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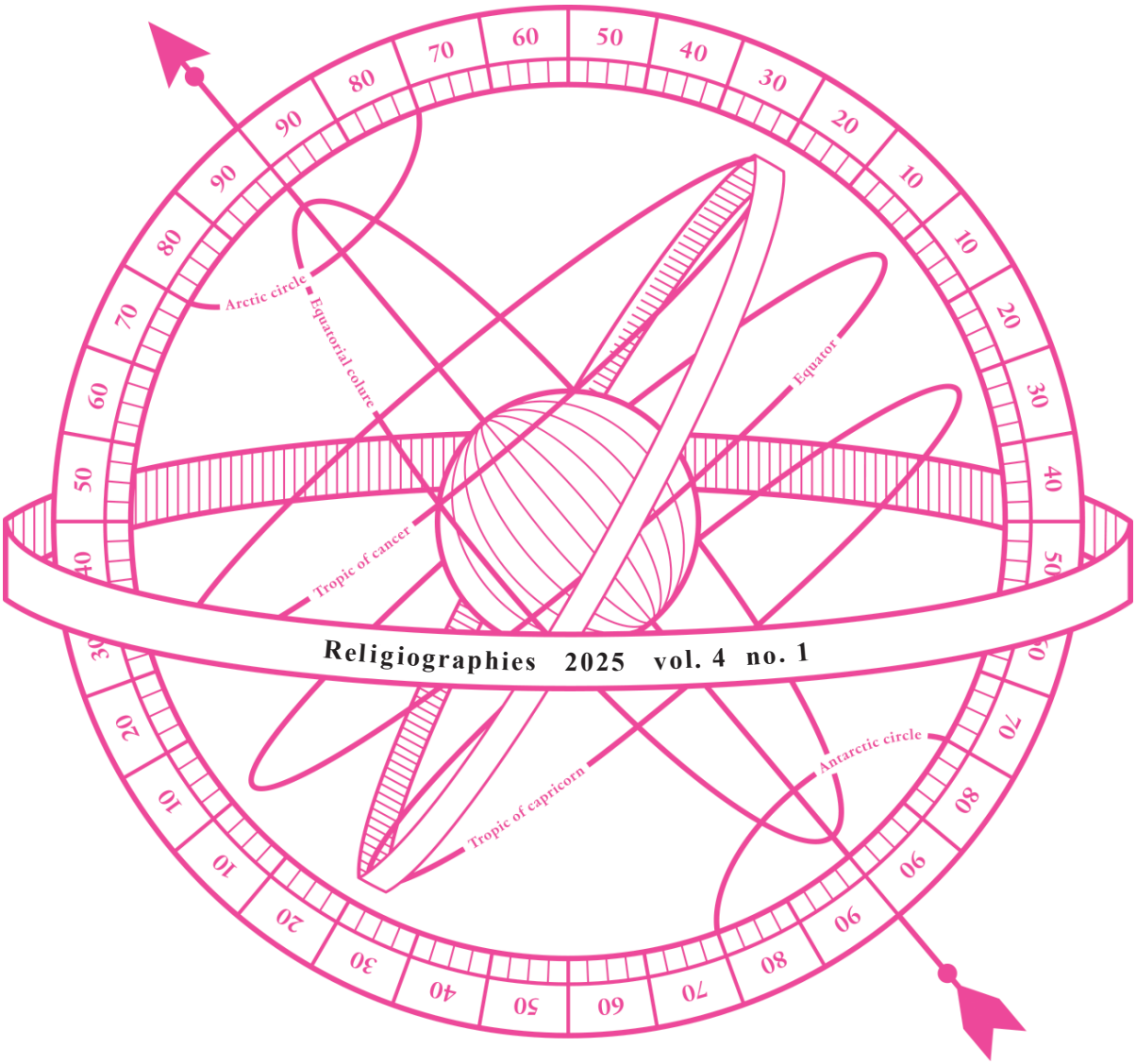

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Ancient Religions in Carl Gustav Jung's Visual Works: A Mythopoetic

SÉBASTIEN MANTEGARI BERTORELLI

Author
Sébastien Mantegari Bertorelli
University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
sebastien.mantegari.bertorelli@gmail.com

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Abstract
Carl Gustav Jung was one of the most prominent figures at the meetings of the Eranos Circle. The comparative research presented on the shores of Lake Maggiore on Eastern thought and its possible relationship with Western philosophies, on the dialogues between different religious phenomena, and on archetypal motifs not only resonated with the scientific research of the psychiatrist, but also lay at the heart of his own visual practice. Jung's creative works were attempts to externalise unconscious psychic processes and a form of visualisation of what he called his "personal myth." In his images, Jung depicts various divinities or rituals, in a clear syncretic effort that gradually frees itself from any pre-established mythical referent to create an original and personal mythical visual system: a mythopoetic through art. By emphasising the links that unite it to the research of Eranos, this article sets out to study the various mythical representations present in Jung's visual works. The aim here is to try to better understand how the psychiatrist and creator seeks to constitute a very personal plastic and visual representation of myths, and divinities by transposing his research onto images.

Introduction

Among the many intellectuals, scientists, artists, and writers who frequented the shores of Lake Maggiore to give a presentation or attend the meetings of the Eranos Circle, the name and figure of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) are certainly the first to spring to mind. The Swiss psychiatrist remains one of the personalities who had the greatest impact on the annual meetings, both through his stature his contributions, and his discussions, and through the direction that, whether consciously or not, he gave to the research carried out at the foot of Monte Verità. While Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn (1881–1962) is credited with giving birth to, founding, and organising these series of themed conferences every year, to the point of being affectionately nicknamed the *Domina Fröbe* by the regular participants,[1] Jung's role can certainly be likened to that of a tutelary figure, observing and acting with distance but great interest behind the scenes, the curtains lightly buffeted by the gentle Ticino wind. In short, he was a *spiritus rector*, as Riccardo Bernardini describes him,[2] whose role is evidenced by the "parallel meetings" that took place around him on the terrace of Casa Gabriella, in the shade of the garden's tall cedars, between two lectures, when many participants came to listen to him and ask him questions.[3] It turns out that the annual meetings in Ascona were also of particular importance to Jung, and Barbara Hannah vividly recalls his insistence on attending, even at the height of World War II.[4]

The work carried out at Eranos in the field of culture and images was increasingly similar to Jung's own scientific research, and the Zürich psychiatrist and the members of the group, who met once a year, generally shared the same engagement "in some form of spiritual endeavour,"[5] common research in the field of what Steven M. Wasserstrom called a "phenomenology of religions,"[6] and the central study of images in the search for a timeless formal, symbolic, and conceptual language which, for Jung at least, could have an archetypal nature and which would come from the collective unconscious.[7] This comparative approach to cultures, belief systems, myths, legends, and religions soon led Fröbe-Kapteyn to build up a veritable iconographic collection, the *Eranos Archive für Symbolforschung*, which she collected and continually enriched during her many trips to European museums and libraries; Jung drew on it, as part of his research, on alchemy in particular, but also Erich Neumann, during his own research on the archetypal figure of the Great Mother.[8] The collection was later bequeathed to the Warburg Institute in London in 1954.[9]

In Jungian scientific practice, images—both material and external, visionary and internal—play a crucial role, since they are the medium through which psychic content from the unconscious is expressed. They thus form the core of the technique that Jung theorised and gradually developed, which he first called the "transcendent function" and then "active imagination." Although not published until 1958, the *materia prima* of his essay on the transcendent function was written much earlier, in 1916.[10] In it, Jung defined what would later be called active imagination: "the union of conscious and unconscious contents."[11] To achieve this, it is necessary to practice "eliminating critical attention, thus producing a vacuum in consciousness" which "encourages the emergence of any fantasies that are lying in readiness."[12] According

1
Riccardo Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos: Il progetto della psichologia complessa* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2011), 285.

