

The master-apprentice archetype – Considerations about the experience¹

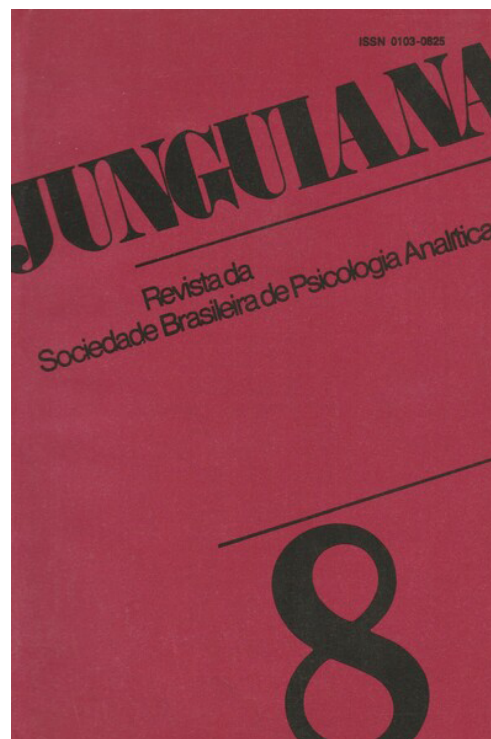
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Abstract

Drawing from her experience as both a professor and a student, the author reflects upon the field of interaction constellated by the master-apprentice archetype. The “Archetypal Theater”, or “Mythodrama”, is presented as it is formulated by its author, as it is implemented in a course within the undergraduate Psychology program at the University of Sao Paulo, and as it can be enriched in certain aspects by contributions from Erich Neumann regarding the phase of the body-self and from Juana Elbein dos Santos regarding the Nagô system. The article also offers some considerations on the relationships and differences between psychotherapy and pedagogy and concludes by emphasizing the importance of the words, which

allow the flow of symbolic elaboration grounded on experience. ■

Keywords
Analytical psychology,
Master-apprentice archetype,
Experiential groups, Masks,
Initiation.



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My special thanks to Johannes Heller who planted the first seeds of this work with masks in me.

This work is related to fantasy. In Portuguese the word ‘fantasy’ has both the sense of a costume worn at Carnival or fancy-dress parties, and the meaning of an imaginative activity identical with the flow of psychic energy. On certain occasions we wear that costume on our body, allowing it to have its deserved prominence and expression, in a harmonious dance. And maybe one day we decide to tear it, in order to show our true colors, our true face, and walk the world with an open heart. Also, the fantasy always accompanies us, even if at some point we decide it is not to be taken into account – it permeates, nourishes and ultimately becomes part of our conscious life, enabling us to experience what Jung called the process of individuation.

And it also relates to lived experience and the word. I seek herein to reclaim the word that expresses lived experience, that allows for the elaboration of what has been experienced, that opens the channel for the intercommunication of individualities so that they can express themselves as fully as possible.

All of this within the pedagogical field, within the context of teaching and learning. I understand Pedagogy as a science-art that aims at not only the transmission and acquisition of information, but also its integration into the personality, made possible and experienced within the field of interaction of the master-apprentice archetype.

The starting point for this reflection is my own experience in this field. I consider it a valuable opportunity to have been able to live, on a daily basis for four years, the roles of both student and professor in institutions that are very meaningful to me. At the University of São Paulo’s Institute

of Psychology (IPUSP), I introduce undergraduate students to Analytical Psychology. At *Sociedade Brasileira de Psicologia Analítica* (SBPA), as a student in the analyst training program, I was delving deeper and specializing in this approach. As for the content, the arrangement could not have been better: the questions were always present in me. The seminars, supervisions, mentoring and readings at SBPA not only ensured my specialization in the subject but also fostered a broad perspective, a contextualization of specific issues brought by my students, which greatly enriched the classes. On the other hand, the preparation of classes and the classes themselves forced me to synthesize information, discover a didactic and introductory language and focus on the basic concepts. All of this helped me maintain a central theoretical axis - no matter how specific the topic discussed in an SBPA seminar was, I was always, or at least in the same week, relating it to the fundamental issues of Analytical Psychology.

Additionally, being able to experience both polarities of the master-apprentice archetype in such a literal way was very enriching. In the very least, it provided me with empathy for those who were in the opposite polarity at any given moment. When the seminar or class flowed smoothly, it seemed that there was no separation between these polarities. Each person contributed their reflections on the reading or the question posed, and everyone shared in the teaching-learning process. The space of supervisions aimed at and facilitated the operationalization of concepts. My private clinical practice helped in the construction of examples in class. Furthermore, the student’s laziness, their usual expectation of having everything handed to them on a silver platter, the professor’s herculean effort to maintain

motivation, to awaken genuine interest, were always very present in me. Not to mention the professor's laziness (this one being more disguised, with no persona to openly express it) or the student's herculean effort to ask for more and more from the professor, to show him where he stands, so that there can be a fluent and meaningful interaction.

At times I found myself in the pole of knowing, at other times in the pole of not knowing. And this movement has borne fruit because today I see myself as someone who knows that does not know (there is so much to know!), as someone who does not know that he knows (how many times a student surprises me with a question that has never occurred to me and, aided by my teacher persona, I begin to reflect on it and end up discovering that I know!), as someone who knows that he knows (after all, I have already covered some ground), and as someone who does not know that he does not know (...).

At IPUSP, one of the courses for which I am responsible is "Analytical Psychology and Educational Art". Its objective is to promote lived experience, reflexions and theoretical elaboration on the foundations of the use of expressive activities within the framework of Analytical Psychology. This is an elective course (meaning students take it if they want to) for a maximum of twenty students in their fourth or fifth year of the undergraduate program, of which "Personality Psychology II" is a prerequisite (and required) course in which we read and discuss Jung's (1978) posthumous work, "Memories, Dreams, Reflections" – a book that manages to be both autobiographical and theoretical.

In "Analytical Psychology and Educational Art", we initially discuss readings on the development and structure of personality, Jungian typology, and symbolic experience. As supporting texts, we use "The Transcendent Function" by Jung (1984), "Ego and Archetype" by Edinger (1972), "Jung: A Gente se Vê em Olinda" by Ratis (1986), and Byington's books: "*Desenvolvimento da Personalidade*" (1987), "*Dimensões Simbóli-*

cas da Personalidade" (1988a) and "*Estrutura da Personalidade – Persona e Sombra*" (1988b).

The practical part of the course, conducted in the Movement Psychology Laboratory (PSA/IPUSP), involves participation in experiential activities aimed at developing different expressive resources in each individual and the group and encouraging reflection on the possibilities of utilizing such activities in various contexts of the psychologist's practice, thereby expanding their creative persona. The themes that have been proposed in the practical part are: opening; exploration of the space and the group; psychological types; the dimension of the body; the social dimension; the dimension of nature; persona and shadow; closing. It is a semester-long course with weekly meetings of three hours each.

The theoretical framework that underlies these themes is the notion of symbol as a connecting element between the unconscious and consciousness, as well as structuring of the latter. Although this notion is central and extensively explored in literature related to Analytical Psychology, little has been written about the use of expressive resources, especially in a group context. And even less regarding the teaching-learning situation. I rely on the experience I have undergone in different contexts (didactic/therapeutic, of bodywork/psychodramatic/gestalt/person-centered), most of them within a group. I believe that part of it is just that: experience is experience, and it makes sense when one goes through it. But another part consists of talking about it, not only in the individual or group, pedagogical or therapeutic context in which it occurred, but also at the level of words, of what can be generalized, abstracted, formulated, and communicated. Words allow for the elaboration of the lived experience; furthermore, they also constitute – themselves! – a lived experience.

