

## Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious

*“..... the mind has grown to its present state of consciousness as an acorn grows into an oak or as saurians developed into mammals. As it has for so long been developing, so it still develops, and thus we are moved by forces from within as well as by stimuli from without.”*

*C.G. Jung, Man and His Symbols<sup>1</sup>*

Knowledge of the collective unconscious is essential in order to use the symbolic content of dreams and visions in a fruitful way. Without this knowledge, the symbolism lacks its true meaning and appears simply as a way to deal with the immediate stresses of everyday life. This results in indifference to the guidance available from the vast reservoir of wisdom and intelligence contained within the collective unconscious

In order to help facilitate the therapeutic use of dreams and symbols we will first look at the difference between the personal and the collective unconscious and then explore symbols and their role in communication between the former and the latter. We will then examine the nature of archetypes and archetypal symbolism and attempt to understand how they relate to the healing process.

In the western world, when most people consider the unconscious they think of Sigmund Freud. Freud's theory is that the unconscious is made up of repressed and forgotten material of the individual. It also includes impulses that have been subliminally registered, like scenes viewed in our peripheral vision. Jung agreed with Freud's definition of the unconscious but felt that it was limited, covering only the personal unconscious. According to Jung, material from the personal unconscious is filled with personal stories and sorrows, long forgotten memories of hurts and humiliation, but he also felt that there was another dimension to the unconscious.

Through observation of disturbed individuals, he saw that the contents of their dreams and fantasies could not be limited to their personal experience. He perceived that these individuals had entered into a realm of ancient symbolism to which they had no conscious access. Their dreams and fantasies often contained mythological themes that existed in

cultures they had never visited and times previous to the birth of any of their relatives. From these observations he developed his theory of the collective unconscious, which he defined as the ancestral heritage of possibilities of representation common to all human beings and, perhaps, even all animals.<sup>2</sup>

Because Jung wished to understand complicated psychological conditions and be able to speak about them, he developed a language to express the facts that he observed. He called themes that emerged from the timeless realms of the collective unconscious, archetypes. Archetypes, he said, were what made up the contents of the collective unconscious and had a powerful effect on the individual. The discovery of the collective unconscious and the theory of the archetypes, are some of Jung's major contributions to psychology.

Because he developed a way to express the functioning of the psyche, Jung has had a very large and many times unacknowledged influence on language in contemporary society. Commonly used terms such as introvert/extrovert, complex, anima, animus, synchronicity, and archetypes are Jungian concepts that are well known but often misused. Because of the misunderstanding of Jung's language, his work is sometimes dismissed as metaphysical. In reality, Jung was a psychiatrist who was able to help some of the most deeply disturbed psychiatric patients through his ability to be the "unprejudiced observer" of their psychic reality. He developed ways of speaking about what was completely within the bounds of human experience, yet he had the uncanny ability to accept even the wildest fantasies of psychotic patients as a valid expression of their reality. Jung would take even the most bizarre flights of fancy very seriously, for he understood that there was a deeper meaning behind these expressions of the psyche and would accept them as a necessary manifestation of the individual's dilemma.

One of his most famous cases is known as "The Woman Who Lived on the Moon." When Marie Louise von Franz, who eventually became one of his closest colleagues, first met Jung, he told her that he was working with a woman who lived on the moon. Von Franz thought that he meant the woman thought she lived on the moon. Jung made it clear that the woman lived on the moon. This subtle but important distinction is a major difference between the Jungian approach and most other schools of psychology. Jung's premise was that it was necessary to be completely open to the uniqueness of each person in his expression of reality and to have no preconceived ideas about the way in which his healing process would unfold.

The woman who lived on the moon was a young catatonic woman who was institutionalized. After many weeks of gaining her trust, Jung was successful in persuading her to speak. As she overcame her resistances and spoke to him, she told him that she lived on the moon. What followed was a bizarre story of what was happening on the moon and her relationship to others who lived on the moon. By listening to her story and regarding it as the absolute reality of this woman's existence, Jung was able to understand her and help her heal. After several difficult years, she was healed of her illness and lived a normal life.