2
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 79.

3
Bernardini, 45.

4
Barbara Hannah, *Jung: His Life and Work; A Biographical Memoir* (1976; London: Michael Joseph, 1977), 270.

5
Hans Thomas Hakl, *Eranos: An Alternative Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century*, trans. Christopher McIntosh with the collaboration of Hereward Tilton (Sheffield: Equinox publishing, 2013), 44.

6
Steven M. Wasserstrom, *Religion after Religion: Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade and Henry Corbin at Eranos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 25.

7
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 130.

8
Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, trans. from the German by Ralph Manheim (1955; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

9
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 344.

10
Carl Gustav Jung, "The Transcendent Function" [1958], in Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 8, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 67–91.

11
"The psychological 'transcendent function' arises from the union of conscious and unconscious contents," Jung, "The Transcendent Function," 69.

12
"The training consists first of all in systematic exercises for eliminating critical attention, thus producing a vacuum in consciousness. This encourages the emergence of any fantasies that are lying in readiness," Jung, "The Transcendent Function," 78.

to Jung, "fantasy must be allowed the freest possible play, yet not in such a manner that it leaves the orbit of its object, namely the affect."[13] There "comes a more or less complete expression of the mood, which reproduces the content of the depression in some way, either concretely or symbolically."[14] The manifestation of affect can take an intellectual, discursive form—a *language* in Roland Barthes's sense of the term, and even a language that is "beyond power," and therefore free: a *literature*[15]—but it can also adopt the language of the image—being, or becoming, a set of signs calling for a *lexis*.[16] For example, Jung states that "patients who possess some talent for drawing or painting can give expression to their mood by means of a picture,"[17] which would then be perceived ever more clearly in consciousness, like a blurred but distinct reflection in a lead mirror.

While active imagination was theorised in the second half of the 1910s, it turns out that Jung himself was practicing it directly at the same time, during what he called his "confrontation with the unconscious."[18] During this period, the psychiatrist engaged in a form of psychic self-experimentation that consisted of letting images from his unconscious come to him from the depths of the psyche in order to enter into a dialogue with them, and it was this same experience that gave rise to his famous *Red Book*.[19] These experiments with the unconscious also foreshadowed the goal towards which analytical psychology would later strive: the realisation of what Jung called his "personal myth," another name for the process of individuation, at the end of which the individual is supposed to succeed in differentiating the contents of the personal unconscious from those of the collective unconscious and achieve autonomy from the influence of the unconscious psychic contents that are the archetypes.[20] As Barbara Hannah points out, active imagination is, in fact, "a form of meditation which man has used, at least from the dawn of history, if not earlier, as a way of learning to know his God or gods."[21] To become autonomous individuals in our own right, to achieve individuation, we must first discover our "gods" and uncover the deep, intimate, and unique nature of our personal myth.

From the point of view of the history of religions, on one hand, Mircea Eliade—a faithful participant in the Eranos meetings—understands myth as the story of a sacred history, of a creation that can give rise alternately to the Cosmos, an institution, or an individual:[22] "myths describe the various, and sometimes dramatic, irruptions of the sacred (or the supernatural) into the World. It is this irruption of the sacred that really founds the World and makes it what it is today."[23] From the perspective of analytical psychology, on the other hand, Susan Rowland recalls that "the stories generated and reproduced via archetypes sponsoring psyche imbued archetypal images are to Jung 'myths,' " referring by this term to both "the cultural inheritance of specific mythologies and to personal myths that are the narrative structure of lives lived in a creative relation to the unconscious."[24] In fact, Rowland distinguishes "myths" from "personal myth," which is "the life story that is the living story, the story in which one lives, and by which intimate being is meaningfully fed."[25] According to her, "there is a creative tension within Jungian psychology on form-making: the emphasis on the need for structure versus the fluidity of process. Such a dynamic is

13
Jung, "The Transcendent Function," 82.

14
Jung, 82.

15
Roland Barthes, *Leçon inaugurale faite le vendredi 7 janvier 1977*, Collège de France, Chaire de sémiologie littéraire (Paris: Collège de France, 1977), 11–12.

16
Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (1957; Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2014), 213.

17
Jung, "The Transcendent Function," 82.

18
Carl Gustav Jung and Aniéla Jaffé, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, trans. from the German by Richard and Clara Winston (1962; New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), 178.

19
The *Red Book,* realized between 1915 and 1928 and briefly revived in 1958, is based on Jung's self-induced visionary experiences between 1913 and 1914. It was not officially unveiled to the public, published, translated, and exhibited in cultural institutions and museums until 2009. See Carl Gustav Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus* (*fac-simile*), ed. Sonu Shamdasani, preface by Ulrich Hoerni, trans. Mark Kyburz, John Peck, and Sonu Shamdasani (New York: W. W. Norton, & Company, 2009).

20
Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 6, *Psychological Types*, a revision by R. F. C. Hull of the translation by H. G. Baynes (1921; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 448–49.

21
Barbara Hannah, *Encounters with the Soul: Active Imagination as Developed by C. G. Jung* (Boston: Sigo Press, 1981), 3.

22
Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du mythe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), 16.

23
Eliade, *Aspects du mythe*, 17.

24
Susan Rowland, *Jungian Literary Criticism: The Essential Guide* (London: Routledge, 2019), 58.

25
Rowland, *Jungian Literary Criticism*, 65.

visible in the tradition of myths as specific stories *structuring*, versus the notion of a personal myth that stresses the creative *process* of a story."[26]

And yet, in his self-experiments, Jung literally illustrates this tension, as he staged his "I," his self-conscious avatar, in the company of psychic contents that took on the appearance—and sometimes the story—of characters from various mythologies or the Bible. These same "exercises"—spiritual perhaps, visionary at the very least[27]—also seem to nourish his visual practice, whether in painting, drawing, or sculpture, since he uses images of figures inspired by divinities, myths, or rites from many and varied pantheons, but always at the service of his personal narrative. Jung thus seems to have created a veritable mythopoetics in the sense of Véronique Gély's definition, which, in relation to literature, refers to the way in which myths are used.[28] While the term seems to have been employed for the first time by Plato, who used the term "mythmakers" to designate the poets themselves,[29] mythopoetic is also used by Claude Lévi-Strauss, who likens it to the concept of "bricolage," to designate the person who makes myths.[30]

Within these multiple creations realised by Carl Gustav Jung, how does he fashion his own personal myth by the images in the surviving divinities, heroes, and rites of the past? To what extent is this mythopoetic truly effective, active, and efficient in the context of the Swiss psychiatrist's "confrontation with the unconscious"? And to what extent did Jung's work on myths and their synthesis foreshadow the research carried out a few years later during the Eranos meetings?