In 1986, I had the opportunity to participate in a one-week workshop, with six hours of daily sessions, focused on mask work. This workshop

took place at the 12th Meeting of the International Association of Jungian Trainees and Newly Qualified Analysts on Mount Rigi, Switzerland. It involved expressive, plastic, and dramatic work developed by an American who currently resides in Paris and who based it on a book. I am referring to Laura Sheleen and the “*Théâtre pour Devenir... Autre*” (SHELEEN, 1983). My namesake underwent comprehensive training in dance and theater. Over time, she became interested in psychodrama and the Jungian and Lacanian universes. She followed the guidance of Pierre Solié. In her book, she recounts how, while working with body expression groups, she began to recognize the psychological reach of dramatic games in which participants wore masks they had made themselves. Based on this realization, she deepened her psychological studies and developed work with groups and masks, leading to the systematization and foundation of what she calls “Archetypal Theater” or “Mythodrama”.

Since 1988, I have been conducting an adaptation and development of this mask work with the students of “Analytical Psychology and Educational Art”. After all, my experience in Switzerland had been very significant, and I was eager to further explore the technique and its resources.

However, before delving into the realm of masks and their implications, I will present another aspect of my work that has brought important contributions to the issue of the international field constellated by the master-apprentice archetype.

I refer to my master’s thesis entitled ‘Psychotherapy as an Initiation Rite - Study on the Symbolic Field through Dreams told in the Therapeutic Self’. (FREITAS, 1987), which I defended at IPUSP in 1987. My initial idea for a master’s thesis had been to research the issue of initial dreams, focusing on their diagnostic and prognostic potential in psychotherapy. I started writing them down and collected over three hundred dreams. I intended to work only with the first dreams, but the definition of “first” proved problematic from the start: how far do the “first” dreams go, and when do the “other”

dreams begin? Just in case, I would jot down all the dreams that clients reported to me. It was very enriching because they became very present in the therapeutic work. And I discovered some other things, such as the fact that there are several beginnings in psychotherapy, that is, several phases that succeed one another and sometimes overlap, and that they can be accompanied by dreams. These dreams announce the phase and provide a reference for the work. I raised other questions, for example, regarding people who do not report dreams, and people who bring other data that are much more significant for the symbolic work or are related to the transference situation.

The major milestone in my master’s degree was the “leap” I took at some point: from the issue of initial dreams, I proceeded to investigate what would be the specificity of the beginning of psychotherapy, and that is when I became interested in the concept of initiation.

It was a leap that resulted in a deep dive. There I was, studying rites of initiation and passage, fully immersed in aspects of Anthropology and the History of Religions. It was an interesting, inspiring, motivating, and mobilizing dive. At times, I even forgot that I was pursuing a master’s degree, as I became completely absorbed in all that material.

I began to experience initiation within myself, in the things I was involved with. On a personal level, it was a very important discovery. I was no longer *doing* an analyst training course; I was *initiating* myself into analysis. I was no longer *doing* analysis; I was *initiating* myself into my own self. I was no longer preparing and presenting the ideas of Analytical Psychology to my students; I was *initiating* them into this approach. I was no longer seeing clients; I was collaborating with them in their own initiation. And so forth...

It may seem like a simple word swap or play. But it was not. The perspective of initiation provided me with a framework that related and integrated the different parts of myself involved in these activities. It provided support to my

consciousness during moments of great indiscriminability and disorientation. After all, the neophytes, during the rituals I had researched, went through moments in which they experienced dismemberment, death, loss of consciousness... Initiation implies the participation of the whole personality, thus ensuring that the lived experience is integrative and that the words used to express it are also experienced.

My master's thesis ended up being also an attempt to contribute to reconnecting the university, with its objectifying, theoretical, conceptual and descriptive language, to the dimension of wholeness, of knowledge lived from a symbolic perspective, of initiatory knowledge not detached from scientific knowledge.

And I made an important discovery: it is necessary to live the experience and be able to talk about it, not only for the recognition of the community, but also for my own recognition, that is, for the elaboration of the lived experience and its integration into consciousness.

The (translated) subtitle of my master's thesis is: "A Study of the Symbolic Field through Dreams Reported in the Therapeutic Self." It was the best way I could think of at the time to name the work. In my view, initiation is ensured by a field, a constellation, a set of interactions. In my master's thesis, I focus on the therapeutic context, whereas here I focus on the pedagogical context. Both fields converge through the perspective of initiation. However, they are also different contexts, each with its own objectives.

I consider that any situation in which the psyche is present belongs to the symbolic field. It is the interplay of consciousness with its surroundings, with what it is engaged with, that gives the situation its symbolic quality. This field consists of a set of interactions, subjective impressions, objective facts and data, fantasies, expectations, intuitions, emotions, evaluations, discriminations and indiscriminations that occur within it. And when it comes to a context involving more than one person, the relationship between them also comes into play.

It seems impossible to define the symbolic field in all its constituent elements, as there are many of them and they all interact with one another, with one element taking prominence at any given moment, while others recede into the background. It is highly dynamic. Unless I have just defined it...

Although it is difficult to apprehend and define it, the formulation of the symbolic field seems useful to me, as it emphasizes the interactive aspect that can, in some way, be detected and taken into account.

I have made some forays into the Lacanian universe, which often employs the word "field". It was interesting because I found a connection with the notion of delimitation, through an analogy with the surgical field: it is necessary to isolate the working area, with all the necessary care and asepsis, in order to then begin the intervention. Lacanian psychoanalysis is defined by the delimitation of a specific area of reality, which is that of language, seeking there the discontinuities that open up the gaps for the expression of the unconscious. It operates from the three dimensions found in this field: the imaginary dimension (which refers to the contents expressed in discourse), the symbolic dimension (which establishes a signifier-signified relationship between what is said and what is latent), and the real dimension (which encompasses the expression of the subject of the unconscious, identified in discourse, especially in its discontinuities).

And I, who used to consider "field" as referring to a play of forces, making analogies with the magnetic field and the electric field and thus emphasizing the dynamic aspect present therein, also began to consider the characteristic of delimitation. Both aspects started to make sense: within a delimited field, as the unconscious participates, the possibilities of interaction are unlimited. We delimit the field for pedagogical reasons, so that our limited consciousness can operate. But within this field, interactions that also involve the unconscious take place, which gives it unlimited possibilities.

Has the symbolic field been defined?

I am not sure. It seems alive, present and a useful notion to me. But I also see a risk in it: that of being placed as the ultimate objective, of being deified. The key is to live it: to teach, impart, involve, stimulate reflection, engage in dialogue. The field of interaction is both the means and a consequence. From the interaction of the program content with the expectations and dedication of all people involved in the course, the course itself emerges.

The course “Analytical Psychology and Educational Art” has an interesting characteristic. The students who choose it are in their final or penultimate year. They are plunged into a real crisis. They oscillate between seeing themselves as fully-fledged psychologists and feeling like complete novices in the field. In one class, they compete with me all the time, showing off how much they already know; the following week, they adopt the position that they know nothing, that the four or five years (for some, six or seven) at university have been useless; they ask me to teach them everything in that one class before it is too late; then in the next class they come back asking for recommendations of extension, specialization, further development courses, study groups and supervision. Then they stop keeping up with the readings and only want experiences upon experiences, arguing that they are tired of reading and studying and want to prepare for practical work. At other times, they resist the experiences, fearing that they will expose themselves too much; they feel vulnerable as psychologists; they feel persecuted.

