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From *Metapsychologie* to *Realpsychologie*: Archetypal Imagery in the Psychologies of C. G. Jung and J. Hillman

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Słowa kluczowe: obraz, archetyp, C. G. Jung, James Hillman, psychologia archetypowa

Abstract

Although the relation between the theories of C. G. Jung and J. Hillman has been thoroughly analyzed, this paper brings a new aspect of their lineage of thought to academic light. By means of the ideas of psychic Image and archetype, it reconstructs their evolution of thought—here presented in the context of Freudian *Metapsychologie* (with its primary meaning a psychological science replacing metaphysics) and Dilthey's project of *Realpsychologie* (a descriptive psychology of dealing with the real activity of the soul). This study focuses on the years 1912–1979, during which period the independent Jungian school was established, and Archetypal Psychology by J. Hillman was formulated. The text is designed to provide both critical and historical account for depth psychology and psychology of Image.

Psychological truth by no means excludes metaphysical truth, though psychology, as a science, has to hold aloof from all metaphysical assertions. [...] Though we do not possess a physics of the soul, and are not even able to observe it and judge it [...] “outside” ourselves, and can therefore know nothing objective about it since all knowledge of the psyche is itself psychic, in spite of all this the soul is the only experient of life and existence.

C. G. Jung (1976, p. 231/CW5§344)

Introduction: Image in the Depths

This article refers to concepts which very rarely appear in the context of academic psychology. In fact, writing on the soul, images and polytheism seem to be reserved for (sub)disciplines of critical philosophy and religious studies—even if their object of study narrows down only to the field of depth psychology. As each school incorporated into the category of depth psychology takes a different angle on the elusiveness of psychic images, our goal is to get back to the philosophical and practical affinities of this notion as seen by Analytical Psychology and a specific branch of it known as Archetypal Psychology. It is unsurprising that picturing the idea of the soul as consisting of countless inner images is a very complex task for academics—especially for psychologists. The idea of Image reconstructed here ought to follow the Jung-Hillman lineage, linking the Swiss master with his rebellious American student.

In concrete terms, the main goal of this paper is to examine the evolution of the idea of Image from the psychologies of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), Swiss psychiatrist and founder of Analytical Psychology, to James Hillman (1926–2011), American psychologist and post-Jungian thinker and founder of Archetypal Psychology. The shift in meaning and function of the Image is depicted amid the historical zeitgeist and theoretical deconstruction rooted into the individual story of each thinker. The crucial idea presented here is an outline of the changes made by the Archetypal school to classic Jungian thought. While Jung used to work with inner images, treating them as universal expressions of the psyche, Hillman focused his work on their relativity, taking psychology back to antiquity and corresponding our inner worlds of images with a dream-like chaotic Pantheon of gods understood as literalized personifications of archetypal ideas.

While Jung's work is widely known to Polish academics, Hillman's legacy still remains largely overlooked, only appearing on the Polish publishing market with a nearly 40-year delay. From the standpoint of Polish academic psychology, from which the authors are speaking, few scholars have taken on the complex task of bringing Hillman's ideas to university light. Just to name some prominent examples, Archetypal Psychology was referred to by Kudelski (1997), Dudek (2010) and Stawiszyński (2006, 2007, 2012). Here, our view introduces Hillman's legacy as an example of so-called Real-Psychology, previously outlined in the works of Pankalla and Czapkowski (2017, 2020), Pankalla and Kośnik (2018, 2022) and Czapkowski (2017).

This work is an attempt to provide a critical and historical account of the idea of Image as seen by two depth psychologists. In the words of Danziger (2013), modern mainstream psychology is psychology without a soul (psyche); this is the aim of Real-Psychology, to "rediscover the forgotten and uncomfortable concepts of the soul, life, and experience, and acknowledges their realness and relatedness as well as their historical specificity" (Pankalla & Kilian, 2018). The metareflection in psychological research is, however, rarely presented with structured methodology; in fact, critical psychology is a dynamically-evolving field that defies any classification (Teo, 2021, after: Pankalla & Kośnik, 2022). Here, applied methodology starts with a contextual description of each branch of thought, moving to a personal and theoretical background, and narrowing on their relation between image and archetype. Moving to the field of therapeutical implications, Jung and Hillman are compared as two different psychologists using the same concepts in different manner. The metaperspective provided by this text and outlined in the summary focuses on the shift in the philosophical background for both theories.

