

## Mother's children – Mother's *animus* in the life of the son

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### Abstract

This paper aims to reflect on people born in the context of paternal absence, the "mother's children". From the understanding of the priceless value of human relational phenomena and psychic functioning, this paper applies the principles of *anima* and *animus* proposed by Jung, considering that such principles explain the duality between sexes, on one hand, and give meaning to the experience itself, on the other. It also discusses the differentiation between the children of a woman with a structured ego and a good relation with his masculine side and the children of a woman with the *animus* acting autonomously. The assumption is that biology and psychology must be looked at integrated, for if the brain shapes the psyche, the psyche also shapes the brain. There is no way to suppose that men be ruled by *logos* and women by *Eros*, even though they be understood as elements that make up both the masculine and the feminine. The capacity for decision, initiative, courage and honesty are born from the positive side of the *animus*, which in its greater aspect embodies a superior spiritual depth.

### Conflito de interesses:

The author states no professional or personal interest that may create a conflict of interests regarding this manuscript.

### Descriptors

ego, Jungian psychology, maternal complex.



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## Filhos da mãe – *Animus* da mãe na vida do filho

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### Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo refletir sobre as pessoas nascidas no contexto da ausência paterna, os "filhos da mãe". A partir do entendimento do inestimável valor do fenômeno relacional humano e do funcionamento psíquico, este trabalho aplica os princípios de *anima* e *animus* propostos por Jung, considerando que tais princípios explicam a dualidade entre os sexos, por um lado, e dão sentido à própria experiência subjetiva, por outro. Discute-se também a diferenciação entre os filhos da mulher com um ego estruturado e uma boa relação com seu lado masculino e os filhos da mulher com o *animus* atuando de modo autônomo. Parte-se do pressuposto de que é preciso olhar para a biologia e para a psicologia de maneira integrada, pois se o cérebro molda a psique, a psique também molda o cérebro. Não há como supor que o homem seja regido por *logos* e a mulher por *Eros*, mesmo que sejam entendidos como elementos que compõem tanto o masculino quanto o feminino. Capacidade de decisão, iniciativa, coragem e honestidade nascem do lado positivo do *animus* que, no seu aspecto maior, personifica uma elevada profundidade espiritual.

### Descritores

ego, psicologia junguiana, complexo materno.

## Los hijos de la Madre – *Animus* de la madre en la vida de los hijos

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### Resumen

Este artículo tiene el objetivo de reflexionar sobre las personas nacidas en el contexto de la ausencia paterna, “los hijos de la madre”. A partir de la comprensión del inestimable valor del fenómeno relacional humano y del funcionamiento psíquico, este trabajo aplica los principios de *anima* y *animus* propuestos por Jung, considerando que tales principios explican la dualidad entre los sexos, por un lado, y dan sentido a la propia experiencia subjetiva, por otro. Se discute también la diferenciación entre los hijos de una mujer con un ego estructurado y una buena relación con su lado masculino, y los de una mujer con el *animus* actuando de modo autónomo. Se parte de la premisa de que hay que contemplar a la biología y a la psicología integradamente, pues si el cerebro modela la psique, la psique también modela el cerebro. No hay cómo suponer que el hombre sea regido por *logos* y la mujer por Eros, aunque sean entendidos como elementos que componen tanto lo masculino como lo femenino. La capacidad de decisión, la iniciativa, el coraje y la honestidad nacen del lado positivo del *animus* que, en su aspecto mayor, personifica una elevada profundidad espiritual.

### Descriptor

ego, psicología junguiana, complejo materno.

## Introduction

“When the father is absent, we fall more readily into the mother's arms” (Hilman, 1998).



**Figure 1.** *Young Girl Defending Herself against Eros*, 1880. Reproduced from Linkmesh, [http://www.linkmesh.com/imagenes/temas/angelitos/cupido\\_pelea.jpg](http://www.linkmesh.com/imagenes/temas/angelitos/cupido_pelea.jpg), 2019.

