

THE ARCHETYPE AS A HEALING FACTOR

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(Reference is made to the decisive significance within the relation between the self and the ego. Experience indicates that the self, which guides the psychical process of growth from birth becomes manifest at the age of two - three years. I consider this manifestation to be the most important event in the development, since experience has shown that this event constitutes the starting point for a healthy ego. Where the manifestation of the self has failed to take place at all or has been inadequate (especially because of a faulty mother-child unity), an attempt must be made to constellate this unity in the transference situation, under the protection of which the omitted development can be made up.)

In the following paper, I would like to show how the relation between the self and the ego, in the psyche of the child, is the decisive factor in the healing process. In children, I find analogies to the dynamics of personality integration as described by Jung. The results of my observations are in agreement with psychological experience that the self guides the process of psychical development from birth. In so doing, a certain archetype, as you know, comes to the fore in each genetic stage, according to Neumann.

According to Neumann, we find the following phases and archetypical constellations:

1. At birth and during the first year, the totality of the new-born is merged in the care of the mother. Mother-child unity.
2. After the first year, the self, namely the center of this totality, detaches from the mother.
3. During the second and from the beginning of the third year, this center becomes established as "self" in the unconscious of the child and becomes manifest. In the following, I will try to show in what way the self is manifested.

I would regard the manifestation of the self as the most important event in the development of the personality. In psychotherapeutic work, it has turned out that the ego can develop in a healthy way only on the basis of such a successful manifestation of the self. It appears to me that such a manifestation of the self is the prerequisite for the development and consolidation of the personality.

Conversely, in the case of a weak and neurotic ego development, I assume with confidence that this manifestation of the self failed to occur due to lack of maternal protection, or else that it was destroyed in its earliest and most vulnerable development by external influences such as war, illness, or even unsympathetic environment.

Therefore, in therapy, I have made a point of giving the child's self an opportunity for constellation and manifestation and I try to protect it in the situation of the transference and to stabilize the resulting relation of the self to the ego.

This is possible because it corresponds to the natural tendency of the psyche to constellate the self, at the moment when the free space and, at the same time, the protected space is established within the therapeutic relationship. By this, a psychic situation of composure is produced which, simultaneously, contains the seed of a gathering of all the forces of personality development.

Since, in my experience, a healthy ego can develop only on this base of security of the

child; I must assume that in the presence of a weak ego, the manifestation of the self, normally observable for the first time at the age of two-three years, has not taken place. The astonishing fact is that, in most cases, the constellation of the self made impossible during childhood can be made up for at any stage of life and regardless of age.

In my practice, the Loevenfeld sand game has proven to be a big help in these psychic situations and developments. It is played in a sandbox of standard dimensions so that the imagination of the player is bounded and confined within these limits. The fact that, in this way, tension is localized inside the boundaries, acts as a regulating and protecting factor.

The sand picture produced by the child can be interpreted as the three-dimensional representation of a psychic situation. An unconscious problem is acted out in the sand box, like a drama. The conflict is transposed from the inner world to the external world and thus made visible. This play of imagination does not remain without reaction upon the psyche of the player. Rather, the sand play influences the dynamics of the unconscious in the child.

The analyst follows this play of the child, who, out of pleasure, will usually produce a whole series of pictures. At the same time, the analyst also interprets for himself the emerging symbols in the same manner as with dreams. Through his resulting insight, a participation may well occur whereby, under certain circumstances, the situation of the first phase, namely that of mother-child unity, is restored and exerts its healing influence. This therapeutic effect occurs even though the insight of the analyst is not communicated to the child in words. Instead, the pictures are brought into an easily understandable association for the child with his external life situations. This means a coalescence of awareness of inner and external problems, which is so significant that a next step in development can be achieved.

Besides, the details and the structure of the pictures give the therapist a guide to treatment. This consists mostly in converting complexes into action, that is, in giving the child opportunity to experience himself in active play. For instance, a pacification occurs when a child with a strong destructive impulse is allowed to shoot glasses to pieces. Thus, play and sand picture go hand in hand, towards the goal which, in my experience, represents a climax of inherent development. As I will show you by illustrations, this can be gathered from symbols of totality, as for instance, the circle, which now appear in the sand pictures.

Now, I would like to illustrate the foregoing with pictures from two cases in my practice.

Pictures and accompanying text for two cases.

Case 1*

Figure 1 is the initial picture by a nine year old boy who suffered excessive timidity and consequently stayed away from school continually.