To answer these questions, I will first briefly examine the relationship between Jung, Eranos, and Fröbe-Kapteyn—a necessary step in understanding Fröbe-Kapteyn's importance in the research carried out on the shores of Lake Maggiore. I will then analyse in detail some of the Swiss psychiatrist's visual works, comparing them with the visual and textual sources that shaped their original form—whether formally or conceptually. Drawing on Hans Belting's approach to the anthropology of images,[31] and Carlo Ginzburg's notion of the index paradigm,[32] the aim will be to show how, a few years before his own research at Eranos, Jung undertook work on images and culture to reveal a survival, a form of unity of meaning, and to synthesise the various legends, myths, and divinities to create a new, individual myth: his own.

The Place Where Synthesis Takes Place: Jung at Eranos, for a Union of Knowledge, Myths, and Culture

Eranos ist meine Individuation.[33]

This is how the intellectual and artist Fröbe Kapteyn described to Ximena de Angulo her relationship with the meetings she had organised every year since 1933 for a few weeks in August at her house in Ascona. The permeability of the methodological approaches, involving the synthetic nature of the discourses and research carried out at Eranos, is already physically apparent in the profoundly liminal nature of Casa Gabriella, built between land and water; at the foot of Monte Veri-

26
Rowland, *Jungian Literary Criticism*, 66.

27
We are, of course, referring to the *Exercitia spiritualia*, which are defined as "any way of examining one's conscience, of meditating, of contemplating, of praying vocally and mentally . . ." Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *Exercices spirituels*, trans. R. P. Pierre Jennesseaux (1548; Flavigny-sur-Ozerain: Éditions Traditions Monastiques, 2004), 9, translation by the author.

28
Véronique Géry, "Pour une mythopoétique: quelques propositions sur les rapports entre mythe et fiction," *SFLGC*, bibliothèque comparatiste (2006): 10, accessed October 4, 2023, https://sflgc.org/bibliotheque/gely-veronique-pour-une-mythopoetique-quelques-propositions-sur-les-rapports-entre-mythe-et-fiction.

29
Plato, *La République*, trans. and presentation by Georges Leroux (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 151–52.

30
"Mythical thought expresses itself using a repertoire that is heterogeneous in composition and, of course, limited in scope; yet it has to use it, whatever task it sets itself, because it has nothing else at hand. It thus appears as a kind of intellectual bricolage, which explains the relationship between the two. Like bricolage on the technical level, mythic thinking can achieve brilliant and unexpected results on the intellectual level," Claude Levi Strauss, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris: Plon, 1962), 26, translation by the author.

31
Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (2001; Princeton, Princeton University Press: 2011), 9–10, 17.

32
Carlo Ginzburg, "Traces: Racines d'un paradigme indiciaire" (1980), in Carlo Ginzburg, *Mythes, emblèmes et traces, morphologie et histoire*, trans. from the Italian by Monique Aymard, Christian Paoloni, Elsa Bonan, and Martine Sancini-Vignet, (1986; Paris: Flammarion, 1998), 290.

33
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 285.

tà—already rich in a profound history that links it to both *Lebenserform* and the international artistic avant-garde and literature, through the figure, in particular, of Rudolf von Laban, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, or Hermann Hesse[34]—and on the shores of the calm, clear but deep waters of Lake Maggiore; like a sea in miniature, circumscribed by the arms of the hills and mountains. But while Fröbe-Katpeyn's phrase attests to her reception of Jungian ideas and concepts, it also shows that Eranos was for her a form of realisation of her "personal myth."

The very birth of Eranos was marked by the spirituality and occultist movements that had been sweeping Europe since the end of the nineteenth century. Fröbe-Kapteyn's initial project, launched in 1930, was to set up meetings on theosophical and esoteric themes, under the supervision and active participation of Alice Bailey, then president of the Arcane School, a dissident branch of the Theosophical Society, with the aim of constituting a genuine school of comparative spirituality.[35] The following year, however, in 1931, Fröbe-Kapteyn decided to turn to the sciences and the history of religions, contacting Rudolf Otto to give a more scientific and academic orientation to her project,[36] and it should be noted that it was the historian of religion himself who suggested the name *Eranos* to her.[37] In any case, she likely decided to draw inspiration from the example of Count Hermann Keyserling's *Schule der Weisheit*, whose annual meetings she regularly attended in Darmstadt. It was also at the 1930 meeting, and therefore in a spiritualist context, that she met Carl Gustav Jung for the first time.[38]

Although Jung initially refused to take part in a project that he considered too steeped in and indebted to theosophical ideas, which he—publicly at least—despised,[39] he eventually agreed to give a lecture at the 1933 session when he learned the names of the other participants, almost all of whom were friends or esteemed intellectuals.[40] His talk, on the individuation process,[41] thus became the first in a long series of scientific communications that Jung gave annually until 1951.[42] It soon became clear that, in addition to the lectures he gave at his seminars at the Zürich Psychological Club, founded in 1916, the Eranos meetings provided him with an opportunity, not least because of their international and interdisciplinary nature, to compare his theories with the wider field of studies on culture and its manifestations, and thus to broaden the scope and ambition of analytical psychology, destined to become a genuine "general psychology, with which the other sciences—from the history of religion to philosophy, from theology to anthropology, from the history of art to the natural sciences—could enter into dialogue."[43] Jung's objective was perfectly in line with that of the founder of Eranos, who also declared:

> The work of C. G. Jung, although never especially emphasized, represents the synthetic force at the heart of Eranos. It works, we might say, underground, invisibly, yet it holds the whole together and embodies the real significance of these meetings. It establishes a net of relationships between the different fields of research between the speakers, and between all members of the conferences, whether they are aware of it or not.[44]

34
See Kaj Noschis, *Monte Verità: Ascona et le génie du lieu* (Lausanne: Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes, 2011).

35
See the chapter "An Esoteric Prelude to Eranos," in Hakl, *Eranos*, 12–32.

36
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 42.

37
Hakl, *Eranos*, 49.

38
Hakl, 39–41.

39
See the letter to A. L. Oswald, December 8, 1928, in Gerhard Adler, *C. G. Jung: Letters*, selected and edited by Gerhard Adler in collaboration with Aniela Jaffé, translation from the German by R. F. C. Hull, vol. 1, *1906–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 56.

40
Hakl, *Eranos*, 45.

41
Carl Gustav Jung, "Zur Empirie des Individuationsprozesses," in "Yoga und Meditation im Osten und im Westen," herausgegeben von Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, special issue, *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1 (1933).

42
Although he attended the Eranos meetings in 1952 and was, as usual, besieged by questions from participants during the interludes between two speeches, 1951 was the year of his last official communication. See Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 241.