Paternal absence is not a recent phenomenon. Meanwhile, there is an increase in the number of cases and diversification in the origin of such lacuna: single parenting, *in vitro* fertilization and genetic engineering are tangible manifestations of the phenomenon of power and autonomy—eventually narcissistic—taken on by women, in whom a higher emphasis of the activity of the *animus* in terms of their relationship with the outer world is observed. This reality compels to question what will be of the individuals born in this context, the “mother's children”, and how will be the new society ruled by the mother complex. This reflection brings about a series of questions intended to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon and its consequences. It should be established in the context to be discussed, a differentiation between the child of the woman with a structured ego and a good relationship with her masculine side and the child of the mother whose *animus* acts autonomously. The mother (the Great Mother) like that who gives

and nourishes with her own life, and demands that her child behaves as dependent (Figure 1).

To demonstrate how this happens, the hypothetical case of a mother is taken, whose unawareness makes it hard for the child to achieve a suitable distance, which enables making decisions and the discovery of the child's own identity. In this case, the child may not be able to develop a strong enough ego to win the battle against the dragon, as it is the case for drug addicts. The "mother's child" may develop an exaggeratedly symbiotic behavior. Many times this bond appears as a romantic love syndrome. When falling in love, in addition to the individual's mother complex being constellated, his or her historical-social load gains relevance. There are cases in which the love relationship may keep in check the partners individuality, preventing each one from being who they really are. For these people, a deep relationship may represent a risk for the ego that must be avoided at all costs, or an expectation of symbiotic fusion with the other, promoting an equally threatening regression.

The myth of the hero in the battle against the dragon is extremely relevant for analytic psychology, a metaphor of the development of the ego from the unconscious. The creature of the narrative may be imagined as a winged snake, a monster that belongs to both the earth and heaven, more to the world of the monsters than the world of human beings. The dragon illustrates the creative and destructive power originated in the deep unconscious of the human psyche, something that wants to exist and swallow everything that dares to be born, preventing to reach awareness, keeping the individual in – or returning him to – an archaic level. Here matter, mother and unconscious are equivalent. The individual runs serious risk of surrendering to such power and, if this happens, they will be doomed to unconsciousness or to develop a personality structure in the diverse manifestations of the *puer*, forever. On the other side, the conquest of the dragon releases a treasure. Only by developing autonomy, the mother's child will have the chance to save his ego from being swallowed by the dragon.

But what projecting factor is this? The Orient gives it the name of "weaver", or *maya*, it is, the dancer generator of illusions.

If we had not known this for some time now through dreams, this interpretation would place us on the right track: what covers, entangles and absorbs, points inevitably to the mother, it is, to the relationship of the child with the actual mother, with her **image**, and with the woman that must become a mother for them. The child's Eros is passive, as is a child's: they expect to be, captured, sucked, veiled and swallowed. They seek in a certain way,

the mother's protective and nurturing orbit, the condition of a suckling child, distanced of any concerns with life in which the outer world comes to meet them and even imposes its happiness on them. For this, it is not surprising that the actual world recoils. (Jung, 1951/2011, p. 9, § 20) (Author's highlights).

Women of this generation know that the journey of a woman to consciousness must be different from a man's journey, whose myth of killing the dragon (this is, the separation from the mother) is currently obsolete. The dangerous dragon or the negative aspect of the feminine archetype cannot be annihilated—it hides within all women and men, although in different ways.

If not consciously accepted, this destruction repressed within the psyche of women and men would devastate our civilization with such revenge that no hero would be capable to stop it. The only way of pacifying the dragon is to recognize that we are part of its nature and that we need to establish a relationship with this side instead of trying to fight it and control it.

### ***Anima and animus today***

To understand the human relational phenomenon and the psychic functioning it is invaluable to apply the principles of *anima* and *animus* proposed by Jung. In analysis, such concepts should be adjusted, made more flexible and expanded, since the discourse is influenced by different historical and social contexts. Jung (1987) proposed the word *anima* to name the feminine portion (countersexual) that composes the masculine personality, and *animus* to designate the masculine portion existing in the feminine personality. If on one side, Jung sought to explain the duality between sexes, on the other, he wanted to give meaning to the subjective experience.

