

# **Act before Image—a polemical review of Warren**

## **Colman's *Act and Image***

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*Beauty awakens the Soul to Act*

Dante

“It is as if we did not know, or else continually forgot, that everything of which we are conscious is an image, and that image is psyche.”

C.G. Jung, Commentary on "The Secret of the Golden Flower." *CW 13*, p.50.

“Meaning is what we give to the image. Significance is what the image gives to us (egos). The archetype’s inherence in the image gives body to the image, the fecundity of carrying and giving birth to insights. The more we articulate its shape the less we need interpret.”

James Hillman, *Egalitarian Typologies and the Perception of the Unique*, p. 32

“Some maintain that there is a form of language so strong, so con-substantial with the very foundation of being, that it ‘shows’ us being (that is, the indissoluble plexus of being-language) so that self-revelation of being is actuated within the language.” Umberto Eco, *Kant and the Platypus*, p. 31

“Of course, genesis is a theory, a point of view, a fantasy, and not a fact. Even in biology, where this fantasy is at home and where are many more facts supporting it, this remains a truism.” Wolfgang Giegerich, “Ontogeny = Phylogeny. A Fundamental Critique of Erich’s Neumann Analytical Psychology” in *Collected English Papers, Volume I, The Neurosis of Psychology*, p. 27

In *Act and Image*, Warren Colman aims to investigate genesis of symbols, which he considers the major issue underlying Jung's hypothesis of archetypes. As he puts in the final statement of the book: "In this study I have attempted to "use directed thinking to construct a material basis for the existence of the non-material fantasy-thinking of symbolic imagination." [p. 260] It is an ambitious piece of work, and a substantial contribution to critique of Jung's ideas. To respect its significant weight, I've decided to give it a close reading. Therefore, mine is rather an extensive, polemical review, that I believe does justice to the work. Its length, I hope, is a sign of the book's value, not just of my polemical fervor.

Colman notes in the introduction, that he was surprised, coming from the SAP developmental tradition, that in his Zurich lecture based on the initial material for the book, that Jungians from the classical, archetypal perspective are unconcerned with the question of origins of symbolic imagination and take the notion of archetype not as a hypothesis but as "living reality that provides orientation and meaning for the practice of psychotherapy and living in general." He attributes this unquestioning attitude to the idea that for many Jungians archetypes become symbolic images in themselves. [p. 3] True to the post-modern perspective, Colman from the start acknowledges that he approaches psychology from the developmental side, asking questions like "where did it come from and how did it develop?" Although he considers his developmental attitude "natural," being exposed to the other school of thought made him "see his assumptions from outside." Unfortunately, instead of questioning his

assumptions, he falls back on the sociological explanation, that “no mode of thought can be separated from context in which it occurs.” [ibid]

Colman traces his interest in the social construction of psychic reality to his college interest in how people are shaped by social forces: “Where does psyche end and society begin?” He feels that forty years later he can “make inroads in this problem by taking a phenomenological approach that breaks down the Cartesian divide between the mind and the world.” (p.4)

My reading of Colman’s thoughtful and thorough exploration of the origins of symbolic imagination is rooted in a phenomenological tradition that sticks to the image, stays on the “surface,” considers the “archetypal” a term of value, works with archetypal images, not with the archetype *per se* (which it perceives as a Saturnian perspective, as it focuses on the structure “behind” the image); it sees image as a way of seeing not a content, and considers the image to be psyche in all its multiplicity. It looks at developmental theory as a concretization of the mother-child mythological motif which assumes that it discovers ***the true*** story of origins, and not merely one of many helpful stories that soul creates to reflect itself in. I will try to do my best to contain my archetypal animus, and stick close to the images as Colman presents them.

As his imaginative starting point Colman takes up a 40,000 years old figurine of the Lion Man of the Hohlenstein-Stadel, a photo of which adorns the book’s cover, emerging from the black background in its full glory. Colman tells us that the statue was painstakingly reconstituted from hundreds of little

fragments of mammoth's ivory found on the site<sup>1</sup>. The re-making of the Lion-man provides a powerful metaphor of Colman's work, trying to put together from multiple sources the origins of the symbolic imagination of which the Lion-man is the initial example.



**Figures 1, 2, and 3** Three views of the Lion-Man: 1) From the book cover; 2 & 3) Photos by Warren Colman at the British Museum 'Living with gods' exhibition, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018

In effect, the Lion-man becomes his guiding image that takes him on the journey on which he travels through contemporary anthropological theories on

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<sup>1</sup> It was a Herculean endeavor, that took three generations of archeologists seventy two years (1939-2011) to piece together. The small figurine, 31.1 cm (12.2 in) tall, 5.6 cm (2.2 in) wide, and 5.9 cm (2.3 in) thick, resides in Ulm Museum in Germany.

See Jarrett A. Lobell, "New Life for the Lion Man" in *Archeology Archive*, Volume 65, Number 2, March/April 2012  
[http://archive.archaeology.org/1203/features/stadelhole\\_hohlenstein\\_paleolithic\\_lowenmensch.html](http://archive.archaeology.org/1203/features/stadelhole_hohlenstein_paleolithic_lowenmensch.html)

the origins of symbolic thought and action, to the origins of language, to the current paleontological understanding of the evolution of human species, to social construction of reality through constitutive symbols, emergence theory, neuroscience, primate studies, and ends up, surprisingly, with the current re-appraisal of Levy-Bruhl's notion of *participation mystique* (that Jung borrowed) read from the social side. On these different way-stations of his journey he criticizes Jung's notion of archetype, primitive mentality, image, symbol, imagination and objective psyche. It is an exciting journey, with a lot of interesting fellow travelers, penetrating insights, and a devastating critique of Jung's ideas.

Colman acknowledges that his task was wildly over-ambitious to explore so many different theories. He succeeds in completing his Herculean, (this later-day Lion-man's) task, in eight labors/chapters. By the way, for all the help that Colman received from the Lion-man, with all the embrace of the extended mind/extended affectivity theory, he does not offer gratitude to this monstrous image, *who* (as the image is a person) has been his companion throughout this reflective heroic adventure. Instead, he seems to identify with the Lion-man's superhuman strength, rather than treat it/him as his daimon, who takes Colman on the journey into his own origins. Their joint effort presents us with a solid grounding in multiple fields of soulful endeavors, that elucidate psyche as if from "outside." The "out/in-side" are for Colman Cartesian terms that obscure true nature of psychic reality, by dividing it into inner and outer.

The first labor that Colman undertakes is to disprove the hypothesis of the archetypal lion-man, of the existence of archetypes as psychic universals. He

takes Jung's notion of archetype as an "inborn image" in the form of "the possibility of representation" not the Lamarckian concept of "inherited ideas."<sup>2</sup> Colman follows Jung's materialistic side that considers the brain as embodiment of experience of life. In this view instincts and the archetypes constitute the collective unconscious for Jung. [p. 20] In the process Colman considers Jung, together with Freud, as a *behindologist*. *Behindology* is a notion "that behind the apparent motives, meanings, and rationale of people's actions, thoughts and behavior are their 'real' unconscious motivations which can be only revealed through the particular beliefs about the unconscious that the author happens to hold." [p. 22] However, he mentions, but disregards, Jung's phenomenological insistence on the manifest content of the dream, that the unconscious reveals not conceals, and the meaning can be found by "sticking to the image," rather than by looking "behind" or "under" the image. Instead he points to Jung's inconsistencies already, noticed by Robert Hobson in 1961, that the phenomenological approach and the notion of archetype are incompatible. [p. 23]

That the soul has practically no press in the contemporary world is a sad affair, but it is truly depressing when Jungians do not at least acknowledge it, particularly when the focus is on the image. In the chapter "Expanding the Mind" Colman provides an excellent review of philosophical debates ensuing from

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<sup>2</sup> There has been a reappraisal of Lamarck's ideas in the recent decades, pointing to the inheritance of some acquired characteristics from the life of the individual to the second generation. Jung was under the influence of "Weismann Barrier," a devastating late XIX critique of Lamarck's ideas of inheritance of acquired characteristics, so he was careful not to claim that ideas are inherited but only potentials for representations. August Weismann, a German biologist, came with the notion that the germline cells (gonadic cells), are unaffected by individual learning, and only the germline information is inherited by the next generation. (See Gissis and Jablonka 2011).