I believe that, in all these moments, they are right and have a lot to say to those willing to reconsider the curriculum of the undergraduate psychology program. But it is not easy to handle all of this within the context of yet another course, which has a specific theme and syllabus.

And there I go, swimming with the current, assigning readings, providing a “holding” environment, accepting disputes, sharing the whirlwind of emotions, seeking out colleagues in the corri-

dors who work with the same students to share our feelings about them.

I run the risk of infantilizing them. And the risk of “adultizing” them. I try to deal with all of this, which is not always easy or successful. I confess that many times I do not know if it would have been better to interact in a different way or even in an opposite way to the one I chose. But the courses have been taking place. The constellated field is experienced by me at times as a barren battlefield, and at other times as a sowing and harvesting field...

The last four or five classes of the “Analytical Psychology and Educational Art” course, whose theme for the practical part is persona and shadow, have been dedicated to mask work.

According to Laura Sheleen, such work should be developed alongside analytical work. However, she also conducts it with individuals who have completed their personal analysis and, alternatively, with people who see the Archetypal Theater as a gateway to the analytical path. Its nature, still according to the author, is educational, therapeutic, and initiatory, as it facilitates contact and confrontation with the unconscious and brings about a transformation in the personality through the integration of previously unknown aspects into consciousness.

Mythodrama is divided into three stages: the artisanal work of creating masks and other objects, the dramatic work of performing on stage with the masks, and the verbal work of naming.

What I have been doing at USP is both an adaptation and a development of the Archetypal Theater. A fundamental difference is that it is performed within a pedagogical field. First and foremost, there is previous group work. We read and discuss texts. We engage in experiential activities prior to the mask work, which aim at better assimilating the readings and building a group where everyone feels they have room to express opinions, think aloud, think together, feel, disagree, give personal examples, draw conclusions, and ask questions. Thus, the crafting of masks and the dramatic and verbal work

are carried out from and within a defined group context that is familiar to everyone. This allows each person, to a certain extent, to choose what they want and are able to express. On the other hand, it ensures that the themes emerge from the group itself or, in the very least, that their verbal elaboration takes place in what has already been constellated. It is not about planning specific themes, characters, and situations to be dramatized. Naturally, the group's collective imagination gradually delimits a set of contents that are more likely to be explored. The discussions of theoretical aspects prior to the mask work, the group members and the themes outlined in the previous experiential activities provide significant elements.

There are also differences between Mythodrama and the work I have been doing at USP regarding material resources. There are no Italian stages or lighting fixtures to emphasize the play of light and shadow at USP! We have a classroom available, which we convert into a theater: closed curtains, rearranged desks, a sign on the door saying: "Do Not Disturb," spaces delimited with chalk on the floor, the light on the "stage" permanently on while the rest remains dimmed. And we also have a room in the Movement Psychology Laboratory, for the artisanal work: an empty space with some mats and stools.

In addition to these, I have introduced some other changes, both in terms of technique and understanding of the work, which I will discuss below with the presentation of the mask work per se.

The artisanal work

The first step is to create a clay mold for the mask. Everyone sits in a circle on the floor. Each person is given a piece of clay, weighing about three kilograms, which they are encouraged to touch, feel and prepare for molding (sometimes adding a little water is necessary). Afterwards, with eyes closed, preferably blindfolded, a face begins to be shaped from the clay, which will

serve as the mold for the mask, in silence, for about half an hour. Participants are simply reminded, as they close their eyes, that they will be making a mask and that it is important for it to be comfortable to wear, have enough openings for breathing and vision.

This first stage of the work puts each person in contact with the material and its characteristics. Masks can be made from other materials such as expanded polystyrene foam, cardboard, or resins. The choice of clay is due to its nature. There are two possible approaches to working with the material: a more sensory mode, connected to the tactile contact with the raw material, and a more intellectual mode, which starts with a plan and involves the use of tools for manipulation. Clay harks back to the earth, to the mud from which, according to the myth, Adam was made, and it takes us back to creation and the creator. It favors the more sensory mode, allowing for a fluid work relying solely on the hands and dispensing with any tools. The second mode requires more of the consciousness. The idea, in my view, is to promote a true active imagination, in different forms from those conceived by Jung.

There is a regression that takes place in this first stage of the work, which can be, and is intended to be, creative. Erich Neumann (1976), in his book "The Child", distinguishes two different ways of experiencing the oral and anal poles and the relationship between them. In a first phase, that of the body-self in the primal relationship, all the products of the body are imbued with *mana*, with a magical power. There is a connection between the oral and the anal, experienced as a living field of ingestion and excretion, in which the two poles are interdependent and of equal value. From this archetypal relationship, it is observed that in many myths, excrement, associated with the earth, is the starting point for a creative life. In a creative primal relationship, this unity is preserved: defecation is both a positive acquisition and a gift from the mother-child relationship.

From the moment the child sits down, the anal pole begins to represent the lower part of the body and gradually becomes associated with what is considered ugly, sinful, rejected. It is the introduction of the patriarchal world, which values what is superior, spiritual, and non-sensory.

Psychoanalysis has discovered the connections between the anal pole and visual arts. However, it interpreted them in a reductionistic manner. Neumann comments that, under normal conditions, artistic creation is not a sublimation of repressed anal elements, but rather one of many creative continuations of an anal stage that has been preserved and integrated with individual development as a whole. The natural pleasure with plastic substances, which a child experiences with feces and later with mud and clay, is a prerequisite for plastic expression and for the use of plastic materials in adult life.

In the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy, defecation, previously associated with a creative and approved process, gradually becomes assimilated into the principle of adaptation and order. Defecation becomes a ritual dedicated to the rejection of the negative element, of evil. The function of expelling feces clashes with the original matriarchal meaning of feces as something created. The initial positive evaluation of the anal pole is surpassed by the new evaluation of the head pole. If this happens in harmony with the child's motor development, related to upright posture, walking, and exercising the will, within a creative primal relationship, the polarizations (up-down, clean-dirty, head-anus) occur normally and the child does not develop an exaggerated, neurotic contempt for their body and its natural functions.

The contact with clay for adults participating in mask work allows for and encourages a revival of this developmental stage. Some people, upon receiving the piece of clay, have a feeling of disgust and may even ask when they can wash their hands. The making of the mask mold allows for a creative movement, as it is created from clay, in which the adult

ego is able to reconsider the polarizations and relativize the value assigned to each pole in a creative process of shadow elaboration. It is possible to reconnect with pleasure, playfulness, creativity, as well as with blockages, inhibitions, and frustrations.

Once the mold is ready, the next step is to keep one's eyes closed, refrain from touching the clay and try to form a mental image of the constructed face. Then to open one's eyes or remove the blindfold and see one's creation for the first time.

This is a beautiful moment. The impact of the first encounter with the clay mold is often significant. The blindfold is removed, and a surprise awaits! Eyes meet eyes, eyes meet non-eyes, eyes meet the molded face... The facial expressions of those who see and have made the mold say a lot. Their movement of approach or rejection reveals how much their consciousness is available to engage with the aspect represented there or how much it is surrounded by defenses.