Considering new forms of relationship and the multiplicity of themes linked to sexuality in our contemporariness, Jung classical vision is exposed to criticism, but the functionality of his theory is unquestionable. All in all, who does not continue projecting and self-delighting with the idea that something or someone would make us whole? Hence, it is legitimate to review and update theoretical concepts, adjusting them to the current sociocultural context. If before the possibilities of experiencing sexuality were restricted because of narrow attributes constraining the masculine and the feminine, today one cannot say the same.

The comprehension of gender and sexuality issues should be broadened, since they distinguish identities and subjectivities that, in their turn, are structures on psychic dynamics and presuppositions

situated in specific points in time and space. Besides, there is a line separating the individual from the collective that should be more clearly perceived. Gender – and the hierarchies of gender that legitimate power positions in the social realm – is the domain of the collective and is related to the body and its social presentation, to the material; sexuality corresponds to the instances of desire connected to fantasy, therefore, concerns the accomplishment of pleasure, the subjective.

In spite of enduring long criticisms, such issues are absolutely relevant when thinking of the concepts of *anima* and *animus* in contemporariness. Therefore, the effort is justified to understand their archetypical characteristics and their quality of manifestation.

### On the use of expressivity in treatment

A more traditional gaze perceives contrasexual pairs as responsible for passion and fascination, as archetypical, and as a kind of connection of the conscious world with the unconscious. According to Jung (1951/2011),

I suggested the word *anima* because it must designate something specific, for which the word soul is general and vague. The fact conveyed in the concept of *anima* is a greatly dramatic content of the unconscious. It is far from expressing its vital character [...] the determining factor of projections and the *anima*, wherever it manifests, appears personified, showing that it holds all the characteristic qualities of the feminine. It is a spontaneous production of the unconscious. It is not a substitutive figure of the mother, on the contrary: the impression that the numinous qualifies making the mother's image be so powerful originate from the collective archetype of *anima*, which incarnates again in every child of the masculine sex. Just as the mother is the first receptacle of the factor determining the son's projections, so is the father to the daughter (Jung, 1951/2011, p. 11, § 25-26).

On the archetype of *anima*, Jung (1987) states, "there is a collective image of woman in the unconscious of man, so that he can understand the nature of woman" (p. 77). Emma Jung (1995), also a representative of the classical vision, describes *anima* and *animus* as archetypes rooted on the unconscious, which connect personal and impersonal, conscious and unconscious aspects. The author also reports as archetypical patterns –therefore, previous– certain specific characteristics to each sex, among them for example, masculinity seen as strength and objectivity. Meanwhile, new discoveries in areas correlated to psychology suggest the formulation of other ways of understanding and conceptualizing

the archetypes *anima* and *animus*. According to Knox (2004), from genetics studies, it was found that a codification done by the genes of images or complex mental processes does not exist; therefore, the notion that the archetypal contents would be awakened in a magic trick is a romantic idea.

Walking side by side with science, a review of such concepts is called for. If on one side, it is known that inherited genetic material does not transmit images or stories, in other words, genes carry neither abstract information nor predetermined complex schemes, on the other, evidences remain that there are structural differences between the masculine and feminine brain. This fact points at new possibilities without closing the issues about human sexuality. It is necessary to look to biology and to psychology in an integrated fashion, because if the brain models the psyche, the psyche also models the brain.

In literature, various authors are critical of the traditional vision because there is considerable confusion in the understanding of the concepts of *anima* and *animus*. These are interesting observations that should be closely analyzed. James Astor (2000) recognizes the concept of archetype as confusing and difficult to describe. Verena Kast (2000) though, believes that *Jungians* comprehend the concept in a different way. Valery von Raffay (2000) indicates contradictions in Jung's work when he refers to the archetype and to the archetypal manifestation, for there is no possibility of the archetype to inherit innate ideas or a world previous to that already formed and considered as true or exemplary. John Beebe (2000) sustains that the exposure to archetypal reductionism should be avoided and agrees with von Raffay (2000) in that an inadequate comprehension of the concept of archetype can lead to disregarding problems constructed in personal relationships. Following the same emphasis, Fillus (2012, p. 42, quoted by Tacey, 1997, p. 20) affirms that

The romantic idea that archetypes are fixed in a space of eternal sleep and that those stable entities can be accessed by anyone, anytime and anywhere must be compared to Jung's idea that the archetypes are unknowable and beyond human experience.