## **The Archetypes**

Looking up at the night sky one can see figures created by patterns in the stars. Adromeda, the maiden, with her outstretched arms, Orion, the brave hunter and a panoply of gods, goddesses and animals cavort about the heavens. If we lived in an earlier time we would probably sit around a fire and tell stories of these celestial inhabitants that had been passed down through generations. These stories would also be about the stars and the earth and its inhabitants; about the north wind that blows in the cold weather and about the time that the sun disappeared. Stories were told of the hero who saved the maiden after encounters with a great beast and of gods who descended to earth and mortals who ascended to heaven. These were stories that helped our ancestors understand their connection to the world around them. They were centered, not only around basic survival needs, but also around spiritual needs as well and were expressions of recurrent themes or archetypes. Moreover, just as those themes had a powerful hold on our ancestors, they continue to affect us up to the present day.

We no longer sit around the campfire and tell stories but we do sit, mesmerized for hours, in front of the flickering movie screen or television. And what we watch is, at its core, surprisingly similar to the stories our ancestors once told. The weather is still a powerful source of fascination to humans as it once was when humans depended upon knowledge of weather patterns for their survival. We no longer pay homage to the gods of thunder and lightning but are still stimulated on a deep level by the idea of a strong storm. A few winters ago there was extensive media coverage for a predicted blizzard in the northeast United States, with forecasts of vast amounts of snow and all kinds of emergency warnings.

Everyone was glued to his or her radio or television. All of the food was sold out of the grocery stores and the story of the blizzard was on everyone's lips. As fickle nature would have it, the blizzard turned out to be a pretty small snowstorm. However, we were all left with, a very exciting media blizzard, which, I suspect, everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

As far as stories of heroes, we don't need to look any further than our latest movies, whether the hero is a super karate star or captain of a submarine or "letting the force be with him" the theme is the same – the hero's journey. Hollywood stories of astronauts and starships ascending into unknown spaces abound along with the ever-present aliens descending to planet earth to either save or destroy us. These are our present day myths and stories and if you look behind the surface of them, you will see ideas that relate to the same human concerns that are the themes of the most ancient myths and stories. Behind these themes are ideas, similar to Plato's "Idea" that there are pre-formed tendencies inherent within the human psyche.

Here we must differentiate between archetypes in their pure form and the symbolism that they stimulate. The archetypal symbol is imagery generated and regulated by the archetype but the archetype is, in itself, invisible. It is an innate predisposition that may be an inherent component of the brain. The archetypes stimulate the individual mind to make a vast variety of images. The imagery can turn out to be the Mona Lisa or Monet's Water Lilies or some imagery straight out of *The Pit and the Pendulum* or the Marquis de Sade.

Another way to look at the archetype is to compare it to the axial system of a crystal. The axial system has the capacity to form the crystalline structure in the mother liquid even though it has no material structure of its own. It determines the basic structure of the crystal but not the ultimate size of the crystal or the exact shape. So too with the archetype. It is a predisposition towards certain manifestation but does not specifically determine the image. As the contents of the collective unconscious, the archetypes are pre-form, pre-thought systems of readiness for action but not the actions themselves.

In becoming familiar with the imagery of myths and legends, we begin to understand some of the universal patterns contained within the archetypes and in turn, learn at least a bit about the human psyche. However, it is not enough to rely only on information from the past; we must investigate the present meaning of the archetypes through individual dreams and visions. It is the task of each age to understand the archetypal symbols in a new way, as each age has its own challenges.

