"... the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being." — Carl Jung (1875-1961)

Structure of Personality

I. THE PSYCHE

In Jungian psychology the personality as a whole is called the psyche. The psyche embraces all thought, feeling, and behavior, both conscious and unconscious. It functions as a guide which regulates and adapts the individual to his social and physical environment. The concept of the psyche affirms Jung's primary idea that a person is a whole to begin with. He is not an assemblage of parts, each of which has been added through experience and learning much as one might furnish a house piece by piece. Jung specifically rejects a jigsaw conception of personality. Man does not strive for wholeness; he already has it, he is born with it. What he must do throughout his life span, Jung says, is to develop this inherent wholeness to the greatest degree of differentiation, coherence, and harmony possible, and to guard against breaking up into separate, autonomous, and conflicting systems. A dissociated personality is a deformed personality. Jung's work as a psychoanalyst was to help patients recover their lost wholeness, and to strengthen the psyche so it could resist future dismemberment.

Three levels can be distinguished in the psyche:

A. CONSCIOUSNESS: the only part of the mind that is known directly by the individual. It appears early in life, probably prior to birth. A child's conscious awareness grows daily through the application of the four mental functions that Jung called thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting. Usually one of these functions will be utilized more than the others. The predominant use of one of these four functions is what differentiates one child's basic character from that of another child. In addition to the four mental functions, there are two attitudes that determine the orientation of the conscious mind: extraversion and introversion.

The process by which the consciousness of a person becomes individualized or differentiated from other people is known as individuation. Individuation plays a major role in psychological development. The goal of individuation is knowing oneself completely as possible, or self-consciousness. A person who remains oblivious to himself and of the world around him cannot be a very individuated person. From the process of the individuation of consciousness, a new element is produced which Jung called the ego.

B. THE EGO: the name Jung uses for the organization of the consciousness mind; it is composed of conscious perceptions, memories, thought, and feelings. Although the ego occupies a small portion of the total psyche, it plays the vitally important function of gatekeeper to consciousness. Unless the ego acknowledges the presence of an idea, a feeling, a memory, or perception, it cannot be brought into awareness. Every day we are subjected to a vast number of experiences, most of which do not become conscious because the ego eliminates them before they reach consciousness. This is an important function, for otherwise we would be overwhelmed by the mass of material that would crowd into
Collective unconscious: Characteristics and contents: (1) it is that portion of the psyche which can be differentiated from the personal unconscious by the fact that its existence is not dependent upon personal experience. The personal unconscious is composed of contents that were once conscious, but the contents of the collective unconscious have never been conscious, within the lifetime of the individual.

The collective unconscious is a reservoir of latent images, usually called primordial images by Jung. Primordial means "first" or "original"; therefore, a primordial image refers to the earliest development of the psyche. Man inherits these images from his ancestral past, a past that includes all of his human ancestors as well as his prehuman or animal ancestors. These racial images are not inherited in the sense that a person consciously remembers or has images that his ancestors had. Rather, they are predispositions or potentialities for experiencing and responding to the world in the same ways that his ancestors did. Consider, for example, man's fear of snakes or of the dark. He does not have to learn these fears through experiences with snakes or the dark, although such experiences may reinforce or reaffirm his predispositions. We inherit predispositions to fear snakes and the dark because our primitive ancestors experienced these fears for countless generations. They became engraved upon the brain.

[sidenote] Two views of the mechanism of evolution have been put forward by biologists. One view states that what is learned through experience by previous generations can be inherited by future generations, and does not need to be learned by them anew. Habits become instincts. This is called the doctrine of acquired characters, or Lamarckism after its founder. The other view of the mechanism of evolution, and one that is accepted by most biologists, is that evolution proceeds by changes (called mutations) in the germ plasm. Mutations that favor the adaptation of the individual to this environment, and which increase his chances of survival and of reproduction, tend to be passed along from generation to generation. Mutations that disfavor adaptation, survival, and reproduction are eliminated.

