respect, what during the Cold War emerged under the more or less official auspices of the U.S. as a collective attempt at (i) rebuilding Europe after the devastation of the Second World War and (ii) creating and strengthening an an-Bolshevik bastion within Western Europe, became afterwards an economic, political and, to a certain degree, cultural project *for peace*, assuming, at least apparently, growing autonomy with respect to the U.S.. Although our discussion will follow a different path, a short listing of the important moments in the history of this institution couldn't hurt:

- 1951 the Treaty of Paris: the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)
- 1957 the Treaty of Rome: the creation of European Economic Community (TEEC)
- 1967 the merger of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and the European Economic Community (EEC)
- 1973 Denmark, Ireland and U.K. join the Community
- 1979 the first elections for the European Parliament
- 1986 the Single European Act; the joining of Spain and Portugal; the adoption of the European Flag
- 1989 the fall of the Iron Curtain
- 1992 the Treaty of Maastricht and the transformation of the European Community in the European Union – the introduction of the Euro as single currency within the EU market (except for the U.K. and Denmark)
- 1995 the joining of Austria, Finland and Sweden
- 2004 the joining of ten more states: Cyprus, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia); the signing of the E.U. Constitution
- 2007 the joining of Bulgaria and Romania
- 2009 the Lisbon Treaty: the merger of the three original pillars of the Union
- 2013 Croatia joins the EU
- 2016 U.K. decides by referendum to exit the E.U

Basically, the concept around which the unification strategy has revolved all this time was, at least declaratively, the so called *integration*. Ernst B. Haas describes it as such: "(... )actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their

loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing nation states."<sup>4</sup> This is a summative example of the functionalist approach that dominated the EU integration process all this time, that is of an approach insisting on *how* of the integration, rather than on its *what* or *whereto* (and that, at least in my opinion, given the enormous challenge presented by, on the one hand, Europe's cultural diversity, on the other, the traditional internal sovereignty claim upon which almost none of the European national states seemed willing to make compromises and this, quite understandably, because their peoples wouldn't have it ). In other words, without a reasonably clear answer regarding the cultural identity of Europe, which had to be (i) general enough to include all those willing and able to participate in this project, but, at the same time, (ii) specific enough to exclude those unwilling or inadequate in this respect and, moreover, (iii) elastic enough, on the one hand, (iii.1) not to fundamentally threaten the members' sovereignty, (iii.2) not to definitively exclude those who, although not yet a part of this project, would show willing, in principle, to take the necessary steps in this respect, both the initiators and the continuers of this unification project preferred to indefinitely delay addressing this issue, focusing rather on instrumental, more easily solvable, economic and legal aspects. The hope was that, as long as these latter issues would be sufficiently well addressed, the cultural and identity issues would go away by themselves. Stephan Elbe's conclusion seems to be heading the same way:

*"After all, the founding fathers of the European project had deliberately avoided an overtly revolutionary process of European federalism, opting instead for a strategy that would achieve unification of Europe more gradually. By focusing on piecemeal and sectoral integration it was hoped that cooperation between states was more likely to ensue in the long run, and that such cooperation could, in turn, breed a habit of further cooperation which would induce ever greater steps towards integration. Eventually loyalties would begin to shift from nation-states to supranational institutions. In this way the functionalist mode of integration might over time culminate in a federal Europe. The founding fathers had thus adopted a policy that did not cast the European question in spiritual or philosophical terms, deliberately refusing to deploy new ascetic ideals. Instead it placed economics before politics, making the latter a function of the former, and relied on the logic of the market to drive forward the political project of Europe<sup>5</sup>."*

Although maybe a little exaggerated, one cannot deny the fact that the view criticized by Elbe in the previous statement is one of the most influential within the decision making process of EU integration. A *formal Europe*, understood as a techno-bureaucratic community and led mostly by the market logic

<sup>4</sup> Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political Social and Economical Forces 1950–1957*, London: Stevens & Sons, 1958, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Stephan Elbe, *Europe: A Nietzschean Perspective*, Routledge, New York, 2003, pp. 80.

constituted, for many Europhiles, an important reference system. Another critical voice asks in this respect:

“How can one possibly ask millions of citizens to think in European terms, to give up the usual national state framework and to adopt a new entity with a symbolic value reduced to rules, regulations and quotas<sup>6</sup>?”

Given that culture is one of the fundamentally defining aspects of a human community and that, consequently, the legitimacy of the political structures of any given community depends upon it, it is very likely that its neglect bring, sooner or later, a legitimacy crisis. And in my opinion, this is precisely what the European Union goes through presently: from the problems in Greece to the ones stemming from the massive immigration wave, the Brexit and so on.

As stated earlier, my basic claim is that all these problems derive from the way the European Union addressed (or rather failed to address) the cultural dimension of the integration process: the latter was, on the one hand, treated as a secondary issue, on the other, to the extent that it was taken into account, it was conceived by analogy to the way it was used during the process of edification of the national state. And I think this would not be the best model in such an endeavor. The motives would be the following:

- I. The construction of the national state sought to create a unitary and centralized political entity (i.e. with *legitimate monopole over the collective violence*) and not a federative or even confederative political entity, based on the free adhesion of its members.
- II. The linguistic ties: the national state was, in most cases, more or less coercively coagulated around a language (that got to become) common and specific to a certain people, thing to which the EU could not have access for obvious reasons.
- III. The religious ties: religion constituted a very important cohesive factor in the edification of the national states, thing to which the EU, as *secular and secularizing* institution, was again denied access.
- IV. The warlike tradition of the European states: war constituted one of the most important factors involved in the construction of the European national states, aspect to which a *peaceful* political project, as the EU always claimed to be, could not and would not resort.
- V. The kind of unity aimed at: unity by (usually coercive) homogenization in the case of the national state vs. unity by diversity in the case of the EU.