Afterwards, each person has the opportunity to present their mold to the rest of the group and share their impressions about it and the process of making it. I observe that most participants in this stage remain quite attached to the mold, speaking more to it than to the group. During the workshop in Switzerland, there was no translation, and I did not understand what some people were saying. But it was very moving to see what they said, it seemed that in that moment words were not the most important thing. The process of elaborating the symbol of the mask was in its preverbal stages for many; they were dealing with sensations and emotions that were not yet very well defined or discriminated.

Some people like their mold, others hate it. Some want to make corrections, adjust the symmetry of the face, remove some rough edges. Some see a resemblance to someone they know in the mold or identify an animal or mythological figure in it. Some want to throw it away and start over. Others are already motivated to start

making the mask itself. Regarding the process of shaping the clay, some people describe it as flowing effortlessly; others mention constantly striving for symmetry or intentionality; still others feel like they were “lost in their own fantasies” while working with their hands.

The following session is dedicated to making the mask. The clay face serves as a mold and layers of small pieces of newspaper are overlapped one by one with glue to achieve a reasonable consistency. The mask is then removed from the clay mold and painted.

This second session is quite artisanal and physical. The process of gluing the newspaper until it reaches the appropriate consistency can be tiring for most participants, putting their consciousness in contact with the nature, resistance, and collaboration of the material. Even at this stage, the temptation to “correct” the mask is strong and needs to be addressed.

Painting is a moment when consciousness can fully kick in, especially depending on the number of colors used. It is possible to paint the mask with a single color in order to neutralize the scramble of newspaper and create a homogeneous appearance. At USP, I initially offered white and black paint to the students. And with the last group, I wanted to introduce one more color. After reading some Candomblé creation myths, I included the color red.

I believe that I gradually felt the need to introduce more colors due to the nature of our work. The focus there is pedagogical; it is not a situation in which the aim is to work with each person’s rawest unconscious material. Being able to dedicate time to painting the mask, choosing colors and strokes, facilitates, for those who need it, the involvement of consciousness. One does not go on stage completely unprepared.

I recently had the opportunity to come into contact with some aspects of the Nagô system and I was surprised and delighted by the connections I gradually established between this system, mask work and the field constellated by the master-apprentice archetype.

The first of them concerns the initiatory nature. Juana Elbein dos Santos (1986), in her book “*Os Nagô e a Morte*” (The Nagô and Death), defines the Nagô universe as an initiatory experience in which knowledge is acquired through lived experience at both a bipersonal and group level. It involves a gradual development through the transmission and absorption of a symbolic and complex force and knowledge at all levels of a person’s being, representing the embodiment of collective and individual elements of the system. This force and knowledge are the components of “axê”, which I relate to the acquired knowledge *and* its integration into/of the personality. And the initiatory form of development is the same, involving the whole personality and occurring within a field of personal interaction present in psychotherapy, as I describe it in my master’s thesis, and in the teaching-learning situation, as I formulate it here, taking into account the characteristics of each context.

The second connection that I establish concerns the concept of “making the head”. According to the Candomblé creation myth, the Orixá, when creating human beings, takes a portion of a palm tree to create someone. When they are born, people of this species must worship Ifá. The Orixá takes a fragment of stone to create another species of people. These, when they are born, must worship Ogum. And so forth. The Orixá can also take a portion of mud, a portion of water or a portion of breeze to create other species of people.

But creation does not stop there. There is also Oxalá, the ancient Orixá, who is the head maker. He shapes Ori (the heads) every day and places them on the ground. The one who is going to be born must come to him and kneel to choose their head. There are seventeen Odu that work every day in the shaping of Ori. The portion from which each Ori is shaped is the ancestral matter. Each person must worship their ancestral matter to thrive in the world and for it to become their guardian. According to tradition, each created being, when choosing their

Ori, also chooses their Odu, the sign that will govern their destiny. There is a relationship between Ori and individual fate.

The participant in the mask work, while shaping the clay and creating a head that will serve as a mold, resembles Oxalá and the seventeen Odu. Blindfolded eyes greatly contribute to a reduction in criticism and aesthetic concerns. Clay, as a raw material with a texture that allows the hands to move freely, facilitates the process of creating the head with significant involvement of the unconscious flow, that is, the creative work of each individual.

Once the masks are ready, it is possible, and in my view desirable, to dedicate some time to the creation of costumes and objects to be used in the dramatic games. Laura Sheleen mentions this possibility but does not give it much emphasis. In Switzerland, the coordinators provided the group with fabrics, clothes, and accessories. At USP, due to time constraints, I also did not allocate a session for the creation of costumes with the early groups. Intuitively, I decided to ask the students to bring from home fabrics, costumes, hats, scarves, ornaments, dolls, umbrellas – in short, whatever they wished to use to complete the characters suggested by the masks. This material was made available to the whole group during the dramatic games. As a result, the work continued for them throughout the week. In the sessions dedicated to the dramatizations, they would arrive with bags after bags, eager to show others what they had brought and to try on different clothes and accessories. In other words, the inspiration for what would be dramatized on stage was already being birthed. Those were moments of excitement, exchange, and creation.

In the Nagô universe, there is the cult of Egun. There are special temples, known as *terreiros*, for this purpose, and the objective there is to experience the presence of the spirits of the ancestors, harness their power and serve as a channel of communication between the living and the dead. I mention this cult because of the emphasis placed

on clothing, particularly. The Egun manifest themselves in a distinctive way, completely covered in strips of colorful fabrics, allowing spectators to perceive human forms only vaguely. It is believed that beneath this attire lies the spirit of a deceased person or any aspect associated with death. The Egun are guardians of moral values, customs, and traditions. Thus, they ensure the immortality of the community's life. They bring blessings and guidance to their descendants and followers, but they cannot be touched or contradicted. Their priests strictly control the communication between them and the living through rules and ritualistic procedures.

In the cult of the Egun, the entire mystery of transformation through death is expressed, as a being from this world (*ayé*) becomes a being from the beyond (*orum*), and there is the possibility of summoning them and experiencing their presence in the *ayé*. Of death, we only see the outer garments, the strips of fabric, and the mystery of transformation cannot be known. One should not attempt to see what is hidden beneath the strips of fabric.

Each Egun has characteristic clothing and a *ké* that identifies them. *Ké* corresponds to their sound or exclamation, a mark of their individuality. Additionally, they carry specific emblems and have particular songs, invocations and greetings assigned to them.

There are two major groups of Egun. The first is characterized by the *abala*, a set of colorful fabric strips that hang like a curtain and are attached to a square or round solid structure that forms the top of the *abala*. Their attire is further adorned with mirrors, cowrie shells, bells, beads and the *awon*, a kind of net with a face-like appearance inserted into a type of jumpsuit that is visible beneath the *abala*. While these Egun represent important family ancestors, those in the second group, the *aparaka*, correspond to new spirits who were unable to complete their initiation rites. The ones in first group speak with an inhuman voice, sometimes hoarse and cavernous, sometimes low and high-pitched. The

ones in the second group are mute. Opening the speech of the Egun is a fundamental phase in the rituals of their preparation and invocation. And their word carries the force of law.

Just like in the cult of the Orixás, the basic mechanism that governs the cult of the Egun is the *transmission* and redistribution of *axé*, especially through rituals of offerings and sacrifices.