Descartes' dualism of *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, that lead to the development of modern materialistic science. To be able to think of and see the natural world as a soul-less machine, and the mind as based on the brain, now envisioned as wetware computer, gave us tremendous material progress, one-sided capitalistic exploitation of nature, and eventually the current disastrous state of environment and irrevocable catastrophic climate change. It is really ironic that Colman uses "soul" only in discussion of Descartes' project "to establish that only soul can think," and find out how "the soul can act and suffer with the body." A hundred years after Descartes, revolutionary XVIII century materialist Julien Offrey de La Mettrie, in his influential 1745 opus *The Natural History of the Soul*, and *L'Homme Machine*—1747, radicalized Descartes ideas, and explained all nature, animals, including humans, in mechanical terms<sup>3</sup>. To paraphrase Jung: "It is as if [Colman] did not know or else continually forgot that everything we are conscious of is an image, and that image is psyche." ("The Commentary on "The Secret of the Golden Flower," CW 13, ¶175, p. 50) As if to balance the materialistic view of the psyche he presents a short discussion of the Idealist position of George Berkeley, *esse est percipi*.

He locates our psychological ancestors, Freud and Jung , in the debates between materialists, exemplified by Decartes and La Mattrie, and idealists, like Bishop Berkeley and Schopenhauer. Here, Colman makes an original point that Freud's insistence on the centrality of his theory of libido, which eventually lead to the rift with Jung, had to do with Freud struggling to preserve "the bridge

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<sup>3</sup> La Mettrie has been responsible for a notion of the eye acting as a magic lantern projecting objects on the screen that constitutes reason and memory. In XVIII century explaining soul as a mechanical automaton was still blasphemous (He was exiled from Germany for his beliefs.).

between [sexual] instinct as a physical phenomenon and its representation in mind as unconscious wishes,” that would allow for the eventual formulation of a neurological theory of psyche, as his early attempt had failed because of insufficient development of that science. [p.59 ] He sees Jung in this context as oscillating between the empirical, scientific approach and his experiential conviction of “the reality of the spirit.”<sup>4</sup> Colman faults Jung for being unable to think beyond duality of mind and body due to entrapment in the Cartesian categories. This is a simplification, as Jung often thinks in terms of the trinity of: mind, soul and body. Because of Colman’s selection of Jung’s quotes reflecting more dualistic emphasis, his conclusion may seem compelling. Although as we all know, and Colman himself acknowledges elsewhere, Jung is full of contradictory statements that can be used to argue Jung against Jung, as Jung believes that any psychic statement has to be paradoxical to be true.

Colman asserts that Jung employs the notion of “psychoid,” and synchronicity, to resolve the conflict between the spirit and matter, although he believes that Jung considered “psychoid” as a Kantian transcendental idea, (quoting Jung to that account) which by definition is beyond empirical verification. Perhaps because Colman has already disproved the notion of the “archetype per se,” he neglects to discuss archetype as a psychoid factor: “The archetype as such is a psychoid factor that belongs, as it were, to the invisible,

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<sup>4</sup> Interestingly that Colman does not say “the reality of the psyche,” although to support this view, he quotes Jung from his 1933 essay on “The Real and the Surreal.” that psychic reality is “the only reality that we experience immediately.” Thus for Jung ‘the reality of the spirit’ is not the immediate datum but it is mediated by the images of the soul. It seems that Colman attempts to stay in dual division of existence into matter and spirit, avoiding giving the psyche, or soul, the third, essential position, by reducing it to spirit or mind.



ultraviolet end of the psychic spectrum. It does not appear, in itself, to be capable or reaching consciousness.” (CW 8, p. 417)

After a brief critique of the contemporary reductive ideas of brain/mind variety, and computational theories of mind that see no difference between bio-electrical-chemical processing of the brain and the mind, or reducing the mind to thinking and thinking to computing, and simulation of thinking to understanding, Colman arrives at the exciting notion from robotics—developed by Horst Hendriks-Jansen—a model of mind based on “situated action” [p. 66.] Colman is at his best as a story teller; from his voluminous readings he selects fascinating tales that beautifully illuminate the theoretical issue in question. Like when he gives an account of the zoologists’ attempt to understand a primitive visual system of the horseshoe crab. [pp. 66-7] All the mapping of the crab optical neurons, was not sufficient to explain its vision; the full account of how the eye works could only be done by observing the behavior of the crab *in situ*.



**Figure4** *Horseshoe Crab*

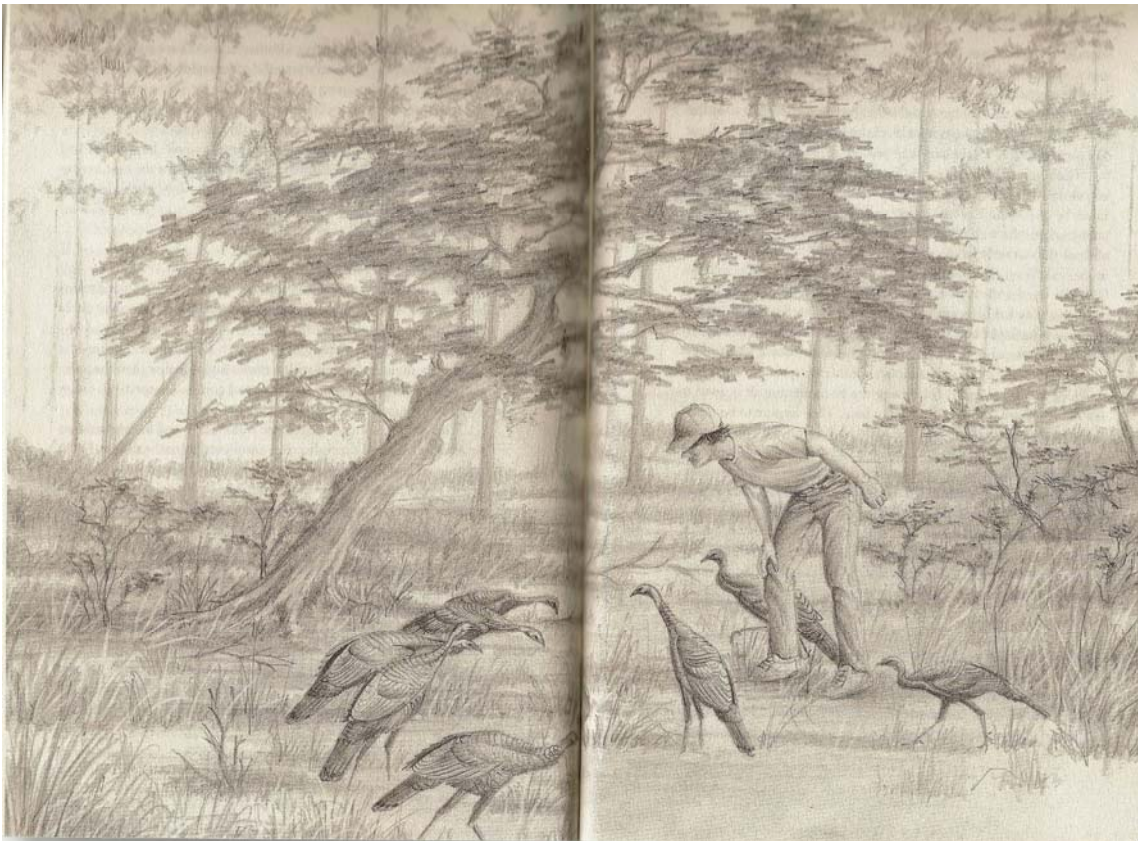
There is a nice feedback loop as Hendriks-Jansen himself looks to developmental psychology to account for emergent thought and behavior from simple mechanisms that by themselves are meaningless and carry no intentions. The crucial notion is that the meaning emerges from the interaction between mother, infant and the environment, and is not inherent in the brain: “Even though the mother does have such an intentional idea and the infant may not, the intention consists of the meaning of the whole situation not simply the mother’s conception of what is happening.” [p. 69 ]

