DOI: 10.21901/2448-3060/self-2025.vol-10.211

Artigo de Reflexão

Self
Revista do Instituto Junguiano de São Paulo

Feminist perspectives: *anima/animus*, dissident genders and sexualities

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Resumo

The Jungian and post Jungian approach about dissident sexualities and genders have been transformed as analysts and researchers come across epistemological productions by feminist and LGBTTQIAP+ movements, which challenge cisheteronormative perspectives. These changes follow the evolution of psychology as a field of knowledge, which changes in response to those influences. The purpose of this article was to demonstrate the need of widening the Jungian classical assumptions, prompting the reader to examine contemporary production and, more importantly to recognize intellectual manifestations of LGBTTQIAP+ individuals and of women about their own experiences. The article is structured in three parts and presents a chronology of publications considered as key references of Jungian studies and feminist research about sexuality and gender. This chronology, elaborated by the author, is not the result of a systematic review. Finally, it is evident that analytic psychology will not go ahead while the advocates of a conservative perspective continue refusing to reimagine the theory.

Descritores

gender, sexuality, feminism, Jung, Carl Gustav, 1875-1961.

Conflict of interests:
The authors declare that there is no professional or personal interest that could generate a conflict of interest in relation to this manuscript.

Funding: Not Applied

Received: Jun 12, 2024; 1st review: Dec 16, 2024; Approved: Feb 21, 2025; Approved for publication: May 28, 2025

Perspectivas feministas: *anima/animus*, gêneros e sexualidades dissidentes

Abstract

Os enfoques junguianos e pós-junguianos sobre sexualidades e gêneros dissidentes têm se transformado à medida que analistas e pesquisadores se deparam com as produções epistemológicas dos movimentos feministas e LGBTTQIAP+, que desafiam as perspectivas cisheteronormativas. Essas mudanças acompanham a evolução da psicologia como campo de conhecimento, que se altera em resposta a essas influências. Este artigo visou demonstrar a necessidade de ampliar os pressupostos clássicos junguianos, convidando o leitor a examinar produções contemporâneas e, ainda mais importante, a reconhecer as manifestações intelectuais de LGBTTQIAP+ e das mulheres sobre suas próprias experiências. O artigo está estruturado em três partes em que se apresenta uma cronologia das publicações consideradas referências chave nos estudos junguianos e nas pesquisas feministas sobre sexualidade e gênero. Essa cronologia foi elaborada pela autora e não resulta de uma revisão sistemática. Por fim, é evidente que a psicologia analítica não avançará enquanto defensores de uma perspectiva conservadora recusarem-se a reimaginar a teoria.

Descriptors

gênero, sexualidade, feminismo, Jung, Carl Gustav, 1875-1961.

Miradas feministas: *anima/animus*, géneros disidentes y sexualidades

Resumen

Los enfoques junguianos y post junguianos sobre sexualidades y géneros disidentes se han transformado a medida que analistas e investigadores han tropezado con las producciones epistemológicas de los movimientos feministas y LGBTTQIAP+, que desafían las perspectivas cisheteronormativas. Estos cambios acompañan la evolución de la psicología como campo de conocimiento, que se altera respondiendo a esas influencias. El propósito de este artículo fue demostrar la necesidad de ampliar los presupuestos clásicos junguianos, invitando al lector a examinar producciones contemporáneas y, más importante aún, a reconocer las manifestaciones intelectuales de los movimientos LGBTTQIAP+ y de las mujeres sobre sus propias experiencias. El artículo fue organizado en tres partes en las que se presenta una cronología de las publicaciones consideradas como referencias clave en los estudios junguianos y

en las pesquisas feministas sobre sexualidad y género. Esta cronología fue elaborada por la autora, y no es el resultado de una revisión sistemática. Para terminar, es evidente que la psicología analítica no avanzará mientras los defensores de una perspectiva conservadora se nieguen a reimaginar la teoría.

