

Jung and ethics: a conceptual exploration

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SUMMARY

Despite Jung's frequent claims that one's moral and ethical stance play an important role both in the development and in the cure of neurosis, Jung's ethical position had not been subjected to a critical assessment and the main sources of his ethical outlook had not been investigated.

I take my point of departure in Jung's definition of ethics as involving both consciousness and the unconscious. In the first chapter, Kant's argument for the primacy of practical reason is shown to ground Jung's conviction of the decisive freedom of the ego. Jung's insistence on the importance of the moral development of both patient and therapist is also related to Kant's call for moral independence. Having elucidated Jung's understanding of conflicts of duty – the existence of which was denied by Kant – I discuss Jung's Nietzschean legacy. I argue that Jung derives the crucial distinction between ethics and morality from Nietzsche, as well as the idea that ethics must consider the irrational and unintentional side of the Self; I also consider how Jung's application of the 'health criterion' to ethics differs from Nietzsche's utilisation of the same device. In Chapter 3, I highlight the critical convergence between Aristotle's approach to ethics and Jung's psycho-ethical paradigm: while both stress the importance of acquiring a balance between reason and the passions and place wisdom at centre stage, Jung adds that psychotherapy can successfully integrate 'unconscious vice'. In the fourth chapter, I examine the (heterodox) Christian side of Jung's ethics. Here I assess the role played by the psychologically 'heavy' notion of evil in Jung's model and analyse the often-misunderstood link between evil and the Shadow.

In Jung's psychology, the individuated subject is the ethical subject, so depth psychology and ethics converge towards the same goal and can be mutually supportive endeavours.

NOTE ON REFERENCING

Jung

Quotes from Jung's *Collected Works* are cited by original date of publication and paragraph. Quotes from works of Jung not included in the *Collected Works* are cited by date and page number.

Kant

I have consulted Kant's work in the translations published by Cambridge University Press (Kant 1998; Kant 2008) and Oxford University Press (Kant 2007). Quotes from Kant are followed, in square brackets, by abbreviation of the German title (see below), volume and page number in the German critical edition (*Immanuel Kants Schriften*. Ausgabe der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1902–). For example: Kant 2008: 94 [G 4:446].

Abbreviation of Kant's works:

G *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785) [*Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*] (in Kant 2008)

KpV *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (1788) [*Critique of practical reason*] (in Kant 2008)

KrV *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781, 1787) [*Critique of pure reason*] (in Kant 1998)

KU *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) [*Critique of Judgement*] (in Kant 2007)

MS *Metaphysik der Sitten* (1797–8) [*Metaphysics of morals*] (in Kant 2008)

R *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* (1793–4) [*Religion within the boundaries of mere reason*]

VOR *Vorlesungen über Psychologie* (published posthumously) [*Lessons on psychology*]

VRL *Über ein vermeintes Recht aus Menschenliebe zu lügen* [*On a supposed right to*

lie from philanthropy] (in Kant 2008)

WA Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung? (1784) [*An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?*] (in Kant 2008)

Nietzsche

Quotes from Nietzsche are followed, in square brackets, by abbreviation of the English title (see below) and section. In the case of *Zarathustra*, *Ecce Homo* and *Twilight of the Idols*, English titles of sections and subsection numbers are also included, when relevant, for example: Nietzsche 2008: 153 [Z III ‘On the Spirit of Gravity’, I]

Abbreviations of Nietzsche’s works:

AC The Anti-Christ (Der Anti-Christ, 1888)

BGE Beyond Good and Evil (Jenseits von Gut und Böse, 1886)

BT The Birth of Tragedy (Die Geburt der Tragödie, 1872)

D Daybreak (Morgenröthe, 1881)

EH Ecce Homo (Ecce Homo, 1888)

GM (I-IV) The Genealogy of Morals (Zur Genealogie der Moral, 1887)

GS The Gay Science (Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, 1882)

HA Human, All Too Human (Menschliches, Allzumenschliches, 1878)

TI Twilight of the Idols (Götzen-Dämmerung, 1888)

Z (I-IV) Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Also sprach Zarathustra, 1883–1885)

Aristotle

Since I only quote from *The Nicomachean Ethics* (standardly abbreviated *NE*), I omit *NE* and cite book (in Roman numbers), chapter, and Bekker number, for example: X.8.1178a9-10. To facilitate the reader, Bekker numbers are quoted referring to their position in David Ross’s translation (revised by Lesley Brown, 2009), not to their position in the original Greek text. I quote from this translation if not otherwise

specified. When relevant, I include my transliteration of the Greek (taken from Mazzarelli's bilingual edition of 2011).

Bible

I provide references to the Jewish or Christian scriptures in the conventional format: book (abbreviated), chapter and verse (separated by a colon). If not otherwise specified, I quote translations from the King James Bible.

INTRODUCTION

I do not enjoy philosophical arguments
that amuse by their own complications.

(Jung 1938/1940: 68)

It is rarely the case that the degree to which
every clinical encounter is simultaneously
an ethical and moral one gets appreciated.

(Peter Lomas)

Readers of Carl Gustav Jung's *Collected Works* should be struck by the contrast between the following statements, both from the same 8-page 'Foreword' to Eric Neumann's *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*¹. The first statement: 'It is only as an empiricist, and never as a philosopher, that I have been concerned with depth psychology, and cannot boast of ever having tried my hand at formulating ethical principles' (Jung 1949: 1408). The second statement: 'The union of conscious and unconscious in the individuation process, *the real core of the ethical problem*, was projected in the form of a drama of redemption and, in some Gnostic systems, consisted in the demiurge's discovery of the highest god' (Jung 1949: 1419; italics in the original). In the first paragraph, Jung denies a philosophical status to depth psychology, describing it as an empirical science, and claims an unwillingness to set down any ethical principle. In the second, he describes the union of consciousness and of the unconscious as 'the core' of the ethical problem. One must concede that to claim that something – in this case 'the union of conscious and unconscious' – is the core of 'the ethical problem' (which Jung does not define) is not to provide a clear ethical *principle*,

¹ Neumann's book, in German, was first published in 1949 and subsequently translated and published in English (1969, from which I quote). The 'Foreword' was written by Jung in 1949 for an English edition of the book which did not then materialise (Neumann 1969: 11) and is now included in Volume 18 of the *Collected Works*, from which I quote.

something easy to follow (not to say that ethical principles are usually easy to follow). Still, Jung is telling his readers who are interested in solving the ethical problem, where to start looking: towards depth psychology. And to readers who are interested in the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious, Jung is suggesting that we look at this relationship as something pertaining to ethics.

Ethics, in however many ways one may conceive it, is usually expected to be a form of enquiry that can provide some kind of guidance, or rule, or principle, about how to live. Depth psychology, on the other hand, is a practice concerned with understanding the complex relationships between consciousness and the unconscious. Jung describes the unconscious, which is made of individual and collective (i.e. common to many) elements and processes, as a ‘natural entity which, as far as moral sense, aesthetic taste, and intellectual judgement go, is completely neutral’ (Jung 1934b: 239). Unconscious psychic contents *are* related to the ego (the centre of consciousness) and produce effects on our conscious life (this is the central psychoanalytic hypothesis), but they ‘are not perceived as such’ (Jung 1921: 700). On the other hand, thoughts, feelings, sensations and intuitions are conscious when and if they are ‘perceived as such by the ego’ (Jung 1921: 700). According to Jung, our Self, which is what we *objectively* are, begins its existence in a state of total unconsciousness, but gradually we become aware of parts of it and ego-consciousness (*subjectivity*) is born.² Jung, by telling us to consider the union of conscious and unconscious as the core of the ethical problem, seems to have in mind a region where the scope of ethics and depth psychology intersect, and where a solution to the problem(s) of ethics and of depth psychology may be found. It is this

² This movement towards consciousness, which for Jung is of central importance, does not exclude that psychic contents also return to a state of unconsciousness through repression, suppression, distraction, forgetting. See Glossary for a general picture of Jung’s conceptual tools.

region that I wish to explore in my work.

In ‘Psychotherapy and a Philosophy of Life’, written six years before the Forward to Neumann's work, Jung had made the following remark, which is both an exhortation and a confession:

I can hardly draw a veil over the fact that we psychotherapists ought really to be philosophers or philosophic doctors – or rather that *we already are so*, though we are unwilling to admit it because of the glaring *contrast* between our work and what passes for philosophy in the universities.

(Jung 1943b: 181, my italics)

Here Jung first states that psychotherapists ‘ought to’ be philosophers³ or ‘philosophic doctors’ and then that ‘[they] already are so’; secondly, he claims that the philosophical nature of psychotherapy is obscured by the contrast between academic philosophy and the philosophy that takes place in the analytic setting. This dense passage on the relationship between *philosophy* and (depth-psychological) psychotherapy, can help clarify the contrast I discussed above. Perhaps Jung sees *ethics*, which is generally considered a branch of philosophy, as both a philosophical-academic task (which he is unwilling to undertake) and as something to be tackled with new tools; something, in fact, which is already being tackled with new tools.⁴

3 Jung himself compared analysis to the ‘Socratic method’, although the former, Jung added, ‘penetrates to far greater depths’ – Jung 1917/1928/1943: 26). Jung writes that ‘[i]t is only to be expected that for certain people who have adopted a certain pose towards themselves, in which they violently believe, psychoanalysis is a veritable torture’ (ibid.) Recall Alcibiades’s outburst in the *Symposium*, when he exclaims that Socrates is the only man who made him ashamed of himself.

4 John Cottingham suggests some of the reasons why *philosophers* may be suspicious of the ethical dimension of psychoanalysis: ‘It is anathema to the philosopher to hand over the search for wisdom and fulfilment to a white-coated expert. Not only does the modern Protestant soul revolt against this implied submission to a new secular priesthood; beyond that, the whole philosophical project, as conceived from Socrates through Descartes and on downwards, seems threatened if our autonomous authority to search for truth is entrusted to another’s care’ (Cottingham 1998: 151). He notes that in Jung’s fourth phase of analysis, transformation, ‘the very division between patient and doctor, between ‘learner’ and ‘expert’, is eroded away’ (ibid.) and that what is discussed in the setting is nothing less than ‘how to live our lives in the way that is truest to our human nature’ (Cottingham 1998: 152), in other words that the final goal of depth psychology coincides with the goal of ethics. (I return to these issues throughout my work, in particular in Section 1.3.)

‘The core of the ethical problem’, Jung writes, ‘is the union of conscious and unconscious’. The methodological problem that this statement generates is that our understanding of what is ethical and of what is an ethical problem – which we expect from ethicists – changes if we relate it to the idea of a union or relationship of consciousness and of the unconscious. Conversely, our understanding of the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious – which we expect from depth psychologists – changes if we relate it the domain of ethics. So to understand Jung’s statement one needs the tools of (Jungian, but perhaps not only Jungian) depth psychology and of (philosophical) ethics. To merely apply one discipline to understand the other, or to reduce one discipline to the other, would probably not allow us to find the ‘core’ Jung is pointing at.

In my work I explore the intersection of Jungian depth psychology and ethics and show how depth psychology and ethics may mutually illuminate each other. My main argument is that Jung’s psychology can be read, amongst other legitimate interpretations of his work, as a consistent and complex psycho-ethical paradigm. I also argue that Jung was only partly aware of this fact. Jung was better at conquering new territories than at administrating the territories he had already conquered, so in my work I try to administer the land of Jungian psychology using not only the tools of depth psychology but also those of philosophy, hopefully without stifling the movement of thought which is characteristic of Jung’s prose. As I will show, Jung appears at times a bit careless in his use of technical terms and his style poses problems to the interpreter: still, behind the clouds of his sometimes erratic discourse, stands a picture of the ethical life which merits our attention as such, especially because, as I will discuss, it is not a

separate addition to his psychological model, but an integral part of. In trying to describe this picture, my modest contribution is offered to those Jungian scholars and Jungian analysts who do not look at philosophical clarification with too much suspicion; although unfortunately the rather aggressive stance towards psychoanalysis of most philosophers is bound to raise some defences.

While exploring Jung's psycho-ethical model, and the conceptual tools that he derives from a diversity of ethical traditions, I have realised that he succeeds in providing an integration of some of the most important ethical models of the Western tradition, which are usually considered to be quite incompatible, especially when looked at as opposing '-isms' (e.g. 'Kant's universalism vs Nietzsche's perspectivism'). Jung's approach, in which both consciousness and the unconscious have a crucial function, allows us to realise that perhaps these models are not incompatible after all: Kant's moral stance, if applied to one's consciousness, can coexist with Nietzsche's amoral and immoral stance, since this may be seen as describing the contribution to an ethical life provided by the unconscious dimension of our psyche. Aristotle's balanced and realistic approach towards the passions, on the other hand, could be read, in Jungian terms, as an integrating device between excessive one-sidedness; and a Christian approach to ethics, with its stress on redemption, evil, and on recognising one's limits (which is not wholly incompatible with an Aristotelian view), may counter-balance Kantian and Nietzschean gestures towards inflation. So Jung's translation of ethical ideas into his psycho-ethical paradigm (Jungian psychology) is a highly original way of integrating some of the most important ideas of our ethical tradition, as well as providing a bridge between opposing '-isms'. From this point of view, my research may also be of some interest to those philosophers who may be open to receive some

ideas in their understanding of ethics from a depth psychologist such as Jung; although unfortunately Jung did little, in terms of public relations, to be favourably received by philosophers.

Jung believed that ethics and morality had a fundamental role both in the *development*, [see quote (a)], and in the cure [see quotes (b) and (c)] of neurosis:

(a) The chief causes of a neurosis are conflicts of conscience and difficult moral problems that require an answer.

(Jung 1949: 1408).

(b) He who does not possess this moral function, this loyalty to himself, will never get rid of his neurosis [...] Neither the doctor nor the patient, therefore, should let himself slip into the belief that analysis by itself is sufficient to remove a neurosis.

(Jung 1916b: 497; my italics)⁵

(c) the treatment of neurosis is not, in the last resort, a technical problem but a moral one. There are, admittedly, interim solutions that are technical, but they never result in the kind of ethical attitude that could be described as the real cure [...] the integration of the personality is unthinkable without the responsible, and that means moral, relation to the parts with one another.

(Jung 1949: 1412)

These quotes show how an understanding of Jung's ethical position is crucial to obtain an understanding of his psychological and therapeutic paradigm as a whole. Furthermore, the passages I have quoted exemplify how Jung is inconsistent in his use of the words 'ethical' and 'moral' (and other related terms), at least until a very late

⁵ Jung expresses a thought that can already be found in Freud: 'I reproached Irma for not having accepted my solution [...] It was my view at that time (though I have since recognized it is a wrong one) that my task was fulfilled when I had informed a patient of the hidden meaning of his symptoms: I considered that I was not responsible for whether he accepted the solution or not – though this was what success depended on. I owe it to this mistake, which I have now fortunately corrected' (Freud 2001a: 108).

paper of 1958 ('A Psychological View of Conscience'), which he arguably wrote to clarify some of the inconsistencies in his previous writing. So a conceptual clarification of Jung's use of ethical vocabulary is a necessary part of our research.

As the Jungian author John Beebe has written,

[a]s a student of Jung, equipped with a conceptual language that includes notions of personal shadow, archetypal shadow, and absolute evil, as well as ego, Self, and conscience, I can be lulled into thinking I understand this ethical territory better than I do.

(Beebe 1992: 22)

Indeed, a superficial understanding of Jung's psychological and ethical position, like any badly digested world view, can be misleading, and can prevent a genuine critique of his work. For example, Jung's concept of individuation may become an excuse to focus exclusively on ourselves, perhaps manipulating others; or his insistence on the need to acknowledge one's Shadow could be read as an injunction to let go of all moral restraints. Other Jungians may instead develop a moralistic approach towards life. Some of these problems can be avoided if we approach them systematically, and consider Jung's ethics as an integral part of his psychological system, perhaps even as its 'core'.

The first issue which arises when tackling Jung's ethics is to determine who is 'the agent' he is addressing: is it the ego, the centre of consciousness, or is it the Self, our whole personality which includes the conscious ego but also a vast amount of unconsciousness? In my conceptual clarification of Jung's answer to this question, which I discuss in the four core chapters of my work, it appears that the ego is the carrier of a *moral* or *immoral* vision of the world; and that the Self develops, thanks to the evolution and consolidation of ego-consciousness, from an *amoral* stance to an

ethical one, which does not discard morality (or immorality), but which transcends it. In Jungian terms, the union of consciousness and of the unconscious is the dialogue of one-sided morality (in which the collective absorbs the individual) or one-sided immorality (in which the individual fights against the collective) with unconscious amorality: this dialogue, which allows an overcoming of positions which are ultimately against the development of one's life and personality,⁶ is the condition and the goal of what Jung calls an ethical outlook on life.⁷

In Chapter 1, I explore Jung's Kantian legacy, and show how Jung derives his insistence on the moral duty to be conscious from Kant's moral philosophy. I then consider, from a Kantian angle, Jung's famous statements about the ethical stance of the therapist; and assess other points of convergence – and some important divergences – between the two authors. In the final section of the chapter, I tackle an issue which is pivotal to understand Jung's ethical stance: conflicts of duty. To appreciate the originality of Jung's contribution, I place my discussion within the broad framework of the contemporary discussion on moral dilemmas.

In the second Chapter, I ask if Jung's ethical outlook can be considered Nietzschean. The answer to this question is 'yes' (in many important respects) and 'no' (in some important respects). The 'yes' and the 'no' do not cancel each other out, nor does one answer diminish the power of the other. Jung says a strong 'yes' to Nietzsche's proposal

⁶ Cf Section 2.3.

⁷ In Jung's *Answer to Job* (1952) this psychological and ethical movement is described in a symbolic form: Job transcends his one-sided *moral* consciousness and Yahweh descends from unconscious *amorality*. These two movements converge, from opposite starting points, towards the *ethical* stage of the Holy Ghost. Satan's *immoral* intervention, which sets the story off, can be read as an unconscious compensation to Job's one-sidedness (the products of the unconscious appear immoral when consciousness is too moral). Cf section 4.3., *infra*.

of a new ethical outlook based on the notions of health and life enhancement, and another strong ‘yes’ to Nietzsche’s stress on the need for an ethical outlook which stays true to the individual and irrational elements of each evolving personality, and which does not efface the role of joy, suffering and creativity in shaping a good life. His ‘no’ is to an interpretation of Nietzsche’s call to go ‘beyond good and evil’ which reads it as a justification for venting one’s strength at the expense of others. I have written ‘as a justification’, since Jung does not deny that there are times – quite often crucial times – when self-love will, and must, inevitably lead to selfishness.

Having explored Jung’s debt to Kant and Nietzsche, in Chapter 3 I take a fresh start, and compare Jung’s ethical position with Aristotle’s. The guiding question here is: ‘given that both Jung and Aristotle are concerned with the development of an ethical character, how could a collaboration between the two authors be envisaged?’ Having sketched out the key concepts of Aristotle’s ethical theory, I seek a Jungian translation of these concepts. Where no translation or common ground is found, I fill in the missing spaces. In the last section, I look at some modern broadly speaking neo-Aristotelian thinkers, notably Anscombe and MacIntyre, and consider if and how virtue ethics and Jungian depth psychology could provide each other with conceptual and indeed therapeutic tools to tackle some problematic areas in their respective fields.

The final chapter of my work looks at Jung’s understanding of evil and at the related concept of the Shadow. Here I have tried to place Jung’s understanding of evil within his psycho-ethical paradigm. I first consider Jung’s bold rejection of Augustinian and post-Augustinian theodicy, through the establishment of a logical, ontological and psychological – but not moral – equivalence between good and evil. I then analyze the

import of Jung's repositioning of the philosophical categories of evil (and good) *in anima*, hence within the field of psychology. Furthermore, I critically assess Jung's psychological and hermeneutic interpretation of the Christian notions of sin and redemption (which are generally considered to be instances, respectively, of evil and good). Finally, I discuss Jung's notion of the Shadow, his most original contribution to the psychology of evil, but not an attempt to replace the latter notion with the former.

Jung's proposal of an integrated ('both / and') ethical approach is based on maintaining a relationship of consciousness and the unconscious: this produces *and* is the result of (self-)knowledge, authenticity, creativity, psychic health; if either consciousness or the unconscious take the lead, this produces *and* is the result of self-division, unconscious dilemmas and moralist, immoralist or amoral behaviour: the hermeneutic circle between psychological development and an ethical outlook on life runs through the whole of Jung's *opus*.

In my work I do not conduct a systematic comparison of Jung's ethical position with Freud's⁸ or with the ethical views of other depth psychological schools. In tackling Jung's debt to Kant and Nietzsche, and Jung's Aristotelian and Christian sides, I rarely discuss '-isms' (e.g. 'consequentialism', 'relativism'). Also, I have not undertaken an assessment of Jung's place within the field of meta-ethics, since this would have required a work of its own. For a general conceptual orientation within the field of analytical psychology and ethics, I refer the reader to the glossary of terms.

⁸ I touch upon Freud's ethics, and the ethics of psychoanalysis, in the literature review that follows. In Section 1.3. I mention Freud's notion of transference; in Section 2.1. I refer to Freud's 'medicalisation' of the unconscious; in Section 2.3. I discuss Freud's notion of the repression of immoral drives in the context of my analysis of Jung's dialogue with Nietzsche.

My interpretation of Jung's ethical position is conducted on the primary (albeit translated) work of Jung himself and on the primary (albeit translated) work of the authors who I consider to be the main sources of Jung's ethical outlook. In the following literature review, I begin by looking at some work which has been conducted on Freud's ethical position, selected because of its eminently conceptual approach, which has provided a term of comparison for my own research, and because it raises issues which have also been central to my work. I then discuss various authors who have considered the topic of Jung and ethics from different angles.

On Freudian psychoanalysis and ethics

One of the guiding intuitions of my work has been that Jung is capable of capturing *both* the mutual influence of psychic health and ethics *and* the tension between them. The mutual influence consists in the fact that psychic health is necessary for the full development of a mature ethical position, but – circularly – the development of a strong ethical stance is also an important factor of our psychic health. One side of the tension between psychic health and ethics is well summarised by Philip Rieff⁹ when he writes that '[A] man can be made healthier without being made better - rather, morally worse. Not the good life but better living is the therapeutic standard (Rieff 1966: 58). Conversely, our morality can develop at the expense of our psychic health. According to Rieff, Freud's answer to this last state of affairs is: 'survive, resign yourself to living within your moral means, suffer no gratuitous failures in a gratuitous search for ethical

⁹ Rieff, as Edward Harcourt puts it, is mainly interested in Freud's 'ethic of honesty,' which he discusses in *Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer* (1960) and in *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (1966). Rieff describes the difficulties in committing to the 'analytic attitude' (Rieff 1966: 29) advocated by Freud and points out how '[it] demands a rare skill: to entertain multiple perspectives upon oneself, and even upon beloved others' (Rieff 1966: 51). If one is capable of such a 'fluidity of commitment', one may be said to have acquired 'psychological manhood' (ibid.) and to possess a 'new science of moral management'. Rieff's endorsement of what he sees as the scientific neutrality of Freudian psychoanalysis is followed, in his 1966 book, by his critique of Jung's version of depth psychology, which I will look at in the following section.

heights that no longer exist - if they ever did' (Rieff 1966: 58). Jung's answer, in my interpretation of his work, is that 'ethical heights' do exist and can be sought without damaging our psychic health, if we maintain a relationship between consciousness and the unconscious, and if we let both morality and ethics play their part. Overall, Jung has an optimistic vision of life and of its possibilities.

On 'Freud and ethics' looked at from the side of philosophy, Donald Abel argues that 'Freud's final instinct classification schema [...] leads to no clear-cut moral theory' but that 'the general tone implied by this schema remains one of individualistic hedonism' (Abel 1989: 88).¹⁰ It would be difficult to define 'the general tone' of Jung's model – if not, perhaps, as possessing an optimistic outlook – since it is characterized by a complex depth-psychological integration of Kantian, Nietzschean, Aristotelian and Christian themes. An ethical assessment of Freud's psychology and meta-psychology can also be found Antonio Lambertino's *Psicoanalisi e Morale in Freud* ['Psychoanalysis and Morality in Freud', 1987]. Lambertino's book considers Freud's philosophical sources, and tries to tease out a coherent moral theory from the Freudian corpus, suggesting that Freud's stance could be defined a 'morality of the ego' (Lambertino 1987: 365), which I think is a fair assessment of his position. So Jung's insistence that ethics cannot be based on the ego alone can be read as a direct answer to Freud.

In *Psychoanalysis and Ethics* (1994) Ernest Wallwork discusses why a (depth)

¹⁰ The author adds that 'the notion of communitarian Eros has certain nonindividualistic and nonhedonistic implications, and the death instinct is nonhedonistic' (Abel 1989: 88). Jung would probably agree with Abel's characterization of Freud's ethical stance as mainly hedonistic: Jung sees Freud's ethics as an ethics of eros, which he sees as complementary to Adler's ethics of power (Jung 1917/1926/1943).

psychological theory is ‘relevant ethically’ (Wallwork 1994: 5). Some of these reasons are that:

- 1) it [a depth psychological theory] may ‘bring into question the very possibility of being moral – for example by undermining moral responsibility with a doctrine of determinism [...]’ [an issue also discussed by Lambertino]
- 2) ‘[E]ven if morality as such is not undermined, psychological findings may indicate the impossibility – or extreme difficulty – of following some specific moral requirement, thereby negating its reasonableness as a guide to action on “ought implies can” grounds.’
- 3) It may ‘reveal hidden unconscious consequences of attempting to follow traditional principles or rules. For example, it may be shown that trying to act on the basis of a generally accepted rule or principle is ultimately self-defeating or exceptionally costly in terms of other moral principles, like non-injury to self or others.’
- 4) It may ‘help to expand our understanding of the nature of moral decision-making’ and ‘may thus be helpful in devising practical strategies for avoiding [...] irrational distortions and the disjunctions that sometimes occur between intentions and actions.’

(all quotes from Wallwork 1994: 5)

I tackle points (1) and (2) in Chapter 1, where I touch upon the debate between free will and determinism by teasing out Jung’s Kantian legacy. I discuss point (3) throughout my work, especially in Chapter 2, where I highlight the tension between morality and health in Jung’s thought. The fourth issue mentioned by Wallwork is also pertinent to my work: in Section 1.5 I look at Jung’s critique of Kant’s idea of the transparency of intentions; in Section 2.1. I consider the notion of virtuous unintentional actions; in Chapter 4 I consider ‘moral decision-making’ in the context of my discussion of the Jung / Aristotle interface.

In a recent article about ‘the place of psychoanalysis in the history of ethics’, Edward Harcourt (2013b) argues that psychoanalysis does indeed have a place in ‘the great tradition’ of ethics concerned with investigating the relationship between ‘human nature, the good life for man, and human goodness’ (Harcourt 2013b: 3). In his paper

Harcourt convincingly shows how both Freudian and ‘relational’ psychoanalysis tackle, in different ways, these ethical problems, so that they can be considered ‘a continuation of the ‘great tradition’¹¹ under another name’ (Harcourt 2013b: 9)¹². He also discusses why the confluence of scope of psychoanalysis and ethics has ‘so often been overlooked’ (Harcourt 2013b: 2), which is an important question in itself. The author thinks that one reason why psychoanalysts have not wanted to see themselves as part of moral philosophy is that ‘morality tended for most of the twentieth century to be theorized as a set of prohibitions and commands’ (Harcourt 2013b: 6), while ‘if there is an ethical dimension to psychoanalysis, it more obviously concerns not the search for a criterion of right action or its meta-ethical standing but *how one should live* or the *good life for man*’ (Harcourt 2013b: 6, my italics). To this regard, in Chapter 3 I analyse Jung’s critique of normative moral philosophy and the convergence of scope between Jung's work and virtue ethics.

The second reason why most scholars have ignored what psychoanalysis and ethics have in common, ‘connects with the long-standing aspiration of psychoanalysis to be ‘value-free’’ (Harcourt 2013b: 6), a ‘commitment to tolerance [...] based [...] not on the value of tolerance but on the supposedly shaky credentials of morality’ (Harcourt 2013b: 7). Taking into account both these explanations, Harcourt finds that ‘Freud’s work is pervaded both by doubts about the credentials of morality and by a narrow construction of morality as a set of prohibitions and commands’ (Harcourt 2013b: 8).

11 As Harcourt points out, this tradition is ‘hard to pigeonhole – it overlaps ‘axiology’ (the theory of the good) and moral psychology’ (ibid.), and aspects of what is usually classified as ‘virtue ethics’. According to Harcourt, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hume, Mill, Nietzsche, and Bradley all belong to this same tradition.

12 Harcourt adds the important disclaimer that ‘[t]o say that psychoanalysis has a place in the history of ethics’, and therefore ‘*is* ethics’, is not to say that it is ‘only philosophy, or even that that part of it which is philosophy is only moral philosophy: if psychoanalysis is in part philosophy at all, then some of it is surely philosophy of mind’ (Harcourt 2013b: 4).

Jung shares Freud and Nietzsche's doubts about the 'credentials' of traditional morality (as I discuss in Chapter 2). However, Jung's critique of morality is the premise for his proposal of a more depth-psychologically healthy conception of morality which, in his mature work, he defines as ethics.

Having considered Freud's distrust of morality, Harcourt asks why philosophers (with some notable exceptions, such as Wolheim and Lear) have also failed to acknowledge the kind of ethical question psychoanalysis raises. The author comments that '[I]t is as if psychoanalysis had hung up a sign outside its door saying 'no ethics here' and philosophy, for once in its life, had taken somebody's word for it' (Harcourt 2013b: 9). My suspicion is that there may be another reason behind the general silence of both philosophers and psychoanalysts about the ethical relevance of depth psychology: each party may perceive the other as a threat.

Once they have noticed that psychoanalysis is, to a certain extent, a continuation (to paraphrase von Clausewitz) of ethics with other means, philosophers may resent the fact that depth psychologists are capable of taking over their leadership in ethical discussions, if not openly, *de facto*; and may envy the way psychoanalysts can tackle ethical questions in the setting using powerful conceptual tools such as 'repression', 'intellectualization', and 'idealization'. Psychoanalysts, on the other hand, may feel slightly guilty for having impinged on the ethicists' monopoly over ethical discussions. They may also feel unprepared to take over discussions that have been the daily bread of philosophers (and theologians) for centuries, and see their sometimes fuzzy¹³ conceptual tools as indeed powerful, but perhaps also less accurate than those used by

13 This fuzziness may be intrinsic to the fact that depth psychology takes into account the unconscious which is, to a great extent, un-definable.

philosophers. These considerations may help elucidate Jung's disclaimers about the complex overlapping of philosophy and ethics with analytical psychology.

Studies on various aspects of Jung's ethical position

I will now look at the work which has been done on the topic of 'Jung and ethics', which appears to have been less extensive and thorough than that conducted in the Freudian camp, which is perhaps due to the non-systematic nature of most of Jung's writing. Many have studied the topic of Jung and religion, and this may have shadowed his work on ethics.¹⁴ Still, the relative lack of specific studies on Jung's ethical position is quite surprising, given the pervasiveness of ethical themes throughout Jung's *Collected Works*.

Eric Neumann's aforementioned *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic* is a personal re-elaboration of Jung's ideas in an attempt to provide a coherent picture of Jungian ethics. Neumann's book was written nine years before Jung's paper of 1958 on conscience and conflicts of duty (which I analyse in Section 1.7), the only paper in which Jung explicitly tackles the theme of ethics as such, so it cannot be considered an assessment of Jung's position as a whole. However Neumann correctly highlights the link between Jung's ethics and *health*, the origins of which I trace in Jung's Nietzschean legacy: 'The principal requirement of the new ethic is not that the individual should be "good", but that he should be psychologically autonomous – that is to say, *healthy* and productive, and yet at the same time not psychologically *infectious*' (Neumann 1969: 102, my italics). On the ethical significance of psychic health in the individual, Neumann writes that the collective 'can better afford to dispense with creativity than allow itself to

¹⁴ I return to this issue at the beginning of Chapter 4.

become exposed to the unconscious *contagious* influence of unintegrated and, in that sense, psychologically *unhealthy* persons' (Neumann 1969: 103, my italics). These considerations facilitate our appreciation of Jung's understanding of ethics (as opposed to morality), however there is a passage in which Neumann makes a claim that is at odds with Jung's ideas. It is when he writes that

[e]vil done by anybody in a conscious way (and that always also implies full awareness of his own responsibility), evil, in fact, from which the agent does not try to escape – is ethically “good”

(Neumann 1969: 114).

This is in contrast with Jung's claim that knowledge of one's evil deed is *not* an excuse and does not make it less evil¹⁵ (Jung 1942/1948: 267; 1959: 868).¹⁶

The main guides to Jung's thought in English, *The Cambridge Companion to Jung* (2010) and *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology* (2006b) do not have specific sections devoted to Jung's ethical position; however the *Companion* mentions Jung's 'involvement with ethical and moral issues' (Douglas 2010: 26) and his debt to the moral philosophy of Schopenhauer, Hegel, and Kant. And the *Handbook*, in the section on Jung's epistemology and methodology, mentions Jung's Kantian emphasis on morality throughout the *Zofingia* lectures (Papadopoulos 2006a: 17, referring to Jung 1896–9). An older handbook to Jungian psychology in practice, *Jungian Analysis* (1997), has a brief chapter on 'Ethics' by Beverley D. Zabriskie where the author points out how 'Jung's bias against the 'formulaic, and the prescriptive' may have 'slowed the

15 I discuss this claim in Sections 2.3., with reference to Jung's criticism of Nietzsche's injunction to go 'beyond good and evil'; and in Section 4.2. when discussing Jung's conception of evil.

16 Knowing that this claim is in contrast with his emphasis on the value of consciousness, Jung adds that one must learn to think in paradoxes (Jung 1959: 868). Arguably Neumann, in trying to make sense of Jung's conceptions, forces them into a more rigid order.

attempt to achieve a consensus about the ethics of the *opus*' (Zabriskie 1997: 407) but also adds that a comprehensive study of Jung's ethical position is not a simple thing, 'given the scope and size of the mandate' (ibid.). The author then provides an overview of some of Jung's most important ethical positions and points out how a Jungian ethics

demands a perspective on self and other that is difficult and painful to maintain: an aware relationship to one's own "otherness," be it the ignorance that looms beneath knowledge, the shadow that attends the ego, the inner states that thrust projections on the outer, the unconscious which is forever larger than consciousness.

(Zabriskie 1997: 407)

She also mentions the ethical relevance of Jung's stress on enduring the tension of opposites (Zabriskie 1997: 410, quoting Jung 1959) and, *contra* Neumann, rightly highlights the fact that, for Jung, 'consciousness of what one is doing [does not] give *excuse*' to exit the moral order (Zabriskie 1997: 411, again quoting Jung 1959, my italics) – although she doesn't mention that for Jung it is sometimes necessary to do so nevertheless, as I will discuss in Chapter 2.

In *Jung and the Post-Jungians* (1985), Andrew Samuels, discussing Jung's stress on the personality of the analyst as being an important healing factor (cf Section 1.3.), writes that 'if personal integrity underpins analytical efficacy, and if strongly held convictions are part of personal integrity, it follows that *possession of a theory* is necessary for analytical efficacy' (Samuels 1985: 267, my italics). I agree with Samuels that this idea is implied by Jung and would stress that for Jung this is true especially for the *ethical* position held by an analyst, which is why Jungian analysts should always consider the complexity of Jung's ethical position and decide where they stand.

Samuels also tackles Jung's ideas on morality and ethics in his 1989 book *The Plural Psyche: Personality Morality and the Father*. In the Chapter on 'Original morality in a depressed culture' he looks at Jung's distinction between ethics and morality and claims that Jung's use of 'moral' and 'ethical' in relation to conscience is idiosyncratic and confusing (Samuels 1989: 197, referring to Jung's 1958 work which I discuss in 1.7.). He states: 'Given that ethics, as a branch of philosophy, concerns itself with justification, codification and assessment of moral principle, an 'ethical' conscience would suggest one more in tune with the values and norms of the day, the exact opposite of Jung's usage' (Samuels 1989: 197). Samuels definition of ethics as concerned with 'the values and norms of the day' is perhaps more apt to describe 'applied ethics': ethicists are not just concerned with codifying current moral principles (this may be the preoccupation of moralists). The real divergence between philosophical ethics and Jung's conception of ethics is that the latter stems, according to Jung, from a collaboration of consciousness and the (in part) 'eternal' unconscious. So Jung's conception of ethics is different from, but not 'the opposite' of the ethicist's.

Samuels also discusses Jung's statements found in *On the psychology of the unconscious* (1917/1928/1943: 30) where Jung claims that morality is innate.

Morality is not imposed from outside; we have it in ourselves from the start—not the law, but our moral nature without which the collective life of human society would be impossible.

This 'moral nature', in my interpretation of Jung's thought, could be read as the *potentiality* to develop moral consciousness. Samuels, instead, describes it as 'original morality', an inborn 'inflexible moral principle' (Samuels 2000: 3), placed on one side of the spectrum which he calls 'moral process' (ibid.). On the other side of the spectrum

he finds ‘moral imagination’. Samuels claims that they are both ‘archetypal’ (Samuels 1987: 195). Samuels describes the former as ‘fundamental, ineluctable’ (ibid.) and ‘inflexible’ (Samuels 2000: 4) and the latter as ‘generat[ing] tolerance, forgiveness, openness, and an ingenious approach to problems’ (Samuels 1987: 194).¹⁷ Samuels’ distinction somehow overlaps the one between morality and ethics which is found in Jung. Morality, as Jung uses the word, tends to be, like Samuels’ ‘original morality’, inflexible and one-sided, since it is only concerned with consciousness, although Jung also considers the possibility that it may be repressed. Genealogically its ‘inflexibility’ can be explained as a conscious reaction to the amoral power of the unconscious from which consciousness derives. However, as I discuss in Section 2.3, immorality can also be inflexible. Ethics is more in tune with the ambivalent aspects of our existence, since it relies heavily on the both/and approach which is typical of the unconscious. This ‘both/and’ character of ethics is close to the properties of ‘moral imagination’ described by Samuels, such as openness and forgiveness. Where Samuels sees ‘moral imagination’ as archetypal, I argue that Jung sees ethics as the result of a complex dialogue between consciousness and the unconscious, which it would be more difficult to term ‘archetypal’, unless the refined results of a process can be termed with the name of the original properties involved in the said process.

Samuels defines ‘original morality’ and ‘moral imagination’ as instances, respectively, of ‘perfection’ and ‘completeness’¹⁸. In my interpretation of Jung’s thought, morality should be associated with perfection, amorality with completeness, and ethics with the

¹⁷ It is possible to discern, behind the first, a Paternal principle, behind the second a Feminine principle, covering what today goes under the name of ‘ethics of care’ (sometimes seen as a branch of virtue ethics, since it’s focus is the virtue of love).