“Situated action” is a compelling idea, allowing for locating the “mind” in-between, and allows for understanding of “mental activity as a form of action.” [p. 70 ] What is important for Colman, is that ideas, like “embodied action,” allow for the transcending of Cartesian separation between mind and world, without the need for the “third thing” of the *psychoid*.

To follow his exploration of emergence of intentionality, I would say, that Colman has a pre-existent intention, that is, prior to his reading of the material, he wishes to eliminate the need for the archetype per-se, or psychoid, or any “third thing”, and, *hopefully not*, the soul, and to overcome the Cartesian division and unify the world and the mind. It is refreshing that he disregards Jung’s obsession with fourfold system, instead he cuts out even the third with the Ockham’s razor, and paradoxically brings depth psychology closer to behaviorism, and sociology in its contemporary rendition.

Neither sociologists nor ecologists recognize the unconscious. The preoccupation with consciousness renders them, at most, capable of expanding mind from the reason and problem solving capacities to the level of emotive

cognition and imagination. Colman again reveals himself as a soulful (no, not the third thing, just a synonym for “moving, touching”) storyteller; his recounting of Joe Hutto’s *My Life as a Turkey*, is particularly affecting and inspires him poetically, even to grant wild turkeys their own form of “individuation:” “It is only through their daily foraging walks in the forest that they were able to accumulate the knowledge and skills to become the wild turkeys they were born to be.”



**Figure 5** *Joe Hutto and the turkeys* (illustration: Hutto, J. (1995). Illumination in the Flatwoods. *A Season Living Among the Wild Turkey*. Guildford, Connecticut: The Lyons Press

Hutto’s attempt to live with the turkeys to understand them, lead him and the young hatchlings to mutual attachment, and reciprocal display of “affection,”

and profound appreciation of their intelligence and his own humble admission that in essence “they will always remain a mystery” to him. [p. 77] Colman’s careful reading of Hutto’s exploration allows him to notice that Hutto identified with the turkeys so closely that he lost the most crucial distinction between a human and a turkey: the human capacity, through imagination, to live like a turkey, a characteristic that turkeys don't possess.

In reviewing the literature exploring the notion of “extended mind,” Colman accumulates evidence to support the hypothesis that the mind is located not only in the brain but in the body and the prostheses and cultural extensions that humans invented to increase their sensory and memory capacities through eyeglasses, telescopes, telephones, musical instruments, writing, recorders, notebooks, etc. Presenting the philosophical example of ‘Otto’s notebook’, in which a man afflicted with Alzheimer’s dementia keeps a notebook recording how to get to places he has now forgotten, he argues that the notebook was not just a mnemonic aid, but the memory itself, activated by Otto’s reading it. The concept of “extended mind” also includes the notion of “distributed cognition” that refers to group processes and activities, such as combo jazz improvisation, or court proceedings, through which cognition is distributed and practiced among several people, and even institutionalized. Through the work of cognitive scientists and philosophers like Andy Clark and Edwin Hutchins, Colman arrives at the conclusion that “without the things that provide the images for symbols, there could not *be* any symbols” and claims that “this puts the things of the world and our cognitive interaction with them *a priori* to symbolic imagination.” [pp. 85, 86] ***This puts an act, of the title of the book, before the image.*** In this

perspective imagination needs things of the world to make images, that, of course, are not limited to copying them but can create new possibilities like the lion-man. It leads to the extreme conclusion that “culture is [human] nature.” [p. 90]

In spite of appreciating Colman’s exploration of the contemporary literature on the subject, I cannot fully accept his conclusion. As far as I could see these contemporary scientists have highly materialistic and behavioral attitudes, recognizing only mind and matter/world/society. While they do build bridges over the Cartesian divide, the bridge is for them real, concrete and not metaphoric, and certainly not a bridge as an image of the soul. It is as if they considered, and Colman following them, that their narrative is the true account, that imagination is based on action, not just a helpful soul story that allows the materialistic, developmentally-minded scholars to ‘see the soul’ in a Zeitgeist-proof disguise (since the spirit of the time does not recognize the *soul*), as *situated action, extended mind, or distributed cognition*. It seems that Colman wants to undo Jung’s move of bringing social and cultural categories into subjectivity, and to place them back in the world, now endowed with mind.

Having explored the ideas of the extended mind, Colman, in his quest for the origin of the symbolic imagination, moves into the evolutionary territory of primate research to study primatologists’ findings on language and symbolization among chimpanzees and bonobos. He discusses theories on the origins of symbolic language put forward by Terrence Deacon and Michael Tomassello<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Note on the terminology here: the linguistic concept of (discursive) symbol is characterized by one-to-one correspondence between signifier and the signified and is an equivalent of Jung’s

Colman follows a narrative of emergence, and reads through the material until he encounters findings that can provide evidence for the presence of proto-symbolization in apes, and how symbols arise from social interactions. Colman favors the utilitarian, extraverted function of symbols:

symbols exist for the purpose of communicating with other humans with whom we co-exist in a symbolic community. Now that we live in such a symbolically saturated world, in which symbols can also be used for solitary contemplation, we may fail to recognize this.” [p.94 ]

He sees symbols not just as the tools we think with but the tools we *imagine* with, and considers that imagination makes us human. At least, in this instance he explicitly acknowledges the autonomous power of imagination to humanize us.

In Colman’s rendering of primate researchers teaching language to their subjects, Nim Chimsky, a chimpanzee, or Kanzi,—a bonobo, the account is transformed from a dry scientific report into an imaginative, empathic case study.

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notion of sign; linguistic non-discursive, or presentational, symbols, which have multiple and indeterminate symbolic references, are closer to Jung’s idea of symbol. Colman puts it with imaginative poetic flair: “the interpretation [of non-discursive symbols] borrows its significance from the replenishing symbol itself, like drawing water from the well.” p.93



**Figure 6** *Kanzi, the bonobo, with his teacher, Sue Savage-Rumbaugh*

Here Colman finds additional points to refute the idea of internalized structures in the mind. We learn how Deacon disputes Chomsky’s module of generative grammar: “children’s minds need not innately embody language structures if languages embody the predispositions of children minds.” [Deacon quoted on p. 98.]

