OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART

The SACRED ROUND

Mandalas by the Patients of Carl Jung

The Oglethorpe University Museum of Art is extremely grateful that the Curatorium of the C.G. Jung Institute in Küsnacht, Switzerland, most graciously has permitted this large selection of precious images to travel so far away from home and has allowed this exhibit to set a precedent.

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"The best art communicates subconsciously without the use of language."

Lloyd Nick

INTRODUCTION

For years I have believed that art is a vehicle for healing. Being trained as an artist and having had years of teaching experience in the studio and art history, I knew that historically, culture has always focused on the spiritual. The best art communicates subconsciously without the use of language. We know that drawing and painting are basic to each of us, and we express ourselves in art before we can speak. Our creative essence needs to be expressed.

When I became founding director of the Oglethorpe University Museum of Art (originally the Oglethorpe University Art Gallery), I decided that one part of the mission statement would reflect the spiritual dimension of art. With that in mind, I was intrigued by the experience of Carl Jung and some of his patients who created art in the form of mandalas as a way of expressing aspects of the inner life.

The idea for the "The Sacred Round: Mandalas by the Patients of Carl Jung," the spring 2012 exhibition, began in the fall of 1995. In December of that year, I went to the Picture Archives of the C.G. Jung Institute Zürich, Küsnacht, with my wife, Vanya, who had introduced me to Carl Jung's ideas. We were shown more than 20 mandalas by Jung's patients. This was a profound experience. Impressed and moved by the quality and the interpretations presented to us, I made a formal request to exhibit some of the works in our museum. Soon, however, I was informed that the Jung family was not agreeable to the idea for undisclosed reasons. There was some speculation, but nothing concrete was understood.

Not wanting to give up on what I thought was a good concept for an exhibition, I met with several Jungian analysts in Atlanta upon my return, including William Willeford and Susan Olson, but we could not come up with a solution. It didn't appear that the prospective exhibition could become a reality.

The idea had gestated for nearly two decades when I was appointed to the board of the Jung Society of Atlanta and brought up the idea again at the first meeting I attended. Cathy Shepherd later told me that she knew someone who could possibly be helpful, Dr. Jutta von Buchholtz, a Jungian analyst from Birmingham, Alabama. Cathy arranged a meeting for the three of us in Atlanta. Jutta immediately became excited about the concept of the exhibition and believed she could be instrumental in establishing a channel of communication with several individuals at the institute. She became dynamically proactive, contacting Robert Hinshaw, vice-president of the C.G. Jung Institute and in charge of the archives. He reacted very positively also and became another crucial link in the fruition of this project.

Vicente de Moura, the institute's current archivist, was highly supportive, responsive, and critically helpful with his professional advice as well.

Ultimately, it is my hope and intention that the experience will encourage us to look within, explore further, and discover the mysteries tucked away in our own unconscious.

Lloyd Nick

Director,
Oglethorpe University Museum of Art,
Atlanta, Georgia

Mandalas of the Picture Archives of the C.G. Jung Institute Zürich, Küsnacht

Vicente L. de Moura, Curator

The Picture Archives of the C.G. Jung Institute were created during Jung's last years. The archives are open to students, analysts, and all those interested in Jungian psychology. Jung had a complex and very dynamic relationship to the visual arts. To this day, he remains the only major psychologist to have painted and made drawings and sculptures as part of his own inner development. From 1917 on, he actively encouraged many of his patients to create images of their dreams and fantasies. The reason was that Jung realized that this approach helped his patients to confront the unconscious and to grasp the symbolic material.

C.G. Jung Institute psychologist Jolande Jacobi translates these inner journeys in a collection of almost 4,000 images from Jung's patients and almost 6,000 images from her own patients.

The first dated images of the archives are from 1917 and extend over a period of some 40 years. The clients who made these images, around 100 men and women from different countries, were in analysis with Jung himself or with some of Jung's collaborators. Jung did not like the idea of leaving clients without their image, so he asked them to paint the same image twice. In this way, Jung could keep one copy.

Later, Jacobi systematized the images, cataloging them according to topics and terms that are helpful for recognizing the archetypal symbolism behind the figures. She also enriched the collection by adding the images made by her own patients. The goal of the collection was, and still is, to support the students of Jungian psychology in their learning about picture interpretation and archetypal symbolism.

While looking at these images, you may see what Jung saw, picture by picture, and thus gain a better understanding of how many of his ideas and concepts were developed. The images have been used for research, lectures, and articles, and even simply to find inspiration and connection to the unconscious.

ABOUT MANDALAS

In Sanskrit, *mandala* means "circle" or "holy circle." Observing a mandala, we cannot help but feel that the image communicates with us at a very deep level.

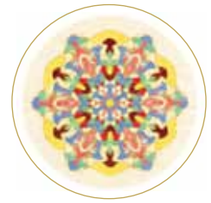
The image usually evokes a sense of order and balance in us. It defines what is inside and what is outside, and it usually embraces the different aspects and elements of the psyche of the painter.

Nowadays painting mandalas in Western societies is used for meditation, for inner balance, or even just for fun. But when someone paints a mandala, regardless whether he or she does so consciously, he or she is repeating a procedure that has parallels in human experience, because historically, it is a spontaneous attempt to achieve order.

A mandala unfolds its effect when someone paints and/or contemplates it. Because they are universal, mandalas are present in religious temples, in art and paintings, and in figures of all cultures throughout the ages. Particularly in India and Tibet, mandalas are important images for meditation techniques.

It was exactly this effect that called Jung's attention to mandalas. In his practical work as a psychiatrist, Jung observed that many of his patients, particularly after anxiety crises or even after psychotic phases, painted this particular shape. The mandala is commonly painted in a regular schema: a geometrical form, like a square or triangle, surrounded by a circle. This kind of painting had a calming effect upon the patients.

By reading *The Red Book,* in which Jung documented his confrontation with the images of the unconscious, we can understand the therapeutic effect that mandalas had upon him as well. According to Sonu Shamdasani, the editor of the recently published *Red Book*, the first mandalas painted by Jung in 1916 led him to realize that the process he was following was leading to a goal, to the center of his psyche, to an inner balance. It was the mandalas that helped Jung to the realization of the Self.



What Jung meant is that the psyche pursues a goal with such an image to find balance, to integrate opposites, and finally to achieve psychic wholeness. Psychic totality clearly does not mean perfection; rather, it is the fulfillment of the potential with which a person is born. Although the potential of inner balance is present in us from birth, and the psyche gives us the images for it, the achievement of balance depends upon the attitude of our ego. How we relate to these images makes all the difference.

In his writings, Jung showed us that the psyche has its own means of coping with life, and each of us must decide if and how we will follow our unique path. The message of the psychology of Jung stresses the importance of paying attention to the images in one's own psyche.

The collection of mandalas presented in this exhibition shows the paths some of Jung's clients pursued. Careful observation of the mandalas allows us to have a look into their creators' inner lives. Images are presented, when known, in chronological order. We can observe that the mandalas appeared as attempts to provide order in a psychological phase of the life of the painter.

The images other than mandalas painted by the patients show us additional elements present in their psyche. They communicate to us about conflict and hope, about challenge and struggle, about damnation and redemption—issues all of us can relate to.

I would like to mention that the information about the images was collected and organized by Dr. Cecilia Rost, a former curator of the Picture Archives. Without her patient and detailed work, it would not have been possible to present the material in the way it is given here.

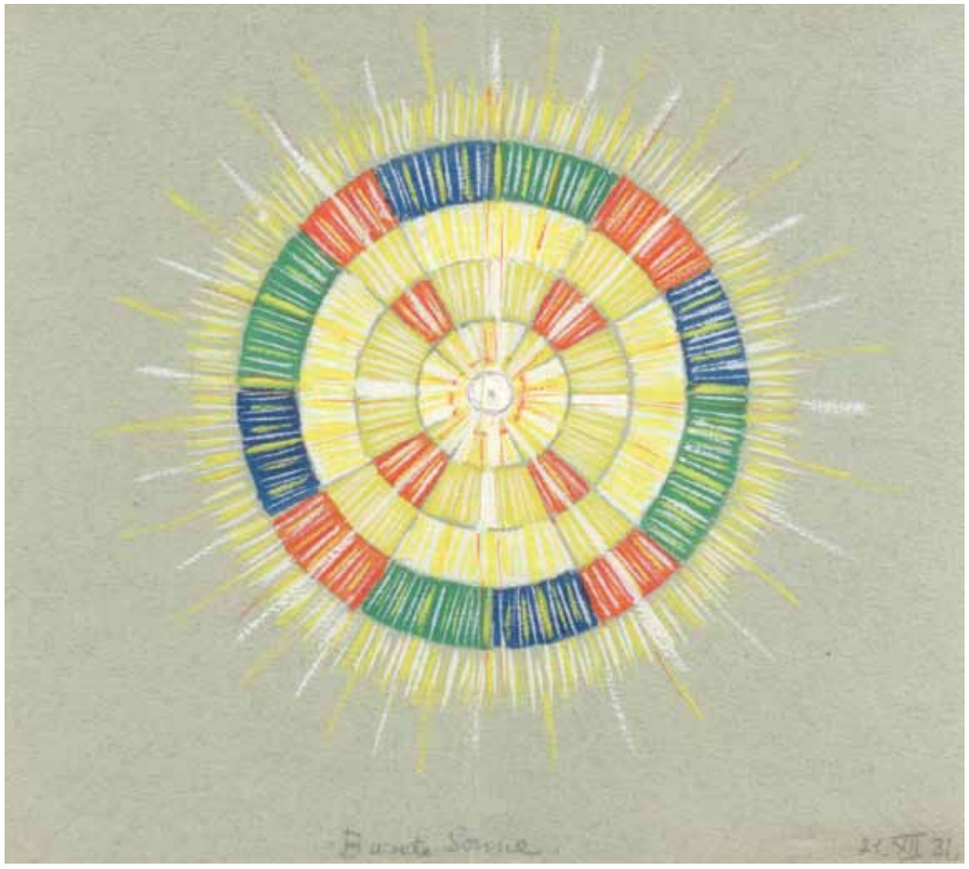
These are the nationalities of the patients:
Case 002 - most probably German
Case 008 - most probably American
Case 016 - American
Case 019 - Dutch (born in Indonesia)
Case 025 - American

"Jung remains the only major psychologist to have painted and made drawings and sculptures as part of his own inner development."

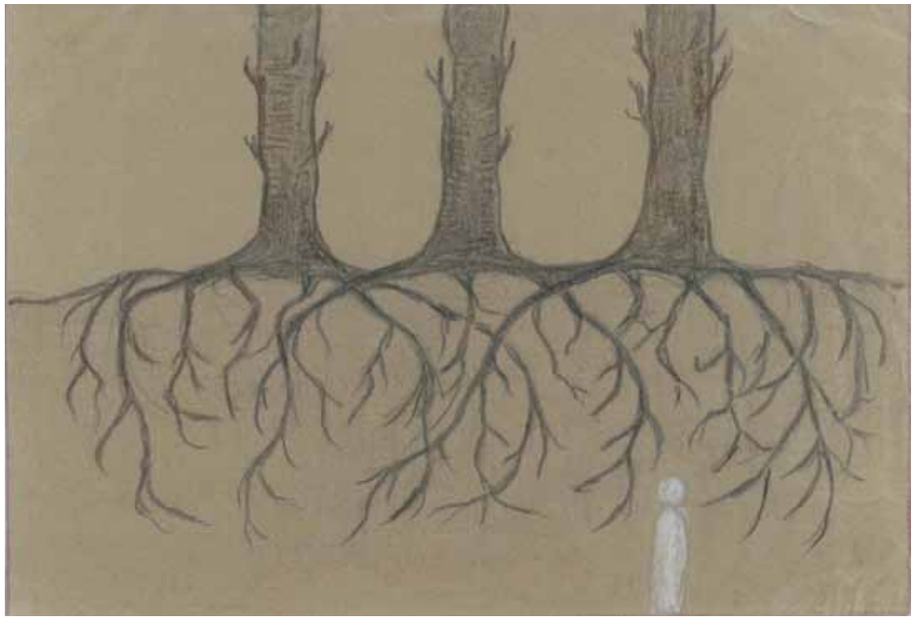
Case 002

In this exhibition, we have 15 images from this painter, case 002. Unfortunately, little is known about this client. What is known is that this person who painted more than 200 images—apparently over a period of 12 years—was a woman. She often wrote on the reverse side of her images (titles and sometimes comments, possibly explanations for her analyst).

Her language was German, and she was possibly living in Germany, at least around 1937/1938. Upon publication of one of her images in the *Collected Works* (henceforth CW), Professor Jung referred to her as "a middle-aged woman patient" (vol. 9, part 1, "Concerning Mandala Symbolism," fig. 15). In addition, in notes on the reverse side of one of her images, she refers to an analysis with "Heyer" (March–June 1935). This could possibly be Dr. G. R. Heyer, from Munich. The images we have from this analysand date from the period between 1927 and 1939.