I mention the cult of the Egun here for two reasons. The first is that this death-related aspect is also present in mask work. On stage, something agonizes; there is an expiration, and the work, completed in the verbal stage with this aspect of death, seems fundamental to me. A character is created, dramatized, presented, shared. At the same time, practically the same conditions that allow its birth also allow its death. It is the process of becoming aware, the assimilation by the ego of its *axé*, its death as a shadow complex capable of possessing the personality in certain circumstances. Mask work refers to creation myths and to myths of death and transformation. It retrieves the continuity between life and death.

The second reason I introduce the cult of the Egun here is related to the attire. In such a cult, there is a strong emphasis on clothing and a non-emphasis on the head. The body takes center stage. In Mythodrama, special emphasis is given to the head, to the mask. The author mentions the attire only briefly, alluding to it as an appendage to the mask, which is necessary for the dramatization on stage. However, that is not exactly what I observe. The same mask, presented with different costumes, takes on very distinct expressions. This can be seen in the dramatic game of presenting the mask to its creator, for example. The clothes and accessories not only complement the character but, in some cases, transfigure it. The process of creation, initiated in the making of the mold, continues in the making of the mask and also in the stage of dressing up. To value only the head, or to give it such prominence, is to remain solely in the patriarchal dynamism of consciousness, which separates the polarities and assigns positive

value to only one of them and negative value to the other. It is to disregard the creative potential of the stage in which, according to Neumann, the oral and anal poles are valued, the head and body are not yet so separated, and this allows for a special creativity. Mask work, through the contact with clay in the making of the mold and the reclaiming of the body through attire and dramatization, greatly favors a creative experience of the matriarchal dynamism.

With the last group I worked with, I made greater modifications to Laura Sheleen's proposal. Instead of requesting the molding of a face in clay, I asked for the shaping of a character. This character, after being seen and introduced to the groups, became an inspiring interlocutor in a drawing, free writing and body movement activity. The following session was dedicated to creating whatever was necessary for the dramatization of the character: costumes (made of crepe paper), masks and accessories. The participants spontaneously devoted a significant amount of time to the creation of costumes. The dramatizations and verbal elaborations in this group were richer.

In her book, the author says little or nothing about costumes. When discussing the delimitation of the theatrical space, she suggests that clothes and objects be placed behind the auditorium; she also briefly mentions the possibility of creating symbolic objects. The emphasis is entirely on the mask, the head and the oral pole that Neumann refers to. There are extensive texts on the history of masks and the psychological significance of the mask. I believe that, in this aspect of the formulation of the Archetypal Theater, she remains attached to the prevailing patriarchal mindset in Europe, as she does not elaborate in words on the issue of attire, the body, the anal pole.

The work that follows the process of mask making, dramatization, and naming has as its main objective the ego, as the component that gives individuality to the personality. In a nutshell, Laura Sheleen's idea is that Mythodrama

offers to the ego personas for shadow aspects, ultimately fostering the integration of the personality by bringing to consciousness previously unknown aspects. The process of creating the mold primarily facilitates the emergence of shadow content. The dramatic games allow participants to perform personas that are not habitual to them. And the focus throughout is on the ego, which is invited, in the end, to elaborate on what it experienced through the use of words.

The dramatic work

Laura Sheleen developed a specific way of conducting dramatic games based on her experience with dance and theater, her psychological studies and guidance from Pierre Solié, who integrates concepts from Analytical Psychology and Lacanian Psychoanalysis.

The purpose of the Archetypal Theater is to facilitate a transformation in personality by mobilizing the shadow and the persona. It is allowed and expected to bring to the stage that which cannot be directly experienced in everyday life.

The theatrical space is fully delimited. The entrance and exit of the stage follow a direction analogous to the movement of the sun; the stage and the auditorium are well separated, with the former being the place of representation with all the possibilities of the imagination, and the latter being the space for receiving and reflecting on the messages presented on the stage. Between them there is a space that the author refers to as the chiasma, which is the conjunction of opposites and also encompasses the place of naming, where the verbal work of symbolic elaboration takes place through the use of words by the ego. In this intermediate zone, there is also a place for masks that are not being used at the given moment. Behind the auditorium, there is a place for costumes, so that anyone who wishes to go on stage can dress up while continuing to watch what is unfolding on stage.

The person who feels ready to go on stage stands up from the auditorium, picks up a mask

and goes get dressed. At the appropriate moment, they enter the stage and perform their dramatization. From there, they proceed to the costume area to remove their attire. Soon they will be invited to the place of naming, where they will participate in the verbal work. Once this is completed, they leave the mask they used in the mask area and return to the auditorium.

After delimiting the space, the author suggests explaining the rules of the dramatic games to the group, which I summarize as follows: Any oral gratification (food, drinks, cigarettes) is prohibited, except for words. Any act that escapes conscious control or that could harm someone or something, involving them in the dramatic game without their conscious collaboration or consent, is prohibited. One should not interpret the dramatic games or verbalizations; instead, participants should speak in the first person, explain what was mobilized within themselves and give feedback. The first person to wear a mask is its creator. Only masked individuals can go on stage. Actions are suggested and represented through mime rather than actually performed. Any infractions should be addressed verbally afterwards, but if it proves necessary, the coordinator may interrupt the dramatization.

These rules are considered symbolic castrations in the Lacanian framework. From a Jungian perspective, to which I subscribe, I would say that they are patriarchal delimitations and sacrifices necessary for the process of symbolic elaboration.

There is a paradox regarding the issue of directivity or non-directivity. Alongside a rigid structuring of time, space and ritual, there is complete freedom in the creation of masks and dramatic games. Unlike Psychodrama, there is no prior verbal explanation before entering the stage regarding the problematic situation, the staging project, or the characteristics of the character to be portrayed. The coordinator is responsible for creating a void, an expectation, from which the spontaneous act of going on stage will result.

The first dramatic game consists of “breathing life into the mask” and presenting it to the group on stage. In French, the author uses the expression “souffler dans son masque”. In many myths, creation arises from the breathing movements of the creator. By inspiring, expiring, inspiring, expiring, ..., the creator populates the universe. The analogy with breathing is highly relevant in this mask work. There is an in-spiration, which leads to the search within the individual for something to be expired, that is, presented on stage in a creative act. Inspiration refers to the movement of seeking wholeness, through which any psychic component can express itself, that which mobilizes and allows for individual differentiation. Expiration corresponds to expression and also to death: something expires when it is expressed; it is subject to the encounter with the other and their potential inspiration; it is shaped, apprehended, assimilated into consciousness, which in this process also restructures itself and loses its previous autonomy.

Inspired by their creation (their mask), the creator aspires to bring it to the stage. They imagine a character, go to the costume area to get ready and then step onto the stage for the dramatization, without words. Upon entering the stage, they become the protagonist, that is, the proto agonist, the first to agonize, to expire. In this process, there is a lot of transpiration: one must deal with the fear of not knowing what or how to present oneself; often the heart races, legs tremble, there are stumbling steps on the way to the stage, literal transpiration, with changes in breathing. Afterwards, during the verbal stage, some participants say: “It was total *piração* (a slang word in Portuguese meaning ‘madness’, which also constitutes part of the Portuguese word “*transpiração*”, meaning “transpiration”)!”