43
"A *Eranos*, la straordinaria sequenza di convegni interdisciplinari inaugurati nel 1933, Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) delineo più chiaramente l'idea di *psicologia complessa*: si trattava, ancor prima che di una scuola di psicoterapia, del disegno di una vera e propria psicologia generale, con cui le altre scienze—dalla storia delle religioni alla filosofia, dalla teologia all'antropologia, dalla storia dell'arte alla scienze naturali—avrebbero potuto dialogare," Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 25.

44
Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, "The Psychological Background of Eranos" [1939], *Spring: A Journal of Archetype and Culture* 92 (2015): 34, translation by the author.

Jung thus gradually became the "spiritual guide" of Eranos, its "central figure" who "animated and directed it behind the curtain,"[45] in the words of Ricardo Bernardini, who divides into seven the different phases of research carried out over the decades on the shores of Lake Maggiore, of which it seems possible to attribute to Jung the direction—unconscious or esoteric—of the first three: the very first stage in the Eranos project centred, between 1933 and 1937, on a comparative phenomenological approach to Western and Eastern spiritual traditions; a subsequent, more clearly Jungian impulse, from 1938 to 1946, with lectures on the themes of archetypes, their nature, and their manifestations; and finally the period from 1947 to 1962—Jung died in 1961—devoted to a genuine anthropology of culture.[46] Moreover, the profoundly Jungian dimension of the Eranos project is readily apparent from Fröbe-Kapteyn's own presentation of it in 1948:

> What we call synthesis in the Eranos work, namely the summarization of a wide variety of research and perspectives, is a dynamic process and involves the integration of seemingly independent but fundamentally interrelated fragments of knowledge into a pattern or image whose completeness is unknown to us. Our task is to capture a fragment of the vast picture of a newly emerging culture that has its roots in previous ages. The fact that we have so far followed the direction indicated by time is proven by the existence of Eranos today, in its own unique form and development.[47]

The increasingly Jungian matrix of Eranos and the increasingly archetypal nature of the research carried out there can also be seen in the very relationship that operates on, and through, images. From 1934 onwards, Jung asked Fröbe-Kapteyn to undertake iconographic research into alchemy,[48] increasingly important in the psychiatrist's research, according to which the alchemical processes developed in the texts and images of the Middle Ages and Renaissance were to be understood as a psychological key, and the experimental tests on the Philosopher's Stone (or *lapis philosophorum*) were in fact a metaphor for the process of individuation: the transformation of lead into gold was to be understood as the metamorphosis, the fulfilment of complete, psychically individuated human beings.[49] Fröbe-Kapteyn thus began to scour the museums and libraries of Europe to collect images, reproductions, and photographs of medieval paintings and miniatures, which soon became a veritable pool of visual material, the *Eranos Archive für Symbolforschung.* Although Jung used these iconographic archives in his scientific essays, such as *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944),[50] they also formed the basis for the work of other researchers and intellectuals, such as Erich Neumann, who drew on the iconographic holdings of Eranos to write his essay on the archetypal figure of the Great Mother.[51] From 1935 onwards, Fröbe-Kapteyn also came into contact with the Warburg Institute and its members, who were already based in London. She asked its then director, Fritz Saxl, for a number of bibliographical references, particularly on alchemy, which Saxl sent her when the works were available in the library.[52] And it was also to the Warburg Institute that Fröbe-Kapteyn decided to bequeath her

45
"Jung, principale ispiratore del progetto di *Eranos*, ne fu lo *spiritus rector*, e cioè la sua guida spirituale, la figura centrale, il nume che lo presiedeva incontrastato e che lo animava e lo dirigeva da dietro le quinte." Bernardini Riccardo, *Jung a Eranos*, 79.

46
Bernardini, *Jung a Eranos*, 51.

47
"Was wir in der Eranosarbeit Synthese nennen, die Zusammenfassung verschiedenster Forschungen und verschiedenster Anschauungen, ist ein dynamischer Prozeß und bedeutet die Integration scheinbar unabhängiger, aber im Grunde auf einander bezogener Bruchteile der Erkenntnis in einem Muster oder Bild, dessen Vollständigkeit uns unbekannt ist. Was uns als Aufgabe zufällt, ist das Einfangen eines Fragments von dem unübersehbaren Bilde einer neuentstehenden Kultur, die in den vorangegangenen Zeitaltern wurzelt. Daß wir bisher die von der Zeit angedeutete Richtung eingehalten haben, beweist die Existenz von Eranos heute, in der ihm eigenen Form und Entwicklung." Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, "Vorwort," in "Der Mensch," herausgegeben von Olga Fröbe Kapteyn, special issue, *Eranos Jahrbuch* 16 (1948), 1.

48
Hakl, *Eranos*, 255–56.

49
Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 9.2, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1951; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 68.

50
Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 12, *Psychology and Alchemy*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1944; Princeton: Princeton University Press 1980).

51
Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother.*

52
Warburg Institute Archive, CG, Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn to Fritz Saxl, August 25, 1935, or Warburg Institute Archive, CG, Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn to Fritz Saxl, January 10, 1939.

archives at the end of her life.[53] While *facsimiles* are still kept in the Eranos archives in Ascona, the original archives are now in London, where they are still classified according to their original mode, i.e., according to the archetypal figures they are supposed to manifest.

The Jungian inclination of Eranos's relationship with myths and images can be seen in the themes and directions taken by the annual conferences and even in the iconographic archives initiated by Fröbe-Kapteyn for Jung.[54] The lectures given and the guests chosen highlight the desire to research the many forms of common religious and spiritual expression and to compare them with Jungian psychological processes, which often involve the central question of the myth.

We should now take a closer look at the visual productions of the Swiss psychiatrist behind his theories, and thus behind the scientific orientations of Eranos, in order to gain a better understanding of his relationship with myths and how he used them in the service of a new and personal poetics, leading to the elaboration of his own myth through images, in parallel with his presentations on the shores of Lake Maggiore.

53
Warburg Institute Archive, CG, Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn to Gertrud Bing, June 12, 1955.

54
It is worth mentioning here that Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn also pursued a creative activity throughout her life, which gave rise to numerous visual works. See Raphael Gigax, ed., *Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn: Artista-ricercatrice* (Locarno: Museo Casa Rusca; Bellinzona: Edizione Casagrande, 2024).

Formal Borrowings and Surviving Iconography for a Mythical Identification

In his creative works, Jung often chose to borrow an iconography from a character, a figure, or a myth from a belief system or a particular mythological tradition that had already been established, as part of his visual experiments aimed as much at creating images as at drawing out of the unconscious his "personal myth," unknown but *already* present. The narrative context and symbolism of these myths then underwent a form of metamorphosis, of *resemantisation*, the meaning of the myth thus chosen adopting a psychological reading in which Jung himself was given an active role.

This *modus operandi* is particularly perceptible in the *Red Book*, where several chapters are devoted to the transcription of his visionary adventures in which the mythical hero Izdubar plays a major role. Following the story proposed by Jung, he crosses the psychiatrist's path at the top of a high mountain in search of the legendary land of immortality, which he believes to lie to the west of the world, and he falls ill when Jung tells him that he has come from that region, but that immortality does not exist there any more than anywhere else.[55] The first image illustrating this part of the *Red Book* gives us an indication of the iconographic and therefore mythological model on which Jung seems to have based himself, at least in part (Fig. 1).