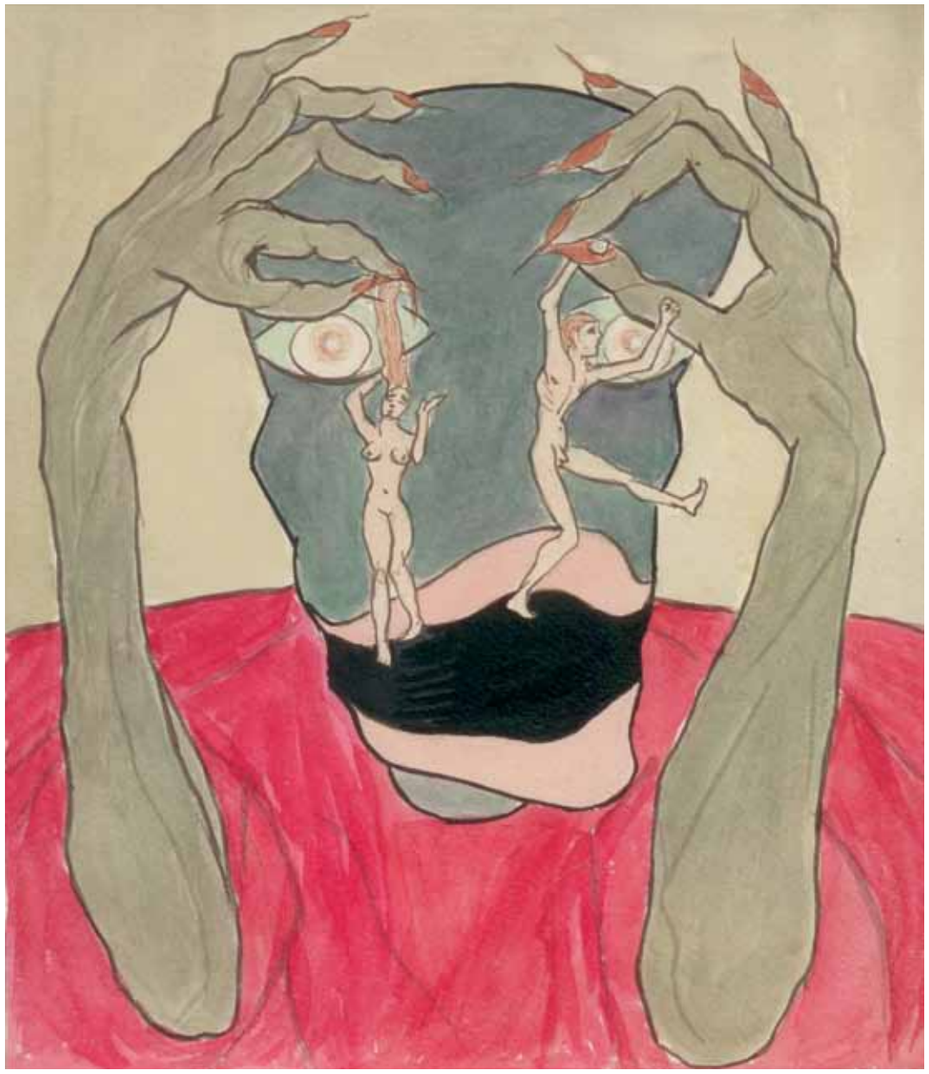
002 - ABAC: *Bunte Sonne (Colorful Sun)*



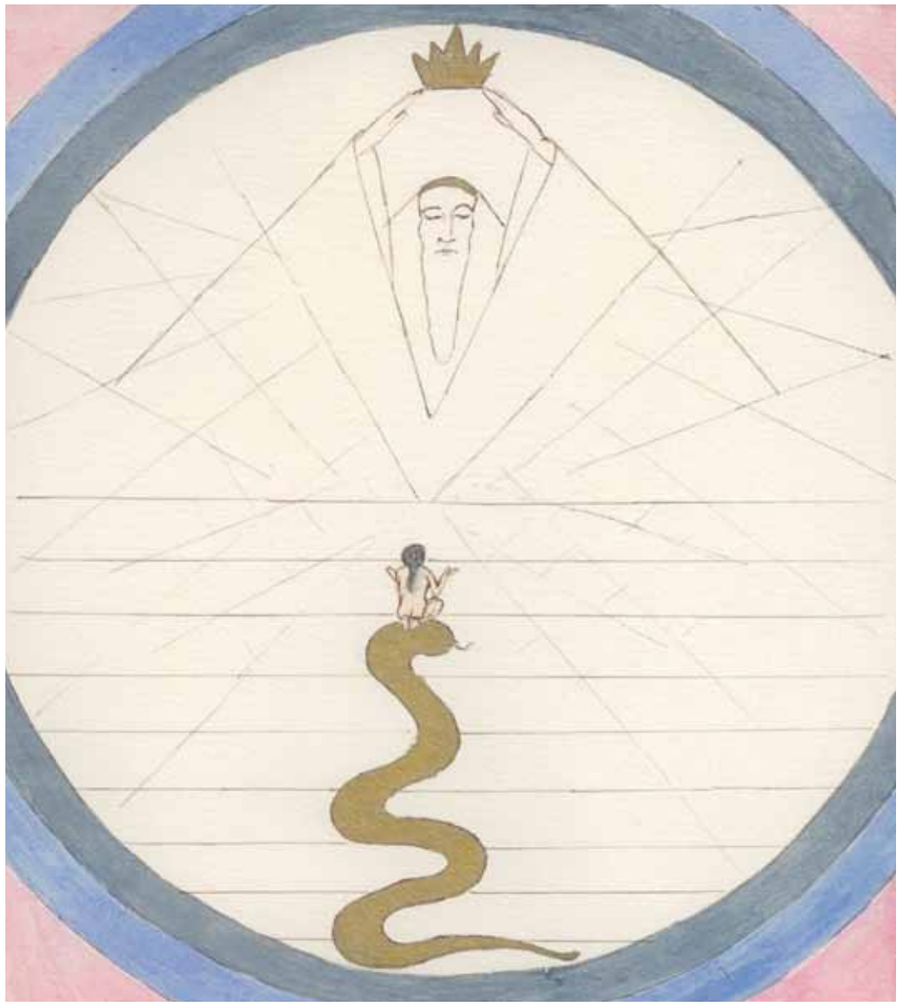
002 - ABAG: *Vision im August 1932 (A Vision during August 1932)*

Comments of the analysand: "Ich sah einen Baum unter der Erde, mit dicken, festen Wurzeln. Es war alles Erde. Drei grosse Stämme wuchsen aus den Wurzeln ins Licht. Ich war ganz unten in der braunen Erde bei den knorrigen Wurzeln."

("I saw a tree under the earth, with thick, firm roots. Everything was earth. Three large trunks grew from the roots into the light. I was way down there in the brown soil with the gnarly roots.")



002 - ABAM: No title

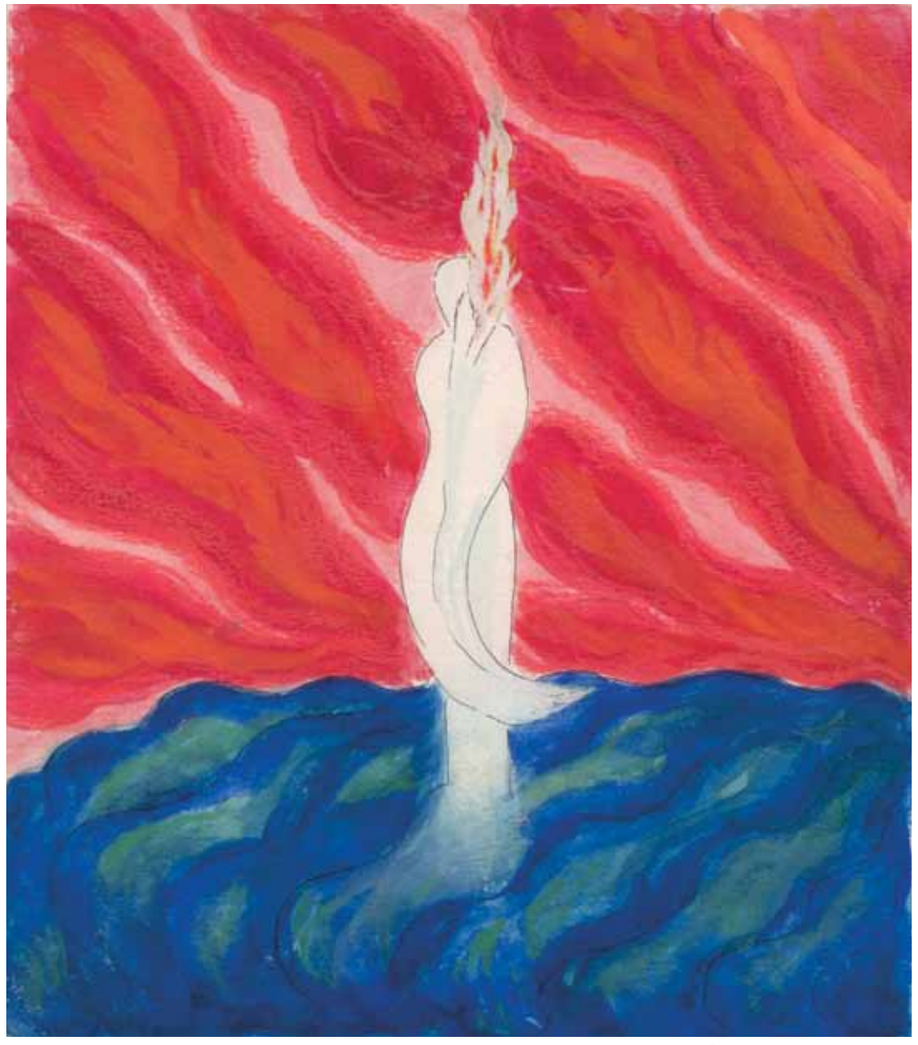


002 - ABAN: No title

002 - ABAV: No title

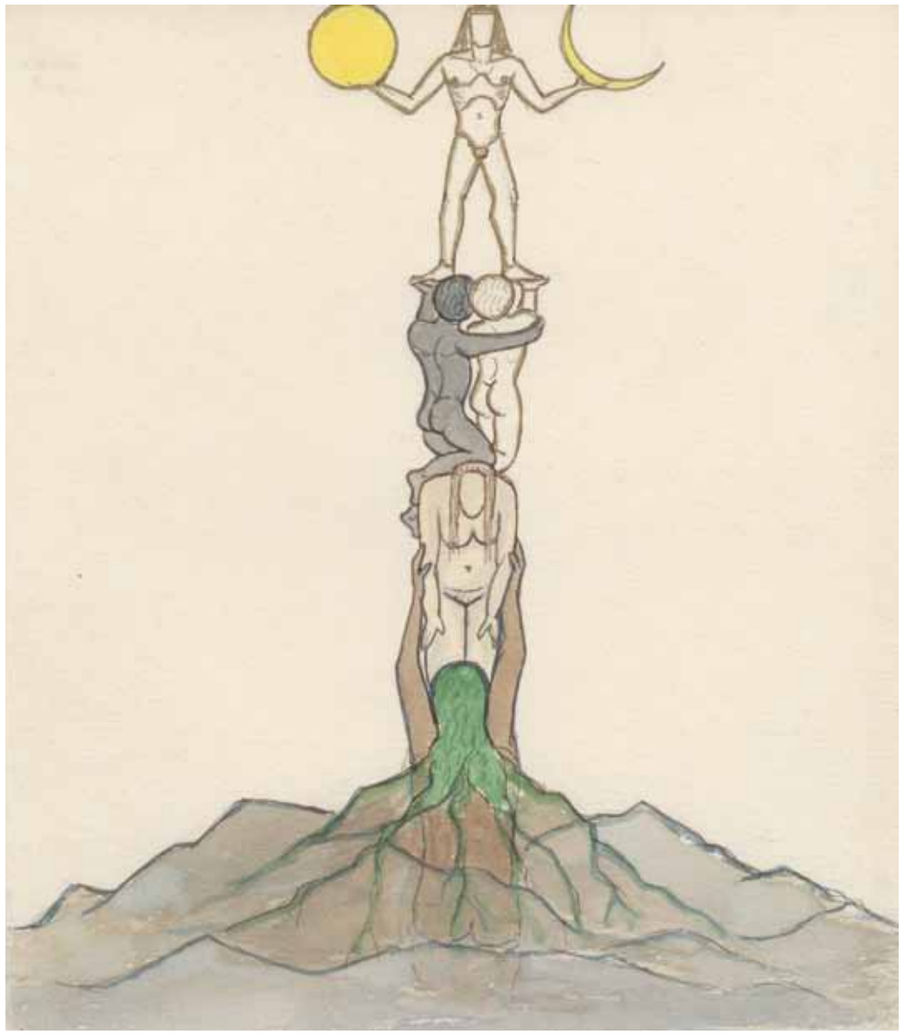
002 - ABAW: No title

002 - ABCF: No title



002 - ABCG: No title

002 - ABCS: No title



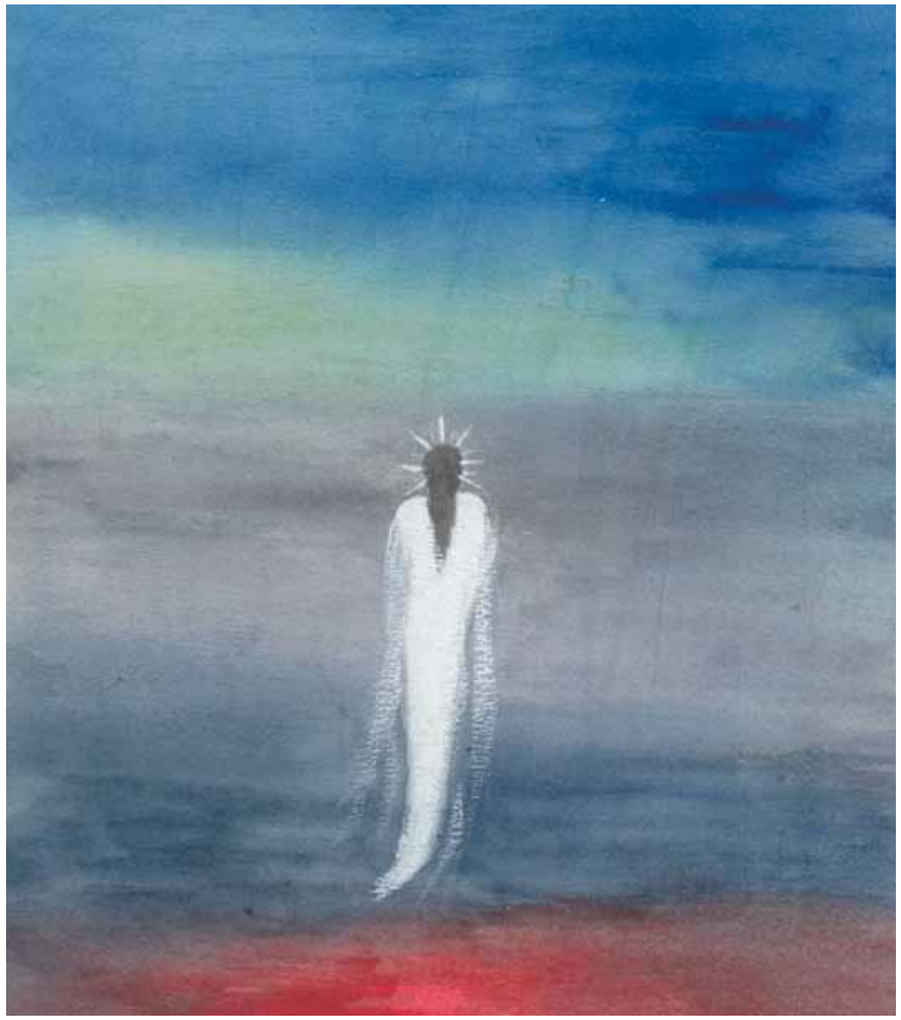
002 - ABDN: *Entwicklungsstadien: zum Ich; über d. Gegensätze, zum Selbst (Toward the Ego; by Way of the Opposites to the Self)*

The three terms *(Ich, Gegensätze, and Selbst)* are in the original text superimposed in three lines, with *zum Ich* as the top line. The full title is *Entwicklungsstadien von der grossen Mutter (MHULADHARA?)*. It is written in pencil on the reverse side of the page. The first word is underlined and constitutes the first line of the writings.