Findings like this, amplified by the hypotheses of paleontologists regarding archaic socialization of hunter-gatherer societies lead Colman to conclude that: “it is sociality that provides the engine for symbolic communication.” [p. 101] Following Tomasello, he sees “language as emergent from cooperation” among early humans. [p. 116 ] I had my preconceptions about social behavior of chimpanzees corrected. I’ve learned that chimps, in spite of a semblance of cooperation, are selfish to the bone. They do hunt in a group but whoever gets the game has the first bite. They get to recognize what the word or

picture stands for but never can play with an object “as if it was something else.” Colman expresses respect for the animal other, and criticizes primate researchers for the way “the humans attempt to induct the apes to be more human-like without making efforts to become more ape-like,” in contrast to the way Joe Hutto, the turkey researcher did. [p. 108]

Following John Searle’s theory from his 1995 classic “The Construction of Social Reality,” Colman negates Jung’s notion of a collective unconscious. However, Colman’s jump from the implausibility of collective consciousness to the impossibility of a collective unconscious begs the question: “The phenomena of the collective unconscious can be explained in social and material terms without requiring an ill-defined notion of a “collective psyche.” These phenomena arise out of human actors working together to solve material problems in ways that require them to develop enough imagination to be able to symbolize things that are “not there” in a material sense but can be recognized as real through being represented in symbolic form.” [p. 117] It is as if Colman reversed Jung’s move from sociology to psychology. In order to save certain phenomena, like ‘gods’ or ‘myths’ from a materialistic Zeitgeist, Jung took them into the “interior” of the psyche, thus “gods became diseases” and myth become personal. Colman sees his own shift as closing the gap between sociology and psychology and even questions whether “psychological acts can be located within the individual mind at all.” [p. 118]

It seems to me that the need for precision in defining psychic matters is an ill-fitting scientific attitude—explaining psychic phenomena in materialistic, behavioral or social terms is bound to reject constructs that can only refer to



particular “internal” experiences and be expressed through speech or other expressive forms (that will make them even less precise). They can then be considered fantasies, but not in Jung’s sense of a reality that psyche creates every day, but in the sense of not real, mere figments of imagination. Colman’s developmental lens makes it self-evident for him that “the development of social life simultaneously creates the development of psychological life,” that “symbolic language is a form of social communication” and that “the imagery of dream and fantasy is dependent on the scaffolding of symbolic language.” [p. 118] If the Lacanian unconscious *is structured like* language, the Colmanian “unconscious,” *is* a form of social language. Thus the super-ego is a part of extended mind “held in place through processes of socialization within the group,” and “even the great mystery and miracle of human self-reflexive consciousness [a bit of “Jungian” irony here] is socially generated.” [p. 120]

Having explored the level of symbolic consciousness in contemporary apes Colman moves on to our ancestral apishness, to see how the current “cognitive archeology” tries to reconstruct the prehistory of mind. For instance, Lambros Malafouris argues that stones have “their own cognitive agency that shape the mind as much as being shaped *by* the mind.” [p. 127] For Colman this becomes a model of thinking in material form, and he argues that “there had to be material engagement with physical objects to provide basic metaphors out of which symbols are constructed... Symbols are imagined things,” and he means it quite lithic-ly, (I mean literally.) [p. 128] He is clearly impressed by *Homo Erectus*’ symmetric tear-drop shaped Acheulean hand-axe of 1.8 million years ago, which is the longest used human tool, till 60,000 years ago.



**Figure 7** Axes

These carefully made axes, are not only tools to shape the material world but become tools to think with and imagine with: “even now, most of the symbolic furniture of dream, fantasy and myth consists of material things (including living things) put to symbolic use.” [p. 128] This a a giant leap from the extended mind interaction between a human subject and the world, with the mind shared by the hand-axe and the human hand, to imagination, the use of representation of these objects to formulate autonomous internal fantasy that is somehow contingent on this early process. “Putting material things into symbolic use,” requires certain capacity for abstraction; thus to use the Acheulean axe to cut a tree branch in two is one thing, but to make logical separations with the mental representation of the axe is quite another.

When Colman speaks of the agency of things themselves, he talks prose not poetry: “it is not only the need of humans to carry things that is promoting

change—it is the needs of the objects themselves to be carried.” [p.130] It is as if he cannot help himself but use Aristotelian attribution of intention to things. I am pleasantly surprised here because, based on his line of reasoning I expected that the change was a result of collaborative mind of humans—axes, and not two discrete subjects (instead of Cartesian subject-object). On the other hand, if Colman needed reason to get to the imaginal place to see the intentionality of things, or even their consciousness, it is all for the better. To paraphrase Jung famous statement, *whatever it takes to allow psychologists’ egos, usually so wrapped up in their mental constructions that they cannot see beyond them,*<sup>6</sup> *to get access to mythopoesis and open their third eye (just an eyeball used symbolically) to get a glimpse of mundus imaginalis it is a worthy cause.*

Colman’s exploration of symbolic use of objects by *Homo sapiens* and Neanderthals leads him to regard the Aurignacian cave painting as a culture on a par with the monumental civilizations of the Near East, rather than it’s being a primitive, i.e., less developed, less sophisticated prehistoric tradition: “we may tentatively conclude that fully modern symbolic humans have been living on the planet for at least 100,000 years.”<sup>7</sup> [p. 149]

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<sup>6</sup> “We are in all truth so enclosed by psychic images that we cannot penetrate to the essence of things external to ourselves.” (C.G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of the Soul*, p. 194)

<sup>7</sup> Colman would be pleased that the recent finds in Morocco extended origins of homo sapiens to 300,000 years ago. See *The Guardian* article: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/jun/07/oldest-homo-sapiens-bones-ever-found-shake-foundations-of-the-human-story>



**Figure 8** *Lions from Chauvet cave, 32,000-30,000 BCE*

These excursions into evolutionary and Paleolithic origins open him to ‘the more-than-human world’, or as I would call it poetically, (which for Colman would sound unrepentantly Cartesian), to the souls of things. This is evidenced by him approvingly quoting David Abram’s *The Spell of the Sensuous*, which offers a view of oral cultures where “the sensible world remains alive with meaning and significance.” Abram sees that the introduction of writing altered the symbolic process by separating the activity of imagination from sensory experiences of the material world. [p. 151-152] Colman extends his journey into the material imagination of earth (although he does not follow Gaston Bachelard’s poetic trajectory of elemental imagination). He co-opts from the philosophers and archeologists the use of the notion of “constitutive symbols,” that is the idea that things are symbolic of themselves, like stone weights of the Neolithic that represent the (abstract) concept of *weight*: “the crucial point is that the materialization of intangible states in the form of symbolic objects

transforms them into tangible presences .” [p. 153] That brings him to the radical conclusion that “the idea of symbolic imagination is created by the symbols without which there is nothing to imagine with.” [p. 155] I read this statement to mean that “symbols” themselves are creative agents that constitute imagination, a notion, that in my terminology, is equivalent to archetypal images creating imagination.

Call me an old-fashioned Jungian, but for me “symbolic imagination” sounds redundant, as if there existed non-symbolic imagination. It is akin to computer science describing pixelated forms of display as ‘virtual reality,’ and then taking it literally, and putting the reality (the one without adjectives), on the defensive. As if now the reality itself needs to prove that it is not a holographic simulacrum, a la *Matrix*. Remember, when in its inception TV was labeled “a window on the world”? It is as if now we lost the window frame, and through the computer screen we look directly at the “world.” But I guess, I am reading things metaphorically here and not symbolically in Colman’s sense. He considers that “metaphors simply *illuminate* meanings that already exist, material symbols *create* meanings that are inextricably located in the material object itself.” [p. 158] Does the symbol to be real have to be concrete, literally dwelling in a thing? This begs the question of whether the new metaphors are symbols as they create new meanings, or whether new material inventions, like smart phones are symbols? Or even further, for the meaning to be created does it have to be material?