Descriptores
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Introduction: Starting from C. G. Jung

Jung is not known in Psychology as a theorist who wrote extensively about human sexuality, and even less about homosexuality, which is the primary focus of this article. Robert Hopcke (1989/1993), a gay analyst associated with the Gay Liberation Movement, noted what he called the 'absence' of interest in the topic of homosexuality within the Jungian community. He undertook a meticulous review of Jung's work and of the major post-Jungians of the time. In Jung's work—complete collections, seminars, and letters—Hopcke identified approximately 24 mentions of homosexuality, a derisive number compared to the vast scope of Jung's theoretical work.

Based on the material gathered, Hopcke (1989/1993) highlights the fluctuations and ambiguities in Jung's views, typical of authors with extensive bodies of work, and identifies at least five concise opinions on homosexuality:

> [1] Homosexuality should not be a matter for legal authorities (. . .) [2] Homosexuality is better understood when placed in a historical and cultural context (. . .) [3] To distinguish an individual's homosexuality from other aspects of their personality (. . .) [4] Homosexuality has a particular meaning for the individual in question, and psychological growth consists of making the individual aware of this meaning (Hopcke, 1989/1993, pp. 61-67, our translation).

According to Hopcke (1989/1993), Jung's intention was to move away from theoretical generalizations and focus on the psyche of the individual. In this case, Jung questioned what the purpose of homosexuality might be for the potential psychological growth of the client. I emphasize that, as progressive as these opinions may seem, Jung was a product of his time, as is clear in the last item: 5) "homosexuality is a result of psychological immaturity and, consequently, is abnormal and disturbed" (Hopcke, 1989/1993, p. 67, our translation). In other words, the psychological maturity to be achieved is heterosexuality. Thus, Hopcke (1989/1993) identifies that, for Jung, if the individual becomes aware of the function of homosexuality in their life, they will mature and become heterosexual.

This last perception appears to be the most popular among the leading Jungians of the time, also analyzed by Hopcke (1989/1993). The author adds, in this item on "psychological immaturity", the idea suggested by Jung (1949/2013, pp. 463-464, para. 843, our translation), first introduced in the book "Psychological Types" (1921), that homosexuality would result from an identification with the archetype of contrasexuality—the anima and animus.

> For a man, the most suitable carrier of the soul-image (anima) is a woman, due to the feminine qualities of his soul, and for a woman, it is a man. Whenever there is an absolute, almost magical relationship between the sexes, it is a matter of the projection of the soul-image. Since such relationships are frequent, the soul must also often remain unconscious—that is, many people are unaware of how they relate to their internal psychic processes. And because this unconsciousness is always accompanied by a total identification with the persona, this identification must be very common (...) But the opposite can also occur: the soul-image may not be projected but instead remain within the subject. This results in such an identification with the soul that the subject becomes convinced that the way they relate to internal processes is also their one and true character. Due to their unconsciousness, the persona, in this case, is projected—and, moreover, onto an object of the same sex, which explains many cases of overt or latent homosexuality (Jung, 1949/2013, pp. 463-464, para. 843, emphasis by the author, our translation).

Jung (1934/2016, p. 48, para. 82) also referred to the Schreber case as a possession by the anima. Hopcke (1989/1993, p. 35, our translation) identifies, based on the aforementioned passage, that for Jung:

> This seemingly improvised discussion about the nature of the anima introduces, for the first time, one of the primary ways in which Jung would come to understand many cases of homosexuality—that is, as a consequence of identification with the contrasexual archetype of the anima or animus (Hopcke, 1989/1993, p. 35, emphasis by the author, our translation).

This idea, which, by the way, is less interesting than the others, seems to have found fertile ground in the psyche of Jungians. So much so that, in the year 2024, it is still possible to hear colleagues saying that effeminate or sensitive men are "anima men" and that butch women are "animus women." For this reason, discussing the archetypes of the anima and animus, after so many years, remains necessary. The aim of this work is not to pass judgment on Jung's thoughts but to provoke the field to question itself: why are concepts formulated decades ago still being repeated, uncritically, by a large portion of analysts and, worse, by some training institutes?

Below, I highlight some definitions of the anima proposed by C. G. Jung:

> There is no man so exclusively masculine that he does not possess something feminine within him. (...) There is a collective image of woman in the unconscious of man, with the help of which he can understand the nature of woman. (...) The anima, being feminine, is the figure that compensates for masculine consciousness. In woman, the compensating figure is of a masculine character and can be designated by the name animus (Jung, 1928/2015, pp. 79-96, para. 297-328, our translation).