002 - ABDO: No title

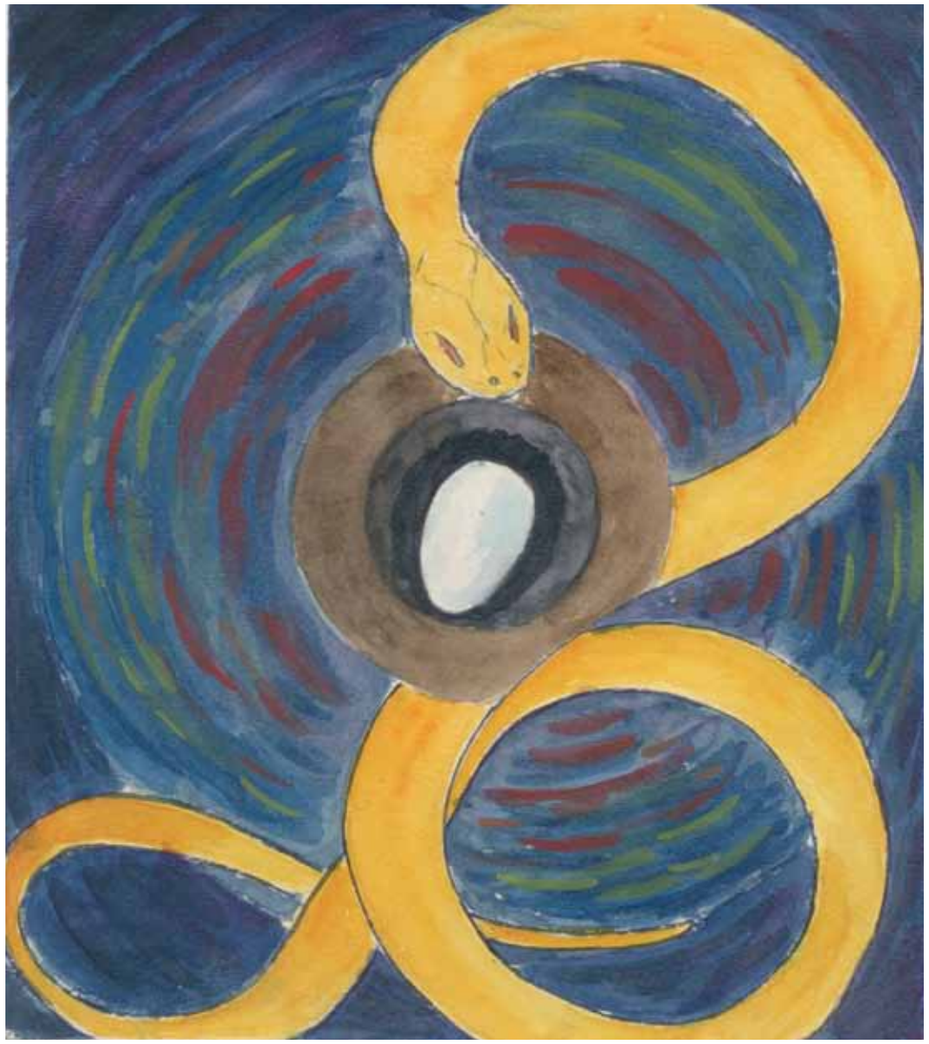
002 - ABDW: *Das Erwachen der Götter (Awakening of the Gods)*

002 - ABDX: *Geburt des Lichtes (The Birth of Light)*



002 - ABEK: *Die Seele wandert durch verschiedene "Schichten" der Erlebnisse (The Soul Wanders through a Variety of Layers of Experiencing)*

Case 002 *continued...*



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002 - ABEL: *Aus einem Traum am Anfang Juni: "Geburt eines Eies"*
(Dream Image from Early June: "Birth of an Egg")

Note: The comments of the analysand are written on the reverse side of the pages.

Case 008

In the archives we have 14 images by this woman, 6 of which are presented in this exhibition. However, considering the way she herself numbered her images, we can assume that she produced more paintings than we have.

Jung, who published most of these images himself, describes her in the *Collected Works* (vol. 9, pt. 1) as "a woman of sixty, artistically gifted," and also says that "she had no knowledge of alchemy." Her comments on the reverse side of the images are in English, and the orthography and style seem to indicate that she was American.

All of these 14 images were published. Jung says, "the individuation process, long blocked but released by the treatment, stimulated her creative activity . . . and gave rise to a series of happily colored images which eloquently expresses the intensity of her experience." The fact that we hold only those images that were published can perhaps be explained: these were probably the only images given to Jung.

The source of the images (dream, fantasy, automatic drawing) was indicated in some cases by the painter herself, either as part of the title or in the comments.

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008 - AHAC: No title

Comments of the analysand: "Assoc.—the hatching of the egg."

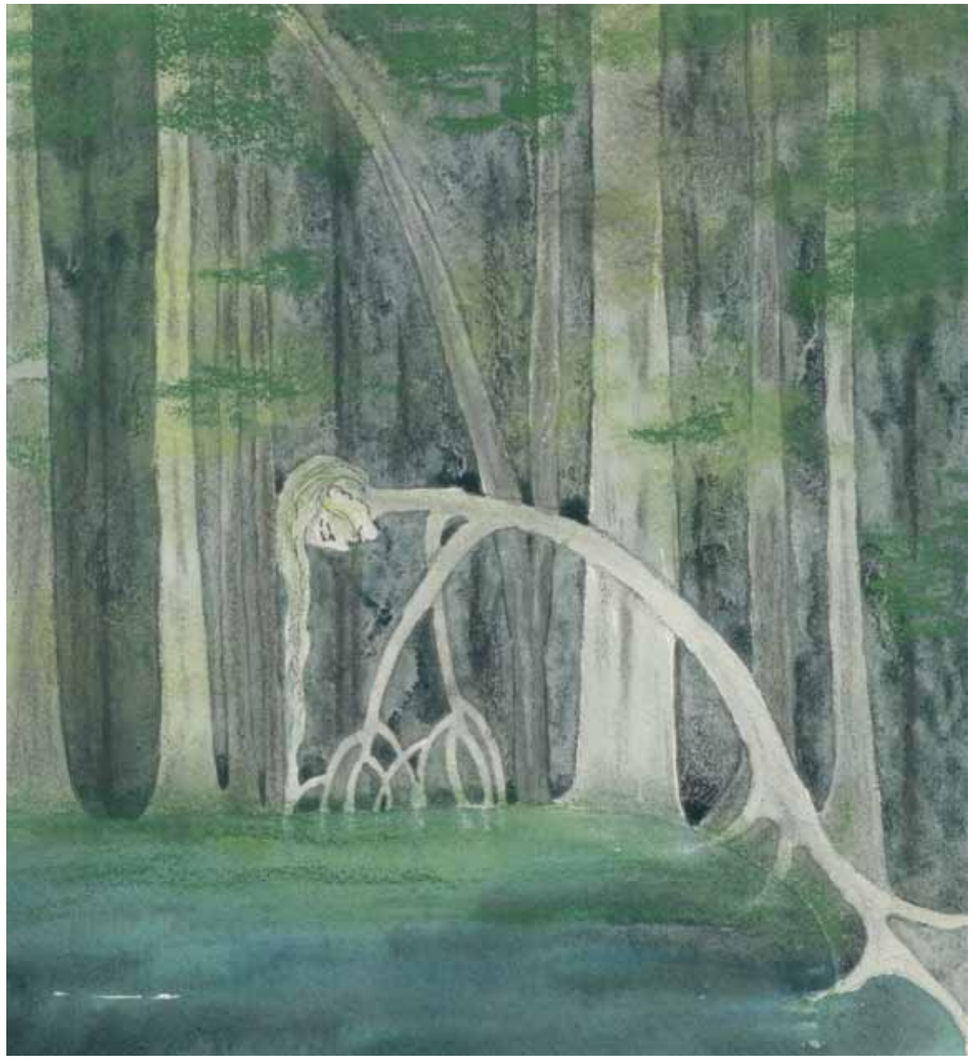
008 - AHAD: *The First Tree of Life from the Egg*

008 - AHAE: *Phantasy*

008 - AHAF: *Automatic Drawing*

Comments of the analysand: "Assoc.—I feel as tho' the libido were beginning to stir—there is movement in the mind—fire and water."

These comments are written in black ink (they are difficult to read because they are already fading) on the reverse side of the mounting sheet below the title.



008 - AHAH: *Dream*

Comments of the analysand: "The witch had been in the swamp so long—that her feet were rooted and her back was bent—but she could still move her fingers in the water—and stir up the poisonous [odors?]."

These comments are written in black ink on the reverse side of the page, under the title.

008 - AHAJ: No title

Jung published this client's images in various books, including the following:

The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Vol. 9, pt. 1 of *The Collected Works* (Bollingen series), translated by R. F. C. Hull. New York: Pantheon Books, 1959.

"Über Mandalasymbolik" ("Concerning Mandala Symbolism"). *In Die Archetypen und das kollektive Unbewußte*. Zürich: Walter-Verlag, 1976.

"Deutsche." Seminar, 1930.

"Der philosophische Baum" ("The Philosophical Tree"). In *Studien über alchemistische Vorstellungen*. Zürich: Walter-Verlag, 1978.

"Examples of European Mandalas." In *Alchemical Studies*, vol. 13 of *The Collected Works*, translated by R. F. C. Hall. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967/68.

We have some very detailed information about the painter of this series of 72 images, 12 of which are included in this exhibition. In fact, she became known as "Miss X" and is the subject of Jung's "Study in the Process of Individuation" (CW vol. 9, pt. 1).

This article contains many of her images. From Professor Jung, we know that she was an American lady "with an academic education . . . who had studied psychology for nine years" and "who had read all the [in the 1920s] more recent literature in this field." She began her analysis with Jung in October 1928 at age 55, but it seems that Jung had known her since 1921, after they met during one of his visits to the United States. From her own notes on the reverse side of one of the images and from other sources, we learn that she became a Jungian analyst.

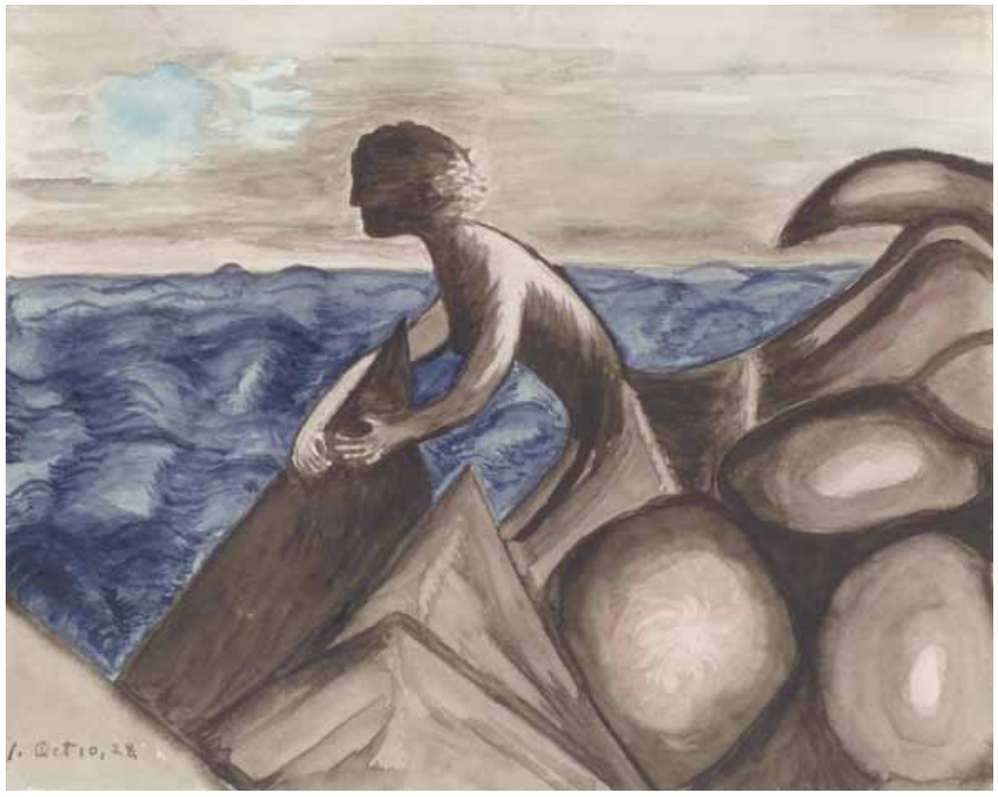
From Jung we learn further that she was "the daughter of an exceptional father . . . had varied interests, was extremely cultured, and possessed a lively turn of mind." He further writes, "She was unmarried, but lived with the unconscious equivalent of a human partner, namely the animus . . . in that characteristic liaison so often met with in women with an academic education." She had "a natural intelligence and a remarkable readiness to tolerate the opinions of other people." However, as a "fille-à-papa," with "a positive father complex," she "did not have a good relation to her mother."