The technological revolutions took all these aspects to their climax. A good analysis of the impact of the impact of the industrial revolutions upon the

edification of the modern national state is provided by the Dutch historian Peter Rietbergen:

“Due to the demands of the mechanization of industry, the nineteenth century brought an increasingly far-reaching division of labour; this contributed to the genesis of many parallel, but by and large separate sociocultural networks and thus ultimately furthered the advancing process of individualization. At the same time, standardization led to both the expansion and the internationalization of production. The consumer culture that developed increasingly crossed the borders of states, nations and their traditions, creating a first phase of ‘globalization’.

However contradictory it may seem, the national state yet proved itself, even increasingly so, the most adequate framework for all these progressive developments. Nationalism was—and perhaps is—both a component of and a reaction to the ‘processes of modernization’ which the economic and political revolutions expressed, processes which should more appropriately be called ‘processes of change’, since both ‘modernization’ and ‘progress’ are to a large extent immeasurable phenomena, mainly moral and, thus, subjective categories.

On the one hand, old certainties were lost, on the other, a strong state was clearly an advantage in growing international competition. Hence, from the late eighteenth century onwards, cultural notions were increasingly linked with politics in an attempt to achieve a sense of identity and thus of unity that, soon, acquired rather extreme dimensions.

Nationalism became an ideological instrument used not only to reconcile the disparate and often conflicting sociocultural elements and regional identities that made up the European states but also to buttress these states’ expansionist politics<sup>7</sup>”

In other words, the culture of the national state was, at least since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, politicized to the extreme, becoming more of an ideological weapon of the nationalist expansionism than a mere systematic expression of a *Weltanschauung*. As such, it could not have provided an adequate reference system for a seemingly peaceful and integrative political project as the EU. But is something like this possible? I think the answer is ‘yes’ and that one solution might come from a rather surprising direction: Carl Gustav Jung’s analytical psychology. Obviously, this is the subject of the next section.

Consequently, I think that in order to overcome its present legitimacy crisis, the European Union must (i) start taking the cultural dimension of integration more seriously and (ii) seek to avoid, in this respect, the cultural models developed during the historical creation of the national state.

<sup>6</sup> Ariane Chebel D’Appollonia, ‘National and European Identities between Myths and Realities’, in Ulf Hedetoft (ed.), *Political Symbols, Symbolic Politics*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1998, p. 65

<sup>7</sup> Rietbergen, Peter, *Europe: A Cultural History*, Routledge, New York & London, 1998, pp. 328

### 3. Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology

The most famous notion related to Jung's name is the *collective unconscious*. The following passage clearly states Jung's basic thesis and concepts in this respect:

"My thesis, then, is as follows: In addition to our immediate consciousness, which is of a thoroughly personal nature and which we believe to be the only empirical psyche (even if we tack on the personal unconscious as an appendix), there exists a second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals. This collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of pre-existent forms, the archetypes, which can only become conscious secondarily and which give definite form to certain psychic contents<sup>8</sup>."

In analyzing and interpreting Jung's thought I have found it useful to distinguish between *entitative* and *functional* concepts. Basically, the entitative concepts stand for psychic entities with a distinct and discernable structure, i.e. for some sort of *psychic organs*, as Jung seems to understand them: Self, ego, archetype, shadow, anima/animus, complex etc<sup>9</sup>. The *functional* ones, on the other hand, stand for the processes taking place within and among these psychic entities, processes whose specific character and evolution obviously derive from the structure and the state of the aforementioned entities: individuation, symbolization, dream, projection, introjection, repression, actualization, relativization, synthesis. In principle, the functional concepts are supervenient on the entitative ones.

I will start by following James A. Hall<sup>10</sup> in distinguishing between the four levels of the Psyche (at least according to Jungian analytic psychology):

1. The personal self-awareness, in other words *our daily self-aware minds*, namely our reflexive-apperceptive capacity for consciously following with a sense of personal identity everything happening within our experience (be it internal or external). The history of this concept is so vast that any attempt in summing it up in these few pages would be destined to fail. As such, in attempting to offer, at least, an essential glimpse of the matter, I will just mention here Kant's perspective that places *intelligence* at the basis of self-awareness, that is our capacity for spontaneously generating a representation of our own existence, i.e. *of the fact that I am* (not necessarily also of *how I am*, this

latter aspect having more to do with *self-knowledge* than with pure self-awareness):

"The *I think* expresses the act of determining my existence. The existence is thereby already given, but the way in which I am to determine it, i.e., the manifold that I am to posit in myself as belonging to it, is not yet thereby given. For that self-intuition is required, which is grounded in an a priori given form, i.e., time, which is sensible and belongs to the receptivity of the determinable.

Now I do not have yet another self-intuition, which would give the determining in me, of the spontaneity of which alone I am conscious, even before the act of determination, in the same way as time gives that which is to be determined, thus I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being, rather I merely represent the spontaneity of my thought, i.e., of the determining, and my existence always remains only sensibly determinable, i.e., determinable as the existence of an appearance. Yet this spontaneity is the reason I call myself an intelligence<sup>11</sup>."

2. The personal unconsciousness has to do with *everything that is unawaresly unique to person's Psyche*<sup>12</sup>. In other words the personal unconsciousness contains everything related to a person's psychic existence that does not involve his/her sense of a *biographic identity*; and I think the latter aspect should be stressed because, despite their name, the unconscious phenomena do not lack the aforementioned Kantian self-consciousness as *intelligence* (i.e. one's capacity for spontaneously generating a representation of oneself as existing), but only the *biographic material* within which this is usually embedded in our daily lives. Dreams, for example, always suppose an *oneiric self* that perceives and interacts with the oneiric material. As such, the dream is also always someone's, i.e. *mine* – in a more general sense, this could also be taken as another proof (maybe from an unexpected direction) in favor of the Kantian thesis according to which the original-synthetic apperception constitutes the *sine qua non* precondition of any conceivable experience, be it exterior or interior<sup>13</sup>.

