

AN EXPLORATION OF ANIMA AND ANIMUS

An Exploration of
Anima and Animus in Jungian Theory

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Abstract

The primary aim of this paper is to conduct a psychological inquiry into the archetypes of anima and animus---the contrasexual aspects of the psyche---within the dynamics of a heterosexual relationship when the male has an undeveloped anima and the female has an undeveloped animus. Jung (1951/1979) defines anima as the feminine aspect in the male psyche and animus as the masculine aspect in the female psyche. The words “anima” and “animus” derive from the Latin word *animare* (Sanford, 1980) which means to bring to life. Anima/animus serve as a bridge between consciousness and the unconscious and as a guide and mediator between the ego and the self, the archetype of wholeness. The author utilizes her own personal experience of an intimate heterosexual relationship to assist in giving the reader a phenomenological understanding of anima/animus. At the end, a discussion will be included regarding some contemporary understandings of anima/animus. The intention throughout the paper, however, is to remain intimate with Jung’s original thoughts on anima and animus.

Introduction

The primary focus of this essay is anima and animus, the contrasexual aspects of the psyche which lie in the collective unconscious. To give a deeper understanding of anima/animus and to remain close to Jung's original thinking, this essay limits discussion of these archetypes to explanations within the context of a heterosexual relationship in which the man has an undeveloped anima and the woman has an undeveloped animus. While Jung's theory of anima/animus is equally applicable to dyads other than intimate, heterosexual relationships, the writings of Jung discuss anima/animus primarily within the context of this traditional relationship. It is outside the scope of this paper to provide an extensive foray into Jungian and post-Jungian understandings and critiques of anima/animus, however, brief mention will be made in the last sections of the paper of some accepted contemporary understanding of anima/animus.

Jung (1928/1977b) gives the simplest definition of anima as the feminine aspect in a man and of animus as the masculine aspect in a woman. He argued that there is a feminine element in the psyche of every man and a masculine element in the psyche of every woman. It is in the process of falling and being in love that these elements become most prominent and animated in the psyche. The experience of in-loveness will be the dynamic in which anima and animus are explored in this paper.

Anima and animus are *archetypal* which means they are inherited and primal universal patterns or principles in the psyche which traverse cultures and geographies. For instance, the archetype of "mother" and "father" have universal substrates of meaning that are common to a person living 5,000 years ago as well as to someone in

contemporary society. Also, regardless of what society, culture or geography in which these archetypes constellate, they have an underlying universal similar meaning.

It is important to begin this psychological inquiry into anima/animus by pointing out how extremely difficult it is to grasp them, either intellectually or experientially. Archetypes *themselves* (not the images they produce) are pre-conceptual; they are thought forms which lack content initially (Jung, 1934/1990a). They are also actual structures of the psyche itself. To know them is to know, in part, the structure, nature, and dynamic of the psyche.

What complicates matters substantially is that the subject that is being used to study the object is the same as the object. In other words, the psyche is being used to study itself. Understood within the context of a lived intimate relationship with its spontaneity, fascination, and extraordinary wealth of feelings which cloud our intellectual acuity, it is virtually impossible to be consciously aware of these two archetypes except by pushing a pause button and examining their nature and dynamic in hindsight.

Archetypes *themselves* cannot be represented and are, ultimately, unknowable (Jung, 1947/1960c). Jung (1934/1990b) refers to them as “transcendental intuitions” (p. 59); they are non-rational, beyond a linear, intellectual understanding. Archetypes *as such* are characterized by certain fundamental meanings which cannot be grasped wholly, rather only approximately (Jung, 1947/1960c). Jung (1947/1960c) tells us they will likely not ever be verified scientifically. He did argue, repeatedly, however, that they are empirically valid and it is by experiencing them that we know they are real (Jung, 1960c; 1977b; 1979).

Anima and animus, as all archetypes, have manifold meanings; it is impossible to arrive at a unilateral formulation of them (Jung, 1934/1990a). We know archetypes in two ways: experientially and symbolically. Experiencing them, they become real and alive in the psyche; we know them intimately in this way. The symbolic representations of all archetypes, including anima/animus, come to us through the images they produce, specifically through myths, dreams, and fairytales (Jung, 1947/1960c; 1928/1977b; von Franz, 1995; 1997). It is a way for us to visualize that which is otherwise without form; that which is an otherwise irrepresentable aspect of the psyche itself. Jung (1928/1977b) confessed the difficulty in grasping anima/animus when he stated: “If it is no easy task to describe what is meant by the anima, the difficulties become almost insuperable when we set out to describe the psychology of the animus” (p. 205).

Additionally, archetypes are unconscious aspects of the psyche (Jung, 1947/1960c; 1928/1977b; 1934/1990c) which seize us, fascinate us, hold us captive as if hypnotized by them (Jung, 1979), thus, they are as much feeling as thought (Jung, 1928/1977b). They are always projected onto others (Jung, 1934/1990a; Sanford, 1980; von Franz, 1995; 1999); therefore, to make them conscious takes extraordinary effort (Jung, 1979).

If not initially highlighted just how difficult it is to grasp anima/animus, the reader may get discouraged or feel inadequate and lose interest. From my experience, it takes multiple readings of Jung and others who are steeped in Jungian theory to finally grasp the definition and meaning of archetype and, more specifically, anima/animus. It is no easy feat to understand them and even more difficult to relate that understanding to one’s own psyche.

Add to these difficulties the fact that Jung did not limit writing about anima/animus to one single work and he never gave a single, definitive statement about them (Sanford, 1980). He specifically remarked that he did not want to limit anima/animus to one or two narrow concepts (Jung, 1928/1977b), so he used different definitions (Sanford, 1980). One contemporary Jungian analyst, James Astor, emphasizes this saying: “Jung makes understanding his concept of archetypes extremely difficult because he uses several languages to refer to them” (Astor, 2000, p. 561).

The level of difficulty becomes even more apparent when contemporary Jungian analyst, Verena Kast, discloses there is “a wide range of understanding among Jungians of the concepts of the archetype and of the anima” (Kast, 2000, p. 569). If Jungian analysts who are steeped in Jungian theory have such different understandings of archetypes, particularly of anima and animus, what can be said for the lay person making an attempt to understand them?

Because Jung knew the significance of anima/animus, he often wrote of the empirical and practical importance of going beyond an intellectual understanding (Jung, 1928/1977b; 1979; 1934/1990a). The words of Jung (1928/1977b) articulate it well:

It is far more to the point to give some conception of what the actual possibilities of experience are. Nobody can really understand these things unless he has experienced them himself. I am therefore much more interested in pointing out the possible ways to such experience than in devising intellectual formulae which for lack of experience must necessarily remain an empty web of words. Unfortunately, there are all too many who learn the words by heart and add the experiences in their heads, thereafter abandoning themselves according to temperament either to credulity or to criticism. We are concerned here with a new questioning, a new—and yet age-old—field of psychological experience (p. 211).

From my point of view, understanding anima/animus is important for several reasons. First, it gives us a psychological understanding of the universal experience of

falling and being in love, an experience that is felt by most to be fascinating and magical. Second, it can provide insight into the role that early object relations as well as social norms and ideologies play in our intimate relationships.

Third, understanding anima/animus from an experiential viewpoint allows for an intimate understanding of the relationship of our ego to our inner world. The understanding and integration of the contrasexual aspect of our psyche has the potential to transform our ego and move us toward greater psychological wholeness and well-being (Jung, 1928/1977b; 1979; 1989). Herein lies the greatest and most meaningful significance of understanding anima/animus.

The intended audience for this essay is the lay person who has a keen interest in personal development and growth. It is for those who have a proclivity toward self-reflection and utilizing insight as a means to understand a deeper purpose and meaning behind intimate interpersonal relationships. It is particularly suited for someone who may never have heard of anima and animus, but may have an interest in how the field of psychology explains “masculine” and “feminine.”

Understanding anima/animus has substantial advantage for the person who has unknowingly had the inner experience of anima/animus archetypal constellations and has been unable, due to lack of theoretical knowledge, to make sense of an intimate heterosexual relationship which was paradoxically highly intimate, loving, fascinating, and erotic, yet also was littered with bewildering personal conflicts. It is this person for whom this essay is particularly meaningful.

Sources for this paper are published works on the subject. The most important for this essay are Jung’s published works on archetypes and anima/animus so as to remain

close to his original thinking. Since I found Jung difficult to understand initially, I found published literature by some first generation Jungian analysts has been very helpful in coming to a deeper understanding of these highly subtle theoretical concepts. Last, sources from some contemporary Jungian analysts have been read.