¹⁸ ‘To strive after *teleiosis* in the sense of perfection [Samuels (2000) quotes this passage and renders this first part: ‘Striving after moral perfection’] is not only legitimate but is inborn in man as a peculiarity which provides civilization with one of its strongest roots’ (Jung 1951: 123).

union of perfection and completeness. Samuels's opposition between original morality and moral imagination is a binary interpretation of Jung's ethical views. Such a binary reading is certainly legitimate, and has a more destabilising power, because it does not state what will stem from the opposition between original morality and moral imagination (to use Samuels' concepts) or between morality and amorality (to use my distinction). In many ways Jung was indeed a binary thinker, who showed the often hidden opposite of any given conception, and warned against one-sidedness. Still, I would point out that Jung, in his mature work (1958), saw ethics as a *tertium* produced by the opposition of morality and amorality, and describes 'ethical conscience' as a special instance of the transcendent function.

John Beebe's work, *Integrity in Depth*, explores the concept of 'integrity', which is closely related to Jung's notion of wholeness (or completeness), from a Jungian perspective:

Of the qualities we seek in ourselves and in each other, surely integrity is among the most important. One measure of our need for it may be that we rarely allow ourselves an examination of the concept itself. To do so would be to betray an unspoken philosophic, poetic, and psychological rule of our culture: not to disturb the mystery of what we desire most. Clarification would threaten integrity, a word we have used like a magic spell to protect what is purest in us from danger.

(Beebe 1992: 7)

Here Beebe touches upon the ineffability (and even numinous dimension) of ethics, which may be one of the reasons why Jung, at least until 1958, did not provide clear-cut definitions of what he meant by moral and ethical. Beebe's work also discusses the interplay of Logos-centred and Eros-centred ethical approaches (Beebe 1992: 39-52); and explores the notion of integrity typologically (Beebe 1992: 56, *passim*).

The psychotherapist Robert Aziz has investigated Jung's ethical model (Aziz 1990, Aziz 2007) and has also proposed a radical revision of it. His characterisation of Jung's ethics is close to my own assessment. Having pointed out that in Jung's model 'compensatory responses take place under the direction of the self', he adds that 'the self is regarded by Jung to be of questionable moral character' and that 'it is incumbent on the ego, not the self, to determine and maintain moral standards' (Aziz 2007: 77).¹⁹ Apart from his description of the self as being 'of questionable moral character', which I believe can sound misleadingly close to the idea of an 'immoral' self, his picture of the architecture of Jung's ethical model is well presented.

Aziz then proceeds to critique the Jungian Paradigm claiming that 'in spite of all stated ambitions to the contrary, [it] is merely a vehicle of aesthetic, rather than ethical, engagement with unfolding Reality' (Aziz 2007: 81). To avoid what he sees as the pitfalls of an 'inner-world orientation' (ibid.), his proposal is that personal integration via the 'encounter with nature's compensatory dynamics' (Aziz 2007: 79), should be sought not 'intrapsychically', as in Jung's model, but 'in nature in its entirety' (ibid.), since nature is 'intrinsic[ally] moral[...]' (Aziz 2007: 77), which Aziz is ready to prove via a rich series of dream material from his clinical work.

The notion of seeking harmony in 'nature in its entirety', and not just within ourselves, is a valid proposal. But I find it difficult to see how one could define nature as 'intrinsically moral'. Perhaps the natural world could be described as moral or ethical,

¹⁹ Samuels gives a similar characterisation of the ego's discriminating role, where he writes that the ego is 'concerned with action and ultimately with will power and free will' (Samuels 1985: 56-7). I discuss the role of the ego in Jung's ethics in Chapter 1.

but as far as the natural dimension of the unconscious Self is concerned, I would agree with Jung's characterisation of it as 'neutral' (Jung 1934b: 239). Jung noted that dreams (a natural phenomenon, or at least a phenomenon in which our natural dimension is most evident) 'lead astray as much as they exhort' and that the unconscious 'pronounces moral judgements with the same objectivity with which it produces immoral phantasies' (Jung 1958, both passages quoted in Proulx 1994: 111). What is key, I would argue, is the *positioning* of the ego: a dream may present the ego with material which hitherto escaped conscious awareness, and which will appear moral or immoral according to one's conscious moral/immoral stance; and again, as Aziz concedes, it is up to the ego to understand this material as best as possible. The meaning of a dream is not univocally imposed on us by the dream itself: what the dream gives us, has to be (carefully) made (clear) by us: just like the laws of nature are, to a certain extent, made by ourselves. In a letter to Mrs N. of 20 May 1940, Jung wrote that

[n]ature is an incomparable guide if you know *how* to follow her. She is like the needle of the compass pointing to the North, which is most useful when you have a good man-made ship and when you know how to navigate [...] The unconscious is useless without the human mind. It always seeks its collective purposes and never your individual destiny. Your destiny is the result of the collaboration between the conscious and the unconscious.

(Jung 1906-1950: 283, italics in the original)²⁰

If we relate this last statement to Jung's idea that 'the union of conscious and unconscious is the core of the ethical problem', we realise that for Jung ethics is humankind's 'destiny'.²¹ Jung frequently stresses the need to seek harmony between

20 An example of how experimental psychology can show the validity of some of Jung's insights is provided in a paper by Marten W. Boas (2008) where the author shows examples of how unconscious thought processes enhance performances only when the performance is consciously directed.

21 In 'The Ethics of Individuation, the Individuation of Ethics' (n.d.), Murray Stein writes, following Jung's approach, that 'the individual (especially the extraordinary individual) has the capacity to affect society and the cosmos (for good or ill) because the individual, society, and the cosmos are intimately

opposites: the inner and the outer; the unconscious and consciousness; the individual and the collective; masculinity and femininity; the East and the West; nature and culture.²²

The Jungian Edward Edinger doesn't mention ethics in his discussion of the ego-Self axis (Edinger 1992), but I would argue that the alignment (Jung himself uses this spatial metaphor)²³ and agreement (here ego and Self are personified) of ego and Self, their 'living connection' (Edinger 1992: 264, here the metaphor is biological), could be described not only as 'an ideal theoretical limit' (Edinger 1992: 261), but also as an ideal *ethical* limit. In this scenario, each and every action of the ego is in accord (a musical metaphor) with one's truest and deepest personality (the Self). The ego-Self could be conceived as both the 'subject' (agent) and the 'object' (product) of ethics; and this should not be surprising since for Jung the ego is the subjective psyche and the Self is the objective psyche, so their relationship is indeed 'a paradox', to quote the title of Edinger's paper. Ethical actions stem from the 'living connection' between ego and Self, and striving to be ethical produces this 'living connection'.

Giuseppe Maffei, the contributor to the section 'Le nevrosi' ['Neuroses'] of the *Trattato di Psicologia Analitica* ['*Treatise of Analytical Psychology*', 1992], discusses the relationship of Jung and philosophy and reviews Jung's linking of neurosis and ethics.

connected parts of a single unified reality [...] If an individual achieves harmony at a personal level – that is, finds a way to unite the psyche's opposites within and thereby approaches the goal of individuation, the self as *coincidentia oppositorum* – this brings order and harmony (Tao) as well to the surrounding social and natural worlds.' I discuss the relationship between individual and collective in Section 2.2.

²² A masterful discussion of the relationship of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology, read through the lens of the nature/culture interface, can be found in Trevi 2010. As early as 1913, Jung had stressed that culture and civilization are a fundamental part of our nature, so the only way to regain the sense of unity of an animal is through the work of civilization (Jung 1913: 556).

²³ Dino Perroni, personal communication.

He mentions that in many of Jung's clinical examples one can find a 'call to an ethical order' (Maffei 1992: 392, my translation)²⁴. Luigi Zoja, in his talks on *Ethics and Analysis* (2007), summarises Jung's ethical stance by saying that for Jung 'deep psychotherapeutic healing is an ethical act, and that every ethical act is indirectly therapeutic' (Zoja 2007: 4). In the same book he briefly mentions Aristotle and refers to Kant's categorical imperative as informing the analytic attitude. Nietzsche is not mentioned. I do not wish to single out Zoja as a negative example, and to be fair the book is eminently dedicated to discussing interesting clinical cases of violation of ethical boundaries, but his book is in line with the majority of books by Jungians where the words 'ethical' and 'moral' are mentioned rather carelessly, and not much effort is put into explaining *in what sense* they are used.

The scholar and analyst Mario Trevi tackles different aspects of Jung's (broadly conceived) ethical stance and in particular considers the topic of 'ethics of truth' in Jungian psychotherapy. Trevi analyses the double meaning of psychology as 'discourse *on* the psyche' and as 'discourse *of* the psyche' (Trevi 1986, *passim*), arguing that analysts should not be conceived as possessing the exclusive monopoly of the discourse *on* the psyche. Every analytic interpretation offered by a therapist is also a subjective confession: an utterance *of* the psyche of the therapist (which is why Jung suggested that analysts should be aware of their complexes by undergoing analysis themselves).²⁵ Patients can also put forward interpretations of the psyche (theirs and of their analyst) which are as valid as their analyst's. An awareness of this fact can defuse the risks of 'charismatic projections' (Trevi 2006: 66). I discuss the ethical dimension of the

²⁴ I discuss this in 3.2. and throughout.

²⁵ Trevi discusses the philosophical paradoxes of analytic supervision in 'Contraddittorietà della didattica junghiana' ['The contradictions of Jungian supervision', 2006], in Pieri (2006).

analyst/patient relationship in Section 1.3. and show how Kant can ground Trevi's – and Jung's – call for autonomous thought and feeling.²⁶

I have already mentioned Rieff's endorsement of Freudian psychoanalysis. Towards Jung his position is instead very critical. Rieff calls Jung's psychology a 'language of faith' (Rieff 1966:108) and his form of psychotherapy a 'commitment therap[y]' (Rieff 1966: 76). Rieff claims that commitment therapies

tend to take on a sacramental symbolism [...] It is the function of the sacralist to help both an individual and an entire community carry out their pledges to some communal purpose. In this sense the sacralist manages the artifacts that symbolize the cultural super-ego [...] The sacralist cures, therefore, by recalling the individual to some principle of legitimacy, by reinforcing, through sacramental action, the cultural super-ego, and by re-enacting its internalization [...] he speaks for the individual buried alive, as it were, in the culture.

(Rieff 1966: 76-77)

As a description of Jung's psychological model and therapeutic stance, Rieff's characterisation seems only partially accurate. As I will discuss in Section 2.2., it is true that Jung tries to help the individual serve 'some communal purpose', but Jung sees the community as constantly modified by (talented) individuals, so the idea of 'reinforcing [...] the cultural super-ego' sounds alien to the somewhat subversive nature of Jung's psycho-ethical model.

To my knowledge, the only *philosophers* who have looked at Jung's ethical position as a whole²⁷ are Carole Proulx (1994) and José Osvaldo de Meira Penna (1985).²⁸ In her

26 In a chapter of his 2006 book, Trevi characterises Jung's ethics as close to Weber's 'ethics of responsibility' (Trevi 2006: 39). On the notion of responsibility in Jung's paradigm see Section 2.3.

27 John Cottingham, discussed below, concentrates mainly on Jung's therapeutic method and the implications of this method for 'ratiocentric' moral philosophy.

28 De Meira Penna's work is discussed below in the sub-section On Jung, evil and ethics.

paper ‘On Jung’s Theory of Ethics’, Proulx discusses the place of ethics in Jung’s model; what she considers to be Jung’s ethical subjectivism; and Jung’s distinction between morality and ethics. Proulx rightly points out how Jung’s call for a new approach to ethics has remained, with the exclusion of Neumann’s work, largely unanswered²⁹. Proulx’s assessment of Jung’s ‘subjectivism’ is not particularly illuminating³⁰, but she makes the valid point that for Jung only the individuated person is allowed, so to speak, to hold a subjectivist stance (Proulx 1994: 106). For those who ‘find their place within a Church’, a subjectivist stance ‘would be catastrophic’ (ibid.). Proulx here is interpreting Jung as a ‘hard’ Nietzschean who endorses a strong divide between herd morality and master morality. To my mind, as I discuss in Chapter 2, Jung should instead be characterised as a ‘soft’ Nietzschean, because there is no clear indication that for Jung the process of individuation, in which a ‘subjectivist’ creation of values may take place, is barred to certain types of people, although this may be the case. In her paper Proulx also claims that, for Jung, ‘[t]he moral judgement stems not from individuals, but from the unconscious’, which I find inaccurate.³¹

Proulx points out how usually morality is used to mean the ‘socially accepted set of

29 ‘M.-L. von Franz’s books on evil and shadow, or Eleanor Bertine’s numerous papers on good and evil. [...] consisted in *illustrating* Jung’s theories. They examined fairy tales and myths within the framework of Jung’s theory, as if they were looking at them through a pair of Jungian glasses, thus showing how much therapeutic benefit and understanding could result by using such a device. This work did a lot to bring content and popularity to Jung’s notion of the shadow, but it did little to show that some Copernican revolution had fallen upon the ethical realm, and that there was a new and better way to look at the ethical problem’ (Proulx 1994: 102-103, my italics).

30 No definition of the meta-ethical categories of subjectivism, relativism, and nihilism is provided and she seems to use these words interchangeably. She also fails to trace a clear line between the ‘search for objective criteria by which to judge a person’s actions’ (Proulx 1994: 105), in other words *moral realism*, and ‘divine command theory’ (discussed on page 106), the latter being just *one* of different types of moral realism.

31 In the same section she writes that ‘Jung relativizes ethical judgements, but he does not relativize good and evil as such’ (Proulx 1994: 107), closely echoing Jung’s own words: ‘As a therapist I cannot, in any given case, deal with the problem of good and evil philosophically but can only approach it empirically. *But because I take an empirical attitude it does not mean that I relativize good and evil as such*’ (Jung 1958: 866, italics in the original).

rules or values' (Proulx 1994: 109), while ethics can mean two things: 'the specialist's theoretical reflection on morality' (ibid.) and 'the individual's capacity to question the accepted morality from the standpoint of what has been known as one's personal conscience' (ibid.). Proulx points out that Jung only uses 'ethical' in the second sense of the word (ibid.) 'with important modifications that require our attention, and that stress the initiative of the unconscious in all moral/ethical situations' (ibid.). This last point explains precisely *why* Jung's ethical enquiry is different from the work done by the majority of philosophers who exclude the unconscious from their arguments.

On Jung, Kant and ethics

There is a general agreement between scholars (de Voogd 1991, Nagy 1991, Bishop 2000) that Jung's *epistemological* appeals to Kant are far from consistent. I provide just a few examples. In the second of his *Zofingia* lectures, he claims that 'if Kant were alive today, he would undoubtedly be a spiritualist' (1896-9: 105), appearing to be quite frankly abusing Kant to back-up his own positive views on spiritualism, but he also disclaims his use of Kant by adding: 'Up to this point we have been treading on the consecrated ground of Kantian philosophy. But who will accompany us further if we choose to burst open the gates that bar our entrance into the "realm of darkness"?' (1896-9: 100). In his 1912-1913 series of lectures on the theory of psychoanalysis, the years of his separation from Freud, he defines the unconscious as a "'negative borderline concept", like Kant's *Ding an sich*' (Jung 1913: 317), a more appropriate reference to Kant's critical philosophy. Then, in his mature work, he claims that the distinction between archetypal image and archetype '*an sich*' (Jung 1942/1948: 222), the latter being unknowable, is based on Kant's epistemological distinction between phenomenon and noumenon. Trevi (1987: 57) and Palmer (1997: 166-196) discuss

various problems of this allegedly Kantian position. In the final years of his career, with his work on synchronicity and the *unus mundus*, Jung's alleged Kantianism seems in even greater danger, as Wolfgang Giegerich points out: 'Kant would show him that he has no right to posit a psychoid archetypal level in which the subject-object dichotomy would be overcome' (Giegerich 1987: 111, quoted in Main 2004: 48). These considerations do not contrast with my argument that Kant provides Jung with the philosophical foundation of the (relative) freedom of ego-consciousness.

The only three authors who have considered the ethical aspect of Jung's Kantian legacy are Marilyn Nagy (1991) Paul Bishop (2000) and Romano Madera (2007). Madera, who has also looked at how Jung could be considered a precursor of philosophical counselling,³² claims that 'Kant's ethics is not Jung's ethics' (Madera 2007: 47, my translation, here and in the following quote), arguing that Kant's categorical imperative is incompatible with Jung's focus on 'natural inclinations' (ibid.). Madera is right in pointing out the tension between the impersonal nature of the categorical imperative and Jung's psychologically realistic ethical stance,³³ but he overlooks Kant's influence on Jung's ethical position, which is in fact considerable, as I will argue in Chapter 1.

Nagy's book looks at Jung's early reception of Kant in his 1896-99 lectures and explores the presence of Kantian themes in Jung's *esse in anima* argument (Jung 1921: 66). Nagy shows how in Jung's *Zofingia Lectures* one finds 'Kant's conviction that through our experience of innate moral knowledge we come as close as is humanly possible to knowledge of reality in itself' (Nagy 1991: 19). Nagy discusses how Jung

32 A discussion of this point goes beyond the scope of my work.

33 I discuss this tension in Section 1.6.

uses Kant's moral philosophy to strengthen his (Jung's) *esse in anima*³⁴ argument. Indeed, Jung's *esse in anima* argument becomes, through his stretching of Kant's thought, what could be called an *esse in anima morale* argument.³⁵

On a different note from Nagy's work, Bishop's monograph (2000) shows in useful detail many of Jung's misappropriations or contradictory appropriations of Kant. Bishop highlights the contrast between Jung and Kant on the difference between knowledge and belief:

[...]in his introduction to the Second Edition of *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1787), Kant had claimed that he had found it necessary to annul knowledge in order to make room for belief [...] but Jung revers[es] Kant's formula [...] 'I think belief should be replaced by understanding; then we would keep the beauty of the symbol, but still remain free from the depressing results of submission to belief. This would be the psychoanalytic cure for belief and disbelief' (Jung 1911-12/1952: 356)

(Bishop 2000: 148-149)

Jung's intention to replace belief with understanding³⁶ could be considered an ethical program. One's actions and decisions would be based on one's understanding of the laws of the psyche (and of the world), and not on one's belief in the revealed truths about God and the soul which Kant makes room for – or at least keeps room for – in his still rather Christian philosophical world view. To this ethical program, which I do think informs Jung's psychological intentions, different understandings of the laws of the psyche (and of the world) would inevitably have to be admitted. Ethics is by its

34 In *Psychological Types* Jung claims – boldly entering into the Medieval ontological debate between nominalists and realists – that 'Between *intellectus* and *res* there is still *anima*, and this *esse in anima* makes the whole ontological argument superfluous' (Jung 1921: 66, quoted in Nagy 1991: 77).

35 Jung claims that 'Kant himself, in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, made an attempt in grand scale to evaluate the *esse in anima* in philosophical terms' (Jung 1921: 66). In fact, Kant would have probably not been a supporter of Jung's radical *esse in anima* argument.

36 On the relationship between belief and understanding in Kant, see Beiser 2006 (607-10).

very nature an inclusive enterprise. If psychology is to be conceived as a foundation for ethics, it will need to be inclusive, too.³⁷

On Jung, Nietzsche and ethics

Graham Parkes (1999), Christopher Hauke (2000) and Sonu Shamdasani (2003) have all tackled Jung's reception of Nietzsche. The latter, in his study on the historical genesis of analytical psychology, writes that

[f]or Jung, Nietzsche had correctly recognized the general significance of the drives [...] His failure was not recognizing the "animal life drive." Nietzsche had faithfully followed the drive for self-preservation (ego-drive), which he called the will to power, and neglected the drive of the preservation of the species (sexual drive). Due recognition needed to be given to each.

(Shamdasani 2003: 251)

In my work I have not looked into Jung's critique of Nietzsche's one-sided emphasis on *one* of the drives (self-preservation), to the expense of the sexual drive. I have concentrated mostly on Jung's critique of Nietzsche's *exclusive* emphasis on ethics, to the expense of morality. But in fact these two points reinforce each other, since morality is about overcoming (through empathy? Through love? Through a sense of duty? Through the sexual drive that allows the preservation of the species?) an exclusive focus on the self.

The most extensive work on Jung's Nietzschean side has been conducted by Bishop and Lucy Huskinson³⁸. In his 1995 book, *The Dionysian Self: C. G. Jung's reception of*

37 Bishop also speaks of a 'potentially devastating moral deficit at the centre of analytical psychology', given that the psyche is a 'self-regulating system [...] regulated only by the automatic constellation in the Unconscious of Ideas or Images [...] which have no moral implications' (Bishop 2000: 163). But moral consciousness and culture, as I have mentioned and will discuss further, also have an active role to play in the regulation and evolution the Self.

38 Graham Parkes (1999), Christopher Hauke (2000) and Sonu Shamdasani (2003) have also tackled

Friedrich Nietzsche, Bishop argues that Jung's assimilation of Nietzsche's notion of the Dionysian is key to understanding Jung's separation from Freud (Bishop 1995: 91, 364, *passim*) and, paraphrasing Nietzsche (who called Kant 'a cunning Christian') describes Jung as 'a cunning Dionysian'.³⁹ As Bishop points out, 'Jung came to see that Nietzsche's spectacular failure to negotiate with Dionysus pointed the way to his, Jung's, more successful accommodation with the Dionysian Unconscious' (Bishop 1995: 193). As I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapters, Jung's appropriation of Kantian, Christian and virtue-ethical themes (not to mention Eastern ones) partly explains why he was able to avoid being engulfed by the Dionysian (unconscious). In his study, Bishop remarks that '[m]uch of analytical psychology [...] can be read as a response to the religious crisis inaugurated by Nietzsche's claim that 'God is dead' (Bishop 1995: 224). Nietzsche's philosophy also inaugurates an *ethical* crisis which has a strong impact on Jung's concept of individuation (cf Section 2.2., *infra*).

Huskinson, in *Nietzsche and Jung. The Whole Self in the Union of Opposites* (2004), considers in detail the analogies and differences between Nietzsche's model and Jung's, as well as suggesting some conscious and unconscious reasons for why Jung, despite the many Nietzschean elements of his thought, is keen to distance himself from one of his most significant masters. She puts it clearly when she argues that, for Jung, 'an explicit identification with Nietzsche's model would be nothing less than identification

Jung's reception of Nietzsche. The latter, in his study on the historical genesis of analytical psychology, writes that '[f]or Jung, Nietzsche had correctly recognized the general significance of the drives [...] His failure was not recognizing the "animal life drive." Nietzsche had faithfully followed the drive for self-preservation (ego-drive), which he called the will to power, and neglected the drive of the preservation of the species (sexual drive). Due recognition needed to be given to each' (Shamdasani 2003: 251). In my work I have not looked into Jung's critique of Nietzsche's one-sided emphasis on *one* of the drives (self-preservation) in detail, but it could be seen as running parallel to Jung's critique of Nietzsche's *exclusive* emphasis on ethics, to the expense of morality.

³⁹ I discuss the Dionysian elements of Jung's ethics in Section 2.1.

with (the insanity of) Nietzsche himself' (Huskinson 2004: 133). Touching upon the theme of ethics, she quotes Nehamas' description of the totally integrated person who 'may well be morally repulsive' (Nehamas 1985: 167) and comments:

Indeed, the whole self, according to Nietzsche and Jung, will embody those shadow-values that are beyond good and evil, those values that we may find unacceptable and directly opposed to our 'traditional' moral code. Nevertheless, according to Nietzsche and Jung, the individual should aspire towards wholeness, despite it being an *immoral (or, rather, amoral [...])* and unachievable state.

(Huskinson 2004: 169, my italics)

As I will explain in more detail in Chapter 2, there are various points here which do not convince me. Neither Nietzsche nor Jung ever claimed that wholeness was immoral or amoral. Nietzsche rhetorically called himself an immoralist, but the 'free spirit' or 'higher man' or 'Übermensch' are the embodiment of a positive *ethical* approach to life based on health and other related values (solitude, self-legislation, self-knowledge) which the words 'immoral' or 'amoral' fail to capture. Jung embraces Nietzsche's new *ethical* approach (cf Section 2.2.): the Self may be mostly amoral, but the dialogue between ego and Self, which is what Jung advocates, results in what Jung calls an ethical outlook. So for neither of them the goal can be described as 'amoral[ity]'.

On Jung, Aristotle and ethics

John Cottingham's study, *Philosophy and the Good Life: Reason and passions in Greek, Cartesian and psychoanalytic ethics*, is an important contribution to the understanding of the 'challenge to ratiocentric ethics posed by psychoanalytic theory' (Cottingham 1998: 141). Quite surprisingly for a book written by a philosopher, Cottingham

dedicates various pages to Jung's psychotherapeutic method, elucidating the strong moral and ethical dimension of Jungian analysis. He describes the confrontation with the Shadow⁴⁰ as 'the beginning of true morality, a morality which is free from sentimentality and illusion [...], and which is founded on a sense of acceptance' (Cottingham 1998: 148). He defines Jung's third stage of analysis, education, as 'moral reconstruction' and highlights Jung's emphasis on 'education of the will', but points out that 'the stress [...] is not so much on 'will' as on 'education'. This is where the points of convergence with Aristotle's model are more evident, since, in contrast with 'the model of traditional *fortitudo moralis*, austere directing us along the iron road of duty', which is also Kant's approach, he describes Jung's approach as akin to the 'more humane Aristotelian model of carefully developed habits of feeling and action' (ibid.). Cottingham's work is particularly significant, to my mind, because it highlights the generally overlooked, and indeed by Jung only briefly sketched, 'cognitivist' and 'behavioural' side of analytical psychology. For Jung, 'confronting the Shadow' and 'confronting the Anima' are not primarily inwardly-oriented struggles: they are new patterns of feeling and thinking that are difficult to form. They involve, respectively, facing what we hate being and doing, and recognizing and pursuing what we love. These new patterns of feeling and thinking can develop into patterns of action which form *eudaimonia* (Jung's overall optimistic stance I mentioned earlier). Cottingham also notes that 'Jung does not apply his results to the traditional problem of *akrasia*' and imagines a fictitious case where the akratic struggles of an individual are related to both Aristotle's categories and to Jung's own concepts (Cottingham 1998: 153-162). I propose my own Jungian interpretation of the akratic and of other 'ethical types' in Section 3.2. Cottingham adds that in Aristotle one does not find a 'notion of systematic

40 Jung's second phase of analysis, 'elucidation', the first being termed 'confession' (see Jung 1929a: 122-174).

redemption, or reclamation of the past', which is present in Jung. I agree and in Section 4.3. I discuss Jung's treatment of the idea of redemption, which he inherits from the Christian tradition (Cf 4.3).

On Jung, evil and ethics

The topics of 'Jung and evil' and of 'Jung and the Shadow' have been tackled by various Jungian scholars; fewer authors have analyzed the relationship between these two difficult concepts; even fewer have looked at how Jung's understanding of evil and the Shadow fits into his overall ethical position. This may be partly due to the fact that *evil* is an 'eccentric' ethical concept, perhaps the most problematic ethical (and ontological) concept of all ('the problem of evil'). The Shadow, on the other hand, is an eminently psychological concept, based on a metaphor, so it is difficult to pin down. Extensive work on Jung's notion of evil has been done by de Meira Penna (1985), Robert A. Segal (1985, 1992), Murray Stein (1986, 1995), Michael Palmer (1997) and Bishop (2002). I will only look at the work by Stein and de Meira Penna, as it is more relevant to my work.

Stein's interpretation of the relationships between evil and the Shadow conflates these two concepts, possibly due to a Christian bias about the non-reality of evil:

[E]vil comes into being only when someone makes the judgement that some act or thought is evil [...] when this category of conscious discrimination is applied to the self, it creates a psychological entity that Jung names the "shadow". The shadow is a portion of the natural whole self that the ego calls bad, or evil, for reasons of shame, social pressure, family and societal attitudes about certain aspects of human nature.

(Stein 1995: 7-9)

While this depth-psychological interpretation is of course legitimate, I don't think it corresponds to Jung's thought. It is true that Jung, too, sometimes conflates these two concepts (e.g. in Jung 1955-56: 346; Cf Section 4.4., *infra*), but he generally maintains, that evil is an irreducible notion, with an ontological weight of its own (e.g. Jung 1951b: 84, *passim*; Jung 1952b, *passim*). From a critical perspective, de Meira Penna reads Jung's ideas on the integration of evil as a 'psychological alibi for permissiveness' (de Meira Penna 1985: 185). His interest is also drawn to Jung's concept of the 'transcendental ethical function' (de Meira Penna 1985: 190), which he considers 'fully independent of any possible *naturalistic* or *empirical* explanation' (de Meira Penna 1985: 187, *my italics*) and connects it to 'Kant's categorical imperative of practical reason'. I agree that Jung is in debt to Kant with regards to the possibility of the ego transcending the natural, empirical and *amoral* dimension of the Self. But this transcending movement only grounds the *moral* (and indeed the *immoral*⁴¹) dimension of our psyche. The *ethical* dimension of our psyche is born, in my reading of Jung, from a second transcending movement of both amoral unconscious nature and moral (or immoral) consciousness.

Turning to specific studies on the Shadow, in the aforementioned work, *Integrity in Depth* (1992), John Beebe provides a phenomenology of the Shadow, highlighting how this concept makes any ethical approach based on the purity of intentions harder but not necessarily impossible:

We are contemplating a course of action, have gone so far as to invest in a certain way of proceeding, and find a strange, nagging unease somewhere at the core of our will. Upon the most meticulous self-examination, we conclude that the course we have embarked upon is not founded, after all, on the motive we

41 Immorality, too, is the result of a conscious positioning of the ego. Cf 2.3.

had supposed. We stop to examine the real motive. However unattractive the ground we uncover through this inquiry, finding the truth brings relief. Only then do we feel secure in figuring out what we must do.

(Beebe 1992: 21)

I discuss the problem of the opacity of intentions in section 1.5. Trevi (2009) has also put forth a conceptual exploration of Jung's notion of the Shadow which I have taken into account in my work and usefully distinguishes various levels of our dealings with this elusive metaphor.

CHAPTER 1:
MORALITY, FREEDOM AND THE EGO:
THE KANTIAN LEGACY

[Scruple of conscience]
 Gladly I serve my friends, but alas I do it with pleasure.
 Hence I am plagued with doubt that I am not a virtuous person.
 [Ruling]
 Surely, your only resource is to try and despise them entirely,
 And then with aversion to do what your duty enjoins you.

Friedrich Schiller
 (quoted in Uleman 2010: 6)

In this chapter I argue that Jung's conception of the relative but decisive freedom of the ego from the Self derives from Immanuel Kant's⁴² argument for the autonomy of practical reason. However, where Kant insists on the consciousness of duty, Jung emphasises rather the duty to be conscious. Firstly, I provide a brief account of Jung's conception of the ego and of its relation to the Self; and present Kant's argument for the autonomy of practical reason. Secondly, I comment on a passage in which Jung's Kantian legacy is most evident. Thirdly, I relate Jung's insistence on the moral development of both patient and therapist to Kant's insistence on moral independence. I then consider other common aspects of Jung and Kant's ethical positions, as well as some points of divergence between the two authors. Finally, I discuss Jung's contribution to the understanding of conflicts of duty – the existence of which was denied by Kant.

42 A historical-bibliographical note I take from Bishop 2000: Jung possessed copies of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason* and *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics that will be able to present itself as Science* (bound together in a single volume, with Jung's ex libris dated 1897); *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics* (with Jung's ex libris dated 1893); *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (bound together with the aforementioned *Dreams* and Kant's *Universal Natural History*, with Jung's signature on the front flyleaf dated 1898); *Critique of Judgement* and *On the Power of the Mind to master Morbid Feelings by Mere Resolution*. In the *Zoofingia Lectures*, Kant and terms related to Kantian philosophy are quoted (at least) 43 times. In the *Collected Works*, Kant and related terms are quoted (at least) 84 times.

1.1. THE AUTONOMY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

“Kant is my philosopher!”

(C. G. Jung to a student
of the C. G. Jung Institute in the 1950s,
quoted in Shamdasani 2003:168)

Jung on the relation between ego and Self: the duty to be conscious

Jung defines the ego as ‘merely one complex among other complexes’ (Jung 1921: 706), ‘the subject of my consciousness’ but not ‘the subject of my total psyche’, which for Jung is the Self (ibid.). So how can the ego be free to act, and be responsible and accountable, given that it is part of the Self? Jung’s concept of inflation, which describes two cases in which the ego loses its freedom, helps us understand how a relative dependence on the Self is seen by Jung as a condition for its freedom. At times the Self, sensing the weakness of the ego, may be tempted to eliminate the ego altogether,⁴³ in which case the ego becomes incapable of action or at least its capacity to act is more or less severely impaired by an inundation of unconscious contents. Other times, the ego will try to usurp the Self’s position,⁴⁴ and attempt to master the unconscious entirely, thus hoping to be able to enjoy a condition of greater freedom and stop feeling ‘the subtle tyranny of the Self’, to use Mario Trevi’s evocative expression. In this second case, as in the first, the ego becomes incapable of directed action and of expressing the power of the Self adequately.⁴⁵ Hence, the effects derived from an excessively ‘confident’ ego are the same as those produced by an ego which abdicates, and that is why both psychic scenarios are covered, in Jung’s work, by the

43 Yahweh trying to crush Job is a symbolic representation of this scenario (see Jung 1952b). By writing ‘the Self may be tempted to eliminate’ I am personifying the Self. The Self is not a ‘person’, but our psyche if we look at it objectively (see Glossary).

44 By writing ‘the ego will try to usurp’ I am personifying the ego. The ego is not a ‘person’, but our psyche if we look at it subjectively (see Glossary).

45 Cf Section 2.1.

term ‘inflation’ (1951b: 47). Inflation may provide a sense of temporary joy, but it undermines moral freedom.

With reference to the first situation I have mentioned, Jung claims that ‘[i]t must be reckoned a psychic catastrophe when *the ego is assimilated by the self*’ (Jung 1951b: 45, italics in the original). To avoid this happening, Jung recommends that ‘consciousness should be reinforced by a very precise adaptation’. He adds that ‘certain *virtues*, like attention, conscientiousness, patience etc., are of great importance on the moral side, just as accurate observation of the symptomatology of the unconscious and objective self-criticism are valuable on the intellectual side’ (Jung 1951b: 46). In the second scenario I described, when ‘the self [...] becomes assimilated to the ego’ (1951b:), Jung suggests, in order to re-achieve balance, not to ‘relax *morality* itself but [...] mak[e] a moral effort in a different direction’, in order to make room for the unconscious ‘at the expense of the world of consciousness’ (Jung 1951b: 47)

Jung sees ego-consciousness as invested with the fundamental role of understanding at what distance from the power of the Self it should place itself. The key to safeguard the freedom of the ego seems to be in the maintenance of ‘the right distance’ and the ‘living connection’ (Edinger 1992: 264) between ego and Self, and only the ego can take care of establishing this right distance, and needs to be strong in order to be able to do so effectively⁴⁶. In the passages I have quoted, Jung uses the words ‘moral’, ‘morality’, ‘virtues’ (and of these he mentions ‘conscientiousness’ and ‘patience’, as well as ‘attention’ and ‘effort’) in relation to the ego. Of these words, ‘virtue’ is quite appropriate in this context, since virtue can be considered a synonym of strength of

46 On the ‘ego-Self axis’ as the subject of ethics, see Introduction.

character.⁴⁷ Where Jung speaks instead of ‘relaxing morality’, one could perhaps use the expression ‘weakness of the ego’. So, according to Jung, if we want to be free, both *free from the constraints of the Self and free to act effectively*, we have the duty to be conscious and to develop and maintain a strong ego-consciousness. Kant’s philosophy, as I will now show, shows how this freedom is possible.

Kant on the autonomy of practical reason: the consciousness of duty

The goal of Kant’s philosophy is no less than to provide ‘a single theory of human experience’ (Guyer 2006b: 539). For Kant, it must be understood how scientific knowledge, moral actions and aesthetical as well as teleological judgements can, in different ways, all be part of the same picture: this is the ambitious aim of his critical philosophy. Jung takes from Kant’s *Critique of Judgement* the ‘regulative’ (Jung 1917: 688-690) teleological judgement and applies it to psychic phenomena such as dreams. A discussion of this other aspect of Jung’s Kantianism could be usefully integrated into mine, since teleology and ethics are strictly connected in Kant’s paradigm, and in Jung’s. In a nutshell, I will point out that Jung agrees with Kant that practical reason not only has priority over theoretical reason (in matters of morality), but can also be conceived as the ultimate *telos* (goal) of nature. As I mentioned earlier when discussing the work of Aziz, Jung conceived ethics as our ‘destiny’.

The scientific understanding of nature is made possible, according to Kant, by the fact that ‘reason has insight only into what it itself produces according to its own design’ (Kant 1998: 109 [*KrV B* xiii]). As Rolf (2010) succinctly puts it, Kant argues that ‘we use our categories [the most important being the category of causality] and forms of

47 Cf Section 3.2.

intuition [space and time] to construct a world of experience'. Relations of causality that we encounter 'in nature' are indeed, as Hume had pointed out, something put there by the human mind. But that is precisely the reason why we can understand nature scientifically, is Kant's reply.

The constitutive (law-making) powers of reason are also at work in the moral domain, with the difference that if in nature our reason *legislates*, in the sphere of morality reason *self-legislates*. As Paul Guyer explains, for Kant 'we are also free to look at the world from a standpoint in which we are rational agents whose actions are chosen and not merely predicted in accordance with deterministic laws of (as we would now say) biology, psychology, or sociology' (Guyer 2006b: 2). The fact that practical reason can provide its own laws, and hence break free from causal determinism, is indicated by the expression 'autonomy of the will'⁴⁸ (Kant 2008: 89 [G 4:440]). Kant criticises systems based on following pleasure or other principles which are external to our own reason (such as 'God's will'), and calls them 'spurious' (*ibid.*), because they are based on 'hypothetical imperatives' which tell me that 'I ought to do something *because I will something else*' (*ibid.*, italics in the original). True morality only obeys the categorical imperative, in other words duty, which Kant defines as '*the necessity of an action from respect for law*' (Kant 2008: 55 [G 4: 400]). So morality is a self-consistent sphere of experience, the sphere of freedom.

48 Allen Wood discusses a tension within Kant's notion of autonomy: 'it is also easy to regard Kant's conception of autonomy as either incoherent or fraudulent. To make my own will the author of my obligations seems to leave both their content and their bindingness at my discretion, which contradicts the idea that I am obligated by them. *If we reply to this objection by emphasising the rationality of these laws* as what binds me, then we seem to be transferring the source of obligation from my will to the canons of rationality. The notion of self-legislation becomes a deception or at best a euphemism' (Wood 1999: 156). On Kant's notion of autonomy, see also Wood 2008: 106-122 and Shell 2009: 122.

But how do we harmonise the sphere of morality with the sphere of knowledge? Kant's approach is to look at these notions from different points of view:

[We can] take a different standpoint when by means of freedom we think ourselves as causes efficient a priori than when we represent ourselves in terms of our actions as effects that we see before our eyes.

(Kant 2008: 98 [G 4:450])

According to Kant: 'we do not indeed comprehend the practical unconditional necessity of the moral imperative, but we nevertheless comprehend its *incomprehensibility*' (Kant 2008: 108 [G 4:463]). What Kant means, as Allen Wood explains, is that 'we can [n]ever *prove theoretically* that we are free' (Wood 2010: 263-64, italics in the original).

In the context of a highly-speculative discussion, Kant's example is refreshingly simple:

If (for example) I am now entirely free, and get up from my chair without the necessarily determining influence of natural causes, then in this occurrence, along with its natural consequences to infinity, there begins an absolute new series, even though as far as time is concerned this occurrence is only the continuation of a previous series.

