

## PSYCHOLOGY

**Religion and religiosity in analytical psychology**

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**Abstract.** The article analyzes the problem of the origin and evolution of religion in terms of analytical psychology. The collective unconscious is considered as the cause of the origin of primary forms of religious belief, national and world religions. Basic archetypes of the collective unconscious (the Great Mother, the Divine Child, Hero), a sequence of stages is described in the context of the evolution of religious beliefs, as well as the evolution of human consciousness.

**Keywords:** *psychology of religion, analytical psychology, a collective unconscious, archetypes, religion*

**Introduction.** Along with the emergence of psychology as an independent science, psychologists were attracted not only by the analysis of the human soul, but also psychological analysis of spiritual sources of mankind: culture, art, and religion. This interest is one of the reasons that contributed to the emergence of the psychology of religion in the late nineteenth century – science having as subject study of psychological aspects and patterns of religious phenomena. The scientists of that time searched for an explanation of the psychological causes of religion (S. Freud, W. James, etc.). They tried to understand the psychological nature of religion and religious experiences (S. Hall, E. Starbek, J. Pratt, T. Ribo, J. Sharcot, etc.). Religion gets into focus of scientific interest of C.G. Jung. The point of view on the features of the structure and functioning of the human psyche offered by Jung became the foundation for the application of analytical psychology in different areas of knowledge, including the religious studies.

The **methodological** and **theoretical** basis of the study were the provisions of analytical psychology about the nature of the origin of religion and religiosity, developed by C.G. Jung; the concept of the origin and evolution of religious beliefs as a reflection of the human consciousness evolution in course of its historical development by E. Neumann.

The **goal** of the study is to define the origin and essence of religion and religiosity in analytical psychology.

C.G. Jung insisted that the human soul consists of three separate substructures, which interact between themselves: consciousness, personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. The *consciousness* is the point of entrance to the psyche. The center of consciousness is *Ego*, which includes thoughts, memories, feelings due to which we feel our integrity. The *Ego* is the center of decision-making and free will. *Personal unconscious* is a collection of complexes charged with energy. The complexes consist of various elements that stick together due to emotions: associative images, traumatic memories, family influences, and cultural norms. The complexes in certain circumstances are characterized by the ability to burst into conscious ego suddenly and spontaneously, and master it. C.G. Jung called this reaction a ‘constellations complex’. The power of the complex is explained not only by its energy charge of traumatic experience which is placed in personal unconscious. The complexes are fused with congenital mental structures that are in the *collective unconscious*. The collective unconscious, according to C.G. Jung, is an inherited part of the

psyche, the same for all people, and creates a common foundation for psychic life. Structural elements of the collective unconscious are *archetypes*. Archetype is the main source of mental symbols which attract energy (libido), structure and transform it and eventually lead to the emergence of religion, culture and civilization [2].

The idea of the existence of such congenital structures and archetypes emerged within search C.G. Jung’s for similarities of psychotic fantasies, dreams, images, products, personal fantasies, as well as images of the mythology. This ancient mental matter, according C. Jung, forms the basis of our mind, just as the structure of the body follows the general anatomical features of the mammals. [3] An experienced psychologist can see many analogies between dreams of the modern man and collective beliefs, images and mythological scenes of the primitive man. Action of archetype is manifested in the formation of beliefs around this central idea. And these beliefs acquire different forms in different historical periods, different cultures, and different people. For example, the idea of Christ the Savior has a pre-Christian origin and it was formed around the topic of the hero-savior. Thus, the image of the Hero is the archetype which is perceived in different ways by every generation that creates its myth about the hero.

These deep psychological complexes and archetypes, in analytical psychology are considered as a factor contributing to the emergence of primitive religious beliefs as a source of symbols, dogmas and myths in the national and world religions. Religion, according to C.G. Jung, binds people with the processes taking place in the dark depths of their soul, in their unconscious. C.G. Jung defined religion in accordance with the first use of the word ‘religio’, as a special notion that monitors the human mind for some dynamic factors (‘forces’, spirits, demons, gods), powerful and dangerous, beautiful and majestic that are able to provide help and need to be considered. And doctrine represents codified and dogmatized forms of primary religious experience, ways of use of this experience. For everything that concerns soul, according to C.G. Jung, there are religious formulas and images. And everything connected with religion, everything that is told about the religion is closely related to the human soul [5].