Method

Several methodological approaches are woven together in this essay, in part, due to the aforementioned difficulty in understanding archetypes and anima/animus. First, I draw on Jung's original writings.

Second, I draw on my own personal experience of a heterosexual relationship, of falling and being in love with a man. I have limited my personal narratives to relevance to anima/animus and have identified them in italicized paragraphs in the section on anima/animus. John was my partner and he self-identified as primarily masculine. I identified myself as primarily feminine. At the time we fell in love, neither of us had developed the contrasexual aspect of our psyche.

Third, I have chosen to write this paper in an attempt to balance, as did Jung, the intellectual and scholarly understanding of anima/animus with an experiential understanding. When I tap into my feminine point of view, I agree with Jung (1928/1977b) when he states that "personal relations are more important and interesting than objective facts" (p. 206). By a methodological approach of combining an intellectual and experiential/personal view, I am attempting to satisfy what I consider a masculine point of view with an intellectual understanding of anima/animus with a feminine point of view which values personal relations. The attempt has been made to integrate intellect and feeling so that it might appeal to different psychological types of

readers, and so that the reader can take the intellectual understanding and marry it with their own lived experience. Jung (1989) used actual client experiences to help the reader understand his theory. Interwoven in this paper are experiences from my own personal life when I have felt that would deepen the reader's understanding. Perhaps through my experience, the reader can relate to anima/animus in her or his own life experiences.

The fourth and last methodology used may be best understood from a metacognitive perspective. This refers to two meanings. First, the process of individuation is, ultimately, beyond a rational, cognitive approach. Second, it is only through hindsight that one can look backwards and review individuation from a cognitive, rational perspective. As one proceeds *through* the actual journey, it is not obvious since projection (an unconscious process) is involved. It is in this second sense of thinking about thinking, or thinking about epistemological and phenomenological processes, that I use the term metacognitive. From a methodological approach, the progression of the paper itself is consonant with the psychological progression leading up to, and experiencing, anima/animus.

The Principle of the Opposites: An Overview

Opposition underlies all psychic energy (Jung, 1947/1960c) as it is an “inherent principle of human nature” (Jung 1917/1977a, p. 59). There is no energy without the tension of the opposites. Jung (1947/1960c) stated: “The psyche is made up of processes whose energy springs from the equilibration of all kinds of opposites” (p. 207).

It is common for our rational mind to think of opposites such as hot and cold, night and day as fighting each other. We forget that one opposite cannot exist without its mate. As with all opposites, they complement each other and, without this, opposites

could never unite. Anima and animus are polar opposites, yet they complement each other. Complementarity refers to two functions or aspects supplementing each other more or less (Jung, 1945/1960d, p. 287). They are similar to the yin and yang principles, feminine and masculine, respectively, in Chinese philosophy (Colegrave, 1979).

Anima/animus cannot exist without each other. They also compensate for each other. Compensation refers to the inherent nature of the psyche to function in a way such that the inferior and superior aspects would compensate for each other (Jung, 1934/1990c). One opposite compensates for the inferiority of its repressed opposite. It is typical for one to maintain the superior function in the psyche and the other to be the inferior. The superior function is the function most developed and utilized while the inferior is the least developed and utilized. Jung (1990a; 1990b) posited that men had an inferior and repressed anima and women had an inferior and repressed animus.

Borrowing from Heraclitus, Jung (1947/1960c, p. 219) used the term *enantiodromia*, the psychological process by which one opposite inevitably turns into the other opposite. When one opposite in the psyche manifests and the polar opposite is repressed, the repressive attitude will turn into its opposite. The goal is to reconcile the opposites and hold the balance between them. When two people fall in love, this process of enantiodromia occurs such that the contrasexual aspect of the psyche, which prior to being in love was repressed, now becomes dominant. Before an exploration of anima/animus, we will review some major concepts and how they relate to anima/animus.

The Ego, Consciousness, and the Unconscious

The ego is the “center of the field of consciousness” (Jung, 1951/1979, p. 3), the “I” which “is the subject of all personal acts of consciousness” (Jung, 1951/1979, p.3).

There must be a connection to the ego if any psychic content is perceived, thought or felt (Jung, 1951/1979; Stein, 1998). The ego arises as a result of the collision between the internal and external world and, when it establishes itself as a subject, it continues to develop based on more of these collisions (Jung, 1951/1979).

Ego-consciousness is consciousness with ego as its center, but it is not considered the whole personality. The “total personality” is “the self” (Jung, 1951/1979, p. 5) which is always and everywhere present, but can never be fully known. The goal of the self is to bring the psyche into a state of wholeness, balance, and unity. The ego is subordinate to the self as a part to the whole (Jung, 1951/1979).

Two of the most fundamental opposites are consciousness and the unconscious. The unconscious is older and more original than consciousness (Jung, 1931/1960a). Jung referred to this causal relationship when he stated that the unconscious is an “archaic, ‘eternal,’ and ‘ubiquitous’ dream-state” (Jung, 1951/1979, p. 25), “the mother of consciousness” (p. 281), and that “all consciousness is manifestly founded on unconsciousness, is rooted in it and every night is extinguished in it” (Jung, 1951/1979, p. 30).

The ego is not consciously aware of anima and animus because ego is the center of consciousness while anima and animus lie in the collective unconscious. Anima/animus, when manifested, tend to have a disturbing effect on the ego. They upset and overwhelm the ego and the latter loses its volitional control. When in love, it is often noted that the two people are “not themselves” and they exhibit a countenance and behavior that others perceive as being enthralled and in a trance. Explained more in detail later, this is due to the possessive effect that anima/animus have on the ego.

There is an energy exchange between consciousness and the unconscious that provides for psychological growth and change (Singer, 1994). This growth is a natural aspect of the psyche in which unconscious contents are assimilated into consciousness and, conversely, conscious contents are constantly being repressed into the unconscious. Anima/animus form a bridge between consciousness and the unconscious (E. Jung, 1934/1985; von Franz, 1999; Ulanov & Ulanov, 1994). Anima and animus, when the ego consciously assimilates them, have the potential for transforming the ego.

We can view the unconscious from two perspectives. As stated earlier, anima/animus derive from the latter. From the viewpoint of the psychology of ego-consciousness, the unconscious is comprised of three psychic contents: first, temporary subliminal psychic contents that can be voluntarily recalled (such as a childhood memory of learning to ride a bicycle); second, psychic contents which can only be recalled involuntarily (such as when childhood traumas surface to consciousness through some trigger); third, psychic contents which have never or never will erupt into consciousness (Jung, 1951/1979). However, from the perspective of the total personality (the self), there is a division of two levels of the unconscious: a personal unconscious and an impersonal, collective unconscious (Jung, 1951/1979).

Freud (1921/1960) posited that the unconscious is comprised solely of repressed contents that derive from *personal* fears, fantasies, and wishes. Jung, on the other hand, posited the unconscious consists of both personal and impersonal layers.

According to Jung (1928/1977b), the personal unconscious rests upon the deeper, more primal layer of the psyche, the collective unconscious. The personal unconscious is chiefly made up of complexes while the collective unconscious is mostly comprised of

archetypes (Jung, 1934/1990c). While the personal unconscious has contents which are unique and individual, the collective unconscious has contents and behavioral modes that are universal and impersonal (transcendent). Everyone, more or less, shares the contents, i.e., the archetypal images, of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1928/1977b).

Jung also theorized that the unconscious is potentially constructive and it has an innate tendency toward some higher purpose (Singer, 1994). “Higher” within Jungian theory refers to closer proximity to wholeness and unity in the psyche. The higher purpose of anima/animus is that of serving as guides and mediators to the self, the archetype of wholeness. More will be discussed about the self later.

The Personal Unconscious and Complexes

One descriptive and visual analogy which Jung (1947/1960c) used to describe the human psyche was as a solar system. The ego is compared to the earth and within the field of that ego is consciousness or awareness. The next layer more distal to the ego is the personal unconscious and, further and deeper, is the collective unconscious. While this typography does not capture the dynamic and structural view of Jung’s theory, it is helpful in visualizing the depth perspective.

