

Anima: True and False

Jungian literature most commonly understands anima as a content of our consciousness/unconsciousness phenomenon.

Fundamental question of this paper is: is anima just another, if even far more subtle, content of this consciousness/unconsciousness phenomenon, or is anima the very transcendence of these contents. Is anima truly, what one could call, the radical other?

In order to understand all this one must understand what is this consciousness / unconsciousness phenomenon.

No doubt that human consciousness/unconsciousness is a complex phenomenon. To complicate it even more I will add that consciousness is not only what is known as consciousness in a narrow sense of the word, but it is also what is known as unconsciousness.

The etymology of the word consciousness consists of the Latin word con- meaning "with" and the word scientia meaning "knowledge". Also the Latin word scire meaning "to cut" is the root word for scientia, knowledge. Consciousness then literally means looking at life through (or with) knowing, or cutting the unbroken wholeness of life in an arbitrary way. We are naively prone to think that we have direct contact with the so-called external and internal world. We by the virtue of the cumbersome presence of consciousness, experience the world only indirectly. We experience it through the various contents of consciousness which include also, what is known as, the psychological unconscious. The psychological unconscious is wrongly coined unconscious because it still has its own content like the consciousness itself. In his

2.

Tavistock lectures even Jung himself, when asked what is unconsciousness said ; unconsciousness is the most distant corner of consciousness. We may then more accurately speak of the conscious consciousness and the unconscious consciousness or even more accurately concealed or tacit consciousness.

But there is, and this is of the paramount importance such a "thing" as the true unconscious, fundamentally different from the psychological unconscious. The etymology is in the Latin un- meaning negation, this implies total negation of the contents of consciousness. This true unconscious, so radically different from the, what is known as the psychological unconscious, is one and the same thing as the void in Zen, the emptiness, nothingness of Buddhism as well as in the case of our anima, the breath. The enormously important practical implication of the presence of the true unconscious, meaning looking at life without the cumbersome parameters of the psychological knowledge, the consciousness/psychological unconsciousness, is an opening of a new instrument, namely the instrument of seeing. The mind that looks at life through the apriory knowledge, the viewing mind, may be called scientific mind. The mind that looks at life without this knowledge the seeing mind, may be called the truly religious mind. The nature and function of consciousness requires further understanding of its most basic building blocks. Thought (knowing, image, memory) is the most basic and irreducible building block of consciousness. The very essence of any thought is its liminality. To put it simply, thought, psychological thought, that also includes feelings, emotions, affect and sensations, is limited. The presence of consciousness than; thanks to the essential liminality of thought, inevitably forms, otherwise formless life, into a certain ordering that amounts to nothing more than a subjective fabrication. The immediate

actuality of life prior to any consciousness is a cluster of sense impressions. Actuality on that level makes no sense; the world is nothing more than a random sense data.

Consciousness, the intricate web of psychological thought than, as we said includes feelings, emotions, through the power of it's semantic articulation, brings to life the most basic images known as sense images. Thus, so called world of things, comes into being through this most basic geometry of the mind. This world of things is also known as a phenomenal world. (phan-, Latin for fantasy) or the world of appearance. The liminality of consciousness the web of thought, not only brings into being the world of things, it also produces the so-called inner world.

The same liminality of thought generates the sense of isolation. Loneliness, anguish, anxiety, angst, anger all coming from the Latin root word angle implying being cornered by the liminality of thought. One may say consciousness "angulates", corners us, producing all those suffering feelings. Its liminality is also projective, producing misperception, illusion. Its liminality being divisive produces strife and conflict. All that feels like a complex and unbearable perturbation that wont to heal itself. This attempt of consciousness to heal itself by the psychological unconsciousness is well known as psychological development, becoming, individuation process. Does or even can the psychological unconsciousness heal the troubled consciousness when it itself is also trouble by the same inherit problematics as the consciousness itself. It can only perpetuate its intrinsically inherent problematic; perpetuate its suffering.

In seeing that every aspect of consciousness, conscious consciousness as well as unconsciousness conscious is absolutely incapable of healing itself one asks than what will do it?

As long a content of consciousness anima is equally not capable of healing the inherently troubled consciousness. Attempting of anima, as an exponent of consciousness to heal consciousness would be as absurd as attempting to wash blood with blood.

We have a radically different situation if anima is not seen anymore as the content of consciousness / unconsciousness but rather as the true unconsciousness. In that true unconscious there is negation of all the contents of consciousness/ unconsciousness. In other traditions that negation is known as void, nothingness, stillness. In that stillness there is healing.