In the center rises a hill for which a combat is going on. Machinegunners are shooting through the tunnel. On the hill, next to the highest tree, a boy is sitting on a bench. At the lower left, the home situation: a fenced-in house, a boy swinging. The fence is lacking

* Two cases 1 and 2 will be published in full together with other cases in book form by the Rascher-Verlag in 1966.

a gate. At the left side wall is a filling station.

It seems that the boy, still living in his temenos, is yearning for the realization of his talents by which he could take his place in the community. However, he perceives the external world as insurmountable struggle, barring him from the access to the self (tree on hill). Fearfully, he withdraws into his temenos.

Libido to gain a victory seems to come from the unconscious (filling station). Therefore, the picture appeared to me to be good prognostically, in spite of the existless setting.

Slow progress was made during four months of play while I tried to give more security to the boy in the transference situation.

The witnessing of a trifling accident, however, seemed to jeopardize the therapeutic process.

The setback showed up in a sand picture.

Figure 2 presents a completely chaotic situation. A train is stuck fast in a mountain; an elephant is standing on a tank. The figures seem to be placed in the sand at random. The whole reminds one of the drawings of schizophrenics. Again, a prognostically good representation is the small lake beside which stands an apple tree bearing fruit. By the lake sits a little boy, beside him a woman; both with their backs to the chaos.

In spite of overwhelming prevalence of a state of chaos, the boy was again looking to the unconscious, and to the therapeutic situation, to overcome it. (Boy with woman by the lake to the left of the picture, with tree standing for the self.)

During the ensuing hours, the boy succeeded in repairing and starting a broken down electric locomotive. I then asked him to instruct me in the operation of the toy trains, with the result that five weeks later, another sand picture represented the following:

In Figure 3, a bridge in the center leads from a forest scene across a broad river upon which ships are moving in both directions. On the bridge itself, lively traffic prevails. Autos likewise are travelling both ways, and on the left side a train is passing.

Much libido has begun to flow from the unconscious, establishing a connection to consciousness. (Bridge leading out of woods, the unconscious). Almost all the vehicles have a regulating function: fire engine, police car, garbage truck. They represent the regulating powers which now are going into action from the unconscious. Besides, the water indicates the incipient flow of libido. Since the traffic on the water as well as on the land is moving in both directions, it points to the completely liberated but orderly flow of forces.

After this picture, I gave the boy, who had shown so much skill in dealing with electricity, an opportunity to install electric lights in a three-story doll house. Since a house may also represent the inner world of man, I intended to clarify symbolically the inner living space to the boy. Three months later, the self-symbol proper then appeared in the sand represented by a circus.

Circus figures are going around a small hill in the center. Figure 4 where a musician is sitting; in contrary directions, that is, some figures from right to left, others from left to right: Roman chariots, elephants, tigers and horses, also clowns and an acrobat. Spectators are posted to the left and right.

A mandala is representing motion in a circle (a circambulatio). Psychologically speaking, one circambulatio leads downward, that means it corresponds to a movement

towards the unconscious, the other from left to right, clockwise, corresponds to a movement towards consciousness.

The whole amounts to a centralization having the significance of a transformation.

Thus, the manifestation and the experience of the self was reached, which simultaneously represents the basis for the development of the ego.

Then there are three more pictures corresponding to the three stages of ego development as defined by Neumann:

1. The animalistic vegetative stage.
2. The phase of struggle.
3. Adaptations to the group.

Figure 5 represents a jungle situation. In the middle, is a watercourse the banks of which are connected by a trail left by animals and by a bridge in the center. The animals are moving towards the water. On the far right are two Maroccans, one on each bank.

The ego represented by the two Maroccans, is beginning to assert itself on an instinctive level resting deep in the unconscious.

The boy named the next picture (Figure 6) "Battle of the Suez Canal". The canal is being navigated by ships; facing one another are fighting soldiers, divided pretty equally.

The boy's ego has become stronger and is competing with others in the showdown.

Figure 7 represents the chain of hills which connects the Lake of Zürich with the Greifen Lake. The single houses stand for the villages, the working people for their inhabitants. A winding road crosses the hills, and on top of the highest, a boy is sitting. The boy has reached his goal. He is sitting on the hill in complete freedom in the neighborhood where his home is. The whole picture (7) represents the enantiodromia of the forces which, in the first picture, frustrated the boy's development in aggressions. Where fighting soldiers had besieged the hill, people are now represented who can pursue their work in freedom. The boy himself, who in the first picture appeared on the one hand in his very narrow home situation, on the other hand surrounded by din of war, is waiting on the hill, now at the edge of the road, for the bus, as he explained, to take him into the wide world. The world is open for him.