The principal contents of the personal unconscious are complexes which are not only cognitive, but have an emotional essence to them (Jung, 1934/1960b). They are “splinter psyches” (Jung, 1934/1960b, p. 97) which are autonomous disturbances of consciousness that impede our intentions of the will and affect our memory. Jung (1934/1960b) defines complexes as follows:

It is the image of a certain psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is, moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of consciousness. This image has a powerful inner coherence, it has its own wholeness and, in addition, a relatively high degree of autonomy, so that it is

subject to the control of the conscious mind to only a limited extent, and therefore behaves like an animated foreign body in the sphere of consciousness. The complex can usually be suppressed with an effort of will, but not argued out of existence, and at the first suitable opportunity reappears in all its original strength (p. 96).

We see that the complex is an inner object and, at its core, is an image. It is an actual structure, function, and dynamic of the psyche itself manifesting as an image. It is powerful, autonomous, stable, and enduring. Complexes are aspects of our inner experience (1934/1960b, p. 100) which can never be eliminated; they appear and reappear, and their manageability depends largely upon the relative strength of the ego.

Jung (1934/1960b) compared complexes to a fragmented personality; to being like demons which overtake the ego. When someone identifies with a complex, there is a moment when the personality has an unconscious alteration (Jung, 1934/1960b). Just as we imagine a person being possessed by demons, complexes tend to possess the individual. Some examples are when a person slips and uses the wrong word, forgets the name of a person who is about to be introduced, or when a person congratulates a grieving person instead of offering condolences. Although complexes disturb the ego to a greater or lesser degree, they are a normal phenomenon of life (Jung, 1934/1960b, p. 104).

One does not learn how to have a complex, rather a complex constellates. Jung (1934/1960b) referred to constellation as an involuntary and automatic process in which an “outward situation releases a psychic process in which certain contents gather together and prepare for action” (p. 94). Constellation refers to a person having a predictable reaction based on assuming a certain position. Contents of both the personal and collective unconscious constellate, thus, anima and animus constellate when certain

factors and conditions converge. One of the most important and powerful constellations of anima and animus occur in the process of falling and being in love. Anyone who has experienced it knows that it is non-rational, involuntary, and spontaneous. Being in love has a certain way of possessing us; sometimes, we become obsessed.

As a general rule, complexes derive mostly from trauma, but they can be products of moral conflicts (Jung, 1934/1960b; Stein, 1998), family dynamics and patterns as well as cultural conditioning (Stein, 1998). These complexes form throughout life, but for the most part they stem from our infant and childhood experiences. They are comprised of “associated images and frozen memories of traumatic moments that are buried in the unconscious” (Stein, 1998, p. 52). We repress these memories because of the pain to the psyche. This results in a kind of split or dissociation (Stein, 1998). The glue that holds together all the associated elements of a complex is the emotion associated with it (Stein, 1998). They are transferred onto people in our adult life in both personal and professional spheres. When a complex constellates, we commonly say that a person is “acting out” or that someone has “pushed her buttons.” Two of the most common complexes are the “father complex” and “mother complex” which dominate the personal unconscious more than any other (Stein, 1998).

Projections play a crucial role in Jungian theory. Projections originate in the unconscious complexes and archetypes (von Franz, 1995). They are unconscious and, hence, unintentional transfers of inner psychic elements onto an outer object (Jung, 1951/1979). Projections are normal and healthy to a certain degree. If, however, there is excessive projection or a deficiency of projection it is unhealthy (Samuels, 1985). The goal is to find a balance between these two poles (Samuels, 1985).

Projection occurs when a person sees in another person something that is either not there at all or only to a small degree. Usually, as Jung noted, there is a “hook” in the object which allows the subject to hang their projection on the object similar to hanging a coat on a hook (in von Franz, 1995). With both positive and negative complexes, they create disturbances with the ego and interpersonal relations.

All complexes have an archetypal core (Jung, 1934/1960b) which is comprised of two parts: an image of the original trauma and an archetypal (innate, impersonal, and primordial) element intimately associated with it (Stein, 1998). Jung (1928/1960e) states that “the feeling-toned content, the complex, consists of a nuclear element and a large number of secondarily constellated associations” (p. 11). Thus, while the core has an impersonal aspect, there are many other personal associations which are formed within the constellation.

Surrounding the nucleus or core of the archetype are bits and pieces, so to speak, of personal life experiences. These are secondary associations including, but not limited to, childhood trauma and life experiences with the opposite sex (siblings, friends, ex-boyfriends and ex-girlfriends, ex-spouses and spouses, acquaintances). These personal memories usually lie just beneath our conscious awareness in the personal unconscious so we are not aware of the influence these have in personal and work relationships. Anima and animus archetypes have these personal *and* impersonal influences particularly when we experience being in love. When confronting the cause and nature of our personal complexes, it becomes clear how many conflicts and desires originate in our earliest object relationships and are played out time and again in our adult life.

Two prominent opposite principles in the psyche are the persona and the shadow. Like all complexes, the persona and the shadow have archetypal cores (Stein, 1998). The persona is the public mask and the other, the shadow, is the container for the hidden, unwanted, and repressed traits and qualities (Stein, 1998). We immediately think of Cain and Abel, and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde to characterize these complementary pairs.

Jung borrowed the word “persona” from the Roman actor’s stage mask and it refers to the person we become as a result of education and adaptation to sociocultural norms. We conceal and reveal conscious thoughts and feelings as a way to fit into society. It is the “psycho-social identity of the individual” (Stein, 1998, p. 109) and can be thought of as “the psychic skin between the ego and the world” (Stein, 1998, p. 120). Its dual function is to relate to objects while also protecting the subject (Stein, 1998). The ego is, more or less, identified with the persona, yet, on the other hand, the persona is also alien to the ego since it does not represent the authentic person. The shadow is a complementary functional complex to the persona (Stein, 1998). It wants what it wants without regard to any moral considerations.

Each ego has a shadow (Stein, 1998, p. 107) although the ego is unaware of the shadow aspect. The dark shadow has an immoral and disreputable quality because it is a part of one’s nature that is counter to the social and cultural customs, conventions, and mores. A few of these unsavory qualities are selfishness, dishonesty, deceit, and greed. The ego usually defends against knowing what is in the shadow because of the disturbing effect it has on the ego.

A less known shadow is the “golden shadow” which refers to favorable qualities that most societies value such as compassion, kindness, patience or honesty. A charitable

or highly virtuous person can be generally unconscious of these inner qualities and, instead, project them onto others. If others attempt to point out these qualities, the person will deny possessing them.

Shadows are generally projected onto others (Jung, 1951/1979; von Franz, 1995). The most common projections that people have are of parental images (von Franz, 1995). Generally speaking, as Jung (1951/1979) often pointed out, it is difficult to become conscious of one's own shadow without considerable effort. To become conscious of our shadow and withdrawing the shadow projection is accomplished with others of the same sex (Jung, 1951/1979). It is the first step toward the realization of the self which is the goal of individuation, the process of becoming psychologically whole and balanced. To become conscious of anima and animus is the second step to the realization of the self and it is only accomplished in relation to someone of the opposite sex (Jung 1951/1979).

Instincts, Archetypes, and the Collective Unconscious

In describing the collective unconscious, Jung (1931/1960a) referred to it as “something like an unceasing stream or perhaps ocean of images and figures which drift into consciousness in our dreams or in abnormal states of mind” (p. 350). It is the source of creativity, knowledge, and life itself (Jung, 1931/1960a; Jung 1934/1990a).

Two extremely important Jungian concepts are “image” and “archetype.” Jung considered the psyche to be imaginal, that is, it produced images. Archetypes are a structure within the psyche which produces images as a way to mirror that structure or, said another way, as an attempt to express the inexpressible. Archetypes, as mentioned earlier, are “irrepresentable” (Jung, 1947/1960c) and ultimately unknowable. The archetypal images and motifs are what emanate from the archetypes. These images are

universal, primordial patterns that are inherited over time (Stein, 1998) and derive from the self (Jung, 1951/1979).

Jung uses the word “*imago*,” which is Latin for “image,” to refer to a complex because “image defines the essence of the psyche” (Stein, 1998, p. 48). “*Imagos*, or complexes, are, in a manner of speaking, constructed human instincts” or “quasi-instincts” (Stein, 1998, p. 49). This is similar to the physical correlate of having instincts which cause us to respond in a certain way. For example, if we are alone in a jungle and we hear a strange noise, our instincts are activated and we run. This is a universal reaction. These instincts simply surface and activate; we do not have to stop and cogitate about what to do, rather our instincts take over our ego and move us. Somewhat loosely analogous are the complexes which surface due to an unconscious, inherited, primordial archetypal element. Our ego is, more or less, unable to control complexes and archetypes; rather they control the ego.