## **The symbol**

In order to appreciate the function of archetypal symbolism as a form of communication from the unconscious, it is important to understand what is meant by a symbol. A true symbol has no fixed meaning but, rather, points to a greater reality that can never be totally understood because it contains wisdom that transcends the knowing mind. The symbol simply points to a greater reality and is not to be confused for the reality as in the following Zen saying:

*A finger is useful to point at the moon,  
The wise look at the moon, the ignorant at the finger.*

When a symbol becomes fixed, with a universally agreed upon meaning, it ceases to be a symbol and becomes a sign. A good example of this is the stop sign. Not only does everyone recognize it for what it is, but it is inherently limited in its agreed upon meaning. It says stop. A true symbol does not say stop, it points towards more and encourages exploration of an unknown reality.

When the meaning of a symbol is fixed by society or religion, it becomes like a stone that has been lying in riverbed. The running water has removed all of the rough edges and unique shapes and it becomes smooth and uniform. When we become familiar with symbols without renewing and exploring their uniqueness, we wear them out. A symbol is only alive when it is pregnant with unknown meaning. This is one of the reasons why western society is now looking towards symbols from the east. Although thousands of years old, they have a new, fresh meaning for the western mind.

Theoretically, there are infinite numbers of archetypal symbols, but there are some that show up in the dreams and visions so often that they are more defined in Jungian psychology. The archetypes of the Self or universal ordering factor, the Shadow, and the anima in the man and the animus in the woman are the most frequently encountered. Although these archetypes are described as if they are separate and delineated in actuality, they overlap and are never this clear. To quote

Marie Louise von Franz “The archetypes do not swim around in the collective unconscious like pieces of bread in a soup, but rather they are the whole soup at every point and therefore always appear in specific mixtures.”<sup>13</sup>

Not only do the archetypes overlap and interconnect with one another but they also each have positive and negative manifestations. The understanding and acceptance of this polarity plays an important role in the process of individuation.

A few years ago, I attended a course on Japanese calligraphy, taught by a master calligrapher. Our first assignment was to draw circles with brush and ink. We all struggled in our attempts to make the perfect Zen circle. After letting us sweat over this for about an hour, the instructor had us sit around and comment on our “best:” circles. As each member of the class described what they liked about their circle, it became clear that we were all striving for the roundest, most spontaneous experience of circle perfection. Finally, the master calligrapher spoke to us about the exercise. The exercise was not about making the best circle, he explained, it was about wholeness. Wholeness contains not only what we like but also what we do not like. It is about the white paper as much as the black ink and our wiggly, nervous lines as well as the smooth strokes.

Like the attitude of the master calligrapher, working with the archetypes requires the presence of mind to be aware and not engulfed by the reality of the opposites. For instance, the conscious mind often idealizes the archetype of the mother, when, in reality that archetype has a more unsavory side, the dark, devouring mother as well as the nurturing goddess. On the other hand, the shadow archetype is frequently thought of as negative, being the repository of unwanted and unaccepted qualities in ourselves. But the shadow has another side, where hidden gifts and abilities may lie dormant until the shadow is confronted.

The awareness of the archetypes and their opposing nature, allows the individual to gain more strength and stability as he accepts the reality of conflict and paradox within the psyche. Symbols from dreams and visions as well as symbolic language and gestures can point to where conflict exists. And, a therapist trained in observing the symbolic realm can help the individual overcome her resistance to the inevitable conflict. Acceptance and reconciliation of the reality of the opposites within the personality is an arduous process, because each time the ego is confronted with what was previously unacceptable, it struggles to maintain it’s former point of view. This creates inner conflict, turmoil and

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even depression. When the individual finally integrates the conflict, acceptance leads to an expansion of awareness and a broadening of the personality. This ongoing expansion combined with the development of the individual personality is a natural process that Jung called individuation. Although Jung explored and named the process, individuation, it is not unique to Jungian analysis. It is a natural development that occurs in many ways through various paths. The tendency is an inborn potential within every human being, but it is only through conscious pursuance that the potential will manifest. It is like enlightenment – the Zen concept of enlightenment. – Something that cannot be found because it is a sudden and spontaneous expression of what is already there. But it comes only to those who spend the time and effort looking for it.