Tacey is also vigorous in his critic to the attempts of aggrandizing behaviors and attitudes of mythological figures that represent immutable ways of being, without considering cultural elements. The author also highlights that archetypal images cannot produce stereotypes. The feeling is that such images are not well understood and end up being treated as psychologisms. One of the first authors to oppose concepts postulated by Jung was James Hillman, for whom *anima* and *animus* are archetypes that should exist for both



sexes. Therefore, there is no way of supposing that the man be ruled by *logos* and the woman by *Eros*, even when they are understood as elements composing both the masculine and the feminine. This idea contradicts the very definition of the universality of the archetype (Hillman, 1990).

In the attempt to solve the issue of the supposedly stereotyped images of the masculine and the feminine, the proposition is to look to the archetypal aspect as the *syzygy* (alterity archetype), the opposites together in the psyche and the possibility of inner production, from where the archetypal systems *anima* and *animus* flourish, loaded of a mobilizing numinous aspect of the imaginary and fantasy where psychological life may integrate. It is like being the one that one cannot be: the woman who cannot be a man and the man who cannot be a woman.

When reviewing the concepts of *anima* and *animus* the gender identity should be conceived as flexible and both men and women would have *anima* and *animus* as a pair of prototypical opposites (Young-Eisendrath, 2002). This does not mean that a division between sexes is also flexible; on the contrary, countersexuality is a complex with respect to the opposite sex. Young-Eisendrath (2002) calls the attention to the fact that biology continues to be determinant in sexual differences; therefore, the archetypes of *anima* and *animus* can also be understood as biological substrate of sexuality. When approaching the concept of gender, Andrew Samuels (1989) affirms that it is a psychosocial issue; there is neither biological denial nor reasons to believe in determinism.

For Fillus (2012),

The reflections regarding *anima* and *animus* may assume diverse aspects. The fact observed in relationships indicates that fantasy in relation to the other is an important mobilizer in individual dynamics. The way every individual integrates his or her experience as phenomenon also interferes in the way the other will have his or her experience.

[...]

In the end, once again it is understood that the subject's individuality has a great deal to complement that perception, which despite of being generic, will acquire new significance according to each history, each drama of being, in fact, human (Fillus, 2012, p. 45).

*Anima* and *animus* are responsible for the creation of projections in the construction of relationships, especially love relationships. Individuals are delineated in the edge of the archetypal and the cultural and in the way to their development find a plastic and

multifaceted trajectory. The possibilities of reflection about *anima* and *animus* are many: the fantasy in relation to the other is an important mobilizer in individual dynamics; the way as each one integrates his or her experience as phenomenon also interferes in the other's experience; cultural transformations and the understanding of the theme are also important. In other words, the discussion is not closed on an immutable point of view; on the contrary, as long as there are means of transformation, the debate should remain open. Everything indicates, therefore, that the subject's individuality complements the perception, which acquires new meanings according to each story.

Since relationship is the keyword for everything that exists about the psyche, individuals relate to their animus based on the knowledge of their own reality, and this is equivalent to recognizing the reality and autonomy of the unconscious. To reach this point, it is inevitable to recognize projections. Usually, the *animus* will project on exterior men, when not consciously perceived by the woman as part of herself. Such projection can be perceived when observing the enchantment, the overvaluation or devaluation of this woman expressed by a man.

The projections of the *animus* develop in four stages:

- (1) It is born like the incarnation of physical strength, like an athlete or "muscular man".
- (2) In the following stage develops initiative and planning ability.
- (3) Then, it becomes "the verb", manifesting itself many times as a teacher or clergyman.
- (4) In its fourth stage, the *animus* manifests itself as a personification of "thought".

In this last stage, life can gain new meaning, because the *animus* assumes the role of mediator of a religious experience, giving to the woman spiritual firmness and inner protection, breaking with the apparent softness. It is then that the woman opens up to new ideas, once the *animus* connects the feminine mind to the spiritual evolution of her time. The positive *animus* imprints boldness to thought, stimulating new initiatives. This characteristic reserved to women of old times the tasks of foreseeing the future and talk with the gods.