(Kant 1998: 487 [KrV A451/B479])

So is the groundwork of morality the fact that I can get up from my chair if I decide to?

This seems to be Kant's conviction.

1.2. 'A FEELING OF FREEDOM'

In *Transformation Symbolism of the Mass* Jung writes:

The Self, is an *a priori*, existent out of which the ego evolves. It is, so to speak, an unconscious prefiguration of the ego [...] [But] if man were merely a creature that came into being as a result of something already existing

unconsciously, he would have no freedom and there would be no point in consciousness. Psychology must reckon with the fact that despite the *causal nexus* man does enjoy a feeling of freedom, which is identical with *autonomy* of consciousness [...]. An absolutely preformed consciousness and a totally dependent ego would be a pointless farce, since everything would proceed just as well or even better unconsciously. The existence of ego consciousness has meaning only if it is free and *autonomous*. By stating these facts we have, it is true, established an *antinomy*, but we have at the same time given a picture of things as they are. There are temporal, local, and individual differences in the degree of dependence and freedom. In reality both are always present: the supremacy of the self and the hybris of consciousness.

(Jung 1942/1954: 391, my italics except in ‘a priori’)⁴⁹

The words I have italicised, ‘causal nexus’ ‘autonomy’ (which occurs twice, once as a substantive and once in its adjectival form) and ‘antinomy’ (not to mention the ‘*a priori*’ at the beginning of the quotation; and the word ‘freedom’, which occurs four times in the passage) are all distinctively Kantian and indeed what Jung is stating could hardly be more Kantian: consciousness is free *and* it isn’t. For Kant, as we have seen, it is free if we consider it from the point of view of morality, but it is determined if we look at it from a scientific-causal standpoint. Jung does not quote Kant in this passage, and his wording ‘a feeling of freedom’ does not sound very Kantian, nevertheless this is perhaps his most truly Kantian statement. Let us recall the aforementioned quote:

[We can] take a different standpoint when by means of freedom we think ourselves as causes efficient a priori than when we represent ourselves in terms of our actions as effects that we see before our eyes.

(Kant 2008: 98 [G 4:450])

The first point of view described by Kant can be considered the point of view of the

49 Proulx comments this same quote as follows: ‘Since human beings believe they are free, and since, without this belief, consciousness would be a pointless farce, then human beings are free. This is as spurious an argument as can be’ (Proulx 1994: 114). I agree that the form in which Jung couches the argument is begging the question and the specific passage Proulx comments subtracts from Jung’s argument, which could have been made stronger by simply appealing to Kant’s autonomy of practical reason.

ego, which experiences itself as moral freedom, while the second point of view can be considered the ‘point of view from nowhere’ of the Self, which is *always* a causal agent, but never a moral subject. When the ego is not inflated, the Self simply provides the psychic material (inclinations, desires, hopes, fears) which the ego decides to utilise in its actions.⁵⁰ To conclude this section, it can be noted that it should perhaps not be a surprise to have found that the ego is autonomous from the Self, capable of autonomous self-legislating freedom: is not the ego, after all, the central ‘*autonomous complex*’?⁵¹

1.3. SAPERE AUDE!

Is Jung’s understanding of the relationship between therapist and patient also Kantian?

In *An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?* (1784), Kant writes:

It is because of laziness and cowardice that so great a part of humankind [...] gladly remains minors for life, and that it becomes so easy for others to set themselves up as their guardians. It is so comfortable to be a minor! If I have a book that understands for me, a spiritual advisor who has conscience for me, a doctor who decides upon a regimen for me, and so forth, I need not trouble myself at all. I need not think, if only I can pay; others will readily undertake the irksome business for me.

(Practical Philosophy: 17 [WA 8: 35])

Jung was deeply aware that a psychotherapist is in a very favourable position to become our moral substitute⁵²:

50 When, instead, due to the effects of inflation, we ‘act out’, the ego is quite right to feel ‘it is not me’. The ego sees, ‘before its eyes’, the effects – but not the causes, which are unknown to it – of the actions of the Self. When we act out, the ‘agent’ (I use the inverted commas because responsibility and accountability are undermined) is the Self, a Self not mediated by an ego. Young children, most of the time, act out. The ego is bypassed by the Self and asks: ‘what is happening to me?’

51 The expression ‘autonomous complex’, sometimes in its abstract variant ‘autonomy of complexes’ occurs at least 47 times in Jung’s *CW*.

52 ‘It is characteristic of the moral phenomenon that the person acting must himself know and decide, and he cannot let anything take this responsibility from him. Thus it is essential that philosophical ethics have the right approach, so that it does not usurp the place of moral consciousness and yet does not seek

The philosophical discussion is a task which psychotherapy necessarily sets itself, though not every patient will come down to basic principles. The question of the measuring rod with which to measure, of the ethical criteria which are to determine our actions, must be answered somehow, for the patient may quite possibly expect us to account for our judgments and decisions. Not all patients allow themselves to be condemned to infantile inferiority because of our refusal to render such an account, quite apart from the fact that a therapeutic blunder of this kind would be sawing off the branch on which we sit. In other words the art of psychotherapy requires that the therapist be in possession of avowable, credible, and defensible convictions which have proved their viability either by having resolved any neurotic dissociations of his own or by preventing them from arising. A therapist with a neurosis is a contradiction in terms. One cannot help any patient advance further than one has advanced oneself.

(Jung 1943b: 179)

This paragraph should be analysed in conjunction with an earlier passage we find in Jung's correspondence with Dr. R. Loÿ (28 January 1913):

Because I know that, despite all rational safeguards, the patient does attempt to assimilate the analyst's personality, I have laid it down as a requirement [...] that the psychoanalyst should first submit himself to the analytical process, as his personality is one of the main factors in the cure.

Patients read the analyst's character intuitively, and they should find in him a man with failings, admittedly, but also a man who strives at every point to fulfil his human duties in the fullest sense. Many times I have had the opportunity of seeing that the analyst is successful with his treatment just so far as he has succeeded in his own moral development.

(Jung 1914: 586-87)

In the first quote, the reference to 'infantile inferiority' echoes Kant's disparaging remarks (quoted above) towards those who decide to remain morally 'minors'. In the second quote, we find the Kantian 'duty' (in the expression 'human duties'), a word that appears (at least) seventeen times in the *Collected Works*, nine of which in the

a purely theoretical and "historical" knowledge either but, by outlining phenomena, helps moral consciousness to attain clarity concerning itself [...] This asks a lot of the person who is to receive the help, namely the person listening to Aristotle's lecture. He must be mature enough not to ask that his instruction provide anything other than it can and may give' (Gadamer 1993: 313)

expression ‘conflict of duties’(cf Section 1.7.).

The two quotes are packed with thoughts about the relationship between ethics and psychotherapy, so I will enucleate the main ideas in bullet-point format and comment them:

- (1) Many therapeutic dialogues are intrinsically ethical because patients very often seek help from their therapist to answer the ethical questions ‘what should I do?’ and ‘how should I live?’ (‘The ethical criteria which are to determine our actions’; Jung 1943a). ‘The philosophical discussion’ mentioned by Jung at the beginning of the 1943 quote, can be understood, from what follows, as being eminently ethical, which does not rule out that the expression ‘basic principles’ (1943a) may also refer to other philosophical issues which go beyond the ethical dimension.
- (2) ‘[N]ot every patient will come down to basic principles’ (Jung 1943a) is an unclear expression, but Jung probably means that these ethical questions (see point 1) can be more or less explicitly formulated (by the patient) and critically scrutinised (by the patient and therapist). This may depend on the cultural level, temperament and ‘ethical type’ (cf. Section 3.2) of the patient.
- (3) A therapist must have a strong ethical position and be ready to state it explicitly (‘avowable, credible, and defensible convictions’, 1943a; ‘a man who strives at every point to fulfil his human duties in the fullest sense’, 1914). The OED defines ‘avowable’ as ‘to be acknowledged, confessed, or declared’, so Jung is presumably thinking that a therapist should be able to define his ethical position.

Jung seems to imply that *if a patient asks* the therapist to be clear about where he or she stands ethically, then the therapist should provide an answer, and be willing to discuss it with her patient ('defensible'). But should the therapist also be willing to provide examples (from her own life) that confirm the strength of her ethical position? These considerations partly overlap with issues of 'disclosure' (should a therapist talk about her life and feelings?), which have been subjected to a wider literature than the issues I am discussing here.

- (4) The therapist must be able to 'account for [his or her] judgments and decisions' (1943a). What does 'account for' mean? One might expect: 'be able to provide a (rational?) justification of his ethical position' (as we have discussed above, this may indeed be necessary). But the following point shows that for Jung 'being accountable' has also a much more personal dimension.
- (5) The 'viability' of the therapist's ethical position can be considered sufficiently tested only if the therapist is not neurotic ('[principles] which have proved their viability either by having resolved any neurotic dissociations of his own or by preventing them from arising', 1943a). The therapist's ethical position safeguards him from being neurotic, but it is of course a matter of degree: a certain level of neuroticism ('self-division'; Jung 1917/1926/1943: 18; cf Section 2.3.) is part of most people's experience.
- (6) Patients can intuitively understand their therapist's ethical strength ('Patients read the analyst's character intuitively', 1914)
- (7) An important factor in a successful psychotherapeutic treatment is the therapist's ethical position ('moral development', 'character', 'personality', 1914) because patients are cured *through* the therapist's ethical position (which they understand intuitively, see above). Here Jung seems to have in mind

something which could be defined as ethical transference.

- (8) ‘One cannot help any patient advance further than one has advanced oneself’ (1943a). I read ‘advance further’ as meaning advance *ethically* and *psychologically*. In ‘Fundamental questions of psychotherapy’ Jung writes that ‘a good half of every treatment that probes at all deeply consists in the doctor’s examining himself, for only what he can hope to put right in himself can he hope to put right in the patient’ (Jung 1951c: 239). He then adds a famous reference to the myth of the wounded healer: ‘It is no loss, either, if he feels that the patient is hitting him, or even scoring off him: it is his own hurt that gives the measure of his power to heal⁵³ (ibid.). Point 8 is saying that therapists *can* help their patients *equal* their own ethical position. But they will not be able to lead their patients any further, psychologically and ethically, and the patients will have to continue by their own device. One must keep in mind Jung’s famous Nietzschean quote in a letter to Freud: ‘One repays a teacher badly if one remains only a pupil’, 3 March 1912, in McGuire 1974: 491. The pupil’s (or patient’s) success proves the ability of both the teacher (or therapist) as well as that of the pupil (or patient).

To sum up, in the quote from 1914 Jung is saying: ‘there is not much that can be done about it: patients assimilate the therapist’s ethical position and psychic health (the former safeguarding the latter): so both better be there!’ The 1943 quote emphasizes more the ‘dialogical’ and ‘explicit’ nature of the ethical dialogues which occur in the setting, and seems to conceive therapist and patient as equal; while the 1914 quote,

⁵³ The healer must not just have been wounded once, as a simplistic interpretation might have it (‘I can cure you because I have suffered (similar things) too in the past’): the wounded healer is defined as such because he or she is susceptible to be wounded every time anew by the patient. This renewed wound contributes to the establishment and reinforcement of a therapeutic link, as well as revealing that there is (already) a link between analyst and patient, and that both care for each other.

written just after Jung's separation from Freud, highlights the role of transference, although Freud's notion of transference is given a markedly ethical twist (what is at stake are not so much feelings, but guiding moral values). Furthermore, the predominantly projective nature of Freud's conception of transference is contrasted by highlighting the essentially introjective nature of what I have called Jung's ethical transference. In Freud's conception, the patient sees, in the analyst, more than what is there; according to Jung's 'ethical transference', the patient can see what is actually there: the analyst's ethical position.⁵⁴

To conclude, it seems that Jung is in favour of therapists being ready to declare where they stand in terms of ethics. If my overall argument is sound, and Jungian psychology contains in itself an ethical position, which is an original blend of Kantian, Nietzschean, Aristotelian and Christian themes, then 'I am Jungian' should also be an 'avowable, credible and defensible' ethical position. This consideration may seem to go against the alleged ethical neutrality of therapy.⁵⁵ But it should be remarked that when Jung writes that a therapist should 'strive[s] at every point to fulfil his human duties in the fullest sense' (Jung 1914: 586-87) he leaves a lot of space to fill in, which is also what we expect therapists to allow for their patients. Certainly the starting point, the idea that patients do not like to be ethical minors (expressed in the 1943a quote), has a Kantian flavour. However, Jung's idea that an ethical stance may be a possible healing factor that can be transmitted, goes both further than Kant (in terms of depth) and stops short of his model of ethical autonomy. It seems that the depth of the psychoanalytic encounter will necessarily undermine Kant's ideal of ethical purity: the unconscious

54 My considerations are clearly not intended to cover the whole range of Jung and Freud's ideas on transference.

55 Edward Harcourt (2013a) makes the interesting point that the supposed 'neutrality' of psychotherapy, the idea that psychotherapists should not judge their patients, *is* an ethical position in its own right.

can never be dismissed when considering ‘what ought I to do?’.

1.4. WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?

“Good advice” is often a doubtful remedy,
but generally not dangerous because it has so little effect.

(Jung 1949: 359, note)

The following quote, from Jung’s Forward to Neumann’s *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, seems to provide a negative answer to the question ‘Can virtue be taught?’⁵⁶:

Having learnt by long and often painful experience the relative ineffectiveness of trying to inculcate moral precepts, he [the therapist] has to abandon all admonitions and exhortations that begin with "ought" and "must"

(Jung 1949: 1408)

Jung here stresses the ‘ineffectiveness’ of *heteronomous* inculcating of ‘moral precepts’, but does not argue against the idea of an *autonomous* ‘ought’ stemming from within, which Jung strongly believes in (see for example Jung 1934a and Jung 1958⁵⁷), so the statement can be considered Kantian and is reminiscent of Kant’s critique against *moral enthusiasm*:

By exhortation to actions as noble, sublime, and magnanimous, minds are attuned to nothing but moral enthusiasm and exaggerated self-conceit; by such exhortations they are led into the delusion that it is not duty [...] which constitutes the determining ground of their actions [...] but as if those actions were expected from them [...] as bare merit’

(*Practical Philosophy*: 208-209 [KpV 5: 85-86])

It is worth noting here that both Kant and Jung seem to be involved in the same paradox:

56 See Burnyeat 1980: 69.

57 ‘The fact that many a man who goes his own way ends in ruin means nothing to one who has a vocation. He *must* obey his own law’ (Jung 1934a: 300, italics in the original); ‘Conscience [...] commands the individual to obey his inner voice even at the risk of going astray’ (Jung 1958: 841).

both believe that an ethical and moral outlook *ought to* be discovered autonomously, but they cannot refrain from telling their readers⁵⁸ that the discovery of this moral and ethical outlook is precisely what they *ought to* do. Moreover, our authors don't just say: 'set off and discover for yourself!', they also suggest *where* one should look for ethics and morality (I use both these terms here in a broad sense). Kant argues they should be found in reason alone; Jung, in consciousness, in the unconscious, and in the union of the two.

To make the paradox even greater, Kant provides precise formulations of the supposedly universal categorical imperative⁵⁹ and Jung, throughout his whole career, describes in great detail what is involved in individuation, the ethical task *par excellence*, which includes: strengthening of consciousness (cf. section 1.1), integration of personal and collective unconscious elements into consciousness (cf. section 2.1), non-identification with collective norms and avoidance of an individualistic stance (cf. section 2.2), modification of one's ethical outlook through time (cf. section 2.3.), endurance of conflicts of duties (cf. section 1.7.), recognition of one's evil side and integration of one's shadow (cf. Chapter 4), development of moral character traits (cf. Chapter 3). If this is what is needed to be ethical, according to Jung, following 'moral precepts' (see quote above) would appear to be, in comparison, a relatively straightforward task!

One last important point of analogy between Kant and Jung: when Jung states that the

58 In Jung's case, their readers and their patients. In the above quote Jung is actually discussing the issue of 'moral inculcation' *in the setting*. It must be added that, although Jung believes that attempting to 'inculcate' duties is ineffective, he believes in the unconscious transmission of an ethical point of view (see above).

59 For an elucidation of these various formulations, see Wood 2005: 348-61.

ego *should* progressively enter in (conscious) relation with the Self and progressively integrate its potential, he uses the Kantian ‘ought implies can’⁶⁰ argument, according to which the categorical imperative can only oblige us to do what is possible:

Whenever a sense of moral inferiority appears, it indicates not only a need to assimilate an unconscious component, but also the possibility of such assimilation.

(Jung 1928: 218)

Kant’s ‘ought implies can’ is based on his foundation of moral freedom. We are free to act morally, so we ought to, argues Kant. If we feel we could evolve psychologically and ethically, then we should, adds Jung.

1.5. THE OPACITY OF INTENTIONS

In the following passage, Jung makes an explicit reference to Kant’s ethics:

Kant rightly requires the individual and society to advance from an ‘ethic of action’ to an ‘ethic of conviction’. But to see into the ultimate depths of the conviction behind the action is possible only to God.

(Jung 1959: 871)

Here Jung, thinking as a depth psychologist, shows his suspicion of actions which are merely ‘good’ and that perhaps hide what one truly is. But he is also sceptical about the possibility of knowing what duty commands. Kant’s famous opening statement of the *Groundwork* claims that ‘[i]t is impossible to think of anything at all in the world, or indeed even beyond it, that could be considered good without limitation except a **good will**’ (*Practical Philosophy*: 49 [G 4: 393]). This implies that one can determine the existence of a good will in an individual. But Jung – who is not against the idea of a good will – nevertheless adds that we cannot see into ‘the ultimate depths of

⁶⁰ [T]he idea that, no matter how dire one’s circumstances, one is aware through one’s consciousness of standing under the moral law that one *can* do what duty requires, simply because one *ought* to do so’ (Allison 2006: 391)

conviction'. This seems a rather self-defeating stance, if we consider that it comes from a depth psychologist, but it can also be read as an admission of the limits of psychological understanding.

Another passage where Jung explicitly discusses deontology (he uses the adjective 'deontological' and the context is markedly Kantian), emphasises instead not so much the difficulty of understanding an intention but the psychological 'hard facts' against which the voice of duty might clash: 'the psychic situation to which the [...] "you ought" would be applicable is so complicated, delicate and difficult that one wonders who would be in a position to make such a demand' (Jung 1949: 1417). The issue at stake is the interplay between duty, inclinations and psychological constitution. Kant states that an action is not moral if it follows inclination (e.g. if we help someone out of sympathy for them): it is moral only if it is performed out of duty and what we feel inclined to do is merely contingent (cf. Arrington 1998: 265). But Jung's notion of individuation, which includes the development of one's inclinations and frequently involves *conflicts of duty* (cf. Section 1.7.), is at odds with Kant's abstract rigorism, in which duty is one and nature must be transcended. Nevertheless, for Jung, by leaving rigid morality behind, one does not fall back into amorality or shift towards immorality: one enters the sphere of ethics, which Jung defines as a 'differentiation and development' within morality (Jung 1949: 1416).

1.6. THE SHADOW OF DUTY

In *Aion* (1951b) Jung writes that '[T]he shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without

considerable moral effort' (Jung 1951b: 14). If Kant were to read Jung, he might comment that by confronting our specific weaknesses, a very private task, we are nevertheless doing our duty as humans, which is a positive and motivating realisation. But of course it would be against Kant's program of duty for its own sake to imply that one acts morally (in this case, confronting one's Shadow) *in order to feel* that feeling of worthiness. Jung (deliberately?) misinterprets Kant when, describing the categorical imperative in terms of 'pleasure', he defines it as

the *irrepressible* demand to do what we regard as good, and refrain from doing what we regard as morally evil. It gives us a feeling of pleasure to act in accordance with the requirements of the categorical imperative, just as the gratification of any instinct brings with it a certain quantity of pleasure.

(Jung 1896-99: 171, my italics)⁶¹

I have italicized the word 'irrepressible' because the use of this word seems to be an involuntary anticipation of Jung's mature views on the fact that *repressing* morality can determine neurosis as much as morality itself can (I discuss this further in Section 2.3.).

According to Kant, '[th]e most perfect, complete state of affairs that could exist in the world [...] would be one in which human beings could be happy to the degree that they deserve to be' (Arrington 1998: 290). This is Kant's notion of the *summum bonum*, the state of happiness that God 'must' grant the morally virtuous, but that the morally virtuous, by definition, does not seek (to many commentators, one of the weakest aspects of Kant's moral philosophy). From a depth-psychological point of view, if each time one was happy one had to investigate if the happiness one was feeling was deserved, it would quickly poison the happiness with reflection. Following Jung's

⁶¹ This passage is quoted and commented by Bishop (2000: 89).

integration of ethical positions, Nietzsche's focus on mostly irrational (and often undeserved) *joy* can be read as counterbalancing (but not necessarily contrasting) the Kantian notion of *happiness*.

In the following and final section of this chapter, I will contextualise Jung's approach to the problem of conflicts of duty, placing Jung and Kant's positions within the broader philosophical debate on this topic, and I will explain where Jung's conception of conflicts of duties fits within his psychological model. I will begin by reviewing the two main positions within the philosophical debate on moral dilemmas, and proceed by elucidating Jung's personal answer to the question: 'do irresolvable moral dilemmas exist?', showing in what respect he belongs to the party of those who believe that irresolvable dilemmas exist and in what respect he belongs to the party that denies this. In what follows, if not otherwise specified, I will consider the expressions 'moral dilemma', 'conflict of duty', 'conflict of duties' and 'moral conflict' as synonyms; the difference between 'duty' and 'obligation' will not be discussed.

1.7. CONFLICTS OF DUTY

One thing God has spoken,
two things I have heard
(Ps 62:11)

Do irreducible conflicts of duty exist?

In discussing moral conflicts, the distinction between the epistemic level (related to what someone believes the obligations or duties involved are) and the ontological level (related to what the obligations or duties involved actually are) is made clear by

McConnell:

The former involves conflicts between two (or more) moral requirements and the agent does not know which of the conflicting requirements takes precedence in her situation [...] The latter are conflicts between two (or more) moral requirements, and neither is overridden [...] not simply because the agent does not *know* which requirement is stronger; neither is. Genuine moral dilemmas, if there are any, are ontological.

(McConnell 2014, italics in the original).

As Christopher Gowans observes, '[T]hat there are cases of *apparent* moral dilemma can hardly be denied' (1987: 3). An (at least) apparent (or epistemic) conflict of duty occurs when someone believes that it would be her duty to do both A and B but cannot do both 'either because *B is just non-doing-A* or because some contingent *features of the world prevent doing both*' (Gowans 1987: 3, my italics). An example in which B is non-doing-A is the case: 'should I return the weapon I borrowed from a friend who told me he wants to use it to harm someone?' Here the (at least) apparent conflict is between 'respecting a promise' and 'preventing harm' [by not respecting it]⁶². Another example: I have promised 'to be best man at A's wedding and also at B's. By bad luck A and B fix their weddings for the same day and I can't attend both. So one of my promises must be broken' (Foot 1987: 254). In this second case, it is a contingent feature of the world, namely the fact that both weddings have been arranged on the same day, which determines the (at least) apparent conflict between what appear to be two instances of the same duty: the duty to respect a promise.

The main question which informs the debate on moral dilemmas is: 'do real (ontological, irreducible, irresolvable in principle, tragic) conflicts of duty exist?' Kant held that what appears to be a conflict of duties 'is inconceivable [...] on the grounds

62 As noted by some commentators, close scrutiny can show this to be a false dilemma: the agent can choose to return the weapon when the friend is in a less agitated state of mind.

that the rules expressing moral duty declare certain actions to be “necessary” and that two rules declaring actions necessary cannot conflict’ (Gowans 1987: 6). However Kant softened his position by distinguishing ‘[p]erfect (or narrow) duties [that] prescribe or prohibit all instances of specific kinds of actions’ from ‘imperfect (or wide) duties’ where one duty can be limited by another (Gowans 1987: 7). William David Ross concedes that, *prima facie*, different duties⁶³ do not appear reducible to one another (1930: 24), but then claims that through ‘intuition’ (which he conceives as similar to Aristotle’s ‘perception’) it is possible to determine which duty has precedence.

From the opposite camp of those who have argued that irreducible conflicts of duties *do* exist, Bernard Williams (1987) argues that their existence can be inferred from the feeling of regret we experience after we have chosen one course of action knowing we have chosen the best. In the contemporary philosophical debate this is discussed as the ‘moral residue’ or ‘moral remainder’ problem. Rosalind Hursthouse, from a similar position, claims, following the agent-centred approach which is typical of virtue ethics⁶⁴, that

An action is right iff [if and only if] it is what a virtuous agent would,

63 McNaughton, drawing from the work of Ross, distinguishes between:

1. Duties resting on a previous act of my own. These in turn divide into two main categories:
 - (a) Duties of *fidelity*; these result from my having made a promise or something like a promise
 - (b) Duties of *reparation*; these stem from my having done something wrong so that I am now required to make amends.
2. Duties resting on previous acts of others; these are duties of *gratitude*, which I owe to those who have helped me.
3. Duties to prevent (or overturn) a distribution of benefits and burdens which is not in accordance with the merit of the person concerned; these are duties of *justice*.
4. Duties which rest on the fact that there are other people in the world whose condition could be better; these are duties of *beneficence*.
5. Duties which rest on the fact that I could better myself; these are duties of *self-improvement*.
6. Duties of not injuring others; these are duties of *non-maleficence*.

(McNaughton 1996: 762-763)

64 Cf. Chapter 3.

characteristically, do in the circumstances, except for tragic dilemmas, in which a decision is right iff it is what such an agent would decide, but the action decided upon may be too terrible to be called ‘right’ or ‘good’. (And a tragic dilemma is one from which a virtuous agent cannot emerge with her life unmarred.)

(Hursthouse 2002: 79-80)

To complete this brief sketch of the main views on the topic, I should mention the philosopher Edward John Lemmon, whose ideas on conflicts of duties seem to converge with Jung’s understanding of this issue. Lemmon looks at the psychological dimension of conflicts of duty and writes: ‘[i]t does not seem to have been much observed by ethical philosophers that, speaking psychologically, the adoption of a new morality by an agent is frequently associated with the confrontation of a moral dilemma’ (Lemmon 1987: 111, in Gowans 1987). Lemmon adds that ‘th[e] change in fundamental attitudes is neither fully rational nor fully irrational’ (ibid) and resembles the change in style of an artist who cannot motivate his change if not with ‘a desire to be (whatever this means) *true to himself*’ (Lemmon 1987: 113, italics in the original, in Gowans 1987).

Jung’s answer

Jung’s derivation of the neuroses
[...] from moral conflict was
‘one of Jung’s greatest contributions to our time’.

(Proulx 1994: 102, quoting Northrop 1962, pp. 39-40)

Having considered some of the most prominent positions on moral dilemmas, it is time to ask Jung the central question of the debate: ‘do irreducible conflicts of duty exist?’ Jung’s answer is: ‘yes and no, depending on the conceptual tools and framework of reference one employs when observing the conflict.’ I will first provide a more

articulate description of Jung's approach, using the language of analytical psychology, and then show which aspects of his answer show a critical convergence with some of the positions I have discussed above.

Jung distinguishes between two types of moral conflicts: '[t]he mental and moral conflicts of normal people [are of] a somewhat different kind [from those of neurotics]: the conflicting opposites are both conscious' (Jung 1978: 436). So with reference to neurotic conflicts, the question that arises is: how does it occur that one side of a conflict is or becomes unconscious? When discussing conflicts of duty Jung does not spell this out explicitly, but arguably one side of a conflict can become unconscious due to the mechanism of *repression*, which Jung defines 'a rather immoral "penchant" for getting rid of disagreeable decisions' (Jung 1938/40: 129). Since one side of the dilemma is relegated to the unconscious, there is no way that a solution can be found. So neurosis, in Jungian terms, could be defined the 'non-solution' to what *should be* a moral conflict.

Normal moral conflicts are instead when both sides of the dilemma are conscious. Can they be solved? Here the answer is: *yes*. But *how* can they be solved? Jung considers two possible ways of solving them, one being the most common, the second being attempted by 'sufficiently conscientious' (Jung 1958: 856) individuals. In the former case, one side of the dilemma is 'consciously and deliberately disposed of' (Jung 1938/1940: 129) through the mechanism of *suppression*: 'Conflicts of duty are solved very often [...] by suppressing one of the opposites' (Jung 1958: 856). This is not a solution obtained via rational deliberation and discussion, but a practical one: a horn of the dilemma is 'disposed of' and we act according to the remaining duty.

The second type of solution envisaged by Jung is more complicated, so it will be helpful to provide a longer quote:

If one is sufficiently conscientious the conflict is endured to the end, and a creative solution emerges which is produced by the constellated archetype and possesses that compelling authority not unjustly characterized as the voice of God. The nature of the solution is in accord with the deepest foundations of the personality as well as with its wholeness; it embraces conscious [sic] and unconscious and therefore transcends the ego.

(Jung 1958: 856)

The solution, according to Jung, can only ‘emerge’ from the unconscious if one has endured the conflict, which, as I mentioned, must have been (made) conscious in the first place. Key factors in the solution are time,⁶⁵ patience and resistance. This second type of solution to a moral conflict is ‘a special instance of [...] the transcendent function’ (Jung 1958: 855), the function that allows a cooperation of consciousness and the unconscious. What I think is worth pointing out, and that I have not found discussed elsewhere, is that in this third scenario the unconscious can intervene presumably because it is not part of the conflict. In other words, when both sides of the dilemma are conscious, the unconscious can provide a more impartial and creative contribution to the psychic system.

For clarity I will summarise Jung’s multi-faceted answer. Unconscious dilemmas, in other words dilemmas in which one horn of the dilemma is unconscious, cannot be solved, and need to be made conscious in order to try and solve them. Conscious dilemmas can be solved in two ways. In the first, a horn is simply suppressed. Jung

⁶⁵ In the solution to the aforementioned (apparent) dilemma of the borrowed gun, namely ‘return the gun, but *later*,’ time plays a part, too: but to reach this solution no archetype, no voice of conscience, seems necessary: rational moral deliberation is sufficient. I will return to this point when assessing Jung’s position.

calls this the ‘moral’ solution (Jung 1958: 855-57). In the second case, the conscious conflict is endured, and eventually a third point of view is found, thanks to the cooperation of the irrational side of our psyche. Jung calls this the ‘ethical’ solution (Jung 1958: 855-857).

Jung agrees with Kant that if we remain entirely within the framework of morality a conflict of duty is actually not solvable, but this agreement is partly clouded by Jung’s not always consistent – and not always Kantian – use of the words ‘morality’ and ‘moral’, as I discuss below. With Ross, Jung shares the idea of a non-entirely rational solution to a moral conflict, which Ross calls ‘intuition’ and Jung ‘transcendent function’. But in fact Jung could have also deployed the word ‘intuition’, as he conceives of it in his own psychology: an irrational⁶⁶ function which tells us where something is going⁶⁷. Hence, a good candidate to help us overcome a moral conflict.

Jung also shows an intuitive appreciation, some twenty years in advance, of Williams’s ‘remainder problem’ and of Hursthouse’s conviction that tragic moral dilemmas do exist. Jung writes:

One comforts oneself with the excuse that it was done in a good cause and was therefore moral. But anyone who has insight will know that on the one hand he [the doctor who lied to a patient] was too cowardly to precipitate a catastrophe, and on the other hand that he has lied shamelessly. He has done evil but at the same time good.

(Jung 1949: 1417)

66 Intuition is irrational because, like its opposite function ‘sensation’, it is not based on judgement [unlike thinking and feeling, which are two forms of judgement], being as it is a special type of ‘perception’.

67 ‘The essential function of sensation is to establish that something exists, thinking tells us what it means, feeling what its value is, and intuition surmises whence it comes and whither it goes’ (Jung 1936: 983).

Or, as he puts it even more succinctly in his last work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, ‘life itself is guilt’ (Jung 1955-56: 206).

Finally, there is a strong critical convergence between Jung and Lemmon in that both share the view that confronting and – in one way or another – emerging from a conflict of duty can be a changing point in one’s life.⁶⁸ Lemmon, as I mentioned, speaks of ‘being true to oneself’, Jung of a ‘solution [...] in accord with the deepest foundations of the personality as well as with its wholeness’ (Jung 1958: 856). Walter Kaufmann summarises Jung’s view (in noting its similarities with Nietzsche’s ideas) that ‘the normal and healthy way of dealing with psychical problems is “overgrowing” them [...] and thus achieving an elevation of the level of consciousness’ (Kaufmann 1950: 82, note 10).

Jung’s discussion of conflicts of duty is chronologically anterior to the resurgence of interest in this topic which has occurred in the last 50 years. Hence it would be unfair to criticise him for not having grasped aspects of the problem that were understood mostly after his death. However, I would like to briefly consider two more approaches to conflicts of duty which do not involve a recourse to the irrational. Foot (1987) distinguishes between a first level order in which the word ‘ought’ applies to both horns of a dilemma and a second level order in which the word ‘ought’ refers to ‘what is best’ (in Gowans 1987: 26). Gowans, instead, suggests that priority principles can be put into place when facing a dilemma, such as ‘when P1 and P2 conflict, and F is present, follow P1’ (Gowans 1987: 28). When Jung claims that the choice of lying or not to a

⁶⁸ The Greek verb ‘to decide’, *krino*, is the root of the word ‘crisis’.

patient would be ‘a catastrophe’ whichever side one chooses (Jung 1949: 1417; quoted above), a priority principle such as the one suggested by Gowans could be put into place to guide the agent in her decision, such as ‘if the patient is severely psychotic or very young, it is sometimes preferable to lie.’⁶⁹ Before we define a conflict as irresolvable, and wait for a symbol to transcend the opposites, careful moral reasoning might be fruitfully employed.

One problem with Jung’s mistrust of moral and ethical *reasoning*, is that Jung frequently conflates his Kantian notion of morality (as freedom and autonomy from nature) with a conformist notion of morality, where morality is a synonym for adherence to customary and collective codes of conduct (1958: 856), such as the penal or religious systems of rules (1959: 870), which is at odds with Kant’s notion of autonomous morality. Freedom from nature does not automatically entail a passive adherence to collective morality (which then requires an unconscious solution to solve the standstill). Freedom from nature can also determine an immoralist-individualistic stance (as Jung himself is aware of in other parts of his work), as well as other approaches to life which are somewhere in between morality and immorality. Jung’s expression ‘conscious scrutiny’ (Jung 1958: 855), on the other hand, refers to the process of holding something in consciousness and attending closely to it, and shows a deeper trust in the power of rationality than is normally displayed in his work. This is an important stage, which should not be overlooked, since it has a role in making the

69 When Jung claims that ‘I have [...] made it a rule to take the “old ethic” as binding only so long as there is no evidence of its injurious effects’ (Jung 1949: 1413), he actually does seem to be proposing a ranking of duties or a priority principle. The quote could be paraphrased as follows: ‘common morality has precedence over individual solutions *except* in the presence of neurosis’. In his *Zarathustra Seminars* Jung declares (to an invited audience, which is not a small detail) that his psychology is based on ‘selfishness’ (not to be confused with individualism or egocentrism): McNaughton’s duty towards ‘self-improvement’ seems to be ranked at the very top.

unconscious conscious, and in turning an unconscious conflict into a conscious one. But conscious scrutiny will rarely be sufficient, according to Jung, to overcome a conflict:

the ethical problems that cannot be solved in the light of collective morality [Jung's conformist conception of morality] or the "old ethic" are [irreducible, ontological] conflicts of duty, otherwise they would not be ethical

(Jung 1949: 1414)

Here he manifestly begs the question and presupposes that only a partly irrational (i.e. 'ethical') solution will be able to overcome a conflict of duty.

Another problem with Jung's conception of 'the ethical solution' (to conflicts of duty) is that there is his belief in the intervention of 'the constellated archetype'. The archetype appears like a *deus ex-machina* which always (?) pulls the enduring 'hero' out of the moral conflict. But how many 'heroes' don't make it for trivial reasons? And who guarantees that the (right) archetype will intervene in a crisis? Both freedom and chance seem slightly undermined. What Jung is telling us that true freedom is the acceptance of necessity and that, in one way or another, all will end well: this appears slightly too optimistic.

To my mind, the more convincing side of Jung's approach to moral dilemmas lies in his distinction between conscious-moral conflicts of duty (which can be solved) and unconscious-neurotic ones (which cannot be solved while they remain unconscious). The implication of this distinction is that if we are not experiencing a conflict of duty, we may either be in the middle of an unconscious one (which should then be made conscious) or we may have (recently) overcome one, and could be living, indeed

precariously, an ethical life, which would be a pleasant discovery.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter I have explored Jung's Kantian legacy with reference to Jung's ethical position. Jung learns from Kant that our actions can be conceived as causally determined but also as morally free. Similarly, in Jung's paradigm, our ego is determined by our Self, but can (and must) emancipate from it. This freedom also involves our relationship with others: Jung embraces Kant's ideal of autonomy, according to which we should be free from the (moral) influence of others. The problem, with Jung's conception of the psyche, is that patients inevitably introject the ethical position of their therapist, so therapists should always have a strong ethical stance (in the sense that I will make clear throughout my analysis) and be aware of it at all times. Jung's conviction that it is our duty to integrate our unconscious also rests on Kant's "ought implies can". Differently from Kant, though, Jung believes that one should also follow one's inclinations (which stem from the unconscious Self). Discussing conflicts of duty, we have also seen how Jung's approach goes beyond Kant's stance according to which, duty being one, a conflict of duty is always only apparent. For Jung, there are two types of conflicts of duty, neurotic ones and 'normal' ones. In the second case, both 'horns' of the conflict are conscious: and the person experiencing the conflict has a choice between suppressing one side of the conflict or waiting for a creative solution to emerge from the unconscious.

As I have shown, Kant provides Jung – and other depth-psychological approaches which may want to embrace Kantism – with a philosophical justification of the idea that the ego can be relatively free from unconscious determinism and that a moral

subject is an autonomous subject. (Ignoring moral philosophy can make it more difficult for therapists to answer questions such as: ‘am I being patronising?’, ‘am I expecting too much from my patient?’, ‘should I give my patient the advice she is asking for?’) But Jung is not entirely (and not only) Kantian and his depth-psychological and therapeutic approach reveals some of the limits of morality. If *duty* is a key word in Kant’s philosophy and a very important word in Jung’s psycho-ethical paradigm, Jung’s belief in different types of genuine *conflicts* of duty brings him beyond the ego-based and rationality-based Kantian framework, towards an integration of the perspective of the unconscious. Consciousness must stand firm, but it cannot stand still. We can now turn to Jung’s second great ethical father, Nietzsche. The discussion of Jung’s Nietzsche’s legacy will help us broaden the scope of what Jung considers to fall under the name of ‘ethics’: not only a matter of concern for the ego, but also a dangerous terrain of experience for the whole Self.

CHAPTER 2:
ETHICS, HEALTH AND THE SELF:
THE NIETZSCHEAN LEGACY⁷⁰

There are times when we're like horses, we psychologists, and get restless:
 we see our shadows bobbing up and down in front of us.
 Psychologists need to stop looking at *themselves*
 if they want to see anything at all.