> It is a well-known fact that sex is determined by a majority of male or female genes. The minority of genes of the other sex does not disappear. Thus, man has within him a side with feminine characteristics—that is, he possesses an unconscious feminine form, a fact of which he is generally completely unaware (Jung, 1939/2016, p. 399, para. 512, our translation).

> A careful investigation reveals that the affective character of man has feminine traits. (...) Deeper introspection or ecstatic experience reveals the existence of a feminine figure in the unconscious, hence its feminine name: anima, psyche, soul. The anima can also be defined as an imago or archetype, or even as the deposit of all the experiences man has ever had of woman. For this reason, the image of the anima is generally projected onto a woman [mother, wife, sister] (Jung, 1930/2016, p. 62, para. 58, our translation).

Regarding the definition of the anima, I now turn to James Hillman (1985/2020), who, in his book "Anima", undertook a meticulous review of Jung's work on this concept:

> In Latin, anima means 'soul' or 'psyche.' It is the term Jung used when encountering the feminine interiority of man. The anima is what men fall in love with; and she possesses them through moods and desires, motivating their ambitions, confusing their reasoning (...). In a single word, anima refers to interiority (Hillman, 1985/2020, p. 9, our translation).

The work (Hillman, 1985/2020) makes it clear that Jung provided numerous definitions of the anima archetype, which appears intertwined with notions of Eros, feeling, human relationships, introversion, fantasy, life, etc., demonstrating that it is a term difficult to pin down. Here, we are interested in analyzing the anima as the archetype of contrasexuality and the feminine; the passages cited above refer to the anima as both. As Hillman (1985/2020) demonstrates, Jung suggests in various writings that the archetypal image of the anima will often appear in men's dreams and fantasies as a woman of captivating beauty, seductive, irrational, emotional/temperamental, as a source of life from the unconscious, which compels men to look inward at their subjectivity (Hillman, 1985/2020).

The first critiques

One of the first books that comes to mind when thinking about critiques of the concepts of anima and animus is "Androgyny" by June Singer (1976/1990). Her book was written in the 1970s, during the height of the second wave of feminism. However, the author does not directly reference feminist works of her time—though it is evident from her critiques that she drew inspiration from this source. The book remains indispensable for those who wish to study sexuality from a Jungian perspective and continues to serve as a reference in the field, as demonstrated by the articles by Moreira (2015) and Aufranc (2018).

In her quest to conceptualize the archetype of the androgyne, Singer (1976/1990) is radically opposed to any categorizations and is critical of the model of life based on polarities: positive/negative, art/science, mind/body, feminine/masculine, etc. For the author, the archetype of androgyny would be the answer to this duality:

> (. . .) androgyny, which in its broadest sense can be defined as the One that contains the Two, namely, the masculine (*andro*) and the feminine (*gyne*). Androgyny is an archetype inherent to the human psyche. (. . .) It refers to a specific way of uniting the 'masculine' and 'feminine' aspects of a single human being. (. . .) Androgyny calls into question various assumptions about our identity as men or women and, therefore, threatens our sense of security (Singer, 1976/1990, pp. 27-31, emphasis by the author, our translation).

In another passage, she states:

> When we begin to recognize androgyny as an essential reality of human nature, we begin to move toward a world in which individual roles and modes of personal behavior can be freely chosen. Androgyny has the power to free us from the shackles of what is considered 'appropriate.' (. . .) Androgyny is not hermaphroditism [intersex] and is not bisexuality (Singer, 1976/1990, p. 33, our translation).

The archetype of the androgyne would, therefore, be the capacity that every human being has to flow through their polarities and dualities, integrating them into the complexity of their personality. The author argues that social conventions around gender hinder the process of individuation and trap the individual in stereotypes. In this way, she points out that the androgyne is a symbol of individuation, belonging to the archetype of the Self—which, for Jung, is necessarily androgynous (Singer, 1976/1990).