In the game of insufflating the masks, each person enters the stage alone and can only exit the moment another protagonist enters. After three or four performances, there is a moment to

share and verbally elaborate on the dramatizations. The person who has just performed takes the floor, following the order that was established on stage, and then the audience makes their comments. Three or four more performances follow until all the masks are insufflated. In the following sessions, the possibility of other masks and other dramatic games is opened, always following the same ritual: dressing up, dramatizing, speaking, corresponding to different stages of the symbolic elaboration work.

Other possible games include: Each person choosing someone to give a “little blow” into their mask. As many masked individuals that so wish going to the stage, as long as there is at least one spectator left in the auditorium, and simply coexisting, that is, occupying the same space on stage without any interaction. Interacting on stage if someone else’s dramatization evokes something that one wishes to express.

It is all very dynamic and spontaneous. Presenting the mask to its creator stirs up group affects. Choosing or being chosen to present someone else’s mask establishes special bonds with that person. It is interesting to become aware of the choice and it is also very enriching to see one’s own mask on stage. The person who receives the mask has total freedom to create a new character. It is often the case that this second presentation of the mask completes its meaning for its creator.

The juxtaposed coexistence relates to certain everyday situations in which we simply must occupy a common space with other people without interacting with them. In this game, difficulties arise due to lack of maturity, defensive narcissism, compulsive need for approval or compulsive need for interaction.

Open games, with spontaneous participation and mask selection, where interaction on stage is allowed, facilitate the presentation and elaboration of certain situations or processes. In these games, the need for creating new masks or accessories may arise.

Dramatic games allow for exploring different means of expression. They involve creating personas so that the ego can express and integrate aspects of the self. What I have observed is that some people feel protected and hidden behind the mask, while others feel overly exposed. These are aspects of the shadow... And of the persona. And of the ego... Aspects of the human being, after all.

In the first games, there are participants who are unable to occupy the back of the stage and stay close to the auditorium, as if they feel they are less visible that way. There are protagonists who constantly play with the audience and not for the audience, thus hoping to merge with the spectators and seduce them into dramatizing, too. These are individuals who do not yet have the means to accept the solitude of dramatization – and of life... –, at least in the aspects symbolized there, of defining oneself, of becoming distinct and unique. Other participants enter and quickly exit the stage. Ultimately, these situations, regardless of the content presented, are to be commented and elaborated on during the verbal stage of the work.

The verbal work

After a dramatic game, the participants are invited to sit between the stage and the auditorium, in the place of naming, and what the author calls “*paroli*” begins, that is, the verbal work. The proposal is for each actor to express in words what motivated them to enter the stage, what they experienced on stage, what satisfied and what frustrated them. Then the audience is invited to give their feedback, expressing their resonance or distancing in relation to the dramatizations.

The verbal work, which favors the chiasma, that is, the conjunction of opposites, in the language of Pierre Solié (1985), allows consciousness to integrate what has been experienced. Some people do not even remember what they

did on stage. In others, there is a significant gap between what was intended and what was expressed – the feedback from the audience is enlightening. Some people want to continue performing with their mask, while for others it seems to have exhausted itself. My namesake comments that, at this moment, interpretations are possible. In a pedagogical context, however, I avoid interpretations.

After the acting of the game, we move on to the verbalization of the game, which is, in psychodramatic language, the double of what has been dramatized. Words allow us to go beyond what was represented on stage; they contribute to the creation of a specific field; they consist of emphasizing, reiterating what was staged and receiving comments from other participants. What was experienced on stage is in search of its naming, of the appropriate word that will enable its elaboration. The process of naming implies a certain distance: the word names and represents the thing, imaginatively placing it at the disposal of consciousness. The verbal stage compels consciousness to articulate the lived experience and thus integrate previously unconscious elements. It is necessary work because it is in the nature of the unconscious to always repeat the same motifs, produce symptoms, until consciousness sends a signal to it that proves it has understood and assimilated it and thereby transformed itself. The verbal work helps each participant to free themselves from guilt and, at the same time, to take responsibility for what happened.

In this stage, two types of movement can be observed: a resonance with empathy or an objectifying distancing. It is not a matter of interpreting, but rather allowing each individual to speak in the first person, take ownership of their projections and share their reactions and associations. Those who express themselves in a hypercritical or hypercomplacent manner, distancing themselves, taking on the role of an observer or someone who has all the intellectual explanations for what was experienced, are of-

ten questioned, and challenged by the group in their participation.

In Candomblé, the word is also invested with a special meaning and is related to Exu, the dynamic and energizing principle that is responsible for individualized existence. Exu, an interpreter and linguist, intercommunicates not only all the elements of the *ayé* with those of the *orun*, and all the elements among themselves, but also, by propelling the individual *axé*, relates the inner realm with the outer realm, allowing sound and words to manifest. The word thus surpasses its rational semantic content to become a conduit of *axé*, that is, an element that carries the power of realization.

The word acquires the power of action because it is imbued with *axé*; it is pronounced with breath, saliva, temperature; it is blown out, lived, accompanied by the modulations, emotional charge, personal history and power of the one who utters it.

Each uttered word is unique. It is born, fulfills its function and disappears. The semantic symbol is renewed; each repetition is a unique outcome. Oral expression is constantly being reborn; it is a product of interaction at both individual and social levels. On a social level, the word transmits the concentrated *axé* of the ancestors to the present generations. On an individual level, the word expresses and externalizes a process of synthesis in which all aspects of the personality are involved.

The word is important insofar as it is pronounced, as it is sound. Sound always implies a presence that expresses itself, presents itself, makes itself known and seeks to reach an interlocutor.

In the I Ching (WILHELM, 1983) commentary for hexagram 37 (Chia Jen/Wind over Fire/The Family – The Clan), we find:

one's words must have power, and this they can have only if they are based on something real, just as flame depends on its fuel. Words have influence only when

they are pertinent and clearly related to definite circumstances. General discourses and admonitions have no effect whatsoever. Words must also be supported by an entire way of life, just as the effect of the wind derives from its continuity. Furthermore, the words must be supported by one's entire conduct, just as the wind is made effective by its duration. Only firm and consistent conduct will make such an impression on others that they can adapt and conform to it. If words and conduct are not in accord and not consistent, they will have no effect.

Dramatization offers a persona to the word as a solely mental production. The initial conception *per-sonifies* through the mask, takes shape and comes to life on stage, and then, in the verbal stage, there is the integration of the lived experience through words.

The Archetypal Theater can be considered, in the language of Candomblé, a process of "opening speech". The opening of speech allows the Orixás to communicate with humans, convey their messages and transfer their *axé*. Several myths witness the drama that surrounds the birth of sound and word. *Ké* is a synthesis and affirmation of individualized existence. In the cult of the ancestors, it is observed that the *aparaka*, which are non-individualized representations, are mute.

Mask work is proposed as a facilitator of individuation through language and various forms of expression: playing, confessing, naming, interpreting, theorizing, recognizing, communicating. Released through the games, images emerge to be immediately surrounded by words.

The emerging images relate to a wide range of themes. At USP, I work with students in the penultimate and final years of their undergraduate studies. In one of the groups, the imagination revolved mainly around graduation and becoming a psychologist. During mask work, various characters appeared or *per-sonated*,

among others, a witch, a priest, a beggar, an old and ancient woman, a mad scientist. These characters were perceived, in the verbal work, as aspects of the psychologist, with some being more present for certain participants and others for others, and all of them partially constituting what the group's collective imagination formulated as being this professional.