(Nietzsche, *TI*, 35)

We should never forget that what today
 seems to us a moral commandment will tomorrow
 be cast into the melting-pot and transformed,
 so that in the near or distant future it may serve
 as a basis for new ethical transformation.

This much we ought to have learnt from the history of civilization,
 that the forms of morality belong to the category of transitory things.

(Jung 1914: 667-668)

In the previous chapter I have looked at Jung's Kantian emphasis on morality, but I have also anticipated that Jung does not see morality as the final goal of individuation. In this chapter I argue that Jung derives from Nietzsche the distinction between the collective scope of morality and the individual sphere of ethics: where the former stands, in both Nietzsche and Jung, for collective and rational values, the latter takes into account, in both Nietzsche and Jung, the irrational, unconscious and unique side of each individual Self. However, where Nietzsche claims that ethics should have the courage to step 'beyond good and evil', in other words beyond morality altogether, and only take into account the difference between what is healthy (good) and what is unhealthy (bad) for the 'higher type', Jung is in disaccord. First, I will discuss the Dionysian side of Jung's ethics and Jung's appreciation of Nietzsche's stress on the

⁷⁰ In this chapter quotes from *Zarathustra* are changed according to the translation I am using. The actual quotes Jung uses are quoted in notes.

value of ‘unconscious virtue’. Secondly, I will provide an account of Jung’s (partial) endorsement of Nietzsche’s critique of collective morality and of his complete agreement with Nietzsche on the necessity of an individual ethics. Lastly, I will examine where Jung is divergent from Nietzsche with regards to the application of the health criterion to ethics.

Before I begin my actual discussion of the Nietzsche/Jung interface, in what follows I will briefly discuss some similarities between the style of Nietzsche and Jung, provide a succinct overview of Nietzsche’s ethical position, and highlight some difficulties in approaching Jung’s reception of Nietzsche.

On Jung and Nietzsche’s style

Most of Nietzsche’s books are collections of aphorisms and paragraphs more or less clearly connected to each other. His stylistic choice allows him to showcase what many consider the most beautiful German after Goethe’s, but it is also functional to his substantive critiques of systematic moral philosophies (such as that of Kant, dubbed by Nietzsche ‘the catastrophic spider’), and one-shaded systems of morality. Nietzsche goes as far as to claim that ‘[t]he will to a system is a lack of integrity’ (Nietzsche 2009: 159 [TI I 26]). The style one chooses to philosophise is integral to what one wants to say. So just like every Nietzschean aphorism is in some way unique, as well as ambiguous, every human being, in Nietzsche’s view, is unique and in some way ambiguous. By the very act of reading Nietzsche, we are subtly introduced to his ethical and indeed ontological claims about the fragmentation of truth and of ethical standpoints.

These reflections could equally be applied to Jung, who notoriously never wrote a ‘system’ of his psychology (except, perhaps, for *Psychological Types*, which can be read as such an attempt), and was generally disappointed with those who attempted to systematise his work (having first encouraged them to try!). Jung frequently leaves a thought unfinished, perhaps out of laziness, or perhaps because he wants to stimulate the reader to think for herself. This method may be derived from clinical practice, where the patient is supposed to develop his own world view. Jung frequently hides aphorisms within his paragraphs⁷¹ and writes in a paradoxical style. With a Nietzschean gesture against ‘weakness’, he claims that

uniformity of meaning is a sign of weakness [...] only the paradox comes anywhere near to comprehending the fullness of life. Non-ambiguity and non-contradiction are one-sided and thus unsuited to express the incomprehensible.

(Jung 1944: 18)⁷²

When approaching thinkers such as Jung and Nietzsche, who frequently write in a fragmentary and not clearly argued way, as if possessed by sudden intuitions⁷³, various problems may arise. When we are confronted with two (or more) statements which

71 Gian Piero Quaglino and Augusto Romano have collected and commented many of Jung’s most thought-provoking aphorisms in *Nel giardino di Jung* (2010) [‘In Jung’s garden’], *A colazione da Jung* (2006) [‘Breakfast at Jung’s’] and *A spasso con Jung* (2005) [‘Taking a walk with Jung’].

72 In a letter to R. J. Zwi Werblowsky of 17 June 1952, he insists on the same point, and his words sound like an act of defiance (‘unequivocalness [...] would be at the cost of truth’) towards any supposedly accurate and clear scientific or academic language: ‘Our language is a faithful reflection of the psychic phenomenon with its dual aspect “perceptual” and “imaginary” [...] The language I speak must be ambiguous, must have two meanings, in order to do justice to the dual aspect of our psychic nature. I strive quite consciously and deliberately for ambiguity of expression, because it is superior to unequivocalness and reflects the nature of life. My whole temperament inclines me to be very unequivocal indeed. That is not difficult, but it would be at the cost of truth. I purposely allow all the overtones and undertones to be heard, partly because they are there anyway, and partly because they give a fuller picture of reality.’ (Jung 1951-1961: 70).

73 Jung saw Nietzsche as an intuitive type – with sensation as his inferior function – and in the *Zarathustra* Seminars he describes him through the following metaphors: ‘Intuition goes in leaps and bounds. It settles down and bounces off in the next moment. Therefore intuitives never reap their crops; they plant their fields and then leave them behind before they are ready for the harvest’ (Jung 1934-1939: 1391). The same can be said, to a certain extent, of Jung’s writing.

appear to be in contradiction, we must be careful enough to distinguish whether the contradiction is real or apparent. The aforementioned Jungian quote (Jung 1944: 18) should perhaps be taken as a methodological indication: some contradictions in his thought may be understood more profitably as paradoxes. Usually a paradoxical statement is signalled in one way or another (with an exclamation mark, for example), such as in the following passage from Nietzsche: ‘In this book faith in morality is withdrawn – but why? *Out of morality!*’ (D 4, quoted in Leiter 2010: 1-2). Nietzsche here produces surprise and estrangement in the reader (as the Greek *para-doxa*, i.e. ‘against common opinions’, originally signified) and his words are there to make one think. But we must guard ourselves against the risk of using the possibility of paradoxical reading as an excuse whenever we encounter a contradiction which resists all our attempts to solve it philologically and critically⁷⁴ or to understand it as a thought-provoking and deliberate paradox. A contradiction, after all our efforts to be ‘charitable’ (Davidson’s hermeneutic principle), must be pointed out and described as such, in the want of any better available explanation. I have insisted on these stylistic and methodological issues because in looking at Jung’s reception of Nietzsche’s ideas there is often the risk of an exponential multiplication of hermeneutic difficulties.

Nietzsche’s ethics: an overview

We wish to be terrified by rope-dancers on the point of falling.

G.W. Leibniz

Nietzsche’s famous genealogical inquiry into the origin of morality is well summarised

⁷⁴ For example asking more knowledgeable colleagues, reading more primary and secondary literature, looking for unpublished material, writing to the author if alive, etc.

by William Schroeder:

Nietzsche suggests that “master moralities” are those in which flourishing human beings bestow value on the traits that *make their flourishing possible*. Everything that produces delight, joy, power – everything that *affirms this life* – is sanctified with the appellation “good”. For such moralities “bad” is almost an afterthought – indicating simply a lack of good traits; the bad person is less condemned than unfortunate. However, those who are more impoverished, less advantaged, and less talented resent and hate the success of those who flourish [...] To avenge themselves, they create the category of “evil”. They substitute for the opposition “good/bad” the more vituperative opposition of “good/evil”, and they invert what counts as good [...]. How else could meekness, self-effacement, and poverty have become virtues? Thus, for slave moralities “evil” becomes whatever master moralities have called good – whatever has made human flourishing possible. And “good” becomes whatever was previously merely bad – characteristics indicating misfortune, weakness, disability, self-denial, and life-denial.

(Schroeder 2000: 382, my italics)

Schroeder highlights ‘flourishing’ (a virtue-ethical notion⁷⁵) and ‘life-affirmation’ as key components of Nietzsche’s positive ethical outlook. Other scholars, in seeking the cornerstone of Nietzsche’s ethical proposal, have focused instead on the concepts of ‘self-overcoming’ (Kaufmann 1950), ‘power’ (Shacht 1983; Richardson 2001), ‘life’ (Geuss 1987), ‘self-creation’ (Nehamas 1985), ‘creativity’ [in *Z*] and ‘knowing’ [in *BGE*] (Berkowitz 1995), ‘the nature of one’s ‘type’’ (Leiter 2010), ‘self-legislation’ (Bennett 2012). All these notions are central components of Nietzsche’s ethical vision⁷⁶ and it is very difficult (and not necessarily meaningful) to try to establish which one of them is the most fundamental.

In seeking which of Nietzsche’s ethical ideas have most influenced Jung, it seems to me that *three* fundamental concepts stand out, and ironically they are so pervasive in

⁷⁵ Cf. Chapter 3.

⁷⁶ I will return to these various aspects of Nietzsche’s ethics in the following sections of this chapter.

Nietzsche's thought that it is possible to overlook them. It could be argued that these ethical ideas are not only the ones that have most influenced Jung, but that they are also Nietzsche's three single most important ethical ideas. The first two are precisely 'ethics' and 'morality' (which can be used as synonyms for 'master' and 'slave' morality respectively). Nietzsche's career-long obsession was that the extremely noble search for a good life has been left for too long in the hands of morality, and should be brought back, as it was in Homeric Greece, into a higher sphere, the sphere of ethics.

The third key ethical concept is *health*: Nietzsche's fundamental argument is that morality is harmful to the development of higher individuals, in other words it is *unhealthy*; and the mark of the 'higher type' or 'free spirit', the type that embodies Nietzsche's *ethical* vision, is health: '[he or she] is solitary, pursues a "unifying project", is *healthy*, is life-affirming and practices self-reverence' (Leiter 2010: 12, my italics).⁷⁷ In Nietzsche health stands not just for an absence of symptoms, as one can have no symptoms of ill-health and still be weak. It has to do with the strength to endure, overcome and recover from illness (as from misfortune); it is a certain powerful vitality and resilience. Morality, on the other hand, is for Nietzsche first and foremost an expression of weakness and decadence. The refusal of morality, in the 'higher type', will coincide both with ethics and with health. (So, for sake of completeness, one could add 'illness' or 'weakness' as Nietzsche's fourth key ethical concept.)

In this chapter, when discussing Nietzsche, I will use 'morality' as shorthand for what Nietzsche disparagingly calls 'slave morality' and 'herd morality' and for what has

⁷⁷ In the *Gay Science* Nietzsche writes: 'Being new, nameless, hard to understand, we premature births of an as yet unproven future need for a new goal also a new means – namely, *a new health*, stronger, more seasoned, tougher, more audacious, and gayer than any previous health' (Nietzsche 1964: 346 [GS 382], my italics).

become known, in the secondary literature on Nietzsche, as ‘Morality in the Pejorative Sense’ (Leiter 2010: 1)⁷⁸. It is a sufficiently good approximation to say that for Nietzsche morality is always slave morality and something to be avoided. Likewise, what Nietzsche calls ‘master morality’ or ‘higher type’ morality, or the moral stance of ‘free spirits,’ can quite neatly be dubbed ‘ethics’.⁷⁹ So my suggestion is that what Nietzsche attacks is morality, and what he endorses is ethics. I derive this contrastive use of the *words* ethical/ethics and moral/morality from Jung. The pupil (Jung) helps clarify a distinction which the master (Nietzsche) already had in mind.⁸⁰ But the *idea* that ethics is an individual task to be differentiated from adherence to collective morality is Nietzsche’s – and Jung learns it from him.

On Jung’s reception of Nietzsche

It would be too ambitious a task to give you a detailed account of the influence of Nietzsche’s thoughts on my own development.

(C. G. Jung to Rev. Arthur W. Rudolph, 5 January 1961)

As I discussed in the Introduction, it is an established fact that Nietzsche had a great influence on Jung’s philosophical and psychological conceptions and it must not be forgotten that for Nietzsche, and for Jung, these two spheres cannot really be considered

78 This issue (‘is Nietzsche against all types of morality or only against a specific type of morality?’) is discussed in the Nietzschean literature as the ‘scope problem’ (see e. g. Gemes and Schuringa 2012: 220, in Angier 2012).

79 This produces clarity and avoids sentences with too many parentheses such as ‘Nietzsche criticises (slave) morality’, as well as book titles with scare quotes such as *Nietzsche’s Ethics and his War on ‘Morality’* (May 1999). It is true that Nietzsche wrote, in the Preface to *Daybreak*: ‘in this book faith in morality is withdrawn – but why? *Out of morality!* Or what else should we call that which informs it – and *us?*’ [D 4] (quoted in Leiter 2010: 1-2). But this is a deliberately paradoxical affirmation: the evaluative criterion deployed by Nietzsche, as well as the positive model he offers, are of an entirely different nature from the object he is attacking.

80 Robert Solomon, in discussing the scope of Nietzsche’s work, agrees that ‘Ethics [...] I take to be the overall arena in which morality and morals and other questions concerning the good life and how to live it are debated’ (Solomon 1998: 324).

separately. Both are indeed ‘psychologists of morality’ and see *morality* as in need of psychological treatment. Jung famously saw Nietzsche – and his ideas – as being in need of psychological treatment.⁸¹ In addition to an “ad hominem” critique of his ideas (‘Nietzsche had an inferiority complex which his grandiose ideas were an attempt to compensate’), Jung conducts what could be called an “ad ideam” critique of the philosopher (‘Nietzsche’s ideas are intrinsically inflation-inducing, and that is part of the reason why Nietzsche went mad’). These two forms of vibrant intellectual attack reinforce each other. I will not discuss these ideas further, but what I have mentioned is enough to reveal that for both Jung and Nietzsche health is the battlefield where different psychological, philosophical and ethical ideas fight for supremacy⁸².

In the *Collected Works*, with the notable exclusion of his seminar on Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* (1934-1939), Jung usually mentions Nietzsche in a rather negative light, and this, given the influence that Nietzsche had on his ideas, seems ungrateful as well as suspicious. There may be more than one reason why Jung does not fully acknowledge the Nietzschean influence on his work, and one reason does not exclude another: intellectual pride; not having always been aware of the extent of this influence; or even the mere pervasiveness of this influence (see quote at the beginning of this section). It must also be noted that, in the years of Jung’s intellectual formation, Nietzsche’s name was wrongly associated with a radical critique of any type of ethical outlook and his figure was an emblem of the lonely and eccentric philosopher;⁸³ so any mention of Nietzsche in a positive light in a scientific work could have alienated Jung

81 Huskinson (2004) and Golomb et al (1999) discuss Jung’s diagnosis of Nietzsche in some detail.

82 Shamdasani (2003) neatly summarises how the early history of psychoanalysis was as much an exchange of diagnosis as it was an exchange of ideas.

83 Cf Ellenberger 1970: 272. Cf also Ascheim 1992, who discusses *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890 – 1990*.

from the sympathies of his (non-Nietzschean) readers (if this was indeed the case Jung can be accused of intellectual dishonesty or cowardice). On the other hand, when discussing Nietzsche more informally and to a close circle of people, during his unique exegesis of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1935-1939) (not intended for publication, but published from the notes of those present⁸⁴), Jung's judgement appears more nuanced and overall more positive: it still contains a good deal of psychoanalytic arrogance (well documented in Huskinson 2004 and Golomb et al. 1999), but there are also frequent acknowledgments of Nietzsche's greatness and of his influence on Jung's own conceptions.

Finally, in his memoir (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*), written at the end of his life in collaboration with Aniela Jaffé, Jung acknowledged the *psychological* influence that Nietzsche's life and philosophy had had on him (which readers of Jung's would have been unaware of until the publication of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*) and claimed that the figure of Nietzsche's Zarathustra was a personification of his (Jung's) 'No. 2 [personality]' (Jung 1963: 102), the one in contact with the unconscious. In his student days Jung feared No. 2 would take the lead of his life (Jung 1963: 102-103) and possibly drive him mad. But, writing his memoir as an old man, he claims that:

The play and counterplay between personalities No. 1 and No. 2, which has run through my whole life, has nothing to do with a "split" or dissociation in the ordinary medical sense. On the contrary, it is played out in every individual.
(Jung 1963: 45).

Still, Jung's early fear that he resembled Nietzsche and so was also ill ('morbid', Jung 1963: 102), must have given him throughout his life a strong stimulus to study him

⁸⁴ Jung also claimed that Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* should not have been published either, since the ideas contained in it were too dangerous: again, an "ad ideam" perspective.

very carefully, and if indeed they were similar, may account for both his great insight into Nietzsche's work, a kind of *participation mystique* between scholar and object of study, and for the occasional blunders and short-sightedness of his exegesis (so that sometimes one wonders: is Jung really talking about *Nietzsche*?⁸⁵). I will now discuss the influence of Nietzsche's ideas on Jung's ethical stance.

2.1. JUNG AND NIETZSCHE: ETHICS AND THE IRRATIONAL

On unconscious virtue

The irrationality of a thing is no argument against its existence, rather a condition of it

(Nietzsche 1999: 182 [HA 515])

“How should one live?” –
the generality of one already stakes a claim.
The Greek language does not even give us *one*:
the formula is impersonal [...]

The implication is that something relevant
or useful can be said to anyone in general [...]
(a larger implication can easily be found in the generality:
that the question naturally leads us
out of the concerns of the ego altogether)'

(Williams 2006: 3, my italics)

In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche exhorts: 'I wish *your* self were in the deed like the mother is in the child: let that be *your* word on virtue!⁸⁶' (Nietzsche 2004: 74 [Z II 'On the Virtuous']). Jung comments on this passage thus:

our action is virtuous inasmuch as the wider circle [in Nietzsche, 'the mother', which Jung sees here as an image of the Self] can be expressed within or by means of the smaller circle [in Nietzsche, 'the child', which Jung sees here as an image of the ego]: namely, inasmuch as the hypothetical invisible self manifests in our actions. In other words, inasmuch as we can allow the unconscious to flow in us, so that whatever we do always contains a certain

85 On the hypothesis that Jung may have projected parts of himself on Nietzsche, see Huskinson 2004.

86 Jung quotes the translation of *Zarathustra* by Thomas Common (published in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, New York, n.d.) who translates this passage as follows: 'That *your* very Self be in your action, as the mother is in the child: let that be *your* formula of virtue!'

amount of unconscious. [...] But it must be clear, if the unconscious flows in with our action and with our behaviour, that *we assume responsibility*. Otherwise it would not be expressed, but would simply be an event that occurred, and it would occur just as well to fishes or plants. It would have no merit; it only becomes ethical inasmuch as we know. If you know that a certain amount of unconsciousness, which means a certain amount of risk, comes in, and you stand for it, you assume responsibility: insofar as your action virtuous or ethical.

(Jung 1934-1939: 1052-1053, italics in the original)

This dense and important passage is essentially an endorsement of Nietzsche's ethical vision. According to Plato's Socrates, if we really know what is good we will do what is good: ignorance is the source of moral error.⁸⁷ With Aristotle's discussion of the moral case of *akrasia* (which I discuss in Chapter 3), the situation is altered by the fact that our will can go in a divergent direction from that prescribed by our intellect: knowing what is good may not be enough.⁸⁸ Jung agrees, with Nietzsche, that there is a vast area of ourselves that cannot be known,⁸⁹ but he does not renounce the Socratic quest of attempting to know as much as we can about ourselves. In depth psychological terms, Socrates's 'I know that I do not know', assumes a vaster significance: we really are, to a large extent, unknown to ourselves. Still, according to Jung, depth psychology should attempt to clarify what can be made clear, as well as accepting that a lot of what we are – including our motives and intentions – will always remain unclear (this marks a significant difference with Freud's positivistic ideal). To accept that we do not know many of our real motives and intentions from is a form of knowledge, and our action 'becomes ethical inasmuch as we know'.

87 'In the *Meno* (78a-b), Socrates argues that no one knowingly desires what is bad (*to kakon*). His argument shows that by 'bad' he means things that are harmful to the subject, i.e., the one who would desire these things. In the *Protagoras* (358c-d) he makes a similar point when he says that it is not in human nature for someone to wish to go after what he thinks is bad in place of the good' (Parry 2014)

88 Nietzsche describes the *akratic* in the following terms: 'And many a one *can* command himself, but still sorely lacketh self-obedience!' (Nietzsche 2008: 139 [Z III 'Old and New Tables', VI]).

89 In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche claims that 'the decisive value is conferred by what is specifically unintentional about an action' (Nietzsche 2002: 33 [BGE 32]).

To Nietzsche's stress on the individual and to a great extent unknowable character of an ethical action, Jung adds that once we admit our unknowable and irrational side we must, paradoxically, take responsibility for it, which is always a risk⁹⁰: the risk of letting our Self express itself, and facing the consequences. But in fact, *not* to allow our Self to express itself, is *more* risky: the result of repression will be, most likely, some form of irresponsible acting out (see Section 1.1.). Jung develops here a 'theory of expression'⁹¹ which is quite different from Freud's 'medicalisation' of the unconscious, in which consciousness is constantly on the lookout for slips and *faux pas*: to express one's unconscious Self, for Jung, is healthy.⁹²

In the Seminar on Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* Jung provides an interesting depth-psychological definition of virtue: 'to be able to submit to the strength which is in us, that is virtue' (Jung 1934-1939: 1053). The 'strength within', in Jung's paradigm, is the Self. This idea of virtue as *strength* is akin to the idea of a *health*-based ethics which must follow what is most vital (see below). In discussing Nietzsche, Jung re-states that 'God' can be equated to 'Self' only if neither are used as a name for what Jung terms (collective) morality. The God which used to be equated to collective morality, the 'good God', is – both for Nietzsche and for Jung – (luckily) *dead*. If this image still survives, it should be killed. The Self, too, may be amoral or become ethical, but it is certainly not *moral*, so the idea that human beings are intrinsically good should equally

90 Huskinson claims that, following Nietzsche, 'the 'well-balanced' personality of Jung's model should take more risks' (Huskinson 2004: 172). But Jung had listened to Nietzsche's lesson more carefully than Huskinson, here, allows. On the ideal of 'balance' and 'equilibrium' in Jung's model, see Chapter 3.

91 Cf Wohlheim 1981: xxxv.

92 Consciousness (our personality No. 1) can quite often let go of its role of guardian, like a parent who stops looking out of the window while his child (our personality No. 2) is playing in the courtyard. The unconscious should also forget about consciousness: to remain with the metaphor, children are more likely to trip if they are constantly looking up to see if their parents are checking on them. Slips of the tongue are perhaps more frequent in a repressive society.

be discarded. The landscape of (post)modernity is a harsh one. Jung notes that:

[w]hen you say you submit to the strength of God [it] sounds like something that is in a way very nice. You have a form, you can even justify yourself apparently, particularly when that strength of God coincides with what is said in books, or with what the priests say, or public opinion says. For instance, if you raise a fund for certain charitable purposes and [...] call it the will of God and say you are obeying his strength, everybody will pat you on the back and call it nice and virtuous [...] Hosea could say it was the command of the Lord [to marry the whore] and there was no gainsaying it. But where are you if you say it is the command of the self? You are an egotist, you are excusing yourself. What is the self? It is yourself and there is no excuse whatever. So you are absolutely in the frying pan. That is what you come to when you say God is dead: you have no excuse any longer. But there we are – we have lost every authority for what we do.

(Jung 1934-1939: 1054).

Jung's psychology thus includes a Nietzschean attempt to restore reliance in the creative and healing power of the whole Self – from whose 'strength' all human beings have the potential to draw from – after the "death of God".⁹³ Jung also seems to want to stress that one should abandon the need for a moral *justification* altogether⁹⁴. In this sense, perhaps, Jung is even more Nietzschean than Nietzsche himself, whose strenuous battle with morality may reveal a higher degree of entanglement with moral categories than Nietzsche would ever have been willing to admit.

Dionysos: creativity, joy, suffering

Most terrible and most gentle to mortals.

(Euripides)

And because you abandoned Dionysus
Apollo in his turn abandoned you.

(Nietzsche, *BT*, 10).

93 To paraphrase ironically Nietzsche: 'God is dead. The Self has killed it'.

94 See my discussion of Zabriskie 1997 in the Introduction.

At present I am sitting so precariously
on the fence between the Dionysian and the Apollinian.

(C. G. Jung to S. Freud, 11 February 1910)

In the Seminar on Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, Jung claims that 'to get drunk with the figures of the unconscious is Dionysian' (Jung 1934-1939: 143). The Dionysian, in Nietzsche, stands for instinctual and unconscious love for life, identification with the instant which destroys itself, craving for experiences which tear us apart and that, by doing so, allow us to reconstruct our identity into new more dynamic configurations. The Dionysian is what allows us to find a form of pagan redemption through a joyful abandonment of the ego, through an ecstatic and immediate relationship with the world, Levi-Bruhl's 'participation mystique' (often quoted by Jung). The Dionysian is dancing with a thousand masks⁹⁵ and discarding them while we dance (as in Goethe's powerful allegory of nature). The Dionysian is the spirit of wine, lust and abandonment. Of these inseparable aspects of the Nietzschean Dionysian, the ones that most influence Jung's ethics are arguably 'creativity', 'joy' and 'suffering'.

I will begin by looking at the latter. As Leiter explains, 'an agent has a Dionysian attitude toward life insofar as that agent affirms his life unconditionally, in particular, insofar as he affirms it notwithstanding the "suffering" or other hardships involved' (Leiter 2001: 235, in Richardson and Leiter 2001). Or, to say it with Nietzsche's own words: 'The discipline of suffering, of great suffering – don't you know that this discipline has been the sole cause of every enhancement in humanity so far' (Nietzsche 2002: 116-17 [*BGE* 225]). Interestingly, Nietzsche speaks of a 'discipline of suffering' – one could even speak of *the duty* to suffer – as a necessary condition for an enhancement of humankind. Jung holds a similar view, when he writes that

⁹⁵ In Jung, these Dionysian masks are also the 'personae', the segments of collective consciousness which we need to wear in order to adapt but which we must not adhere to too strictly.

[L]ife demands for its completion and fulfilment a balance between joy and sorrow [...] happiness is itself poisoned if the measure of suffering has not been fulfilled. Behind a neurosis there is so often concealed all the natural and necessary suffering the patient has been unwilling to bear.

(Jung 1943b: 185)

In this quote Jung speaks not only of suffering, but also of joy,⁹⁶ the Dionysian counter-pole of suffering, since the word happiness usually defines a more intermediate condition. He emphasises the necessity of finding a ‘balance’ between these two states or conditions, and in fact (moderate) happiness could be a good word to describe this balance. What characterizes joy and suffering, though, is not only that one can indeed seek them, but that they occur to us often unexpectedly and against our will. Jung seems to place a larger emphasis on this aspect – accepting these conditions when they occur, not resisting them, since to do so would lead to neurosis, while Nietzsche claims that we should have an active role in seeking suffering and joy. Jung, in the above quote, speaks only of the importance of not resisting suffering. In the *Red Book*,⁹⁷ instead, we find an interesting reflection on joy: ‘It is always a risky thing to accept joy, but it leads us to life and its disappointment, from which the wholeness of our life becomes’ (Jung 1913-1930: 219). And again: ‘The part that you take over from the devil – joy, that is – leads you into adventure’ (Jung 1913-1930: 225). Jung’s attitude towards suffering and joy seems closer to the Oriental attitude, of openness to whatever the Self and the world have to offer, and trying to maintain the aforementioned balance, while Nietzsche

96 Cf. Section 1.6.

97 The visionary and prophetic style of *The Red Book*, as well as some intuitions therein on the nature of ‘new morality’, can be compared to Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*. Jung never mentions his own work during his seminars on Nietzsche’s masterpiece, presumably to avoid the risk of being associated with Nietzsche’s ‘madness.’

maintains a more Western power-based and ego-based frame of mind. But as is often the case when trying to characterise Jung, there are aspects of his psychology in which an active role of the ego towards the Self is also recommended, as I have discussed in the previous chapter.

I will only briefly discuss the third aforementioned aspect of the Dionysian side of Jung's psychology, creativity, since to do so properly would require many pages and would be beyond the scope of my work. It will suffice here to say that Jung's unconscious has been characterised as an essentially *creative* unconscious (Gaillard 2009) and that the Dionysian could be seen as another word for the creative principle which brings health (as I have said, health can be interpreted as the crucial feature of Nietzsche's ethical vision): a casting away of unnecessary rigidity and formality, the liberation from convention and boundaries.⁹⁸ But excess, alone, is not healthy. Humans also strive for Apollonian 'form', which is also necessary for life and happiness:

The "mysterious union of Apollo and Dionysus" stems from their intrinsic deficiencies; they are necessarily interdependent and "inwardly related" (BT 4). Apart, the Apollinian and Dionysian drives both prove incomplete and incapable of attaining satisfaction.

(Berkowitz 1995: 52)

Jung was aware of this complementarity and perhaps, in his mature years he would have defined the difficult composition of these two impulses as a *unio oppositorum*.⁹⁹

98 Ideas that the peaceful revolution of '68 embodied with great strength. Cf Tacey 2001. Jung died in 1961, so his interest in the Dionysian, as well as in the power of the feminine (it must be remembered that Dionysos is primarily the god of women), can be said to anticipate those movements, although perhaps nobody, including Jung, could have imagined the extent of 'liberation' waves of the '60s and '70s.

99 'In his early work, Nietzsche tended toward a *dualistic* metaphysics, and the Dionysian was conceived as a flood of passion to which the Apollinian principle of individuation might give form. In the "dithyrambs" of Zarathustra this opposition of the two gods was repudiated, and the will to power was proclaimed as the *one and only basic force of the universe*. This fundamental principle, which Nietzsche

2.2. JUNG AND NIETZSCHE: THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COLLECTIVE

Jung and Nietzsche on the relationship between individual and collective

When Nietzsche writes that ‘[M]adness is rare in the individual – but with groups, parties, peoples, and ages it is the rule’ (Nietzsche 2002: 70 [BGE: 156]), he is implying that (psychic) health is to be found not in groups, or in group-minded individuals, but in unique and superior human beings, who have the courage to be individuals.

Adaptation, for Nietzsche, is only a goal for the ‘herd’:

Today it seems to do everyone good when they hear that society is on the way to *adapting* the individual to general requirements, and that the happiness and at the same time the sacrifice of the individual lies in feeling himself to be a useful member and instrument of the whole.

[D II 132, *my italics*]

As we have seen, true philosophers, free spirits, are for Nietzsche capable of being lonely and can live separately from morally-informed communities.

Although I am keeping my discussion of Jung’s diagnosis of Nietzsche to a minimum, I will quote a passage which sums up the former’s thoughts about the risks that the ‘higher type’ may go *too* high:

Nietzsche, in his identity with Zarathustra, reviles the collective man without realizing that he is a collective man himself, so he is really reviling himself [...] Unfortunately enough, he has certain thoughts which transcend the lower regions, but that does not mean that he is identical with his high thoughts. In

still called “Dionysian”, is actually a union of Dionysus and Apollo: a creative striving that gives form to itself” (Kaufmann 1950: 282, *my italics*). On the difference between dual and triadic metaphysics in Jung and Nietzsche, see also Huskinson 2004.

that respect he is exactly like a tenor who thinks he is identical with his high notes; but the tenor is a very ordinary man, and the more he identifies with his beautiful high notes, the lower his character will be, if it is only by way of compensation.

(Jung 1934-1939: 1421-22)

This critique does not apply simply to Nietzsche, but to all the followers of his ideas who despise the healing power of being part of a living community¹⁰⁰ in which adaptation to reality and individuation can occur.

The following quotes, in which Jung explains the concept of individuation, show his thoughts on the complex interplay of individual and collective¹⁰¹ more clearly. In *Psychological Types* (1921) Jung defines individuation as (1) the ‘development of the psychological *individual* as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology’ (Jung 1921: 757, italics in the original). He adds that individuation is (2) ‘a *natural* necessity inasmuch as its prevention by a levelling down to collective standards is injurious to the *vital* activity of the individual’ (Jung 1921: 758, my italics). And, a couple of paragraphs below, he states that (3) ‘the more a man’s life is shaped by the collective norm, the greater is his individual immorality’ (Jung 1921: 761). He also claims that individuation is (4) ‘the development of consciousness out of the original state of *identity*’ (Jung 1921: 449, my italics)¹⁰², specifying that (5) ‘[i]ndividuality can hardly be said to pertain to the psychic elements themselves, but only to their peculiar *grouping* and *combination*’ (Jung 1921: 756, my italics). In his work of 1928, ‘The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious’, when discussing ‘The Way of

100 Rieff 1966: 76, passim.

101 Or, to use the language of virtue ethics, ‘self-regarding’ and ‘other-regarding’ concern’ (Brown 2009: xxiv).

102 This theme is amplified in Neumann’s *The Origin and History of Consciousness* (1954). The *moral* aspect of this development out of identity is described by Jung in *Answer to Job* (1952).

Individuation’, Jung stresses that (6) ‘adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to a *better social performance* than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed’ (Jung 1928: 267, my italics). And again, in his 1928 work, he clarifies, as he had already done in 1921 (paragraph 761), the difference between individuation and *individualism*: (7) ‘Individualism means *deliberately* stressing and giving prominence to some *supposed peculiarity* rather than to collective considerations and obligations’ (Jung 1928: 267, my italics).

What is Jung telling us in these statements? He is telling us that individuation is the only ethical and healthy option between mass-mindedness (morality in the conformist sense, cf. Section 1.7) and individualism (immorality): ethical and healthy because it allows both individuals and the society in which they live in to flourish. In mass-mindedness, adherence to collective standards is suffocating, and no space is left for the individual, who becomes ‘immoral’ (Statement 3). This use of immoral here, which Jung uses with a paradoxical intent, describes conformist individuals, and is different from Jung’s use of ‘immoral’ that I discuss below (cf. Section 2.3.), where the word describes individualists. To avoid this confusion, in Statement 3 Jung could have used the word ‘unethical’. Leaving aside this terminological issue, the adherence to the ‘code’ described by Jung means both that autonomous reflection is not allowed (by the structure who detains power and/or by a self-imposed limitation of reflexivity) and that the irrational elements of the individual psyche are not taken into account. This would be the case in which a conflict of duty could only be solved by discarding one horn of the dilemma: the reduction of critical space between an individual and social norms effaces consciousness (and conscience), suffocating the spontaneous and uncontrollable aspects of the psyche.

On the other hand, in individualism, we find a systematic neglect of the collective (Statement 7). Jung implies that individualism *is also a norm* (it is, after all, an –ism), the norm according to which we are asked or tell ourselves to pursue only what we think is original about ourselves. (Marketing strikes the individualistic chord frequently in its logically self-defeating description of unique products for unique individuals). In ‘Psychotherapy today’ Jung writes: ‘Individuation is at-one-ment with oneself and at the same time with humanity’. In *Psychological Types* he explains that the individual way never coincides with a norm, since authentic individuals always deviate from norms followed by the majority. Still, for this precise reason, they need norms as points of reference, as objective elements against which their subjective evolution is measured. Integration of the unconscious and a critical selection of social norms and values are both involved in individuation. Jung does not actually speak of individuation as a critical selection of values, but I think this is implied in the idea that individuality is a unique combination of collective factors (Statement 6).

Statement (2) stresses the natural uniqueness of each individual (Jung uses the adjectives ‘vital’ and ‘natural’), against the excessive demands of culture; whereas statement (6) points out that our social performance will improve if we cultivate what is unique about ourselves in terms of the combination of values that we embody (preserved from or chosen out of all the ones that were available in our culture). I think Jung implies that if we only follow a restricted set of value and norms, we will have less richness to offer to society. But at the same time, as Jung’s critique of Nietzsche’s oddness implies, if we try to be ‘eccentrics’ by any means and follow no collective value (except of course the value of eccentricity), we will end up not sufficiently

adapted.

Individuation is a middle ground between originality and adaptation, *but not a compromise*, because in one individual there are already collective elements which allow for adaptation, and our uniqueness is a more valuable resource for society than we usually allow. The ‘individuated person’ – although nobody, of course, is entirely individuated – is an asset to society, perhaps inasmuch as he or she adds a peculiar blend of values and points of view which had not previously been part of that specific culture or normative system. Richly and nuanced individuals make a culture rich and nuanced. It is not simply a matter of putting together individuals who have different points of views and who uphold different sets of values: Jung seems to think that each of us should *be* a melting pot.

Not only is the individuated subject capable of a better social performance. For Jung, he or she *must* produce something in favour of society. In a series of notes on the relationship between individuation, adaptation and the collective, Jung writes ‘the individuated personality *must* produce something equivalent in favour of society [...] individuation remains a pose so long as no *positive values* are created’ (Jung 1916: 1098, my italics. In the above quote Jung speaks, in a Nietzschean manner, of the creation of values. These values, if we keep in mind Jung’s ideas on conflicts of duties, could be seen as the ethical and creative *tertium* which the ‘hero’, having endured many conflicts of duties during his individuating journey, is capable of ‘producing’, and decides to share with mankind. This *tertium* may actually be the hero’s qualities in themselves, and not necessarily a specific cultural object or achievement. In the fourth part of Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*, the protagonist begins his descent back to humanity to

teach his ideal of the eternal recurrence, and Nietzsche's subsequent books can be read as the substantiation of this promise (if it is true that Nietzsche did identify with *Zarathustra* to a great extent). So Nietzsche's life and work would seem to follow the same archetype of the "return of the hero", although one could argue that *Zarathustra* does not really endure a conflict, since he does not stand *between* good and evil, but goes *beyond* this polarity, so he cannot really be said to have reached atonement with himself or with humanity¹⁰³. Unfortunately Jung did not comment on the final fourth part of Nietzsche's masterpiece (his Seminars ended by discussing Part III of *Zarathustra*, "On Old and New Tables", Part 13), in which *Zarathustra* returns to humankind.

I will now turn to look at how Jung takes from Nietzsche some aspects of his depiction of the 'great individual', without overlooking the results of our previous discussion, namely that an individuated subject is adapted to society, while the 'higher type' despises society and sees himself as above the collective man.

Jung and Nietzsche on individual ethics

In the seminars on *Zarathustra*, Jung defends Nietzsche from the accusation of being an individualist, a move which is in partial contrast with our examination above of Jung's critique of the Nietzschean stance. Jung claims that it is only those who confuse ego and Self that can bring about such an accusation. Nietzsche may indeed have been *selfish* (in a technical sense), but he was not 'egotistical'; and although he was, according to Jung, unable to handle the power of the Self on a personal level, his putting the Self at the centre of the psychic stage was a theoretical move of crucial importance.

¹⁰³ Jung levels a similar criticism in *Answer to Job* (1952), when he describes Christ as partly 'aloof' from humankind.

Jung is in debt to Nietzsche's idea that there are many forces (or drives) within our Self which should all be taken into account and integrated in a unitary but not synthetic picture (Pieri 2005: 679), avoiding the repression of one force at the expense of another. The more we take into account these different forces, according to Jung, the more our action will be ethical, in other words not one-sided: it will be the action of a whole individual. Nietzsche writes:

One thing is needful – To “give style” to one's character – a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. Here a large mass of second nature has been added; there a piece of original nature has been removed – both times through long practice and daily work at it.