As critical as Singer may appear to be regarding the notions of femininity and masculinity of her time, and despite agreeing that Jung incorporated sexual stereotypes into the formulation of the *anima* and *animus* archetypes, she paradoxically exalts the existence of essentially masculine and feminine principles. Similarly, she adheres to Jung's idea that women possess the *animus*

and men possess the *anima*. For this reason, the author argues that Jungian readings of anima and animus should always refer to the contrasexual archetype.

Considering that Singer (1976/1990, p. 198) interacted with the feminist movements of her time, the author's statement seems controversial to me:

> There is no doubt that Jung uncovered new ground when he separated the concepts of sex and gender, and could see the Masculine detached from virility [anatomical male sex] and the Feminine detached from femininity [anatomical female sex]. For him, the Masculine detached from virility was the animus in women; the Feminine detached from femininity was the anima in men (Singer, 1976/1990, p. 198, emphasis by the author, our translation).

As pointed out by Louro (1997) and Colling (2018), it was through Anglo-Saxon feminists that the concept of gender began to be used distinctly from sex, with the aim of rejecting biological determinisms that referred to a 'feminine nature.' One of the cited authors is the historian Joan Scott (1989), who states:

> Gender becomes, moreover, a way of indicating "social constructions"—the entirely social creation of ideas about the roles proper to men and women. (. . .) The use of "gender" emphasizes an entire system of relationships that may include sex but is not directly determined by sex nor directly determines sexuality. (. . .) In other words, this use of gender refers only to the domains—both structural and ideological—that imply relations between the sexes (Scott, 1989, p. 7, our translation).

This is the opposite of what Jung (1927) argued in some of his contributions. It is enough to read his text "Woman in Europe," where he states:

> (. . .) when a woman embraces a male profession, studies, and works like a man, she is doing something that, at the very least, does not correspond to her **feminine nature** and may even be harmful (Jung, 1927/2019, p. 95, para. 243, emphasis added, our translation).

Jung referred to empirical concepts and did not question the concept of sex or gender roles in his works; on the contrary, he reinforced the idea of a 'feminine nature' or a 'feminine psyche' in various writings, as presented throughout the article.

It is evident that Jung's (1875–1961) work aligns with his historical context and the scientific production of his time. As Conceição Nogueira (2017) informs us in her book "Intersectionality and Feminist Psychology," around the 1920s, psychological research—mostly led by men—sought to determine the differences between the 'intelligences' of the sexes. Failing to obtain significant data to support this hypothesis, scholars abandoned these studies and, in the 1930s, focused on determining the typical characteristics of men and women, now exploring the differences in personality between the sexes. After the 1980s,

psychology moved closer to critical social constructionism and took a different direction:

> The very notion of 'psychology of women' is essentialist because it suggests that women (as a unitary group) share a psychology (a set of qualities, traits, and abilities, innate or acquired) that presumably conditions their behavior (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1990). Another important consequence is that when traits are located within individuals, the responsibility for change falls on the people themselves and not on society (. . .) Social constructionism (Gergen, 1982, 1994), as well as postmodernist philosophy (Flax, 1990), recognizes contradiction as a fundamental part of social reality, and this is consistent with the argument that important categories such as sex and gender can function with distinct definitions and simultaneously in a particular situation (Nogueira, 2017, pp. 100-102, our translation).

Naomi R. Goldenberg (1976), in her article "A Feminist Critique of Jung," offers a harsh critique of the concepts of anima and animus. The author argues that the theory favors men and that Jung did not dedicate himself to the concept of animus as he did to anima, treating it as a kind of 'mirror' of what the anima archetype would be in men. Finally, the author disagrees with the idea, widespread in Jungian circles, that the anima and animus archetypes promote the integration of the sexes, pointing out that, in fact, they foster more separatism by categorizing what would be a 'feminine' and a 'masculine' archetype.

Later, Susan Rowland (2002/2024) followed in Goldenberg's (1976) footsteps and presented a relevant critique in her book "Jung: A Feminist Revision", suggesting that the concept of anima was formulated based on Jung's fantasies and projections about the women he was involved with throughout his life, incorporating the gender stereotypes of his time into his theory.