Mundus Archetypalis: Jungian Insights into the Psychology of Image

C. G. Jung's vision of analytic treatment has attracted large groups of both critics and followers. Just in terms of the most radical views, Jung has been pictured as a prominent academic researcher and therapist (Jacobi, 1973; Shamdasani, 1998), a gnostic philosopher (Hoeller, 1982), a misunderstood mystic and prophetic thinker (Kingsley, 2018), a guru (Storr, 1997) or even a cult leader (Noll, 1997). What is clear is that Jung's early-twentieth-century

empirical attitude combined with his mystic approach resulted in a peculiar system not found anywhere else in the academic psychology of this period. It is questionable whether Jung ever moved from his pre-theoretical phase of thought. Picturing himself as a scholar promoting some views on the psyche rather than as a founder of a coherent intellectual system, Jung never claimed to preside over a group of “Jungians.” What is currently understood as “Jungism” can be attributed to the so-called classical school, trying to present the essence of the master’s thought.¹ The elusiveness of the psychological image presented here has its foundations both in ancient philosophy and in empirical studies over the unconscious dynamics which will be briefly outlined in this paragraph. It is crucial to say that Jung’s view is not heterogenous; his ideas evolve in the course of events, so it is common for some of his notions to change over the thousands of pages of his *Collected Works*, leaving the reader with an impression of occasional inconsistent definitions.

Jung’s Analytical Psychology (or Complex Psychology) focused on four chronologically listed areas (Dudek, 2006, p. 22): (1) the theory of complexes (developed during his Freud-influenced years 1904–1911), (2) the idea of psychological types (presented in 1921 as a first integral thought distinct from psychoanalysis), (3) the archetypal theory (mentioned even earlier, but developed as a main theme after 1932) and (4) the theory of development towards the unity of Self (starting in the 1950s) and the somewhat-linked concept of *unus mundus*, joining his opus with Nobel Prize winner and long-time patient Wolfgang Pauli. Only the third division (along with earlier appearances of the archetypal system) lies in the field of interest for this text reconstructing “Jungian Metapsychology.” Its idea, however, cannot be taken out of historic context.

Born into the poor family of a Protestant Reformed Church pastor, young Carl, from early childhood suffered from loneliness, growing up as he did in the emotionally cool environment of his parents’ marriage (McLynn, 1996; Bair, 2009). Experiencing both his father’s loss of faith and his mother’s tragic descent into depression, Jung was said to have experienced tendencies, uncommon in children, which were interpreted

¹ It is also an important question to be asked in the context of upcoming deliberations on Hillman (Saban, 2014): what is the irremovable essence of Jungian thought if not the soul and its images?

in an extreme way by Winnicott as childhood schizophrenia (McLynn, 1996), which is rather unlikely in the light of Jung's diaries (Shamdasani, 2019). To reconcile the two antagonistic personalities that developed in his teens, he decided to continue the legacy of his grandfather, and chose medicine as his life goal. As he admitted during his *Analytical Psychology* seminar in 1925 (1989, p. 8), "I wanted to catch the intruders in the mind—the intruders that make people laugh when they should not laugh, and cry when they should not cry." His early works focus around the problem of the Unconscious and its self-regulation: occult phenomena like mediumism and hypnotism (following his interest in spiritualistic sessions secretly carried out in his family) as well as cryptomnesia and complexes studied in the way of an association test that brought him international fame (Błocian, 2000). In fact, his background can be read as an attempt to pass on Swiss folk knowledge to science. Jung spent his childhood in rural areas which, according to McLynn (1996) were still rife with superstitions, paganism, or even economically-justified incest. Jung must have faced an environmental shift entering from still intellectually-privileged village presbyterial life into the academic world. From the outset, his academic work was situated on the bridge between Aryan psychology and empirical studies, and can be treated as a return to the indigenous aspects of the mind (in contrast to the universal Greek-oriented psyche by Hillman, as discussed later). Fitting into the landscape of industrially developing Switzerland, his approach faced many problems during the rise of fascism in Europe, with attempts made to appropriate it as a part of the ideology.