Different definitions of archetypes are explored since the archetype itself is so esoteric. Jungian analyst, Verena Kast (2000), gives her definition of archetypes:

I understand archetypes as ordering or structuring principles, common to all human beings, which allow us to register information and emotion—usually in images---as having meaningful connections; they also promote meaningful and life-preserving behavior and action in any given existential situation. I am not talking about a static order or structure, but about one which is continually renewing itself in the sense of self-organization of the psyche. The archetypal images, and the stories that are linked to them, are very stable in their narrative core, but have a pronounced capacity for marginal variations. These archetypal images are mediated and colored by our complexes, that is, our internalized patterns of relations, and are also influenced by the current social climate (p. 569).

The archetype is a structural aspect of the psyche itself which, in turn, orders and structures our experiences. The archetype itself cannot ever be intellectually known or ever visualized, yet it produces images; any idea of its reality can only be attained by

inference (von Franz, 1995). The images emanating from archetypes have an inner core that is cross-culturally and intergenerationally the same; yet there are peripheral variations which are influenced by our personal complexes (from the personal unconscious), our relationships patterns, and by the sociocultural norms in which we live.

Von Franz (1995) refers to archetypes as “natural constants of the unconscious psyche” (p.23) and as “innate irrepresentable structures that always and everywhere on suitable occasions produce similar thoughts, mythological images, feelings, and emotions in human beings, parallel to instincts” (p. 23). Another definition is that “archetypes are inherited, in-born, structural dispositions with respect to the species-specific modes of behavior of human beings” (von Franz, 1999, p. 6). Thus, the archetypes are stable and enduring, as mentioned previously, and their constellation manifests certain common behavioral elements across cultures and geographies. Someone who is beginning to explore the definition of archetypes may start with the definition of “that which is typical in the psyche” before moving to more esoteric and deeper understandings. For example, the Hero archetype, whether constellated in an individual in Western or Eastern culture, has similarities in behavior such that the individual will exhibit rescue and protection characteristics. This image is not only cognitive, but produces an inner experience of courage. The Hero archetype is a typical aspect of the psyche in the sense that this archetype typically constellates in situations where someone needs rescuing and protecting.

Jung received substantial criticism for his theory of archetypes, in large part, because they are, in theory and empirically, highly abstract and cannot be represented except through myths, fairy tales, dreams, and other symbols. Singer (1994) states that

“archetypes cannot be fully grasped by our minds---their being, in a sense, the very source of our thought processes and, consequently, of our attitudes and behavior---the concept of the archetype is bound to raise more questions than it can possibly answer” (p. 106). This conveys to us that, when talking of archetypes, we cannot arrive at some limited definition which includes an exhaustive list of parameters.

Anima and Animus Archetypes

Anima and animus, two of the most important Jungian archetypes (Stein, 1998), regulate all relationships, but above all others, they influence love relationships which are erotic (Sanford, 1980). Earlier it was stated that anima is the feminine aspect in the male psyche and animus is the masculine aspect in the female psyche (Jung 1951/1979). Jung derives the words “anima” and “animus” from the Latin word *animare* (Sanford, 1980) which means “to bring to life.” Anima is experienced as that which animates a man; animus is that which enlivens a woman. Jung identifies anima with life and relationships, and animus with intellect and spirit (Sanford, 1980).

At the beginning, an attempt was made to convey how extremely difficult it is, intellectually or experientially, to grasp what an archetype is. Noted Jungian analyst, James Hillman (1985), in his book, *Anima: Anatomy of a Personified Notion*, provided 439 extracts from Jung’s writings about anima and von Raffey (2000) points out that Jung made 439 *different* statements about anima. By sharing other’s descriptions, placing them within the context of a heterosexual relationship dynamic, sharing some of my personal experiences of being in a heterosexual relationship, and, finally, with the reader examining her or his own personal, intimate relationship, perhaps these liminal and necessarily ambiguous concepts will come alive.

Masculine and feminine principles are not to be confused with male and female biology or socioculturally determined traits or characteristics. Male and female biological qualities refer to the anatomical or the hormonal system in a man or a woman. Sociocultural gender determinants in relation to anima and animus are more controversial and produce substantial debate (Stein, 1998); however, Jung (1928/1977b) posited that there were essential differences in the psyche of a man and a woman which had an *archetypal core* irrespective of sociocultural influences.

Masculine and feminine principles relate to patterns in the structure of the psyche as well as producing a certain nature in one's personality. They also serve a functional purpose. Thus, anima and animus are functional, structural, and have a specific nature which combine to form a general pattern or dynamic in the psyche. We will look first at the structural aspects of anima/animus and then examine anima/animus within a heterosexual relationship dynamic.

Anima and Animus: Abstract Structures in the Psyche

Jung (1951/1979) describes a hierarchical arrangement in the psyche as a way to give a visual picture of where anima/animus are in the structure of the psyche. If we think of concentric circles, the shadow is the most immediate level to the ego followed by anima/animus. The self is the most distal to the ego. The self is superior in value, authority, and power to anima/animus with the latter being superior to the shadow (Stein, 1998). The word "value" refers to psychological wholeness and unity.

While persona relates to external objects, anima and animus relate to our inner world of the unconscious which is directly inaccessible to consciousness (Jung, 1921/1976). Anima and animus can be understood as an attitude which determines the

relationship one has to the inner unconscious world of ideas, emotions, moods, intuitions, perceptions, fantasies, and imagination.

By referring to anima as the inner feminine for a man and animus as the inner masculine for a woman, Jung (1928/1977b) argued that there was an inherent psychological essence that was different between males and females. He posited that both men and women had these inner essences, but that, for most people, the inner was inferior and not integrated into consciousness.

Socio-cultural norms derive from these pre-existing, in-born, primordial archetypes in the collective unconscious (Stein, 1998). Following the logic of Jung's thought, anima/animus are, in essence and at their core, untinged by gender stereotypes which are culturally defined. Instead, these archetypes have an inner structure which transcends socio-cultural definitions, but through the experience that a man and woman have in the cultural milieu, these archetypes can and do come under the influence of how society defines gender.

Anima/Animus and Gender

Anima/animus behave as though they were inner personalities (E. Jung, 1934/1985) which exhibit characteristics that the outer personality lacks. In a man, these characteristics are feminine; in a woman, these are masculine (Jung 1928/1977b). According to Jung (1928/1977b; E. Jung, 1934/1985), anima and animus have characteristics which are determined by three factors: personal, collective, and archetypal. The confluence of these unconscious factors determines the nature of the expression of the contrasexual aspect.

Personal characteristics of anima and animus derive from actual life experiences with the opposite sex. The most significant influence is with the opposite sex parent (Jung, 1990a; von Franz, 1999). Jung (1928/1977b) referred to this as the *parental imago*, the inner image of parents that is contained in the unconscious. Other influences come from life experiences including intimate relationships, close friendships and acquaintances with the opposite sex (E. Jung, 1985). These personal experiences form a kind of amalgam to comprise anima/animus within the personal unconscious.

Collective characteristics of anima/animus derive from sociocultural experiences. Gender norms are the collective expectations of each gender. Examples are the expectation that women will be gentle, submissive, and cooperative whereas men should be assertive, authoritative, and competitive. Eastern and Western cultures have varying gender expectations, but there are also differences within each of these broad cultures. These aspects of anima/animus are also from the personal unconscious.

The archetypal characteristics of anima/animus derive from the collective unconscious, from the “deposits of all our ancestral experiences (Jung, 1928/1977b, p. 190). This is the image of Man with a capital “M” carried in the psyche of the woman and the image of Woman with a capital “W” carried in the psyche of the man. It is a collective image of Man and Woman. These universal and primordial images of Man and Woman are stable and universal expressions which have become embedded in the collective psyche and are carried across generations.

These three factors---personal, collective, and archetypal---combine to form a psychic entity which is both image and experience (E. Jung, 1934/1985). The psychic image which is a collection of characteristics from the personal and impersonal layers of

the psyche is projected onto a person of the opposite sex and, in turn, produces a certain subjective experience.

Anima and Animus in Heterosexual Relationships

When a heterosexual man and woman meet and fall in love, this constellates the universal archetypes of anima and animus (Jung, 1979; Sanford, 1980; Stein, 1998). These spontaneous, autonomous archetypes cause an obsession to take hold of, and overtake, the ego. We call that obsession “falling in love.”