As Colman goes deeper into investigating (or is it imagining?) origins of the “imaginal realm” (an unacknowledged notion of Henri Corbin), he arrives at

the grounds of imagination in *actual* things: “before symbols can be imagined things, they are actual things.” [p. 158] The late Jungian analyst Yoram Kaufman would concur, since he treated dream images as objects that should behave in the real way, and if they don’t, they reflect a disordered psyche. Consequently, Colman arrives at the his own radical metaphysics of the psyche: “There is an ***ontological dimension*** [emphasis mine] to material symbols such that, or originally, breath/wind/air were not merely *like* the soul but *were* the soul. Psyche comes into being through being symbolized as breath.” [p. 158] I breathe a gasp (or is it soul?) of relief here, because, at least, he does not go Wolfgang Giegerich’s way of originating the soul in the animal sacrifice<sup>8</sup>. While I am glad that he finally speaks of *soul*, it is as if psychology has to become meteorology for the soul to be considered real. And as if to rub it in, to the archetypal psychologists (without ever mentioning Hillman), Colman uses the notion of “sticking to the image” in the context of luxury consumption, to clarify the importance of the redness of Ferraris and the whiteness of Rolls Royces, for the way they signal success, by the iconic specificity of the image: “The image does not *represent*, it embodies and enacts its meaning.” [p. 160] This statement is not far from Jung’s view: “Image and meaning are identical; and as the first takes shape, so the latter becomes clear. Actually, the pattern needs no interpretation; it portrays its own meaning.” [CW 8, ¶402] Perhaps, Colman’s image has more agency—it *embodies* and *enacts*—than Jung’s which *takes shape* and *portrays* its own meaning with clarity. However, he reverses Jung’s model of projection and

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<sup>8</sup> Wolfgang Giegerich. “Killings: Psychology’s Platonism and the Missing Link to Reality,” *Spring* 54, 5-18, 1993.

gives generative power to the material and social world which brings forth the imagery which can then serve as the ‘furniture’ of imagination... it is only through activity in the world with things and other people that we are able to develop psychic lives at all. So before things can be ‘in’ the psyche, they have to exist in the world as concrete realities.” [pp. 161-162]

So much for reality of the psyche and depth psychology. Viva Social Psychology!

In his own way Colman wants to save the substantiality of the psyche: “I am arguing that material symbolization is necessary in order for the imaginal world to be realized (i.e., made real).” And he even moves to the realization of the spiritual realm: “Symbols do not represent the gods, they *are* the gods. Or to put it in another way, there can be no gods without god-images. The gods are inherently symbolic beings.” [p. 166] He comes to this conclusion, not from reading *Re-Visioning Psychology*, but from the exploration of notions of “extended mind” and “constitutive symbols.” Thus gods are not just images but (symbolic) material things in the context of social beliefs. In this way gods are real because the symbols that are the gods are real. Gods do not just dwell in things (poetically), they are the things, although their transcendence is social, or in other words, they are immanent in society in constitutive symbols enacted through rites and myths shared by the tribe. However, Colman’s position on the “spiritual” is the weakest. In this area, unlike the others, he has not gone through careful examination of the development of religious symbols, and the history of religions, and simply applies his findings from the previous explorations to contemporary monotheistic religions, as if there is a symbolic equivalency among

decorative shells, money, Ferraris and Yahweh or Allah. Are all constitutive symbols constituted equally?

I like his commentary on the difficulty of inter-faith dialogue: “Each party tries to translate the other’s reality into their own symbols, not realizing that symbols are reality. ...Constitutive symbols thus give us some purchase on the different realities that cannot be reduced to one another because the reality is in the symbols that *present* that reality. To repeat, they do not represent, they enact and bring forth reality.” [p. 166 ] That view does not offer much hope for the Middle East. If Holy Land is Christian reality, ארץ הקודש [eretz hakodesh] is Jewish, and الأرض المقدسة [al'ard almuqaddasa] Palestinian, the same piece of this blooded-for centuries-earth is a different symbol/God, different reality for each of the faiths. It cannot be cut into pieces that preserve its spiritual integrity, unless a piece of the symbolic ground has holographic nature, and it is a constitutive or rather re-constitutive symbol for the whole.



**Figure 9** *The Temple Mount, Jerusalem. Sacred to Muslims and Jews*



Let's look closely at this passage:

If the imagination is a space in the mind, then it is one that is created by the contents of that space. Of course, the notion of imagination as a space is itself a metaphor—another example of the way material realities can be utilized to metaphorically represent and thereby make thinkable the intangible realities of the mind. Mind is emergent from the symbols we use to imagine with; without symbols, there can be no imagination and without imagination, there can be no human mind. Hence, imagination makes us human. [p. 168]

While most Jungians would agree that we are *homo imaginalis*, (perhaps with the exception of psychologists of interiority, who are into thinking—not into human thinking—into soul thinking, *psyche cogitans*), the location of imagination in the mind is even doubtful to Colman himself, as he immediately sees mind as emergent from the symbols as tools for imaginings. For archetypal psychologists, phenomenologically, the imagination, the act of imagining and the image imagined are co-constitutive, and simultaneous. Imagination is present only through images imagined, or more precisely through images presenting themselves, i.e., the soul's self-presentation. It is as if Colman uses mind as a synonym for the psyche, which creates some confusion, and even if mind is extended, it does not quite cover the whole psyche. Human capacity to imagine (imagination is where the "space" resides), uses the symbols, or images to manifest themselves. So it is as if the mind was in imagination, or in the psyche, not psyche in mind.

Colman considers shell bead necklaces of 100,000 years ago the earliest evidence of symbolization of the immaterial.



**Figure 10** *Cro-Magnon shell beads.*

The figurines and parietal paintings of 40,000 years ago are seen as signifying the spiritual dimension of *homo sapiens*. He seems to uncritically accept the terminology of paleontologists and anthropologists who refer to their speculations and conjectures based on fossils as hypotheses, rather than fantasies, which is what they are from the psychological point of view. Colman sees the increased popularity of Lascaux's and Altamira's paintings, as an expression of our need to connect to the origins, which is also the motive behind his quest for the emergence of imagination.



**Figure 11** *Cave-painting from Altamira*

He criticizes the Western bias that regards talismans, or amulets, or other constitutive symbols, as symbolic tokens, or fetishes, inferior to modern humans' symbolic thinking: "in oral cultures for whom the entire sensory world is animated by symbolic imagination... the distinctions between the spiritual energy of a talisman, the symbolic token of representation, or the aesthetic qualities of a work of art" that we make, are meaningless. [p. 172] Colman selects a few fascinating anthropologists who propose wild hypotheses with regard to the meaning of the parietal paintings. David Lewis-Williams considers them records of shamanic trances and visionary experiences. Paul Bahn criticizes this view as "the great leap backwards" and proposes that these were ceremonial spaces for ritual dancing and music, as the chambers with the richest paintings have the best acoustics. Ann Solomon believes them related to real death and the realm of

the dead animal spirits. Alan Garfinkel argues that they refer to actual communal hunting, to assure the steady supply of new game. Colman respects these interpretations as hypotheses, finds them equally plausible [p. 175], and uses them to further his argument, that they are evidence that “there can be no neat separation between what is metaphorical and what is actual.” [p. 176] Call me Cartesian apologist but it seems to me that his anti-Cartesian spirit, blinds him to seeing these interpretations as fantasies about the mind of their creators in the mind of the archeologists observing the cave art, in the same way that the polymorphous perverse infant was residing in Freud’s mind, not in the baby’s. However, Colman arrives at a conclusion worthy of Hillman: “they are not representations ... they might be better regarded as *presences* in their own right that ... enact and bring forth reality.” [emphasis mine] [p. 176] “Imaginal phenomena are what they appear to be.” [p. 178] Compare Hillman: “Images and metaphors *present* themselves always as living psychic subjects with which I am obliged to be in relation.” [emphasis mine] *Re-Visioning Psychology*, [32]

Colman puts Jung in the company of a semiotician Saussure, a psycholinguist Chomsky, and a structural anthropologist Levi-Strauss, as proponents of the notion “that structure of the mind is projected onto the world.” [p. 178] In contrast, he proposes the notion that “*the structure of the mind* is emergent from embodied engagement in a social and material environment.” [ibid., emphasis mine]. Thus, the world is an active participant in the emergence of the mind. However, he seems to be infected with the notion of the “structure of mind” himself, while previously speaking only of emergent, or extended mind,

with no hint of structure, as this would sound archetypal (belonging to the Senex).