To go further into Jung's history also means revisiting classic Freudian Psychoanalysis, presented here as Jung's (and at the same time Hillman's) intellectual background and prototype for his Analytical Psychology project. Before Jung developed his school, he became deeply involved in the Freudian movement which left an indelible—but still hugely overrated (Shamdasani, 2012)—mark on him, as that time it remained the only trend in psychology towards studying the unconscious psychic life. The father-son bond between Freud and Jung was built on academic partnership: Freud provided an original system of analysis and psychotherapy, while Jung provided academic studies which helped to promote Freud's marginalized ideas in the academic world—even outside Europe. Much has been written on their breakup—most of it irrelevant in the current context—but at the core of their arguments lies the vision of Metapsychology, originally

understood by Freud as his project to replace metaphysics with more profound psychological studies (1975a/SE6, p. 259).

The term *Metapsychologie*, first used publicly in 1901 in its meaning above, underwent changes, as described by Pajor (2009), and was retuned in Freud's 1915 (1975b/SE14) work entitled *Das Unbewusste* (in English *The Unconscious*), just to cover the idea of topography and the dynamics of unconscious processes. This work appeared following the severance of ties with Jung. Both pioneers struggled to provide an extensive psychological answer to the problem of metaphysics to which their work needed to respond, due to extending their scope from a clinical to a more humanistic perspective. As Freud's ideas are not a part of this study, it is sufficient to outline his attitude toward the exploration of the Unconscious, also crucial for the Jungian perspective: "Our psychical topography has for the present nothing to do with anatomy; it has reference not to anatomical localities, but to regions in the mental apparatus, wherever they may be situated in the body" (Pajor, 2009, p. 175); included in Freud's so-called Papers on Metapsychology, mistranslated into English as the id-ego-superego relation (Bettelheim, 1983), this lies just beside our imaginal concern. But it was Jung who decided to take another step further than Freud, who had declined to explore metaphysics.

Their disagreement can be seen as a parallel process to the publication of Jung's two-volume text *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* from 1912 and 1913—a digressive work in which Jung fully outlined his revision of psychoanalysis and distanced himself from Psychoanalysis (mainly though the extension of Freud's sexual libido to generalized psychic energy). It is hard to talk about Jung's *Metapsychology*, as this term needs to stay strictly Freudian, but *Wandlungen ...* at that time was intended to cover issues unspeakable in Psychoanalysis and—historically more importantly—finally provide the first extensive account of psychoanalysis in the USA, even before Freud, under the name *Psychology of the Unconscious* in 1916 (1992²) (Bair, 2009). Apparently (intended or not) it became a response to Freud's then-developed Metapsychologie or even an attempt to go back to

² *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* was published in two parts in German in the psychoanalytic magazine *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen* (vols. 3 (1911–1912) and 4 (1912–1913)). The final edition of this text came out in 1967 as the *Collected Works* vol. 5, revised, enhanced, and renamed *The Symbols of Transformation*.

its original 1901 meaning. The most important change Jung made in the topography of psyche (which, for Freud, was unacceptable due to metaphysic or even occult affinity) was adding the additional layer of psychic apparatus to cover its collective aspect. Dealing with the issues of transcultural psyche, Jung provided an important insight to the psychology of Image. Taking Freud's symbolical approach, he refused to use exclusively the personal meaning of symbols and focused on their even psychoidal existence. Citing Jung (1976, p. 77/CW5§114), “[s]ymbols are not allegories and not signs: they are images of contents which for the most part transcend consciousness.” And, crucially for the background of Image psychology, “[w]e have still to discover that such contents are real, that they are agents with which it is not only possible but absolutely necessary for us to come to terms” (Jung, 1976, p. 77/CW5§114). Combining these words with Freud's previously cited comments, we can address Jung's Psychoanalysis as a method for examining this universal realm of ideas, independent from bodily functioning. This is the symbolic life that exists above conscious functioning.

Jung developed his theory towards the ego-Self dichotomy; the first being the center of the conscious part of the psyche, and the second governing the unconscious realm, linking its personal and collective aspects. Taking the metaphor of Jung (as described by Jacobi, 1973), the ego is an island emerging from the boundless ocean of the psyche. What inhabits this ocean can be called archetypes. As stated before, Jung's definitions of archetypes vary depending on the period from which they were published—noticeably, late Jung mixed their philosophical features with biological aspects. As an initial view, let's continue, in the words of Jung (1976, p. 232/CW5§344):

The archetypes are the numinous, structural elements of the psyche and possess a certain autonomy and specific energy which enables them to attract, out of the conscious mind, those contents which are best suited to themselves. The symbols act as transformers, their function being to convert libido from a 'lower' into a 'higher' form.