Jung adds, she "got stuck . . . this made it urgently necessary for her to look around for ways that might lead her out of the impasse. That was one of the reasons for her trip to Europe." In fact, "in 1928, at the age of 55, she came to Europe in order to continue her studies" (with Jung). "Associated with this there was another—not accidental—motive. On her mother's side she was of Scandinavian descent. Since her relation to her mother left very much to be desired . . . the feeling had gradually grown up in her that this side of her nature might have developed differently if only the relation to her mother had given it a chance. In deciding to go to Europe she was conscious that she was turning back to her own origins and was setting out to reactivate a portion of her childhood that was bound up with her mother. Before coming to Zürich she had gone back to Denmark, her mother's country. There she had been affected mostly by the landscape, and unexpectedly there came over her the desire to paint—above all landscape motifs." Jung says further that "till then she had noticed no such aesthetic inclinations in herself, also she lacked the ability to paint or draw." She tried watercolors and told Jung that "painting them seemed to fill her with new life."

The text from "A Study in the Process of Individuation" continues, introducing us to the first image related with analysis. Jung published 24 of her images in this work and commented on 18 of them. About the remaining ones (19–24 in the published series), he says, "I will not comment on the subsequent images, nor reproduce them all—as I say they extend over more than ten years—because I feel I do not understand them properly." He then refers to the death of the patient and the lack of documentation and adds, "Sixteen years later, Miss X became fatally ill with breast cancer. . . . Under these circumstances the work of interpretation becomes very uncertain, and is better left unattempted."

The comments below were transcribed from the notes accompanying the first set of 10 images.

"She tried watercolors and told Jung that "painting them seemed to fill her with new life."



016 - APAA

Comments of the analysand: “Psychological source of the first design. While waiting for you to return to Küsnacht, a vivid Phantasy arose in my mind. I saw myself with the lower part of my body caught in the rocks—a very part of the earth indeed. I appealed to you, who seemed to be passing by, to help me. You touched the rocks lightly with your ‘magic’ wand and they broke apart liberating me. I had a desire to depict this but could manage it only in silhouette. But I had (in picture 1) succeeded in producing something I liked—i.e. that was satisfactory to the unconscious. But although satisfactory to the unconscious as depicting an instant of feeling, it could not be left as it was. The woman must be released. But how? Thinking over the problem led to the production of two or three sketches of a man attempting to help the woman out, but I could not create an effect which was at all satisfactory to me. I had no technique. Then you made two suggestions:

1. Use a simple symbol to present the idea.
2. Work as carefully and perfectly as you can.

Instantly the sphere as a fitting symbol of the individual occurred to me and picture 2 resulted.”

016 - APAB

Comments of the analysand: “Struggle and development during the painting of 2. Always a struggle went on between what my mind thought fitting and what my eye would accept. But always the eye was the final judge as I could not bear to have the design look inartistic. My mind wanted a day-light picture with the sun-light melting away the sphere, so to speak. I drew it this way at first. But the eye repudiated it and would accept nothing but a night scene and lightning—something sudden, shattering, dangerous. Yet the eye agreed that the sphere must be so nearly broken away already that it itself would not be injured in the process. The mind wanted blue as well as red in the coloring of the sphere but the eye insisted on a small diluted blue-red in the very centre. (I used a red which was more of a wine color than the latter. This color meant to me ‘life.’) The lightning was associated in my mind with ‘intuition’—something sudden, illuminating but a little dangerous. I felt the picture carried the future suggestion that the development of intuition would release me from the bondage of the earth.”

016 - APAC

Comments of the analysand: “Design Number 3. The sphere was free in the heavens held in equilibrium by equal and opposing forces. I thought of it now as a planet in the making. (Note. This third design makes it necessary to speak of the two ‘great’ dreams I have had in my life; for they both became involved at this point.) One was the anesthesia dream in which I saw a grey world with a silver band whirling about the equator and forming, as it whirled, areas of condensation and rarefaction, in the former of which numbers had appeared up to 3; but (as I dreamed) were to appear up to 12. These represented great men or ‘nodal points’ in the development of the world. Twelve was to be the most important point (or great man) of all because it represented the culminating or climatic instant in the process of development. The second dream (occurring a year earlier than the first) was of the appearance, on two separate occasions, of a golden serpent in the sky, who claimed on his first appearance and before all the people, a young man as his victim. Although the people had looked pityingly at me, I had accepted my ‘fate’ proudly.

“Associations with design 3. I began to see the sphere free in the heavens but with a rapidly moving silver band around it, as in the anesthesia dream on which the figure 12 stood out. The silver band was associated further with the rings of Saturn which to me meant a planet in the making. The rings would go on developing into satellites like those of Jupiter or into one satellite like the moon. You said: ‘The silver band is the wings that raise the sphere.’ ‘Why, of course,’ I thought. ‘Mercury’s wings. The silver is quicksilver, the messenger of the gods, the animus. He should be in, not outside. Outside he becomes a veil, concealing the true personality.’ Twelve is to me the culminating point of life. It is the point at which I am present—although I have reached this point at an unusually late age. (I started to be analyzed in 1919 when I was 46 years of age.) I was also born at 12 a.m. or so nearly at that time that my father took the trouble to verify his watch in order to be sure that I was born on the 29th and not on the 28th of August. He found it was just after midnight. I had known this for a long time because he had always joked with me about being ahead of my time, that is, at the dawn of a new day. So 12 means both ‘at the eleventh hour’ and ‘at the dawn of a new day.’ Blue has now appeared in the sphere but mixed up with the red. It is also a green-blue (sea blue). My mind wanted to make these colors ‘pure’ and more differentiated from each other; but my eye not only would not permit this but insisted on a coating of grey over the entire sphere after the picture was otherwise complete. The golden serpent in the distance was put in later, i.e., was felt to be necessary after four was completed.”

016 - APAD

Comments of the analysand: “Source of 4. The silver ‘veil’ became a disturbing feature of picture 3. I began to see that the silver (mercury, the messenger of the Gods, the animus) should be inside the sphere. Then the black ‘lines of force,’ indicating the current of the silver, seemed to become a black snake, encircling the sphere. The black serpent was at first felt to be a terrible danger, something that was threatening the integrity of the sphere. So the first effort I made to draw 4 represented a black snake completely encircling the sphere with a strangling grip and piercing the topmost point with his fang. Fire burst forth within the sphere. This fire, as I at first conceived it, was the effort of the sphere to expel the danger; and the first drawing of 4 showed the snake torn in half and about to be thrown off triumphantly. But this sketch drawing was not satisfying to the eye. Nevertheless I showed it to you. Then came the turning point and culmination of my analysis (that is, this particular point of it. You explained about the recognition of a law of life to which our own sexuality was subordinated. Suddenly I grasped the whole process in a more impersonal way. ‘I’ was not the ‘center’ but was subject to universal laws, was revolving around some ‘sun.’ The serpent was accepted as a necessary part of the process of growth and picture 4 then came rapidly in its final form. The snake, however, had to be drawn almost 100% above the mid-line before the eye was satisfied. It was a golden serpent or (what I feel to be symbolically similar) a flying snake—to be accepted as in the serpent dream of eight years ago. With this change of inner attitude the blue and red became differentiated. An enormous inner activity began to take place. The silver of the ‘veil’ was drawn within the sphere. Green, lavender and gold became a part of the inner life.”

016 - APAE

Comments of the analysand: "Source of 5. The transition to 5 was comparatively smooth. Four was the most difficult of all the drawings and the climax of the entire process—I should say. The snake now retreats to below, the sphere continues to increase in size, the general background of the sphere becomes less colorful or important as the sphere itself becomes more colorful. It is 'melted' within, i.e., in a state of rapid flux. The four functions begin to be set apart. The red and blue intercommunicate by 'induction.' There never could be any direct flowing into each other. But: The blue is still the blue of the sea, not of the sky—altho [*sic*] the red has become bright (crimson lake instead of carmen). There is no intercommunication between the functions, which are also represented exactly alike. The center is green."

Author's remark: In CW, vol. 9, part 1, this picture was printed upside down!

016 - APAH

Comments of the analysand: "Source of 8. At all events I could not draw picture 8 until I had clarified this point. The final result of these two achievements towards increased consciousness within the self (i.e. the sexual and the maternal) was shown in picture 8. The 'water' has been broken up—the fluid, the too-great mobility. Instead the gold center develops into a plant with the blue uncertain how to attach itself. The four functions differentiate, as the individuality appears—intuition, yellow; thinking, light blue; feeling, pink; sensation brown—and intercommunicate."

016 - APAL

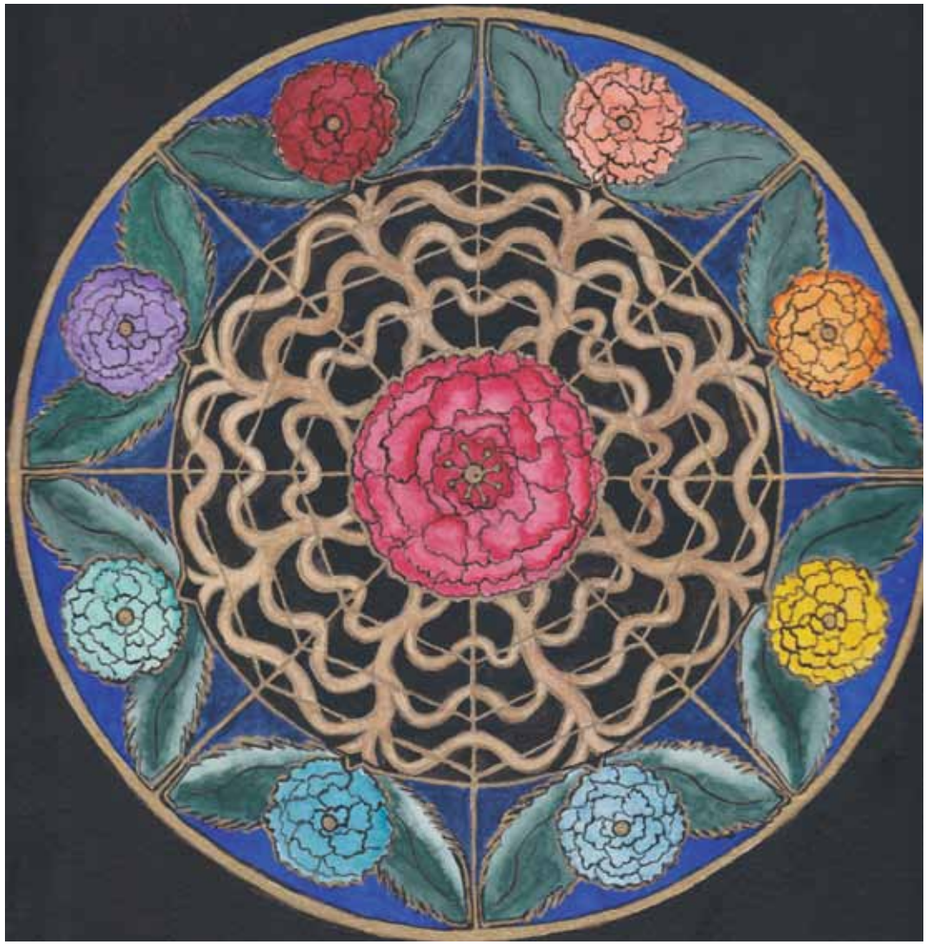
016 - APAN

016 - APAU

Comments of the analysand: "The last of a series of 10. [Threw Yi?]* 24
'The turning point.' The red + blue are in their right places & relation."

* This probably refers to the *I Ching*, whose number 24 is, in fact, "The Turning Point."