Case 2

Initial picture (Figure 8) by a 23 year old girl, was done during a session of 1½ hours in a very depressive mood, which had been the reason for consulting me.

A verbalization of the situation at this moment appeared to me inopportune; that is why I proposed the sand game, which permits direct access to the deeper, more primitive strata in man.

The picture represents the symbol of the feminine and the symbol of the masculine: uterus and phallus lie side by side. Connected to them is a circle from which a point is directed toward the upper right. The whole, reminiscent of an embryo, represents a complete expression of an unconscious sense of wholeness, in early childhood, of the antitheses, with the distinct tendency toward their union in the self (circle).

From contact with the sand there grew the need to work in clay. Thus, three days later, a figure (Figure 9) was produced showing a witch holding in her arm a waning sickle of the moon. She represents the archetypal negative mother, whose conquest is symbolized

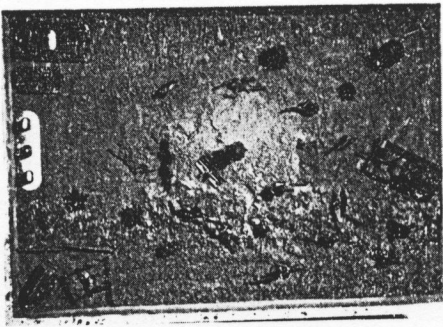


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

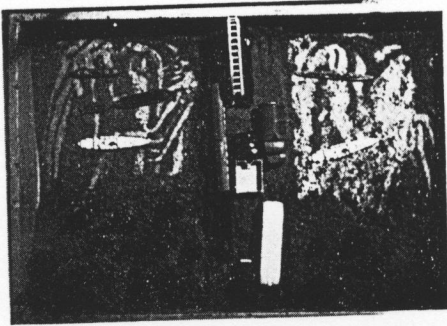


Fig. 3

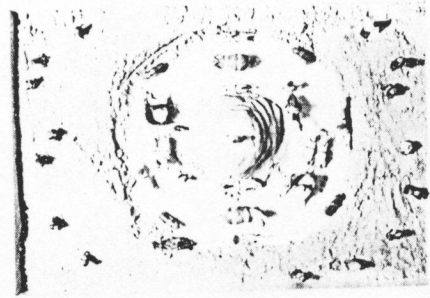


Fig. 4

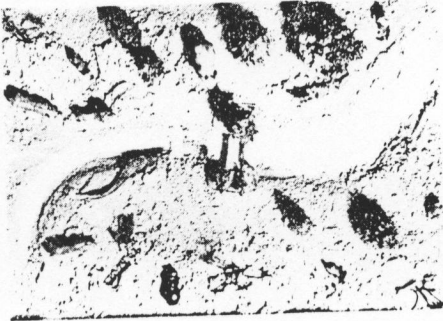


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

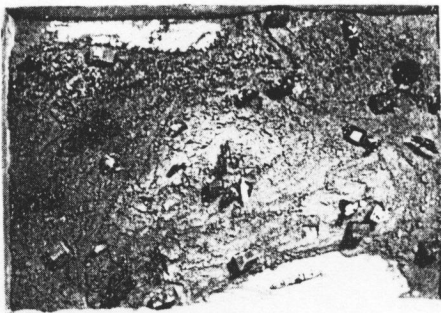


Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

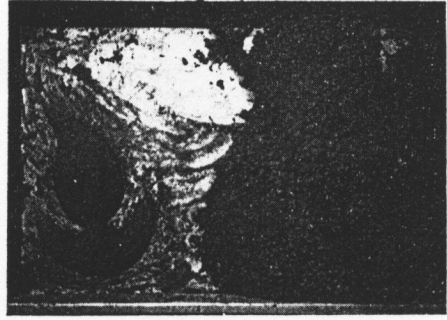


Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

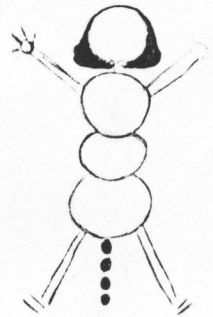


Fig. 16

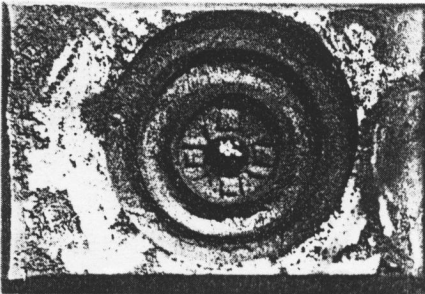


Fig. 17

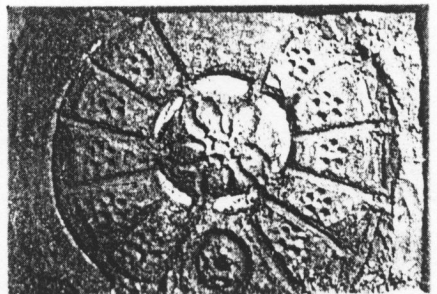


Fig. 18

by the waning moon.

Two days later, another sand picture was made (Figure 10); out of a half-moon grows a tree. It contains the libido for union of the opposites and thus represents the self as a process of growth.

Two days later, a Christ (Figure 11) was produced from clay. The Christ figure is holding a crescent moon in his arm. The self is represented here as *imago dei*. It contains the basis for a further development represented in the new moon as the point of origin of new female life.

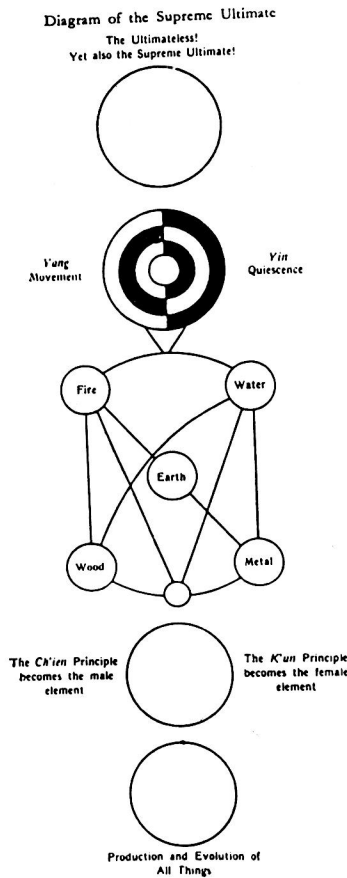


Fig. 19

This new life was reproduced impressively in another representation (Figure 12): It shows a monk holding in his arm a newly born girl.

Through occupation with her deeper strata, the girl experienced a rebirth in the unconscious. Only thereafter was her own masculine component positively indicated, as shown in further figures, as in the Prince (Figure 13), the Primitive (Figure 14), and finally a Boy (Figure 15).