This passage originates from *Wandlungen* ... and shows Jung from the period before his emotional crisis caused by the 1914 breakup with Freud. According to Adams (2008, p. 107), “[b]oth Freud and Jung acknowledged the existence of archetypes, which Freud called phylogenetic ‘schemata’, or phylogenetic ‘prototypes’.” The Oedipus complex was the first discovered (or invented?) archetype, on which Freud decided to build

his system of treatment. Taking the explorations further cost Jung his friendship with Freud.

After the publication of Jung's *Liber Novus* (2009) and his personal notes in *The Black Books* (2019) we no longer need to speculate as to the contents of this monumental calligraphic volume bound in red leather, which illustrates his pioneering self-therapeutic work concentrating on images and fantasies. He linked poetic works and visionary art (such as, e.g., Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*) with facing the unconscious potential; as Shamdasani says (2009, p. 63), "[h]e held that these works stemmed from the collective unconscious. In such instances, the creative process consisted in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image. The archetypes released in us a voice that was stronger than our own." This leads us to the fundamental archetype-Image distinction. In a later work from 1946, Jung (1981, p. 213/CW8§417) distinguished archetype *per se*, being a purely hypothetical, incognizable, psychoid entity, and archetype *in se*, being an Image, or "representation" (Jung, 1981), an inner or outer expression of this form. This leads us to the conclusion that the interchangeability of the terms "archetype" and "psychic images" is partially possible. According to Adams (2008, p. 107), Jung "spoke of archetypes as if they were images. Sometimes, he distinguished more precisely between archetypes as unconscious forms devoid of any specific content and archetypal images as the conscious contents of those forms." This means that he moved their attributes to the "categories of the imagination" (Adams, 2008, p. 107).

Also important in presenting Jungian points is that although it separates archetypes from instincts, it also attributes the evolutionary function of the unconscious. As Jung states in his famous 1935 Tavistock Lectures (Jung, 1980, p. 41/CW18§84):

The brain is born with a finished structure, it will work in a modern way, but this brain has its history. It has been built up in the course of millions of years and represents a history of which it is the result. Naturally it carries with it the traces of that history, exactly like the body, and if you grope down into the basic structure of the mind you naturally find traces of the archaic mind.

This passage raises the ever-recurring issue of combining the philosophical with the medical approach which Jung faced his entire life, finally adding evolutionary significance to the idea of archetypes.

According to Adams (2008, p. 107), “[p]hilosophically, Freud and Jung were neo-Kantian structuralists who believed that hereditary categories of the psyche imaginatively inform human experience in typical or schematic ways.” Another perspective on Jung—preferred by the authors—is also possible: he was struggling to move Psychoanalysis from the Aristotelian approach popular in 19th- and 20th-century psychology (Stachowski, 1992) to Neoplatonic metaphysics, sometimes awkwardly mixing it with medical biologism and evolutionism. As he stated: “I very much agree with you that we have to grapple with the knowledge content of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism. These are the systems that contain the material which are destined to become the foundation of the theory of the unconscious” (Jung to Lang, 1918, as cited by Shamdasani, 2019, p. 67 [v. I]). In the light of this passage, it is even likely that Jung deliberately built his system on Neoplatonic ontology. Just to name some of the philosophical studies, there are remarkable similarities between the systems of Jung and Plotinus (Barnes, 1945; a text published during Jung’s lifetime and still relevant despite his as yet unwritten and unpublished texts) and Jung and Pseudo-Dionysius (Henderson, 2014). This in turn has crucial meaning for the psychology of archetypal image postulated here. It also puts into question the purely scientific, meta-psychological approach to his work which was negated by Hillman’s usage of his terms.

Mundus Imaginalis: Into the Postmodern Visions of Image

There is probably no better introduction to Archetypal Psychology than that given by James Hillman, its founder, (or godfather, as he used to call himself). His school was founded with the “intention of moving beyond clinical inquiry within the consulting room of psychotherapy by situating itself within the culture of Western imagination” (2004a/UE1, p. 13). In his essential work *Re-Visioning Psychology*, Hillman (1975, p. xi) says:

Here I am working toward a psychology of soul that is based in a psychology of image. Here I am suggesting both a poetic basis of mind and a psychology that starts neither in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behavior, but in the processes of imagination.