Jung, unfortunately, adopted the unpopular Lamarckian explanation: Fear of snakes or of the dark learned by one generation or a sequence of generations can be inherited by succeeding generations. It should be pointed out, however, that the concept of a collective unconscious does not require an explanation in terms of acquired characteristics. The collective unconscious can also be explained by mutation and natural selection; that is, a mutation or a series of mutations can result in a predisposition to fear snakes. Since primitive man was exposed to harm from poisonous snakes, his fear of them would cause him to take precautions against being bitten. Thus, the mutation(s) that caused the fear and hence the precautions would increase man's chances of survival so that the changes in the germ plasm would be on to succeeding generations. In other words, the evolution of a collective unconscious can be accounted for in the same way that the evolution of the body is explained. Because the brain is the principal organ of the mind, the collective unconscious depends directly upon the evolution of the brain.

The contents of the collective unconscious exercise a preformed pattern for personal behavior to follow from the day the individual is born. "The form of the world into which he is born is already inborn in him as a virtual image." This virtual image comes into conscious reality by identifying itself with corresponding objects in the world. For example, if a virtual image of the mother exists in the collective unconscious, it will quickly express itself by the infant's perceiving and reacting to its actual mother. Thus, the contents of the collective unconscious are responsible for the selectivity of perception and action. We easily perceive some things and react to them in certain ways because the collective unconscious is predisposed to them.
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A. ARCHETYPES: The contents of the collective unconscious are called archetypes. The archetype means an original model after which other similar things are patterned - prototype.

Jung identified numerous archetypes including those of birth, rebirth, death, power, magic, the hero, the child, trickster God, the demon, the wise old man, the earth mother, the giant, many natural objects like trees, the sun, the moon, wind, rivers, fire, and animals and many man-made objects such rings and weapons.

It is very important for a correct understanding of Jung’s theory of archetypes that archetypes are not to be regarded as fully developed pictures in the mind like memory images of past experiences in one’s life. “A primordial image is determined as to its content only when it becomes conscious and it therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience. Some archetypes are of such great importance in shaping our personality and behavior that Jung devoted special attention to them. These are the persona, the anima and animus, the shadow, and the self.

Archetypes are universal: everyone inherits the same basic archetypal images. Every infant through the world inherits a mother archetype. This performed image of the mother is then developed into a definite image by the actual mother’s appearance and behavior and by the relationships and experiences the baby has with her.

THE PERSONA: the mask or facade one exhibits publicly with the intention of presenting a favorable impression so that society will accept him. It might also be called the conformity archetype. A person may have more than one mask. collectively all of his masks constitute his persona. “the outward face” of the psyche.

THE ANIMA and the ANIMUS: The “inward face” of the psyche: animus in females and anima in males. The anima archetype is the feminine side of the male psyche; the animus archetype is the masculine side of the female psyche. Every person has qualities of the opposite sex, not only in the biological sense (hormones) but also in a psychological sense of attitudes and feelings.

Man has developed his anima archetype by continuous exposure to women over many generations, and woman has developed her animus similarly.

THE SHADOW: This archetype represents one’s own gender and influences a person’s relationships with his own sex. The shadow contains more of man’s basic animal nature than any other archetype does. Because of its extremely deep roots in evolutionary history, it is probably the most powerful and potentially the most dangerous of all the archetypes. It is the source of all that is best and worst in man.

In order for a person to become an integral member of the community, it is necessary to tame his animal spirits contained in the shadow. This taming is accomplished by suppressing manifestations of the shadow and by developing a strong persona that counteracts the power of the shadow. The person who suppresses the animal side of his nature may become civilized, but he does so at the expense of decreasing the motive power for spontaneity, creativity, strong emotions, and deep insights. He cuts himself off from the wisdom of his instinctual nature, a wisdom that may be more profound than any learning or culture can provide. A shadowless life tends to become shallow and spiritless.
Example of shadow: Consider the evil or nefarious elements that exist in the shadow. A person might think that when the evil elements are eliminated from consciousness they are disposed of one and for all. Not true: they have simply withdrawn into the unconscious, where they will remain in a latent state as long as all is going well in the conscious ego. But if the person finds himself faced by a crisis or difficult life situation, the shadow will use this opportunity to exert its power over the ego. The shadow has tremendous staying power; it never nearly surrenders. The persistent nature of the shadow is equally effective whether it is promoting something evil or something good. Consider the blood shed in the name of Christianity: religious teaching represses the shadow, which eventually strikes back.

**THE SELF:** the organizing principle of the personality is an archetype that Jung called the self--the central archetype in the collective unconscious, much as the sun is the center of the solar system. The self is the archetype of order, organization, and unification; it draws to itself and harmonizes all the archetypes and their manifestations in complexes and consciousness. It unites the personality