

## SOME RECENT STUDIES IN ARCHETYOLOGY

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

THESE is no such word as archetypology, nor is there any one discipline which could fittingly be so named. But we might invent the word to cover all those very various studies which, in very different ways, contribute to our understanding of what the analytical psychologists call archetypes—the primordial images and patterns of behaviour of a supra-personal character which the depth-psychologists find in their clinical work, and which have been expressed in manifold ways by human beings throughout the ages and throughout the world. Whatever else may be said for or against Jung's concept of the archetype, it has undoubtedly provided a meeting place for specialists in the most disparate fields of inquiry.

This is particularly manifest at the yearly 'Eranos' meetings at Ascona, Switzerland, whose proceedings are subsequently published in the *Eranos Jahrbuecher*. The sciences, as distinct from the humanities, were, however, rather poorly represented at the 1956 meeting, which was devoted to 'Man and the Creative'.<sup>1</sup> But it had some notable contributions from Professor Mircea Eliade, Gershom Scholem, Chung-Yuan Chang, Laurens van der Post, Hellmut Wilhelm and Sir Herbert Read. Meanwhile we have another volume of previous *Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks* translated into English.<sup>2</sup> Its theme is 'Man and Time', and here the sciences are represented by the physicist Max Knoll and the biologist Adolf Portmann. The arrangement of the contributions is somewhat haphazard, and readers may be recommended to begin at the end with the late Professor G. van der Leeuw's brilliant essay on 'Primordial Time and Final Time', with its careful analysis of basic concepts and its profound theological and philosophical insights. Theologians should also on no account miss Professor Puech's 'Gnosis and Time' or Professor Quispel's 'Time and History in Patristic Christianity'. And no mortal should miss Professor Plessner 'On the Relation of Time to Death'.

<sup>1</sup> *Eranos Jahrbuch*, 1956, Band XXV. *Der Mensch und das Schöpferische*, herausgegeben von Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, pp. 528. Zürich: Rhein-Verlag. S.Fr./DM 31.20.

<sup>2</sup> *Man and Time: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*. Edited by Joseph Campbell, translated by Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 35s.

Time and the timeless—the personal or historical and the archetypal—are also the focal points in all Professor Mircea Eliade's presentations of religions, whether in general or in particular. And it is in the same terms that he now gives us what is probably the most comprehensive and definitive study of yoga that has yet appeared.<sup>3</sup> This is no mere revision of the preliminary study he published in 1936, but, to all intents and purposes, a totally new and far more thorough work. It combines meticulous Western academic scholarship with first-hand experience of the subject, and it carefully avoids the esoteric romanticism and tiresome moralizing with which it is often associated. Eliade also steers clear of the usual facile syncretism with Western patterns, while stressing the relevance of yoga to the universal human predicament. Mr Trask, his translator, has this time served him well, and Miss Rosemary Sheed has given us a lucid translation of his general *Traité* on the history of religions, though the English title could be misleading.<sup>4</sup> A translation of this work has long been needed: it deserves to become a standard introduction to the subject; and while experts will find little information in it that is new or unobtainable elsewhere, its original method may claim their attention. Its value to students of archetypes is enhanced rather than reduced by M. Eliade's insistence on treating the 'sacred' as a phenomenon in its own right, and not to be reduced to psychology, sociology or anything else whatever.

A like solicitude to avoid regarding religion as a subsidiary or department of something else marks the theoretical prologue and epilogue to Professor E. O. James's *Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East*.<sup>5</sup> The body of the book, immensely erudite and sober but never dull, is packed with information. This is made possible by the fact that, 'in the Near Eastern religions, which constitute the background of most of the living religions of today (Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Islam), a considerable corpus of documentary data is available concerning the mythology and ritual organization'. By comparison, the documentary evidence for *The Lost Gods of England*—those of our British, Anglo-

3 *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, by Mircea Eliade, translated by W. R. Trask, pp. xxii-529. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 35s.

4 *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, by Mircea Eliade, translated by Rosemary Sheed, pp. xv-484. Sheed & Ward. 25s.

5 *Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East*, by E. O. James, D.Litt., Ph.D., F.S.A., D.D., pp. 352. Thames & Hudson. 35s.