A year before Singer (1976/1990) and Goldenberg (1976) published their works, Gayle Rubin (1975/1993) had already published the text "The Traffic in Women", in which she argues that every society has a sex/gender system, so that, "Sex as we know it—gender identity, sexual desire and fantasy, attitudes toward childhood—is itself a social product" (p. 12, our translation).

In this chronological perspective, I now turn to Hillman (1985/2020, pp. 73-75), who, while listing the different meanings Jung attributed to the anima, offered one of the most important critiques of the *anima* and *animus* archetypes by stating:

> (. . .) we can hardly attribute anima solely to the male sex. (. . .) an archetype as such cannot be attributed to or located within the psyche of either sex. Thus, an adequate notion of anima requires looking beyond men [humanity] and beyond man, and even beyond the psyche. (. . .) we want to make it understood that anima, as an archetype, is far too broad to be contained within the notion of contrasexuality. Freed from this limiting definition, anima also applies

> to the psyche of women (Hillman, 1985/2020, pp. 73-75, our translation).

Here, Hillman (1985/2020) does what Claudette Kulkarni (2017, p. 245, our translation) calls "using Jung against himself". Based on the notion of the archetype, which is intended to be universal, as formulated by Jung, it is conceptually inconsistent to claim that the operation of a particular archetype in the psyche necessarily depends on one's sex.

The Jungian community seems to have readily accepted Hillman's (1985/2020) critique that both men and women possess anima and animus. However, they appear to have conveniently erased from memory his other critiques, such as when he states, "We are unfair to the complexity of the anima when we call any woman who appears in our dreams an 'anima image'" (p. 47, our translation); or when he argues that containing the anima archetype within the notion of contrasexuality is limiting; or even when he questions whether we truly know what 'feminine' and 'femininity' mean.

Contemporary to Hillman's (1985/2020) work is that of lesbian feminist Monique Wittig (1992). In her first text, "The Straight Mind" (1980), Wittig (1992, p. 27, our translation) questions the naturalization of heterosexuality and argues that a society that sees women only as reproducers of the species will never validate homosexual relationships. To this end, what she calls the 'straight mind' produces a series of discourses that create the idea that 'you are either straight or you are nothing':

> (. . .) the straight mind develops a totalizing interpretation of history, social reality, culture, language, and simultaneously all subjective phenomena. I can only underline the oppressive character that the straight mind takes on in its tendency to immediately **universalize its production of concepts into general laws that claim to be applicable to all societies, all eras, all individuals** (Wittig, 1992, p. 27, emphasis by the author, our translation).

In her second text, "The Category of Sex" (1982), Wittig (1992, p. 17, our translation) also problematizes the creation of the category of 'sex,' which remains necessarily tied to the idea of gender, to argue that "The category of sex is the product of a heterosexual society." Wittig (1992) points out that the category 'woman' is produced by men and, therefore, lesbians would not be women—since lesbians do not correspond to the ideal of woman constructed by heterosexual men. Kulkarni (1997), building on Wittig's (1992) ideas, reaches the radical conclusion that:

> Only what is socially acceptable for women to do or be is reified and labeled as 'feminine', while everything else is attributed to the 'masculine.' It has thus become inevitable that the notion of 'feminine', like the concept of the 'animus,' is simply irrelevant to women, lesbian or not (Kulkarni, 1997, p. 1, our translation).

In this passage, Kulkarni (1997) critiques the notion of the animus as a contrasexual archetype, drawing on the work of Andrew Samuels (1992, p. 132, our translation) in his book "The Plural Psyche" (1989), where the author critiques biological determinism, highlights the role of culture in shaping the notions of feminine and masculine, and argues that the images of *animus* and *anima* function as metaphors for the potential of the 'other': "So-called contrasexuality is more of a counterpsychological matter; anatomy is a metaphor for this."

It seems counterproductive to speak of archetypes of the masculine and feminine as universal categories when social movements, especially those led by Black women, have already unveiled the power structures behind these concepts, exposing even the fact that the category 'women' is not universal. After all, we can never forget the speech delivered by Sojourner Truth at the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio (USA), in 1851: "Ain't I a woman?" (Davis, 2016).

Whats next?