(Nietzsche 1974: 232 [GS: 290])

Here Nietzsche's emphasis is on the active making of the Self, an idea that Jung embraces when he speaks of individuation as an *opus contra naturam* (Jung 1939a: 256). Elsewhere Nietzsche insists rather on the fact that the Self comes to being thanks to unconscious forces, which must be allowed to run their own course:

Becoming what you are presupposes that you do not have the slightest idea *what* you are [...] The whole surface of consciousness – consciousness *is* a surface – has to be kept free from all imperatives. Be careful even of great words, great attitudes. They pose the threat that instinct will ‘understand itself’ too early. – – In the mean time, the organizing, governing ‘idea’ keeps growing deep inside, – it starts commanding, it slowly leads *back* from out of the side roads and wrong turns, it gets the *individual* qualities and virtues ready, since at some point these will prove indispensable as a means to the whole, – one by one, it develops all the *servile* faculties before giving any clue as to the domineering task, the ‘goal’, the ‘purpose’, the ‘meaning’.

(Nietzsche 2009: 97 [EH “Why I am so clever” 9], italics in the original)

In Jung ‘found’ and ‘given’ are just as much complementary as in Nietzsche. Jung quoted Nietzsche’s ‘become what you are’ many times and believed that one should not passively await the development of one’s (unconscious) personality, but actively (consciously) strive so that this development may occur. (The expression ‘active striving’ may be construed as including an ‘active waiting’, since waiting is an action, too). So both Jung and Nietzsche, and Nietzsche is one of Jung’s teachers in this respect, claim that the Self is both given and made.¹⁰⁴ It would be erroneous to suggest that Jung and Nietzsche are not in agreement: that the former favours the ‘given’ side of ethics and the latter the ‘made’.

In ‘The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious’ (1928) Jung provides an important description of what he means by an ethical [although he actually uses the word ‘moral’] feeling of inferiority, which he believes should *not* merely be cured as a symptom. He describes the feeling of ‘moral [sic] inferiority’ which ‘does not come from a collision with the generally accepted and, in a sense, arbitrary moral law, but from the conflict with one’s own self’. As I have said, this feeling would be better defined, using Jung’s mature distinction between ethics and morality (1958), as ‘ethical inferiority’. One should consider the possibility that some classical approaches to feelings of inferiority (‘senses of inferiority are mostly neurotic and depressive’) may be misplaced or misguided: one sometimes feels ‘ethically inferior’, Jung writes, because in an important sense one *is* inferior (to what one has the potential to become). (These considerations complement the idea (cf. Section 1.3.) that a patient can sense if his therapist is ethically *superior*).¹⁰⁵ Jung adds that the feeling of (ethical) inferiority

104 See Zinkin 1991.

105 This doesn’t just apply to the patient/therapist relationship, although in the patient/therapist relationship, as we have seen, there is the advantage of being able to ‘introject’ (to a certain extent) one’s therapist’s ethical stance.

is like a ‘deficit’ which ‘for reasons of psychic equilibrium’, needs to be ‘redressed’. The inner perception of a contrast between what we are and what we could become if we strive towards a greater degree of wholeness is the motor of the individuation process.

Jung explains that to contrast this feeling of inferiority positively one must ‘enlarg[e] one’s moral consciousness’ (the idea of a ‘duty to be conscious’ is restated here) through ‘knowledge of oneself’, which can be obtained primarily through ‘a thorough confession’ and especially through ‘dream analysis’: ‘the unconscious contents that are released and brought into consciousness by analysis are usually unpleasant – which is precisely why these *wishes, memories, tendencies, plans*, etc. were repressed’ (Jung 1928: 218, my italics). One could argue that ‘wishes’, ‘memories’ and ‘tendencies’ are all, in a sense, ‘given’ and ‘natural’ elements of one’s personality. But Jung also speaks about ‘plans’, which are conscious creations, so the ‘created’ side of the Self is equally present in Jung’s description of what it is to feel an individual sense of guilt, not determined by any moral law. This idea of an ethical feeling of ‘inferiority’ is close to Nietzsche’s conception of a non-moral type of ‘bad conscience’ (the latter elucidated by May 1999: 55). Jung and Nietzsche both think we have a duty towards the best of what we are.

Why selfishness is good

To unlearn all distinctions,
save that concerning direction,
is part of your salvation.

(Jung 1913-1930: 360)

When Jung calls the ‘vice’ which informs his psychology of individuation, ‘rank selfishness’ (Jung 1934-1939: 1451),¹⁰⁶ he does not mean ‘individualism’ (Jung 1921: 761), the attitude that shows indifference and contempt towards norms. The idea that selfishness, or ‘self-love’ (a much less negatively connoted word), is a positive thing is taken straight from Nietzsche (the passages Jung is commenting are from the chapter of *Zarathustra* ‘The Three Evil Things’). Nietzsche writes that ‘[o]ne must learn to love oneself – thus do I teach – with a wholesome and healthy love: that one may endure to be with oneself, and to go roving about’ (Jung 1934-1939: 1475) and the philosopher Christine Swanton describes Nietzsche’s account of self-love as ‘a crucial depth-psychological component of virtue’ (Swanton 2003: 11).

In the Seminar on *Zarathustra*, Jung’s comments on Nietzsche’s sarcastic chapter on “Neighbour-Love” are extremely positive, with a whole-hearted endorsement of Nietzsche’s views. Jung here is clearly on Nietzsche’s same wavelength. I will provide just two examples:

We can forgive the early Christian when he speaks of the love for the neighbor, because he was quite aware that he did not hate himself. He was taught that he loved himself and he knew it very well. He was aware of the primitive egotism and therefore he was aware of the fact that it was a merit to love the neighbor; he made a merit of it in order to compensate his absolutely naïve selfishness, the naïve love for himself. Then later on, it was discovered what a cunning loophole that love for the neighbor could be; when things are getting hot for yourself, disagreeable, then you simply love the neighbor and forget all about yourself.

(Jung 1934-1939: 700)

Commenting on Nietzsche’s ‘My brethren, I advise you not to neighbour-love – I advise

106 Under this vice Jung subsumes Freud’s ‘voluptuousness’ and Adler’s ‘passion for power’: ‘voluptuousness and passion for power are only two aspects of selfishness’ (Jung 1934-1939: 1451).

you to furthest love!', Jung perceptively notes:

If those you love are far away, you have the greatest chance of being alone with yourself in the meantime; you have an incomparable opportunity to become acquainted with yourself and then you make discoveries.

(Jung 1934-1939: 702)

It is arguably not a matter of geographic distance from those one loves (although this might help), but of being capable of creating an internal space in which self-love is always consciously put in the forefront, and this clearly is not “selfish” (in the negative sense): would one really want to be loved by someone who could not stand himself? What value would there be in such a love, if not a vampire-like attempt, as Nietzsche cynically remarked, to steal the good qualities of the “beloved”? In the *Red Book* Jung opposes positively selfish love to ‘needy’ love when talking to Salome: ‘But give to me out of your fullness, not your longing’. (Jung 1913-1930: 438). Nietzsche’s ‘higher type’, as we have seen, cultivates loneliness. The last words of *The Red Book* are: ‘The touchstone is being alone with oneself. This is the way’ (Jung 1913-1930: 458). In both thinkers self-love is the ‘cauldron’ out of which one’s healthy love towards others may be born.

2.3. BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL?

‘Whatever is done out of love takes place beyond good and evil’
(Nietzsche 2002: 70 [BGE 153])

Especially those who call themselves “the good,”
I found to be the most poisonous flies;
they sting in all innocence, they lie in all innocence.
(Nietzsche 2008: 148 [Z III “The Homecoming”])

I could not help being deeply impressed by his [Nietzsche’s] indubitable inspiration.
He was sincere, which cannot be said of so many academic teachers
to whom career and vanity mean more than the truth.

(C. G. Jung to Rev. Arthur W. Rudolph, 5 January 1961, in Jung 1951-1961: 621-622)

Jung's reception of Nietzsche's suggestion to go 'beyond good and evil' is at least partly positive. Nevertheless, Jung is frequently preoccupied to distance himself from the risk of being considered at worst an immoral thinker or at best an amoral one (as Nietzsche was frequently considered). Furthermore, he seems worried that readers of Nietzsche may end up being as inflated as (Jung thought) he was, some of Jung's comments could be read, metaphorically, as attempts to defuse a potential bomb, which he assumes to be able to handle himself. In this section, I begin by showing how Jung agrees with Nietzsche's call for the creation of new life-enhancing values. I then discuss Jung's partly ambiguous statements in which he critiques Nietzsche's ideal of a 'transvaluation of values', noting the importance of understanding the context in which Jung's critique is put forth. Finally, I present my own characterisation of Jung's position, according to which the creation of new values does not imply the need to discard old ones.

The expression 'beyond good and evil' can be interpreted as follows. The distinction between 'good' and 'evil' was invented by herd-minded people. They were jealous of the strength, power and nobility of stronger, freer individuals, and called them 'evil' and themselves 'good'. We should abandon this *moral* distinction, which should be replaced by the *ethical* distinction between 'good' and 'bad' (which is roughly equivalent to healthy and unhealthy). In Nietzsche this second 'good' includes venting one's strength. As Swanton writes,

To express one's strength or vitality or 'will to power' *well* [...] involves finding an equilibrium between the 'coming close' of (self-)love, and the 'keeping distance' of respect for self and other. Where there is failure or defects in self-

love a proper equilibrium is missed. There may be, for example, mastery over others involving loss of respect for others, or clinging dependency or servility involving loss of respect for self.

(Swanton 2003: 144)

The problem with the idea of going “beyond good and evil” into the extra-moral territory of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ is that venting one’s strength can involve ‘mastery over others’. If the ‘[right] distance’ and an ‘equilibrium’ are to be sought, where should they be sought? According to Nietzsche, the (ethical) self can set his own limits and standards (Bennett [2012] discusses Nietzsche’s *psychology* of self-legislation). For Jung, instead, it is incumbent on the (moral) ego to re-adjust the equilibrium (cf. 1.1.).

This divergence is made quite clear in his [1940] 1942/1948¹⁰⁷ statements:

Even on the highest peak we shall never be "beyond good and evil", and the more we experience of their inextricable entanglement the more uncertain and confused will our moral judgment be. In this conflict, it will not help in the least to throw the moral criterion in the rubbish heap and to set up new tables after known patterns; for, as in the past, so in the future *the wrong we have done*, thought or intended will wreak its vengeance on our souls, no matter whether we turn the world upside down or not. Our knowledge of good and evil has dwindled with our mounting knowledge and experience, and will dwindle still more in the future, without our being able to escape the demands of ethics.

(Jung 1942/1948: 267, my italics)¹⁰⁸

107 ‘A Psychological Approach to the Trinity’, from where this quote is taken, is the elaboration of an Eranos lecture delivered in 1940, then published in 1942 and subsequently republished in 1948. Jung claims that ‘the lecture needed improving’ and that he felt under a kind of ‘moral obligation’ to return to it’, so, as the editors tell us, he ‘revised and expanded it’ (Note 1, Page 109, CW vol. 9**) It is very difficult – given the low philological quality and poor apparatus of notes to Jung’s collected works – to know if this quote was added *after the war* or not. If this is so, Jung’s critique of those who feel entitled to commit harm by the fact that they are self-transformed may sound like an *excusatio* for the horrors of the war. (Jung’s famous “I slipped up”, with reference to Nazism, was said to Rabbi Leo Baeck some time before 1947, so during the time in which this conference was re-elaborated).

108 Another critique of Nietzsche’s ‘beyond good and evil’ is found in the following passage: ‘Nietzsche undoubtedly felt the Christian denial of animal nature very deeply indeed, and therefore he sought a higher human wholeness *beyond good and evil*. But he who seriously criticizes the basic attitudes of Christianity also forfeits the protection which these bestow upon him. He delivers himself up unresistingly to the animal psyche. That is the moment of Dionysian frenzy, the overwhelming manifestation of the "blond beast," which seizes the unsuspecting soul with nameless shudderings. The seizure transforms him into a hero or into a godlike being, a super-human entity. He rightly feels himself "six thousand feet beyond good and evil" (Jung 1917/1926/1943: 36-40).

Jung is critical of those who discard morality because they feel transformed and elated ('on the highest peak'). He claims that our 'soul' will suffer for the harm we have done, *even if our experience of the entanglement of good and evil has become more refined*. At first sight, this remark seems puzzling. Why should we assume that those who feel "beyond good and evil" should have more knowledge of the entanglement of good and evil? In *The Red Book* Jung touches upon the 'entanglement' when he writes:

We suspect and understand that growth needs both [good and evil], and hence we keep good and evil close together. Because we know that too far into the good means the same as too far into evil, we keep them both together.

(Jung 1913-1930: 406)

This passage helps clarify the link between entanglement (of good and evil) and going beyond (good and evil). In effect, to feel beyond good and evil could be read as meaning we are beyond the rigid opposition of these two concepts, and if one does not see these two concepts as opposed, one realises they are entangled. Conversely, one could conclude that because good and evil are entangled, it makes no sense to distinguish moral from immoral actions. Jung is warning against this identification (of entanglement and overcoming): it is correct to realize that good and evil are often mixed, but one should not then conclude that nothing is evil, and that no course of action will ever be immoral. Our feeling of guilt reminds us, says Jung, that human beings are psychologically and ethically predisposed to feel at home within a moral order. When reaching out into a more healthy ethical approach we should not discard the morality and social norms which helped us reach our individualised stance. As Jung writes, 'The superman is beyond good and evil but the superman is the self' (Jung 1934-1939: 568). To identify with the Self is not a desirable state of affairs.

‘A new morality’

Although I have discussed Jung’s reservations about Nietzsche’s project, in the Seminars on *Zarathustra* (which as I mentioned were not intended for publication) Jung explicitly endorses the idea that new values based on life and health should be promoted. In commenting on the following passage ‘Let your love to life be your highest hope; and let your highest hope be the highest thought of life!’ (Z), Jung produces a powerful exegesis, on which I have rarely found comments: ‘Nietzsche says something here which is really a foundation of a new morality’ (Jung 1934-1939: 568). Jung, in a whisper, but it is a very convinced whisper, endorses Nietzsche’s point that life, and what is vital, in other words what is healthy for the individual, can count as a new moral standard.¹⁰⁹ Jung’s comments, since the matter is so delicate, are extremely nuanced: on the one hand he claims that ‘whatever is vital is of moral importance’ (Jung 1934-1939: 569, Seminar of 19 June 1935¹¹⁰). Here it is clearly the clinician speaking: the idea of vitality, as we have seen, was also used by Jung when describing individuation as the ‘vital’ activity of the individual (Jung 1921: 758), which analysis seeks to enhance. But on the other hand, as a philosopher, Jung is careful to add:

109 ‘Jung has stated clearly the similarities he perceived between his views and Bergson’s. In 1914, he confided: ‘I realize that my views are parallel with those of Bergson, and that in my book (*The Psychology of the Unconscious*) the concept of the libido which I have given is a concept parallel to that of *élan vital*; my constructive method corresponds to his intuitive method [...] When we turn to Jung’s “On Psychic Energy” (begun 1912-1913, completed 1927), we discover that Jung himself draws a parallel here between *élan vital* and Jungian libido. Nor was this his last such comparison. In “On Psychoanalysis” (1913) and “A Contribution to the Study of Psychological Types” (1913) the parallels again extended. In “The Content of the Psychoses: Part II” (1914) and “Psychological Understanding” (1914) the equation is restated twice in each essay. The comparison in question lost no significance for him, for Jung proposed it again twenty years later in “The Meaning of Psychology for Modern Man” (1934)’ (Gunter 1982: 638-639).

110 One cannot fail to note a chilling resonance of Jung’s ‘whatever is vital’ (he was speaking in June 1935) and of Hitler’s ‘vital space’. The idea of *Lebensraum* has its origin in biological theories, but it can be found discussed by Hitler in the context of Germany’s political situation in his *Mein Kampf* of 1925. Hitler’s manifesto was published ten years before Jung’s *Zarathustra* Seminars, and four years after Jung’s *Psychological Types* in which ‘the vital activity of the individual’ is mentioned. This is not of course to claim that the idea of life and the notion of vital is only found in the work of Hitler and Jung (nor that one influenced the other).

Of course one would refrain from using the word *good* there because it has acquired a particular quality in the history of morality; you know very well that the vital thing is not just good as we understand that word [Jung presumably means: good as kind, respectful, generous]. But you cannot deny it is vital [...] Perhaps you would say that to decide in such and such a way would be good and moral, but then you see that it is not vital to decide in that way; so a more vital solution should be sought, allowing life to be lived [...] The only question is: “Is it vital? Does it help life?”

(Jung 1934-1939: 569)

In line with Nietzsche’s critique of morality, he adds:

We have plenty of moral ideas which impoverish life, and we think it is even good to do so, but then we discover that we do it not for any moral reasons but out of sheer cowardice – just cowardice and pretext; we hide our cowardice behind moral laws.¹¹¹

(ibid.)

In commenting on Nietzsche views, Jung is also presenting his own (to an important extent) Nietzschean depth-psychological approach. As I mentioned in the introduction, according to Jung the ‘vital connection’ between the ego and the Self is what allows access to the ethical dimension of life.

How do we know what is the ‘vital’ and indeed *ethical* course of action to take in the circumstances of life? To put it more succinctly: how do we know what to do? We have already seen that enduring a conflict of duties is a good starting point, since it may allow the unconscious to intervene. In a text written shortly after Jung’s break from psychoanalysis, Jung claims that it is thanks to the analysis of the symbols of the unconscious that ‘life-lines’¹¹² can be discerned (Jung 1916: 501). The word ‘life’

111 It is quite striking that Jung made these comments on morality as opposed to vitality in front of both his wife Emma Jung and his long-standing (and to everybody known as such) lover, Toni Wolff, as one can infer from their questions and comments which are also published in *SZN*.

112 The word ‘life’ appears here for the first time in the context of ethics; it then re-appears in 1921 and

appears here for the first time in the context of ethics; it then re-appears in 1921 and again in the *Seminars on Nietzsche's Zarathustra* of 1934-1929. In the *Red Book* Jung writes: '[t]o unlearn all distinctions save that concerning direction is part of your salvation' (Jung 1913-1930: 360). (Here the word 'direction' can be read as analogous to 'vital' and 'life-line'.)

Jung explains that '[T]he moment we begin to map out the lines of advance that are symbolically indicated, the patient himself must proceed along them' (Jung 1916: 497-499; 502) Pointing out how these life-lines are different from Adler's "guiding fictions", Jung quotes, significantly, Nietzsche's dictum "All truth is crooked" and adds:

These life-lines [...] are never general principles or universally accepted ideals, but points of view and attitudes that have a provisional value [...] [An individual must] take the way of the individual life-line he has recognized as his own, and continue along it until such time as an unmistakable reaction from the unconscious tells him he is on the wrong track.

(Jung 1916b: 497)

What is puzzling about this idea is that one could interpret these 'life-lines' too literally. For example a person who lives and works in London could start dreaming of the countryside, and decide to move to the countryside. Then this person could start dreaming of the sea, and decide to move to the seaside. Clearly, this person would find it difficult to adapt to social reality and to form meaningful relationships. I would argue that Jung's life-lines refer more to the *way* one does something, than to what one does. The unconscious (which is a purely natural dimension of our psyche) doesn't really

again in the *Seminars on Nietzsche's Zarathustra* of 1934-1929. In the *Red Book* Jung writes: '[t]o unlearn all distinctions save that concerning direction is part of your salvation' (Jung 1913-1930: 360). Here the word 'direction' can be read as analogous to 'vital' and 'life-line'

‘care’ that much about what one does, but ‘it’ does cares about *how* one lives. A life-coach may provide practical career advice, but what a depth psychologist can provide is an analysis of one’s way of living. This said, Jung is clear about the fact that following ‘general principles’ or ‘universally accepted ideals’ (see quote above) is not going to foster our development, and in this sense we can understand his reluctance, discussed in the Introduction, at defining ethical *principles* (Jung 1949: 1408).

For Nietzsche and Jung ethics is an individual task. In the *Red Book*, inspired by Christ’s famous ‘I am the way, the life and the truth’, Jung writes:

The way, or whatever it might be, on which people go, is our way, the right way. There are no paved ways into the future. We say that it is this way, and it is. We build roads by going on. Our life is the truth that we seek. Only my life is the truth, the truth above all. We create the truth by living it.

(Jung 1913-1930: 351).

He repeats this concept again forty years later, in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, his last great work: ‘Yet the real carrier of life is the individual. He alone feels happiness, he alone has virtue and responsibility and any ethics whatsoever’ (Jung 1955-56: 194).

The repression of immorality, the repression of morality

With Nietzsche man stands alone,
as he himself did, neurotic,
financially dependent, godless and worldless.

This is no ideal for a real man
who has a family to support and taxes to pay

(Jung 1928: 397)

The Pauline overcoming of the law
falls only to the man who knows
how to put his soul in the place of conscience

(Jung 1928: 401)

Nietzsche defines morality ‘the self-division of man’. Jung defines neurosis ‘the self-division of man’ (‘Neurose ist Entzweiung mit sich selbst’, Jung 1917/1926/1943: 18).

Putting these two ideas together, using the notion of ‘self-division’ as the middle ground, morality and neurosis appear to be co-extensive. Jung points out that

[i]n most people the cause of the division is that the conscious mind wants to hang on to its moral ideal, while the unconscious strives after its – in the contemporary sense – unmoral ideal – which the conscious mind tries to deny. Men of this type want to be more respectable than they really are.

(Jung 1917/1926/1943: 18)

Taking Nietzsche’s ideas one step further, and in fact going against Nietzsche’s occasional ‘immoralist’ stance, for Jung immorality is also self-division and a form of neurosis:

[t]he conflict can also easily be the other way about: there are men who are to all appearances very disreputable and do not put the least restraint upon themselves. This is at bottom only a pose of wickedness, for in the background they have their moral side which has fallen into the unconscious just as surely as the immoral side in the case of the moral man.

(ibid.)

How can both (excessive) morality and (extreme) immorality be characterised as neurotic self-division? Kant’s categorical imperative, during the Fourth ‘Zofingia Lecture’, is described as

the *irrepressible* demand to do what we regard as good, and refrain from doing what we regard as morally evil. It gives us a feeling of pleasure to act in accordance with the requirements of the categorical imperative, just as the gratification of any instinct brings with it a certain quantity of pleasure

(Jung 1896-9: 171).

Apart from Jung's incorrect interpretation of Kant's ideas regarding the feeling of pleasure associated with fulfilling our duty (noted by Nagy [1991] and further discussed by Bishop [1995]), the key word, which reveals Jung's point of view on these matters, is 'irrepressible'. This is the first occurrence of an idea which can be found in many of Jung's writings, the idea that both our need to be part of society (morality) and our impulse towards separation and individualism (immorality) cannot be repressed. On a similar note, in *The Red Book*, he writes that: 'If we have risen near the heights of [the] good and [the beautiful], then our badness and hatefulness lie in the most extreme torment' (Jung 1913-1930: 166)¹¹³ The good and the bad, morality and immorality, the individual and the collective, all need some space.

The first situation described by our author (see quote above, Jung 1917/1926/1943: 18), in which 'immoral' drives are incompatible with what lies above the surface, is close to Freud's formulation of an amoral Id in contrast with the demands of the superego. But the second scenario, which depicts Nietzschean immoralists such as Otto Gross, is not contemplated by Freud's scheme: the unconscious appears to be 'more moral' than what is above the threshold of consciousness, which for Freud would have been felt as an anathema.

¹¹³ The original English translation is 'near the heights of good *and evil*', which makes the rest of the sentence meaningless. I derive the correct version from the Italian translation.

Jung's critique of Freud is made explicit a few paragraphs below. First he writes, as if wanting to defend Freud, that 'Freudian psychoanalysis has been accused of liberating man's (fortunately) repressed animal instincts and thus causing incalculable harm'. To which he humorously adds: 'This apprehension shows how little trust we place in the efficacy of our moral principles' (Jung 1917/1926/1943: 28). But then, a paragraph below, he explains why he considers Freud's picture to be incomplete:

The Freudian theory of repression certainly does seem to say that there are, as it were, only hypermoral people who repress their unmoral, instinctive drives. Accordingly the unmoral man who lives a life of unrestrained instinct, should be immune to neurosis. This is obviously not the case, as experience shows. Such a man can be just as neurotic as any other. If we analyse him we simply find that his morality is repressed (*Verdrängung*). The neurotic immoralist presents, in Nietzsche's striking phrase, the picture of the "pale felon" who does not live up to his acts.

(Jung 1917/1926/1943: 29)¹¹⁴

Still on the topic of the 'pale felon' Jung writes:

a good man will do a good deed. He will be forced to be good and feel utterly miserable if he isn't; so there is no merit in it. He is just doing what he is, all quite natural, like an animal [...] But if the man *knows* he is doing a good thing just because he cannot do otherwise, then there is merit because he is then conscious of that saying of wisdom: The king shall play the role of the king, the beggar the role of the beggar [...] Yet if he knows that this is all from the gods, there must be redemption [...] it is just as bad to be good without knowing it: neither way has merit; the only chance for redemption is in consciousness, for that is the point

114 Ten years before writing this passage, Jung 'self-righteous[ly]' (Bair 2004: 137) wrote to Freud telling him that for his recently acquired patient Gross 'the truly healthy state for the neurotic is sexual immorality. Hence he associates you with Nietzsche'. Then, instead of asking Freud, as one might expect, to be reassured about this association ('But your views differ from Nietzsche's, don't they?'), he immediately adds, as if wanting to please the master but at the same time as if he did not really want to know what Freud's answer on the matter actually was (it could well have been 'yes, Gross is right, I am a Nietzschean'): '*It seems to me, however, that sexual repression is a very important and indispensable civilizing factor, even if pathogenic for many inferior people. Still, there must always be a few flies in the world's ointment. What else is civilization but the fruit of adversity? I feel Gross is going along too far with the vogue for the sexual short circuit, which is neither intelligent, nor in good taste, but merely convenient, and therefore anything but a civilizing factor*' (*F/J*, J46, my italics). In this passage Jung interestingly connects 'repression' to civilization. Jung is certainly not the first Western thinker to have pointed out this link, but his phrasing of it in psychoanalytic terms (in 1907), can be said to anticipate Freud's ideas in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929).

in which one differs from what one does, where one differs from being a mere animal.

In speaking of those who are ‘naturally’ evil or good, Jung does not consider the Aristotelian idea that one can become good (and indeed bad) through habituation and that indeed there is a merit in becoming good and in being good having become so.

To summarise what we have found so far about Jung’s ethical vocabulary, *morality*, as we have seen looking at Kant, occurs when we free ourselves from nature (from the unconscious Self) and embrace cultural collective norms (exemplified by the categorical imperative or the ‘golden rule’). *Immorality*, on the other hand, is also determined by a conscious positioning of the ego which sets itself free from natural amorality, but in the case of immorality the ego also refuses collective norms to embrace *individualism* (which Jung strongly distinguishes from individuation). Following Jung, we could all be described as both moral and immoral, because we all feel the need to respect norms (if we don’t, we cannot adapt) but we also feel the need to express ourselves (if we don’t, we feel stifled). Jung thinks that if one of these two sides is *repressed* we will experience neurosis. To suppress one side is often necessary, but to repress one side is a problem, as we have seen discussing conflicts of duty (cf. Section 1.7.). In fact, in Jung’s view, we are not ‘neutral’ agents who can decide to refuse to embrace the values of society. The picture is, in a sense, reversed: we are all both moral and immoral, but from time to time, we must *suppress* one of these two sides. Jung’s point is that we should never *repress*, in other words forget, that we are also the other side, too.¹¹⁵

115 Jung’s ideas about ‘good’ and ‘evil’ follow exactly the same pattern: he claims we are all both good and evil (cf Chapter 4, *infra*); but good and evil are parts of the Self, of what we *ontologically* are, and are independent of the positioning of the ego. Incidentally this helps understand the difference between the Shadow and evil (cf. Section 4.4): the ‘magnitude’ of the Shadow is the same as the ego’s (the Shadow

Digression: Jung and Gross on (im)morality and repression

The influence of Otto Gross on Jung has been studied in depth by Gottfried Heuer (University of Essex, 2004). Heuer shows how Jung's behaviour towards Gross was not always admirable, from many points of view. The motto and maxim of behaviour of Otto Gross was 'Nichts verdraengen!' ('repress nothing!', in Bair 2004: 136, quoting Frank 1952, p. 49) and he was known as the 'Blond Dionysos' (Bair 2004: 137). Bair also quotes a letter from Jones to Freud in which the former says he is "a little uneasy" about Jung treating Gross 'psychically' because of the 'fundamental differences of opinion between them on moral questions' (Bair 2004: 137). Could it be that Jones thought that Jung was treating Gross just because of their different moral opinions? This would be an extremely interesting accusation. On the one hand, Jones may have been thinking that Jung was attempting to brainwash Gross, perhaps turn him into a Christian through psychoanalysis (something which could not occur if Gross was treated by Freud or a non-Christian psychoanalyst). But Jones may have half-guessed something partially true: perhaps Jung intended to treat Gross not so much to turn him into a Christian, but because he saw him as a neurotic who had repressed his moral side. And in this case Jung should not be seen as a brainwasher or a moraliser, but as someone who tried to show Gross that he was not only immoral, but also moral. Jones, a positivistic Freudian, is less comfortable with the risk of a reciprocal "contamination" of ethical views therapy than Jung is (see section 1.3.), who saw "ethical transference" as unavoidable and even as something to be welcomed, while still holding that it had to be understood and studied in its own right. Jung analysed Gross at the Burghölzli and '[w]henver I got stuck, he analysed me. In this way my own psychic health has

is the 'counter-ego'), whereas the 'magnitude' of Evil is the whole Self.

benefited' (letter of 1908, F/J, 95J, quoted in Bair 2004: 142). Here we find the idea of an open (ethical?) discussion between patient and therapist (see 1.3), in which the possibility of reciprocal analysis is also contemplated. In the same letter Jung describes Gross in positive terms: 'He is an extraordinarily decent fellow with whom you can hit it off at once provided you can get your own complexes out of the way'. He thinks his analysis with Gross has produced positive effects and that 'all that remains now will be gleanings from a very long string of minor obsessions of secondary importance'. But, in the following weeks, Jung got stuck again analysing details from his patient's childhood. His description of Gross, in a letter of June 19, is far less optimistic. His infantile complexes are described as 'overwhelmingly powerful', 'the events of early childhood remain eternally new and operative'. His diagnosis of Gross (which he asks Freud not to tell the patient about) is Dementia praecox (which today is called schizophrenia). Jung feels very sorry not to have been able to help this man whom he sometimes felt was like a 'twin brother' (for those interested in biography, this is telling about Jung's dark and sexual side: Jung doesn't call the famously promiscuous man an alter-ego of himself, a shadow of himself, but twin brother). It is possible that the problems Jung encountered with Gross could have had a role in pushing Jung towards a stronger consideration of the actuality of psychic problems – and their moral side – as more important than their past etiology, as Jung was to claim in his mature years, moving away from Freud's causal and reductive approach. I am unaware of any attempt to connect Dementia praecox and psychosis with ethical considerations and as far as I know Jung does not go so far as to claim that an ethical approach to life can cure psychosis. On the contrary, he often connects the lack of an ethical approach to life with neurosis (see other sections of this work). It is possible that Otto Gross was not psychotic after all, as Heuer claims basing his evidence on many sources, so Jung's

diagnosis comes across in an extremely negative light, both professionally and ethically: Heuer speculates that Jung may have been jealous of Gross and may have used the diagnosis of schizophrenia to get him out of the way. All this digression may partly explain why Jung's discussion of 'immoralists' seems so emotionally charged (the image of Otto may have been in front of his eyes more than that of Nietzsche; towards the latter Jung felt more pity than anger). As Heuer claims, Otto Gross seems to have played for him the role of a shadow or of a trickster figure, prompting Jung to ask himself 'the one simple question he had never had the time or given himself permission to ask: Why not? Why not?', on so many different levels, in regard to so many different aspects of his life' (Bair 2004: 144).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter we have seen how, in many respects, Jung's ethical position can be described as Nietzschean. Jung derives from Nietzsche: the idea that morality should not weaken the health of the individual; the careful scrutiny the 'life-lines' which emerge from one's unconscious; that self-legislation is always to be preferred to mass-mindedness; and that an ethical life must include space for creativity and irrationality. But Jung does not follow Nietzsche to the extreme consequences of his position. Jung points out that not only mass-minded morality, in which the collective absorbs the individual, leads to neurotic self-division. Immorality, in which the individual fights collective norms in name of a supposed uniqueness, produces the same result, so both are to be avoided.

As the reader will recall, when Jung discusses conflicts of duty, he claims that the "new ethic" is 'confined at present to those *uncommon individuals* (my italics)' who attempt

to find a personal solution to conflicts of duty. Are these uncommon individuals Nietzsche's "philosophers of the future", the "free spirits", the "higher type"? Jung uses the Nietzschean expression "higher type" to refer precisely to the people for whom adaptation is not enough:

There are vast masses of the population who, despite their notorious unconsciousness, never get anywhere near a neurosis. The few who are smitten by such a fate are really persons of the "higher" type who, for one reason or another, have remained too long on a primitive level [of consciousness]. Their nature does not in the long run tolerate persistence in what is for them an unnatural torpor.

(Jung 1928: 291)

These people eventually experience a neurosis which represents a 'retarded maturation' of their personality (Jung 1928: 291). Nietzsche writes that: 'Independence is an issue that concerns very few people: – it is a prerogative of the strong' (Nietzsche 2002: 30 [BGE 29]) and he adds that the man who has the courage to be independent may end up 'destroyed', and in the position in which 'he cannot go back again! He cannot go back to their pity again!'. Jung would say that in fact he should, because he must share with them what he has learnt: since he has been given the opportunity to develop himself and escape (some) collective obligations, the collective expects something in return.

Jung writes that his 'rule' is to take the "old ethic" [in other words morality] as binding only so long as there is no evidence of its injurious effects (Jung 1949: 1413). When Jung suggests that in some cases the "old ethic" is not binding, he is not implying that one should 'burn it' and never return to it. In normal circumstances, collective values are perfectly tenable: but in some particularly crucial cases (namely conflicts of duty),

one may need to go beyond them. For Jung, too, one may at times need to “live dangerously”, as Nietzsche prescribed: but again, as is most often the case with Jung, one may also quite often be prudent: to allow a relationship to flourish it may be a good thing to follow the conventional morality of faithfulness. And to find and maintain a life-sustaining job, it may be psychologically and morally sound to behave according to normal “persona” values. In the *Red Book*, Jung writes: ‘something evil is attached to the creation of the new, which you cannot proclaim loudly’ (Jung 1913-1930: 343). Here he acknowledges that there is always an element of destruction involved in any act of creation (something Nietzsche knew very well), and that is why the creation of the new should not be ‘proclaimed’ (as Nietzsche’s emphatic tones do).

If we look at Jung’s philosophical approach to life, many of his statements seem to be very Nietzschean with regard to the idea that values change as life itself changes. Compare Nietzsche’s: ‘Truly, I say to you: good and evil that would be everlasting – there is no such thing! They must overcome themselves out of themselves again and again!’ (Nietzsche 2008: 90 [Z II On Self-Overcoming]); and Jung’s ‘[w]e cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life’s morning; for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie’ (Jung 1930–31: 784). In this statement Jung is talking about “the stages of life”, and discussing his ideas that in the first stage of life the ego is more important, and in the second stage of life the Self is more important, but what he says has – ironically – a more general validity. Nietzsche’s project was to ‘re-evaluate’ values. For Jung, life’s truths are also constantly changing, even without our conscious intervention.

The overall difference in tone between Jung and Nietzsche's ethics can be appreciated by comparing two deceptively similar passages. Nietzsche has Zarathustra say (to his disciples) that 'What falleth, that shall one also push!' (Z III 56 (12) "On Old and New Tables"). In *The Red Book* Jung writes (to himself) 'let fall what wants to fall; if you stop it, it will sweep you away' (Jung 1913-1930: 170). To let something that wants to fall, fall, in other words, is not only the best way to preserve one's self: this action also displays more respect towards what is ending. If instead we follow what Nietzsche suggests, by taking part in the ending of something, not only do we exert violence towards the object, but by the very act of pushing the object that is falling, we may lose balance, and fall with it. So comparing these two statements Jung showcases greater psychological and ethical wisdom than Nietzsche.

Nietzsche writes 'If a temple is to be erected *a temple must be destroyed*: that is the law – let anyone who can show me a case in which it is not fulfilled!' (GM III, 24) But human beings, I would suggest, are not geometrically perfect temples: they are more like irregular houses, with central rooms and less fundamental ones, and houses allow interior refurbishments (which are usually carried out without intervening on the sustaining walls), as well as exterior extensions – the image of Jung's Tower in Bollingen, with its multiple additions, comes to mind –, even underground bunkers may be added if needed (!). If the work is well done the house will still stand in place. One may expand and transform and even deepen one's moral and ethical awareness without necessarily discarding one's previously held values.

We are reminded by Paul Bishop that Jung concluded his third talk at the Zofingia Club (1897/1898) with the 'humorous but significant' (Bishop 1995: 28) reference to

Nietzsche: 'We should always do our duty. For, Nietzsche notwithstanding, there is something to morality after all' (Jung 1896-1899: 161). Here Jung is using Kant against Nietzsche. But Jung could have also said that, Kant notwithstanding, there is something to immorality after all, using Nietzsche against Kant. Jung's (at least) double ethical allegiance – to Kant and to Nietzsche – seems to reflect the double nature of Jung's psyche and psychology, where a Personality No. 1 and a Personality No. 2 coexist in dynamic harmony and this coexistence (*integration*) impedes the formation of psychic splits. A *compromise* between Kant and Nietzsche, or between Apollo and Dionysus, would produce no movement forward: stagnation and (unconscious) conflict instead of psychic transformation.

The problem with this picture of Jung's double allegiance (to Kant and to Nietzsche) is that it may leave the impression of a certain split: can one really be both Kantian and Nietzschean? The multi-faceted and realistic approach to ethics which belongs to what could be termed Jung's Aristotelian side can help provide a bridge between the extremes of Kantian morality and Nietzschean immorality or amorality: with Aristotle, as we will see in the following chapter, ethics is always a matter of degree and approximation, and the development of one's moral character is never a matter that can be fixed once and for all.

CHAPTER 3:
ARISTOTLE AND JUNG:
CHARACTER, VIRTUE AND ETHICAL TYPES

In this chapter, I ask if Jungian psychology could add depth to Aristotle's account of ethics (which Jung never explicitly refers to throughout his *Collected Works*) and what it could receive in exchange, given that both are interested in the development of a moral and ethical character. Jung's psychology – like Aristotle's ethics – contains elements of common sense and the craftsman's perspective which can be shaded by Jung's more grandiose archetypal constructions. Turning to Aristotle, the master of conceptual clarification of the apparently obvious, can help elucidate and even give order to Jung's sometimes sketchy remarks about character, virtue and wisdom. On the other hand, Jung's depth of vision can provide a new way of looking at Aristotle's ethical classifications.