Anima is present in the male psyche and animus is present in the female psyche to varying degrees, but they will not be outwardly exhibited if they disturb the ideal image. For instance, if the culture places high importance on men being highly masculine and women being highly feminine, the contrasexual aspects of the psyche will be largely denied, repressed, and disowned. This is the dynamic to be explored in this paper.

Jung (1928/1977b) wrote of anima/animus in a broad sense of what behaviors manifest from them. In one attempt to distill them to a core essence, he stated: “The anima produces moods, so the animus produces opinions” (Jung, 1928/1977b, p. 206).

Anima

There are positive and negative features of anima and animus (von Franz, 1999).

Anima is defined as:

All feminine psychic qualities in a man---moods, feelings, intuitions, receptivity to the irrational, his personal capacity for love, his sense of nature, and most important of all, his relationship to the unconscious (von Franz, 1999, p. 311)

When the man has had a favorable relationship with his mother (von Franz, 1999) and other women, the woman he falls in love with will have the positive anima image projected onto her. Recall how the contents of the anima archetype will derive from both

the personal and collective (impersonal) unconscious. This phenomenon we call “love at first sight” or “falling madly in love” compels him toward the woman who is most like the image of his own inner anima. He is drawn to her like a moth to a flame. She seems to promise him a state of eternal bliss, an eternal Garden of Eden. He perceives her, paradoxically, as both a sexual and spiritual object. The sexual object he wants to possess, to own, to merge with; the spiritual object he wants to worship and revere in submission. She embodies goddess qualities of Venus and Aphrodite. She is his Queen Guinevere. Because she appears to him as a goddess, he overvalues her and expects perfection. Unknown to him, all he can see is his own anima image; opaque, more or less, is the real woman underneath. He is unaware he has fallen in love with his own anima.

When John met me, he fell immediately in love with me. When together and intimate, he came bearing roses, gifts, and deep affection. We vacillated between frolicking with joy and laughter versus relishing each other in a magical fascination. When apart, he would write of his longings to be with me; of how difficult it was to be apart. Our relationship had a Divine quality to it, yet it could be very erotic. He referred to us as “Twin Flames.” He would write of the desire to “merge” with me and “to get away from the profane world and move into sacred space” with me. We both had the desire to stay in that liminal, sacred space. The relationship and our feelings had a magical, mesmerizing, other-worldly quality. It was a paradise, like living in the Garden of Eden and we never wanted to leave. John would send poems and letters referring to me as his Queen or as “She” who was compared to various goddesses or who had certain goddess-like qualities. He would send packages of highly meaningful items that were sacred to him such as a bird’s nest, his grandfather’s silk scarf, his personal infant bracelet. Postcards had an ethereal, romantic, or numinous quality: Botticelli’s Annunciation, Antonio Canova’s Psyche and Amour, Francois Gerard’s Psyche Receiving the First Kiss from Cupid, Joseph Ferdinand Lancrenon’s Boreas Abducting Oreithyia, John William Waterhouse’s Lady of Shalott, La Belle Dame sans Merci, The Siren or The Mermaid. Letters came with pressed violets, scents of lavender, and images of angels. Words of “love,” “adore,” and “honor” were abundantly used in his correspondences to me. He wrote of loving me beyond death. He would often speak and write of some Higher purpose that our union represented and that, in time, that purpose would become known to us. He was gripped with a fascination of me and he related to me at times in a state of reverence. At certain times, he related to me as though his ego were submitting to a numinous essence. Yet, other times, his words were quite

sensual and erotic. Our relationship encompassed domains of father/daughter, lovers, brother/sister, friends, and god-goddess. I would describe it as a spectrum which encompassed every positive, yet paradoxical, aspect of the fullness and depth of the most whole relationship potential from virginal innocence to sexual erotica; from physical longing to spiritual ecstasy; from intellectual depth to emotional highs; from sensual worship to divine adoration. I would say the hallmark of our in-loveness was a deep desire to give so that the Other, the Beloved, could experience joy. In hindsight, his poems, cards, and letters, with references to “He” and “She” and replete with images of mythical figures, were no less than an archetypal pantheon. When we first fell in love, both he and I were unconscious that he was projecting onto me his anima, the feminine aspect of his own psyche. Later in the relationship, John told me: “You are my anima. If I were a woman, you are who I would be.”

During this phase, he is particularly sensitive to her and meeting her needs. His reservoir of empathy is large. His sense of emotional relatedness is heightened.

Nurturance, cooperation, compromise are in free-flowing supply.

During this in-love phase, John was particularly sensitive to my needs. He told me: “You make me feel alive.” His passion, energy, and creativity were heightened. He would go extra lengths to be attentive and responsive to me. He expressed a consistent and deep desire to be intimate and close to me virtually all the time. Asking me what I needed was largely unnecessary because he anticipated my needs without me having to verbalize them. It was as though he knew my needs without my articulating them. In hindsight, I see this as John responding to the needs of his own inner feminine which, being universal, would naturally satisfy my needs.

As with all states of “in-loveness,” it never lasts. At first, the woman carries his anima projection because it makes her feel powerful to be so enchanting and alluring to her partner. But as Jung (1928/1977b) tells us, enantiadromia is an inherent psychic dynamic. All extremes turn into their opposite. It is easy enough in the initial phases of infatuation when there is a tendency to overlook differences and imperfections. After the passage of time, he begins to realize that she is not what he thought her to be, and then the relationship changes. Conflicts surface; misunderstandings, miscommunications, and

tensions mount. He begins to see the discrepancy between what he thought her to be and who she really is. The gap can be quite wide.

With time, John's infatuation began to wane. John became increasingly irritable. He would begin to have mood swings which would cause me to respond with personal jabs. In hindsight, his annoyances at me were, in part, an expression of the inconsistency between his fantasy of me (the ideal) and who I really was (with flaws and imperfections). He was also irritated because I began to pull back and be more independent. Increasingly, John was seeing my flaws and faults.

After the woman begins to feel increasingly smothered by her mate's anima projection, she begins feeling irritated and frustrated. Because he is seeing her not as who she is, but who he wants her to be, she senses this more and more. It feels as though she is not there; she cannot feel he perceives her humanness. She begins to break free from his restrictive and possessive tendencies. She may begin to dread sexual intimacy because of the feeling of being objectified as some other-worldly icon. Unknown to him, he is possessed by the archetypal image of Woman welded together with the positive traits of his mother and of women in general. She is not conscious of it either; only that it feels unreal.

After time passed, I began to become increasingly irritated with John's possessiveness. He was possessive of me and my time. I initially wanted to be with him every moment. Increasingly, his neediness was smothering. What once was enthralling now began to turn into its opposite—it was irritating. Simultaneous with this, John was beginning to see my imperfections and how that was inconsistent with his fantasy or ideal image of me.

If the woman fails to meet his expectations, he becomes hurt or belligerent. When she begins rejecting him or expressing her irritation, then he suddenly replaces the positive anima projection with a negative one. His anima characteristics will be a depressed mood, irritability, chronic discontent, and oversensitivity. The anima will

constellate a sense of doom and fear of threats to his masculinity, such as fear of impotence and loss of physical prowess.

John's anima image, his ideal soul-image within his psyche, was now inconsistent with the real me. No one can live up to these inner ideals—anima and animus--- which get projected onto our mates. When I began to express a desire to be more independent, that hurt his feelings and made him irritable and moody. I would, at times, prefer not to be intimate. This had the effect of making John sulk into dark moods and to withdraw. At this point, neither of us were conscious of the role that his anima projection had on our relationship.

A man's anima is noticeable to others whenever emotions and affects are at work in a man (Jung, 1934/1990a). If a male is anima-possessed, he can behave in a very cruel way to others (von Franz, 1999). Moods can overcome him with only the slightest provocation or when hearing a chance remark. Others experience him as grouchy. Common negative-anima characteristics are feminine barbs and insults that always have an untruthful element, but are intended to cause hurt feelings. This anima projects a cold, uncaring attitude. His bad moods, which develop in response to her increased irritations and rejections of him or because she is too needy, become more prominent. Now he blames her for the relationship turning sour. Actually, the mood is due to his negative anima image projected onto her. He is unconscious that what he saw initially in her was his own inner feminine unconscious and not who she really is, and he is unaware he is externalizing blame onto her. The process of enantiodromia, from over-idealization to undervaluation, occurs.