The evolution of religious beliefs, according to C.G. Jung, is tightly linked to the evolution of human consciousness in the process of anthropological socio-genesis. And the complexity of the soul of the modern man resulting from a number of introjection acts grew

along with the evolution and loss of spirituality of nature. This evolution is slow and difficult [3].

Thus, among people of the past whose level of consciousness differed from ours, the soul (psyche) was not regarded as something integral. Permanent 'twilight' consciousness did not allow the primitive man to consider clearly whether it was a dream or an actual experience. Consciousness of the primitive man (C.G. Jung called it 'childish', 'one that emerged in the early waters of the unconscious') was constantly endangered by all-powerful unconscious [3, 4].

Fragility of primitive mind has found its expression in the *animistic* beliefs when the properties of the soul were conferred upon everything that surrounded the man. These religious beliefs have become a cementing element that did not allow the psyche to break down. Thus, the primitive man, in the event of exceptional situations (e.g., when hearing voices), did not have to question their mental abilities, and have thought about fetishes, spirits or deities. And worshipping to these primitive gods, the man got integrated, holistic state, turning back by means of this generation that they rejected before.

Thus, the life of the prehistoric man was associated with a number of actions aimed at strengthening awareness and protection of the unconscious. Many rituals taboos and rules of conduct served to this purpose. Subsequently, archetypes in tribal teachings got conscious forms and meanings in the traditions of education and training of the tribe members.

Internal forces which grow from the depths of the unconscious were transformed later into the ancient *mythology* in images of spirits, demons, *fata morgana*. Myths are vital phenomena; they represent projection of the deep essence of the soul. C. Yung called first myths initial manifestations of the pre-conscious soul. Furthermore, they do not just reflect mental life of primitive tribes, they are that life itself. And if the tribe loses its mythological values, it faces immediate collapse, it ruins as a man who has lost his soul. Anthropologists have repeatedly described what happens to communities of savages in case of collision between their spiritual values and influence of modern civilization. They lost their interest in life, they are morally omitted. The role of religious symbols is precisely aimed to make human life meaningful. The mythology of the primitive man is a living religion, loss of which is always and everywhere, even in civilized nations, a moral catastrophe.

Therefore, C.G. Jung did not consider the myth as an allegory of the physical world; he spoke of the myth as a symbolic expression of events in the unconscious psyche. Through a projection to the images of mythology, consciousness can grasp the inner unconscious drama of the soul. It took several millennia in order to separate somehow the projection from external events. For example, in astrology psychological characteristics still are not separated from the stars [3].

*Global and national religion*, as well as the primitive religious beliefs, expresses the mysteries of the soul through majestic images. Religious symbols shape the past and give the sense; they help these unconscious forces to find the way to enter the conscious world of the man which sometimes is unable to understand what is actually happening. Herewith, the religious symbol does not dis-

tort the essence of this experience. Unconscious form of expression always found reflection in protective and healing religious images [3].

The current level of civilization and culture, according to C.G. Jung, is not evidence that human consciousness has reached a level of continuity. It is vulnerable and exposed to fragmentation. Even now a significant part of our mind is immersed in the darkness of the unconscious and is influenced by the archetypes of collective intelligence which break out. The rational and intelligent modern man has acquired some willpower, learnt to work effectively without singing and drumming that previously made them ready to work with hypnosis, man cannot do without daily prayer for God's help. Modern man can do the planned things, move without obstacles from words to deeds, in contrast to primitive man, whose every step was hampered by fears, prejudices, etc.

And it is this excessive rationalism gave modern man under the power of mental 'hell' by destroying the ability to perceive symbols and ideas of divinity. The gods and demons have not disappeared, they have new names: 'restlessness', 'dark foreboding', 'psychological complications', 'insatiable attraction to pills, alcohol, tobacco, food', and, above all, a huge number of neuroses.