By working with the symbolic realm, it is possible to shine some light on this process and to support others in their development. It is not easy, however, because most cultures today rely heavily if not completely on rational thinking as the primary form of investigating reality. Because of this bias, it is easy to dismiss the realm of symbolism and its paradoxical nature.

If we understand the nature of the archetype and it's relationship to the archetypal symbol, we can then begin to understand the relationship of the archetype to human suffering and disease. The archetype is simply itself but the relationship of the ego personality to it is of utmost importance for the health of the individual. This relationship can be seen in the complexes of the individual. A complex is bundle of emotionally charged ideas with an archetypal core. When activated, it upsets the usual psychic balance and functioning of an individual. The question is not that we have those complexes but how many and how activated they are. Our complexes are our "buttons" that are often being pushed, an idea and experience that is now unique to Jungian psychology but was originally discovered and named by Jung. What is unique about the Jungian approach to the complex is the understanding that the complex has at its core, an archetype. This means that even though the complex itself is individual at its core it is connected to the collective unconscious and archetypal symbolism.

The complex becomes a working model for understanding the dynamics of the whole person and the role of archetypal symbolism in his life. This symbolism is most easily seen in dreams and fantasies but is also present in the symbolism of bodily symptoms and sensitivities and in emotional symptoms such as fears and phobias. Symbolic manifestations of the archetype spontaneously arise during times of stress or mental breakdown when the complex is most

activated. The archetypal image often indicates that the individual is experiencing difficulty connected to a basic human problem, such as finding meaning in their life or relating to the reality of the existence of evil.

The following is an example of archetypal symbolism appearing throughout a person's life and how recognition of that symbolism helped to find a homeopathic remedy that assisted her in her healing process. M is a very intelligent and creative woman in her 60's who has had a history of psychotic episodes. At this point in her life, she is interested in becoming as healthy as she can be. The feeling of being dissatisfied because she is misunderstood runs through her story. She has had trouble with her eyes from an early age and is now legally blind. At her first eye exam in her 40's; the doctor said she had the eyes of an 85-year-old woman. Her dialogue reflects some interesting symbolism.

*"I must have seen a lot. I have looked through microscopes, video cameras, and computers. The first time I looked through the microscope, I saw the cosmos in the tissue slide I was looking at.*

*I'm developing a course in mind, body, spirit Interface. It's all about the order of the universe, fractals, and connections. I like to think my name stands for Minerva who is the goddess of wisdom and crafts. She wove and spun. My first movie was about spinning and weaving.*

*When I was 31 I slipped into a psychotic state. I was working with a very esoteric group in group therapy – they felt I was slipping away –they brought me to a psychiatrist. My pupils were dilated. They put me on Thorazine.*

*I talk- but I don't feel that I am being heard. So I started studying communication. Then became interested in film.*

*A year later I met my second husband, we worked together. But the relationship was difficult – the feeling of rejection was overwhelming. This marriage ended- I went to a Richean therapist- it opened all kinds of doors – but I became psychotic again.*

*Nine years later I was again given Thorazine and hospitalized.*

*I am now married to my third husband. He doesn't understand me. I don't feel he is really sympathetic to who I really am. I'm cheerful on the outside – deep sense of sadness inside.*

*Mom was tough and tough on me. Very strict. She hit me. I was told I was too sensitive, cried too easily. Mom would always say how much she loved me but never let me express myself. After my first marriage ended – I wanted to come home but Mom wouldn't let me.*

*In my dreams I am always traveling- always in transit- always alone. Hard to make connections.*

*Once when I was hospitalized, I found this ball of black wool and I had a compulsion to weave it around the chair in my room. That black wool was so iridescent.”*

She refers to spinning and weaving several times; she even made a film about spinning and weaving. When hospitalized during one of her psychotic episodes, she wove black yarn around a chair in her room. The yarn appeared iridescent to her. These remind one of a spider spinning her web. She even refers to her self as Minerva. Minerva, also known as Athena or Pallas, is a goddess of ancient Greek mythology.