The male figure is presented in a hieratic frontal position, tall, wearing armour, and carrying an axe, with a coiffed head and braided beard. In front of him, kneeling with arms outstretched, we can make out the small, fragile figure—in appearance only—representing Jung's "I." It turns out that Izdubar was the first name that European translators gave to the hero of the text that would later become known as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. King of the ancient city of Uruk in Mesopotamia, Izdubar/Gilgamesh is also a hero of superhuman strength who, accompanied by his friend Enkidu whom the gods created, and following the signs revealed to him by dreams, has many adventures.[56] Jung had

55
Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus*, 278–79 [38–39]. In the following notes, the pagination follows that of the transcription of the English text by Sonu Shamdasani. The pagination in brackets corresponds to that of the *Red Book* itself.

56
Épopée de Gilgamesh, text established, commented, annotated, and translated from Akkadian by Georges Contenau (Paris: Éditions Libretto, 2020).

Fig. 1. Carl Gustav Jung, Red Book, Liber Secundus, page 36, 1915, ink, tempera, and gold on paper, 27.3x20 cm, Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, © 2009 Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zürich. First published by W. W. Norton & Co.

a version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* in his library in Küsnacht[57] and, during exchanges between Jung's "I" and Izdubar, the latter mentions the goddess Tiamat, a Mesopotamian divinity incarnating the forces of chaos.[58] The choice of the name Izdubar was no accident, then, and already provided Jung's visionary adventures with a deliberately legendary, and even archaic, narrative framework by his preference over the name Gilgamesh.

If we now turn to the works or connections that might link Jung to the ancient culture and productions of the Mesopotamian region, we note that the Swiss psychiatrist's library contains, among other things, the catalogue of the British Museum's collections of Babylonian and Assyrian antiquities, where Jung even slipped in a few bookmarks.[59] What is more, Jung visited London on several occasions before or during the period in which the *Red Book* was being written; during the winter of 1902–1903, for example, but also in 1919. This attests to his familiarity with Sumerian legends and iconography by the time these images were created.

If we compare the figure of Izdubar/Gilgamesh with certain works in the collections of the British Museum, such as a head seen in profile taken from a wall panel in the palace of Khorsabad dating from the time of Sargon II (Fig. 2), we find the same braided beard, particularly on the face, which falls down and covers part of the neck, and whose curls merge with those of the beard as they rise up the face. Sonu Shamdasani has also pointed out that the figure of Izdubar painted by Jung bears a strong resemblance to an image in Wilhelm Roscher's *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, which Jung had in his library in Küsnacht.[60]

Fig. 2. Wall panel from the Khorsabad palace, 710–705 B.C., gypsum, 62x53 cm, London, British Museum, Museum Number 118830, © The Trustees of the British Museum.

57
Gilgamesch: Eine Erzählung aus dem alten Orient (Leipzig: Im Insel-Verlag, 1916), Küsnacht, Jung's Library, ref. L 42.

58
"No stronger being has ever cut me down, no monster has ever resisted my strength. But your poison, worm, which you have placed in my way has lamed me to the marrow. Your magical poison is stronger than the army of Tiamat," Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus*, 278 [38].

59
A Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities (London: British Museum, 1922), Küsnacht, Jung's Library, ref. L 54.

60
Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus*, nn. 96, 309.

It is a reproduction of a bas-relief from the palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad, now in the Louvre, depicting a hero slaying a lion, often equated with Izdubar/Gilgamesh (Fig. 3). Jung was able to observe this bas-relief first-hand during one of his visits to Paris in 1902–1903.

In terms of the story that Jung had now developed, there were strong similarities with the story told in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. In the Sumerian text, after the death of his companion Enkidu, Gilgamesh decides to embark on a long and perilous journey westwards to the home of his ancestor, Um-Napishti, the only man who, like the biblical Noah, survived the Flood, so that he can reveal to him the secret of immortality.[61] In the *Red Book*, Izdubar recounts how he too left his country to travel west, in search of the land where he could find immortality.[62] Jung's "I" meets him at the top of a high mountain pass and tells him that, coming from the West, he knows that there is no such country, which plunges the hero into deep despair that quickly escalates into a state of illness that is dangerously fatal for both body and spirit.

Thus, in the story he tells in the *Red Book*—which, it should be borne in mind, is a reworking, a reconstruction, based on his previews notes in the *Black Books*—Jung places his "I" in the role of Um-Napishti, who brings the quest of the hero Izdubar/Gilgamesh to an end and, as we shall see later, enables him to achieve a form of rebirth. Jung thus seems to be superimposing his own narrative in the *Red Book* on that of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, and creating his own personal myth by substituting it for the ancient myth.

This identification, both iconographic and narrative, with myths and religions, can be found in other pages of the *Red Book*, particularly those that continue the story of Jung's adventures with Izdubar, but this time, it seems, with a different type of cultural reference.

During their discussions and Jung's own reflections, he gradually came to realise that Izdubar was an important unconscious psychic content, what he called his "god,"[63] an externalised representation of his psychic totality. The Jung's "I" therefore decides to take care of the hero, who has fallen ill, which eventually leads this "I" to transform him into a golden egg and to perform a number of incantations and prayers that lead to the resurrection of Izdubar in a new form, "transformed, and complete."[64]

The section of the *Red Book* that contains these various prayers is punctuated by several paintings depicting the golden egg in which Izdubar now rests in different environments that borrow from a variety of myths and traditions, from the solar boat of ancient Egyptian cults to the tree motif, which can alternately represent the Ygdrassil of Scandinavian mythology and the biblical tree of Jesse.

However, it is particularly relevant to take a closer look at another painting from the chapter on *Incantations*, which also shows a form of identification here, where Jung's "I" seems to be taking part in well-defined religious rites (Fig. 4). This image occupies the whole of page 51 of the *Liber secundus*, the second part of the *Red Book*. Against a crimson background, the text of one of the incantation prayers is reproduced in German Gothic and framed by a series of decorative motifs and figures, including a snake and a white bird on the right and left. The egg containing Izdubar is at the bottom of the composition, deli-

Fig. 3. Hero taming a lion (Gilgamesh), detail, relief from the façade of the throne room in the Palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad, 8th century B.C. (710–705 B.C.), gypsum, 552x218 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre, Museum Number 1019862-17, © Photo (C) RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) / René-Gabriel Ojeda.

61 "(Gilgamesh replied: I want to reach) Um-Napishti, my ancestor, who was able to ascend to the assembly of the gods and obtain [Life; about death and about life I want to ask him!]", Épopée de Gilgamesh, 91–92, translation by the author.

62 Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus*, 278 [38].

63 Jung, 283 [48].

64 Jung, 286 [65].

cately placed on an altar-like form and framed by arcades containing other decorative motifs, including a cross and a star. At the very top is the only anthropomorphic figure in the painting, crowned, seated, legs crossed on a cushion, eyelids closed as if in repose or meditation.

Fig. 4. Carl Gustav Jung, Red Book, Liber Secundus, Page 51, 1916, ink, tempera, and gold on paper, 27.4x19.9 cm, Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, © 2009 Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zürich. First published by W. W. Norton & Co.