Since the origins, every man carries in himself the image of woman; not the image of this or than woman, but one of a certain type. Such image is, deep inside, an unconscious hereditary conglomerate of remote origin, incrustated in the living system, typical of all the experiences of the ancestral lineage around the feminine being,

residue of all the impressions supplied by woman, system of inherited psychic adaptation... The same happens with the woman. She also carries in herself the image of man. Experience shows us that it would be more accurate to say: an image of *men*, inasmuch as in men it is about the image of *the woman*; as it is unconscious, this image is always unconsciously projected on the lover; it constitutes one of the essential reasons of passionate attraction and its opposite. (Jung, 1961/2006, p. 351) (The author's highlights).

One of the functions of *animus* and *anima* is to establish a relationship between individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. In a similar way, the persona represents an intermediate zone in the search for social adaptation; this is, between the self and the outer world. The inverse path is done by *animus* and *anima* that must carry images from the collective unconscious to the consciousness of the self. There is always a positive aspect and another negative, and a primitive aspect and another distinctive in the archetypal manifestations, including *animus* and *anima*.

For Jung,

In its first conscious form the *animus* is an instance that generates spontaneous, non premeditated opinions; applies a dominant influence on the emotional life of the woman, while the *anima* is an instance that spontaneously engenders feelings that exert influence on the understanding of man and lead to its distortion (Jung, 1961/2006, p. 351).

The projections of the *animus* occur mainly in religious personalities, and in heroes, including celebrities from music, the arts, and sports. The *anima* occupies in women a space that is empty, unconscious, barren and solitary. Along the process of individuation, the soul and the awareness of the self come together, and therefore, it is verified a feminine portion in the man and a masculine portion in the woman. While the *anima* unifies, the *animus* in the woman individualizes. Since they are opposed configurations, at the level of the conscious reality, they constitute a conflicting scenery, even when the relationship with the partner is balanced.

The *anima* is the archetype of life ... because life sizes man through the *anima*, although he thinks that it comes to him through reason (*mind*). He masters life with the understanding, but life lives in him through the *anima*. And the secret of woman is that life comes to her through the thinking instance of the *animus*, although she thinks that is Eros who gives her life. She dominates life, usually lives, so

to speak, through Eros: but real life, which is also sacrifice, comes to her through reason, that in her is incarnated by the *animus* (Jung, 1961/2006, p. 351-352).

Ability to decide, initiative, courage and honesty, are born from the positive side of the *animus*, which in its greater aspect personifies great spiritual depth. It is though it that the woman becomes aware of the basic processes of development of her objective position, both in the cultural and personal requisites, to find the path that will lead and elevate her to an intensely spiritual attitude concerning life. For that, perhaps her *animus* will no longer issue absolute opinions. In this process, shielded by courage and spiritual greatness, the woman will be able to evaluate the intangibility of her beliefs, she will become more flexible and apt to accept advice from her unconscious, specially those which contradict the ideas of her *animus*.

*Anima* and *animus* live in a very dissimilar world from the outside world, one where the pulse of time beats infinitely slow, where individuals' birth and death count very little. It comes as no surprise that its being is strange, so strange that its entry in consciousness often means something like psychosis (Jung, 1934/1954/2002, p. 280, § 519).

Originally, the *animus* is a spontaneous, involuntary formation of opinions that exert a powerful influence on the feelings, projecting on religious personalities and heroes. The *anima* is also a spontaneous formation, but it influences or distorts reason. In both cases, the incestuous aspect plays a decisive role: in the young woman the projection occurs on the father; in the older woman on the son; in the young man on the mother; in the older man on the daughter.

"The first was your father / The second your brother / The third was the one that Tereza gave her hand." (Anonymous, nda.).