The figures, produced in quick succession, were an anticipation of the ensuing analysis, which consisted in bringing to consciousness and integrating a very abundant dream material.

During this time, the critical moment of the developmental disturbance was also uncovered.

It consisted in a drawing which the girl had made as a three year old child, calling it a representation of man (Figure 16).

On my request, the drawing was reproduced from memory. It represents an urinating and defecating child as depicted by four circles.

This representation amounted to a comprehending of the totality of man, with a sinister as well as a bright aspect.

Inasmuch as our present culture represses the dark side of our existence, the drawing was called indecent by the child's mother and torn up before her eyes.

The manifestation of the self had been destroyed. It was restored in the ensuing analysis, and shows up well in the form of two successive "mandalas" in the sandbox in three-dimensional shape.

The square and the circle in Figure 17 are united in harmony.

The number 5 dominates the picture within the circle (Figure 18), now also suggesting physical development and hence the step into real life.

In my studies in Chinese philosophy I have encountered a diagram (Figure 19) which, it seems to me, corresponds to our conceptions. This is the diagram of Chou-Tun-Yi, a philosopher of the Sung era who lived around the year 1000. Here the primal origin of all things is represented as a circle, in which I see an analogy to the self at birth. A second circle contains the Yin (rest) and Yang (movement), from the confluent movement of which the elements evolve. I am inclined to compare this circle in our context to what I have said about the manifestation of the self. It contains the germinal forces in the unconscious for the formation of the ego and for the development of the personality. Like the elements out of this constellation, so the personality unfolds around the centering point of the ego. I equate this step to the development in the first half of life. The diagram then includes the further development, that of the second half of life, with its distinct tendency toward the self. The third circle, therefore, could be compared to the visualization of the self in the process of individuation during the second half of life. I see the fourth circle as an exist-opposite the entrance, thus the fourth circle concludes the movement leading from life to death. According to the law of transformation on which the diagram is founded, death contains the germ of new life.