First (3.1.), I briefly present the main tenets of Aristotle's ethical theory, including his depiction of ethical 'types'. I then (3.2.) seek for equivalents of Aristotle's main concepts (such as 'state of character', '*akrasia*', and '*eudaimonia*') in Jung's psychology. The difficulties in finding exact 'translations' of these ideas, given the different assumptions and methods of the two thinkers, are discussed throughout this section. Then I consider the convergence between Aristotle's approach to ethics and Jung's psycho-ethical paradigm: both authors highlight the importance of acquiring a balance between reason and the passions; both are concerned with the development of practical wisdom and believe that ethics should take into account a variety of ethical situations and types; both assume a strong continuity between ethics and psychology.

In 3.3. I look at some modern versions of virtue ethics (an area of moral theory which has seen a great resurgence in the last fifty years), and at some key issues discussed in the field; and consider how virtue ethics and Jungian depth psychology may provide each other with conceptual tools to tackle some problematic areas of debate in their respective fields.

3.1. ARISTOTLE'S ETHICAL THEORY: A BRIEF SKETCH

Aristotle notes that everybody agrees that ‘the highest of all goods achievable by action’ (I. 4. 1095a16) is *happiness (eudaimonia)*, but that there is disagreement about what happiness is. Aristotle defines happiness as ‘an activity of soul exhibiting virtue’ (I.7.1098a16-17), not as a product or state of mind which follows action (the distinction is drawn in I.1.1094a1-5). A moral virtue (*ethike arête*) is a state of character (*hexis*, II.5.1106a12) which is acquired through habituation, for example we become brave by performing brave actions. Vice (*kakia*) belongs to the same category as virtue (it is a state of character) and it is acquired by repetition of vicious actions. For each virtue there are two vices, for example an excess of courage is rashness and a lack of courage is cowardice: Aristotle’s “doctrine of the mean”.

Virtues can be either moral (*ethike arête*) or intellectual (*dianoetike arête*): moral virtues are acquired through habituation, intellectual virtues are learnt (II.1.1103a14-17). Moral virtues are what make us wish (in Greek, *bouleō*) to perform virtuous actions, for example if we possess the virtue of courage we will wish to perform courageous acts. The most important intellectual virtue with regards to ethics is *phronesis*, practical wisdom. *Phronesis* is what allows the choice of the right means to

accomplish the virtuous action we wish to perform. Each time we exercise a virtue, according to Aristotle, we are happy, but the virtuous activity of theoretical reason is the most noble for man.

In addition to the ethical types of the virtuous and of the vicious person, Aristotle adds the *ethe* of *akrasia* and of *enkrateia*, which can be translated, respectively, as ‘weakness of will’ and ‘strength of will’. The akratic individual is less blameworthy than the vicious, because he aims at doing good actions, but his will is too weak – and the impulse towards pleasure too strong – so he fails to do what he sees would be the best course of action. The enkratic individual is in a better position than the akratic one, because she is capable of performing good actions, although she accomplishes this through an effort of the will: her character has not been habituated towards the good, as is the case with the virtuous person. Having briefly presented Aristotle’s ethical theory, I will now look at some of its main concepts in more detail and seek for equivalent concepts in Jung’s psychology.

3.2. JUNG AND ARISTOTLE: CONVERGENCE, DIVERGENCE, DIALOGUE

Aristotle sees human excellence as harmony between rational and nonrational parts of the soul (Broadie 1991: 267). Jung advocates the development of both the thinking and the feeling function. The first function provides an answer to the Socratic question about ‘what’ something is. The second tells us ‘the value’ of something. These functions work in conjunction with sensation (which assesses the existence of something) and intuition (which tells us where something is headed). An ethical individual, which in Jung coincides with an individuated person, needs to rely on all

four functions. Both Aristotle and Jung highlight the importance of acquiring a balance between reason and the passions and consider personality not just a given, but a task to be accomplished. So there is a wide enough confluence of scope to allow a comparison of Aristotelian and Jungian formulations.

***Eudaimonia* (flourishing, happiness)**

The Highest bliss on earth shall be
The joys of personality

(Goethe, Western-Eastern Divan,
quoted in Jung 1934a: 284)

Michael Horne (2002) has argued that Aristotle's theory of being can be read as a theory of individuation in Jung's sense of the word, but he does not relate Jung's central concept to Aristotle's notion of *eudaimonia*, as if individuation were to be read as an exclusively ontological concept. In my view, instead, individuation shares various features with *eudaimonia*. First, like *eudaimonia*, individuation is more a process than a product. We have seen that for Aristotle *eudaimonia* is an activity, something which is felt while performing a virtuous action and not a product separated from the activity (I.1.1094a1-5). Similarly, for Jung, individuation is the 'coming to Selfhood', it is a more and more refined experience of the Self, and something which is always in motion. Secondly, like *eudaimonia*, individuation is an 'urge' ('towards self-realization', Jung 1928: 291): Jung could paraphrase Aristotle by claiming that everybody desires to individuate (although, as we have discussed in the first two chapters, individuation is not a simple matter). Thirdly, just as *eudaimonia* is experienced thanks to the possession of virtues which are acquired as a second nature,

but which are not in themselves natural¹¹⁶, so individuation is defined by Jung as an *opus contra naturam*. These points of convergence may allow therapists to propose a keener ‘eudaimonistic’ interpretation of individuation. To a patient it may be said that the effort needed to individuate will bring with it, intrinsically, a deeper sense of well-being.

States of character (*hexeis*)

In Aristotle’s map of the soul (*psyche*), three different things can be found: capacities (*dynamis*), emotions (*pathe*, also translated as passions or feelings) and states of character (*hexis*). Aristotle notes that while capacities and emotions are *not* chosen by us, are *not* praised or blamed, and are determined by nature, habitual states are instead chosen by us, praised and blamed and *not* determined by nature. Aristotle argues, with an argument from common consent, that brave people are praised for their virtue, so virtues must be states of character¹¹⁷.

Jung’s discussion of the psychological notion of ‘attitude’ in *Psychological Types* (1921) seems close to Aristotle’s idea of *hexis* (‘state of character’ or ‘habitual state’).

Jung writes:

To have an attitude means to be ready for something definite, even though this something is unconscious; for having an attitude is synonymous with an *a priori* orientation to a definite thing, no matter whether this be represented in consciousness or not. The state of readiness, which I conceive attitude to be, consists in the presence of a certain subjective constellation [...] Whether the point of reference is conscious or unconscious does not affect the selectivity of the attitude, since the selection is implicit in the attitude and takes place

116 ‘Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do the virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit’ (II. 1. 1103a24-25).

117 To be an habitual state is virtue’s *genus* (Brown 2009: xxxviii). Aristotle defines an object/concept by establishing the *genus* (broad category) it belongs to and by highlighting its *differentia* (the feature that separates it from the other members of the same category). For virtue’s *differentia*, see below.

automatically. It is useful, however, to distinguish between the two, because the presence of two attitudes is extremely frequent, one conscious and the other unconscious. This means that consciousness has a constellation of contents different from that of the unconscious, a duality particularly evident in neurosis.

(Jung 1921: 687)

Jung's notion of an 'unconscious attitude' may be seen as a key difference from Aristotle's notion of *hexis*, but it must be observed that vice, which is also a habitual state, is described by Aristotle as being 'unconscious of itself'. So it appears that Aristotle also entertains the idea of an unconscious *hexis*. But how can something unconscious be praised or blamed? Aristotle's argument is that a vicious person *should* be blamed because she could have chosen not to perform vicious actions which made her become vicious. If we transfer the idea of 'blame' to the sphere of Jungian psychology, we find ourselves in the uncomfortable position of having to *blame* a neurotic subject (in which, see quote above, 'the constellation of contents' which belong to the unconscious attitude is different from that of the conscious one). But this is exactly what Jung does, on countless occasions, albeit amid various disclaimers and hedging remarks.

Some of Jung's most famous clinical examples¹¹⁸ are provided to show that the subject's moral responsibility extends down to the unconscious and the therapist's role is to point this out. I have here shown the advantages of a cross-contamination of ideas: blame is attached to habitual states (Aristotle) and has been applied to the idea of an unconscious attitude (Jung) via the similarity of attitudes and habitual states. Furthermore, the 'extremely frequent' case in which a conscious and an unconscious

118 The mother who let her toddler die by drinking from a sponge; the young intellectual who spent his holidays in Saint Moritz using the money given to him by a rich woman who was in love with him (the latter case is recounted in Jung 1935: 282-284).

attitude are in conflict (see previous quote, Jung 1921: 687) could be read as the matrix in which a specific ‘neurotic conflict of *duties*’¹¹⁹ is placed. So we are also in a better position to understand Jung’s signalling of neurotic conflicts of duty (cf. 1.7.) as psychic situations to be avoided as much as possible, and even to be blamed, despite being quite common.

Moral virtues (courage)

In *The Theory of Psychoanalysis* (1914), Jung describes the ‘failure of adaptation’ which occurs when libido regresses and is not used to overcome difficulties, which leads to ‘disunion’ and ‘internal conflict’ (Jung 1914: 381). He gives the example of a mountain climber who convinces himself that a mountain is insurmountable, although he actually knows that it is not. In the space of two paragraphs (Jung 1914: 380-381), Jung uses the word ‘courage’ (a fundamental virtue for Aristotle, discussed in *EN*, Book III, Chapters 6-9) three times and the word ‘cowardice’ four times. Jung’s description is particularly vivid and is summarized by the following words: ‘At bottom the man knows perfectly well that it would be physically possible to overcome the difficulty, and that he is simply *morally incapable* of doing so’ (Jung 1914: 381, my italics). Jung’s argument, used frequently in his work,¹²⁰ is that neurosis is the result of some kind of moral failure. What is problematic about the argument, I believe, is not so much the risk of a ‘moralisation of neurosis’¹²¹, but the fact that Jung does not provide *a way out* of the situation he describes. Can one just say, to a neurotic person: ‘don’t be a coward’? This might be a starting point, but will it have any real effect? Jung himself wrote about the general inefficacy of good advice (see the humorous quotation at the beginning of

119 In which one horn of the dilemma is conscious and the other unconscious.

120 ‘The chief causes of a neurosis are conflicts of conscience and difficult moral problems that require an answer’ (Jung 1949: 1408), quoted in the Introduction.

121 An example of this trend can be found in Wood 1986.

Section 1.4.). To say ‘be brave’ or ‘don’t be a coward’, even if it provides some emotional encouragement, might simply not be enough. We need to understand what being brave means and what it entails. Aristotle’s account of courage as a mean between rashness and cowardice is more helpful than Jung’s mere stigmatisation of cowardice. The philosophical analysis of specific moral virtues can usefully integrate Jung’s depth-psychological interpretation of neurosis as partly derived from a failure to develop morally.

What is important, following Aristotle, is the correct assessment, by means of practical wisdom, of concrete situations where courage is demanded; and, most importantly the practice of courageous actions themselves. A therapist may hence encourage a neurotic patient to exercise his or her courage, pointing out how this exercise – coupled with a more refined understanding of the task at hand (via *phronesis*) – may be the best way to develop courageous traits. A philosophical and ‘cognitive-behavioural’ approach may usefully complement a focus on unconscious dynamics that considers the personal complexes activated by a demanding situation.

***Phronesis* , the virtues and ‘the mean’: can ethics prescribe rules of conduct?**

Jung defines ‘feeling’ as an ‘apperception of value’ (Jung 1921: 729) and distinguishes two types of feeling, active and passive. As an example of the former, he mentions ‘loving’, as an instance of the latter ‘being in love’ (ibid.). Generally Jungian scholars define ‘feeling’ and ‘thinking’ as rational functions, because they both judge (feeling judges the value of something, thinking judges what something is), but Jung specifies that passive feeling is ‘irrational’, since it ‘confers values without the participation or even against the intentions of the subject’ (Jung 1921: 729). Jung writes that ‘Where

wisdom reigns there is no conflict between thinking and feeling' (Jung 1955, quoted in Qualls-Corbett 1988: 143).

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle states that the degree of precision we should expect in ethics is inferior to the one we may expect in scientific matters (I. 3. 1094b12-14). The *differentia* of virtue is 'a disposition to choose the intermediate' (Brown 2009: xxxviii). *Phronesis*, in Aristotle, is the capacity to understand the ethical situation and 'finding the mean [...] requires a full and detailed acquaintance with the circumstances' (Kraut 2012: 7). Aristotle writes that 'such things depend on particular facts, and the decision rests with perception' (1109b22-23). As Heather Battaly explains,

The person with phronesis knows which actions are conducive to the good life. She deliberates well, judges well and perceives the world as she should. She recognizes opportunities for courage, temperance, and so on. She also knows how to hit the mean. For example, she knows when and what she should face, and when and from what she should flee.

(Battaly 2014: 180)

The mean, for example courage, is not just a matter of the right action to be performed, it is (even more) a matter of the right degree of emotion (or feeling) to be felt in the situation: the courageous person is he who feels the right amount of fear. In contrast to the Stoic ideal of *apatheia*, the absence of emotions reached by correct understanding of emotions, Aristotle advocates *metropatheia*, the obtainment of the right degree of emotion. Aristotle, with a good degree of psychological wisdom, adds that to find the intermediate state

we must consider the things towards which we ourselves are easily carried

away; for some of us tend to one thing, some to another, and this will be recognizable from the pleasure and the pain we feel. We must drag ourselves away to the contrary extreme; for we shall get into the intermediate state by drawing well away from error.

(II.9.1109b4-6)

In Jung's *Red Book* we find a strikingly similar, albeit more succinct, statement of the same idea: 'You achieve balance, however, only if you nurture your opposite' (Jung 1913-1930: 226). He mentions 'the mean', too, but in a keenly Shakespearian vein: '[w]hat lies in the middle is the truth. It has many faces; one is certainly comical, another sad, a third evil, a fourth tragic, a fifth funny, a sixth is a grimace, and so forth'. He then adds the disclaimer: 'It is a murderous task to write the wisdom of real life, particularly if one has committed years to serious scientific research' (Jung 1913-1930: 306, note 135). The idea of 'what lies in the middle is the truth', sounds Aristotelian, although there is a significant difference: for Jung the different aspects of life have to be *integrated*, and by integration he does not mean a 'mish-mash' in which a compromise is sought. Instead he suggests that the different sides of one's personality stay one next to the other (the both/and principle), and one must learn to accept the contradiction involved. Aristotle, on the other hand, although *phronesis* is admittedly not as exact as mathematics, does seek for a 'medium point':

anyone can get angry – that is easy – [...]; but to do this to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right motive, and in the right way, *that* is not for everyone, nor is it easy; wherefore goodness is both rare and laudable and noble

(II.9.1109a: 27-29).

Aristotle's mean is an intermediate between two extremes (although it is not to be confused with mediocrity¹²²); Jung's 'mean' is the ideal point of equilibrium between extremes, which are kept in a state of vital tension. Jung's claim that it is difficult to write about 'the wisdom of life', on the other hand, definitely resonates with Aristotle's claim, towards the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that the degree of precision to be expected in ethics is inferior to the one we may expect in scientific matters (I.3.1094b12-14).

The Aristotelian idea that in ethics one should not seek definite rules, and that moral wisdom is capable of understanding a specific situation, can also be found in Jung. Jung writes that

Conventional morality is exactly like classical physics: a statistical truth, a statistical wisdom. The modern physicist knows that causality is a statistical truth, but in practice he will always ask *what law is valid in that particular case*. So it is in the realm of morality.

(Jung 1959: 871)

So Jung's idea of *phronesis* is the idea of a moral understanding that sees which moral law applies to a specific. In the case of conflicts of duties, as we have seen, there is an apparent or real contradiction between moral laws. This idea of flexible morality is very close to the clinician's set of skills which permits an understanding of which factor is the most determinant in the onset of an illness, and how to address a remedy. This goes some way in explaining Jung's puzzling claim that he approaches depth psychology (and ethics) 'as an empiricist' (Jung 1949: 1408).

122 'The "mean" is relative to the person acting and to the situation she is in. Some situations do call for highly intense responses. Great danger calls for high courage. Great challenges call for extreme effort and so on' (van Hooft 2006: 59).

To a member of the public at his lecture on ‘Good and evil in analytical psychology’ (1959) who asked him if therapists should help their patients ‘deal with evil’, Jung replied:

You are tempting me to lay down a rule. But I would rather advise: do the one thing or do the other according to circumstances, and in your therapeutic work do not act on any *a priori*, but in each case listen to what the concrete situation demands [...] For instance, a patient is still so unconscious that you simply *cannot* take up an attitude towards his problems.

(Jung 1959: 879)

He then provided the example of a ‘devouring mother’ type with whom it would not be sensible to tackle her difficulties with her daughters directly:

Something must grow from inside *her*. Another patient has reached a certain level of consciousness and *expects orientation from you*. It would then be a great mistake not to make your attitude clear. The right thing must be said at the right time and in the right place.

(Jung 1959: 880, my italics)

What Jung is saying here resonates with Aristotle’s point that ethical reflection is only valid for those who have already reached a certain level of emotional maturity, and also with his views on anger: for the ‘vicious’ (that in Jung’s model corresponds to the very neurotic person, see below) a lesson on ethics will have no effect whatsoever. This introduces the next topic, habituation in Aristotle and Jung.

Habituation

‘Socrate’s mistake, according to Aristotle, is to have entirely neglected the preparatory training, which is to a large extent affective, that precedes the philosophical

examination' of virtue (Kraut 2012: 540). Virtues are acquired through habituation and it is very important that this habituation begins at an early stage. Aristotle compares the acquisition of virtues to the arts: 'men become builders by building, and lyre-players by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts' (II.1.1103a30-1103b2). Jung writes:

It is of the greatest importance for the young person, who is still unadapted and has yet achieved nothing, to shape his conscious ego [...] He must *feel* himself a man of will, and may safely depreciate everything else in him and deem it subject to his will, for without this illusion he could not succeed in adapting himself socially.

(Jung 1929b: 109, my italics)

The belief in the importance of habituation is shared by the two thinkers; this said, Jung's psychological perspective focuses especially on the need, for the young man who needs to adapt, to centre ('he must feel himself') on his ego and will: this determines the 'feeling of freedom' discussed earlier on (Jung 1942/1954: 391; cf. Section 1.2.).¹²³

Even if early education and experience are of crucial importance, Jung claims that analysis on the one hand, and practice on the other, can allow a 'retarded maturation of the personality' (Jung 1928: 291). This rather Aristotelian passage explains in some detail Jung's frequent stress on the fact that 'analysis is not enough' (cf. Introduction):

It is obviously not enough for [the patient] to know how his illness arose and whence it came, for we seldom get rid an evil merely by understanding its causes. Nor should it be forgotten that the crooked paths of a neurosis lead to as many obstinate habits, and that for all our insight these do not disappear until replaced by other habits. But habits are won only by exercise, and appropriate

¹²³ On the role of feeling in Jung's model, cf. Section 4.2.

education is the sole means to this end. The patient can only be drawn out of himself into other paths, which is the true meaning of “education”, and this can only be achieved by an educative will.

(Jung 1929a: 152)

In *Symbols and Transformations of the Libido*, Jung writes that ‘rhythm is a classic device for impressing certain ideas or activities on the mind, and what has to be impressed and firmly organized is the canalization of libido into a new form of activity’ (Jung 1911-12/1952: 219). These reflections could be read as a depth-psychological understanding of habit.

In what follows I will first present Aristotle’s typology of ethical characters and then compare it with Jung’s views on neurosis and psychic health.

Enkrateia vs Virtue

As we have seen, the virtuous person acquires, through habituation, an impulse towards what is good, and her *phronesis* helps her determine the right course of action, so the virtuous feels in the right way and acts in the right way in a given circumstance. Virtues also possess a self-replicating power: ‘virtues tend, and by their own nature, to the doing of the acts by which they are produced’ (III.5.1114b28-29). In Burnyeat’s description of the virtuous man,

nothing will tempt or lure him so much as the temperate or brave action itself. Nothing else will seem as pleasurable. That is how Aristotle can assert (VII.10.1152a6-8) that the fully formed man of virtue and practical wisdom cannot be akratic. Quite simply, he no longer [here Burnyeat seems to conceive *akrasia* as a stage of development, see discussion below] has reason to be.

(Burnyeat 1980: 88).

Where the virtuous has acquired, through habituation, the impulse to do what is good,

and possesses *phronesis*, moral wisdom, the *enkratic* has not received sufficient habituation and his moral wisdom is lacking. Nevertheless, the *enkratic* has been taught what is good and is able to perform good acts through strength of the will. Aristotle actually praises [*enkrasia*] as an ‘excellent disposition’ (*spoudaia hexis*, VII.8.1151a27-28, Gould 1994: 174). Indeed, it could be said that ‘[v]irtue [...] represents a victory in a long, arduous battle, whereas *enkrateia* brings a long series of small victories’ (Gould 1994: 176). Gould also adds that

One might think *enkrateia* not so much a settled disposition as a developmental stage on the way to virtue [...] [But] Aristotle is clearly concerned with *enkrateia* as an ingrained state of character. He begins Book 7 by speaking of three moral characters (*ethe*) to be avoided: *akrasia*, vice and bestiality [...] If *akrasia* is an ethos, then so is its contrary, *enkrateia*.

(Gould 1994: 176)

As Gould points out, it is not entirely clear why, for Aristotle, *enkratic* people do not develop into virtuous people:

Aristotle prescribes habituation for engendering moral virtue so that if a person is to develop [temperance], he must act as if he had it. This will eventually lead the agent to feel, as well as to act, in accordance with the mean. The *enkrates* does behave as if he had [temperance] – he behaves just as the [temperant] would. Why, then, does the *enkrates* not develop the emotions and desires proper to the [temperant]?

(Gould 1994: 184)

The only solution to this logical difficulty is to see *enkrateia* as an ‘evolutionary stage’, but Gould argues that Aristotle would not admit this solution, since he sees *enkrateia* as a *hexis*, an ingrained state (Gould 1994: 184).

Akrasia vs Vice

I have mentioned Aristotle’s pessimism about vicious people: it seems that for Aristotle

there is not much to be done once one has become vicious through habituation. Aristotle writes that ‘[I]t is irrational to suppose that a man who acts unjustly does not wish to be unjust or a man who acts self-indulgently to be self-indulgent’ (III.5.1114a11-13). The impulse of the vicious is directed towards vicious actions, for example he may have an impulse to act in a rash or cowardly way. The akratic, too, ‘acts emotionally and *fails to deliberate* not just once or twice but with some frequency’ (Kraut 2014: 13). But, in contrast to the vicious, the akratic has been taught what is good, and aims at doing what is good. Still, her impulse has not been habituated towards performing good acts, therefore she fails to perform them¹²⁴.

To my mind, Aristotle’s notion of *akrasia* (weakness of the will) could be conceived as providing an attenuation to his/the view that there is nothing to be done about vice. By ‘inventing’ the akratic, Aristotle seems to be telling us that we actually *do* have a second chance: perhaps we are not vicious after all, but we need to work on strengthening our will. *Akrasia* could be interpreted as an antidote to moral desperation, although for Aristotle, it is a ‘chronic condition’ (Kraut 2014: 13)¹²⁵. In contrast to Socrate’s view that knowledge will be enough to make our will do the right thing, Aristotle’s realism is both more pessimistic and, in a sense, more optimistic: knowledge is *not* enough, *akrasia* shows this very clearly. ‘To have the right “prescription” without the habits to carry it out in action is, Aristotle suggests, a situation especially vulnerable to *akrasia*’ (Burger 2008: 134). But perhaps the knowledge that knowledge is not enough (and that early education is fundamental) might – counter-intuitively – provide a stronger incentive to do better.

124 In Aristotle’s account of *akrasia*, the notion of pleasure plays an important part. Various scholars have sought to understand the akratic puzzle: ‘why is appetite victorious in the akratic, and not reason?’ Aristotle provides a much debated answer in VII.3., in which ‘practical syllogisms’ are involved.

125 See below my discussion of *akrasia* as neurosis.

In describing the difference between *akrasia* and vice, Aristotle provides a list of five points which distinguish the two types of conditions:

- 1) The vicious (Aristotle uses the self-indulgent as an example, but his remarks apply equally well to any type of vice) has no regrets (*ou metamēletikos*), while the incontinent is subject to regrets (VII.8.1150b29-30).
- 2) The vicious is incurable, while the incontinent is not (VII.8.1150b32-33).
- 3) ‘Vice is unconscious of itself, incontinence is not’ (VII. 8. 1150b36). Ross uses the adjective ‘unconscious’ to translate the verb ‘*lanthanei*’; the root of ‘*lanthanei*’ is the same used by Freud in describing the ‘latent contents’ of a dream.
- 4) Vice is ‘in accordance with choice’ (*kata ten proairesin*), incontinence is ‘contrary to choice’ (*para proairesin*) (VII.8.1151a6-7).
- 5) The vicious is not ‘easily persuaded to change his mind’, while the akratic can be so persuaded (1151a13-14).

I will now suggest Jungian equivalents to Aristotle’s fourfold¹²⁶ division of ethical types.

Ethical typology: from Aristotle to Jung

The vicious

Aristotle’s vicious individual could be compared, looking at things from a depth-psychological perspective, to *the highly neurotic person who is not (yet) aware of being neurotic*, or at least doesn’t entertain the possibility that his behaviour may be in need

¹²⁶ Aristotle does also consider ‘bestiality’ as a state below vice and ‘heroic excellence’ as a state above virtue, but both states are admittedly very rare.

of improvement: he is how he is. In this sense his character is ‘incurable’ (see point 2, above); his actions are ‘in accordance with choice’ (point 4); he has no regrets (point 1), except perhaps unconscious ones (point 3, to which I will return). Jung would say that his morality is repressed (see Section 2.3.). He cannot be easily persuaded to change his mind (5), for example he refuses the possibility that he might benefit from analysis. Finally, and most importantly, his ‘vice’ (neurosis) is unconscious of itself (3). If we simply concentrate on the relationship with his Shadow, Jung would say that the neurotic/vicious individual splits his Shadow and projects it on others. When describing vice, Aristotle makes a comparison with illness and claims that when we are making ourselves ill through our life-style we are free to wish not to be ill; but once we are ill, we cannot wish ourselves out of the illness (III.5.1114a16-17). This seems to be a very apt description of Jung’s conception of neurosis, too. Aristotle, in describing vice, writes that ‘When you have let a stone go it is too late to recover it. But yet it was in your power to throw it, since the moving principle was in you’ (III.5.1114a17-19). Depth psychology claims there is a level of radical ignorance about ourselves which makes us inevitably neurotic/vicious and which presumably *cannot* be blamed (we should here recall that vice, for Aristotle, is and should be blamed, being an habitual state). The ‘invention’ of neurosis could be interpreted, similarly to Aristotle’s ‘invention’ of *akrasia*, as an attempt to re-conceive the traditional and somewhat paralysing notion of ‘sin’¹²⁷, since neurosis, for Jung, is a sin or vice which we *can* work upon. Overall, depth psychology seems more indulgent than Aristotle’s classification: for Aristotle, *akrasia* (the neurotic person who has begun analysis, in my comparison, see next point) is blamed, but not as much as vice (the neurotic who has not yet undergone analysis). While for Jung, even the severely neurotic person should

127 See Chapter 4.

not be considered incurable: neurosis can be cured.

The akratic

The akratic could instead be compared to *the neurotic individual who has begun a path of self-knowledge*, but who still needs to rely heavily on the ‘ethical transference’ (cf. Section 1.3.) to gain moral strength. Perhaps she has not yet begun analysis, or perhaps she is in the first stages of analysis. The conflict within herself, in one way or another, has reached consciousness. In depth-psychological terms the akratic is someone who has begun recognition and integration of the Shadow. The choice of facing her Shadow (the first task of analysis, according to Jung) has been made, thus she is ‘curable’ (see point 2, above), but she is quite often unable to come to terms with her unconscious. When effects of her unacknowledged Shadow are pointed out to her she ‘has regrets’ (see point 1, above): not just in a moral sense, but in an epistemic sense (‘I could have known better, been more careful’). Finally, the neurotic who has begun analysis can easily be persuaded to change her mind: in fact, she will quite often be confused by the interplay of conscious and unconscious dynamics within her, and will appreciate some guidance. As John Beebe writes:

[t]he decision to approach the shadow involves anxiety, doubt, shame, and a desire to repair the relationship with an other whose needs I have somehow missed. My recognition of the need to look at shadow starts with a painfulness, a stoppage, an absence of the sense of well-being, and an agitation from within to feel okay again. Or I can be feeling too good, and suddenly realize that I am secretly afraid.

(Beebe 1992: 22)

The type of suffering experienced by the *akratic* individual could be defined, in Jungian terms, as ‘neurotic suffering’ (Jung 1943/1946: 185; Jung 1938/1940: 129).

The enkratic

The enkratic could be likened to the person who has been in analysis for a sufficient amount of time and who is capable of confronting his or her shortcomings even without the help of the analyst. The enkratic, in Jung's paradigm, could be the adapted individual, who has a strong will and who is capable of integrating unconscious contents without letting himself be engulfed by them. He has doubts, but the doubts do not impair his ability to act. He is strong and can withstand the tension of opposites. The type of suffering experienced by the *enkratic* individual could be defined, in Jungian terms, as 'natural, necessary' (Jung 1943/1946: 185) and 'legitimate' (Jung 1938/1940) suffering.

The virtuous

It is not easy to find an equivalent, in Jung, of Aristotle's virtuous individual, who has the habit of performing good actions, the impulse of performing good actions, and finds pleasure in doing so. One would be tempted to equate the virtuous to the individuated person. However, from Jung's point of view, Aristotle's virtuous individual risks inflation, because she denies the shadow-side of her personality. One of the discoveries of depth psychology is that being virtuous is not always healthy. The shadow-side of the personality may be neglected and if the shining ego is always at the forefront, the bad side may suffer (cf. section 2.3.): 'The living form needs deep shadow if it is to appear plastic. Without shadow it remains a two-dimensional phantom, a more or less well brought-up child' (Jung 1928: 400). What Aristotle's virtuous individual and Jung's individuated person have most in common is that both achieve excellence on a personal and social level: their intrinsic value is recognised in and by the outer world.

What else can be derived from this attempt at a comparison? In a sense, we have found what was expected: Aristotle believes that a harmonious relationship between emotions and reason, in a society with shared values, can be achieved. Jung, who writes more than two thousand years after Aristotle, in a society where a multitude of values face each other¹²⁸, and after the discovery of the unconscious, is more sceptical. In Jung's world the distance between nature and culture, conscious and unconscious, moral imperatives and ethical demands, has considerably widened. On the other hand, as we have seen, the gaps between the vicious and the akratic, and between the akratic and the enkratic, have diminished. The power of depth psychology (and its intrinsic optimism) claims to be able to not only make our will stronger, but also to uncover what is 'unconscious of itself' in us, and which determines suffering for ourselves and for the community we live in. Neurosis, according to Jung, provokes the need, which can be fulfilled by analysis, of a 'retarded maturation of the personality' (Jung 1928: 291), something which Aristotle, as we have seen, claims to be difficult to achieve, because of the grip of (im)moral habituation.

If both vice and virtue seem to risk one-sidedness, should we suppose that for Jung the happy-enough individual possesses a blend of the *akratic* and of the *enkratic*'s character? Or should we enlarge the picture even further, at this stage definitively going against Aristotle's intentions, and claim that for Jung the happy-enough individual possesses character traits of all four main ethical types? At times, Personality No. 1, the virtuous individual, will be at the forefront, dutifully performing his daily tasks. Other times, Personality No. 2 will appear on stage, bringing dangerous inflation but also lively enthusiasm. Many other times, Kant's victory over Nietzsche will be felt as

128 Cf Section 3.3.

a temporary and suffered one, and the happy individual will be in the state of mind of the *enkratic*, doing his duty but wanting to do something else; or Dionysian enthusiasm will be undermined by the feeling of guilt that the *akratic* individual knows all too well.

The greatest point of convergence between Aristotle and Jung is arguably the idea that ‘to know what is good is not enough’, which is Aristotle’s critique of Plato and Socrates, and which is embedded in Aristotle’s notion of *akrasia*. This mirrors Jung’s oft-repeated criticism of those who naively believe that in order to get better it is enough to undergo analysis. Both Aristotle and Jung believe there is an intermediate term between knowledge and action, which is ‘will’ in Aristotle (weak will or strong will) and the ‘moral function’ in Jung:

He who does not possess this *moral function, this loyalty to himself*, will never get rid of his neurosis [...] Neither the doctor nor the patient, therefore, should let himself slip into the belief that analysis by itself is sufficient to remove a neurosis.

(Jung 1916b: 497, my italics)

This same insight is expressed by Aristotle where he writes that ‘intellect alone moves nothing’ and ‘to the incontinent, knowledge brings no profit’. Again Jung mirrors this when he states: ‘Nothing influences our conduct less than do intellectual ideas’.

Burnyeat claims that Aristotle’s ethics ‘is addressing someone who already wants and enjoys virtuous action and needs to see this aspect of his life in a deeper perspective’ (Burnyeat 1980: 81).¹²⁹ Aristotle speaks to the well brought-up young man, who desires

¹²⁹ He adds that the secret of the *akratic*’s failure is to be found ‘in the man’s earlier history. We must account for his present conflict in terms of *stages of development* of his character which he has not yet completely left behind’ (1980: 85, my italics).

clarification in ethical matters. Jung's psychology, instead, is intended to address 'vicious' individuals and 'virtuous' ones alike, as well as 'enkratic', and 'akratic' ones. Jung reproached Freud for having taken into account only highly neurotic individuals, claiming that a third of his (Jung's) own patients were non-neurotic people who suffered from some kind of existential, spiritual or moral difficulty. If depth psychology, and Jungian psychology in particular, is a form of ethical enquiry, it cannot but speak to all.

3.3. MODERN VIRTUE ETHICS AND JUNG

To look, in this final section, at some proponents of modern virtue ethics is not just a way of completing our survey by considering some of Aristotle's contemporary followers. The fact is that some ideas discussed in the field of modern virtue ethics, such as MacIntyre's concept of a fragmented moral order, describe a sense of ethical confusion which may well be felt, today, by those who undergo analysis, so it is worth asking Jung (and Jungians) if and how they would address these issues; and if and how modern virtue ethics could help tackle, with different tools, some problems that Jung was not able to solve.

As Pence points out:

On theories of duty or principle, it is theoretically possible that a person could, robot-like, obey every moral rule and lead the perfect moral life [...] In contrast, in virtue theory, we need to know much more than the outer shell of behaviour to make such judgements, i.e. we need to know *what kind of person* is involved, how the person *thinks* of other people, how he or she thinks of his own character, how the person *feels* about past actions, and also how the person feels about actions not done'.

(Pence 1995: 256, in Singer 1995 my italics)

The concerns of virtue theory highlighted in this passage are all of interest for depth psychology: they involve the typological, cognitive and emotional dimension of our personality. As we have already noticed when discussing the Aristotle/Jung interface, depth psychology and virtue theory have a lot of ground in common. I will start by looking at Elisabeth Anscombe's (and Gilbert Ryle's) arguments about moral language.

Anscombe and moral language

Jung's 'A Psychological View of Conscience' and Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy', unanimously considered the beginning of modern virtue ethics, were both published in 1958. Anscombe argues that

the concepts of obligation, and duty—moral obligation and moral duty—and of what is morally right and wrong, and of the moral sense of “ought,” ought to be jettisoned *if this is psychologically possible*; because they are survivals, or derivatives from survivals, from an earlier conception of ethics which no longer generally survives, and are only harmful without it.

(Anscombe 1958: 1, my italics)

The 'earlier conception of ethics' mentioned by Anscombe is close to Jung's notion of collective morality, but Jung, as we have seen, still maintains the use of the 'old' moral vocabulary with words such as 'duty' and 'morality', because he considers this to be helpful in distinguishing morality from ethics. Perhaps, when discussing what he calls ethics, he could have embraced a keener virtue-ethical stance, which takes into account 'all the colours'¹³⁰ of our moral spectrum (Ryle, quoted in Harcourt 2013b), in opposition to the usually 'black' and 'white' distinctions of collective morality:

¹³⁰ Ryle defines 'good' and 'evil' with the expression 'single generic Sunday attribute[s]' (Ryle, quoted in Harcourt 2013b).

A person is not black or white, but iridescent with all the colours of the rainbow; he is better than most in one respect, about level with the average in another respect, and a bit, perhaps a big bit, deficient in a third respect.

(Ryle, quoted in Harcourt 2013b)

To put it in Rieff's words, 'if psychology was to be the philosophy of the future, as Nietzsche anticipated, it would have to avoid the verbal mannerism of older moral speculations (Rieff 1960). Nietzsche, as we have seen, is one of the reasons why Jung decided *not* to abandon a moral vocabulary altogether.¹³¹ Furthermore, Jung's notion of the Shadow (which I discuss in the following chapter), could be read as an attempt to mitigate the rigid moral dichotomy between good and evil, moral and immoral. Anscombe's paper was published when Jung's ethical position had already reached maturation. Both papers, Jung's and Anscombe's, are useful reminders for therapists to avoid a moral vocabulary when discussing the ethical dimension of life.

MacIntyre's fragmented moral order and the link of virtues with practices

As J. L. A. Garcia has argued, MacIntyre's approach to ethics is not so different from Anscombe's, since they both recognise a 'messy' moral landscape. What is relevant to my discussion, is that Garcia employs the Jungian metaphor of the mind as a house (found in Jung 1928), although he does not discuss Jung's ethical conceptions, which I believe can also be compared to a house (cf. Chapter 2, Concluding remarks). Garcia writes:

As with the house's parts, the disparate provenance of the different components may not be obvious and may have been forgotten. It is also likely that over time the fissures become deeper and the structure less stable, even if the joints are hidden to all but the trained eye. Thus, like Anscombe, MacIntyre has long complained that, in our moral discourse, we freely shift from concepts of natural

¹³¹ Jung's notion of the Shadow, which I discuss in the next chapter, could be read as an attempt to mitigate the rigid moral dichotomy between good and evil, moral and immoral.

law to natural rights, from obligation to virtue, from self-interest to sacrificial charity, from consideration only on overall consequences to compassion for immediate victims to interest in one's own higher interest and long-term self-improvement, without noticing the very different histories and, he thinks, incompatible bases and presuppositions from which these concepts and vocabularies emerge.

(Garcia 2003: 97)

MacIntyre's answer to the fragmentation of the modern moral landscape was a return to the horizon of Aristotle and St Thomas – having rejected the option of returning to Nietzsche (see Fuller 1998: 22). He defines virtue as

an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods.

(MacIntyre 1981: 191)

If we conceive virtues as linked to 'practices', Robert Solomon asks

how is integrity possible in a society without an ethos or, in more positive terms, in a 'pluralist' society with many *ethe*, some of them admittedly dubious? Does it make sense in such a society to still speak of 'excellence,' or should we just award 'achievement' and recognize limited accomplishments in cautiously defined sub-groups and professions?