John could be quite moody during this period. He would be highly loving and attentive one minute, only to turn grouchy if I expressed a desire to be social instead of intimate. While I had been perceived as perfect at the beginning of the relationship, now I constellated in him the negative "mother complex" and negative anima. Since he was a psychologist, he was very self-reflective and self-aware. Thus, he knew his moods were a result of our relationship. An intellectual understanding of a psychological dynamic, however, does not preclude an inner experience. He would, at times, refer to how his mother would

distance herself from him when he was a child and how my responses to him reminded him of that painful rejection. We referred to his little wounded boy as "Ben." What began as a simple and unoffensive remark that I wanted to go to a museum at the time and we could be intimate later would get distorted and exaggerated into projections onto me that I was being cold and rejecting like his mother.

If only he would learn to recognize, honor, and value feminine values in himself, then learn to express his feelings to his partner, these irritable moods could be worked through without causing such damage to the relationship. Because the negative mood possesses him, the anima intensifies, distorts, and exaggerates his emotions. He will ignore and deny his feelings because he has difficulty identifying with his feminine side, his anima. His mate may ask him what is wrong and instead of him saying, "You hurt my feelings" or "What you did made me angry," he will dig his heels in and respond with more anger toward her or will tell her "I'm not angry!"

Not only does anima affect a man's emotions, but it also interferes with his rational thinking. When anima possessed, he may give irrational, dogmatic opinions that give the impression of absolute truth. This situation occurs when the anima within actually responds with his partner's animus, giving the receiver of these projections the perception that he is no longer objective and has lost his sense of logic and reason. Jung (1979) referred to this as when the man's anima has been transformed into the animus.

Anima functions positively in this role when the man is able to examine seriously his unconscious expectations as well as his moods and feelings (von Franz, 1999). If he can do this, over time, he can develop the realization that this inferior aspect of his own psyche can, if consciously integrated, play a creative role in his life and enhance his relationships with both women and men.

Like the anima in the male, the animus in the woman also has positive and negative features (von Franz, 1999). The animus expresses positively as “initiative, depth of thought, consistency, courage, sense of religious truth; negatively as rigid opinionatedness, brutality, exaggeratedly masculine behavior” (von Franz, 1999, p. 364). Her animus expresses not as moods, rather as dogmatic, irrational opinions and convictions (Jung, 1928/1977b). The negative animus is always right; there is often a righteous indignation in the opinions which have a sort of command quality, an aggressive authority and power (E. Jung, 1934/1985).

When a woman’s animus constellates, she projects onto her male partner the characteristics of her inner animus. If her relationship with her father was a positive one, she may project onto her partner the psychic image of a person having the capacity to speak in a powerful, authoritative manner or as someone who has the intellectual ability to think very analytically and critically. If she had a negative experience of her father, she may project onto a man certain cold, uncaring, and abusive qualities. This creates a situation where she falls instantly in love not consciously realizing that the reality of her partner’s characteristics may be very discrepant from her animus projections. If we take the same relationship previously mentioned, we can become familiar with some of the experiences and behaviors of the woman who is animus possessed.

The animus is influenced initially by the female’s experience of her father (von Franz, 1999). When the woman has had a favorable relationship with her father (von Franz, 1999) and other men, the man she falls in love with will have the positive animus image projected onto him. As mentioned previously, the contents of the animus archetype will derive from both the personal and collective (impersonal) unconscious.

This “love at first sight” or “falling madly in love” compels her toward the man who is most like the image of her own inner animus. Just as he overvalues her by projecting his soul image onto her, so she projects her soul image, her animus, onto him. He appears fascinating and powerful. She is drawn to him like a moth to a flame. He gives her a feeling of being complete and being safe. Of course, this ideal lover she imagines is not real; it is a projection of her own psyche. She overvalues him and sets up expectations of god-like perfection.

Many women project their animus onto men who have a special ability to verbalize in a powerful and eloquent way (E. Jung, 1985; Sanford, 1980). When a man uses verbal language to articulate ideas well, and especially when he is effective in using words to influence, he is an ideal carrier of the animus projection. As long as he is content carrying that projection, she is not forced to self-reflect to find her own inner creativity and develop it.

When I met John, I immediately fell in love with him. Physically and intellectually, John represented the ideal Man to me. He was extremely intelligent and intellectually focused, a very deep thinker, highly cultured, yet also was earthy, affectionate, witty, and fun-loving. John was full of paradoxes and it enthralled me. He was a psychologist, highly creative and had a way of articulating his ideas in an extremely well-reasoned and logical manner. His voice was alluring. Because my mother and father were divorced before I was born, I never had a father figure in my childhood except through transient interactions with my grandfather and uncle. Thus, in hindsight and unbeknownst to me at the time I met John, the influence of the archetypal image of Father was enormous in my psyche. Ever since early adolescence, around the age of eleven, I was keenly conscious of an inner image of the “ideal” Man and there was rarely a time when I was not vividly conscious of searching for that ideal Man. I always knew exactly what that Man would be like when I met him---I would know. When I met John and sat down to speak with him, I immediately knew I had met that Man. I fell passionately and deeply in love with him the first time we had dinner. He represented Father, Beloved, Brother, Friend, and Hero to me. All I wanted to do was to moor in the harbor of my Beloved and never leave. Unconsciously, I had met the undeveloped contrasexual aspect of my own psyche.

During this in-love phase, she sees him not as he truly is, but as she wants him to be. He is a god; her ideal lover, Adonis and Eros all in one. He is King Arthur to her Queen Guinevere. For a period, this is flattering to him because the idealization she projects onto him gives him a sense of power and superiority, almost of perfection.

During the in-love phase, my letters and poems to John were filled with references to him being my “King” or my White Knight. When together, we would “fall into sacred space” and “merge” with each other. Space apart was emotionally painful. We had a fantasy relationship during this time. I would send him gifts of highly meaningful items. John was a Buddhist, so I would send cards with highly spiritual connotations such as a Himalayan mountain, a picture of the Buddha, or of archetypal pictures of Kings, Knights, and Lions. I was drawn to pictures of Lancelot and Guinevere or similar romantic images. I would constantly seek out objects of archetypal significance to give him such as an antique pin in the shape of a crown. Of course, at the time, I was unaware of the archetypal significance of anything I was giving him. I just knew it symbolized through images what my mind and heart were experiencing. My heart was so full of love and adoration, I felt, at times, I could not contain it. My love for him felt bigger than the Universe with an infinite and divine quality. Words of “love,” “adore,” and “honor” were replete throughout my correspondences to him. I was mesmerized with him; in a hypnotic trance of fascination with him; it had a reverence-like or numinous quality. He poured out his heart to me. I adored him. I derived so much joy giving to him. At certain times, particularly in correspondences and when we were alone and intimate, we referred to each as other as “Twin Flames.” I was fascinated that he had both a masculine overt presence and an inner feminine which he was unafraid to exhibit. He was extremely affectionate and had an endearing habit of putting one of his hands to his heart whenever we said “good-bye.” One day, when he and I were particularly euphoric, I referred to him as a “gay Angel.” John was able to balance his masculine intellect, creativity, and assertiveness with an ability to be gentle and make me feel safe. I was enthralled with his verbal and written expressions of his innermost thoughts, and with his special gift of bringing sacredness and romanticism into our physical space. It was as though my ego were willingly submitting to a numinous essence. We both had the intense desire to be reclusive and stay in that liminal, sacred space forever and never leave it. The relationship had a magical, other-worldly quality to it. When he told me if he were a woman, he would be like me, I instantly thought the converse---if I were a man, John is who I would be. Of course, both he and I were unconscious in the beginning that I was projecting my positive animus onto him and he was projecting onto me his positive anima. We were unaware that each of us represented the repressed contrasexual aspect of our own psyche.

As we know, these in-love phases cannot endure. No one can live up to an image of perfection, of a god or goddess. Sooner or later, the unpleasant realities of personal flaws and imperfections of our beloved fall upon us. For some, they hit us quickly, suddenly, even harshly. For others, it may occur slowly. What began as a feeling of bliss and security turns into its opposite. He begins to feel that she is not seeing him for who he really is. What once was welcome adoration now turns into repulsion and distaste. Her clinginess repels him. When the flaws become exposed, the negative animus constellates. Enantiodromia occurs. Just as he was once over-idealized, now he is undervalued. The hero that she once saw turns into a demon responsible for disappointing and belittling her. She is unaware that she was in love with her own animus. She now externalizes blame onto him for not being perfect.