In fact, the crown worn by the figure closely resembles the ritual tiaras used in Tibet, which, in *Vajrayana* Buddhism, house the five *Jinas*, the Buddhas of the five wisdoms and the cardinal points.[65] If we take a closer look at the gestures adopted by the crowned figure, we see that the crossed legs, with the hands placed flat on top of each other, evoke the posture of the *dyana mudra* which, again in the Buddhist tradition, is the posture that represents the state of meditation.[66]

Jung's interest in Far Eastern cultures and philosophies is well known, particularly through his research into the mandala motif, whose term is also taken from the meditative practice of *dkyil `khor* in *Vajrayana* Buddhism.[67] Although Jung seems to have developed

65
Robert Sailley, *Le bouddhisme "tantrique" indo-tibétain ou "Véhicule de diamant"* (Saint-Vincent-sur-Jabron: Éditions Présence, 1980), 107–8.

66
Anjan Chakravarty, *Les peintures bouddhiques sacrées* (Paris: Charles Moreau, 2006), 32.

67
See Martin Brauen, ed., *Mandala: Sacred Circle in Tibetan Buddhism* (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche; New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2009). Exhibition catalog, Rubin Museum of Art, New York, from August 14, 2009 to January 11, 2010.

his psychological interpretation of the mandala from his *Commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower* in 1929,[68] he possessed a large number of works that may have given him a much earlier insight into Buddhist rites and traditions. While his library contains Heinrich Zimmer's *Kunstform und Yoga im Indischen Kultbild* (1926), Martin Hürliman's book on the sculpture in Sri Lanka and Indochina, *Ceylon und Indochina. Baukunst, Landschaft und Volksleben* (1929), Maurice Maindron's *L'art indien*, William Cohn's *Indische Plastik* (1921) and *Buddha in der Kunst des Ostens* (1925), and *Tibetan Paintings* by George Roerich, the son of the Russian painter Nicolas Roerich (1925), it is more likely that Jung's visual references draw from his complete edition of the *Sacred Books of the East*, the date of publication (1908) being well before the dates when these paintings were produced. It should finally be noted that another potential source that may have contributed to Jung's knowledge of Indian spirituality and art can be found in the theosophical works that his library preserves, such as Helena Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy* (1911) and *Höllen Traume* (1908).

Furthermore, if we continue the iconographic comparison between this painting and the works kept at the British Museum, whose collections Jung is known to have visited, we notice, for example, the presentation of a small bronze figure of a Buddha produced in Tibet, possibly the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, acquired by the museum in 1885, and which presents exactly the same *mudra* as the figure on page 51 (Fig. 5). As far as the crown painted by Jung is concerned, its strongly accentuated three-lobed structure is formally close to the models of the ritual headdresses of Tibetan Buddhism, as the psychiatrist was able to observe them not only in the Far Eastern collections of various European museums, but also in the reproductions presented in the numerous works in his library, such as the book by the art historian and Indianist Heinrich Zimmer, *Kunstform und Yoga* (Fig. 6).

It is therefore certain that Jung was familiar with the traditions, iconography, and rituals of Buddhism in general, and esoteric Tibetan Buddhism in particular, when he produced the painting on page 51 of the *Liber secundus*. In the part of the book devoted to the prayers supposed to lead to the resurrection of the hero Izdubar, the symbol of Jung's psychic totality, Jung would represent his "I" in a meditative posture, within a universe evocative of Buddhism, a religious system in which the concept of reincarnation through the cycle of *samsara* is essential.

As with the painting of Izdubar in front of Jung's "I," Jung seems to be staging himself, *portraying* himself in paintings whose content represents his inner experiences. But to do this, he drew on a vast repertoire of legends and myths, both visual and iconographic, borrowing from a wide range of cultures, legends, and religious traditions. It would seem, then, that Jung appropriated myths, both plastically and symbolically, with a view to creating his own personal myth; a personal one that would then either replace the previous myth or be placed in its direct continuity.

But beyond these two examples, it appears that in other cases Jung uses repertoires of mythical and religious images in a way that completely disengages him from the initial referent to which this icono-

68
Carl Gustav Jung, "Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*," [1929] in Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 13, *Alchemical Studies*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 1–56.

Fig. 5. Bodhisattva (Avalokiteshvara?), 19th century, bronze and semi-precious stones, London, British Museum, Museum Number 1885, 1227.18, © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 6. Buddha in paryanka posture, reproduced in Heinrich Zimmer, Kunstform und Yoga im Indischen Kultbild, Frankfurter Verlag, 1926, p. 80, ref. N 34.

graphic language belongs, making it the support of a totally personal narrative.

Conceptual Borrowings and Original Forms for a Personal Narrative

This mythmaking by image is active in a whole series of paintings depicting various ritual scenes (Fig. 7 and 8). Here we see officiants and figures in prayer positions before an altar, above which appears, like a mysterious epiphany of light, a figure dressed in a gilded garment with geometric motifs, floating in the air in a night sky made up of tesserae of bluish mosaics that seem to revolve around him.

Fig. 7. Carl Gustav Jung, Cultic Scene I, ca. 1917, gouache on cardboard, 26x21 cm, Jung Family Archive, © Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zurich.

Fig. 8. Carl Gustav Jung, Cultic Scene with Phanês, ca. 1917, gouache and gilt bronze on paper, 28.5x20.5 cm, private collection, © Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zurich.

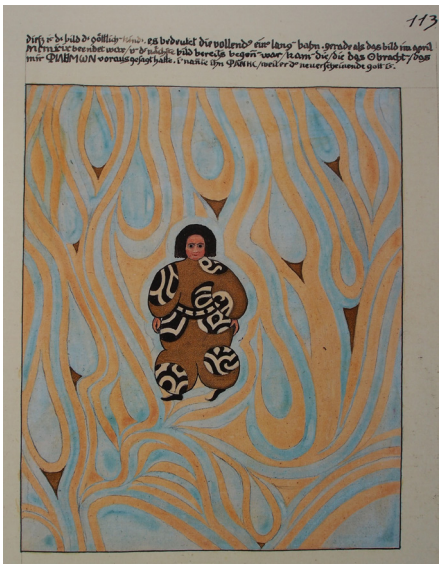

Fig. 9. Carl Gustav Jung, Red Book, Liber Secundus, Page 113, 1919, ink, tempera, and gold on paper, 21x16.8 cm, Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, © 2009 Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zürich. First published by W. W. Norton & Co.

This same figure appears on page 113 of the *Liber secundus* (Fig. 9) and, between this and the images depicting ritual scenes, we find the childlike figure, dressed in a puffy golden garment, as if suspended in a matrix-like universe made of ancient turquoise and opal. Above this painting, Jung writes:

> This is the image of the divine child. It means the completion of a long path. Just as the image was finished in April 1919, and work on the next image has already begun, the one who brought the Θ [rho] came, as ΦΙΛΗΜΩΝ [PHILEMON] had predicted to me. I called him ΦΑΝΗΣ [PHANES], because he is the newly appearing God.[69]

The childlike figure in this group of paintings would therefore be a representation of the god Phanês, the central deity of the Orphic mystery cults that flourished on the coasts of Asia Minor and Greece from the sixth century BC onwards; a cosmogonic deity begotten from the primordial egg before giving matter, form, and life to the world.[70]

69 Jung, *The Red Book. Liber novus*, 301 [113].

70 Florian Métral, *Figurer la création du monde: Mythes, discours et images cosmogoniques dans l'art de la Renaissance* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2019), 9.