While the *anima* in the man seeks to unite, the *animus* in the woman demands to individualize, to distinguish. They are opposites and this generates disagreement. Although the conscious does not identify with the unconscious, there is a confrontation that must be taken into consideration because it has a fundamental role in the subject's development. The conscious must be able to express verbally, with gestures or feelings. Otherwise, the old severance resurfaces and with it, all the consequences that the despise for the unconscious may entail. However, if many concessions to the unconscious are made, an inflation of the personality may take place, in the positive sense. Anyway, there will always be a conflict between pros and cons, what is certainly uncomfortable, but inevitable, because it is difficult to escape from oneself all the time. It is a cross one must carry. According to alchemy, this opposition

has a quadruple structure, it possesses four elements and form the image of a cross that corresponds to psychic reality, to the creation of the ego from the unconscious, as much because of its crossed shape, as for its aspect of torture.

It can be said that carrying the cross is then a symbol that adequately illustrates wholeness and passion. Taking an attitude of escape before life makes the person bitter. Meanwhile, to live well with oneself requires an effort to give oneself patience, love, hope and humbleness.

This behavior may bring about issues about one's own happiness, self refuge and recognition of own needs, which may reveal a provocative internal "demon" and turn the coexistence with oneself unbearable, until we gain awareness that one should not give to the other what one does not give to oneself, be it good or be it evil.

### **The mother**

The Oedipus complex is merely a model of the relationship between son and mother that produces the fatal interlacing of the spirit with matter, called neurotic from the twentieth century on. Desperate, agonic and tragic attempts to untie the primordial knot of neurosis show how strong are their mutual needs. The tight embrace or the erotic conjunction between mother and son personify the original bond between spirit and matter. The spirit is so immersed in the material body, either in delight or squirming to get out, that we are hardly able to discover other interpretations for the spirit.

For James Hillman (1998), to declare the complex as negative is to freeze it in hell. The author proposes that the issue of *puer aeternus* in relation to the mother be rethought. The idea of negative and positive *puer* should also be reviewed.

But, who is the missing father anyway? It is not the personal, but the spiritual, the dead God that offers such a focus that does not incite the son to look for answers in dreams and oracles more than in prayers, codes, tradition and ritual. Hillman (1998) inquires what happens when *puer*, as the fundamental structure of the psyche, loses his self-identity, its position within the *puer/senex* totality (young/old), and is subtly substituted by the figure of the great's mother son. "When the mother substitutes the father, magic substitutes the *logos* (verb) and the priests sons invade the *puer spirit*." (Hillman, 1998 p. 75).

As they are not able to retreat and relive the dead father of the tradition, children walk towards the interior of the mother of the collective unconscious seeking a total comprehension and the guarantee of safety. "The mother encourages the child to go

ahead and embrace everything, that for her means all the things, while for the father, on the contrary, all means nothing, unless it is discriminated." (Hillman, 1998, p. 77)

Without the father, the ability of recognizing a call and discriminate voices, such essential activity for psychology, is lost. The spirit with no father has no guide.

Without the father, we also lose the capacity that the church recognized as "discrimination of the spirits": the ability to recognize a call when we hear it and to discriminate the voices, such necessary activity for psychology, needs the unconscious (Hillman, 1998, p. 76).

Passive, dynamic inertia compulsive of nature is characteristic of the reign of the "Great Goddess". There is a protective cycle that generates and nurtures animals and plants, from seed to death. This is a place full of affinities with the beautiful, timeless and emotional, and their preferences point at kinship ties, but also to the obscure, opaque, stagnant. The mother, as the one who nourishes like natural life, provides for the *puer* an excessive amount of food, and with it, reinforces some basic traits of the child, demanding that he behaves as dependent. The mother complex hinders the precision of the spirit, an element of little understanding for the "Great Goddess" who apprehends it in her relationship. The spirit must have effects in the material world (life and people). Even if the child recognized the mother in their own acts, fled and took shelter in impersonal abstractions and fantasies, would continue to be the child impregnated by the *animus* of the "Goddess". Mother and child constitute themselves as modes of perception.

The intimate association between mother and child in the psyche is imagined as incest and experienced as ecstasy and guilt. The ecstasy follows two vertical directions, the divine and the infernal, but guilt does not find relief. The great mother transforms the *puer's* debt towards the transcendent – what he or she owe to the gods for their gifts – in a debt of feeling, in guilt related to the symbols of the material life. They pay in excess to society through the family, the job, the civil duties, and avoids their fate (Hillman, 1998, p. 79).