(Solomon 1998: 334-335)

Jung's notion of individuation, which is based on integration more than on 'integrity', and takes place in "a 'pluralist' society with many *ethe*," could be read as an optimist's answer to this interrogative.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, through the discussion of the Aristotelian side of Jung's approach to

ethics, I have sketched out the plan for a collaboration between Jung's depth-psychological method and a philosophical approach to mental suffering. The importance of Jung's Aristotelian legacy can be made clear by reviewing Jung's Kantian and Nietzschean ethical dimensions. A Jungian therapist who is aware of Jung's keen Kantian stance will never overlook the importance of making the unconscious conscious, since freedom, as we have seen, can only be the expression of a strong ego who has integrated unconscious drives and tendencies. On the other hand, an analytical psychologist who is also faithful to Jung's Nietzschean legacy will be aware that an action may be deemed called ethical only if a significant amount of what informs it is irrational and unconscious. To avoid being stuck between these two apparently incompatible positions (and the Jungian literature on ethics often is), Jung's Aristotelian stance can come to the rescue, stressing the need of a dynamic balance between reason (Kant) and the passions (Nietzsche), and of a more nuanced and graded approach to psychological and ethical development, in which Kantian and Nietzschean elements coexist, at different times and with different degrees. The discussion of ethical types that has been conducted here can be a helpful reminder that there is more than one way to be ethical: the akratic, the enkratic and the virtuous, are all, in different ways, to be praised, since they all strive to improve their ethical position; although the starting point of the akratic is lower down; and the virtuous is at risk of inflation and of ending up like his opposite, the vicious, who is engulfed by the unconscious.

Aristotle believes that a harmonious relationship between emotions and reason, in a society with shared values, can be achieved. Jung, who writes more than two thousand years later, in a society where a multitude of values confront each other, and after the 'discovery' of the unconscious, is more sceptical, but he remains optimistic. The

distance between nature and culture, consciousness and the unconscious, moral imperatives and ethical demands, has considerably widened. On the other hand, depth psychology claims to be able to uncover what is ‘unconscious of itself’ in us, and which determines suffering for ourselves and for the community we live in. Neurosis, according to Jung, is a positive occurrence inasmuch as it provokes the need of a ‘retarded maturation of the personality’ (Jung 1928: 291): analysis can fulfil this need and bring us out of the grip of (im)moral habituation.

In the imaginary dialogue between Jung and some notable modern proponents of virtue ethics, which has closed this chapter, we have seen how Jung’s attempts to disentangle ethics from morality can be enhanced by a careful scrutiny of the language of moral philosophy, such as that conducted by Anscombe; and we have seen how Jung’s pluralist approach to ethics has various points of convergence with MacIntyre’s stress on a variety of ethical practices. Various modern authors from the fields of philosophy and sociology, such as Sennett and Solomon, open avenues of research (into the practice of craftsmanship, in the field of business ethics) in which the cooperation of a depth-psychological angle could prove very fruitful.

In the following chapter, which is in some ways transversal and eccentric with respect to the first three, we will be looking at Jung’s understanding of evil and at the Christian dimension of his ethical position. The belief in the (at least psychic) existence of evil stands rather awkwardly within Jung’s overall understanding of ethics, yet it has an important function. On the one hand, it softens Jung’s Nietzschean stance: expressing our Self in the world should be done, as far as possible, without harming others, so here the notion of evil works as a counter-balance to Jung’s more radical claims such as the

idea that 'Selfishness is good'; on the other hand, the belief in the existence of evil works as a safeguard against an excessive optimism towards the power of morality to overcome the limits of human nature.¹³²

¹³² Cf Kant's own notion of 'radical evil'.

CHAPTER 4:
EVIL, THE SHADOW, SIN AND REDEMPTION:
THE CHRISTIAN DIMENSION
OF JUNG'S ETHICAL POSITION

Jung was one of the great psychologists of religion of the 20th century, and his work in this field has been scrutinized by many scholars, including Bishop, Main, Palmer, Segal and Stein.¹³³ In trying to define the specific quality of Jung's ethics, it can be difficult to determine if his ethical position can and should be separated from the religious dimension of his thought. Marco Heleno Barreto writes that 'these two dimensions – the ethical and the religious – although distinct in themselves, form one unity in the notion of Self; and [...] individuation is simultaneously an ethical and a religious experience' (Barreto 2013: 227). The convergence of the ethical and the religious is most evident in Jung's discussion of the concept of evil, a concept which poses a challenge to both philosophy and theology (Ricoeur 2007).

Today some philosophers still argue that the notion of [moral] evil cannot be used to describe actions which are simply 'very wrong': there is a qualitative difference that the word 'evil' encapsulates (Calder 2013b). From a psychiatric angle, Simon Baron-Cohen suggests that the idea of [moral] evil should be understood as 'empathy-erosion', and defines extreme evil as 'zero degree of empathy' (so 'good' should be seen as 'empathy') (Baron-Cohen 2011, discussed in Foley 2012: 42). The idea of evil being a lack of empathy is close to Jung's idea that 'moral judgements' are judgements based

133 Cf Introduction, sub-section 'On Jung, evil and ethics'.

on the ‘feeling function’ (see Section 2, *infra*). Given that evil is the negative moral *value* par excellence, and good is the positive moral *value* par excellence, to ask if evil has a place in the framework of depth psychology is akin to asking if depth psychology can be ‘value free’ or not. Jung’s answer seems to be that it cannot, since ultimately goodness is conceived as the value we should follow, but this answer is far from being unproblematic.

In this chapter I will explain why, for our author, the notion of evil has an important role to play within a depth-psychological framework. In the first section, I look at Jung’s bold rejection of Augustinian and post-Augustinian theodicy through the establishment of a logical and indeed ontological equivalence between good and evil. In Section 2 I describe Jung’s repositioning of the (philosophical) categories of evil (and good) *in anima*, hence within the field of analytical psychology. Thirdly, I look at Jung’s psychological and hermeneutic interpretation of the ethical-religious notions of sin and redemption, instances, respectively, of evil and good. In Section 4, I discuss Jung’s notion of the Shadow (an idea Jung arguably took from Nietzsche and then elaborated upon)¹³⁴, which should be read as his most important contribution to the psychology of evil (in this respect Jung takes a different direction from that followed by Nietzsche), but not as an attempt to replace the latter notion with the former. Finally, I locate Jung’s understanding of evil within his overall ethical position.

¹³⁴ As many authors, most notably Bishop and Huskinson, have observed.

4.1. JUNG'S ONTO-THEOLOGY¹³⁵ OF EVIL: AGAINST THEODICY

Why should we fear and avoid what has no being?
(Augustine, *Confessions*, VII)

If we call everything that God does or allows “good”
then evil is “good” too, and “good” becomes meaningless.
(C.G. Jung)

Augustine's philosophical dialogue *On the Free Choice of the Will*, written between 387 and 395, opens with 'Evodius' asking 'Augustine': 'Please tell me whether God is not the author of evil' (Augustine 2010: 3). This is the problem of theodicy¹³⁶, the philosophical attempt to justify the coexistence of a benevolent and omnipotent God and evil. In formal terms:

1. There is a benevolent and omnipotent God
2. Evil exists

How can (1) and (2) both be true?

Augustine, the most original thinker in the history of theodicy¹³⁷, suggests that the apparent inconsistency can be solved by providing a conception of evil which can be accommodated with (1), so he concentrates on re-elaborating (2). Jung debunks this attempt and instead attacks (1): as we will see, Jung's God is also evil. Therefore his ideas do not, strictly speaking, belong to the tradition of theodicy (etymologically

135 Following Ricoeur (2007), I take Augustine's argument as onto-theology: it is a discussion on the nature of good and evil (ontology) which is conducted within a theological framework (theology): onto-theology. Jung's refutation of Augustine should also be considered an onto-theology. But while Augustine's discussion is also a theodicy, Jung's is not.

136 Recent accounts of theodicy can be found in Geddes (2013) (in Adams et al, 2013); Peterson 2010 and Oppy 2010 (both in Tagliaferro et al, 2010); van Inwagen (2005) (in Wainwright 2005).

137 Although the word 'theodicy' is first used by Leibniz, Augustine's work moves within the framework of theodicy.

‘justification of God’), nor should it be termed ‘psycho-theodicy’ (see Bishop 2002: 68), unless we specify that Jung’s theodicy is an ‘anti-theodicy’: his goal is to justify evil rather than to justify God¹³⁸. Jung refuses a traditional notion of God and defends an ontologically strong notion of evil against any ‘apotropaic’ attempt to soften it.

I will now provide a brief account of the theodicy of Augustine. I will then explain how Jung criticises Augustine’s notion of *privatio boni* (mainly in *Aion*, 1951). Given the scope of my work, I will not provide a detailed account of Jung’s confutation of the idea of God as *Summum Bonum* (which can be found, most notably, in [Jung 1952]), the other half of his anti-theodicy, but I will mention the links between the divine and the human aspects of good and evil throughout this chapter. In *Confessions* (VII, xii, 18), Augustine argues that

things which are liable to corruption are good. If they were the supreme goods, or if they were not good at all, they could not be corrupted. For if they were supreme goods, they would be incorruptible. If there were no good in them, they would be nothing capable of being corrupted. Corruption does harm and unless it diminishes the good, no harm would be done. Therefore either corruption does not harm, which cannot be the case, or (which is wholly certain) *all things that are corrupted suffer privation of some good.*

Augustine’s claim is that evil does indeed exist, but that it has no ‘*independent or metaphysical* existence’ (Yates 2009: 78). Thomas Aquinas continues this tradition and claims that ‘Evil as such is nonbeing’ (Aquinas 2003: 104)¹³⁹. Augustine’s general argument – I partially follow here the reconstruction given by Prusak (2009: 73-74) –

138 Given the scope of my work, I will not here discuss the Gnostic origin of many of Jung’s ideas on evil (cf Segal 1992). A brief account of the role of Gnosticism in the discussion of evil is provided in Ricoeur 2007: 44-49.

139 Leibniz endorses the Augustinian doctrine of evil as *privatio boni* and elucidates it using the Aristotelian distinction between ‘material’ and ‘formal’ cause: ‘Thus the Platonists, St. Augustine and the Schoolmen were right to say that God is the cause of the material element of evil which lies in the positive, and not the formal element, which lies in privation’ (Leibniz 1951, 141).

can be formalized as follows:

- a. God is good and omnipotent.
- b. God creates only good things.

But

- c. Evil things exist.

Therefore

- d. Evil things must be defined as ‘diminished goods’.

As we have seen from the above quotation, Augustine explains (d), the notion of evil as ‘privatio boni’, using the following argument:

- d1. Things liable to corruption are good
- d2. Things not liable to corruption are either supreme goods or things with no good in them
- d3. Things that are corrupted suffer privation or diminishment of some good
- d4. Good things can suffer privation or diminishment of good
- d5. Evil things are good things that have suffered privation or diminishment of good

The pivotal notion in this argument is the notion of corruption, not that of privation. Corruption is a one-directional version of privation, because it is *by definition* a process from good to less good (bad)¹⁴⁰, whilst a ‘privation’ can also be conceived ‘from bad to less bad (good)’. But Augustine does not concede this possibility, since he insists on (b): God creates only good things, *ab origine* there are no evil things.

140 A gangster of course may say, of a traitor, that he was *corrupted* by the encounter with a kind woman, but he is clearly not using the word in a conventional manner. For a gangster, honour as loyalty to the gang, is the purest value, so he uses the word appropriately. But this does not change what we usually mean by ‘corruption’.

Jung calls the doctrine of *privatio boni* a *petitio principii*¹⁴¹ (Jung 1951b: 94), i.e. an argument where the conclusion is already stated in the premise, presumably because he sees (d1) as already containing the idea of evil as *privatio boni*. If we look at Augustine's argument in detail, we can see that Jung's confutation is justified: to say (d1) [things liable to corruption are good] is basically providing a definition of the notion of corruption. It is like saying: 'corruption is when a good thing becomes bad'. Augustine's conception has entered tradition as *privatio boni*, and not as *corruptio boni*, perhaps in order to hide the 'petitio principii' contained in the argument: the idea of '*privatio*' appears more neutral, hence more convincing, but in fact the argument is based on a combination of 1) the idea of corruption and of 2) the claim that God, being good, only created good things¹⁴². The two ideas mutually reinforce each other.

Jung's response to this argument is that good and evil are ontologically equivalent:

Obviously evil can be represented as a diminution of good, but with this kind of logic one could just as well say: The temperature of the Arctic winter, which freezes our noses and ears, is relatively speaking only a little below the heat prevailing at the equator [...] The *privatio boni* argument remains a euphemistic *petitio principii* no matter whether evil is regarded as a lesser good or as an effect of the finiteness and limitedness of created things.

(Jung 1951b: 94)

141 'The Church can never explain the truth of her images because she acknowledges no point of view but her own. She moves solely within the framework of her images, and her arguments must always beg the question' (Jung 1955-56: 347).

142 Jung, who, like most contemporary philosophers, believes that humans possess 'free will', does not (and it is a shame) discuss Augustine's theodical argument *about 'moral evil'*. This, a specific theodical argument, which does not consider other types of evil (namely physical evil and metaphysical evil), is discussed in *On the Free Choice of the Will*, which Peter King, in his Introduction to this work, reconstructs as follows:

[1] Every case of genuine moral evil in the world stems from the voluntary choices of free agents.
 [2] Since God bestowed free choice of the will on human beings unconditionally, He ought not, and hence He does not, interfere with its exercise.
 [3] It is better for there to be a world in which there are beings with free choice of the will, even at the cost of genuine moral evil, than a world in which there is neither.'
 (Augustine 2010, xx)

Good and evil are *logically* and *ontologically* equivalent ('good' is the logical opposite of 'evil', just like 'light' is opposed to 'dark' and 'white' to 'black' [Jung 1951: 92])¹⁴³.

They are also, for Jung, *chronologically* equivalent, whilst for Augustine evil comes after good. In 'Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology' (1959), Jung writes:

good and evil are [...] principles. The word "principle" comes from "prius", that which is "first" or "in the beginning" [...] Good and evil are principles of our ethical judgement, but, reduced to their ontological roots, they are "beginnings", aspects of God, names for God.

(Jung 1959: 864)

Concerning the idea of evil as a product of corruption, which, as we have seen, is in effect the cornerstone of Augustine's doctrine, Jung, in a letter to Victor White, claims that 'The possibility of corruption means nothing less than a tendency inherent in the Good to decay and to *change* into Evil' (quoted in Segal 1992: 112, my italics). So Jung sees the idea of corruption more in the sense of (qualitative) change than as (quantitative) 'diminishment'. Rebutting White's naturalistic analogy ('I call an egg 'bad' because it *lacks* what I think an egg ought to have' [letter from White to Jung of 20 April 1952, quoted in Segal 1992: 111]), Jung writes:

A bad egg is not characterized by a mere decrease of goodness however, since it produces qualities of its own that did not belong to the good egg. It develops among other things H₂S which is a particularly unpleasant substance in its own right. It derives very definitely from the very complex albumen of the good egg and thus forms a most obvious evidence for the thesis: Evil derives from Good.

(quoted in Segal 1992: 111)

¹⁴³ 'During the discussion I addressed the main question, i.e. whether good and evil are equivalent or "privative" opposites and elaborated on your idea that the privatio boni leads to an undervaluation of the soul and cuts off the creative process' (J. Kirsch to C.G. Jung, 23 January 1955, in Lammers 2011: 219).

Taken out of the ‘privatio boni’ argument, in which God has a fundamental role, good and evil can indeed be seen as ‘a logically equivalent pair of opposites’ (Jung 1951: 84). But, to refute the doctrine of *privatio boni* in its entirety, including its theodical purpose, one must also attack the idea that God is wholly benevolent, as stated in the doctrine of *omne bonum a deo, omne malum ab homine* and in the idea of God as *Summum Bonum* (which are also Augustinian conceptions). This is arguably why Jung, having published his critique of the *privatio boni* in *Aion* (1951), felt the need to write *Answer to Job* (1952), where he attacks the idea of God being wholly good. In this passage from *Aion*, we see how Jung anticipates, in a compressed form and with bitter accents, the theme of the unjustifiable suffering, which is at the centre of his 1952 work on Job:

The false conclusion [of the *privatio boni*] argument necessarily follows the premise “Deus = Summum Bonum”, since it is unthinkable that the perfect good could ever have created evil. It merely created the good and the less good [...] Just as we freeze miserably despite a temperature of 2300 above absolute zero [...]. It is probably from this tendency to deny any reality to evil that we get the axiom “Omne bonum a Deo, omne malum ab homine”. This is a contradiction of the truth that he who created the heat is also responsible for the cold (“the goodness of the less good”). [...] One could hardly call the things that have happened, and still happen, in the concentration camps of the dictator states an “accidental lack of perfection” – it would sound like mockery.

(Jung 1951b: 94-96)¹⁴⁴

In the same letter to Victor White of 1952, Jung gives a more informal critique of the

144 Jung’s critique of *privatio boni* is in line with the arguments put forth by the philosopher Todd Calder: ‘One problem with the privation theory’s solution to the problem of evil is that it provides only a partial solution to the problem of evil since even if God creates no evil we must still explain why God allows privation evils to exist [...] An even more significant problem is that the privation theory seems to fail as a theory of evil since it doesn’t seem to be able to account for certain paradigmatic evils. For instance, it seems that we cannot equate the evil of pain with the privation of pleasure or some other feeling. Pain is a distinct phenomenological experience which is positively bad and not merely not good. Similarly, a sadistic torturer is not just not as good as she could be. She is not simply lacking in kindness or compassion. She desires her victims’ suffering for pleasure. These are qualities she has, not qualities she lacks, and they are positively bad and not merely lacking in goodness’ (Calder 2013a).

idea of *privatio boni*, where he exposes the psychological risks of the doctrine:

On the practical level the *privatio boni* doctrine is morally dangerous, because it belittles and unrealizes Evil and thereby weakens the Good, because it deprives it of its necessary opposite.

(quoted in Segal 1992: 113¹⁴⁵)

So the idea of *privatio boni* is not simply a logically flawed doctrine, it is also, according to Jung, psychologically dangerous. The doctrine of *privatio boni*, the notion of God as *Summum Bonum* and the belief *omne bonum a Deo, omne malum ab homine* are all connected attempts to deny the reality of evil and defend God's goodness. These arguments stand – and fall – simultaneously¹⁴⁶.

4.2. JUNG: *BONUM ET MALUM IN ANIMA*

The anima is the great entangler
and the Maya who involves [us]
in good and evil.

(von Franz 1974: 129)

In the conclusion of *Aion*, Jung claims that 'we do not know what good and evil are in themselves' (423) and that 'a hypostasis of good and evil as metaphysical entities is inadmissible because it would deprive them of meaning' (ibid.). To hypostatize means to substantiate, to consider as possessing independent ontological substance or essence. For Jung 'good' and 'evil' are not independent entities: they reside in the human soul¹⁴⁷.

145 In the same letter Jung argues that if evil is considered non-being, then to call God the Lord over Evil, means he is 'Lord over nothing' (quoted in Segal 1992: 112).

146 I touch upon Jung's rejection of the idea of God as *Summum Bonum* and of the doctrine of *Omne bonum* etc. in the following sections, limited to the relevance these ideas have to my argument.

147 In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, Jung's last great work, it is stated that 'Psychology cannot advance any argument either for or against the objective validity of any metaphysical view [...] The psychic is a phenomenal world in itself, which can be reconduced neither to the brain nor to metaphysics' (Jung 1955-56: 667).

This may seem an apparent contradiction with the Jungian idea we have discussed above of evil being *real*. But for Jung, there is no contradiction, since the soul, the psyche, is a real entity, the most real entity of all, and it is in the soul that good and evil are felt and known.

In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* Jung provides a new elucidation of his views on *privatio boni*:

[Manichaeism] forced the Church to take an important step: the formulation of the doctrine of the *privatio boni*, by means of which she established the identity of “good” and “being.” [...] one half of the polarity, till then essentially metaphysical, was reduced to a psychic factor, which meant that the devil had lost his game if he could not pick on some moral weakness in man [...] As interpreted by dogma, therefore, good is still wholly projected but evil only partly so, since the passions of men are its main source.

(Jung 1955-1956: 86)

Jung explains this ontological asymmetry as an attempt to put the blame of evil entirely on man (*omne bonum a Deo, omne malum ab homine*). Although he never states this move explicitly, arguably Jung re-equilibrates the asymmetry by placing the locus of *both* good and evil in the soul: indeed it is *in anima* that good and evil are known and felt as real¹⁴⁸. This explains why Jung does not accept Basil’s idea of evil as a ‘mutilation of the soul’ (Jung 1951b: 82)¹⁴⁹, if this means simply that good has received a somewhat unsubstantial diminishment:

when [...] Basil asserts on the one hand that evil has no substance of its own

148 He even goes so far as to concede that ‘The *privatio boni* may [...] be a metaphysical truth. I presume to no judgement on this matter. I must only insist that in our field of experience white and black, light and dark, good and bad, are equivalent opposites which always predicate one another’ (Jung 1951b: 98)

149 Basil had claimed that ‘evil does not subsist as a living being does, nor can we set before our eyes any substantial essence thereof. For evil is the privation of good [...] And thus evil does not inhere in its own substance but arises from the mutilation of the soul’ (quoted in Jung 1951b: 82).

but arises from a "mutilation of the soul," and if on the other hand he is convinced that evil really exists, then the relative reality of evil is grounded on a real "mutilation" of the soul which must have an equally real cause. If the soul was originally created good, then it has really been corrupted and by something that is real, even if this is nothing more than carelessness, indifference, and frivolity [...] When something – I must stress this with all possible emphasis – is traced back to a psychic condition or fact, it is very definitely not reduced to nothing and thereby nullified, but is shifted on to the plane of *psychic reality*, which is very much easier to establish empirically than, say, the reality of the devil¹⁵⁰.

In *Psychological Types* (1921) Jung argues that for something to be true in the soul (*in anima*) means that it is neither just true 'in re' nor just 'in intellectu'. Looking at this argument vis-à-vis the modern debate between relativism and naturalism, Jung's *esse in anima* thesis allows him to steer clear of ethical naturalism, according to which 'there are moral properties and facts' (Nuccetelli - Seay 2012: 1), which is an 'in re' (realist) conception of good and evil; and to avoid ethical relativism¹⁵¹, for which 'each culture's values are right for that culture' (Hinman 2008: 35), an 'in intellectu' (nominalist) version of ethics. But is this emphasis on the ethical qualities of the soul really a solution to the problems posed by various forms of relativism?

Jung's goal appears to be that of establishing, via psychology, an autonomous sphere of moral judgement, which he bases, unlike Kant, not on thinking, but on feeling, since it is a judgement of feeling which establishes the (good or bad) value of something (what something is, being determined by the thinking function). So while Jung is indeed a 'Kantian' when he claims that we must all, despite the influence of the Self, consider ourselves autonomous moral subjects, he seems to want to replace Kant's *deontology*

150 Concerning the devil, Jung adds: 'According to the authentic sources [he] was not invented by man at all but existed long before he did. If the devil fell away from God of his own free will, this proves firstly that evil was in the world before man, and therefore that man cannot be the sole author of it, and secondly that the devil already had a "mutilated" soul for which we must hold a real cause responsible (Jung 1951: 85).

151 I discuss Jung's rejection of relativism in the following paragraphs.

(based on the abstract law which practical reason imposes on itself) with an *axiology* in which the value of things is recognized by the feeling part of the soul¹⁵². Hence he endorses the philosophically dangerous position according to which feeling¹⁵³ can and should guide our actions, feeling being an essential component of what Jung calls ‘wisdom’: ‘Where Wisdom reigns there is no conflict between thinking and feeling’¹⁵⁴. In a letter to J. Kirsch of 16 February 1954, Jung writes: ‘Without thorough knowledge of “good and evil”, of the ego and the Shadow, there is no recognition of the Self, but at most an involuntary and therefore dangerous identification with it’ (Lammers 2001: 195). Here Jung puts the words ‘good’ and ‘evil’ in inverted commas, as to indicate he does not want to buy the moral(istic) burden attached to these two concepts. He doesn’t seem to imply that one should commit evil actions, but that one should be comfortable with experiencing one’s evil side (and not just one’s Shadow side) and be ready to feel a wide range of moral emotions.

In ‘Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology’ (1959)¹⁵⁵ Jung states that ‘philosophers and theologians’ do not seem, when they are talking about evil, to ‘be talking about the thing in itself, but only about words, about the concepts which denote or refer to it’ (Jung 1959: 858). The sentence may not sound very Kantian: how *could* one talk about ‘the thing in itself’? Well, for Jung in a sense one can: depth-psychological clinical

152 ‘Theoretical questions about value constitute a core domain of interest in moral theory, and often cross the boundaries between the normative and the metaethical’ (Schroeder 2012).

153 Here Beebe very elegantly warns how feeling can be an instrument of (therapeutic) control just as much as thinking: ‘But Jung saw through the pretensions of the feeling-types to recognize, as a good psychologist, that feeling can deny or attempt to control the irrational just as effectively as thinking. In fact, feeling loves to bring order to emotion (as we see in the rhetoric of psychotherapy: sort it out, work it through, talk it out), and the means it employs in so doing are rational, involving the conscientious application of values and relationship. And feeling is involved, just as much as thinking, in “judging” which feelings go where, and how much weight is to be put on them’ (Beebe 1992: 7).

154 Jung 1955-56, quoted in Qualls-Corbett, 1988: 143.

155 The paper is actually ‘an extemporaneous address to the Stuttgarter Gemeinschaft “Arzt und Seelsorger”’ (CW 11, p. 456, n. 1), so it is particularly useful for understanding Jung’s informal approach to moral issues (Not to say that Jung’s published work generally suffers from an excess of scholarly schematism!)

practice provides an outlook, beyond conscious defense mechanisms, onto the actual ‘battle of good and evil’ which goes on in every soul. For Kant the realm of practical reason (i.e. the moral realm) is the noumenal realm. So what appears *prima facie* as not Kantian is actually the expression of a Kantian belief in the primacy of practical reason (see Chapter 1) and the idea of *esse in anima*.

As I have already mentioned above when discussing his confutation of *privatio boni*, he defines ‘good’ and ‘evil’ as ‘principles’ (Jung 1959: 859) and adds that ‘the ultimate principle we can conceive of is God’ (Ibid.: 864), so good and evil are seen as two aspects of God, a point which Jung had already made in his *Answer to Job* of 1952. Also, repeating what he had stated in *Aion*, he calls good and evil the ‘*principles of our ethical judgement*’ (Jung 1959: 864, my italics). So we have the two apparently contradictory definitions of good and evil:

- (1) Good and evil are religious, numinous principles, the two sides of God.
- (2) Good and evil are principles of our ethical judgment.

The first conception (1), as Jung admits, is indeed ‘ontological’ (864). But one should always remember that for Jung God is *certainly, at least*¹⁵⁶ the Self, so the definition can still be taken as eminently psychological, although admittedly a non-Jungian reader, who is not aware of this possible reading, may feel uncomfortable with such theological language.¹⁵⁷ In Trevi’s hermeneutic understanding of ‘psycho-logy’ (1986),

156 Perhaps *only the Self* – although Jung never added this atheist clause. I would argue that a Jungian can be atheist, agnostic or theistic, depending on how much God one thinks there is behind the Self, so to speak. Personally Jung held a theistic position, expressed by the famous ‘I know God’.

157 Here Jung does not seem willing to abandon a theological framework, as in other works (notably his Seminars on *Zarathustra*) where he claims the need to re-establish the ethical authority of the Self, devoid of theological ties.

we are looking here from the angle of the discourse *of* the psyche: the Self ('God') 'reveals' its good and bad aspects to the ego. The second conception (2) could be called logical (from *logos*, discourse, judgement), but again it would be more accurate to define it as *psychological*, since it is the psyche that passes judgment, mainly through the feeling function, in the sphere of morality. Here we are instead, again following Trevi's interpretation of Jungian 'psycho-logy', considering the discourse *on* the psyche: our ego understands the Self as both good and bad.¹⁵⁸

'Good' and 'evil' are seen, by Jung, as the two parts of a polarity which is present in the soul, amongst other polarities (e.g. 'masculine/feminine'), which we all perceive as polarities because of the 'principle of separation' (in an alchemical sense), which can also be called the 'either/or tendency' which is a function of the ego¹⁵⁹. 'Good' and 'evil' are words which we use in our moral judgements about ourselves (our Selves), others (other Selves) and God (that which is perceived as divine or as having its origin in God). These judgments are true in anima. In anima, God (if one believes in God), our Self and others can be felt, in different circumstances, as good or bad; and – thanks to a conscious reflection which integrates as much unconscious elements as possible and realises the *coniunctio oppositorum* – as both good and bad¹⁶⁰.

158 So it is incorrect to say, as Stein does, that there is a 'logical contradiction' (Stein 1995: 15) between (1) and (2) and that the contradiction can be solved by seeing it as a 'paradox' (Stein 1995: 15). There is no need to invoke paradoxes here and it is best to read (1) and (2), as Trevi suggests, hermeneutically, as implying one another.

159 This tendency is manifested, most notably, when our ego is confronted with an archetype: the shadow, says the ego, is 'bad' (so if we want to define the shadow, we can say that it is the sum of what the ego feels to be bad), the anima is 'good' (so if we want to define the anima, we can say that it is what the ego deems good). But in fact, the shadow is also 'good', and the anima can also be 'bad' (Jung 1951b: 423). Archetypes appear bipolar and contradictory because the ego which confronts them cannot grasp their amoral complexity, and defends itself by splitting them into two parts. *So is morality, after all, a defence mechanism?* Perhaps Jung would reply to this reductive approach that indeed defending ourselves from our daemonic side is a psychic necessity, because we are not Yahweh.

160 Which resembles Klein's 'depressive position'.

In the same talk Jung claims that

- (3) We can never know if something *is* in its ‘deepest qualities’ good or bad: only God can know (ibid.: 860, my italics)¹⁶¹.

According to Jung, this is because ‘we know only the surface of things’ (865), which is an extraordinarily modest, perhaps too modest, affirmation, if we consider that depth-psychology is supposed to be able to see at least the signs (or symbols) of what happens under the surface (of consciousness). Jung adds: ‘If you take the attitude: “This thing may be very bad – but on the other hand it may not”, then you have a chance of doing the right thing’ (862). Here Jung’s goal seems to be to highlight the dangers of inflation, where the ego identifies with the Self.

These disclaimers are followed by the rather blunt statement: ‘In spite of all this we cannot simply abstain from judgment’ (863). So

- (4) We should try to determine if something is good or bad.

Jung then discusses the question of the ‘felix culpa’ with reference to his clinical experience. Something may indeed be evil, but necessary for our evolution. Jung claims that if we do not experience evil first hand, in other words if we do not commit evil actions, ‘what is wrong [here Jung uses ‘wrong’ as a synonym of evil] never becomes

161 One would be tempted to complete this statement with the word ‘Himself’, since, following (1) we have seen that good and evil are aspects of God, so *only God can know Himself*. But this would appear in stark contradiction with what Jung has claimed in *Answer to Job* about the human capacity to help God discern the good from the bad. Jung’s view seems to be that God and man both need each other, for different reasons. Only God has access to the tree of good and evil (Jung 1959: 862), but only humans can live an ethical life.

a content of [our] actual life and [we] do not know from what [we] need to be saved' (a Lutheran idea).

So we have the idea:

- (5) It is sometimes necessary to commit an evil action.

Having said this, he feels the need to amend the apocryphal (and indeed gnostic) saying 'if thou knowest what though dost, thou art blessed, but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the law' (quoted in 868). According to Jung, 'the evil you do, even when you do it knowingly, is still evil and works accordingly [...] A man who knows what he is doing when he commits evil may have a chance of being blessed, but in the meantime he is in hell'¹⁶² (868).

- (6) If we know that what we are doing is evil, this does not make it less evil.

This, for Jung, is really a paradox – consciousness is no value *per se* - and so he comments: 'There is nothing for it but to accustom ourselves to thinking in paradoxes' (868)¹⁶³.

He then continues by re-stating the opposition between ethics and morality which he had already discussed in 'A Psychological View of Conscience' (1958) and says that in 'critical situations' (one is reminded of Jaspers 'limit situations') we cannot always decide by following moral codes. Jung refers to the 'creative freedom either to observe the moral code or not' (870) and makes the example of lying in order to protect a

¹⁶² I discuss the contradiction between 'vital' and 'moral' in Chapter 2.

¹⁶³ See Chapter 2, On Jung and Nietzsche's style.

professional secret. All that can be done, in critical situations, is ‘stand [our] ground’ and ‘react as [...] whole m[en]’. This would sound like a Gary Cooper kind of exhortation (‘A man’s got to do what a man’s got to do’), if it weren’t for the adjective ‘whole’. It is not, for Jung, a question of macho qualities, but of human qualities, which are much more complex to achieve¹⁶⁴. The idea of reacting to a situation appropriately and as ‘whole men’ is the equivalent to the virtue-ethical idea of acting according to the right emotional response¹⁶⁵.

Jung also adds that when

we are true[...] to [our] innermost nature and vocation [...] [we] alone and the Omniscient [see] the actual situation *as it were from inside*, whereas the judges and condemners see it only from outside.

(Jung 1959: 869, my italics)

So, in the paragraphs I have quoted, Jung seems to think that if we have a ‘creative approach’ to moral codes, we have a better chance of seeing if something is actually evil or not. A completely individuated subject – which is of course a *fictio*, since it would coincide with a complete incarnation of the divine in the human, which for Jung is impossible to achieve – would actually always be able to understand if something were good or bad. Here Jung seems to conceive the possibility of reaching into the noumenal level of ethical reality, a lesson, as we have seen, he takes from Kant, who considered the human soul on the level of the noumenal reality. So Jung’s claim that ‘theologians don’t grasp the real thing’ may not have been in contradiction with Kant’s

164 Tony Soprano would vehemently disagree: ‘What happened to Gary Cooper, the strong, silent man? He wasn’t in touch with his feelings, he just did what he had to do...if they had got Gary Cooper in touch with his feelings it would have been dysfunction this and dysfunction that...’ (*The Sopranos*, created by David Chase, HBO)

165 See Chapter 3.

lesson after all, given that Kant concedes that the moral subject can actually gain access to the knowledge of (moral) situations as they are. That is because acting morally, makes the situation morally understandable: good is not found, but in a sense made (or created) though our attempts to be good (Kant calls this the *constitutive* faculty of practical reason, Jung the soul's capacity to judge through feeling). There is a fundamental hermeneutic circle in Jung's ethical stance, which is between these two propositions:

- (α) only a fully individuated subject can be said to be truly ethical (movement from health to ethics)
- (β) only if we strive to be truly ethical can we individuate (movement from ethics to health)

To summarize the ideas found in Jung's *Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology*, for Jung not every moral judgement is correct, but we must make moral judgements nevertheless, being aware that we may be wrong, which is why I would characterise his meta-ethical position as '*agnostic*', but not *relativistic*, *nihilist* or *entirely subjectivist*. Also, what is good for somebody, may be bad for somebody else. This is a perspectivist (and pragmatist) stance, not a relativistic one, and is grounded in the idea, discussed in Chapter 2, of the fundamental role of *health* in Jung's new ethics. In the following quote Jung states his anti-relativistic and perspectivist stance very clearly and boldly, and seems to be unaware of the philosophical commitment that doing so implies, so the part of his talk which the editors have italicised starkly contradicts the empiricist's declaration of faith:

As a therapist I cannot, in any given case, deal with the problem of good and evil philosophically but can only approach it empirically. *But because I take an empirical attitude it does not mean that I relativize good and evil as such.* I see very clearly: this is evil, but the paradox is just that for this particular person in

this particular situation at this particular stage of development it may be good. Contrariwise, good at the wrong moment in the wrong place may be the worst thing possible.

(Jung 1959: 866)

The ‘paradox’ Jung refers to may actually be solved by saying that the ‘evil’ action may – at a given moment, for a particular person – be healthy and vital. So Jung, here, appears to be subsuming the ethical under the dichotomy ‘healthy/unhealthy’, which looks like a Nietzschean move, if it weren’t for the fundamental difference that for Nietzsche the healthy/unhealthy opposition *substitutes* the good/evil opposition, while for Jung *both* spheres are valid and meaningful. This has the unpleasant consequence that at times we are obliged to choose between what is good for us (healthy) and what is good (moral). So Jung endorses Nietzsche’s health criterion, but does not discard the categories of good and evil, which he believes should be retained, since they possess numinous qualities.

4.3. JUNG’S DEPTH-PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SIN AND REDEMPTION

God does not save people
who are only fictitious sinners.
(M. Luther)

I could never accept the existence of a personal God.
No such Being could possibly endure
the suffering of humanity.
(W. Pauli to G. Quispel)

Non si può dire che sia servito a molto
perché il male dalla terra non fu tolto.
(Fabrizio De André
"Si chiamava Gesù")

In the secular and pluralistic approach to human suffering offered by the modern psychotherapeutic paradigm, can there still be place for the Christian notions of sin and redemption? Freud's paradigm, as the following quote makes clear, is generally offered as an 'alternative' to 'atonement theology':

[S]everal non-religious accounts of the world – most saliently that of psychologist Sigmund Freud – have led to alternative therapies for approaching many of the human problems traditionally addressed by atonement theology – the experience of guilt, in particular, but also anxiety, depression, and feelings of meaninglessness.

(Zahl 2013: 633)

In this section I will be addressing Jung's analysis of sin and redemption. This should help understand why 'good' and 'evil', in Jung's work, are generally found in inverted commas. One of Jung's central points is that sin – the moral aspect of evil – is a necessary step in man's moral development: without sin (evil) there can be no redemption (the turning of evil into good). In *Answer to Job*, Jung writes that

[t]he guilty man is eminently suitable and is therefore chosen to become the vessel for the continuing incarnation [by which Jung means individuation], not the guiltless one who holds aloof from the world and refuses to pay his tribute to life, for in him the dark God [by which Jung means the negative polarity of the Self which we call 'evil'] would find no room.

(Jung 1952b: 746)

In the 'Tavistock Lectures' (1935) Jung writes that '[o]ur sins and errors and mistakes are necessary to us, otherwise we are deprived of the most precious incentives to development' (Jung 1935: 291-295). Again, in *Answer to Job* Jung offers a psychological reading of Satan's rebellion, of Adam's fall and of Cain's crime, which he considers as all belonging to one archetypal pattern: their "evil" and "sinful" actions

are interpreted as movements of separation from the morality of the father (Jung 1952b: 618), as attempts to seek individuation beyond ‘paternal approval’ (ibid.), although their ‘progressiveness’ is still marked by ‘moral inferiority’ (ibid.). Reading these passages, one cannot escape from the impression that Jung feels a considerable degree of admiration towards these figures and their efforts to substantiate an individual ethical approach, which our author, as we have seen, always considered as superior to a merely ‘moral’ stance. As Jung writes in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, ‘life itself is guilt’ (Jung 1955-56: 206).

This quote from Leibniz, who discusses and seems to approve the position of the Gallican Church of his time towards sin and redemption, can also be used to describe Jung’s position on the matter:

The illustrious prelates of the Gallican church [...] maintain that a sequence of things where sin enters in may have been and has been, in effect, better than another sequence without sin.

(Leibniz 1951: 139)

Jung seems to endorse the interpretation of sin as *felix culpa* which we find in St Paul, according to which sin is the gateway for redemption: ‘where sin abounded, grace did much more abound’ (*Romans* 5: 21). Although, interestingly, the *culpa* which redemption solves, is actually a *divina culpa*: Jung interprets Christ’s incarnation as God’s answer to Job:

Christ’s [...] sacrificial death was a fate chosen by Yahweh as a reparation for the wrong done to Job on the one hand, and on the other hand as a fillip to the spiritual and moral development of man. There can be no doubt that man’s

importance is enormously enhanced if God himself deigns to become one.