Freud has described the personal unconsciousness as that part of the psyche reserved for the complexes generated by the repression of the primary libidinal drives, a process that, according to him, accompanies the entire ontogenesis of the individual. Strictly with respect to the personal unconsciousness Jung, actually, does not have much to

<sup>8</sup> C.G. Jung, "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious" in *Collected Works IX*, Part I, 1981, pp.43/parr.90.

<sup>9</sup> In what follows I will refer only to the most important of them, an exhaustive analysis of all the entitative and functional concepts in Jung's psychology requiring much more space (and time!) than a mere article.

<sup>10</sup> Hall, James A., *Jungian Dream Interpretation: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*, Inner City Books, Toronto, 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. by Paul Guyer & Allen W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998 pp. 260/parr. B 157-158.

<sup>12</sup> Hall, James A., *Jungian Dream Interpretation: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*, Inner City Books, Toronto, 1983.

<sup>13</sup> On the basis of such considerations some authors label, quite counterintuitively, both Freud and Jung as neo-Kantian structuralists. See Adams, M.V. „The Archetypal School” in *Cambridge Companion to Jung*, Polly Young-Eisendrath and Terence Dawson (Ed.), Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp.107-124.

object or add to Freud's view: this is, according to both, the field of those drives which are denied, for certain reasons, direct access to the conscious reality, as such remaining confined to this obscure realm out of which they constantly seek an escape to the conscious world in a disguised, dissimulated form.

3. The collective consciousness has to do with *the official cultural world*, what in the German Romanticism was called *Zeit-/Volksgeist* (the Spirit of the Age/Community): the norms, symbols, values, myths, practices by which a given human community explicitly functions (they make the object of education and intermediate both the intra- and inter-communitary relations). We will come back to discussing the collective consciousness after clarifying the basic aspects of the collective unconsciousness. I have preferred this order because, fog Jung and the Jungians, in principle, everything included in the former is based, in one way or another, on the *tacit infrastructure* of the latter: "Archetypal forms that are enshrined cultural institutions become the tacit furniture of the collective conscious mind."<sup>14</sup>

4. The collective unconsciousness or the *objective Psyche*, as Jung sometimes calls it, is by far the oldest stratum of the human psyche, *unspecifically belonging to each individual by heredity*. On the backdrop of the collective unconsciousness, the phylogeny irrupts into the ontogenesis, i.e. the psychic development of a person follows certain trans-individual archaic patterns emerged in the course of the phylogenetic evolution. Jung inferred the existence of this stratum of the psyche by constantly noticing, in his clinical practice, the fact that some events and processes on the level of the individual unconsciousness reproduce certain absolute models absolutely independently of the biography of the respective individual, therefore that could not be explained in terms of the Freudian Id-ego-Superego dialectics and that, all the more, appeared, actually, to make it possible.

In Jung's thought, the *collective unconscious* or the Self (*Selbst*) has, basically, three hypostases with respect to the psyche:

- I. It is the psyche as a whole, i.e. as a specific and autonomous ontological realm of the human Spirit;
- II. The central archetype, that is the supreme regulative authority within the hierarchy of the psychic structures;
- III. The main reference system of the individual psychological becoming.

In other words, the Self constitutes, concomitantly, the *psychic substance* into which the ego is immersed, its origin and the model of personality

which it<sup>15</sup>, as the center of the conscious existence, attempts, voluntarily or not, to overtake and emulate.

As noticed, the constitutive substructures of the collective unconscious are the so called *archetypes*. Their existence is always felt but never fully perceived. In fact, according to Jung, they cannot be explicitly and directly observed, but only postulated, i.e. *necessarily guessed* if you will on the basis of their influence upon the perceivable contents of the psyche (complexes, archetypal images etc.).<sup>16</sup> As such, we could say that the archetype corresponds rather to the recurring tendency of structuring certain types of images in determined ways, than to a specific concrete psychic image. For those familiar with Kant, we could say that the archetypes fulfill the same role that in the *Critique of the Pure Reason* was ascribed to the pure concepts of the understanding (i.e. the categories) and of reason (i.e. the Ideas), the existence of which could not be directly shown on the empirical level, but only *transcendentally deduced* or postulated, that is presupposed with necessity by the *sine qua non* preconditions of an experience such as ours. In fact, Jung himself promotes at times such an interpretation:

"One could also describe these forms as categories analogous to the logical categories which are always and everywhere present as the basic postulates of reason. Only, in the case of our 'forms' we are not dealing with categories of reason but categories of the imagination. The original structural components of the psyche are of no less surprising a uniformity than are those of the body. The archetypes are, so to speak, organs of the prerational psyche. They are eternally inherited forms and ideas which have no specific content. Their specific content only appears in the course of the individual's life, when personal experience is taken up in precisely these forms<sup>17</sup>."

Unlike the categories however, which are essentially *neutral* and *impersonal*, the archetypes are more personally, mundanely and pragmatically oriented, i.e. the *presuppose and open up a world* (as a system of meanings and practices), at the same time anticipating concrete human ways of being within it (in other words, *roles*): maternal/paternal, sexual, educative, aggressive, creative, cynegetic etc..

As such, the primary conditioning by the archetype of the personal experience goes along with a secondary and opposed conditioning, i.e. by the particular psychological event of the archetype. Jung's explanation would be the following: the archetype is actually only a *necessary latency* (in the form *if* → *then*), a *formal receptacle* that in order to actualize itself must be filled with the *psychic matter* of the personal experience – when the corresponding individual psychological event arises, it triggers the archetype and the correlative psychic process. Consequently, the ego, as the center of the individual

<sup>14</sup> Hall, James A., *Jungian Dream Interpretation: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*, Inner City Books, Toronto, 1983, pp.114.