### Final Considerations

The heroes are wanderers (Gilgamesh, Dionysius, Hercules, Miltra etc.), and the wandering is the symbol of the unending search that never finds its object and the nostalgia of the mother that was lost. According to Jung (1912/1952/2013), this lost mother is the secret object of the walk.

There is a part of the libido, the renegade libido, which stirs away from heroic endeavors and longs for diving into the mother in an incestuous way, but it fails, because it is intimidated by tabu. Once the libido does not reach its objective, it goes on wandering and wishing forever. This dynamic explanation is the first and classic Jungian elaboration of the *puer aeternus* archetypal figure: the eternally young component of human psyche, man or woman, young or old, that keeps always wandering and linked to the archetypal mother.

Jungian psychology proposes considering the wandering as a symbol of the nostalgic longing that may have nothing to do with incest. Let's see Ulysses case, the primordial wanderer. Sitting on the seashore, in the island [Ogygia] where Calypso lives [the maritime nymph], the inconsolable gaze, is full of nostalgia. "Think that there is nothing worse for the mortal than wandering. Anticlea [mother], Telemachus [son], Eumaeus [friend] misses Ulysses" (Hillman, 1998 p. 186). But Ulysses only wishes to come back home, not for his mother, but for his home and the island where he was born. Even though Calypso and Ogygia may fulfill his libidinal incestuous and disowned needs. "Ulysses suffers and longs for his home, for his large round bed where he used to sleep with Penelope [his wife]. Nostalgia is born from the separation of the two halves, from the lack of conjunction" (Hillman, 1998, p. 188).

The role of the mother archetype, regressive and devouring, is clearly discriminated from the creating matrix. Jung introduces such duality within a fantasy in each half of life, which is also a duality, that of the *puer/senex*: structures of consciousness valid in all the stages of life. For the youth "enter the mother" means to practice an incestuous act; for the old "enter the mother" represents a path of renovation, of individuation. It seems that the world lives today in a period in which its heroic ego reached the apex and the complementary *senex* and *puer* acquired great relevance. Jung would say that this phase of collective consciousness corresponds to the second half of life.

For individuals who live in current times and are inserted in this culture, the battle with the dragon and the heroic position of the first half of life are archetypally wrong, despite the age of the individual. This is an obsolete position, completely out of tune with current times, and each victory over the dragon symbolizes a defeat before the task of current culture: become aware of *senex* in all its archetypal meaning and relate to the phenomenology of *puer*. Today (twenty first century) the characteristics of *puer* – are valued (speed, volatility); where characteristic of *senex*, become shadow.

The new woman lives in the world of man, where she turns against the forces of femininity situated in the core of her identity. The relationship with her children is also permeated by the development of a filial complex. Unreal expectations that go beyond the children individuality are thrown into this circular maze, hindering the process of development of each one.

Meanwhile, the capacity for liberation does not depend on the maternal-filial biological-archetypal relationship, it depends on individual nature. In the clinic, one sees individuals that manage to break free, in spite of the difficult scenery and the embarrassment caused by the imprisonment of the mother's *animus*. They are individuals that have vitality, linked to an activity factor of the self that provides them the ability to overcome.

In real life, the woman is able to recognize that she is achieving a balance between both archetypes within her, when she is no longer compelled to an action, speech or defense of an ideal collective, before realizing what she truly values in herself. When her feminine nature is not annulled by her *animus*, she will experience the feeling of peace and intimacy with herself. Even external relationships may not be essential at this time, because the woman may not need to project her *animus* or her femininity outside herself.

If, in fact, it is the repressed and violated female that is about to retaliate our unilateral civilization, women have a serious responsibility of helping men in the reconstruction of balance. However, it is necessary that she be a woman in her body and soul and not her cultural and social role. Besides, the woman needs to recognize that her power can both construct and destroy. Only then, she will be able to have a meaningful relationship with her *animus* and with men and society. Then the *animus*, in its turn, will be released of its position of control, to serve to the woman's feminine ego, so that she can satisfy her individuality and accomplish her destiny by the creation of a new awareness.

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