The passage above shows that the connection with biological affinity is cut. The term “Archetypal Psychology”, was first used by Hillman in his 1970 essay *Why Archetypal Psychology?* (2004c/UE1) to distinguish his artistic, cultural and historical approach from Jungian thought, which was built on clinical ground (Hillman, 2004a/UE1, p. 28). Apart from its therapeutic (or sometimes anti-therapeutic) inclinations, Hillman’s thought was designed to become a cultural movement incorporating, in a later phase, themes such as the pro-masculinity movement or gerontology. Concerning its extensiveness, this text refers to Hillman’s archetypal opus from the 1960s and 70s.

In terms of the essence of Hillman’s thought, it would not be an overstatement to say that he retains the psychodynamics of depth psychology (emphasizing the unconscious mechanisms governing the psyche), at the same time rejecting most of the causality it goes with (just sticking with the physical-archetypal co-occurrence). His work can be described as a bridge between Greek antiquity, the Renaissance and Romantic thought. This philosophical mixture, however, is treated with a postmodern attitude. There are three main inspirations for Archetypal Psychology (Pankalla & Kośnik, 2022): (1) the Neoplatonic tradition represented by Plotinus, Ficino and Vico (cf. Hillman, 2021/UE8), (2) the Jungian school of thought, (3) the legacy of Henri Corbin, the famous Islamologist who equated *mundus archetypalis* with *mundus imaginalis*, hence preparing the ground for transferring the principles of the Unconscious to the power of imagination. All these personae were named by Hillman as archetypal psychologists who anticipated his writings.

In a similar manner to Jung’s thought, Hillman’s ideas were children of their time. Facing financial problems, the Hillman family ran a hotel business. His mother, Madeline, a dominant and ambivalent figure, was the daughter of a prominent rabbi, Joseph Krauskopf, whom James never met as he died three years before he was born. Even Hillman himself, admitted “She wanted me to be big, like her father” (Russell, 2013, p. 25, after Tacey, 2014b, p. 489). She put pressure on him to seek fame, calling him the “golden boy” among his three siblings. James spent his teenage years during World War II, joining the US Navy and finally moving to Europe, starting studies in English Literature in Paris and Dublin. His European period was marked by his psychotherapeutic training in Zurich’s C. G. Jung Institute, where he gained a reputation as a “bad boy” and “free spirit” (Russell, 2013, p. 386);

an extreme illustration of this was probably his sexual involvement with one of his patients which ended up with his returning to America. Meeting and talking to Jung in person in 1954 exacerbated his Icarus complex (Russell, 2013, p. 386), making him irritated as he saw Jung surrounded by admirers.

The social changes in America of the 1960s and 70s were the perfect basis for Hillman's psychology. According to Tacey (2014a, p. 479), the hero myth and Jungian individuation, so important in the Jungian metaphor of individuation, faced extensive social devaluation in the times when Hillman's theory was beginning to arise: "[a]t this time we were witnessing the breakdown of European colonialism, the decline of monarchy, the rise of civil rights, black rights, women's rights, homosexual rights." In this age of relativity, Hillman's trickster attitude expressed the spirit of this time—just like his *Puer* papers marking the 1967 Summer of Love in San Francisco (Russell, 2013, p. 590).

Archetypal Psychology may be considered as one of three main (post) Jungian schools of thought, set by Samuels (1985) among the classic school (not "orthodox"; sticking to the understanding of Jungian concepts as carried out by Jung) and the British developmental school of Michael Fordham (taking a similar direction to that followed by Kleinian psychoanalysis while redefining Freud's ideas). A different classification is offered by Kudelski (1997), who placed the archetypal approach in the "'third generation' of orthodox Jungian school," which, in opposition to the "second generation" trying to systematize their master's thought, provided a new understanding of old terms. Nevertheless, the idea of treating the archetypal school as an integral, uniform discipline is arguable since there is no fixed distinction between the current archetypal psychologist and other widely-understood post-Jungians. This fact led Tacey (2014a, p. 467) to call archetypal psychology Hillman's "dream of a post-Jungian future that was never able to be realized." What is important among the terminology controversies surrounding the archetypal school is that it should actually be called "imaginal" psychology, as in fact it is based on Hillman's understanding of the imagination and not on Jung's idea of archetype (Odajnyk, 1984, after Tacey, 2014a, p. 467). In fact it places the soul (psyche) in a central place, making it a basic perspective and a starting point for any psychological thinking.