In another group, the mask work focused mainly on the theme of belonging or not belonging to the group. It was a class that faced challenges until the group we were working with was defined. One student dropped out of the program in the second month of the course, another student arrived a month late, a third student refused to participate in expressive activities. Apart from the latter, which brings up the theme of resistance, these situations are "routine" at USP, but in a course where the group is meant to be operative and inclusive for the full participation of students, there was some disruption to the progress of the work. This disruption eventually turned into an advantage, perhaps because the group had to deal with the themes of desiring or not desiring, taking ownership or not, belonging, being accepted or rejected, and having individual differences. In the end, each participant was very explicitly acknowledging their desires, individual characteristics, level of interest and engagement with the course, and the group's collective imagination revolved mainly around the issue of typology and the possibility of forming a creative group. Spontaneous comments during the mask-making process were made in relation to the participants' astrological traits, for example. During the final verbal work, some students commented on how surprised they were by the high degree of personal exposure in this course and the possibility, through group and expressive experiences, of getting to know different aspects of their classmates, with whom they had been interacting for four or more years. At this point, they revisited the issue of typology,

which we had discussed at the beginning of the semester.

A third group spontaneously focused on the themes of masculinity and femininity, on being a woman today in São Paulo. It was a group composed only of women, and each one brought forth a different aspect of the female experience.

Regarding the role of the coordinators, which the author suggests should be two, three different terms are used: animators, initiators, and therapists, referring, respectively, to the effort of insufflating the work, the assistance in the realization of dormant potentials, or the work of dissolving defenses. Their functions are to facilitate the associative journey through Mythodrama, bringing the experienced characters back to the reality of the here and now.

Laura Sheleen suggests that one of the coordinators should take responsibility for the artisanal work, performing a more maternal and feminine role by connecting each participant to the material, the sensation function and the feeling function and welcoming creations and recreations. The other coordinator should take responsibility for the dramatic and verbal work, performing a more masculine role of setting boundaries and rules, guiding each participant to connect, through the thinking function, to what has been experienced sensorially and affectively. Both coordinators should be prepared and familiar with contact with the unconscious in order to avoid the risk of inflation, depression, identification with the archetypal or group material.

The results of the work largely depend on the constellated transference: only the other can allow the establishment of a relationship that enables self-recognition. The participant finds themselves triangulated between the two coordinators, benefiting from the relationship with one of them, with the other and with both.

My experience at USP has been one of solitary coordination work. I consider co-animation to be very enriching for reciprocal and collective

feedback and insights, for perceiving more details of the interactional field, for more accurate work with transference. And I have my doubts: is it interesting to maintain two roles so rigidly separated, as proposed by the author?

The students I worked with at USP commented, in the end, that they felt me at times as a “big mama” who offered them clay and paints and let them play, at times as someone who rigidly imposed the rules of the work, at times as someone who inspired them in defining what a psychologist is supposed to be, and at times as someone whose feedback was important to hear.

The fact that all these facets and polarities are experienced in the relationship with a single coordinator helps integrate the different aspects present in each participant. If conditions allow, I choose to have two coordinators, but without a rigid delimitation of roles; rather, in creative alternation during the course of the work.

To a large extent intuitively, I have gradually introduced some modifications to the Archetypal Theater. I exclude one of the groups, to which I requested the shaping of a character instead of a face and in which I introduced other stages before the dramatic work, because in it I significantly deviated from the framework proposed by Laura Sheleen and because it is a group whose work is still in progress.

I have already mentioned one of the modifications: it is related to attire. I started suggesting that students bring from home whatever they desired to create their own costumes, and the work became enriched. Even better is to set aside time for costume creation during the process.

I have also mentioned another modification, which pertains to the previous group work and aims at building a creative group and establishing preliminary contact with the most significant themes for the participants. In an educational context, I consider these preliminary stages to be fundamental. The emergent theme (or themes) of the group ultimately becomes evident in hindsight. In Mythodrama, I am constantly surprised

by what emerges during the creative and experiential work. The individual and group dimensions are constantly intertwining, developing, enfolding and unfolding in an entirely unforeseen manner. And it is important to make room for the different aspects to interact.

At the beginning of the semester, when presenting the course proposal, I usually make myself available in case any student wants to have an individual conversation with me during the course, while also reserving the reciprocal right. So far, none of them has approached me. I believe that the most important thing is for me to be available. There was a case of a student who did not want to participate in the experiential activities; I had two individual meetings with her, but they were proposed by me and aimed at evaluating what was happening and finding a way to make up for the classes she would miss.

This situation touches on the issue of resistance to experiential activities. As it is an elective course, I usually expect students to come willing to participate in expressive activities. Manifestations of resistance are therefore considered within the field constellated by both me and the whole group. My concern is to assess whether the resistance is creative or defensive in that particular situation. I listen to the expression of resistance, respecting it and leaving it intact if I perceive it as creative, meaning it preserves a situation that should no longer be mobilized, or intervening and allowing the group to intervene if I perceive it as a request for help. Sometimes none of this is necessary: resistance speaks for itself, and by allowing its expression, it resolves on its own.

I also perceive that the resistance of the professor can operate in the field of interaction. Although I have voluntarily proposed a course structured in such a way, with an emphasis on expressive activities, at times something tells me to “tone down” a specific experiential proposal or ease the pressure when demanding the participation of a particular student. Re-

garding this “something”, I adopt the same approach described above: I try to assess the underlying reasons for its emergence and act accordingly.

The work with the student who refused to participate in all but the first experiential activity was enlightening. We assessed together that her refusal should be respected, and in the middle of the semester I asked her to complete two written assignments: one on the theoretical part and another on the practical part, so that we could determine how she would make up for her non-participation. To my surprise, her assignment on the practical part was excellent! Her experience was that of the refusal of experience, and she related it to previous groups that she had been a part of and to the current semester’s group. Expressing and sharing her refusal of experience with everyone, including myself, and having it accepted was very meaningful for her, as it allowed her to work on this refusal at an individual level. However, I had to ask her to complete the theoretical assignment, as she had put little effort into it...

One suggestion that I introduced in the course and that I intend to maintain is for the students to keep a journal throughout the semester. At home after each class, they should write about their experiences, thoughts, feelings and any fantasies or images that came to their mind freely and without any obligation to share them with anyone unless they wish to. During the verbal work, mask work or previous experiential activities, I noticed that some individuals are in the midst of full verbal elaboration, but there is no more time or group containment. Others do not wish to say anything at that moment but are under the impact they have experienced, mobilized by what has emerged. I suggest that they arrive home and write. The idea of the journal came to me intuitively. I realized the importance of providing a larger space for the individual ego, where contact with symbolic material could continue and the constellation of certain defenses could be avoided.

The practice of journaling has proven to be extremely enriching. In the very least, it ensures that the emerging material is recorded and can be revisited later. Some students do not resort to it at all. Others only use it after a few experiential activities. Others systematically write a journal entry after each class. Some even submit it to me at the end of the semester as an appendix or as part of the written assignments I request. In the second group, a student wanted to read during a class what she had written after the previous experiential activity. She read it aloud and the group commented on it, which I found to be a creative exercise in consolidating group containment and assimilating the symbolic dimension of the body, in this case.