Two letters written to Sigmund Freud attest to the fact that Jung spent three weeks in Italy in April 1912, mainly in Florence.[71] Visiting the Palazzo Vecchio, he and his wife probably observed in the Sala dell'Udienza the fresco that Francesco Salviati painted between 1544 and 1548 depicting Phanês (Fig. 10). The artist was probably inspired here by the *Orphic Rhapsodies* and a second-century AD bas-relief preserved in Modena and reproduced on the modern decoration of the entrance to the Cornaro Odeon in Padua.[72] In the room devoted to the audiences of Duke Cosimo de' Medici, the god is depicted in his classical attributes: that of a winged, laughing ephebe of his youth, with three animal heads standing out vividly from his naked, flat torso, a sceptre in his hand, dominated and dominating by bright flames and surrounded by the signs of the zodiac, a snake coiling sensually around his naked body. A reproduction of the ancient bas-relief from which Salviati drew his inspiration was included by Jung in his essay *Symbols of Transformation*, published the same year as his trip to Florence, in 1912, in which he definitively broke away from Freudian precepts.[73] On the subject of Phanês, Jung states that the Orphic god, like Eros in Hesiod's *Theogony*, represents a creative force, since he is assimilated to Priape and identified with the Theban Dionysus of Lysios, just as, like the Hindu Khâma, he is simultaneously God of love and cosmogonic principle.[74]

A representation somewhat similar to the traditional and canonical representation of Phanês appeared as early as 1916 in the upper part of a painting that Jung entitled the *Systema Mundi Totius*, which was also produced at the same time as his visionary experiences. However, Jung soon seemed to abandon this iconography, with which he was clearly familiar, and chose to depict the Orphic god in his own style. In his paintings of ritual scenes, the wings, the symbols of the zodiac, and the nudity of the young ephebe are replaced by a puffed-up garment, swaddling the cosmogonic child-god in gold and light.

A choice has therefore been made here: that of deliberately neglecting a familiar and classic iconography and formal approach—expected?—producing a liberation, one might say, in favour of an original image, new in the systems of symbolic representations it possesses, yet still indebted to a certain mythological tradition, attested to by the title and name of the divinity, but perhaps above all more effective in the system of operative images that Jung was creating.

Phanês is in fact a creator god, born from the cosmogonic egg containing the world in the making. We saw earlier that the golden egg painted many times by Jung in the *Red Book* contained Izdubar/Gilgamesh, in gestation, awaiting his imminent resurrection. Jung recognised in the Babylonian hero a representation of his Self: we can therefore see Phanês, the god in the egg, as the new form that Jung's Self adopted once Izdubar's metamorphosis was complete. Adding to this hypothesis, a comparison between the 1917 *Cult Scene* and the first painting depicting Izdubar highlights the identical posture adopted by Jung's "I" in front of Izdubar and the figure in front of the altar above which Phanês appears. It is therefore legitimate to recognise here too a representation of Jung's "I," then in prayer, accompanied by two female figures, before the epiphanic appearance of Phanês, Jung's new Self.

Fig. 10. Francesco Salviati, Phanês, 1544–1548, fresco, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, Hall of the Audiences, north wall, © Fototeca Musei Civici Fiorentini.

71
Carl Gustav Jung, letters to Sigmund Freud dated April 1, 1912 and April 27, 1912, in William McGuire, ed., *The Freud/Jung Letters: The Correspondence between Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung*, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (1974; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 498–99, 501–2.

72
Philippe Morel, "Virtù, Providence et arcanes du pouvoir dans la salle des Audiences du Palazzo Vecchio," in Philippe Morel, ed., *Le miroir du prince dans l'art italien de la Renaissance* (Tours: Presses universitaires de Tours; Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2012), 209.

73
Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 5, *Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1912; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), plate XII.

74
Jung, *The Collected Works*, 5:137–38.

The same prayerful posture can be seen in another painting depicting a cult scene, in which Jung's very probable "I" is framed by two Egyptian-looking sculptures in profile, on whose open palms rest two objects, while the central figure holds two winged female figures, one with jade butterfly wings, and the other with tawny bird wings (Fig. 11).

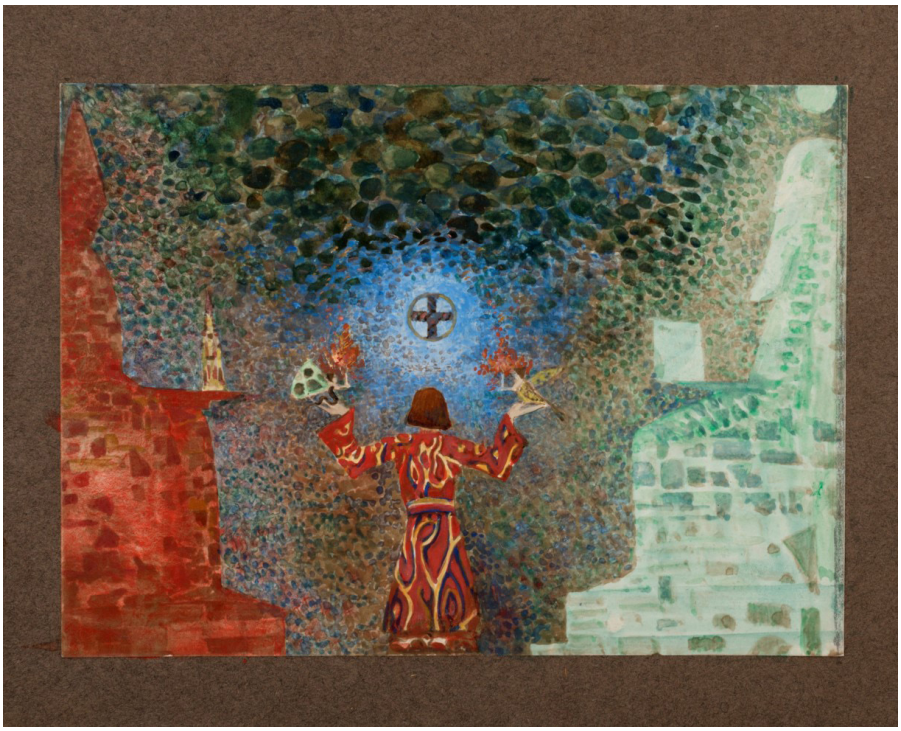

Fig. 11. Carl Gustav Jung, Cultic Scene II, ca. 1919, gouache on paper, 11x14 cm, Jung Family Archive, © Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zurich.