016 - APAX

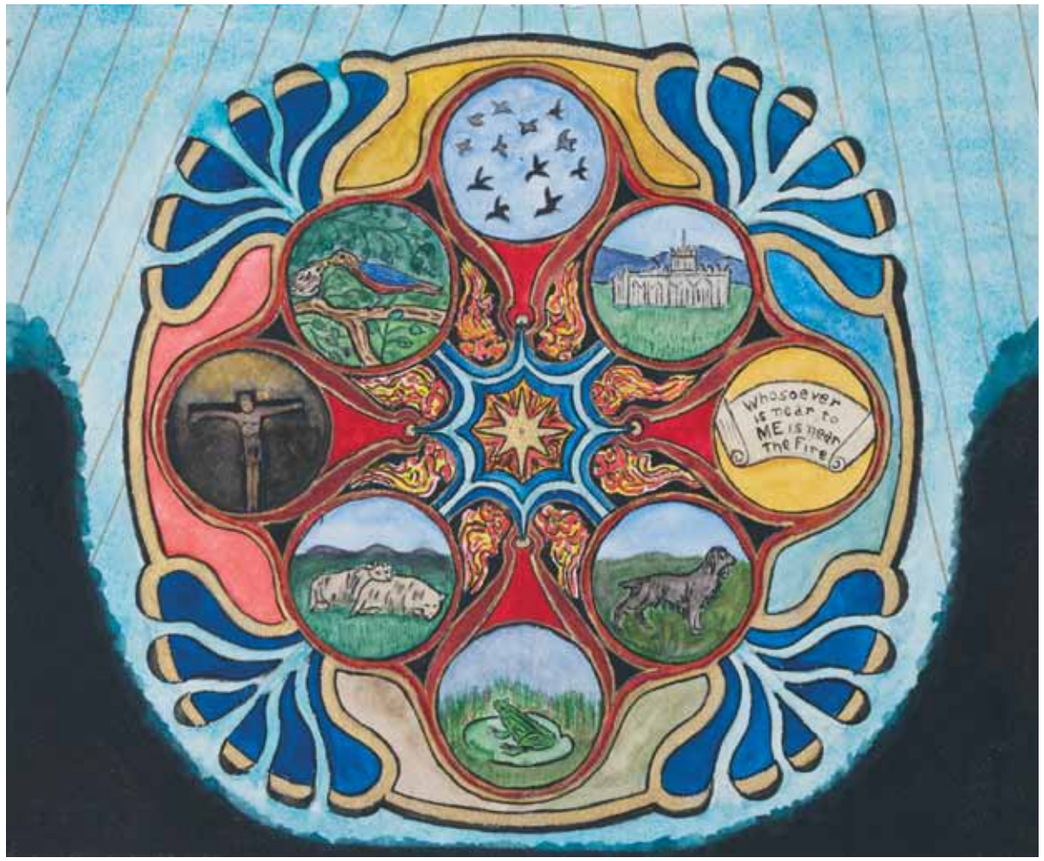


016 - APCR

Comments of the analysand: “PICTURE 7.* The rose in the center dominates the entire atmosphere of the picture, reaching out to the periphery and endowing the persona with a feeling tone. In this picture the mandala is beginning to show independent growth, as the branches of the vine penetrate the dark unconscious area separating persona from the Self. From now on the laws of that growth must be followed by the conscious ego. The mandala has become a living entity in itself.”

In addition to the typewritten notes referred to above, there are also the following comments, handwritten in black ink on the reverse side of the page: “An attempt to solve the integration of the persona with the Self. The connection is effected by the vine-like branches pushing out through an area of unconsciousness.”

* Picture 7 refers to a subseries of paintings, which the patient numbered in her work.



016 - APCU

Comments of the analysand: “PICTURE 10.* Finished November 30th 1943, begun about Sept 15th. The mandala is born. From the black depths of the unconscious it is forced up into the light of day. It must breathe. The transition is fraught with suffering. The whole weight of evil threatens to overcome one until one differentiates between body and spirit. The fan-like expansions are like lungs—opening and closing to draw in and absorb from the outer world. The crucifiction† is what my feelings went through when I was operated upon. I shared some of the horror of humanity brought on by the most deadly of all diseases at the present day. I shared in one of the deepest afflictions of humanity. But there might be compensations in the vigor of the spirit. The idea (so prevalent—and particularly so among Swedenborgians) of the all-pervading goodness of life must be crucified—however overwhelming the suffering in the acceptation of the evil, the dark inscrutable horrors of life.”

In addition to the typewritten notes referred to above, there are the following comments, handwritten in bluish ink on the reverse side of the page: “This represents the birth of the mandala from the black depths of the unconscious.”

* Picture 10 refers to a subseries of paintings, which the patient numbered in her work.

† The word appears this way in the original typewritten text, but certainly “crucifixion” was intended.

Case 019

We know that the painter and embroiderer of a series of 33 works (6 of which are in this exhibition) was an educated woman who had worked with Jung around 1925 and possibly later. Some of her many mandalas were published by Jung in vol. 9, pt. 1 of the *Collected Works,* in the chapter "Concerning Mandala Symbolism." Other of her works were published in CW, vol. 13, in the chapter "The Philosophical Tree."

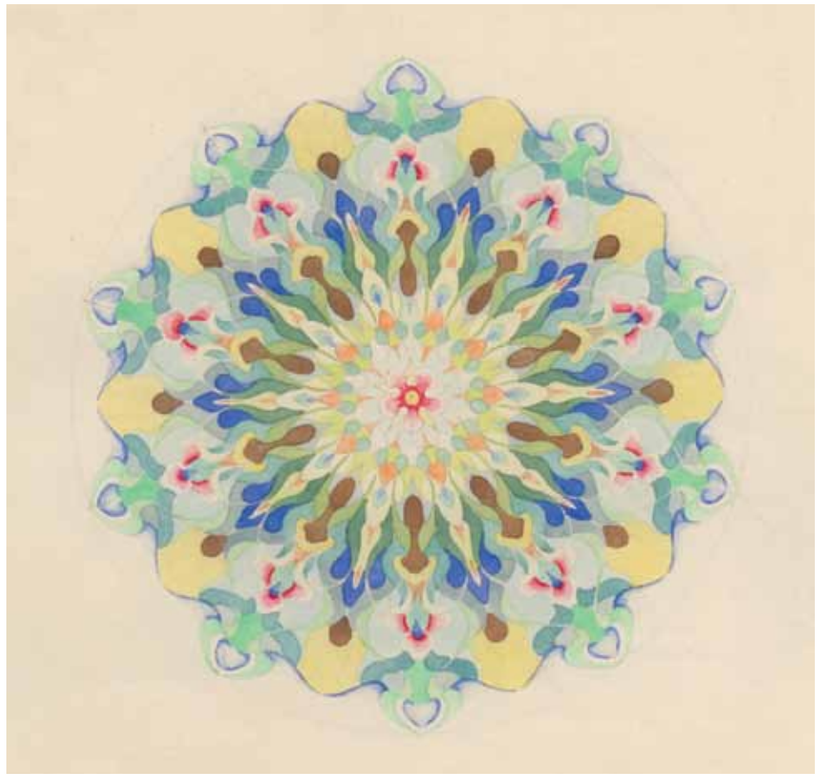
In "The Philosophical Tree" (paragraph 345), Jung tells us that the present patient "was born in the East." In "Concerning Mandala Symbolism" (paragraph 656), he had already told us that she "was born in the Dutch East Indies, where she sucked up the peculiar local demonology with the mother's milk of her native ayah." He added that "her numerous drawings all had a distinctively Eastern character, and thereby helped her to assimilate influences that at first could not be reconciled with the Western mentality."

In fact, we know that the person whose works constitute case 019 was one of three sisters, all born in Java. From a book published in 1957 in Holland about the youngest of these sisters—the work of the Dutch psychiatrist Dr. R. J. van Helsdingen, entitled *Beelden uit het onbewuste* (translated as Images from the Unconscious), with a preface by Jung—we learn that the girls were in fact born in Indonesia (Java) to educated parents. The mother was English and the father Dutch. At a very young age, the girls were brought to England by the mother for "educational and health reasons." There they were left in a strict Anglican boarding school for the greater part of their school years, while the mother returned to Java to join her husband. Holidays were spent with the English grandparents and an aunt—a fact which, given the character of these adults, did not seem to help much in their emotional development.

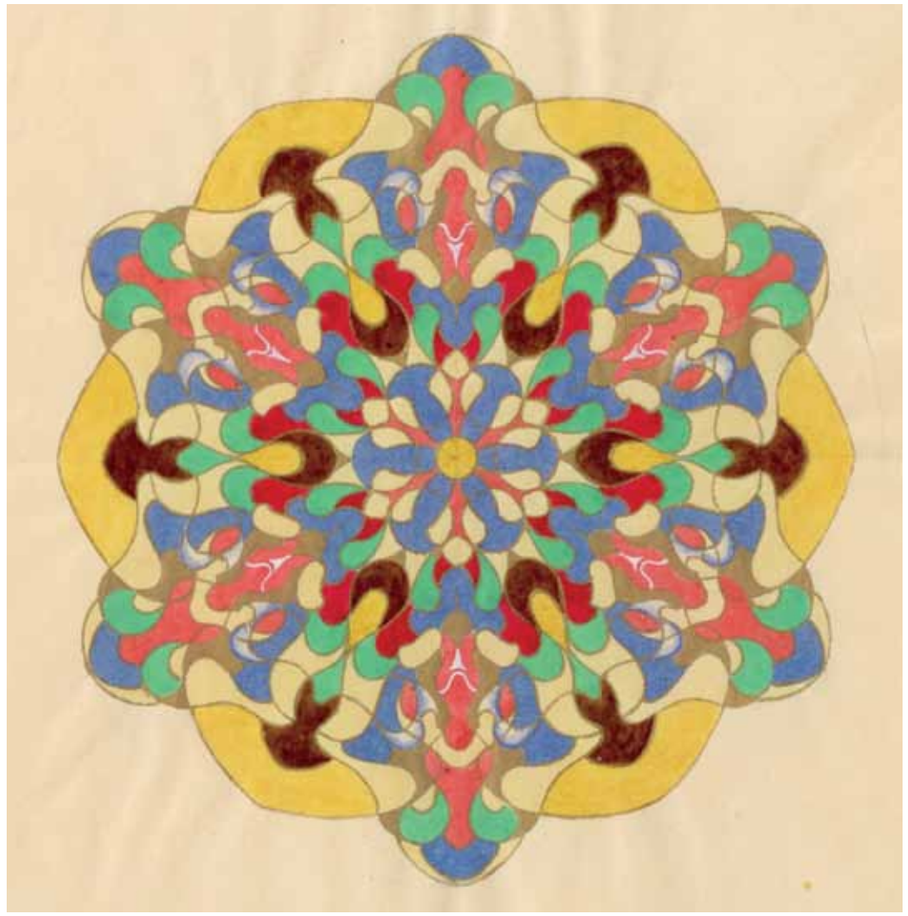
Jung tells us also that at the time she started to work with him, the patient was still unmarried, but later did marry and have children. The painter did not leave any writings of her own on the paintings, or on separate pages, or at least these are not to be found in the archives. We have no information from the two previous therapists. The painter did not usually date her works, and the source of the works (e.g., dreams, visions, fantasies) is not clearly known.

019 - ASAF: Detail

019 - ASAF: No title



019 - ASAP: No title



019 - ASAT: No title

019 - ASAV: No title

019 - ASBG: No title

019 - ASBH: No title

Case 025

The case presented in this picture book is one of the best documented in our collection. In addition to the vision's texts, we have publications by Jung, Dr. Henry A. Murray, and Dr. Claire Douglas. The identity of the painter, because it is already in the public domain, can be revealed. Her name was Christiana Morgan.

From Jung's *Visions Seminars* we learn that she was "a woman of about thirty years of age, highly educated, very intelligent, a typical intellectual, with an almost mathematical mind, . . . a natural scientist by education and exceedingly rational." He goes on, she "has a great deal of intuition, which really ought to function, but is repressed because it yields irrational results and that is very disagreeable to the rational mind." She "got into a hole at about thirty. . . . [H]er intelligence was so highly developed that she thought the things that the people in her environment did not think. . . . She was secluded, in a 'tourd'ivoire' . . . and naturally suffered from that ice-cold isolation. . . . She is rational, married, propagating the species . . . yet she is completely isolated. . . . Hers is no real marriage union whatever. . . . [F]eeling, . . . overwhelmed by the intellect, . . . disappears, but reappears projected upon a man who, of course, is not the husband. . . . She tried . . . squashing it . . . and it did not work. . . . When she had made every attempt to squash what she had understood to be the most amazing nonsense, she finally gave up and collapsed. . . . Then she heard of my existence and thought that I might be a fellow who knew some magic word and so she came to me." After amplifying the subject, Jung continues: "I am pretty sure that the unconscious contains a solution, so I propose to my patient to watch its activity as given through dreams. . . . She agreed to this idea and so we started in with analysis." After the initial, "personal part" of the analysis was over, her visions began. Jung says, "She felt very sleepy and lay down, thinking she would fall asleep. Instead she merely got into a drowsy condition and saw with her inner eyes a hypnagogic vision." After commenting on some of the initial visions, Jung goes on to report her first "big" vision, *The Ram's Head,* which is the subject of the first picture in her first album.

In the seminars, held from October 1930 to March 1934 and abruptly ended, apparently because of an indiscretion (see the comments by H. A. Murray below), Jung comments extensively on all these visions. For more details, we invite the reader to consult that published work.

From Henry A. Murray we have additional information about this analysand. It comes from a postscript to the spring 1976 edition of *The Visions Seminars*. Murray, an American medical doctor and psychologist, and professor emeritus of Harvard University, had known the analysand intimately and had also worked with Jung.

Murray tells us the following (we quote here the most relevant passages about the person and the circumstances surrounding the seminars): "[T]hat leak [of the patient's name within the small circle that had attended the seminar] . . . a sorry misunderstanding, nobody particularly at fault—brought about the abrupt, earlier than expected termination of Dr. Jung's stirring English seminar. . . . Instead of a finale that induces a relaxing sense of closure, the reader is left with an unsolved and probably unsolvable enigma. . . . [A]lthough Mrs. Morgan was a patient of Dr. Jung's and introduced by him to the art of visioning (active imagination) as a therapeutic measure, she was nowhere near the focus of her doctor's commentary in these volumes. The point is that the seminar was devoted to the study not of a particular case, but of a set of universal, self-transforming processes. After getting through an obligatory introduction . . . Dr. Jung had virtually no more to say about this patient, her dispositions or experiences, past or present. 'I omit personal details intentionally,' he announced, 'because they matter so little to me.' Later in the text: ' . . . what sort of woman, when she closed her eyes, would emit within her head such strange and arresting imaginal scenarios, at times violently descriptive, and then would so diligently and delicately represent them in hand-printed sentences and colored pen-and-ink drawings (eventually well over a hundred represented visions). . . . Was this woman . . . a borderline schizophrenic? No, although her imaginings seemed at times to be outside "normal" limits.'"