Colman really got my attention, although it was ultimately disappointing, with the section “Where Are Dreams?” Here he evicts the dreams from (the Cartesian) head, and (the neurologist’s) brain, and finds “no ultimate reasons for regarding dreams and visions as internal figments,” and based on the phenomenological experience considers them happenings in the “real world,” rather than coming from the unconscious. [p. 179-80] Whereas he rejects Jung’s explanation of “the mythic land of the death” as the collective unconscious, and regards it as a translation from one mythic language (the land of the ancestors) into another myth (the inner world of the unconscious<sup>9</sup>),” [p. 180] he considers his own position of emergent, extended mind and constitutive material symbols to be non-mythical explanations and scientific hypotheses. True to the title he prioritizes act before image: “The realm of symbolic imagination is a realm of eternal presence, but it *requires the work of humans to maintain it.*” [*italics added*, p. 181]

Colman considers the human act of image-making as constituting human imagination, with images acting as tools revealing an otherwise invisible spirit:

“Image-making has a crucial role to play in the process [of symbolic imagination]; it is not that images are made in order to represent symbols of imagination, rather that image-making is an activity conducted for the purposes that would not exist without the faculty of human imagination. *Pari passu* imagination could not exist without those activities. It is in this sense that images are a form of tool-use; more than tools to think with, they are *tools of revelation*,

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<sup>9</sup> As far as I remember the “Inner world of the unconscious” is not Jung’s expression. Jung speaks about the (collective) unconscious and “the world of the unconscious” and locates it in the psyche, that is also, following alchemy, partly outside of human subjects.

a means of simultaneously revealing and bringing forth the unseen world of spiritual reality.” [pp. 181-182]

While the metaphor of images as “*tools of revelation*” at the first glance, seems really appealing and sounds meaningful, upon reflection it is really reductive, not so different from reducing the meaning of a Gothic cathedral to the stones and the activity of building it. Only when it is complete does it reveal the spirit. It is as if, at times Colman forgets that he speaks in metaphors, and treats them as prosaic expressions telling us of the way things really are. To evoke Wallace Stevens’ *The Man with the Blue Guitar*:

“They said, "You have a blue guitar,  
You do not play things as they are."  
The man replied, "Things as they are  
Are changed upon the blue guitar."

It seems to me that as psychologists we play the blue guitar. As Hillman put it:

psychology’s job is ... to see the subjective archetypal factor in our sight, before or while looking at facts and events. Other sciences have to pretend at being objective, to be describing things as they are, psychology fortunately is always bound by its psychic limitations and can be spared the pretense of objectivity... psychology ... is obliged to be subjectively aware.” [James Hillman, *Anima*, 99]

If we eliminate the archetypal factor from psychological perception we believe that we describe things as they really are, rather than seeing them as metaphoric subjective statements of the soul, coloring things blue.

Colman arrives at the most radical notion of psychology that undermines the idea of (depth) psychology itself, or at least re-defines it as act-ology or even a form of psychological materialism: “Whether we speak of the imagination, the unconscious, or the spirit world, we are referring to a phenomenological domain that comes into being through material means beyond what is ordinary visible in the material world.” [p. 182] Having advanced the notion of the material constitution of symbolic imagination, Colman aims, in two final chapters, at the deconstruction of Jung’s notions of two kinds of thinking and *participation mystique*.

## **FINAL CHAPTERS ON TWO KINDS OF THINKING AND *PARTICIPATION MYSTIQUE* REVISITED (THINKING THE SPIRIT)**

Although Colman is engaged in the ambitious task of updating Jung’s anthropological material, he uses only the early Jung’s ideas regarding understanding psyche and fantasy thinking. In 1912, Jung makes a classical distinction between two kinds of thinking, but it takes him 40 years to arrive at his mature understanding of fantasy thinking and relativize his view of the ego and consciousness. Eventually, Jung was able to give equal or superior value to fantasy (over directed thinking), considering fantasy an instinctual process that rarely goes astray. Even though Jung did not have the ‘post-Cartesian’

vocabulary, through his own active imagination process (*The Red Book*) and the study of alchemy, he developed a deep pre/post-Cartesian appreciation of psyche that had her center everywhere and circumference nowhere.

As I understand the aim of Jung's psychology project, a significant part of his purpose was to save the soul from positivism and modernity, that tended, at the beginning of the twentieth century, to reduce every phenomenon to verifiable, material, 'external' explanations. Jung was engaged in constant critical reflection on his own process. Already in 1925, looking critically at his fantasies about Miss Miller's fantasies, he found his conclusions biased, based on his terror of the autonomy of the soul:

I was in my consciousness an active thinker accustomed to subjecting my thoughts to the most rigorous sort of direction, and therefore fantasizing was a mental process that was directly repellent to me. As a form of thinking I held it to be altogether impure, a sort of incestuous intercourse, thoroughly immoral from an intellectual viewpoint. Permitting fantasy in myself had the same effect on me as would be produced on a man if he came into his workshop and found all the tools flying about doing things independently of his will. It shocked me, in other words, to think of the possibility of a fantasy life in my own mind."

[C.G. Jung, *Analytical Psychology 1925 Seminars*, pp. 27-28]

As we can see Jung's 1912 view of fantasy thinking, based on his own psychology was quite distorted, so Jung himself would agree with Colman's critique of his position.

I share Colman's lamentation on how we have destroyed indigenous cultures and sadly misunderstood their view of the world, to their and our peril:

Belatedly, and in most cases tragically so, we are turning to indigenous people not for what we can teach them but for what they can teach us.... learning to see the



world as they see it helps free us from the shackles of rationality and Cartesian dualism in which our own culture otherwise encapsulates us. [pp. 203-204]

Colman sees [contemporary] Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis alike as dominated by “Cartesian modes of thought that regard the psyche as “internal” and our emotional relation to the world and sometimes even to other people as ‘projection,’”. Although he recognizes Jung’s appreciation of fantasy, mythology, fairy tales and dreams, all of which, for him, are representative of non-discursive mode of thought, he considers Jung’s notion of “two kinds of thinking” as stuck in Enlightenment values that regard fantasy thinking as inferior, and primitive.

While Colman notices that Jung revised his view of fantasy thinking in *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* in his 1950 edition, from “overwhelmingly subjective and distorted picture of the world” to considering the fantasy process “an objective fact rooted in the instinctual, archaic basis of the mind.” [p. 208], he finds Jung’s revision insufficient: “It is only because Jung still thinks that reality has to be objective to be real that he needs to insist on the objectivity of the psyche.” [ibid.]