<sup>15</sup> The ego, that is.

<sup>16</sup> Not unlike the existence of the planet Neptune, for example, was initially inferred from its gravitational pull upon Uranus.

<sup>17</sup> Jung, C.G., "Psychology and Religion: West and East", in CW 11 pp. 845.

consciousness, displays a constant tendency towards some sort of *metonymic abuse*, that is of taking over and substituting the whole, i.e. the Self along with the entire archetypal system, due to the fact that it (the ego) is the one that provides (and experiences) the triggering events of the unconscious process. This accounts for our growing tendency, both individual and collective, of automatically taking everything happening within the psyche as of a personal and conscious nature. However, we must always bear in mind that despite this secondary conditioning of the collective unconscious by the personal psyche, the primary determination is the opposed one, i.e. by the collective unconscious of the individual psyche – adapting Kant’s words, we could say that *the fact that any experience starts with the personal psyche does not mean that it originates entirely in the personal psyche*. In fact, in his cultural psychology studies, Jung will try to understand modernity and its correlative phenomena precisely as a progressive (and actually unrealizable) historical assertion of the individual consciousness against the collective unconscious:

“The iconoclasm of the Reformation, however, quite literally made a breach in the protective wall of sacred images, and since then one image after another has crumbled away. They became dubious, for they conflicted with awakening reason. (...) I am convinced that the growing impoverishment of symbols has a meaning. It is a development that has an inner consistency. Everything that we have not thought about, and that has therefore been deprived of a meaningful connection with our developing consciousness, has got lost<sup>18</sup>.”

*In nuce*, the archetypes are not inborn ideas but only purely formal categorical (ideational) potentialities that must be experientially actualized. In his study “The Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry” Jung refers to the archetypes as *innate possibilities of ideas giving shape to the contents accumulated through personal experience*. As such, their role with respect to personal experience is rather *regulative*, that is determining the ordering of the psychic contents within certain default patterns, than *constitutive*. They are intentionally oriented toward consciousness to the extent that they become actual only insofar being filled with the *psychic matter* of personal experience.

Moreover, Jung refers many times to the archetypes as unconscious images of the instincts. In other words, the instinct, defined by him as a *physiological drive as perceived by the senses*, always carries with it a series of phantasms and symbolic images whose psychic *eidōs* is precisely the archetype. In another study, “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious”<sup>19</sup> he explicitly refers to the archetypes as *copies of the instincts themselves*, respectively *fundamental models of instinctual behavior*. From this

perspective, the archetype seems to include not only a purely psychological layer (the *image*), but also a nervous and ultimately behavioral one (coming quite close to the Freudian notion of *nervous drive*).

As such, in order to understand more clearly the way an archetype, once triggered, seeks realization within the individual personality, a few points concerning the notion of *complex*, that Freud and Jung share, are in order. Basically, for Jung, the complex is the personal unconscious product of the interaction between the collective archetypal underlayer of the Psyche and conscious experience. For Freud, on the other hand, the problem has more to do with the interaction and confrontation of the individual unconscious and, shall we say, social or cultural demands. As known, much of Freud’s work was dedicated to describing, explaining and interpreting the dialectics of the *vital drive (libido)*, which was governed by the pleasure principle and whose realization was, consequently, felt as satisfaction, a complicated and contradictory process during which it had to either comply with, or fool the exigencies of the ego and super-ego (governed by the so called *reality principle*). In other words, in Freud’s view, the complexes arise precisely as a result of the constant repression of certain drives which the ego and the super-ego find unacceptable – more precisely, once repressed, they do not just vanish but are cast away into this dark region of the individual psyche, i.e. the unconscious, from where they constantly seek an escape in a dissimulated form. According to Freud (but not also to Jung), this is actually the basis for the entire symbolic-sublimative activity of the human spirit, i.e. culture. In other words, from his perspective, everything having to do with dreaming, art, mythology, politics and even sports constitutes, in fact, nothing more than the product of the perpetual attempts made by this ostracized Dionysian pulsional sublayer to symbolically integrate itself in the conscious reality.

Jung, on the other hand, acknowledges the relative (but substantial) validity of Freud’s interpretation of the complex, but *deepens and widens* its causal basis much beyond mere sexuality or aggression, rooting the entire libidinal dynamics in the archetypal structure of the collective unconscious. According to Jung, Freud’s perspective does not seem capable of explaining why the experience of the constant repression of certain unacceptable drives always tends to crystallize in specific and recurrent patterns on the level of the individual unconscious. For him, this tendency of the individual unconscious to assimilate in a specifically determined and recurrent way certain experiences within complexes proves the influence of some broader trans-individual structures, namely the archetypes. James A. Hall provides the following Jungian definition of the complex: “a group of related ideas and images, held together by a common

<sup>18</sup> C.G. Jung „The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious“ in CW IX, pp. 12-14, par.22/28

<sup>19</sup> C.G. Jung CW IX

emotional tone and based upon an archetypal core.”<sup>20</sup> Basically, every archetype is a *psychic eidos* that instantiates itself on the level of the individual unconscious in a specific complex whose appearance depends upon the personal life of the individual in cause. One example in this respect is provided by another Jungian psychologist, Anthony Stevens<sup>21</sup>: in children, the maternal archetype instantiates itself in the Mother complex according to the rules of contiguity and similarity; as such, the close and constant presence of someone with characteristics sufficiently similar to those claimed by the maternal archetype triggers in the soul of the child this archetype which acquires, during the individual’s life, acquires an ever more specific shape in the form of the individual Mother complex.