The myth of the goddess Minerva includes a story about the maiden, Arachne, who had such skill in the arts of weaving and embroidery that the nymphs themselves would leave their groves and fountains to gaze upon her work. Those who saw her work said that she must have been taught by Minerva herself. However, Arachne was vain about her weaving and could not bear to think of being a pupil, even to a goddess. She challenged Minerva to a contest in weaving. Minerva was very displeased by all of this and disguised as an old woman came down to earth and warned Arachne not to challenge her. *“Challenge your fellow mortals,”* she said, *“but do not compete with a goddess. Ask her forgiveness for your defiance and if she is merciful she will forgive you.”*

Now, this is fair warning from the goddess about the dangers of hubris. Only those with excessive pride and ambition challenge the gods and goddesses and it usually leads to their downfall. A warning against hubris is warning of the dangers of identification with the archetype. Human beings are not archetypal energies; they are and must remain earth bound and ego bound to some extent. Living in the archetypal realm of the gods is dangerous to the human condition. Unconscious identification with an archetype is an overpowering experience for the ego and leads to possession by the archetype. In extreme cases, this can lead to psychosis. In M's situation, each time she moved too deeply into the archetypal realm she had a psychotic break. She, like Arachne unknowingly commits the crime of hubris, steps over into the archetypal realm of the gods and becomes possessed by them. The story of Arachne continues.

*Arachne did not heed the warning of the old woman. She stopped her spinning and turned to the old woman. “I am not afraid of the goddess, let her try her skill, if she dare.” At this point Minerva drops her disguise and stands in full regalia in front of Arachne. The nymphs and bystanders bowed in*

*reverence but Arachne maintained her foolish resolve to challenge the goddess. They proceeded to the contest.*

*Each of them sat at their loom and began their work. Their hands move skillfully and lightly, the excitement of the contest moving hands and shuttles easily. The colors of the wool are as the rainbows formed by sunbeams reflected from mist.*

In the height of a psychotic break, M. wove black wool around a chair in the hospital. She experienced it as beautifully iridescent just as the wool in the weavings of Arachne and Minerva, the sun shining on the weavings reflecting the colors of the rainbow.

*Minerva wove into her web the scene of twelve heavenly powers and her contest with Neptune. She depicted herself and a war goddess with helmet and armor. In the four corners of the weaving were representations of incidents illustrating the anger of the gods when mortals presumed to challenge them. These were meant as warnings to Arachne to give up the contest before it was too late.*

*Arachne covered her web with designs chosen to show the failings and errors of the gods. It was beautifully depicted but irreverent and arrogant. Minerva could not help but admire the work but felt indignant at the insult. She struck Arachne's weaving with her shuttle, tearing it into pieces. She then touched Arachne's forehead with the shuttle making her feel guilt and shame. Arachne could not endure it, went, and hanged herself.*

*Minerva pitied her as she saw her suspended by her rope. She brought her to life by sprinkling her with Aconite and turning her into a spider. Arachne continues to live, spinning her thread and, often, hanging suspended, as she was when Minerva touched her and transformed her into a spider.<sup>4</sup>*

According to Massimo Mangialavori, the web weaving spider, *Aranea diadema*, is a remedy for people who need to define their own identity. The idea of not having been understood and appreciated for what and who they are is more predominant in this remedy than in other spiders. Unfortunately, they are searching for support in their own family that

has shown to be unable to help them and even worse, they have the tendency to reproduce this lack of understanding and help in their own relationships, falling in love with people that show a very similar behavior to that of their primary care givers. They find themselves in a position where they fight for identity in front of a family and society that never even recognized them as an individual person.<sup>5</sup>

Because of her many associations to weaving and to the archetype of the spider along with her feelings of being misunderstood, M is given *Aranea diadema*.

After a few months on the remedy, her confidence and feeling of dissatisfaction at being misunderstood were greatly improved. She has not had any psychotic breaks and is moving forward with her work over the last two years. She now has better relationships and no longer feels that people have to understand her completely. The result of her homeopathic treatment is best explained in her own words.