Further, Colman argues that Jung believed that directed thinking to be a modern scientific acquisition and failed to see it in the stone tools developed by early humans, or in the ancient technologies of the first *Homo sapiens*. However, Colman severely simplifies Jung’s view, by solely relying on *Two Kinds of Thinking*, to prove his points. Thus, he sees Jung as “mesmerized by modern technology,” and that, due to his “Cartesian psychology restricting directed thinking to the treatment of the material world as soulless and inanimate.” , “soul

has been forced into the subjective, individual sphere,” [p. 211]. No question that Jung’s notions had been influenced by XIX century science (notwithstanding his ventures with Wolfgang Pauli), but it was not because he was mesmerized by technology nor that he considered the world as soulless, but because he wanted to create a psychology of soul with soul that he felt was endangered by the reductive and behavioral tendencies of modernity. One only has to read Jung’s seminars to see how critical Jung was of technological and scientific modernity, and the alchemical Jung to see his deep understanding of the soul as the third substance, unmediated, between matter and spirit, and his view of the world as a conscious being in such notions as *anima mundi* and *unus mundus*.

In similar vein, I could criticize Colman for attempting to fabricate psychology without the soul and replacing it with human extended mind and sociological ideas such as when he returns the notion of *participation mystique* back from Jung’s psychological use of it, to Levy-Bruhl’s sociological viewpoint. Furthermore, since he uses the term psyche only sparingly, and soul almost exclusively in positions that he criticizes, and places act before image he turns Jungian psychology into a form of sociological behaviorism. Some part of Jung’s thinking may suffer from *behindism*, but by the same token Colman’s critique suffers from *beforism*, the theory that considers whatever activity happened before (evolutionarily, or developmentally) as constitutive of the psyche.

For the late Jung psyche was everywhere, “inside” human and “outside,” in the world; they were both alive. Even if Jung used Cartesian categories, he had respect for the other, for the image, that for Jung carried consciousness. Jung was not only developing theories about images but listened to them and let them

speak, and treated them as subjects, not only as objects of his psychological inquiry. In *the Red Book* both Jung's ego and non-ego figures are subjects, passionately engaged in dialogue. For Colman human mind, transcendent spirit and material symbols reside in the collective social cultural sphere that provides context to its affective meaning.

Thus the meaning of experience is emotional and social, and even the numinous experience of transcendence is a heightened emotional state, complete in itself, only experience-able and sharable through collective cultural presences.

In his critique of the inferiority/superiority of Freud's primary/secondary process, or of Jung's fantasy/directed thinking, Colman makes a valid point that these categorizations assume that only the "conscious, rational part of the mind had evolved rather than entirety of human mental functioning." [p. 216 ] To get out of the hierarchical attitude towards kinds of mental functioning Colman relies on Ian McGilchrist's discussion of differences between right and left brain functioning in his book, *The Master and His Emissary*. The left-hemisphere is dominated by focused attention, abstract categories and the internal logic of the situation; while the right hemisphere rules broad, flexible attention, gestalts, symbol formation, bodily experience of emotions, and creates metaphors. Consequently, because of the emphasis on integration, on relatedness to the other, the right brain is (or should be) the master and the left brain its emissary.

True to the SAP developmental mold and unquestioned admiration for Winnicott, Colman is able to consider the notion of *transitional space* as something emergent, as it is neither created nor found. He can also see Bion's alpha/beta elements in the emergent light. In contrast, Jung is seen as an

essentialist, structuralist, archetypalist, Cartesian (which Colman succeeds, overtime to cast as a hopelessly obsolete, reactionary notion), a firm believer in the pre-existing forms structuring experience. Given the sociological- material-cultural bent Colman finds affinities in developmentalists such as a Marxist psychologist Vygotsky, for whom language and mind are internalized social exchanges, or an anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, who based language and individual mind on collective ritual practices and enactments. In this he is post-structuralist, with an affinity for images rather than structures, for presences rather than representations, which brings him close to Hillman. However, because he considers images originating in and emerging from social-cultural-material-symbolic acts, he constitutes them as “brought forth” in the primary interactions of the infancy both of our species and babyhood. While he—like Hillman—considers images constituting the archetype, presences, Colman deems them emergent from interpersonal affective situations [p. 225] whereas Hillman sees them as autonomous, immediate, pure psychic, mysterious presences, self-originating, self-referential (i.e., without “material” referent) and complete. As Hillman is imaginologist, so Colman is actologist. To paraphrase Gertrud Stein, for Hillman image is image is image, for Colman image is act. Thus Colman’s motto would be: “stick to the act and an image will emerge.”

Another interesting idea that Colman discovers is the logical thought of Chilean psychoanalyst Ignacio Matte-Blanco. Matte-Blanco sees the characteristics of primary process (timelessness, absence of space, non-contradiction, displacement and condensation) as examples of symmetrical form of logic in which everything is the same as everything else. Conscious thought is

governed by asymmetrical logic, of distinctness and separation. Intensity of affect is what increases the level of symmetry. For instance, on the conscious level a man and lion are distinct, on another level a man can be like a lion or feel like a lion, but when emotion intensifies he can become a lion, and eventually he'd run on all fours and roar. All psychic phenomena show combination of both, a bi-logic. This perspective offers an advantage in that symmetrical logic is not necessarily unconscious, and different cultures to different degrees cultivate this form of logic consciously. All the struggles of the Church fathers, and scholastics for centuries, the bloody history of heresies, of reformation and counterreformation, and even Jung's own labor to fathom Christian mysteries, would be neatly bypassed if they had a notion of symmetric logic that allows for simple understanding: Jesus being both a human being and a son of god, or trinity: God, Son and the Holy spirit being one, or in the Mass, bread and wine being simultaneously body and blood of Christ—they are all the result of symmetric logic. [p. 244]

As if inspired by symmetric logic Colman, obviously under the influence of affect, loses the crucial distinction between spirit and imagination: “there is at least a rough equivalence between the reality of the spirit and the reality of imagination.” [p. 232] Relying on Geertz analysis of emotions, that like ideas, are “cultural artifacts,” Colman comes to view spiritual practices as an example of “distributed affective cognition,” a “culturally organized system of thought, an expression of forms of life.” [p. 232]

After his exploration of distributed affective cognition, and constitutive symbols he comes back to Levy-Bruhl's notion of *participation mystique*, and

sees it from Durkheim's sociological side as collective representation. He uses it as a "model for the emergence of symbolic imagination as a collective, social phenomenon *before* it can be psychological one that is ... appropriated by individuals," and claims that it offers a way to "think the spirit." (pp. 235-236) It is as if in his fervor and intoxication with symmetric logic he does not realize that at this point he ceases to be a psychologist and becomes sociologist, a *beforist*. Thus symbols cease to be manifestations of the psyche and become "expressions of humans' active engagements in shaping their own Umwelt," "not created by individuals but [arising] from the collective activity of social groups, transmitted from one generation to another as the symbolic matrix in which individuals are located." [p. 237] In the Durkheimian way he claims that "'God" is a representation of society, and religious rites and beliefs are ways of expressing and reinforcing the social realities of a particular society." [p.238] Quite unlike Jung's view of "god," the Jung who even in 1912, saw "god" as a symbol of libido. Thus he loses psychological optic (psycho-logy, as a logic of the soul, that doesn't need anything from outside psyche) and considers "belief in spiritual forces an expression of affective states that have become symbolized via collective representations and thereby transformed, which includes taking on a social aspect." [p. 239] With this statement he transforms himself from an individual psychologist into a social psychologist.

It seems to me that when Colman applies *participation mystique* from the sociological perspective and adds symmetric logic to it, he gets so inspired that he takes his schoolboy experience of reading in *The Wind in the Willows*, of an encounter by Rat and Mole with the god Pan, for real mystical experience. While

mystical experiences can come from unlikely sources, a Mole protagonist in a children's story epiphany of Pan, seems to be on a different level than Jung's usual biblical example of Saul's epiphany of Christ on the way to Damascus. *The Wind in the Willows* has become a beloved children classic, but as far as I know, did not become a source of the new religion.