Case 025

Murray then discusses the reasons why the patient would agree that her material be used "in the service of her doctor's search for truth" and tells us many further details of this patient's life and circumstances: She was "born in Boston in 1897 . . . the second of three variously cultivated daughters of intellectual parents. . . . Their father . . . [was an] eminent professor of pathology at the University of Harvard. Mrs. Morgan seems to have felt that she and her revered . . . father were bound together by a secret, reciprocal understanding. . . . One potent result of this was a durable father complex with a readiness to exalt a series of passionate thinkers. . . . Of this distinguished series Carl Jung was certainly the most influential."

Murray speaks further of her "tower on a solitary wooded hillside" and says that "the style of her days . . . came to resemble Jung's at Bollingen." He continues, "She had an intuitive understanding of the aims, methods, and principles of the life sciences: but she was neither, in any strict sense, scientifically educated nor, to any degree at all, mathematically minded, as Dr. Jung supposed. Her formal education, limited to private schools, ended with one [senior] year at boarding school. No college. Instead there was World War I, nurse's training in a New York hospital, and marriage to a convivial man of goodwill, a Harvard graduate and war veteran whose sense of humor was likened to her father's. . . . In the autumn of 1924 the Morgans . . . with a . . . son of about three . . . settled in Cambridge, England. It was from there, a year later, that Mrs. Morgan sallied forth to meet her destiny in Küsnacht, lake of Zürich. . . . From her detailed record of every session of her analysis with Dr. Jung we learn that after a month or so of focusing on dreams she was introduced to the practice of visioning [active imagination].

"As models, she was shown Dr. Jung's images of his own series of visualizations some years back, and in due course she benefited from an extensive critique of her initial imaginal productions. . . . Soon after returning to her native turf (1927) . . . [she] had reinstituted her program of intermittent visioning and by fall had a very creditable portfolio of water-colored visional images, each with its concurrent text, to send off to the Old Man." Murray comments, "like many another Analysand with a strong positive transference, she was inclined to become an analyst herself. As it happened, chance was on her side." He goes on to explain how she got an opportunity to work with Dr. Morton Prince at the Harvard Clinic, and that "after much training, including a short Freudian analysis with Dr. Sachs . . . [she] became a very effective psychotherapist for the rest of her days, dividing her time between the clinic and her home office. . . . Although semi-Jungian psychotherapy was her prime vocational concern during her first fifteen years at the Harvard Clinic, Mrs. Morgan gave more than half her hours to carrying forward her share of the action in the several long-term, collaborative studies of personality undertaken by the clinic staff. Her forte was interviewing and, next to that, administering and interpreting certain projective tests, especially the TAT, as co-author of which she was remembered for a while." He then mentions their collaboration and some of her own personal work, adding, "most of us were aware that Mrs. Morgan's contribution . . . was of another order . . . muted, intangible, profound, partly of Jungian derivation, but mostly her own—the mere presence of her beauty, one might say."

Murray concludes his remarks: "After Pearl Harbor, Mrs. Morgan's abhorrence of war was translated into a somatic upheaval marked by hemorrhages in [the] retina and blood-pressure escalating dizzily above 200. Prognosis: one year of life. But happily a better outlook was offered by a very painful radical two-stage operation recently perfected right there in Boston. Mrs. Morgan, who always seemed to have some fearless hand in determining her own fate, made the brave decision and was rewarded with the gift of twenty-four more years of vigor, despite her repudiation of the good doctor's prescription of total abstinence. Finally, with the lethal mounting of ventricular fibrillations, Mrs. Morgan chose her best-loved Caribbean beach, St. John's Island [Virgin Islands], as locus of her demise."

Dr. Claire Douglas, a Jungian analyst and writer from California, wrote a most illuminating biography of this analysand and had access to her original documents, kept in the rare-book section of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Douglas has greatly helped us with the reclassification and understanding of the Morgan material. We learned from her that the album of images and visions we hold is a copy of a handwritten original. The original album of this exhibition is in fact the first in a series of three—"the well over a hundred represented visions" mentioned by Murray. The copy was obviously made to be sent to Jung ("the Old Man," as Morgan used to call him in private writings). In fact, a great part of this material (as well as other loose images—copies from pages of her other albums, as Douglas demonstrated) was used by Jung for his seminars on "The Interpretation of Visions." The fact that the text in this album is a typed copy also explains the absence of the texts' first letters. In fact, in the original texts those first words are illustrated as "illuminations," in a style similar to that found in medieval texts.

Douglas's most valuable contribution to the knowledge of this seer, writer, painter, analysand, and later analyst, however, lies in her illuminating biography, *Translate This Darkness*. We shall now transcribe those passages most relevant to the understanding of the character and work of this analysand.

In her introduction, Douglas says, "Mrs. Morgan worked as a lay analyst and as a research associate at Harvard's Psychological Clinic, where she was also a renowned interviewer. . . . Her patients, lovers, and friends have recalled her beauty and her style; they have noted her creativity as well as her capacity to listen, elucidate, and yet remain profoundly and independently her own self. . . . Mrs. Morgan spent her childhood as an independent, upper-class, post-Jamesian girl in a turn-of-the-century New England family that was part of the small, interrelated, and intertwined group of Boston 'Brahmins.' An intelligent, large-minded, and headstrong girl, Mrs. Morgan received only a smattering of education and was prohibited, restricted, or mocked for wanting a larger, more vigorous life. She accomplished relatively little that people recognized as hers, lending herself, rather, to forwarding other people's success. Her own remarkable imaginative quest inspired Carl Jung and opened the Harvard Psychological Clinic to a new way of measuring creativity. Her notions helped mold a third force in American psychology, which focused on respect for the individual and on a personality's development over time." Further, Douglas writes, "Mrs. Morgan was a powerful woman who never felt at ease with her strength. She was also a wounded woman whose early experiences left her as vulnerable and conflicted as she was strong. Her great interest was depth psychology. She studied Freud (especially 'Interpretation of Dreams') and was very attracted by C.G. Jung's 'Psychology of the Unconscious' ('Symbols of Transformation'). In the meantime she continued to alternate between hectic activity and depression and was accompanied by the same feeling that she was frittering her life away. She met Henry Murray and, sharing an interest in Jung, they began to work together. By this time, 1923, Jung's 'Psychological Types' had been published in the United States," and "they played at devising a type test for the club [the Extravert-Introvert Club], based on . . . Jung's typology; though too psychologically naive to measure anything reliable, the test presaged their professional work together in the 1930s.

"Henry Murray came to Zürich in 1925 to consult with Jung. In September that year (Mrs. Morgan was then almost 27 years old) . . . Mrs. Morgan travelled to Zürich to see Jung, who agreed to take her on as a patient the following June. Analysis began next year. Mrs. Morgan arrived in Zürich in early June 1926; (her husband followed two weeks later). Four years later, when Jung lectured on the fantasies and art-work Mrs. Morgan produced during that period; he disguised their author but sketched an outline of her at the time as a thinking intuitive type. From the notes she made of her analytic sessions, it appears that Jung focused primarily on her love problem. Mrs. Morgan made rapid headway, at first seeing Jung several times a week for two-hour sessions, with an occasional visit to Toni Wolff."

Based on Morgan's notes, Douglas continues, "Jung taught her to focus inward, allowing space for her feeling sense to develop. She learned to avoid the strained over rationalization that had masked her psyche, and she started to trust herself. . . . [But] the very fact that [she] was a woman blinded Jung to many of her possibilities. . . . Jung forgot Mrs. Morgan, while

he glorified her role as an Anima figure and 'inspiratrice for a man.' Under Jung's guidance, she had descended into the waterways of the collective unconscious, bringing back up with her 'the strange shapes of the unwrapped primal world.' For Mrs. Morgan, active imagination slowly began to oppose her propensity to translate everything into theory, because her images evoked her feeling response. Between early July 1926 and May 1927, she generated an extraordinary series of fantasies. The technique Jung was developing caused images to well up in her; she experienced and then recorded them, later transferring them, as Jung suggested, to three folio-size books. She illustrated her text with a potent image from almost every vision, her art training enabling her to catch the feeling and much of the extraordinary magic realism of her visionary realm. The near-Coleridgean intensity with which the visions claimed her led Mrs. Morgan down into the most primitive and archaic parts of herself, yet she was able to maintain a rational and directed outer life without being swept away."

Douglas now quotes Jung from Morgan's notes: "I should advise you to put it all down as beautifully & as carefully as you can—in some beautifully bound book. It will seem as if you were making the visions banal—but then you need to do that—then you are freed from the power of them. If you do that with those eyes for instance they will cease to draw you. You should never try to make that vision come again. Think of it in your imagination and try to paint it. Then when those things are in some precious book you can go to the book & turn over the pages & for you it will be your church—your cathedral—the silent places of your spirit where you will find renewal. If anyone tells you that this is morbid or neurotic and you listen to them—then you will loose your soul—for in that book is your soul."

"I should advise you to put it all down as beautifully & as carefully as you can — in some beautifully bound book.... Then when those things are in some precious book you can go to the book & turn over the pages & for you it will be your church— your cathedral—the silent places of your spirit where you will find renewal."

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About the Author:

Vicente Luis de Moura is a psychologist and training analyst. He graduated in 1999 from the C.G. Jung Institute Zürich, where he curates the Picture Archives. Former president of the Susan Bach Foundation and member of the Swiss Society for Analytical Psychology, he also works as an analyst and a psychotherapist in Zürich.

025 - AYAF

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The Great Round

James Hollis, PhD,
Jungian Analyst, Houston, Texas

Perhaps the world has no inherent meaning. Perhaps it is random chaos—molecules chaotically, randomly assembling, then disassembling. So what brings order to this chaos, if any, or meaning to these variant assemblages of energy? When C.G. Jung traveled to Africa in the 1920s, he awakened one morning before his colleagues, walked out on the veldt, listened to the cry of scavenger birds wheeling in search of prey, felt the low rumble of hooves from great grey streams of beasts on the move, and asked himself, "Why am I here?" It was one of those questions we asked as children and forgot when we grew up, but, when we stand before the primal—whether it be in wonder or terror—we sometimes reflect on our tiny presence in this large mystery. Such questions call us back to our essential human condition. As he asked the question, Jung felt the answer come back to him quickly: we are here to bring consciousness to brute being. Those great rivers of animals that passed before him are driven by instinctual hungers, as are we; but as far as we know, animals do not stand outside those instinctual agendas and wonder, consider, speculate, or imagine. But we do. We bring consciousness, order, and sometimes meaning to these phenomenal molecules dancing before us and within us.

Just over 200 years ago, the Sage of Konigsberg, Immanuel Kant, observed that we can never know reality in itself, the *Ding an Sic*h, and therefore we must labor to understand the psychological instruments by which we stand in relationship to that presumptive reality, the means by which we experience, structure, and process the world. In so asserting, Kant ended traditional metaphysics forever and made depth psychology necessary. Rather than presume we are observing the phenomena of life directly, we are obliged to focus on how we experience, the capacities and limitations of knowing, and the intricate dynamics of our subjective constructions of reality.

A century ago, Jung split forever from Freud when he speculated that as a species we are not driven just to tissue satisfaction but also to meaning. In his 1912 book *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, today published as *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung described the multifarious ways in which libido, or psychic energy, transforms the chaos of life to order it, and to stand in some meaningful relationship to it. Respecting this elemental symbol-making, symbol-mediating process is even more critical to persons who have experienced the erosion of images and rituals once provided by tribal myth and sacred institutions. Such persons, he wrote in a letter, slid off the roof of the medieval cathedral into the abyss of the self.

That we are symbol-making animals is obvious, from the three-millennia-old paintings in the caves of Lascaux to the most recent films and novels. Our tools for appropriating a relationship to the elemental mysteries of life—why we are here, why we are so evanescent, why we possess a modicum of consciousness, what, if anything, runs this universe—are metaphor and symbol. Metaphor, whose etymology intimates a reality beyond the immanence of nature, and symbol, whose etymology intimates a projective process toward connection with mystery, are profound tools that enable us to speak of what is unspeakable, or gain a fragile purchase on that which is unknowable.

When we examine the way in which the human psyche works, we see that it brings to the random assemblages of life duration, sequence, order, comparison/contrast, number, time, proportion, relationship, and many other fictive entities that nonetheless open our hearts, minds, and affects to understanding and connection. When we look at an inkblot, we do not see only a smear on the page, though it is that, but perhaps a fiddler on the roof, or a threatening creature. If it is not inherent in the blot, from whence does that image come? It comes from the organizing and projective process of the human psyche. We wish to make it accessible, and so we approach the unknown by way of the partially known.

"Perhaps the world has no inherent meaning. Perhaps it is random chaos—molecules chaotically, randomly assembling, then disassembling. So what brings order to this chaos, if any, or meaning to these variant assemblages of energy?"

A study of the history of metaphor and symbol indicates that we have a virtual storehouse, a thesaurus of images that have emerged over our collective histories to which individuals return repeatedly. Such images are expressive of this elemental ordering process. To give but one example, an analysand of mine recently recounted her recurrent dreams of the image of a mandorla, the interlocking of intersecting circles. This image haunted her, and she could not imagine why it had come to her. Though her personal heritage is Jewish, she found exactly the mandorlic image she dreamt in the church of St. Catharine of Siena when she visited that Tuscan city. Subsequent investigation of the story of the 14th-century Sienese saint opened a line of parallel meaning in this modern dreamer's life.