'Advanced' consciousness of modern man has deprived itself of means of impulses perception coming from unconscious and instinctive. A person needs to have some ideas that give meaning to life and give possibility to find a place in the universe. C.G. Jung believed that dogmatic religious symbols were useful and had a psychotherapeutic effect. Due to these ideas powerful and dangerous spiritual experiences find their wording. An attack on images and sacred symbols was launched during the Reformation that led a man of the West to 'symbolic misery'. Protestantism soon began to feel devastating effects of individual revelation, that is why it broke up to more than 400 denominations. On the other hand, C.G. Jung speaks of Protestantism as a great risk and great opportunity. Protestant was alone face to God, he has neither confession, nor absolution. Therefore the protestant's conscience became apprehensive. Protestants achieved the unique ability to realize their sins. This is the condition of the own understanding of psychology, the ability to cross the threshold of the unconscious and get the impersonal forces. [3]

Erich Neumann, the student of C.G. Jung, in his works continues and develops the ideas of dependence of religious beliefs on collective unconscious. In his work 'Origin and Evolution of Consciousness' he shows that the main part of the mythology of a number of archetypes that is organically linked to each other and their sequence of stages determines the development of consciousness and personality. [1]

This means that the stages of development of consciousness and ego of humans, within the phylogeny and ontogenesis, are defined by archetypes. Archetypes of Ouroboros, the Great Mother and the Divine Infant, the Hero find their expression in the images of ancient myths as well as in the national mythology and world religion. E. Neumann interprets these characters as stages of transformation of the Ego into its relationship with the unconscious as the stage of development of human consciousness and ego.

*The initial stage of formation of consciousness and ego, Ouroboros*, is associated with prehistory of humanity. The

story begins with a subject that is able to perceive with the entity, endowed with the ego and consciousness. In prehistory of humanity the Ouroboros is a period when individual and group, conscious and unconscious, man and the world, were inextricably linked, identical, merged. This state means collective ideas dominance, group and group consciousness dominance. The mechanism of contact and communication with the world is represented by merging. The basis of such phenomena is the lack of distinction between ego-consciousness and the unconscious.

On the religious level, the equivalent to such amorphous psyche is uncertain deity, primitive power that only some time later becomes the substance where gods and divine appear. The symbol of this stage of human consciousness is Ouroboros, i.e. a snake curled up in the ring and biting its own tail. This symbol expresses the absolutely undifferentiated character, the origin of everything from everything, and re-entering into everything, interdependence of everything. It is a symbol of the womb, a symbol of the unity of opposites of the initial stage of life. This is the image of the Great and the Good Mother that generates, protects, feeds.

Symbolic depiction of the initial state of origin and development of human consciousness we find in the mythology of creation of the world. Myths tell about the creation of symbolic unnamed amorphous initial state that was characteristic of the world in the early days. According to E. Neumann, it is the story of the initial state of the human psyche. The man is nothing, the world is everything. World covers and feeds them. Person is in the unconscious, all needs are met by major breadwinner (unconscious); this is the early state of paradise. At this stage there is no suffering – suffering come into the world with the appearance of the ego and feelings.

The desire to plunge into the whole without any responsibility and efforts is fundamental for a person, that is the start of the life, and myths tell about paradise. In ontogenetic level, everyone passes ouroboros situation of merger with parents, starting with the prenatal period of development.

Force that can overcome the powerful call of the unconscious, E. Neumann called 'central version', i.e. the desire to become conscious. He notes that the stability of the ego, i.e. its ability to resist to the disintegrating tendencies of the unconscious and the world develops very early, as well as the desire to expand consciousness.

At the next stage of development, the Great Mother stage, the Ego begins to separate from the being identified as the Ouroboros (the unconscious), it takes a new position towards the world. This means meeting with the dangers and obstacles of reality, awareness of the existence of such characteristics as pain and pleasure. The world is dual, the Ego knows positive and destructive aspects of the world (Good and Terrible Mother).

Compared to the Great Mother (unconscious), the ego-consciousness and the individual remain small and powerless. Life in the mental space of primitive man of primitive culture is a life full of dangers and uncertainty. And demonic nature of the world, filled with diseases and droughts, is strengthened by the influences of inner peace. The same fear of unnamed mysterious forces is known even to a child who is not able to orient consciously and assess what is happening. The child also has primitive

fear of the outside world that is mysteriously curved with internal projections. This stage of the psyche development (both individually and in a historical context) is characterized by the highest dependence of a child on mother-nature, of man on mother-nature, the earth.

At this stage the typical image of the mythology is the image of the Mother-Goddess (unconscious, feminine) and the Divine Infant (Ego, masculine). This image highlights the essence of the helpless child and the mother's protective side, the weakness of the born Ego face to the forces of overwhelming unconscious. In religious myths of various peoples we find this image: in the image of mother-goat nurses Cretan boy Zeus and protects him from absorbing father (Greece), Isis brings back to life the boy Hor after being bitten by scorpion (Egypt), Mary defends Jesus, fleeing from Herod.