It is impossible not to begin this section with Judith Butler (1990/2022) and her book "Gender Trouble," which, although not chronologically distant from the previous texts, is a significant milestone for contemporary feminist studies. Butler (1990/2022) takes Wittig (1992) as a reference and continues to critique what had been repeated for years in the feminist movement: that sex is natural and gender is cultural. The author argues that:

> If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps the very construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps sex has always been gender, with the result that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all. If sex is itself a gendered category, then it makes no sense to define gender as the cultural interpretation of sex (Butler, 1990/2022, p. 27, our translation).

Butler (1990/2022) discusses the regulatory practices that shape and divide gender into binary structures of female/woman and male/man, and how these categories construct our identities and subjectivities. The gender binary is politically and culturally well-defined by the norm that demands a certain coherence and continuity between sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire. Thus, those who do not conform to this model are considered unintelligible by the norm.

From this perspective, all those who do not fit into this model will, in some way, be discriminated against, persecuted, or killed by what is called cisheteronormativity. Butler (1990/2022) served as a foundation for transfeminist authors who later named this "CISystem" of sex-gender as cisgenderity. The term 'cisgender/cis' is a concept that encompasses people who identify with the gender assigned to them at birth, that is, non-trans people

(Vergueiro, 2015). Letícia Nascimento (2021, p. 52, our translation) argues that if, for Beauvoir (1970), woman is the "Other" of man, and for Grada Kilomba (2019), the Black woman is the "Other of the Other", then trans women are "the *Other* of the *Other* of the *Other*, a distant image from what is normatively determined in society as man and woman" (emphasis by the author).

The transfeminist Viviane Vergueiro (2015) identifies three interdependent aspects that sustain cisgenderity: pre-discursivity, binarity, and the permanence of genders. Pre-discursivity is characterized as:

> (. . .) the sociocultural understanding (. . .) that it is possible to define the sexes-genders of beings based on objective criteria and certain bodily characteristics, regardless of their self-perceptions or the intersectional and sociocultural positions and contexts in which they are located (Vergueiro, 2015, p. 61, our translation).

The author draws on various queer, decolonial, and feminist authors to demonstrate that the idea of supposedly universal Western categories, such as 'sex' and 'gender', did not exist in many non-white civilizations. In fact, I also cite the Nigerian Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí (1997/2021), who, in her book "The Invention of Women", writes that the Western category of gender, constructed primarily by white european feminists, makes no sense when applied to a pre-colonial Yoruba reality.

As mentioned earlier, binarity is the idea that there are only two types of bodies in the world (female and male) and that they are necessarily men and women, thus invisibilizing the existence of intersex people. Vergueiro (2015, p. 66, our translation) states:

> This binarist universalization is directly associated with a decolonial perspective that understands it as part of projects of extermination of the diverse sociocultural perspectives on gender that exist and have existed in colonized societies, 'unintelligible' to European Christian eyes, and where other perspectives on corporealities and genders could and can exist.

The notion of permanence is tied to binarity and assumes that the boxes of sex-gender are socially coherent and remain so until the end of life. This notion not only affects the LGBTTQIAP+ population, who daily challenge this model, but also cis-heterosexual individuals who do not fully remain within their 'boxes'.

Given the productions presented here, where do anima and animus stand? Polly Young-Eisendrath (1995), foreseeing that these concepts could be used for misogynistic purposes, aligns with Samuels' (1992) perspective and prefers to speak of contrasexual complexes "organized around the archetype of the identity of the not-self" (Young-Eisendrath, 1995, p. 32, our translation). These complexes would contain the effects of projections and projective identifications of one gender identity onto another. In another text, the author states:

> What makes contrasexuality such a powerful emotional determinant of development is its unique relationship to the ego: the contrasexual Other constrains and defines what the ego can be. The way I act and imagine myself as a woman carries with it a limitation in terms of what I consider to be "not-woman" – male, masculine, not-self (Young-Eisendrath, 2002, p. 222, our translation).