Final Considerations

I realize that some therapeutic training and sensitivity are necessary to coordinate work like the one proposed in this discipline. I find myself constantly trying to discern what is being creatively or defensively elaborated and seeking channels for creative elaboration (such as the suggestion of journaling). As components of the teacher’s persona in a course like this, I identify: being available for an open, fluent, empathetic and accepting relationship; applying restraint to predominantly aesthetic impulses in the creation of masks and costumes; caring for the group climate by providing group containment for regressive movements, especially during the mold-making process, for the experience of fear of dramatization and for expression during the verbal work; maintaining the framework at all times (as there is a risk of everything turning into a big carnivalesque party); addressing the symbolic material that emerges, facilitating the contact of consciousness with it and suggesting channels for continuing this contact when necessary; fostering the connection between what has been experienced and theoretical and group themes. In short, the professor is in charge of the basic conditions for creating and maintaining a field of communication where the

symbols of the master-apprentice archetype can take shape, manifest, and be assimilated into consciousness.

Therapeutic experience is of great value in this work. However, at no point do I consider myself a therapist of the students or the group. The focus there is pedagogical, which I understand as the field where the acquisition of knowledge is done by the whole personality, resulting from theoretical elaboration, and lived experience. The therapist within me helps me precisely by showing me where the boundaries of the work lie, when it is time to suggest another channel of expression and elaboration to a student, when it is time to protect someone from an imminent invasion by another participant or the group.

I believe that undergraduate education in Psychology greatly benefits from work like this. I see the need for the professor to have some therapeutic sensitivity. But what more could be expected from a course that will ultimately grant a degree in Psychology to the students?

My starting point in this work was my lived experience in the four roles, which I arrange (Figure).

Psychotherapy aims at the transformation of the personality in line with individuation. It involves working with defenses that hinder the authentic realization of the self.

The teaching-learning situation aims at not only the transmission of information, but also

its assimilation by the personality, which then gradually learns to learn and structures a professional persona – the term persona here understood in a broad sense, as a para-egoic, expressive, communicative, and structuring function of the personality.

I consider the therapeutic field to be more conducive to working with the shadow, and the pedagogical field, with the persona. However, both primarily aim at the ego.

Psychotherapy is a protected and instrumented setting for the confrontation/encounter with the shadow, especially the pathological one. Such a confrontation/encounter is not to be taken lightly and requires a safe “vessel”, a relationship of trust and some degree of consistency and continuity. Dissolving defenses deeply shakes consciousness, and it needs to be able to experience its confusion and indiscrimination within a special context that allows for symbolic experiences of death and rebirth.

The pedagogical situation is highly favorable for the structuring of the professional persona. First and foremost, it takes place within a group and collective context. The professor is sometimes a role model and sometimes a reference point that allows the student to differentiate themselves from him. The field that is constellated favors the experimentation, development, structuring and integration of new personae.

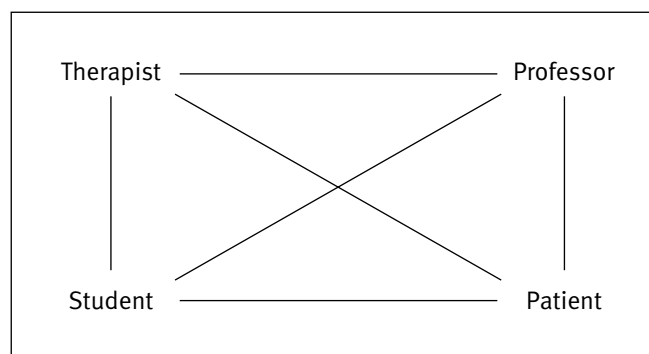


Figure - Experience in the four roles.

However, persona and shadow are not completely separate. Together with them, there is the ego. What allows me to relate these two fields, the pedagogical and the therapeutic, is the concept of initiation, which involves the participation of the whole personality and a transformation of consciousness that expands and structures itself in a more comprehensive way.

This transformation occurs by taking well-codified and separate roles as a starting point: the student who does not know and wants to know, the professor who knows and is there to teach; the client who seeks help, the therapist who has the means to assist. However, initiation is only complete when all of this is set in motion and interaction, when the four roles cease to be rigidly distributed and become interchangeable. That is, when the inner therapist is awakened within the client, partly due to the therapist being in contact with the patient within himself; when the student becomes able to teach and apply what he has learned, and when the professor remains connected to what he does not know and can learn. These are the relationships shown in the scheme above.

It is through the interpersonal aspect that initiation occurs. It is built and personified in the relationship between the initiator and the initiated. There is certainly a body of knowledge and techniques, but it is lifeless and inert until it is set in motion by the initiatory relationship.

And the development of language is fundamental. The word is the privileged means of symbolic elaboration. It cannot be dissociated from lived experience, from what is experienced on a non-verbal level. In the very least, it is the final stage. Integrative speech retrieves the lived experience and relates it to consciousness, thereby effecting a transformation within it. Through language, there is the assimilation of *axé* by the ego.

The word is an indispensable and necessary element in the constitution of the international field of the master-apprentice archetype. Currently, the academic situation is such that words tend to lose their meaning, their *axé*. Throughout the education system, there is an excessive emphasis on the word, but on the word that is devoid of vitality, disconnected from Eros, from the whole personality and individuality (SILVA, 1986). When they arrive at the university, students – better late than never! – need and greatly benefit from a work that recovers the meaningful word, the word that integrates the lived experience, the word that allows language to become an associative and elaborated itinerary of the experienced situations.

And the word thus experienced becomes once again the *logos* of the psyche, which is the etymological root of Psychology itself. It is this word that *tears the fantasy*, by expressing it, setting it in motion and integrating it into consciousness. ■

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Resumo

O arquétipo do mestre-aprendiz - Considerações sobre a vivência

A partir de sua experiência como professora e como aluna, a autora tece reflexões sobre o campo de interação constelado pelo arquétipo do mestre-aprendiz. O “Teatro Arquetípico”, ou “Mitodrama”, é apresentado tal como é formulado por sua autora, tal como tem sido realizado numa disciplina do curso de graduação em Psicologia, e tal como pode ser enriquecido em alguns aspectos

por contribuições de Erich Neumann sobre a fase do self corporal e de Juana Elbein dos Santos sobre o sistema Nagô. O artigo faz ainda algumas considerações sobre as relações e as diferenças entre a psicoterapia e a pedagogia, e termina por ressaltar a importância da palavra que “rasga a fantasia”, permitindo o fluir da elaboração simbólica embasada no vivido. ■

Palavras-chave: Psicologia analítica, Arquétipo do mestre-aprendiz, Grupos vivenciais, Máscaras, Iniciação.

Resumen

El arquetipo del maestro-aprendiz - Consideraciones sobre la vivencia

A partir de su experiencia como profesora y como alumna, la autora teje reflexiones sobre el campo de interacción constelado por el arquetipo del maestro-aprendiz. El “Teatro Arquetípico”, o “Mitodrama”, se presenta tal como es formulado por su autora, tal como ha sido realizado en una disciplina del curso de graduación en Psicología, y tal como puede ser enriquecido en algunos aspectos

por contribuciones de Erich Neumann sobre la fase del self corporal y de Juana Elbein dos Santos sobre el sistema Nagô. El artículo hace aún algunas consideraciones sobre las relaciones y diferencias entre la psicoterapia y la pedagogía, y termina por resaltar la importancia de la palabra que “rasga la fantasía”, permitiendo el fluir de la elaboración simbólica basada en lo vivido. ■

Palabras clave: Psicología analítica, Arquetipo del maestro-aprendiz, Grupos vivenciales, Máscaras, Iniciación.

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