(Jung 1952b: 650)

Here Jung moves within St Anselm's juridic category of 'satisfactio': Christ is the 'price to pay' for Job's suffering (today most theologians prefer to read redemption as a gratuitous 'gift'). But this does not mean that, for Jung, the sum of Job's suffering and of Christ's Passion is zero. Christ begins to redeem humanity by bringing the 'light' of love (as opposed to the morality of law) and is an ally in humankind's fight against darkness, which includes – paradoxically – the dark side of God, and sin. In psychological terms, the Christian era represents the individuating phase in which we are capable of successfully contrasting the negative influence of our shadow therefore strengthening our ego. Jesus 'sav[es] the threatened religious community' (Jung 1952b: 688).

Jesus is a model of perfectionism, not of completeness: he is more divine than human and his Shadow is split off. The problem is that our Shadow has a positive function inasmuch as it connects us to earth, to our instincts and to the feminine side of Western consciousness, in other words to our unconscious. '[W]hile God in the person of Christ succeeded in incarnating his good side, his evil side continued to be projected onto his creatures' (Main 2006: 307). In a letter to Victor White, Jung explains this paradox: 'When Christ withstood Satan's temptation, that was the fatal moment when the shadow was cut off. Yet it had to be cut off in order to enable man to become morally conscious' (letter to Victor White, 10 April 1954, quoted in Stein 1995: 76).

A more complete redemption and 'continuing incarnation' can only occur in the 'era of the Holy Ghost', where God incarnates in the 'empirical man' (Jung 1952b: 755), 'the

natural man who is tainted with original sin'. According to Jung, 'the guilty man is eminently suitable [...], not the guiltless one who holds aloof from the world and refuses to pay his tribute to life, for in him the dark God would find no room' (Jung 1952b: 746)¹⁶⁶. Jung's developmental account of our ethical capacities, can be looked at through the lens of the human and divine *figures* of *Answer to Job*:

Yahweh: the *amoral* Self for whom the distinction between good and evil is not defined and creative tendencies coexist alongside destructive ones

Job: the first development and differentiation of a *moral* ego (i.e. capable of distinguishing between good and evil), out of an indifferentiated Self

Christ: the one-sided strengthening of a *moral* stance based on love

Satan/the Antichrist: the one-sided strengthening of an *immoral* stance based on power

The Holy Ghost: the beginning of *ethics*, in which the opposites of good and evil (of love and power?) within the Self are reunited at a conscious level¹⁶⁷

The way Jung deals with the notion of sin exemplifies the hermeneutical approach which is constantly operative in his work: a religious concept is brought into Jung's

166 In a letter Pauli wrote to Jung, we read: 'you have linked the concept of incarnation with ethics, which, moreover, just like Schopenhauer (in his work on the basis of morality), you have based on the identification of the Self with one's fellow men on deeper psychic levels ("what one does to others, one also does to oneself" etc.). Is it possible to define your point of view as *incarnatio continua*?' (Jung-Pauli: 82)

167 By revealing his contradictions to us and in us, 'God/the Self' allows us to become conscious of our own: here is the redeeming quality of 'psycho-theological' (Stein 1995) knowledge, which shows the *incarnatio continua*. By expressing our own contradictions, brought into the light by the depth-psychological knowledge of the Self, we allow 'the Self/God' to manifest its creative and destructive force: here is the dangerous freedom of individuation, the constant risk of falling into the sin of inflation.

psychological discourse because of its psychological value – so one could reach the conclusion that for Jung religion is ‘nothing but’ psychology, or perhaps ‘proto-psychology’. But in fact when Jung is talking about ‘sin’ it would be difficult to trace where the original ‘religious’ notion of sin ends and where Jung’s interpretation of this same concept begins. It is not that an interpretation subsumes under its categories everything to which it is alien. The point is that the interpreter is already within the horizon of meaning which has been opened by the concept he is looking at. This is why Jung, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, writes that he ‘moves entirely within a Christian framework’. He is not referring, in this quote, to Christian beliefs, which he may or may not have personally had (a question which I am happy to leave to biographers), but to the cultural legacy which he inherits and which informs his thinking. Interpretation is akin to psychological growth inasmuch as it is both a movement of separation from a cultural matrix in order to see more clearly and of integration of one’s cultural matrix within oneself in order to understand it from within. Jung’s aim is not to ‘explain’ (*aufklaren*), but to ‘understand’ (*verstehen*)¹⁶⁸. Jung’s ‘psychology of religion’ should be read in the two senses of the grammatical genitive: as an interpretation of religion through psychology; *and* as an uncovering of the psychological value of religious thought – the psychology *in* religion.

168 The distinction can be found, amongst others, in Karl Jaspers.

4.4. THE SHADOW IS NOT ONLY EVIL, AND EVIL IS NOT ONLY THE SHADOW

Piety is needed for the work,
and this is nothing but knowledge of oneself.

(Jung 1954-55: 657)

In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (1955-56) Jung, speaking of the alchemical generation of the *nigredo*, writes that it is

the indispensable prerequisite for synthesis, for unless the opposites are constellated and brought to consciousness they can never be united. Freud halted the process at the reduction of *the inferior half of the personality* and *tended to overlook the daemonic dangerousness of the dark side*, which by no means consists only of harmless infantilism. Man is neither so reasonable nor so good that he can cope *eo ipso* with evil.

(Jung 1955-56: 346, my italics except for the Latin)

Leaving aside his remark about ‘harmless infantilism’¹⁶⁹, what strikes us here is that the *nigredo* is at first compared to ‘the inferior half’ of personality, in other words with the Shadow, and then, in the following sentence, to ‘evil’. Secondary literature on Jung often confuses these two concepts, and sometimes Jung appears to do the same.

Jung defines the Shadow as the inferior part of our personality, that in us which is underdeveloped at a given moment of our life, but most importantly ‘the thing a person has no wish to be’ (*CW*16: 470, quoted in Samuels et al 2010). If I am aware that I am

¹⁶⁹ In Freud’s theory ‘infantilism’ is of course far from being ‘harmless’, since it is but another name for the incapacity to deal with the Oedipus Complex, which for Freud is the main source of neurosis.

not a fast runner, and I don't mind, this aspect of my personality would not be part of my Shadow. The Shadow, for Jung, is a metaphor that describes our unconscious alter-ego, it is both a complex and an archetype, and it exerts power over our Self. It has both a positive and a negative side, although we tend to see it only negatively, and the positive side of the Shadow is that it contains a potential of energy that can be integrated if we can bring ourselves to confront it.

Jung would seem to break the Kantian epistemological boundaries when he claims, in *Aion*, that, albeit 'rare', experience of evil is possible: 'it is quite within the bounds of possibility for man to recognize the relative evil of his own nature [the shadow], but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil' (1951: 19). This shows that Jung is not always as Kantian as he would like to be. But there is another terminological problem: to speak of the shadow as 'relative evil' and of evil proper as 'absolute evil' can be confusing, so clarification is needed:

- 1) When speaking of 'relative evil', Jung is not endorsing a relativistic stance, in which 'Mark claims that X is evil', 'Peter claims that X is good'. He is endorsing a perspectivist stance and means 'evil *relative to the psychology* of the person who speaks', which is precisely what the shadow is. As I have shown above, Jung is not a relativist, but a perspectivist.
- 2) 'Absolute evil': one should compare the use of this expression with Jung's claim that 'good and evil cannot be hypostasised'. So what does Jung mean by absolute evil? He probably means that it is one side of the polarity 'evil/good'. 'Unmixed evil' would perhaps be a better translation.

Some authors read the Shadow as Jung's word for evil. I would contend that this is not

the case. In fact the discovery of the Shadow, in Jung's framework, is that which allows us to distinguish what is actually evil from what is merely 'Shadow projection'. It is thanks to the introduction of the psychological concept of Shadow that Jung can avoid psychoanalysing evil away: the Shadow, for Jung, should be integrated as much as possible, and Jung seems to envisage it as a 'psychological mediator' between the ego and evil, since the latter cannot be dealt with 'as it is' (*eo ipso*). And Jung also writes that generally we are not 'so good' as to be able to deal with evil. What he means here is that we are not sufficiently integrated personalities: for Jung our Shadow is very often 'in the way' and impedes a proper understanding of evil.

So the Shadow does not simply mediate: it distorts, impeding a clear vision of what is (actually) evil in ourselves and others. Our vision of evil is usually obscured – the plasticity of the metaphor of the Shadow is here apparent – by the aspects of ourselves which we repress and quite often project on others. So before one can deal with actual evil, according to Jung, one should deal with one's own Shadow. These ideas are arguably Jung's single most important contribution to the construction of a *psychology of ethics*. The important fact, as I mentioned, is that one's own Shadow, when looked at closely, appears to be not that 'evil' after all:

[T]he shadow is merely something inferior, primitive, unadapted, and awkward; *not wholly bad*. It even contains childish or primitive qualities which would in a way vitalise and embellish human existence.

(Jung 1938/1940: 134, my italics)

The Shadow's influence can cease to be dangerous and it can become beneficial. This is when, according to Jung, we have had the courage to admit that (1) parts of *our* Self are 'childish' and 'primitive' and that (2) we usually don't recognise this, but find it

easy to see *others* as ‘childish’ and ‘primitive’. Jung thinks that our Shadow should be made conscious to us and that we should try not to project it on others (the two psychic movements are interrelated). The ethical – and developmental – implications of ignoring our Shadow (and of projecting it on others) are described by Jung as follows:

Everyone carries a Shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. If an inferiority is conscious, one always has a chance to *correct* it. Furthermore, it is constantly in contact with other interests, so that it is continually subjected to *modifications*. But if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets *corrected*, and is liable to burst forth suddenly in a moment of unawareness. At all events, it forms an unconscious snag, thwarting our most well-meant *intentions*.

(Jung 1938/1940: 31, my italics)¹⁷⁰

The notions of Shadow recognition and Shadow projection help elucidate Jung's linking ‘neurosis’ to a ‘disturbance of our ethical function’ (Jung 1917). The shadow, in a neurotic individual, is by definition not integrated. This is why a neurotic individual (it would be useless to stress that no individual is entirely neurotic or entirely healthy) finds it very difficult to be ethical. Should patients thus be excused? According to Jung, they should not:

Everything suggestive of illness should be avoided [when speaking with patients] [...] Illness too is a solution of sorts, a way of disposing of life's problems: ‘I am ill, now the doctor must help!’ [...] They are disappointed when I treat them as normal people and myself act as a normal man.

(Jung 1958: 881)

Nevertheless, Jung would probably agree that neurosis makes it extremely difficult to be ethical:¹⁷¹ we cannot pursue what is good for us and avoid being evil because the

170 See Freud, in *The question of lay analysis*, written some 15 years earlier: ‘The ego, as we put it, institutes a repression of these instinctual impulses. For the moment this has the effect of fending off the danger [...] The repressed instinctual impulse is now isolated, left to itself, inaccessible, but also uninfluenceable. It goes its own way’ (1926).

171 I discuss this issue, from a different angle, in Section 3.2.

Shadow, to use Jung's metaphor, gets constantly in the way. If we recall Stein's Jungian definition of an ethical action as an 'action of the whole person, the Self' (Stein 1995: 10), which I take as including the ego's discriminating role, it is clearly possible, albeit difficult, to break this vicious circle and try to act ethically. One could say that only after one has tackled the Shadow, which is a '*moral problem*' (Jung 1951: 14, my italics) in its own right, *other moral problems* can fully emerge. Although unethical behaviour¹⁷² may have been the 'original sin' which determined the inception of some cases of neurosis¹⁷³, the incapacity to be ethical is (subsequently) experienced as intense suffering, as a 'fall' in a condition of exile from authentic human relatedness.

If it comes to a neurosis, we invariably have to deal with a considerably intensified shadow. And if such a person wants to be cured it is necessary to find a way in which his conscious personality and his shadow can live together.

(Jung 1938/1940: 131)

Now, given that one is able to come to terms with one's Shadow, and withdraws the projection of his Shadow onto others, how should one deal with the evil in oneself which is not 'Shadow' and with the evil in others which is not 'Shadow projection'? In a sense, for Jung, dealing with this 'ontologically heavy' evil – which determines authentic (as opposed to neurotic) suffering, authentic (voluntary) 'sin', and ultimately violence and death – is dealing with God¹⁷⁴. But the problem, as I have shown, is that 'evil', an aspect of God (and of the God within us), should not be eliminated, or 'goodified' (see Jung's critique of the *privatio boni*), because to do so would weaken the polarity of good and evil which is precisely what one must 'feel' before choosing

172 But it would perhaps be more accurate to say 'repeated behaviour', behaviour which at a certain time worked but that was not subsequently re-tested against reality (Burkeman 2012).

173 According to Wood (1986), neurosis is *always* the result of being unethical, a radical position which Jung does not endorse.

174 See Ricoeur: 'It is, in fact, because evil is supremely the crucial experience of the sacred that the threat of the dissolution of the bond between man and the sacred makes us more intensely aware of man's dependence on the powers of the sacred.' (Ricoeur 1969: 6)

an ethical course of action. In the aforementioned speech of 1958, Jung writes with regard to this:

People speak sometimes of “overcoming” evil. But have we the power to overcome it? [...] [I]t is often impossible to speak of overcoming evil, because at such times we are in a “closed” situation, in an aporia, where whatever we choose is not good [...] Often we cannot say in such situations how the problem of good and evil will work out. We have to put our trust in the higher powers.

(Jung 1959: 883)

If we consider that for Jung the ‘higher powers’ of God (psychologically – the Self) can manifest themselves in dreams (Jung 1959: 884), which analytical psychology claims to be able to understand (more fully than psychoanalysis), one must conclude that, for Jung, what happens in a psychotherapeutic setting is often nothing short of an attempt to understand good and evil – at this stage we are well beyond the problem of the Shadow – and allow the good to prevail.

The distinction between the Shadow and evil is perhaps a point that psychoanalysts and psychotherapists should not overlook when they encounter what may be called (following Kant) ‘radical evil’. Our evil side – as patients and as doctors – may be immune from therapy and a therapeutic *furor sanandi* could sometimes give evil one more reason to laugh:

[S]uffering, whether it be Christ’s passion or the suffering of the world, remains the same as before. Stupidity, sin, sickness, old age, and death continue to form the dark foil that sets off the joyful splendour of life.

(Jung 1951b: 84)

As I mentioned in the passage from *Mysterium Coniunctionis* which I quoted at the

beginning of this chapter, Jung seems to conflate the two concepts. This can perhaps now be explained if we consider that much of the evil we encounter is actually derived from Shadow projection, hence it is true that ‘integrating our Shadow’ we are indeed ‘integrating evil’. As Trevi and Romano put it, ‘if Freud [...] shows the vice [...] hidden under any self-proclaimed virtue, Jung, with Aristotelic humanism, shows the possible virtue hidden under every vice’ (Trevi – Romano 2009: VIII).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter I have shown the place and function of the notion of evil in Jung’s psychology. Evil and good have been elucidated as the fundamental and archetypal halves of a psychic polarity: coming to terms with good and evil means coming to terms with the Self, which is the goal of Jungian psychology. I have then discussed how Jung’s position towards evil and good is best defined as perspectivism and shown how the notions of sin and redemption, two declinations of, respectively, evil and good, also occupy a fundamental position in Jung’s moral psychology: we all, according to our author, go through cycles of ‘sin’ and ‘redemption’, and completeness derives from both the experience of the ‘hybris[*tic* failures] of the ego’ (Jung 1942/1948) and the reconciliation of our ego with the supraordinate objective psyche, the Self. Finally, the notion of evil has been shown to be relevant to a depth-psychological paradigm because it maintains, beyond the necessary integration of the Shadow which Jung asked patients to attend to, a sense of the *mysterium tremendum* which every inclination towards evil reveals, ‘the daemonic dangerousness of the dark side’ (Jung 1955-56: 346) quoted at the beginning of this section and which refers to much more than just the Shadow.

In this chapter I have tried to select the most relevant passages for understanding the Christian side of Jung's ethical approach. Having done so, I leave it to the reader who wishes to hold a Jungian ethical position to choose from various possibilities: (1) hold on to the ethical dimension of the religious ideas I discuss, discarding the dogmatic and 'revealed' elements of the tradition from which they originate; (2) embrace both the ethical and the religious side of these ideas; (3) discard both the religious and the ethical dimension of these ideas, in other words discard Jung's Christian side entirely; (4) discard the ethical side of Jung's Christian approach and hold on to the Christian-religious dimension of his thought.¹⁷⁵

Within the pluralist framework of my thesis, option (1) is the option I choose and hope the reader may be in agreement. I think option (1) allows Jung's valuable ideas on evil (and the other valuable ideas which he derives from a Christian matrix) to sit alongside the Nietzschean and Kantian side of his thought, which I think is a complex but not impossible state of affairs. Option (2) has the problem of generating a contrast between a philosophical and a religious approach to life: can a Jungian believe in the dogmas of Christianity and also embrace the Kantian and Nietzschean side of Jung's thought? I don't see how this can be possible. Options (3) and (4) would be, to my mind, scholarly inaccurate, as they would cut off the Christian source of some of Jung's ideas, and the Jungian world-view which would result would be impoverished and an important part of what makes it 'Jungian' would be missing. Discarding the Christian side of Jung's ethics would be comparable to the error of discarding his Kantian or Nietzschean side

175 According to Philip Rieff, the 'conversion experience' championed by Jung in order to 'halt deconversion as the central experience of the mature Western personality [...] need not necessarily be Christian' (Rieff 1966: 88, note 2). Still, Jung's use of categories such as sin and redemption within a psychological discourse puts the author in the position of being criticised for being partial towards one specific (religious) vision of the world.

(and indeed his Aristotelian approach, in the sense I have discussed). Still, Jung's emphasis on the duty to be conscious of the positive amorality ('beyond good and evil') of the Self – which should bring one towards an ethical outlook on life – sits rather awkwardly next to Jung's 'Christian' belief that goodness is the value we should ultimately hold on to: how can we follow *both* the 'vital' (see Section 2.3) *and* the good, given that these two principles are quite often in conflict?

In the Conclusion, I will review the main results of my work and provide further directions of research.

CONCLUSION

In my work I have argued that we can acquire a deeper understanding of Jung's psychological model if we interpret it as a psycho-ethical model. Jung does not only attempt to describe how our psyche works and how to cure it when it doesn't work; he also provides an answer to 'the ethical problem' (Jung 1949: 1419): how should one live? For Jung, one should live a life which is capable of transcending and overcoming both the one-sidedness of conscious morality or immorality and the amoral pull of the unconscious. This life is the life of the subject who seeks individuation, so the answer to the ethical problem is also the central concern of analytical psychology. As I mentioned in the introduction, Jung is ambivalent about the ethical enterprise which he has undertaken, and is keen to underplay the philosophical intentions and implications of his work. At least as far as ethics is concerned, I believe this was not just dictated by some form of poorly disguised immodesty¹⁷⁶. His conception of ethics as stemming from a dialogue between consciousness and the unconscious is so different from ratiocentric (Cottingham) ethical systems, that what, in Jung, goes under the name of ethics is really no longer ethics, at least not in the sense in which a long tradition of thought has been used to considering this word. Jung is therefore right to be cautious in labelling his work as ethical. Furthermore, to my mind, Jung did not fully realise how much ethics is embedded in the structure and core concepts of his psychology. As we have seen, ethics is so pervasive that readers of Jung, including the author himself, may easily forget that it is there. As with many thinkers and writers, Jung's greatness

¹⁷⁶ When he writes about the difference between the philosophy that goes on in the setting and academic philosophy (Jung 1943b: 181, see Introduction) it is difficult not to detect a sense of superiority in the tone of his remarks; as when he dismisses the 'complications' which 'amuse' philosophers (Jung 1938/1940: 68; opening quote).

went partly beyond his conscious intentions, at times even against them.

I have shown how Jung, often not explicitly, incorporates ideas from Kant, Nietzsche, Aristotle and the Christian ethical approach, and how these ideas, together, help shape his psycho-ethical model. As he critically and eclectically selects Kantian and Nietzschean conceptual models, he reshapes them – and sometimes forces them into – his new psychological language, so for example Kant’s ‘consciousness of duty’ becomes ‘the duty to be conscious’, and Nietzsche’s Dionysian approach to existence is read as an injunction to listen to the unconscious. It is often difficult to establish if Jung finds, in these authors, an answer to his ethical (and psychological) questions, or if their ideas are merely a corroboration of his intuitions: Jung’s inquiries are already partly shaped by the cultural atmosphere he has grown up in. Also, his approach to religious, scientific, and philosophical ideas is always the approach of the conqueror, who submits what is useful and discards what is not needed. He is not always philologically accurate and whatever topic he addresses (be it psychological, religious, scientific, or philosophical) is already, so to speak, very Jungian, which is to say that Jung ceaselessly *interprets*, as indeed one would expect from a therapist. This can easily lead his interpreters astray. Jung is not a cautious thinker. So we should be cautious with him.

As I mentioned in the Introduction, the two main arguments of my work have been that within Jung’s psychological model we find a viable psycho-ethical paradigm or, to frame this idea in a slightly more radical fashion, that Jung’s psychology can be read, amongst other legitimate readings of it, as a psycho-ethical paradigm in its own right; the second point I have made is that Jung’s approach to ethics, which is based on an

interplay of consciousness and of the unconscious, allows an original integration of ethical approaches which Jung's psychological point of view reveals as complementary to one another, as parts of a meaningful 'whole'. For example: in Kant, morality, as we have seen, is freedom, the rational and *universal* principle which commands us to perform our duty (in Jung, the duty to be conscious). It is not a *collective* norm of a specific society – although Kant is accused, by Nietzsche, of being a 'cunning Christian', partial to the Christian set of values –, as Nietzsche sees it. So Jung can agree both with Kant's conception of morality and with Nietzsche's critique of morality as collective homologation.

No great ethical thinker is entirely 'virtue ethical', or 'deontologist', or 'consequentialist'.¹⁷⁷ After all, it is the psyche which is asked to be ethical, and the ethical needs of a 'plural psyche' (Samuels 1989) may be adequately met only by a plurality of ethical approaches. Jung's psychology, and in particular his distinction between introversion and extraversion, could suggest that the answer to the question of 'eliminativism' ('can one ethical approach do all the work of ethics?') is 'no'. Deontology and virtue ethics, with their focus on intentions and individual character, could both be classified as 'introverted' ethical theories, while consequentialism, with its focus on the effects of one's actions, may be classified as 'extraverted'. This distinction could help understand the continuing debates between these schools of ethics, which appear to embed a different view of the world, and the need to see these different approaches to ethics as complementary, just like introverted and extraverted individuals can work quite well together, and nobody is exclusively inwardly or outwardly oriented. It could also be fruitful to take a closer look at how Jung's typology

¹⁷⁷ Cf Harcourt's notion of the 'great tradition' of ethics (Harcourt 2013b).

and archetypal theory can function as conceptual devices which are capable of connecting divergent ethical positions.

Drawing upon the results of my research, disagreements and incomprehension between Jungians could be clarified by seeing them as deriving from the different place which their work occupies on Jung's ethical spectrum. For example, David Tacey's critique of James Hillman could be understood as a disagreement between a Kantian Jungian and a Nietzschean one. In *Jung and the New Age*, Tacey claims that Hillman 'ignored moral problems and ethical dilemmas' (Tacey 2001: 120). As I discussed in Chapter 1, ethical dilemmas are actually very important for Jung, in a sense they are a gateway to the ethical dimension of life. Hillman, according to Tacey, undermines the importance of the ego and encourages a 'celebration of the archetypes' (Tacey 2001: 118), to the exception of those that 'seem[...] to champion the logos, spirit or father, such as Christ, Yahweh, Herakles or Zeus' (ibid.). Tacey argues that 'Jung has the old-fashioned view that we have to extend moral responses toward the images we encounter. Hillman finds this antiquated, intrusive and moralistic' (Tacey 2001: 119). Tacey quotes Hillman who claims that to respond morally to the archetypes is to 'commit the sin of satanic selfhood, the ego who owns what is archetypal' (Tacey 2001: 122). The former comments that 'the logic is seductive, but again this is not true. The reverse is true: if we refuse to have moral dealings with archetypes, we leave ourselves open to possession and unconscious identification' (Tacey 2001: 122).

Another example: Marie-Louise von Franz's perplexity towards 'thick-skinned' patients could be derived from her embracing of the Christian side of Jung's psycho-ethical approach, without considering the other aspects of his position. Von Franz,

discussing some of her clinical work, concludes that there are ‘ethically and the not-ethically gifted people’ (von Franz 1995: 145). She writes:

[E]ach individual has his own ethical level and form of reaction. There are, for example, thick-skinned people who can afford a lot of what we would call sins. Other people cannot afford anything; as soon as they sidestep a bit from their own inner law, they get the most awful dreams and inner reactions [...] People in analysis sometimes do the most incredible things, and you think that now it is possible to catch them on their shadow. But naturally, as an analyst, one has to wait until they themselves have a dream. Then they have no dream! The unconscious has pardoned them.

(von Franz 1974: 144).

Jung would surely agree that there are different levels of ethical awareness to be found in different people. Jung’s unconscious is not a god or a person, but the natural and amoral dimension of our psyche. If the unconscious produces no ‘compensation’ to what appears to be a ‘one-sided’ immoral action, then perhaps the (immoral) action was not so one-sided after all. The ‘thick-skinned people’ who appear immoral in the eyes of a certain culture (and presumably moral heroes are also ‘thick-skinned’), may be in fact psychologically healthy. Von Franz does not consider that in Jung’s paradigm the tension between the ‘healthy’ and the ‘moral’ is both maintained and overcome by the notion of ethics.

In my work I have not explored all the clinical implications which could be derived from a deeper understanding of Jung’s ethical position and the notion of ‘ethical transference’, which I discuss in Section 1.3, deserves further study. A related set of implications from my findings could include looking at conflicts between analysts and patients as conflicts between different ethical positions. We could imagine a patient who is exclusively Nietzschean, while Jung advocates, as we have seen, an integration

of different ethical approaches. So one could ask: is a Jungian analyst, in a very peculiar sense, a teacher of ethics? And: do patients of a Jungian analyst have to follow a *Jungian* ethical vision in order to be cured? Various studies seem to suggest that the personality of the therapist is a stronger healing factor than ‘the theory’ held by the therapist, but could one really envisage a patient of a Jungian analyst who is effectively cured while still holding on to an immoralist, moralist, or amoral outlook, and not having accessed what could be defined as ‘the level of reality’ disclosed by an ethical world view? These are all open questions, which need further reflection. A detailed study of Jung’s meta-ethical position should also be part of a more comprehensive study of Jung’s work as an ethical thinker.¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, to compare my findings with the ‘ethical codes of conduct’ which (Jungian) therapists are asked to follow in their work might also be beneficial. Lastly, if ethics does indeed play a central role in Jungian psychology, my guess – based on an argument from analogy – is that this is true for every depth-psychological and therapeutic school. So a critical dialogue within the field of depth psychology and psychotherapy could be renewed by taking ethics as a point of departure.

¹⁷⁸ When Jung speaks of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ as objective (psychic) things, his position appears close to meta-ethical realism; but in other passages of his work, as we have seen, his views seem closer to perspectivism.

GLOSSARY

JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY

analytical psychology: Jungian psychology.

depth psychology: psychology that includes the unconscious in the equation (Freudian, Kleinian, Jungian)

both/and...either/or: the first is the ‘logic’, ‘law’ or ‘principle’ governing the *unconscious*, where relations of difference and opposition can coexist, as a result of the fact that ego-consciousness has not yet established these differences and oppositions; the second is the ‘logic’, ‘law’ or ‘principle’ of *consciousness*, which establishes distinctions and oppositions, the first of these being precisely the distinction between consciousness and the unconscious. For Jung, when approaching a problem, the either/or approach of consciousness should always be attuned to/listen to/be open to the ‘both/and’ principle of the unconscious. Jung’s idea that we should approach any problem with *both* the ‘either/or’ principle *and* the ‘both/and’ principle suggests that ultimately the ‘both/and’ principle should be considered paramount: ‘unconscious compensation is only effective when it co-operates with an integral consciousness. Assimilation is never a question of “this or that,” but always of “this and that”’ (Jung 1934b: 338)

personal equation: expression Jung borrows from astronomy to indicate the subjective factors that influence any psychological observation (including observations by professional psychologists)

psyche: ‘the totality of all psychic processes’ (Jung 1921: 797).

soul: synonym of individual personality (Jung 1921: 797).

complex: a collection of ideas and images that form a relatively independent part of the psyche and are characterized by a common emotional tone (Samuels et al 2010: 33-34).

archetypes: a psychic content, figure or narrative motive, that belongs to mankind in general (some archetypes are: **Shadow, Anima, Animus**, Hero, Wise Old Man, Wise Old Woman, Great Mother, *Puer aeternus*, Trickster, the initiatic journey of death and rebirth, the sacrifice of the God). Jung defines archetypes in various ways and Jungian scholars have not reached an agreement as to their nature. The nature of archetypes and the distinction between ‘archetype’ and ‘archetypal image’ are not discussed in my work.

abaissement du niveau mental (Janet): when a conscious attitude shifts into unconsciousness, in other words when the ego loses its ‘grip’ on a psychic content.

participation mystique (Lévy-Bruhl): when unconscious contents are shared by two people or by a group of people.

Shadow: archetype that represents the aspects of the personal and/or collective psyche that the ego and/or an entire society finds disagreeable, immoral, inferior, dangerous, underdeveloped and ugly, roughly corresponding to the Romantic ‘double’, and that individuals or groups tend to project on others.

Anima: archetype that represents relatedness, life and love; the “guardian of the threshold” (Jung 1928: 339) to the unconscious of men, which men tend to project on women.

Animus: archetypal masculine figure that represents meaning, order and courage; the “guardian of the threshold” (Jung 1928: 339) to the unconscious of females, which women tend to project on men.

Eros (relatedness) vs Logos (meaning): according to Jung, the dominant values of,

respectively, femininity and masculinity.

unconscious: '[r]elations [of psychic contents] to the ego that are not perceived as such' (Jung 1921: 700). 'The unconscious is [...] a natural entity which, as far as moral sense, aesthetic taste, and intellectual judgement go, is completely neutral', Jung 1934b: 239).

Chronologically, for Jung, the unconscious comes before consciousness.

consciousness: 'the relation of psychic contents to the ego, in so far as this relation is perceived as such by the ego' (Jung 1921: 700).

collective psychic content: 'I term *collective* all psychic contents that belong not to one individual but to many, i.e., to a society, a people, or to mankind in general' (Jung 1921: 692).

ego: the subjective psyche; the dominant complex; the centre of consciousness. The archetype that corresponds to the complex of the ego is the archetype of the Hero.

Self: the objective psyche, which includes both conscious and unconscious contents and relations; the 'regulating centre' and 'totality' of the psyche; the dominant archetype; the archetype of personality and of God

ego-Self axis: expression coined by Edinger which refers to the dynamic relationship and 'living connection' (Edinger 1992: 264) between ego and Self. The ego-Self axis could be defined as both the subject and the goal of Jungian ethics.

individuation: 'development of the psychological *individual* as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology' (Jung 1921: 757). Individuation, according to Jung, involves both differentiation and integration, and produces both psychic health and better social performance.

individualism: the one-sided development of individual character-traits which are not put into the service of society.

neurosis: self-division (of the psyche), in which consciousness and the unconscious are in conflict.

differentiation: ‘the separation of parts from a whole’ (Jung 1921: 705). Jung speaks of the differentiation of psychic functions from an original state of identity and of the differentiation of the individual from the collective. He considers it impossible for all four functions to be equally differentiated in an individual, and sees this as a positive thing, since the inferior function is what connects us to the unconscious and to the rest of humankind (Jung 1935: 212).

integration: the act of making unconscious contents conscious and, more generally, of connecting different psychic contents and functions together in a cohesive whole.

perfection vs completeness (wholeness): Jung values the pursuit of the second goal over the first. The exclusive pursuit of the goal of ‘perfection’ will produce psychic one-sidedness if it is not complemented by the pursuit of completeness, which is not to say that the pursuit of perfection has no role to play, as it provides ‘selective values’ (Jung 1952).

enantiodromia: Jung takes the concept of ‘running towards the opposite’ from Heraclitus to refer to the abrupt change of a psychological attitude into its opposite.

compensation: ‘the act and the effect of the establishment, in the psyche, of a situation of equilibrium between different elements and systems’ (Pieri 1998: 132, my translation). Jung speaks of how the unconscious tends to ‘correct’ a conscious attitude (Pieri 1998: 133), producing compensation, but he also stresses the importance of counterbalancing *the unconscious* by strengthening consciousness and adaptation. With reference to the difference between ‘mechanical’ *complementarity* and ‘intelligent’ unconscious compensation, he writes that it has ‘the character of [...] an intelligent choice of means aiming not only at the restoration of the psychic equilibrium but at an

advance towards wholeness [...] [the unconscious] takes the initiative in a creative way, and sometimes its purposive activity predominates over its customary reactivity' (Jung 1949: 1418).

one-sidedness: the quality of a psychological attitude that only considers one side of something. Jung sees consciousness as inevitably one-sided, and mentions both the advantages (to adapt to reality one-sidedness is necessary) and the risks of one-sidedness (excessive one-sidedness will produce unconscious compensation) (Pieri 1998: 757-58).

inflation: loss of boundaries between Self and ego.

projection: 'the expulsion of a subjective content into an object [...] a process of *dissimilation*' (Jung 1921: 783).

introjection: 'an indrawing of the object into the subjective sphere of interest [...] a process of *assimilation*' (Jung 1921: 767-68). Jung's conception of introjection draws from the work of Ferenczi.

identification: 'psychological process through which personality is partially or totally dissimilated from itself' (Pieri 2005: 312, my translation).

symbol: an image which is only partly conscious and that stems from a 'collaboration' of consciousness and the unconscious. For Jung, symbols have a healing quality (see *tertium*).

tertium: Jung calls symbols the *tertium* (the third), in contrast to the logical law of the *tertium non datur*, where something is either A or nonA: *tertium non datur* (a third option is not given). This is because for Jung symbols allow one to go beyond the dual opposition of points of view, in particular beyond the opposition between consciousness and the unconscious.

transcendent function: psychic function that allows the production of symbols and a

constructive relationship between consciousness and the unconscious.

attitudes: Jung distinguishes the **extraverted** type, which habitually ‘thinks, feels and acts in relation to the object’ (Jung 1921: 710), from the **introverted** type, which habitually ‘withdraws from [the object]’ and for whom ‘the subject is the prime motivating factor’ (Jung 1921: 769).

function: ‘a form of psychic activity that remains the same in principle under varying circumstances’ (Jung 1921: 731). Jung distinguishes four main functions: **thinking, feeling, sensation, intuition.**

attitude: ‘*a priori* orientation to a definite thing’ (Jung 1921: 687).

Persona: ‘outer attitude, outward face’ (Jung 1921: 803).

Anima: ‘inner attitude, inward face’ (Jung 1921: 803).

opposites: Jung believes that consciousness separates the contradictory character of unconscious contents into pairs of opposites (e.g. the ego separates the archetype of the Anima into saint and whore, the archetype of the Self into God and the Devil etc.).

coniunctio oppositorum/unio oppositorum/complexio oppositorum: the union of opposites, in Jungian psychology, designates the unification of psychic opposites (e.g. male and female, good and bad) which have been previously separated (by consciousness). Original psychic undifferentiation differs from *coniunctio oppositorum* because the former is the state before the separation of consciousness from the unconscious, while the latter is the result of a collaboration of consciousness and the unconscious.

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Philosophy

philosophy: critical study of an object or science: discusses, using rational arguments, the question: ‘what is x?’

ontology: branch of philosophy, discusses (using rational arguments) the question: ‘what objects are there?’ (in general and/or in a specific field); ‘What is the **ontological status** of x?’ means ‘what type of object is x?’ and ‘is x actually an object?’

epistemology: branch of philosophy, discusses (using rational arguments) the question: ‘what is (scientific) knowledge?’ (in general and/or in a specific field); ‘What is the **epistemological status** of x?’ means ‘what type of science is x?’ and ‘is x actually a science?’

Ethics

Note: In this section I provide hopefully not excessively controversial definitions of concepts used in the field of ethics. As I discuss at length in my work (but not in this glossary), Jung assigns a very peculiar meaning to the words ‘ethics/ethical’ and ‘morality/moral’, which should not be immediately conflated with the meanings provided below, although, as the patient reader will notice, some points in common emerge throughout my discussion.

ethics (1): branch of philosophy, discusses (using rational arguments) the question: ‘what should one do?’ This question can be asked with reference to specific circumstances. If looked at more generally, this question becomes: ‘How should I live?’. If instead one decides to focus more on personality and character, the question of ethics becomes ‘how should I be?’. Sometimes the answer to this question is seen as

being of pertinence of ‘normative (or prescriptive) ethics’, but I rarely use this expression in my work because I find it too narrow to convey the range of ethical issues under discussion.

ethics (2) (sometimes found as singular, especially in compound forms such as ‘work ethic’): ‘moral principles, or a system of these’ (Oxford English Dictionary).

moral: ‘[o]f or relating to human character or behaviour considered as good or bad’ (Oxford English Dictionary).

moral vs ethical: can be used as synonyms, but their respective etymologies continue, to a certain extent, to determine the different connotation of the two adjectives. Moral ‘emphasises rather more the sense of social expectation’ while ethical ‘favors that of individual character’ (Williams 2006: 6).

moral philosophy: synonym of ethics (1). In my work I generally prefer to use ‘ethics’ instead of ‘moral philosophy’ because (a) the latter expression has a slight old-fashioned taste to it and (b) I hope to avoid the problems related to the different connotations of the adjectives ‘ethical’ and ‘moral’ (see above).

normative/prescriptive ethics: synonym of ethics (1) (see note above)

virtue ethics vs deontology vs consequentialism: three main areas of debate within normative ethics. I do not discuss these fields as such in my work.

descriptive ethics: branch of ethics, which answers the question: ‘what do people, individually and as groups, think they should do?’

metaethics: branch of ethics, which answers the question: ‘what are the meaning, the ontological status and the epistemological status, of ethical language and thought?’

intuitionism, skepticism, relativism, naturalism, moral realism (objectivism), moral anti-realism (subjectivism), emotivism, moral cognitivism, moral non-cognitivism, nihilism, universalism: some of the prominent positions within the field

of metaethics. In my thesis I refer to some of these positions, but mostly in connection with a specific author, for example I compare Jung's ideas on conflicts of duty with *Moore's* intuitionism (and not with intuitionism as such).

descriptive vs prescriptive relativism: the first 'claims as a matter of fact that different cultures [and/or people] have different values' (Hinman 2003: 35), the second that each person and/or culture's values are right for that culture.

moral psychology: inter-disciplinary field (in which both psychologists and philosophers work), primarily interested in moral judgment, moral reasoning and moral development.

axiology vs deontology: traditional distinction between Classical 'theories of the good' and Modern 'theories of duty'.

ethics of intention (or conviction) vs ethics of responsibility: Weberian distinction between two different types of normative ethics, roughly equivalent to the distinction between deontology.

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