**Figure 12** *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*", frontispiece to a 1913 edition of *The Wind in the Willows*. Paul Bransom

A child's identification with the description of Mole's experience of awe is hardly a representative example of mystical experience, unless *participation mystique* with any affect becomes mystical. For all my love of fiction and even considering fiction as a realm of the psyche, it is hard to take this example seriously, unless it is meant to trivialize the numinous experience, and take it as a

‘garden variety’ emotional state, that we can participate with. For me it is an example of literalization of fiction, that loses the as-ifness of it.

To be fair, Colman notes that “states of ‘oneness’ are not all the same.” [p. 246] Thus, he sees the difference between the distress of a borderline patient who loses her boundaries and is one with the sky, the mystic being one with the universe, or an “ersatz mystic” on hallucinogenic trip. [p. 247]. However, the difference is not based on the experience itself but on the communal context of collective meaning provided by mystical tradition or psychoanalysis; though poor seekers are deprived even of such communal context, Timothy Leary and Terence McKenna notwithstanding.

Individual experience is not what Colman chooses to emphasize, and even undermines Jung’s visions by suggesting that they were dependent on the “vast resources of Jung’s library on which he drew for his apparently individual visions.” [p. 247] Colman claims that Jung “psychologized” *participation mystique*, taking it out of its social origins, and that this led to separating psyche from the social world, “obliterated the social and material dimension of emotional experience,” and “desocialize[d] collective representations so that they become merely ‘psychic contents.’” [p. 247-48] While it is true that Jung used ideas from sociology, biology, physics, or anthropology to build his psychology project, he redefined them psychologically, not to sever psyche’s connection with the social or material world, but to claim priority for the soul. Criticizing (any) ideas for being *merely* ‘psychic contents’ is another example of *beforism*; just because some idea appears first in the vocabulary of one discipline it does not mean that it cannot be appropriated with change of meaning by another, and



besides, from Jung's perspective, any idea enters the social realm from individual psyche, anyway. Furthermore, for Colman, Jung "confuses the emotional processes that inform *participation mystique* with their public, symbolic representations so he ends up putting symbolic representations back "inside" the psyche as "pre-existent forms." For me Jung starts that way by design, as for Jung these are psychic not social phenomena. Also being "inside" the psyche does not imply either that it is "inside" of the individual, nor that the psyche is limited to the human skin. "Inside" the psyche is a metaphoric way of speaking, imagining psyche as a spatial container, i.e., ideas are inside psyche.

It seems to me that to prove his point, Colman oversimplifies Jung's position, although he shows that he is also capable of appreciating the nuances of different theoretical languages than his own, for instance, of Bion: "Collective representations and their social mediations are, in Bion's language, the alpha function that transforms beta elements into usable thoughts," clarifying "that here "thought" is to be understood not simply as intellectual thought but in a wider sense that includes being able to recognize affective states as meaningful and thinkable." [p. 248] However, in his zeal to sociologize Jung, he does not offer the same attention to the subtlety of meanings of Jung's terms. Increasingly, the rhetoric of Colman's arguments gets hyperbolic, as he asserts that "Jung turned his back on all this" [meaning the social dimension of mystical experiences in the manner he conceives of it], as if Jung could possibly have known about it. Moreover, he dismisses Jung's claim that the psyche "was capable of coming up with representations entirely independently of human engagement in the social and material world," and that the "external

circumstances merely ‘constellated’” pre-existent forms, rather than, as in Colman’s language, “generating and structuring them through *the extended engagement of the affective mind in the lived body of a shared world.*”

[emphasis mine], [p. 248] I don't see how this mouthful of a phrase is more precise a description of a phenomenon than Jung’s constellation of archetypes.

Through Geertz’s view that “ in a ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined, fused under the agency of a single set of symbolic forms, turn out to be the same world,” [pp. 250-251] Colman arrives at his own version of one-world. In this one-world “Imagination is made real by being enacted; act becomes image.” [p. 251] and “There is no “as if” to this form of imagination and it is experienced as entirely real.” [p. 253 ] It seems that Colman represents an extraverted view of imagination which becomes real for him only through social enactment. In contrast, Jung’s view of imagination is introverted—it needs only a *psychic act* of imagining to be realized. For Colman act (understood as social, symbolic, material expression) realizes image, for Jung image imagines itself, or image constitutes itself through an act of imagining. This shows that Colman does not understand Jung’s view of fantasy [“psyche creates reality every day. The only expression I can say for this activity is fantasy.” CW 6, p. 78], as reality. He needs a social expression to make fantasy real.

Inspired by Geertz’ understanding of rituals, Colman projects his fantasy of it (yes, it is a projection of a contemporary view into the imagined past) into Upper Paleolithic rituals by stating that “it is *virtually certain* that whatever they were like, they were experienced in this concrete way as living reality.” [emphasis mine, p. 254] Or when he claims “wherever [Bali rituals] “came from,” the form

in which they appear *must have evolved* over time, over many generations or even centuries through a gradual process of accretion and creative innovation by countless individuals.” p. 255 [emphasis mine]



**Figure 13** *Rangda and Barong, the figures in the Bali ritual discussed by Clifford Geertz*

Those speculative fantasy proclamations are presented as real through the power of rhetorical hypothetical statements, however, they are as “real” or “metaphorical” as any “as-if” statements of Jung.

Finally, Colman arrives at the end of his heroic quest for the origins of symbolic imagination [defined as a way of thinking (and feeling) suited to the expression and representation of emotional aspects of experience, p. 255] and finds it in transformative social rituals of the Upper Paleolithic, claiming that “experiences of this kind can be transformative just as the mother’s mediation of infant’s beta elements transforms them into usable alpha elements fit for

dreaming.” As a developmentalist Colman needs to locate the mother-infant interaction at the evolutionary origins of symbolic imagination, because his quest for origins (like any quest) is governed by the mythologem of Great Mother. However, it is as if he gets self-conscious at this juxtaposition and denies that he is “suggesting that the ritual is a ‘re-enactment’ of infancy, but ... the opposite.” [p. 256] If he means by that that infancy is a re-enactment of ritual, this will open the developmental position of all that vast amount of psychological data, which emerged from mommy-baby interactions, to his own social critique. If that is the case, that such appraisal would be a most welcome contribution to the developmental theory.

Finally we arrive at the source, at the origins of symbolic imagination:

At some point in prehistory, adults who had only a rudimentary capacity for symbolic imagination would have needed some means of creating this other world of symbolic imagination as a way of making meaning of their heightened levels of affectivity which, in turn, derived from the increased importance of collective social living and the intersubjective aspects of attachment. [p. 256]

For me, Colman’s meandering journey to the origins was much more interesting than its destination. While I’ve enjoyed reading, and, learned from, his project of updating Jung’s XIX century anthropology to the XXI century, I am saddened by his conclusion in which he considers the psyche a social medium, not anymore located in the head/brain but in the extended space between the hand and the stone, between the mind and matter, in the social context, true to Winnicott’s notion of transitional space. And that for me, at least, paradoxically leads to a XXI century recreation of the early XIX psychology without the soul.

It distresses me that as small as our Jungian enterprise is, 3,200 or so Jungian analysts in the world, we do not read work of people from different “schools”. It seems that the already over 30 years old designation of Jungian “schools” into developmental, classical and archetypal in Andrew Samuels’ *Jung and PostJungians* (1985), now holds even stronger. Colman arrives at a similar destination that, from a very different trajectory, James Hillman did, over 40 years ago, and not once does he mention Hillman’s name. So, I’d rather stay with, Hillman’s view: “Man is primarily an image maker and our psychic substance consists of images; our experience is imagination.” *Re-Visioning Psychology*, p. 23

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