Over time, John began to see my imperfections. The realities of life began to surface and the idealizations began to wane. Disappointments that I could not see his humanness set in. These were matched by my disappointments that he could not always present to me as all things at just the right time began to mount. It was inevitable that he could not meet my perception of masculine perfection—the ideal image of Man, my animus, nor could I meet his ideal image of Woman, his anima. In hindsight, I can see that my irritations around feeling like I was sexually objectified at times were matched equally by his feelings of my objectifying him as a king and protector. I felt he was overly needy at times, much too possessive. I had the feeling he was not perceiving me as who I really am. I needed him to see me for who I was, not as some other-worldly, metaphysical ideal. Likewise, he needed to know that I saw his humanness and that he was not perfect. These disillusionments set in for both of us as it does with all people who fall madly in love. There were times when he would pull away from me into a sulking mood and I felt abandoned. It resurfaced childhood pain regarding rejection from my mother. We called this little wounded girl “Emily.”

As stated earlier, just as the anima produces moods, the animus produces irrational opinions (Jung, 1928/1977b). Animus expresses himself in absolute truths, generalizations, criticisms, illogical assertions (E. Jung, 1985; Sanford, 1980). They frustrate and annoy her mate because they lack sound reason and clear logic. Animus

opinions are expressed bluntly as rude criticisms that have a quality of being destructive (Sanford, 1980).

The critical, harsh opinions of the animus annoy others. The opinion may not fit the current situation. Because of their absoluteness, the animus does not allow for discussion or questioning. She will shut down interactions with her mate, assuming she holds the authority of the truth on her side. She exhibits a judgmental demeanor that prevents her mate or others from experiencing her warmth, tenderness or affection from her feminine side.

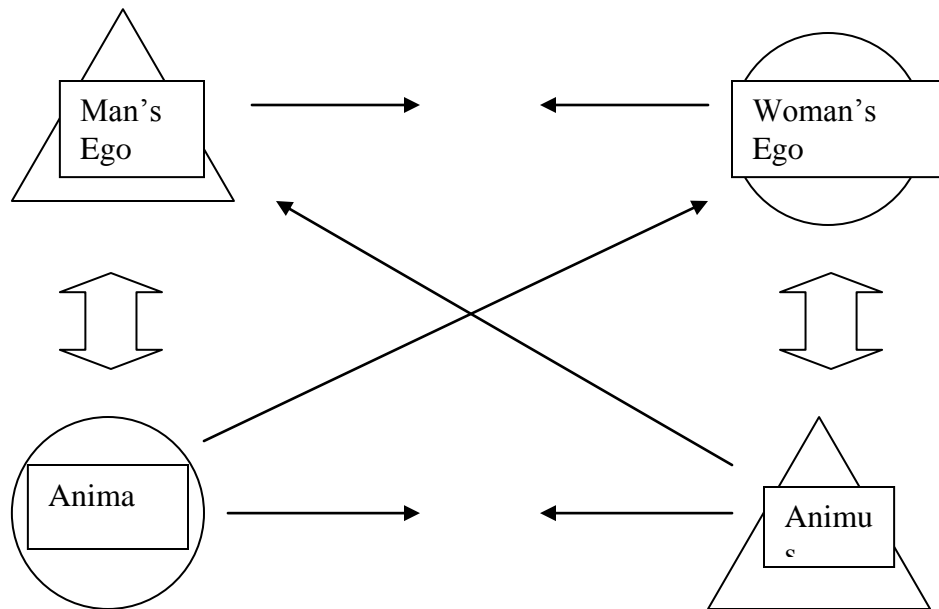
There would be times when I would respond with critical, harsh judgments about John which were in response to his clinginess or his mood swings. Where I was usually very affectionate, I would become distant and make statements that, in hindsight, were hurtful. This would only serve to make the matter worse because his mood would become even more sulky and sour. Unbeknownst to both of us, our negative anima and animus were facing each other and reacting.

When the animus verbally assaults her mate, it stings, wounds, and hurts. Sanford (1980) states that “animus has a way of using a sword when a lamp would be better” (p. 48) and refers to animus as “the Great Prosecutor, the Top Sergeant, the Great Scorekeeper, the Inner Judge” (p. 47), all descriptions which lack love, compassion, and tenderness. Common statements from animus are: “You are no good,” “You are a failure,” and “You can’t do anything right” (Sanford, 1980, p. 47).

While it would have been unthinkable to say things like this to John, I can reflect back and see that I placed the responsibility of upholding the perfection of the relationship onto him. Of course, that is unrealistic. No man can do this. No woman can either. My unrealistic expectations and his unrealistic expectations greeted each other, although unconsciously. According to Jungian theory, John’s anima and my animus fell in love. Being idealizations, it was inevitable that the realities of everyday life would interject our imperfections and cause either conflict or necessitate a new look at our relationship based on realistic appraisals. It was an opportunity to move into a relationship in which our humanness was honored.

Anima and Animus: The Eightfold Relationship Dynamic

When the positive soul images are projected onto each other, there exists a blissful state called being in love. It is mutual magnetism, awe, and fascination. Below is a diagram drawn by Sanders (1980, p. 17) which depicts the eight lines of relationship possible when a man and woman are in love.



The line between the man and woman's ego represents the conscious level between the ego personalities. The lengthiest lines between the woman's ego and her mate's anima as well as the man's ego and his mate's animus are a very powerful attraction. It is the attraction of the anima/animus projections. The most powerful magnetism, however, is between the animus of the woman and the anima of the man. These two have fallen in love with each other. When the anima/animus are projected, in a sense, it is like being in love with one's own self (Sanford, 1980) and not with the real human whom we claim as our mate. Just as both John and I had fallen in love with the

anima and animus within, we actually fell in love with a part of our own inner world, our own undeveloped psychic make-up. We fell in love with the part of ourselves which had the potential to make us whole.

Falling in love is a natural and meaningful experience, but cannot last forever before the human imperfections come to the fore, forcing us to examine who our mate really is, and urging us to take back our projections. What is the consequence of not taking the projections of anima/animus back and integrating that within our own being? It is a potential lifetime of constant disappointments after never finding the perfect man or woman. No person can live up to these positive anima/animus projections.

The masculine characteristics of animus and the feminine characteristics of anima are irreconcilable when unconsciously embodied. The goal, according to Jungian theory, is for each partner to consciously acknowledge these projections, realize they are a part of themselves, and withdraw and integrate them so they can be used toward personal growth. More importantly, they are a bridge to the realization of the self, that unifying center of wholeness and unity.

In heterosexual, traditional relationships, the man and woman will usually seek a partner who will help them manage the archetypal contents of anima and animus (Stein, 1998). For example, a man will look for a woman who best mirrors his anima and, thus, will help him express and manage his emotions. Similarly, a woman will seek out a man who best mirrors her animus.

With John and me, we found one another and fell in love, in part, so we could experience the personal aspect of being in love and work through our childhood issues. But the relationship was, in a sense, purposive so we could serve each other as bridges to a larger purpose, that of seeking psychological wholeness through the realization of the archetype of the self.

Depending upon her own psychological development and her natural cognitive abilities, a woman will usually seek out one of two types of men. For less developed women, she will seek out a man whose physical prowess is emphasized. In a more developed woman, she will seek out a man who will inspire her to create ideas and thoughts which result in usefulness on a broader scale (E. Jung, 1934/1985).

The Self: Archetype of Wholeness and Unity

Most psychological theories, either implicitly or explicitly, recognize psychological wholeness as the pinnacle of well-being. Jung (1951/1979; 1928/1977b) posited that the self is an archetype which is always remains supraordinate to the ego. The self embraces consciousness and the unconscious (Jung, 1928/1977b).

The self is an archetype which unifies, centers, balances, and harmonizes the psyche (Jung, 1951/1979). While it is everywhere and always present, most are unconscious of it (Jung, 1951/1979). The objective value of unity and totality (or wholeness) stands at the highest point on the scale of objective values, and at this state there is no distinguishing between the symbols of the archetype of the self and *imago Dei*, the image of God (Jung, 1951/1979). The image of God is a metaphysical concept which, according to Jung (1951/1979), is related to a universal, living intrapsychic process. The self is the “ever-present archetype of wholeness” (Jung, 1951/1979, p. 40) which restores the original state of oneness with the God-image within. While the objective value of anima/animus is higher than that of the shadow, the objective value of the self is higher than that of anima/animus (Jung, 1951/1979).

The journey toward realizing the self, a journey toward wholeness which is never ending, Jung (1917/1977a; 1928/1977b; 1951/1979; 1934/1990c) called *individuation*.