*Mutatis mutandis*, a complementary process takes place in the mother’s soul. The conjunction of the two processes generates a special kind of synthesis of the two personalities (*participation mystique*), which can cover the entire early and middle childhood of the individual in cause.

However, in understanding these issues we must keep in mind that the evolution of the collective unconscious follows a specific and autonomous path that does not necessarily depend upon the facts of the personal biography. As such, we should not take the previous example in the sense that the presence of a person corresponding to the specifications of the mother *causes* the archetype and not even, necessarily, that it *pulls it out of latency*. When the time comes, the archetype activates itself irrespective of whether in the factual life of the child there is a mother or not. But if for some reason the archetype does not find fulfillment on the level of the conscious life of the individual, the unconscious will spontaneously seek to compensate, i.e. (1) to realize the respective archetype beyond the conscious life of the individual in cause and, at the same time, (2) to press him/her into realizing it on the level of the conscious life. This compensation tendency may take the form of dreams, neuroses or of all the *troubles and turmoils* specific to the transitional periods in the life of an individual. Jung brings his own example in this respect, in his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* referring to a certain period of his childhood when his mother, due to certain familial issues, was absent for a relatively long time. According to his self-analysis, in this situation, he projected the maternal archetype upon the maid who acquired consequently an outmost importance in the development of the child Jung. In time, her figure was assimilated to the maternal image and thereby became representative for femininity in general. However, Jung adds, in his case, the typical sentiments associated with motherhood, i.e. closeness, warmth, protection were grafted upon a fundamental lack of trust with respect to femininity, derived from his mother’s *original*

*betrayal*, a mistrust that followed Jung for a substantial part of his life.

As such, in a general sense, the ego-Self relation could be understood through Schopenhauer’s analogy of the strong blind man carrying on his back a cripple (with sight): the *seeing cripple* has the impression that he has the role (and power) of telling the strong cripple where to go, when in fact the latter can go wherever he wants, irrespective of what the cripple tells him. The seeing cripple can either take things as they are and reconsider his position accordingly, or he can resort to some sort of compensatory self-delusion and claim that he wanted all along to go precisely where the blind was carrying him.

The methodic analysis and moderation of this more or less natural inflation tendency of the ego with respect to the Self is an important aspect of Jungian analytical psychology. In short, the (endogenous) causes behind this tense relationship between the ego and the Self are the following:

1. The tendency of the ego to replace the Self as the center of the Psyche and, consequently, to subdue it entirely to the personal consciousness (due to the fact that it<sup>22</sup> is the one that provides and experiences the life content of the archetypes).
2. Given its inherent limitation, the perspective of the ego is always unilateral and, therefore, even if it attempts to realize an archetype, on the level of conscious reality, it will not be able to fulfill the entire array of its meanings and demands. More precisely: the aspects which get realized are integrated within the personal identity; but the frustration originated with the unrealized ones will press the ego towards realizing them as well. However, the realization is again partial, so the process restarts within a new tension and so on.

The ego follows with respect to the Self a perpetual dialectics in which the elements that are initially conjoined (synchronically, within the Self), subsequently get separated (on the level of the ego, given its unilaterality) and then get synthesized again, diachronically, through their successive fulfillment, in one way or another, on the level of the conscious personality and life of the individual in cause. This is what Jung calls *individuation* and its driving force is the so called *transcendent function* of the unconscious realized through symbolization. In *Aion* Jung writes:

“The one and only thing that psychology can establish is the presence of pictorial symbols, whose interpretation is in no sense fixed beforehand. It can make out, with some certainty, that these symbols have the character of “wholeness” and therefore presumably mean wholeness. As a rule they are “uniting” symbols, representing the conjunction of a single or double pair of opposites, the result being either a dyad or a quaternion. They arise from the collision between the conscious and the unconscious and from the confusion

<sup>20</sup> Hall, James A., *Jungian Dream Interpretation: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*, Inner City Books, Toronto, 1983 pp.61

<sup>21</sup> Stevens, Anthony, *On Jung*, Routledge, 1990

<sup>22</sup> I.e. the ego.

which this causes (known in alchemy as “chaos” or “nigredo”). Empirically, this confusion takes the form of restlessness and disorientation. The circle and quaternity symbolism appears at this point as a compensating principle of order, which depicts the union of warring opposites as already accomplished, and thus eases the way to a healthier and quieter state (“salvation”). For the present, it is not possible for psychology to establish more than that the symbols of wholeness mean the wholeness of the individual. On the other hand, it has to admit, most emphatically, that this symbolism uses images or schemata which have always, in all the religions, expressed the universal ground, *the Deity itself*<sup>23</sup>.”

For Jung, in other words, the symbol, be it oneiric, mythic, artistic and so on, has as main function the compensation of the insufficiency of the ego with respect to the Self, by relativizing the initial opposite terms, on the level of the conscious life, with respect to their encompassing archetype(s) and, ultimately, to the Self as the all-encompassing collective unconscious. As you can notice, in this model, the conflicts between the opposite elements are not repressed in order to be tempered or settled, but get transcended by relinking them to their initial encompassing archetype and, ultimately, to the Self. We might say that a specific aspect of Jungian therapy resides in the fact that it does not so much seek to alleviate the symptoms, but rather to amplify the pathologic images so that the ego gets to experiment the archetypal roots of the complexes, by avoiding however its *dissolution in the archetypal sea*, that is by keeping its sense of self-identity. Ego’s coherent capacity in keeping a constant connection to the Self results in the formation of an ego-Self axis which can bring about, given the appropriate circumstances, a fortification of the ego through the provision of an explicit reference system in the course of personal becoming. But this positive outcome takes place only provided that the ego is strong enough to withstand this experience of the Self, otherwise running the risk of being engulfed<sup>24</sup> by the Self which may result in very serious psychic pathologies (as schizophrenia for example).