In his own dreams, in the dreams of many of his patients (as you will see in this exhibit), and in many cultural forms such as architecture, art, and design, Jung identified the mandala as a recurrent, archetypal image. His simplest definition of neurosis was "the one-sidedness" of our personalities, a one-sidedness almost unavoidable in a culture such as ours, which is driven by service to abstract rather than instinctual values. The mandala rises as an inherent tendency to bring the rejected, the neglected, the devalued, back into play, to honor what is missing. The mandala intimates wholeness not partiality, return not estrangement, and centering rather than disorganization. Such images are most critical in our psychological process when we are feeling scattered, disorganized, in the terrible gap between guiding pictures of the road ahead.

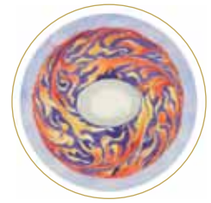
There are two great mythic cycles which may be found throughout Eastern and Western cultures: the Quest and the Great Round. The former is the developmental myth, the movement from naïveté to experience, from immaturity to maturity, from innocence to wisdom. It is the story of our journey to individualized personhood. The latter is the story of the going and the coming, the beginning and the end, the departure and the return, the persistent desire to come home again, to come to oneself again.

Both organizing patterns speak a necessary truth; both express a need to render our bewildering transit on this spinning planet personal and universal, timely and timeless, and to move beyond our fractionated journeys toward wholeness again.

The mandalas you will see express a timeless message: In our beginning is our end, and in our end our beginning, and that every journey outward is also about the prospect of circling home again.

What Are Mandalas Doing in Therapy?

Jutta von Buchholtz, PhD
Jungian Analyst, Birmingham, Alabama



The images you see in this exhibit are not the sort of artworks that museums usually show. They are the visual distillates of the analysis of five clients of the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung. They are considered products from the archetypal realms of the creative unconscious and a slide show of the individual psychological development based on the personal journey of individuation of five patients. The veracity of his own discovery of the archetypal process of individuation was confirmed for Jung by these images, the mandalas.

Mandalas made their debut on the psychological scene in 1918–19, when Jung, stationed on military duty at the Chateau-d'Oex, found himself involved in a strange ritual that seemed to have neither meaning nor purpose: every morning he felt compelled to sketch small circular drawings, mandalas, in his notebook. He noted that while he was drawing, he was "actively at work." It was a time of emotional crisis in his life: the estranged heir apparent to Sigmund Freud's psychological legacy felt that he had lost his bearings, his focal point, his center. He understood that being compelled to such an activity must surely be important to his psychological development, had to have meaning, and so he continued without understanding the aim or goal of what he was doing; he just knew that somehow it had to be important to his becoming. Years later, in his autobiographical *Memories, Dreams, Reflections,* he tells us that these strange little circles constituted the muck, the fertile ground that would give birth to all his later work. The alchemists would say that they were the *prima materia,* the beginning of all things. The images, like dreams, emerged from his creative unconscious, and he named this universal process of becoming, "individuation." He also encouraged some of his patients to draw and noticed that their unconscious liked to express itself in circular drawings, or mandalas, as well.

Here at the Oglethorpe University Museum of Art, you are in the midst of nearly 40 of hundreds of such drawings. They are usually safely stored and carefully preserved in Switzerland at the C.G. Jung Institute Zürich, Küsnacht. They have never before been

"Images make the invisible visible; the most outstanding characteristic of mandalas is that all the information is gathered around a center..."

presented in the United States. Five of Jung's clients are represented with small selections of the images that came to them from their unconscious in the course of their analysis with Jung. Although some of the mandalas are esthetically so pleasing that one is tempted to refer to them as works of art, Jung thought that understanding our personal mandalas as pieces of art would be a mistake, a trap laid by the ego in its perpetual need for aggrandizement. It is important to remember that in this exhibition we are privileged to witness emotional "Stations of the Cross," a slide show of intimate psychological experiencing by some of Jung's patients.

In the essay "Concerning Mandala Symbolism" in his *Collected Works* (vol.9, pt.1), Jung carefully analyzes 24 images that an American woman drew during many years of analysis. These images document and serve as paradigms of the individuation process. They show how purely inner events transition to a relationship between the inner and outer. Twelve of these images from the American patient's work are exhibited here. Jung eventually arrived at the following understanding of what his personal stream of circular sketches or mandalas, were intended to make clear to him: "I understood that the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning. Therein lies its healing function" (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*). At a time of disorientation in his own life, a time when, as William Butler Yeats wrote, "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold," Jung truly understood the healing power of connecting to the central archetype of the Self, of orientation and meaning, which is what holds us and heals the sense of emptiness and meaninglessness that modern men and women suffer.

Images make the invisible visible; the most outstanding characteristic of mandalas is that all the information is gathered around a center, holding the images together, just as the archetype of the Self holds our psyche together. This explains why mandalas, as the fruit of active imagination, are often a part of Jungian psychotherapy. In Western culture we increasingly live with deep and growing spiritual emptiness, the bankruptcy of the soul. What sustains the psyche/soul is the focus of our work as psychotherapists.

When Jung first sketched his mandalas, they appeared to him, as he said, rather "Chinese," foreign. Mandalas are not part of our Western cultural heritage, although we can observe mandala-like formations in Christian and Jewish iconography, in city planning, in architecture, as well as in nature. The symbolic picture language characteristic of Tibetan mandalas belongs to a vibrant spiritual tradition that is thousands of years old. Years ago I was able to observe as Tibetan monks rasped colorful sand out of narrow funnels to form beautiful geometric creations. I was not familiar with this tradition but was struck by how intent on their work the monks were. They looked happy, actively at work, as they "painted." They appeared secure and contained in a tradition that gave their lives meaning. After they had completed the large image, they gathered up the colorful sand, destroying their work, and gave the sand back to the river. The ritual was over. After this experience, I researched Tibetan mandalas and learned that the colors, shapes, placement—everything contained within the mandala—were based on and symbolic of ancient spiritual practices, stories, and experiences; had meanings; and were openings to emotional experiences foreign to my Western way of life. And a deep, sad, nostalgic longing to be embedded in a culture, where the center still holds, came over me.

Because of this very deep longing to belong and to be embedded somewhere in this universe, we impatiently, urgently, and therefore often superficially employ whatever seems to offer itself "out there." This kind of thinking leads to this logical conclusion: if it's good for Tibetan monks and helps Carl Jung in his individuation process, it's good enough for me, too! In typical Western fashion, we could, and often do, take the speedy way and graft mandalas onto our lives. We don't have to look far to find someone who has made a business of our needs. There are numerous how-to mandala books, with "recipes" for mandala making like recipes in a cookbook. There are mandala drawing workshops, where we are instructed on how to create a "personal mandala." Predictably, when I tried this route, the results were most often emotionally empty and sadly disappointing. Speed in matters of soul precludes depth. We may find ourselves mimicking something that is either too foreign and therefore feels grafted, or has not emerged from the darker spheres of our own soul! Then we go through meaningless motions that only reinforce the inner melancholy emptiness.

There are no shortcuts to soul work. Jungian psychotherapy tends to the soul. This process requires time and devotion to our emotions, to our self, which is what nourishes the soul. And, as you have witnessed in this exhibit, the drawing and/or meditating on mandalas, as they connect us to the personal and archetypal realms of psyche, can surely be the kind of psychotherapy that, with its images, moves the soul.

Mandalas and Uncenteredness

William Willeford, PhD
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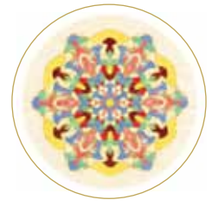


Mandala is Sanskrit for "magic circle." Asking what mandalas are more specifically might well lead to thoughts about the following:

Circular and fourfold-circular natural forms. Extremely archaic humanly made, apparently magico-religious circles such as carved stones. Mandalas as pictured circles centered and squared or otherwise made fourfold, and often including triangles. Mandala-like floor plans of sacred buildings in many cultures. Mandalas populated with divine figures and serving meditation in Tibet and India and throughout Southeast Asia. Mandalas in sand paintings made for healing among the Navajo. The Rose Window of Chartres Cathedral. Mandalas as standard in children's drawings in various cultures, ever since Rhoda Kellogg found that mandalas (along with radials, suns, and global human forms) are regularly intermediate between children's scribbles and pictorial representation.[1] Phosphenes (subjective light patterns visible with closed eyes), which include circles, crosses, and triangles, all common in mandalas.[2]
The psychologist C.G. Jung's relation to mandalas, which he helped to make widely known.

Mandalas presumably depict and facilitate a centering of psychic energy. This may happen as though of itself and seem a gift having a therapeutic effect.
But uncenteredness may also play a positive role in our lives. And psychological concern with disarrayed psychic bits can be therapeutic with or without reference to an avowed center.

If we try to imagine a domain of uncenteredness, we hardly expect to find mandalas in it, though we might find snakes. So it might be surprising that when we consider mandalas deeply, the symbolic snake figures importantly in what we find. This realization, to be explored later, will vividly concentrate much of what I will have said about mandalas in other ways.

Jung's emphasis on individuation and totality is a hallmark of his theorizing. But so are his profound researches into the dissociability of the psyche. Early in his psychiatric career, for example, he wrote a groundbreaking study of the psychology of what is now named schizophrenia. And in France he studied with the great so-called French dissocitionists Pierre Janet and Jean-Martin Charcot.[3]

Decades ago the British Jungian analyst Michael Fordham described regularly recurring successive phases of integration and what he termed deintegration (to suggest part of an ongoing process) in the mental life of babies. His views deserve continuing attention in their applicability throughout the life span. And much is gained for psychological thinking if both aspects of this process are held not far from focal awareness.[4]

Bringing these reflections to bear upon mandalas does nothing to lessen the remarkableness of many of them. But it does caution against regarding their phenomenology too one-sidedly as related to what William James called the religion of healthy-mindedness, which he contrasted with the outlook of the perhaps more clear-eyed "sick souls" he so obviously esteemed. After all, powerful Indian and Tibetan mandalas display demons, often in commanding and even devouringly embracing positions, and sometimes at their centers. Jung grants that individuals may also spontaneously create mandalas in response to extreme psychic states such as panic, suggesting that such states might sometimes be the precondition for their creation. Although some individuals may also create mandalas as though these just appeared of their own accord, we may do well to remain alert to the chaos mandalas may be warding off.

The pictures on display came to Oglethorpe University Museum of Art ascribed to "patients" or "cases." This one-sided labeling needs to be elaborated upon if we want to imagine our way into thecultural context in which the artwork was created.

Jung was well known in the United States very early in the 20th century, having been awarded an honorary degree along with Sigmund Freud at Clark University in 1906. Prominent American families, with whose more troubled members he could comfortably and helpfully interact, consulted Jung. His *Psychological Types* (first English translation 1923) validated introversion as nonpathological and maintained that psychological development is by its nature one-sided, thus creating an opportunity for valuable inner work. In this spirit some people, mostly citizens of the United States, settled in Zürich for extended stays during which they engaged in psychotherapy or analysis with Jung or analysts close to him. Introverted Swiss culture was hospitable to them, making them feel free to spend hours in cafés writing in their notebooks, largely about their inner lives.

All of these visitors knew of Jung's *Red Book* and of his own painting of mandalas (both to be discussed shortly). Some of them roomed at the same pension. One, Joseph L. Henderson, who would become a highly distinguished and well-loved Jungian analyst, felt compelled to move to a different pension because he could not abide the disregard for privacy by some members of the group. Another of the American visitors, Christiana Morgan, whose extraordinary artwork is on display here, presented Jung with records of visions she had had, which he analyzed in seminars over a period of years, before which she returned to the United States. The seminars were abruptly broken off because she cabled Jung to demand that he stop them. The two had agreed that her material was to be kept anonymous, and she had learned to her chagrin that his presentation was such that people attending had recognized it as hers.[5]

These comments on the chumminess among Jungians in those years do not detract from the quality of their imaginative and artistic material or from Jung's interpretation of it. But they are reason to qualify his insistence that the mandalas created in this setting just appeared as though made by themselves.

This insistence on Jung's part implies that in modern times mandalas made spontaneously are much preferable to those made after explanations and instruction as part of something like a schoolwork assignment. Who would disagree? Jung also felt that engaging in an exercise of making mandalas to further what he called individuation would be of little avail. Who would disagree with this, either? But then we are left with the implication regarding mandalas that spontaneity should be preserved as the property of the centering instance with which he was concerned, namely the self as a psychic agency distinct from the ego and possessed of superior awareness. My own understanding of this matter inclines me to remind us that for the notion of centering to be useful it needs to be of a process open to its own background and real-life context, so that mandalas, for example, are not immediately regarded as having been made by self-generation.

Let us assume that some or all of the mandalas of his followers came into being indirectly because he had painted mandalas before them. And let us assume that his own first mandala in 1916 came into being indirectly owing to his knowledge of Asian mandalas, which he imitated in a very free way. Let us assume further that some of Jung's followers saw some of one another's artwork. These seem generally like the conditions under which much good, bad, and indifferent art is created. Good conditions do not always result in good art—living in the same setting did not make Salieri the equal of Mozart. Whereas good art is often made under conditions that seem compromised—as many of those that were Beethoven's lot. Much of the art on display at Oglethorpe will probably strike viewers as moving and authentic, regardless of how, exactly, it came into being. Such genuineness speaks for itself.