*“Since I took the remedy, I’ve been walking on the bottom of my own pond. My relationship with my husband is more peaceful- I know that he doesn’t have to understand everything.*

*Sometimes my thoughts had become too big for this little body. I’m learning not to get so abstract. My breakdowns were always very creative. They were brought about by a huge amount of rage – rage caused by the feeling that trust was betrayed. I don’t have that component any more now. I can feel the joy of being in touch with very deep spaces in myself. Previously, I tried to do things that I couldn’t accomplish.”*

### **Relationship to the Archetype**

Perception of what needs to be healed in an individual is of paramount importance in any healing relationship. We cannot proceed in any healing modality without some idea of the goal of the therapy. The truth of the matter, however, is that it takes a lot of time and work on the part of the therapist and the patient to reach the core of what needs to be healed. In M’s situation, we have some strong clues in her association to Minerva, the goddess of spinning and weaving, and to the specific story of the contest between Minerva and Arachne. Finally, we have the symbolism of the spider that was the homeopathic remedy that helped her.

The myth of Minerva is that she sprang fully armored from the head of Zeus. This is similar to creative work that springs forth from the collective unconscious fully formed. It is a kind of higher logic. This type of creativity is a gift and at the same time a great difficulty for the individual upon whom the gift has been bestowed. Working with the gifted individual requires an understanding of her particular dilemma. M is an extremely creative person who, like many creative people, felt that people did not appreciate and understand what she was trying to communicate. The dilemma in these cases is that often what they have to say is new and unfamiliar to those around them. It takes a lot of ego strength to feel comfortable with the reality that many, if not the entire society, will reject your ideas. The challenge is to continue creative exploration in spite of the rejection.

More specifically related to M is the story of Minerva and Arachne, especially the weaving and the spider. The spider appears in the creation myths of many cultures. In the American southwest Navaho creation myth, Grandmother Spider Woman spins all life from the shimmering threads in her belly. Spinning and weaving is traditionally a feminine art and many goddesses are shown spinning and weaving the universe. Plato had a dream of great goddess Ananke, "Necessity," spinning the universe; the sun, moon, and planets were her spindle's whorls; sirens sang through the webs of time and fate that she wove, and souls endlessly moved through the strands on their way to and from death and rebirth.

The ancient Vedic philosophy of India suggests that it was a spider that wove the veil of illusion that conceals the Supreme Reality. In West Africa, Anansi, the spider, prepared the material from which the first humans were made and created the Sun, the Moon and the stars. The spider web relates to the idea of the web of life that represents the interconnectedness and inter-dependence of all things. M. has always had that kind of vision. Her challenge has been to integrate it into her individual, ego bound self in such a way that she can continue to function in this world.

The art of perceiving the individual's connection to an archetype requires that the therapist understands the unique way that the personal material of the complex relates to the archetypal core. It also requires an understanding of the uniqueness of the time in which the individual is living. Different eras have different challenges and archetypal symbolism becomes enriched with changes in human development. Understanding the relationship between the personal and the archetypal within the era it is experienced gives an appreciation of new ideas and developments emerging from each individual life. It also helps to put the complexity of disease and healing into a different perspective.

In M's case, the spider and its web relates to the archetype of wholeness, a central unifying archetype that Jung called the Self. More specifically, we are dealing with the archetype of the Self in a feminine form, as the creative goddess spinning the web of the universe. At times, M's mind would go so far into the reality of this archetype that she could not contain it. It was at those times that she would experience a psychotic break. In a situation like this, the most important help that can be given is to strengthen the individual ego self so that it can withstand this level of reality. It is also important to break the inappropriate enthrallment with the archetypal realm.

Fascination with the archetypal realm is very dangerous. In the myth, Arachne is warned by Minerva not to challenge the gods. Another way of saying this is not to play with the gods. Humans must remain in the human sphere. If we stray too far into the world of the gods, there is great danger of losing one's human self. In unconscious identification with an archetype, one is in danger of becoming possessed by the archetype and losing one's autonomy. There is also the possibility of becoming either over inflated or demolished by an energy that is impossible for an individual to contain.