Re-Visioning Psychology was Hillman's breakthrough opus, both personal, bringing him out of depression, and professional, being a solid

follow-up in his work towards establishing the Archetypal school. In his groundbreaking work, adapted from his Yale University *Terry Lectures* materials, Hillman criticized current psychology, proposing his own, antiquity-inspired idea of Soul. So central and omnipresent in his work, the soul was presented with a more poetic attitude than scientific:

[b]y soul I mean, first of all, a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself. This perspective is reflective; it mediates events and makes differences between ourselves and everything that happens. Between us and events, between the doer and the deed, there is a reflective moment—and soul-making means differentiating this middle ground. (Hillman, 1975, p. x)

In his 1964 debut book, *Suicide and Soul*, Hillman was already suggesting the separation of the psychiatric and psychological approaches, emphasizing the role of psychology as the science of the soul and the role of medicine as the science of the body (1978, p. 19). In this view, the soul belongs exclusively to humanistic, or even religious cognition (1978, p. 46):

The soul is a deliberately ambiguous concept resisting all definition in the same manner as do all ultimate symbols which provide the root metaphors for the systems of human thought. “Matter” and “nature” and “energy” have ultimately the same ambiguity [...].

One of the most controversial of Hillman’s revisions of Jungian psychology is the rejection of Christianity which, especially in his later phase, was a central point of Jung’s work. Continuing with the words of Tacey (2014a, p. 476, “[a]long with religion, Hillman threw out Jung’s topic of Christ as a symbol of the Self [...]. Also deleted were Jung’s interests in good and evil in the concept of God, and he threw out God too, replacing God with many gods.” This decentralized view situates humanity not on an endless journey towards unity but emphasizes that the current state is always the final state. According to Samuels (1985), the Hillmanian view interprets the rise of monotheism as a metaphor for the limitation imposed on contemporary Western culture’s imagination; in social terms, monotheism may be interpreted as totalitarianism. As he states (1975, p. 26), “Polytheistic psychology refers to the inherent dissociability of the psyche and the location of consciousness in multiple figures and centers.” Additionally, Hillman, in his personifying manner, addressed loosely-connected (or

even fragmented) parts of the soul with Images, being irreducible expressions of archetypes (Hillman, 2004c, 2004d/UE1). After Corbin, *mundus archetypalis* is, at the same time, *mundus imaginalis*. The boundaries of the soul are the boundaries of the imagination; what is unconscious is at the same time imaginal.

This leads us to Hillman's (1975, p. xiii) vision of archetype, functioning as an adjective rather than a verb:

Let us then imagine archetypes as the deepest patterns of psychic functioning, the roots of the soul governing the perspectives we have of ourselves and the world. They are the axiomatic, self-evident images to which psychic life and our theories about it ever return. They are similar to other axiomatic first principles, the models or paradigms, that we find in other fields. [...] All ways of speaking of archetypes are translations from one metaphor to another.

In other words, Hillman denies any scientific cognition of archetypes itself; in fact, even a scientific approach is one of "dominant fantasies that govern consciousness" (1975, p. xiii). Archetypes are, similarly to the Jungian view, recognizable only through Images, with the exception that the reality postulated by Hillman is neither true nor untrue, and the phenomena recorded by the individual are "fully experienced, but wholly imaginary": dreams, behaviors, emotions or symptoms (Stawiszyński, 2007, p. 11). This means that there is no archetype per se (Hillman, 2004a/UE1). As our perception is limited by the means of our body, our functioning is limited by pre-cognitive Images. The Image, as seen by Hillman, does not refer to the construct of perception or some inner truth. The source of any existing Image is the innate activity of the soul. Even the Soul consists of images, while being one of them. For Hillman (1975, p. 23), "Man is primarily an imagemaker and our psychic substance consists of images; our being is imaginal being, an existence in imagination."

The motto of imaginal psychology is "stick to the image," which means not to interpret it but treat it as it is, and make it a basic reference point. This rule is drawn from Jung (1982, p. 149/CW 16§320, after Adams, 2008) who stated that "[t]o understand the dream's meaning I must stick as close as possible to the dream images." In Hillman's view, Images are not what we see, but what we perceive.