Jung's stressful but creative years of 1913–19 have been described as his "confrontation with the unconscious." This is surely accurate, but it is also useful to note that this time was also one of the "creative illness" that Henri Ellenberger discerned in the lives of such innovative thinkers as Theodor Fechner, Sigmund Freud, Jung, and Rudolf Steiner.[6] After all, when Jung's translator into English, R. F. C. Hull, saw *The Red Book*, created in this period (and first published in 2009), he was reminded of Freud's self-analysis and remarked that in comparison "Jung was a walking asylum himself, as well as its head physician." This assessment increased Hull's admiration of Jung because of what Jung had had the strength to put himself through.[7]

"Jung's emphasis on individuation and totality is a hallmark of his theorizing. But so are his profound researches into the dissociability of the psyche."

The kind of condition Ellenberger was examining in these various highly creative figures is polymorphous, taking the form of depression, neurosis, psychosomatic ailments, or even psychosis. Throughout, the subject does not lose the thread of his preoccupation with a dominating idea and his search for a certain truth. He is absorbed with himself and suffers from feelings of utter isolation. This is so even though he may retain his usual activities and relations with others. (In 1916 Jung also helped found the Psychological Club for the meeting of people likeminded in their pursuit of psychological matters.) Such a period often ends with a phase of exhilaration, along with a permanent transformation of the personality and a conviction of having discovered a great truth or a new spiritual world.

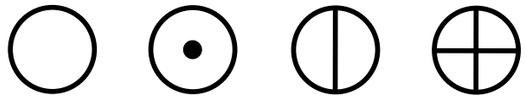
Conviction thus arrived at commands assent but may insist on drawing firm lines where others concerned with the same matters might prefer to be less emphatic. Jung tends to think in polarities—let us for the moment say in "black and white." Though these are opposites, in the real world much is gray, and the gray is mixed with many colors. To insist on the mutual exclusion of black and white when dealing with multicolored grays may create a false clarity obscuring what one was trying to see—as in a black and white photograph of a richly colored scene. In Jung's conception, ego and self, as I have mentioned, are very different from one another. In reality they may sometimes seem to be much less so. At moment (a) ego and self might seem to mark out what makes sense to regard as alternative psychic regions. A "big dream" or vision expressive of the self might be potentially life altering in treating important matters in a remarkable way, as does Jung's patient's vision of the "world clock," something like a multidimensional super-mandala.[8] At moment (b) there might seem no point in distinguishing between ego and self. (One might say, "I did that myself," understanding my "I" and my "self" to be the same thing.) When Jung is speaking about highly ordered mandalas, the reader may want to pause and reflect that the context of his most intense concern with them was a time of upheaval with moments of endangered personal identity. This brings us again to uncenteredness and the value of keeping it in mind, since as I have proposed, integration and deintegration are rarely all that far apart.

In being a satisfying whole, a mandala may be said to have what Gestalt psychologists have called totality-character. This is a result, wholeness or totality, but it is also a process, that of making whole. This can also be called closure, as a circle is self-enclosed. Closure is the result of bringing such closure about. It could also be called being finished.

Still, the state of being finished implies—and is in that sense continuous with—that of not being finished. An outline distinguishes the inside from the outside of something. I have two unfinished 19th-century Indian paintings that are, in effect, line drawings that prefigure in a ghostly way a three-dimensional world that never became fully represented in them. Lines may take over most of the expressive function of an artwork, as in Matisse's line drawings. In contrast to Matisse with his meticulous lines, Lawrence Calcagno made large landscape sketches by squeezing paint from a tube onto paper, making something like lines of blobs and smears that then seemed to become solid shapes.

As these examples suggest, any artwork may be not yet drawn or be erased or replaced by other elements. The overall conception may still be taking form or need to be revised. Thus an artwork has been and is related to the spirit of its own unmaking, as the centering of mandalas is to uncenteredness. Mandalas are often simple, but they can become artistically alive in many ways, sometimes becoming elaborate, richly expressive structures. Being alive is unfinished business.

I want now to turn to the center of the mandala, or to what I will more broadly call centeredness. I will mostly be concerned with a quality of mind characteristic of people in the premodern world. This mentality has been summarized succinctly and profoundly by Alan W. Watts, who speaks in cosmological terms required because that is how premodern people situate themselves in their world. He asks us to consider this sequence of four images:



These represent to the archaic mind: "(l) the undifferentiated matrix, (2) the male seed-point or *bindu* in the cosmic womb, (3) undifferentiated chaos now polarized as pairs of opposites, and (4) the flowering of the seed in systems of complexly organized polarities. Such organization," he maintains, "depends quite basically upon the idea of the intersection of the horizontal by the perpendicular," giving us a means of orientation. This whole pattern, which is also to be understood temporally, "underlies the whole possibility of the meeting of I and Thou."[9] Let us take I and Thou as a point of departure in reviewing his summary.

All human relationships begin with that of mother and baby, including all forms of I and Thou. In time, and often before birth, it opens out to the larger socio-cultural order. As for the division into quarters depicted in the last of our diagrams, ancient cities were often divided into four. And this division is related to that of vocations in such cities into four groups, such as the priests and scholars, the warriors and administrators, the merchants and tradesmen, and the craftsmen and laborers. And much else in the life of traditional societies often accorded with a fourfold pattern—for example, the supernatural beings of the four quarters in the visions of the Sioux medicine man Black Elk and in many other Native American cosmologies. It is not difficult to imagine life in such a society as in part the dramatization of a mandala.

Mandalas from traditional cultures are generally—apart from the purely diagrammatic ones—iconic and narrative. They depict known religious figures and ideas in a pattern having an often complex but decipherable meaning partly amenable to restatement in words. Though the references of the figures in Jung's first mandala are more private, they offer themselves to be understood in the same way. Others of his mandalas are abstract and lack this level of semantic reference. Of the mandalas displayed here, some contain such traces of a story as snakes or human figures; some are semi-abstract; the others are purely abstract.

In contrast to the abstract mandalas, the storytelling pictures on display offer a medley of themes seemingly asking to be understood. What are we to make of the storybook-like human forms occupied in various ways with roots, branches, and eggs? And what of the following two? A monstrous bald, gray-skinned male figure, who has a mouth full of teeth but no nose or ears, is holding a naked woman with the nails of his forefingers—she is that small—while he studies her with the reddish beam of his reddish eye. A naked black man lying under a tree holds fruit in both hands as from his side flows a river of blood, in which a female figure stands, the blood above her ankles. The abstract mandalas break out of the medley, seeming to be about something else.

Many religious images and terms refer to matters deemed ineffable. But they do not usually offer an invitation to slip into this further dimension, leaving all else behind and forgotten. Rather, since we are not in it but here, imagery and speech referring to such matters often seem to remain necessary to us. Thus stories about religious founders are preserved in the hope of understanding better the truths they had to convey and asked their followers to make their own.

The purely abstract mandalas on display here, partly in contrast, are *sui generis*, seeming to portray centering somehow just taking place or somehow just having done so. Our impression of them is compatible with Jung's view of how they were made. They are islands of something beautiful but remote, seeming at times to beckon to us, then insisting on their self-sufficiency. Good art can be about such improbable states of affairs. The viewer will probably find these mandalas engaging and feel that they "work" as art. But they do so by pushing a limit, as art often does, in this case that which separates us from the ineffable while also alluding to it.

I speak of "good art" because mandala art has in recent years—later than that on display here—become an identifiable subgenre, some works of which are less engaging than their makers probably intended. Though sometimes having weighty themes (such as the nature of man and of woman), some of them seem substantively thin, as though having been made according to a pat recipe. This may be a danger of modern abstract mandalas, divorced from traditional teachings that include a critical component helping to guide the creation of art. Still, the mandalas we are looking at are very different from artworks belonging to the mandala-like subgenre I just mentioned. The latter are like pale, less vital shadows of the former.

I say this wondering if the mandalas before us are not end products in the way plucked beautiful flowers are. Where do our mandalas lead, and where do they come from but where they already are? I may mostly be confirming Jung's sense that they are products of the self more than of the ego, that they belong to a higher level of being and functioning, one that is emergent and therefore hard to say anything about. But I am also appreciative of the sometimes scary and irrational storytelling so vigorous in the artistic culture that produced them. Such storytelling presumably goes on and on, not drawn into mandalas and thus made peaceful and contained. The weirder storytelling, too, is precious. (Let us recall Hull's admiration of Jung for his ability to open himself to difficult parts of psychic reality that also need to be known.) Such storytelling must not be left behind.

The story-pictures on display here are well populated by snakes, some truly horrendous. The snake is the symbol par excellence of uncentered, uncenterable, inexhaustible life. Not far from creatures doomed to die, it merely sheds its skin. Invisible in dark crevices, it reappears wherever and whenever it pleases.

In the artworks we are considering, there are various views of mandalas or mandala-like things together with sakes or snakelike things. These include Jung's fine dragon-snake encompassing a mandala on p. 129 of *The Red Book*—his rendering of them making them look very much akin.

Then again mandala and snake are fundamentally at odds. The mandala cannot draw snake-energy up into itself and center it. Therefore to the snake, the mandala must be ineffectual and harmless. If we imagine the mandala as a living thing, it might deal with snake-energy by disregarding it, forgetting it. One name for this is repression. It is easy to imagine that the snake forgets nothing.

As representative of all these works, I would choose for its simple clarity one of a black snake next to a mandala of four blue spiral-circles in a black, orange, and red circular field.[10] This picture expresses an even more comprehensive way of dealing with these matters than that of making mandalas. It entails holding in single awareness—as the picture, its artist, and the viewer of it all do—the unreconcilable principles of snake and mandala.

A main trend in these works as a whole is for the mandala to become abstract and to appear alone.

Perhaps these reflections—more questions than answers—help ready us for one more look at Jung's distinction between ego and self.

I want to begin by discouraging a misleading notion now and again to be encountered. It is that what Jung calls individuation is a clear path, on the advanced stages of which one often dreams of mandalas or wants to create them. As an analyst I am always gratified to feel that people who come to me are making progress in living their lives in ways that are most fulfilling to them. Since mandalas are hardly a rarity the world over, it is not surprising that in analysis something like one should appear in a dream or some other way. For someone in analysis to expect them as a sign of progress, and then when they do not appear to imagine having been awarded a D or an Incomplete, is to invent a dreadful report card that is not needed by anyone. In my view, one can grow old and wise without ever having given special thought to mandalas. Still, anyone who has the good fortune to see an illuminating or beautiful one should be grateful. We live our lives in ways that require us to have alternately a narrower and a broader conscious focus. The broader focus may be very extensive, taking in a whole stage of life or period of history.

It may subjectively have for me what I have spoken of as totality-character, representing an alternative way of being or doing that may require decision and commitment. When Jung avers, as he has done, that the experience of the self is always a defeat for the ego, he has in mind the discrepancy of the two as psychic agencies.[11] This need not mean, however, that the broader focus is objective and the narrower subjective, though it does mean that the former is of larger scope and may sometimes deserve greater consideration. But as Jung would agree, the defeat of the ego cannot mean its annihilation, as the narrower focus remains necessary, and the ego is left with many things to attend to. These may even include facilitating the experience of the self as having the preeminence he ascribes to it.

A Zen proverb tells us, "Before enlightenment, chopping wood and carrying water; after enlightenment, chopping wood and carrying water." Although Jung's self does not necessarily bring about anything like the enlightenment alluded to, it fosters a broader outlook and is transformative in a major way. Without meaning God, as he explains often, his self is ultimate and functions like a God-term in Jungian discourse (in which it is often capitalized).

If we try to translate into the terms of the Zen proverb Jung's observation about the experience of the self as the defeat of the ego, a first attempt might yield this: before experience of the self, chopping wood and carrying water; after such experience, no chopping of wood or carrying of water. This jarring mishmash tells us that Jung's statement is about one aspect of a matter more complex than he was at that moment taking into account.

And so we may turn to a complementary aspect in accordance with which there may well be moments in which there is no point in drawing a distinction between ego and self, as one does not when one is chopping wood or carrying water. This reservation brings Jung's statement into much more comfortable alignment with the Zen proverb.

Mandalas can serve the broader outlook of which I have been speaking, and they are often felt to have a spiritual component. In relation to storytelling, they may be like a grand summing up or a glimpse of ultimate goals, though, as I have remarked, they reach beyond stories to something like another level of things. At the same time they are as "natural" as children's drawings, and they engage the bodies of their viewers by offering forms and proportions that they are physically disposed to find pleasing. Sublime as mandalas may sometimes be, they are congenial to our nature as choppers of wood and carriers of water. That is, we ordinary people who produce the circles and other forms common in mandalas find comfort in looking at the mandalas that contain such forms.

The centering that mandalas seem to depict surely reflects a persistent tendency of the human mind. The centering may lead to error, and the results of centering even when carefully executed may in the long term dissolve in the void with all things mortal. But centering is something we try to do; we need to try circumspectly, and many mandalas strongly evoke an imaginative world in which we might be successful in our attempts.

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2. Phosphenes: ibid., 278.
3. C.G. Jung and French Dissociationists: John Ryan Haule, "From Somnambulism to the Archetypes," *Psychoanalytic Review,* 71, no. 4 (1984): 635–59.
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5. Joseph L. Henderson, other early Jungians, Christiana Morgan and her visions: Deirdre Bair, *Jung* (Back Bay, 2003), 376–95; C.G. Jung, *The Visions Seminars,* 2 vols. (Spring Publications, 1976).
6. Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious* (Basic, 1970), 447–8.
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8. C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy,* vol. 12, *Collected Works* (Princeton University Press, 1980), 194–205.
9. Alan W. Watts: Foreword to John Weir Perry, *Lord of the Four Quarters* (Collier Books, 1970), vii–viii.
10. Mandala image 0016 - APAE.
11. C.G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis,* vol. 14, *Collected Works* (Princeton University Press, 1980), 546.

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