A distinction that is central to Jung’s thought, but that, up to this point, would have been prematurely introduced, is the one between the archetype and the archetypal image. While the notion of archetype, as we have seen, refers to the subjacent and indirectly observable tendency of the Psyche to structure our personal experience within certain archaic and universal patterns, the so called archetypal image represents the concrete image(s) a certain archetype acquire(s) within a given historical and cultural context. Following Jung, James A. Hall offers the following definition for the archetypal images: “Archetypal’ images are fundamental and deep images formed by the action of archetypes upon the accumulating experience

of the individual psyche. Archetypal images differ from the images of complexes in having a more universal and generalized meaning, often with numinous affective quality.”<sup>25</sup> What differentiates them from the images of the complexes is their universal meaning, on the one hand, their numinous quality, on the other.

The archetype is therefore as a crucible, or an alchemic vessel, to put in in more Jungian terms, within which psychic materials of different sorts and origins (i.e. personal conscious, personal unconscious, collective conscious etc.) get molded. As previously mentioned, the ego, in his *average everydayness*, participates in a collective layer of consciousness consisting in values, existential stances, shared images and sentiments characteristic of the any given cultural context. The psychic materials originating in this layer are assimilated by the collective unconscious, synthesized and shaped in specific (typological) images. In other words, in his dialectics with respect to the ego, the Self, although restating the same messages, uses the language specific to each and every age and culture. As such, the archetypal images restrict, adapt and apply the archetypes to a specific cultural context. On the other hand, no archetypal image, however wide in its semantic array, cannot provide an exhaustive expression of its original archetype(s), and, precisely by this insufficiency, enters (in a secondary sense) in contradiction with the archetype(s), fact which pushes the collective unconscious into finding a new archetypal image, with a greater synthetic capacity and so on. Jung explains by this kind of dialectics, both the becoming of the personal psyche and that of cultures in general.

As such, for example, every individual has a threefold relation with the representation of the mother:

- I. The Mother archetype (corresponding to the maternal principle);
- II. An archetypal image of the Mother, shaped by the cultural context of the individual in cause;
- III. An image of the personal mother, corresponding to the mother complex as specifically instantiated in the personality of every individual;

The personal instantiations of the mother image synthesize, most of the times, aspects derived from all these levels of the psyche, one of the basic finalities of Jungian therapy being precisely that of discerning, and actually enabling the patient to discern, among them.

On the level of the collective consciousness we encounter an equivalent process to that of the personal consciousness, with the difference that now the archetypal images, and not the complexes, take on the main role. In other words, the archetypes become embodied, or rather embody themselves, on the level of the collective consciousness, in different images of historical and cultural significance – epochal individuals (Charles the Great, Leonardo da Vinci, Napoleon etc.), typological artistic representations

<sup>23</sup> Jung, Carl G., “Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self” in CW 9, par. 304.

<sup>24</sup> As Jonas, for example.

<sup>25</sup> Hall, James A., *Jungian Dream Interpretation: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*, Inner City Books, Toronto, 1983 pp. 10-11.

(The Virgin and Child, the *Danse Macabre*, the self-portrait etc.), institutions, systematized, as previously mentioned, into a *tacit infrastructure of the collective consciousness*. According to Jung, all these represent, along with their correlative practices, archetypal images, as such reducible, despite their diversity, to their original archetype. Once constituted, they are projected, i.e. their meaning, along with their correlative feelings and behaviors, gets transferred over the corresponding events and characters on the level of everydayness. The projection process constitutes, in Jung's view, the interface between man and nature in all human cultures; however, while in primitive cultures, this happens spontaneously, explicitly and uncritically, in the modern ones, this relation gets more complicated due to the (over)expansion and potentiation of the ego and its correlative faculty: rational-analytic thought. Especially relevant in this respect are the next two passages from „The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious“:

*“Primitive man is not much interested in objective explanations of the obvious, but he has an imperative need- or rather, his unconscious psyche has an irresistible urge - to assimilate all outer sense experiences to inner, psychic events. It is not enough for the primitive to see the sun rise and set; this external observation must at the same time be a psychic happening: the sun in its course must represent the fate of a god or hero who, in the last analysis, dwells nowhere except in the soul of man. All the mythologized processes of nature, such as summer and winter, the phases of the moon, the rainy seasons, and so forth, are in no sense allegories of these objective occurrences; rather they are symbolic expressions of the inner, unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection-that is, mirrored in the events of nature<sup>26</sup>.”*

*“Whether primitive or not, mankind always stands on the brink of actions it performs itself but does not control. The whole world wants peace and the whole world prepares for war, to take but one example. Mankind is powerless against mankind, and the gods, as ever, show it the ways of fate. Today we call the gods ‘factors,’ which comes from facere) ‘to make.’ The makers stand behind the wings of the world-theatre. It is so in great things as in small. In the realm of consciousness we are our own masters; we seem to be the ‘factors’ themselves. But if we step through the door of the shadow we discover with terror that we are the objects of unseen factors. To know this is decidedly unpleasant, for nothing is more disillusioning than the discovery of our own inadequacy. It can even give rise to primitive panic, because, instead of being believed in, the anxiously guarded supremacy of consciousness-which is in truth one of the secrets of human success-is questioned in the most dangerous way. But since ignorance is no guarantee of security, and in fact only makes our insecurity still worse, it is probably better*

*despite our fear to know where the danger lies. To ask the right question is already half the solution of a problem. At any rate we then know that the greatest danger threatening us comes from the unpredictability of the psyche's reactions. Discerning persons have realized for some time that external historical conditions, of whatever kind, are only occasions, jumping-off grounds, for the real dangers that threaten our lives. These are the present politico-social delusional systems. We should not regard them causally, as necessary consequences of external conditions, but as decisions precipitated by the collective unconscious<sup>27</sup>.”*

#### 4. Globalization and EU: A Jungian Analysis

How can these considerations help us in our discussion of (i) the meaning of the globalized world and (ii) the correlative EU legitimacy crisis?