Susan McKenzie (2006) argues that for a substantial revision of Jungian gender theory, it is necessary to:

> (. . .) revise our concept of the archetype. A new understanding of archetype as an emergente mind process is currently under construction. Taking this idea further, I suggest that gender is a particular example of emergent archetype in emergente mind process. (. . .) I suggest that one's primary gender feelings are part of a pre-conscious proto-self (Damasio 1999) or emergent self (Stern 1985) that is related to our earliest body/mind organization. This emergent sense of self precedes the organization of archetypal imagery and complex formation. Jung's archetypes in this neurological framework would be second-order organizing mechanisms in the mind and not first-order archetypal principles that determine body or gender feeling. (McKenzie, 2006, p. 411-412, our translation).

Thus, McKenzie (2006) critiques the idea that the adoption of an archetype 'x' or 'y' (or a constellation of them) can determine our sexuality or gender identity, rejecting the perspective proposed by Jung in the 1920s. McKenzie (2006) states that our internal experience of gender is shaped by our personal experiences and the cultural artifacts that surround us. Regarding this, Rowland (2002/2024, p. 86, our translation) says:

> The mind can never have a fixed gender, as archetypes will work with and produce contrasting notions of femininity and masculinity witnessed by material culture (. . .) because once this state exists, the primary method of weaning the ego for better nourishment by the unknowable and mutable unconscious would cease (p. 86).

Regardless of the theoretical path each individual chooses to follow, there seems to be a consensus among post-Jungian authors: it is no longer pertinent to associate anima and animus with the idea of the contrasexual archetype of the "feminine" and "masculine". This is due to the fact that such notions are embedded in a specific political context and historical period, making them incompatible with the notion of the archetype proposed by Jung. Moreover, it is also unfounded to insist on biological determinisms that correlate clinical symptoms to anatomical sex.

Hillman (1985/2020) rejected this perspective, arguing that approaching complex archetypes in such a reductive manner would be unfair to them. In his book "Anima", the author moves away from the essentialist gender attribution present in anima and animus, betting on the archetypal possibility of the Syzygy,

which plays a fundamental role in the dynamics of the psyche. The syzygy is a *coniunctio* that grants the anima-animus pair a soul-spirit relationship:

> The syzygy says that wherever the soul goes, the spirit goes too. This syzygy illuminates imagination with intellect, and refreshes intellect with fantasy. Ideas become psychological experiences, and experiences become psychological ideas. The work is to keep spirit and soul differentiated (Hillman, 1985/2020, p. 203, our translation).

Luciana Ximenez (2024), in "Is There Still Room for the Animus in Jungian Clinical Practice?", builds on authors like Giegerich, Hillman, and Elene Liotta to expand the concept of syzygy: "the syzygy can occur both in interpersonal relationships and in our psychic life" (p. 402, our translation). In this sense, if the anima has commonly been treated as the archetype of the capacity for relationship, the animus, with its rational aspect, would be a compelling force of separation, acting as the archetype of the capacity for non-relationship: "A destruction of the known and tangible, so that virgin innocence is lost" (Ximenez, 2024, p. 405, our translation). The ability to establish and end relationships is crucial for the healthy development of personality, regardless of gender and sexuality. Thus, the author distances the archetypal pair from gender essentialisms and opens up deeper possibilities for analyzing anima and animus.

Final considerations

The effort to maintain a timeline in this work arose from the need to highlight that the Jungian community and our concepts are immersed in cultural aspects that distance archetypes from their claim to universality. I therefore propose avoiding the use of the words "feminine" and "masculine" when referring to any archetype, especially anima and animus, which have suffered from generification since their conception. I suggest that we reserve generification for symbols and archetypal images, which are enveloped by historical and cultural contexts.

Let us draw inspiration from the complexity of the syzygy presented here to expand the original conceptions of anima and animus. Reproducing the classical view of contrasexuality stifles the potential of the archetypal pair and aligns with the normative discourse of gender essentialism. Regarding the contrasexual view, I propose that we consider it, as suggested by Samuels (1992) and Young-Eisendrath (1995), as a complex of "identity of the not-self" within relational dynamics.

It is important to note that there is resistance within the Jungian community to critically revisit Jung's works. It is our responsibility to continue the legacy he began. In this sense, refusing to update the theory condemns analytical psychology to obsolescence.

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