Sailing Over the Styx: The Imaginal Work against Ego

Taking a distanced perspective, Hillman's school has met with extensive—and often justified—criticism, as summarized by Tacey (2014a, 2014b) in a rather “orthodox” Jungian manner (Paris, 2014). His main reservations can be summed up as follows: First of all, Hillman's relation to Jung remains in many ways controversial. He was accused of copying Jung, misreading his texts, ignoring too many important aspects of his legacy, and marginalizing his authorship in his writings. Secondly, his psychology was claimed to be selective, non-historic and focusing only on the “pagan” antiquity and Resistance, which resulted in his omitting the Christian aspect of human psyche, so vitally outlined by Jung and—more significantly—culturally relevant (even for non-Jungians) in the context of the analysis of western humanity's condition. Thirdly, the often emphasized relativity of his ideas can be seen as leading to the rejection of any objective point of view. It makes his work beyond criticism and—in consequence—outside the academic world. Most of all, Hillman's theory is assessed by Tacey (2014b) to be deeply submerged in his personal history and family issues, with Hillman unconsciously acting out of his mother-induced inferiority complex and the absence of his father. Just to give an example, depicting Jung as old-fashioned (Tacey, 2014a) puts Hillman in the Oedipal dilemma of father assassination—just as Freud had interpreted Jung's relation to him. An important point was also made by Adams (2008), who claimed that “[...] the archetypal school embraces what Jung tries (never, he admits, entirely with success) to avoid—that is, what he calls ‘metaphysical concretism’,” which in Hillmanian thought is distinctive in dressing archetypes in the faces of ancient gods. His “anima fascination” leading to polytheism, “personifying, aestheticism, and an anti-heroic stance” (Tacey, 2014a, p. 481), are considered to be crucial points in early Jung's ideas, which he finally overcame on his journey to psychological maturity. To quote Tacey (2014a, p. 481), “[f]or Hillman, however, these are not transitional but final positions. It thus seems that Hillman is reverting to an earlier stage in Jung's thinking and calling it new.” Nevertheless, those weakest points of Archetypal Psychology, settled in different context, may be considered also as its advantages.

Undeniably, in the light of current academic psychology, Hillman's Archetypal legacy has no value due to its ambiguity. Hillman's view has also lost its connection with Freud's Metapsychologie. But, taking another view,

it links the clinical approach with a different perspective, not considered but also valid as a method of cognition. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), a German philosopher preceding Freudian psychology, was an author of a qualitative research perspective which he referred to (1982, p. 364) as *Realpsychologie*. Being a historiosophical method, Real Psychology presents studies of human nature as based in historical evolution; it studies the contents of the human soul, the connections occurring, and activities (Pankalla & Źmidziński, 2015; Pankalla & Kilian, 2018). His project, anticipating other descriptive methods, was an attempt at creating humanities-based science which does not deny natural sciences but exposes their insufficiency for a multi-level understanding of human functioning. In 1849, Dilthey (1977, p. 41) referred to explanatory psychology as follows:

The first distinctive character of explanatory psychology is [...] its synthetic or constructive procedure. It derives all the available data of inner experience and its extensions from a limited number of well-determined elements. The emergence of this constructive tendency in psychology is historically connected to the constructive spirit of the physical and natural sciences of the 17th century.

Therefore, psychology may describe, analyze, interpret, and, consequently, lead to understanding the content of the soul. Dilthey treats human life as individual and total, encapsulated inside the individual and social history, i.e. leading the cultural context (Pankalla & Kośnik, 2022). Characteristically for Dilthey, along with Jung and Hillman, they recognized psychic events as real and irreducible. The (meta)cultural view addressing the archetypal structures as presented by Jung and Hillman have been characterized by Pankalla and Czapkowski (2017) as the self-named Real Cultural Psychology. Continuing this perspective, our deliberations can be relieved from the academically-induced shame of not maturing to medical psychology.