But first, a summative overview: Following Jung, Husserl and Jaspers, my understanding of the *meaning of the concept of meaning* would amount to the following: any personal or collective representation, partaking in the (quasi-)systematic structure of (some-)one's self-understanding against the backdrop of one's encompassing world (both culturally and existentially) and concomitantly serving a descriptive, explicative and teleological function within the intentional flux of self-awareness, respectively within one's interaction with the world and fellow humans. Zaki Laïdi seems to be in agreement with such characterization when writing that the concept of meaning essentially involves three aspects: a ground, an identity feeling and a telos.

Moving forward, I think a proper way of interpreting the process of globalization would be through Edward Lorenz's Butterfly Effect, that is as an accelerated *interdependentization* of the global causality, respectively as a marked increase, both extensively and intensively, in the interdependence between the different fields, levels and regions of human society, civilization and culture. As such, against the backdrop of globalization, phenomena that would previously have had only local or, at most, medium level consequences, can now reach global impact (and that ever more rapidly). Through globalization the world self-compressed, if you will. Consequently, humanity became ever more exposed to endogenous unpredictability for the management of which it developed, mostly during the 20th century, various projects, systems or sub-systems of collective control. The European Union is one of them – I think we might count as other examples thereof, the League of Nations, the various world peace or international security organizations, the totalitarian systems and, more recently, even the various IT control systems.

<sup>26</sup> C.G. Jung „The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious“ in CW IX, pp. 6/par. 7

<sup>27</sup> C.G. Jung „The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious“ in CW IX, pp. 23/par.49.

But why would all this induce a world crisis of meaning, in other words, why would globalization threaten to devoid humanity (or significant parts of it) of ground, identity or finality? My answer would be that, hopefully, this is not something inexorable, but rather contingent upon our form of globalization. In other words, although I do not think that globalization would necessarily have such nihilistic consequences, the way in which it happened to emerge along human history threatens to lead us thereto. Again, why? Because globalization essentially happened to progressively assert itself, at least since the modern age, in close connection with the overinflation of the techno-instrumental rationality and to the detriment of the teleological-holistic rationality. An explanation for this might be that the ever increasing competition between the rising nation states, spanning across the entire modern age, provided the favorable socio-political framework therefor: the techno-instrumental rationality could provide immediate and concrete advantages within such ever increasing interstate competition, the teleological-holistic one couldn't, or at least not in the short run. Of course that the Industrial Revolutions have done nothing but to accelerate and intensify this process that consequently, on the long run, has come to fundamentally reshape the European Weltanschauung. Ultimately, the mass production engendered, in ever more efficient ways, by the Industrial Revolutions has also brought, aside from technological progress and sustained increases in life expectancy, standardization, instrumentalization and massification in both cultural and existential senses. The accelerated population growth that, with certain regional differences, has accompanied globalization all through its history, has provided the favorable demographic conditions as well. As a side note, it is remarkable how the fear of the alienating effects of mass society was shared by many important 19th and 20th Centuries thinkers who were otherwise very different in terms of background or philosophical and political views: Delacroix, de Tocqueville, Marx, Nietzsche, Husserl, Freud, Heidegger, Jung, Marcuse, Ortega y Gasset etc..

All this conjoined with the marked bellicosity of the European Weltanschauung as reshaped within the aforementioned progressive interstate competition spanning all through modernity and post-modernity, created an explosive mixture: nationalism, as aggressive assertion of the alleged superiority of one's national culture, civilization and, in extreme cases, even biology, which is probably the most historically influential and poignant phenomenon in this respect.

The European Union is one of the most salient collective projects for the prevention and control of the endogenous unpredictability emergent within the context of this form of globalization. But I think that unfortunately the European Union, along its evolution, has not taken seriously enough the cultural dimension of europenity or, as much as it did, it conceived it (intentionally or not) by analogy with the models already tested during the historical construction of the

modern nation state. In nuce, as noted by Stephan Elbe, the so called integration was conceived in terms of economic or political know how, rather than cultural, the basic idea (or hope) being that a purely functional integration would bring about by itself a specific culture as well. But the latter kept failing to emerge, up to the point at which the European Union has come to face the serious identity and legitimacy problems of today.

Now, on a milder note, it would be unfair to claim that the European Union has completely neglected the cultural dimension of integration, but, on the other hand, we could rightfully claim that, to the amount that it has attempted to do something in this respect, the so called European culture was mainly conceived by analogy with the models pretested within the context of the historical edification of the modern nation state. In a course way, one might claim that the European Anthem, Flag and Day are things that, by their very source and symbolic form are rather associated, within the collective psyche, with the national conflictual entities and therefore in contradictory tension with the E.U. motto: United in diversity! In Jungian terms we might say that, onto them, as symbolic forms, i.e. Anthem, Flag etc. the history of the conflicts within which they appeared and evolved as such gets projected, consequently the aforementioned motto, the circle on the flag (as a supposed symbol of unity) or the fact that the anthem is Ode to Joy appearing in this context as unconvincing.

What solution could there be to all this? Well, firstly and quite obviously, the EU should take the cultural dimension of integration much more seriously than it has until now and that especially with respect to its holistic-teleological aspect. Secondly, it should somehow attempt to determine and bring forth the subjacent cultural layer of Europenity, against the backdrop of that of the humanity in general and then attempt to non-abusively reinterpret in its terms the elements of national specificity.