Saxon and Norsemen forbears—is sparse in the extreme. Mr Brian Branston's fascinating efforts to reconstruct them in a companion volume are inevitably limited to ingenious inferences and speculations.<sup>6</sup> Less inevitable is his filling of the gaps in factual information with a romantic nostalgia for his picture of our heathen past, and with gibes at Christianity, concerning which he seems singularly ill-informed.

René Guénon's *Symbolism of the Cross*<sup>7</sup> is metaphysical (in his own meaning of that word) rather than factual: the facts concerning this most universal of archetypes are here employed as illustrations to serve his own meditations on its manifold significance. It is perhaps his shortest, but also his most important, book: less smugly superior than some of the others, but hardly less didactic and pompous. But it suggests important amplifications to the understanding of quaternary symbols, to which the Jungians have already given much attention.

Mr F. C. Happold's *Adventure in Search of a Creed*<sup>8</sup> may make little appeal to those who already have one, and may perhaps seem to them somewhat dilettante. But they should not neglect it, for it bears further testimony to the possibilities of the rediscovery of the meaningfulness of Christian faith and practice through the psychologists' investigations into the archetypes.

But many psychologists themselves are often deterred from taking the archetypes seriously on account of the seeming vagueness and imprecision in Jung's own treatment of them, and the esoteric aura with which some of his followers have enshrouded them. This state of affairs Dr Michael Fordham, and others of the London Society of Analytical Psychology, are determined to remedy. Dr Fordham has soon followed his *New Developments in Analytical Psychology*<sup>9</sup> with a further volume of essays<sup>10</sup> which 'reveal his distaste for esoteric tendencies' and 'emphasize the need for more careful analysis of concepts'. In this, the concepts of the objective psyche (*née* the collective unconscious), of individuation and of active imagination receive special attention—that of the archetypes generally was analysed in the earlier

6 *The Lost Gods of England*, by Brian Branston, pp. 194. Thames & Hudson. 25s.

7 *Symbolism of the Cross*, by René Guénon, translated by Agnus Macnab, pp. xiv-134. Luzac & Co. 21s.

8 *Adventure in Search of a Creed*, by F. C. Happold, pp. 219. Faber & Faber. 15s.

9 *New Developments in Analytical Psychology*, by Michael Fordham, M.D., M.R.C.P., F.B.Ps.S., Foreword by C. G. Jung, pp. xiv-214. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 25s.

10 *The Objective Psyche*, by Michael Fordham, vii-214. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 25s.

volume. He welcomes and invites controversy. But he can hardly be gainsaid when he maintains that 'the concept of the collective unconscious has made a considerable impact on religious thought and has added a new facet to the study of religious experience'. He resists the attempts, which he associates especially with Père Hostie and 'Catholic theologians', to set arbitrary limits to psychological inquiry in the field of religion and theology; but he does not remark that there are psychiatrists who are even more eager to establish such boundaries—boundaries which are as difficult to maintain theologically as they are in the light of the empirical data. Two of the essays in this book are occupied with a controversy with Fr Oswald Sumner who defends a very vulnerable position of his own choosing, but here has no chance to reply with further shots.

Psychologists who may be weary of trying to tidy up their own conceptual tools may hope from help from the professional linguistic philosophers and seize eagerly upon Dr A. C. MacIntyre's *The Unconscious: A Conceptual Study*<sup>11</sup>; but we fear they will be disappointed. His rejection of the view that 'a thorough and successful psycho-analysis is a necessary prerequisite for understanding psychoanalytic doctrine' is fair enough. But a psychological concept, and notably that of the unconscious, is a contrivance to do a job,<sup>12</sup> and criticism of it demands acquaintance with the job it is required to do and the material it is used to handle. To be of any use, beyond that of delight in verbal analysis for its own sake, such criticism must keep pace with developments in the work, and not ascribe priority to obsolete constructions. It should also take account of the criticisms which the tool-users themselves have already made of their own tools, and of the modifications which they have introduced into them. The author has unfortunately taken few of these precautions; though he offers some interesting criticism of Freud, tempered with profound but unanalysed respect.

<sup>11</sup> *The Unconscious: A Conceptual Study*, by A. C. MacIntyre, pp. ix-100. Studies in Philosophical Psychology. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 11s. 6d.

<sup>12</sup> See L. Stein, 'Analytical Psychology: a "Modern" Science', *The Journal of Analytical Psychology*, iii.1, Jan. 1958, pp. 43 ff.