Already the etymology of the word anima points in the direction of uncovering its true nature and function. The word anima is Latin but derived from Sanscrit, Persian, Arabic, Greek root an- meaning breath. The word animal truly means that which breaths, that which is alive. Consequently isn't than anima factor of aliveness par excelance so lacking in our lives? For me for years, anima was not a soul,

Christian, or otherwise. That kind of anima, so cluttered with heavy notions, dogmas, psychological images one could call false anima for that anima is not breath; that kind of anima could not possibly be a factor of aliveness, factor of healing. To awaken anima as breath, anima as true unconscious, a true anima, meant to awaken aliveness in our lives.

As it was already said to come upon that so needed aliveness is not a matter of becoming, developing nor even individuating of consciousness/ unconsciousness phenomena but is rather in dissolving of these or at least in corroding them. It's not a via positiva but rather a via negativa. It's flowering of the flower and then its withering. In far eastern tradition withering away of things is far more important then the flowering itself. Their

5

esthetics finding ideals not in perfectly portrayed flower but rather in that beautiful flower in decay.

Even the title of the paper, Anima: True and False already, even though, cryptically depicts the question of true nature of anima differentiating false anima from the true one.

In understanding the nature and function of consciousness one clearly sees than anima that ascert itself as consciousness is false anima. But anima that takes place amidst the desolution or at least corrosion of the consciousness is true anima.

Love and anima are closely connected if not the same issues. Again the etymology of the word love coming from its root word leave implies, not unlike in the case of anima, dissolving, corrosion, leaving, letting go of our consciousness / unconsciousness phenomena. As long as anima and love are the contents of consciousness / unconsciousness realm they are inevitably dualistic in nature. Dualistic in nature means division into separate, delineated things. I love you, I love my mother, father, child, god, things, ideals, are all examples of that kind of dualism. I and you are divided, separate things each longing for the other. I and you, the so called outer world, is as divisive as our consciousness / unconsciousness the so called, inner world. They are, actually not two different things.

Psychologically speaking consciousness, by the virtue of its liminality is projective creating subject and object, object being nothing more than the projection of the subject. In order for one to come upon anima, and for the same reason to come upon love, one must see through the most obstinate, most resistant fact that the observed is only a projection of the observer. It is imperative to see that the I and the other are one and the same thing.

In seeing this obstinate thing, both the observer and the observed collapse. Not unlike in spontaneity what remains is an unbroken field of life devoid of any dualism. As long as there is an intactness of the subject and the object there is a distance between them. As long as there is a distance between you and I we are galaxies apart. In seeing the distance between the observer and the observed, in seeing that both are false things, both being nothing more than the web of consciousness, they both collapse.

In collapsing of the subject and object, collapses the distance between them and that is a true intimacy. That intimacy is love, that intimacy is anima. It is interesting to remark that the I, the subject that longs for love is an epidemic of isolation and loneliness inherently preventing love ever to happen. As long as that I is present love can not happen.

In Jungian psychology there is no subject of more importance than the subject of anima. Most Jungians see anima as content of conscious / unconsciousness. Hillman sees it equally as content of consciousness / unconsciousness but also sees it in dissolving of these contents. We will enlist couple of notions of anima that will shed some light on the subject of false and true anima.

One, the most known one, and Jung himself held it very dear to his heart, was that anima is the feminine in man. This is an anima confined only to man. Hillman called it also counter sexuality in man.

Further notions are anima as a container of eros. He also talks of anima as moodiness, falling in love, possessiveness. By introducing a notion of anima as femininity Hillman sees it as equal property of men and women allowing equality, men and women to bring out their feminine side.

Further are the notions of anima as an reflective phenomenon generating more consciousness / unconsciousness shaping psyche, imagination, mythologizing the world. All these notions are the notions of anima as an exponent of consciousness, false anima. When Hillman ascribes notion of depersonalization to anima he brings into the picture a radically different attitude born not out of perpetuation of consciousness but rather out of its corrosion, its desolving. Images of death, destruction, major natural catastrophes indicate the true anima. Ultimately when Hillman calls anima the mediatrix of the unknown he is radically departing from the anima as the usual affirmation of consciousness/ unconsciousness pointing in the direction of the desolution of these contents. Human mind, consciousness with all its well known notions, complexes, archetypes must, if only even for a moment, be in abeyance in order anything to be seen as it is. If mind is not in abeyance, does not collapse one does not see what is. One only sees projectively. Seeing projectively is not seeing at all.