Here, the Jungian distinction between the archetype and the archetypal image may prove very useful. As we know, according to Jung, the archetype is the constitutive substructure of the collective unconscious, fulfilling a regulative role with respect to the personally lived experience, be it conscious or unconscious. The archetypes provide us with certain trans-individual phylogenetic schemata for the typologization of the collectively or individually relevant experiences, i.e. the content of the latter is integrated within such essential forms (eidé) belonging to humanity in general. The archetypal images, on the other hand, are the result of the interaction between the archetypes and the specific culture of a certain community or age: they translate, if you will, the meaning of the archetypes in the imagological language of the present. As such, while the archetypes are hereditary, the archetypal images are cultural. One of the fields that express most clearly these dialectics between the archetype and the archetypal image, on the

one hand, the collective and the personal unconscious, on the other, is quite expectedly art:

*“The creative process, so far as we are able to follow it at all, consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life. Therein lies the social significance of art: it is constantly at work educating in the spirit of an age, conjuring up the forms in which the age is most lacking. The unsatisfied yearning of the artist reaches back to the primordial image in the unconscious which is best fitted to compensate the inadequacy and one-sidedness of the present. The artist seizes on this image, and in raising it from the deepest unconsciousness he brings it into relation with conscious values, thereby transforming it until it can be accepted by the minds of his contemporaries according to their powers.”*

As such, a substantive foundation for the European unity could be found precisely by laying bare the archetypal substratum of the allegedly specifically national images, institutions and behaviors, in other words through their archetypalization: roughly, this would involve their reinterpretation and determination as different archetypal images of the same archetype (or series of archetypes). The obvious advantage provided by the eventual success of such an undertaking is that it would render possible the harmonious integration of the specifically national elements without any homogenization, given that an archetype can be expressed in a potentially infinite variety of archetypal images and complexes, each valid in its own way. Understood in these terms, the historical construction of the modern nation state has actually hyperpotentiated certain images with specific relevance for certain political communities, at the same time repressing (intentionally or not) their subjacent collectively-human substratum, precisely in order to create (or one might even say invent), by semi-ordered culturalization, political communities with a specific and, most frequently, agonistic identity. In a Jungian interpretation, besides the bellicose consequences of this phenomenon, which are historically obvious enough, subtracted from their archetypal foundation, these collective representations became weak, unconvincing, artificial and, consequently, justifiable only by the nation state’s monopoly on the legitimate use of collective violence, i.e. authority. The archetypalization of these elements of national specificity would render possible their harmonious and non-homogenizing integration, while at the same replenishing their psychological persuasiveness.

Another advantage would derive from the fact that the archetype is, in principle, oblivious to the distinction between secular and religious, it can be expressed in images, institutions or behaviors of both natures. Therefore the archetypalization would also allow us to close the ever expanding gap between the

religious and the irreligious man, which is an ever more pressing problem in post-modernity.

At the same time and for the same reasons, the archetypalization would also allow for the integration and peaceful coexistence of elements belonging to various mythical-religious traditions, thereby instituting, again in a non-coercive and non-homogenizing way, one of the basic principles of the EU, namely tolerant coexistence: to the extent that the sacred is, in one way or another, a definitive problem for humanity, i.e. a question to which the human being is unrelentingly pushed, by its own nature, to find an answer, the way in which this happens, the answer found as well as the actual living by this answer may legitimately vary with each culture, religion and, ultimately, individual, at least as long as this does not infringe upon the others’ possibility in doing the same for themselves. Archetypalization would allow for the actual and effective assertion of this form of tolerance which, I think, becomes ever more necessary in a globalized world.

But beyond all this, I think that archetypalization would, most importantly, enable humanity to overcome the most serious problem faced by today’s world globalized as mass society: what Heidegger called the instrumentalization of Being, i.e. the understanding and treatment of all relevant aspects of both human existence and nature in general as mere resources (Bestand) for the productive complex (Ge-stell) devoid of any telos outside of production itself, a phenomenon which both him and Jung lay at the basis of all the problems related to the growing alienation of post-modernity.

In a nutshell, in my opinion, archetypalization could bring about the rebalancing of today’s humanity on four fundamental levels:

- I. between the techno-instrumental and the teleological-holistic dimensions of rationality;
- II. between the rational consciousness and the unconscious;
- III. between the individuality and the collectivity;
- IV. between humanity as a whole and nature;

In other words, through archetypalization, each fact and aspect of existence would be connected (in its specificity) to the encompassing community and, through it, to humanity in general, both synchronically (the global culture) and diachronically (history).

How could this archetypalization be enacted? By what means? Although an exhaustive answer to this question is beyond my present possibilities, I think that, for the moment, I could indicate at least the field in which this process might start: art. Why art rather than other fields? Because, at least as I see it, art, by its pronounced symbolic character, holds a more direct and, maybe, intimate, relation to the unconscious (both individual and collective). Furthermore, it can engage its subject/subjects in a both passive-contemplative sense (i.e. as spectator) and active-creative (as author) and can cover, at the same time, both the individual and the collective dimensions of personality. Moreover, art

is easier and more spontaneously accessible for the common man, than other spiritual fields, all the more in our post-modern age with its unprecedented development of the information and communication technology. On the other hand, there is still the issue of whether the IT and media technology is adequate in this respect, but this, I think, should be discussed separately.

Novalis, Fichte, Schelling and the other German romantics had initially envisioned a resacralization of

the world through art (*Weltvergöttlichung*). What I have in mind through the concept of archetypalization is something similar but, as we have seen, grounded in Jung's analytical psychology which, by its openness, mindfulness and attention to specificity, could protect this undertaking from abusive ideological distortions as it, unfortunately, was the case with the original project of the romantics.

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