Based on the visionary experiences recorded in the *Black Books* and on Constance Long's diary, in which she transcribed a conversation she had with Jung in 1920, Diane Finiello Zervas has shown that the two stone figures most probably represent two aspects of Jung's personality. He would call the crimson sculpture on the left "Ka," representing a creative and Dionysian aspect associated with sensation, while the figure on the right would be Philemon, embodying the organising and Apollonian side, Jung's intuition.[75] The two female figures in Jung's "I" embody two aspects of the anima, one chthonian and the other spiritual, linked respectively to Ka and Philemon.[76] Here too, then, Jung depicts his "I" grappling with unconscious content, the form of which is borrowed from representations of ancient pantheons. However, between this painting and the previous *Cult Scene*, Phanês has disappeared. All that remains of the child floating in his halo of light is a shimmering sphere before which Jung's "I" appears to be praying, a sphere separated into four sections by a central cross.

This luminous sphere, with its elementary geometry and quadripartite division, can undoubtedly be likened to a mandala. The creation of mandalas, the term for which, as we have seen, is taken from *Vajrayana* Buddhism,[77] would, according to Jung, be a means of achieving a state of balance and harmony between the conscious and unconscious, personal, and collective contents of the personality, the mandala symbolising the Self.[78] As we have already seen, for Jung,

75
Diane Finiello Zervas, "Philemon, Ka, and Creative Fantasy: The Formation of the Reconciling Symbol in Jung's Visual Works, 1919-1923," *Phanes: Journal for Jung History* 2 (2019): 70, 73.

76
Zervas, "Philemon, Ka, and Creative Fantasy: The Formation of the Reconciling Symbol in Jung's Visual Works, 1919-1923," 73.

77
See Martin Brauen, ed., *Mandala: Sacred Circle in Tibetan Buddhism*, (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche ; New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2009). Exhibition catalog, Rubin Museum of Art, New York, from August 14, 2009 to January 11, 2010.

78
Carl Gustav Jung, "Mandalas" [1955], in Carl Gustav Jung, *The Collected Works*, vol. 9.1, *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 388.

Izdubar, like the egg and Phanês, is a motif that also symbolises the Self. It would seem, then, that in his search for representations of his Self, his inner god, Jung migrated from a figurative mode of representation based on ancient, mythical, and antique references—alternately the hero Izdubar/Gilgamesh, the cosmogonic egg or Phanês, the god in the egg—to a semi-abstract mode of representation in which his psychic totality is signified by an arrangement of geometric shapes and colours.

This liberation, both from mythical and legendary referents and from classical iconography, is in the end perfectly represented in a painting from the *Red Book* that offers a synthesis of Jung's work on the representation of his Self and the constitution of his personal myth based on divinities and cults of the past (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12. Carl Gustav Jung, Red Book, Liber Secundus, Page 127, 1921, ink, tempera, and gold on paper, 20.8x20.6 cm, Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, © 2009 Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung, Zürich. First published by W. W. Norton & Co.

Created on page 127 of the *Liber secundus*, this image, which is one of Jung's only visual works to be clearly titled, is called *Amor Triumphat*. It shows a large circle divided into four sections by a central cross. Against a background of abstract red and blue shapes, the lower left-hand section shows a tree half felled by an axe, with a dead bull beside it, the knife still stuck in its bloody spine. The upper right shows a crucified man and, to his left, a naked figure lying as if on a bed of stings or spikes, a large circle with a cross on its chest. At the bottom of the painting, Jung wrote:

> This image was complete on 9 January 1921, after it had waited incomplete for 9 months. It expresses I know not what kind of grief, a fourfold sacrifice. I could almost choose not to finish it. It is the inexorable wheel of the four functions, the essence of all living beings imbued with sacrifice.[79]

Noting that this image was produced shortly after Jung had finished writing *Psychological Types*, Zervas describes it as a work "that presents a vision of the collective process of humanity and cultural history integrated with the personal process of individuation, including that of Jung,"[80] the process of individuation being, as previously explained, the scientific name derived from the idea of searching for one's personal myth. According to Zervas's interpretation, it would be possible to start reading the work from the bottom right-hand section and work counter-clockwise to the top right-hand quarter, which would correspond to the spiritual evolution of humanity as thought by Jung. The first part of the work with the half-cut tree would therefore represent the end of the early cults devoted to nature[81] while the second part would show the decadence of the pre-Christian cults, in particular that of Mithra, slayer of the cosmic bull.[82] The crucified man in the upper part represents Christ, but it seems that his cult must also be overcome in order to reach the last quadrant of the composition. The figure in this section, which can be likened to Jung's "I," wears a mandala on his chest which, as we have seen, symbolises the Self. Here we have the image of the new subject of the new cult: the god within, the inner divinity, the Self, whose image here is devoid of any reference to a past cult or tradition and is, on the contrary, perfectly abstract because it is absolute, universal, and totally interiorised.

79 Jung, *The Red Book: Liber novus*, 307 [127].

80 Zervas, "Philemon, Ka, and Creative Fantasy: The Formation of the Reconciling Symbol in Jung's Visual Works, 1919-1923," 80.

81 Zervas, 82.

82 Zervas, 83.

Conclusion

Jung's images draw on a vast iconographic repertoire and are inspired by many mythical and religious traditions, both Western and Eastern. But, from Babylonian legends to Christianity, Buddhism, and the Orphic mystery cults, we can also see that his imagery is above all the site of an action, a pictorial representation of his inner experiences, in which he always takes centre stage and plays a very active role. Such figurations are to be understood above all as manifestations of psychological content, archetypal images that externalise unconscious psychic elements through painting. The coloured pigments and alternately geometric and organic forms of Jung's images are thus the source of a truly personal and original mythopoetic. The references to ancient myths appear to be a necessary step in representing the different stages leading to the discovery of one's own god, through the visual representation of one's own personal myth for successful individuation which, according to Susan Rowland, "is myth-generating," as "in individuation, we cast from intimate experience a story that functions as a form-making myth for living."[83] Achieving liberation from unconscious content translates into an image that gradually frees us from references to ancient cults, and the image of Jung's personal totality, of his inner god, the image of his Self, thus becomes an almost abstract image, in which the content of his personality is liberated from the mi-

83 Rowland, *Jungian Literary Criticism*, 65.

metic yoke of myth. In this context, Jungian images thus become the place of encounter and tension between the structuring properties of historical myths and the creative process driven by the personal myth that Rowland distinguishes.[84]

During his period of confrontation with the unconscious, Jung experienced this laying bare of myths to reveal their effectiveness, which is both inner and universal, and universal because it is inner, this meaning of images that would be valid in its essence in all cultures. But after all this, after the creative period that gave rise to the *Red Book*, and his paintings, it was at Eranos that Jung was able to explore the depiction of myths with other researchers. Eranos seems thus to have been a major location for Jung in many respects: in terms of putting images to the test through scientific confrontation and the presentation of his theories; in terms of the dialogue between images and those also produced by Fröbe-Kapteyn; and finally in terms of the study of images that he was able to consult thanks to the iconographic archives that Eranos's mistress was compiling: for a place where images are born, live, and take flight—over the deep waters.

84
"There is a creative tension within Jungian psychology on form-making: the emphasis on the need for structure versus the fluidity of process. Such a dynamic is visible in the tradition of myths as specific stories *structuring*, versus the notion of a personal myth that stress the creative *process* of a story." Rowland, *Jungian Literary Criticism*, 66.