Just to take our imaginal perspective to the ongoing clinical field, we must first consider Hillman's attitude to the helping professions. His approach differed over the years. He started as a prominent Jungian analyst and eventually he quit consulting in the 1980s to "make contact with the world by working with groups, and doing 'public speaking, teaching, publishing and writing'" (Tacey, 2014b, p. 429). Nevertheless, Hillman's system—despite promoting an anti-therapeutic and anti-psychiatric attitude—is claimed to be

used by Jungian psychotherapists in their clinical practice (Samuels, 1984). Hillman's psychotherapeutic inclinations were even presented by Butler (2014), who provided an outline of applied psychotherapy according to the archetypal movement. If there is any strictly Hillman-inspired therapeutic work, it must be work focused on images. According to Samuels (1985, p. 199), "the business of analysis is not to cure the soul but rather to facilitate that soul-making mentioned just now—not to 'deal with' deep problems but rather to let problems become deeper." Let Hillman (1975, p. 75) speak again: "By regarding our symptoms as the accidents that brought us into therapy rather than as the *via regia* into soul, we neglect their importance in soul-making." As with Jung, the goal of analysis was establishing the ego-Self relation; Hillman's purpose was to weaken (or relativize) ego.

Imaginal therapeutic work is based on dream analysis and active imagination, which is opposed to interpretation, seen rather as a "translation into the language of the waking life" (Hillman, 1979, p. 10). "It is dayworld style of thinking [...] that must be set aside in order to pursue the dream into the home territory"; "[w]e must go over the bridge [to the dream reality] and let it fall behind us" (Hillman, 1979, p. 13). Hillman equated the Unconscious (or rather Imagination) with the dream world or—mythically speaking—the Underworld. It is a matter for the analyst to go with the patient (lat. *patiens* = the one suffering) to their inner Imaginal reality; the analyst's role is to become Charon and help the patient sail over the Styx safely. But serving the mythical role of psychopomps and leading souls towards the Underworld to regain their deeply-hidden inner healing images is not just Hillman's idea. It brings the profession of psychotherapy back to its roots of religious (lat. *religio* = go beyond) and shamanistic meaning (see Pankalla & Czapkowski, 2020) and opens up the issue of ethical values in helping professions, which is beyond the scope of this text.

In Hillman's words, "the wound and the eye are one and the same"; "we hurt because we have no insight and when we gain insight we shall no longer hurt" (1975, p. 107). Image work is closely connected with the Jungian school, even as a method which helped to form this branch during Jung's crisis after his breakup with Freud. Although it serves a different role for Jung and Hillman (integration vs disintegration), it supports the imaginal function of the psyche, opening the doors for self-development towards the archetypal or artistic aspect of the psyche.

Coda: (Re)Imagining the Discipline

The original metapsychological writings of Sigmund Freud were created to provide a structural and topographical model illustrating the dynamics of the psyche. Any philosophical deliberations were only a means of understanding the mechanism of pathology occurring in the inner encounters between the conflicted structures; it was not a thing of Freud's Psychoanalysis to debate over the ontology in a different context than seeking father-like figures. Despite promoting similar assertions, Jung moved psychoanalysis a step further—into the gnostic system, appealing to the inborn religious tendencies of the soul, which Freud (in Jung's view) tried to marginalize. Although Jung did not use the term of metapsychology in his writings (obviously reserved for his rival and ex-father figure), he filled this philosophical gap created by Freud. Hillman eventually deified the metapsychological ideas of archetypes and Images, which were meant to be a theoretical estimation of the functioning of the psyche, but became the realm of a polytheistic, non-religious and non-academic system of soul-making. This is the turning point when Real Psychology begins, treating the psychological and spiritual life as real and unquestionable, sticking to the individual meaning, not replicable, not reducible. Presented in this context, depth psychology changed its function radically, from providing the prerequisite philosophy in order to analyze the pathologies of the mind straight to becoming an "observer of innate images" and corresponding inner and outer realities as complementary.

This brings our consideration back to the idea of Image as a turning point for the presented paradigm shift. From biological to imaginal, from interpretable to irreducible, from clinical to god-like, from pathological to soul-full, from scientific to relative. This evolution also reflects the *senex-puer* dynamics that Hillman spoke of. With his *Re-Visioning...*, Hillman breathed new life into the psychology of the 1970s. He tried to derail psychology, which was heading in a soul-less direction and turn it back to its antique sources. This single fact can be seen as a sufficient argument against treating Hillman's legacy as "often brilliant but sometimes disappointing footnotes on Jung's opus" (Tacey, 2014a, p. 467) or "a dream of the past" (Tacey, 2014b, p. 499). Just as Jung says (2009, p. 143), "[t]he words that oscillate between nonsense and supreme meaning are the oldest and truest."

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Abbreviations used in the text

CW—*The collected works of C. G. Jung*

SE—*The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*

UE—*Uniform edition of the writings of James Hillman*

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