The goal is to improve the awareness of the ego self in relationship to the archetype. In doing so, it is possible to be in relationship to the archetype and understand that the realm of the gods belongs to the gods. We can then learn to operate with our feet on the ground and one eye on the heavens. The gods are willing to assist us as long as we understand our place.

M was at first too deeply identified with the archetypal realm. Her challenge was to ground herself more deeply in the here and now. For others, who are more earthbound, connection with the timeless realm of the collective unconscious can create a new perspective on life. This connection sometimes comes in unexpected ways and can be delivered by unusual messengers.

A while back, some friends were sitting around the fireplace in my living room, when Jim, who is an artist and environmentalist, told us an interesting story. About ten years ago, he was camping in a remote area and came upon a moss-covered rock with what looked like a painting of a frog on it. The moss had formed in such a way that it looked like a frog sitting in the middle of a fire. He was so impressed with this that he made a drawing of it but didn't think much more about it until our discussion.

I was aware enough of the parallel between Jim's frog picture and the alchemical drawings of salamanders surrounded by fire to know that this was symbolic of a transformational process. Jim and I talked about it for a while. He related it to his environmental concerns, thinking that, perhaps it was a sign about frogs being wiped out by environmental pollutions. I asked him to look further into his own relationship to the frog in the fire. Was this a message from the collective unconscious stimulating a much-needed transformation? We didn't come to any answer, just more questions.

In working with archetypes and the symbolic realm, coming up with more questions is a good thing. The worst thing we can do is to pin things down too quickly. Jim was interested enough in the symbol to continue mulling it over and came to the decision that what he wanted to do was to draw the frog again and have it tattooed onto his body.

Tattooing is a way that many societies have used meaningful symbols for hundreds of years. The symbol becomes a permanent and integral part of the body, thus linking the body to the archetypal realm through the sacred symbol or totem.

I didn't hear from him for a while, but he did get his tattoo because a few months later he very excitedly told me the following story. He went to an old friend of his who is a tattoo artist. The tattoo artist loved his drawing and, being familiar with Jim's other artwork, suggested that his style would lend itself very well to tattoo. The result of all this was that Jim gave up a job working in an office and started working as a tattoo artist. He is spending a lot more of his time on his artwork now, drawing on human easels as well as paper and canvas.

Jim opened himself to the symbol of the frog in the fire, a symbol of the heat of the transformation process that is necessary for alchemical change. In doing this, he also opened himself up to his own creativity and the expression of his art. The finding of the rock with the image of a frog was an example of synchronicity, that mysterious connection between the personal psyche and the material world. It served as a messenger that, when given its due, served as a vehicle for change.

Messages from the symbolic realm are all around us. They appear in nature, in dreams and visions and in bodily symptoms. Too often, they are judged with the rational mind and the precious gift is ignored. We tend to consider ourselves beyond what our inner nature gives freely and believe that answers come only from some man-made, institutionalized source outside of ourselves. The result of ignoring messages from the deeper realms of the psyche, the basis of the interconnectedness between man and nature, is already taking its toll on the health of our bodies and the state

of this planet. It is time to move into the next stage of our development and elegantly integrate rational, scientific advances with the wisdom of the ages that can be found in the symbolic realm of the archetypes.

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## Chapter Four

### Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious

<sup>1</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Man and His Symbols* (New York: Doubleday, First published in 1964), 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> C. G. Jung, *Collected Works 8, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 140.

<sup>3</sup> Marie Louise von Franz, *Psyche and Matter* (Boston: Shambala Publications, 1992), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book VI, Pallas et Arachne, lines 1-213.

<sup>5</sup> Massimo Mangialavori, M.D. and David Warkentin, PA, *Spider Remedies*, Thema, Multimedia DVD.