The transition from Ouroboros the stage of the Great Mother is characterized by the further development of Ego and consciousness system strengthening, and when the first gods appear, the most striking example of what the Olympians gods of ancient Greece can be.

Further development of the human psyche at the stage of the Great Mother is marked by the emergence of consciousness. This stage of relations between conscious and unconscious is symbolically expressed in religious mythology relations through the Mother goddess and her son-lover. Young men and young fertility gods appearing in myths, make the ground fertile, they symbolize the vegetation itself. And as plants that grow and reach maturity, so the young men have to be killed, chamfered and cleaned as a crop. Death and dismemberment is the fate of the young god of fertility such as Tammuz in Sumerian mythology.

Human sacrifices were characteristic of fertility cults (that accompanied the cult of the Great Mother). They existed all over the world: there was no life without sacrificial death. Considering them cruel, we misunderstand their meaning. For early Neolithic cultures sequence of events (life – death – rebirth) are obvious. Woman-earth needs fertilizing family blood. Dull contrast between the orgiastic mysteries and subsequent fertility ritual murder is an archetypal expression of the dependent ego position and the dominant influence of the Great Mother (the unconscious).

Overcoming the archetypal state of relations between the son-lover and the Great Mother occurs at the heroic stage of consciousness and Ego evolution. From the psychological point of view, the sequence of the Great Mother and her son-lover and new mythological stage is not accidental historical, logical and psychological event. The heroic stage of the Ego is symbolically expressed in the myth of Hero, which are found in the various religions of the world. Hero is a masculinized Ego that is free from the power of the feminine unconscious. The myth about the hero is an integral part of the personal development of the individual. The Ego (Hero) at this stage fights with the unconscious (Dragon). And the battle with the dragon is a key element of all mythologies of the world. The Hero overcomes the Dragon (i.e. unconscious covering the Ego). The Hero is always a figure that brings light, is a light keeper. The Hero's victory is a new spiritual status, new knowledge and changing consciousness. The Hero is an ego carrier capable to discipline the will and to shape personality.

The mythological goal of the battle with the Dragon is almost always a virgin, captive or treasure that is hard to

get (live water, magic ring, etc.). These images are symbols of Anima archetype that stands out from the archetype of the Great Mother. This means that the Ego after the battle with the dragon-unconscious opens the way for integration with the feminine part of the soul. That is, giving freedom to the princess and getting treasure, the one gets the treasure of the soul. And this is a big step towards the mental integrity. At this point, the central version of the ego that occurred unconsciously becomes conscious – it is the way of individuation.

In the individual development of personality, these processes begin to occur in the second half of life. And C.G. Jung, and after him E. Neumann emphasize that during all life the personality integration is controlled by the archetype of the Self, but his ego is able to realize it only in the second half of the individual life. At this time all the components of personality structure that took shape as a result of socialization in the first half of the life (Shadow, Person, Anima/Animus) have to be conscious and integrated. This is the process of transformation of the Hero: the Ego understands the Self. This is the *fourth stage of consciousness – Hero Transformation Stage*, when conscious mind feels the integrity of the psyche. This is the stage of the assimilation of transpersonal phase where a person can feel like the Universe, Atman, and God. Perhaps this explains the Jewish aphorism ‘Man and

God are twin brothers’. That is what the Christian doctrine is about that states that man is a spark of God.

This last phase, according E. Neumann, is not archetypal any more, but individually caused, each with its own myth on transformation. Both humanity as a whole, and the individual have the same problem, i.e. to realize themselves as a unity. The structural integrity of mind at this stage symbolizes the mandala.

There is no coincidence that modern psychology and mental therapy appear in the twentieth century. Man of the West needed a method, some means to understand and integrate the unconscious. C.G. Jung considered individual personal development (individuation) as naturally given, resulting from archetype process. In this way the consciousness often strays from the archetypal instinctive way, comes into conflict with its own foundation. Then there is the need for the synthesis of both. And this synthesis at different stages of human development helped perform primitive religious beliefs, national and world religions, modern psychotherapy. So, in this article the attempt to make analysis and synthesis of the psychological factors of religion and religiosity in analytical psychology was made. The results of the analysis indicate that only a deep understanding of the essence of the structure and functioning of the human psyche can give us possibility the essence of spiritual products, one of which is religion

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