Individuation is a process of divesting the self of the falsity of the persona and of the power of the primordial images in the collective unconscious (Jung, 1928/1977b). It is a process of finding our innermost uniqueness as an individual and becoming that self. Jung (1928/1977b) refers to it as a process of “becoming one’s own self” or “coming to selfhood” or “self-realization” (p. 173). It takes extraordinary effort, most oftentimes fraught with pain and suffering, for this archetype to become conscious and to experience the self (Jung, 1928/1977b). Von Franz (1995) tells us that the realization of the self comes to us only through great suffering to the ego. We can only bow to the self and relate to its numinous nature in a state of surrender.

The self encompasses the unknown, the mystery of life and existence, a personal relationship toward the *numinosum* (Stein, 2008). This archetype of wholeness encompasses all inner opposites, shadows, contradictions, identifications, and personal, cultural, historical, gendered, and moral subpersonalities (Stein, 2008). It links persona and the shadow (good and bad), the ego and anima/animus (masculine and feminine), and consciousness and the unconscious (Stein, 2008). Constituting a ‘coincidence of opposites’ or that which holds all opposites, the self is paradoxical unity (Stein, 2008, p. 308).

Jung (1928/1977b) emphasizes that the realization of the self is a living, inner psychic experience. He argues that this experience of the God image within is an empirical, psychological experience and process. Jung consistently emphasizes in his writings that the self confers an inner experience of the numinous, not a validation of a theological or philosophical idea. It is through the actual inner experience that the self is

understood as empirically valid and not as a mere hypothetical or metaphysical concept (Jung 1951/1979).

Henderson (1990) refers to the self as a central archetype of order as well as a symbol of the totality of the psyche. He expresses it visually as being, paradoxically, both a circle and the central point within that circle. The circle is the totality of the psyche (although it is infinite and without boundaries) while the central point represents the ordering principle.

One may be tempted to think of the ego and the self as polar opposites, but this is not supported by Jungian theory. The ego and the self are more like counter parts to one another with, as mentioned earlier, the ego being as a part to the whole of the self (Jung, 1951/1979). Jung (1947/1960c) stated that “conscious wholeness consists of the successful union of ego and self, so that both preserve their intrinsic qualities” (p. 225).

The role that anima and animus play in the process of individuation or in the realization of the self is crucial. Jung (1951/1979) tells us that the integration of anima and animus cannot occur until after the shadow is integrated; also, the realization of the self cannot occur until the contrasexual aspects of the psyche are integrated. Thus, anima/animus act as mediators to the realization of the self.

Both the ego and the self experience gradual and rapid developmental shifts across the lifetime (Stein, 2008). According to Jung, we are never perfectly whole; realizing the self is not an end goal that, if experienced, there is no further necessary psychological development. We are never fully realized (Stein, 2008); we do not realize the self once and for all, finally coming to an end state of perfect wholeness and unity. Shadow projections and anima/animus projections, if not excessive or deficient, are an

aspect of normal psychic life and occur, more or less, throughout life (Jung, 1928/1977b). The key is to be ever mindful of these projections so we can make them conscious, integrate them, and take conscious responsibility for our wholeness and our relationships. Striving toward wholeness is a lifelong, arduous process with no end, rather a life of creating ever greater harmonic tensions between the many opposites in the psyche.

Analysis of the Findings

There are a number of key findings in this exploration of anima/animus. Some of the most noted are that:

1. anima/animus are two of the most important archetypes pertaining to psychological growth and the movement toward wholeness,
2. anima/animus are mediators to the realization of the self,
3. love (through anima/animus) plays an important role in the realization of the self,
4. early object relations (through anima/animus) plays an important role in the realization of the self
5. anima/animus are controversial because of their relationship to gender

As was stated, Jung (1951/1979) described a sequential process which occurs during the individuation process. Withdrawing the shadow projection precedes withdrawing the anima/animus projection which, in turn, precedes the realization of the self. If we view the ego-self axis, then we note that the shortening of the axis has a positive correlation with the integration of personal shadow and then of anima/animus in the psyche. Following this logic, greater psychological wholeness is dependent upon the integration of masculine and feminine principles in the psyche.

The potential that an intimate and erotic relationship has for bringing us closer to wholeness is highlighted by Jung (1951/1979; 1934/1990b). While not the exclusive relationship dynamic in realization of the self, Jung's (1951/1979; 1990a; 1990b) theory

of anima/animus presents the love relationship as a situation which carries the potential for mediating toward wholeness, unity, and balance. When we consider that being in love has the potential to allow us to become conscious of our anima/animus projections, withdraw them, and then offer us the opportunity to realize the self, it is particularly noteworthy the exalted role that being in love plays in Jung's theory.

We can see the crucial role that infant and childhood relations with parents (or primary caregivers) play in the development of the contrasexual aspect of the psyche. These memories lie repressed in the personal unconscious and play a role in affecting our adult love relationships.

One last significant finding is the controversy surrounding a nexus of two relationships. Those relationships are between anima/animus and gender, and anima/animus and sociocultural norms. Each of us are, to varying degrees, a product of the sociocultural norms into which we are born. Jung was no exception. Increasingly after Jung's death in 1961, gender and gender roles began to be examined in relation to cultural biases.

Stein (1998) opines that Jung's theory was partially masculine biased, but also partially unbiased. According to Stein, Jung did have certain masculine biases that manifested in his theory of anima/animus. For example, Jung's personal view was that heterosexuality was a given; that a man and woman were incomplete without each other (Samuels, 1985). Stein (1998) also argues that Jung did theorize that the core of anima/animus were unrelated to social and cultural derivatives.

In the field of analytical psychology, there are two generally accepted contemporary interpretations of anima/animus. These allow for a revision of Jung's

thinking on anima/animus that could encompass non-traditional gender identity perceived as healthy, yet also maintain the integrity with the overarching theory which states that there exists a contrasexual, undeveloped element in both genders. The first is an interpretation of Jung's theory which argues that anima/animus are in both genders (Hillman, 1974; 1985); women and men have both anima and animus archetypal energy. The second interpretation of Jungian theory is that the contrasexual is the least developed "other" (that which is different within us) regardless of which gender (Samuels, 1995; Ulanov & Ulanov, 1994). Anima/animus can be understood as a way of "communicating otherness, difference, that which is momentarily unavailable because of unconsciousness" (Samuels, 1985). These interpretations have a number of advantages.

They:

1. provide valid interpretations of anima/animus based on contemporary views of gender as opposed to what is widely viewed as Jung's outdated and untenable attitudes toward women (Baumlin, 2005).
2. maintain Jung's thinking that there is a core archetypal essence, but that anima/animus also are influenced by sociocultural norms from the personal unconscious.
3. maintain Jung's original thinking that there is an opposite and generally undeveloped contrasexual aspect in the psyche.
4. allow for a valid explanation of gay, lesbian, transgendered, and transsexual individuals.
5. allow for a contemporary understanding of the dynamics in non-traditional relationships such as gay and lesbian partnerships.
6. permits an understanding of the relationship between ego, shadow, persona, anima/animus, and the self in gay, lesbian, transgendered, and transsexual individuals so that the focus is on the healthy or unhealthy intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamic and not on the sexual orientation.

Discussion

Contemporary interpretations of anima/animus are helpful in reducing the oppositionalism and academic conflicts surrounding Jung's theory of anima/animus, but

one lingering question remains: What is the *essence* of masculine and feminine principles which are unrelated in any way to social and cultural norms? No answer which provides agreement from all camps seems available.

What has been provided are contemporary interpretations which mollify the opposition to Jung's original thought that anima is restricted to the inner aspect of man and animus is restricted to the inner aspect of woman, as well as the heterosexual relationship is the ideal. These interpretations, paradoxically, are in line with Jung's theory that there is a contrasexual aspect in both men and women. Regardless of whether a person is heterosexual, homosexual, transgendered, or transsexual, anima/animus exist, to varying degrees, in both genders. Clinical experience supports this (Samuels, 1985). It is correct in stating that Jungian theory of anima and animus provides for the potential of each gender to integrate their opposite archetype and behave like the other (Bradway, 1995). Anima and animus are principles in both genders, to varying degrees, which mediate the never ending process of the psyche to seek wholeness, to continue the journey toward the realization of the archetype of the self.

Conclusion

By understanding anima and animus, according to Jung, we have insight into a number of different intrapsychic and interpersonal aspects. We understand how our childhood affects our adult relationships. We come to better understand the magic and disillusionment of love relationships. We have an opportunity to know the deepest part of ourselves. Although a journey that is not made without sorrow and pain to the ego, the outcome, if we stay on that path, can bring us to a place of psychological wholeness.

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