

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARCHETYPAL AND TIBETAN PSYCHOLOGIES

by

Kevin Volkan

An Investigative Report submitted to

Sonoma State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Psychology

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Robert Greenway, Chairman

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Gordon Tappan

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Roshni Rustomji

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Date

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707-882-2449

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARCHETYPAL AND TIBETAN PSYCHOLOGIES

An investigative report by  
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## ABSTRACT

### Purpose of study:

The Buddhism which is indigenous to Tibet has an elaborate system of psychology. Though much referred to in the West, this psychological system has yet to be compared with a Western system of psychology that shares its phenomenological and archetypal assumptions. It is the hypothesis of this study that the advent of Archetypal Psychology makes this comparison possible. The purpose of this investigation is to compare Archetypal Psychology with Tibetan Buddhist Psychology in order to better understand their common phenomenological and archetypal premises.

### Procedure:

In order to compare Tibetan Buddhist Psychology with Archetypal Psychology this investigation has studied the phenomena of the unconscious mind as it interacts with the conscious mind. This was done by examining the Tibetan view of this interaction with the tools and language of Archetypal Psychology.

### Findings:

Tibetan Buddhist Psychology was found to actively engage in a manipulation of the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious. This manipulation was effected by the use of archetypal images. This archetypal use of images was found to be symbolically represented, as well as actively practiced in the rituals of Tibetan Buddhism.

### Conclusions:

This investigation confirmed the hypothesis that Tibetan Buddhist Psychology and Archetypal Psychology share similar assumptions about the nature of human consciousness. The comparison between these two systems of psychology supports the view that the unconscious can be contacted through the use of archetypal imagery.

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

M.A. Program: Psychology  
Sonoma State University

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Date

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A few years ago I had the good fortune to be able to travel to India and Nepal. While staying in the Kathmandu Valley, I began to think of how I could arrange a trip to Tibet. Unfortunately, the political climate of the time made it impossible for an American to cross the Nepal/Tibet border and so I put the idea of traveling to Tibet out of my mind.

A few weeks later, I embarked on a long dusty bus ride to India. The first day of this trip ended in a small Nepalese town nestled under the Himalayas. We had arrived late at night and I was too restless to sleep, so I spent the night walking through the village. As if in a dream, I was suddenly transported back to a time before the West had intruded in this magical land. Walking alone through the night, I could feel the ancient rhythm of the Himalayan countryside. In the very early morning I went to a Nepalese truck-stop for tea and as all the eyes in the building turned toward my strange figure, I realized how far removed my life was from this mountain culture.

I left the tea shop and began to walk back to my camp. As I was walking I looked up towards the mountains which had been clothed in darkness. Suddenly, the first rays of sunlight flashed from the heavens and the mountains were brilliantly illuminated in an other-worldly glow. I stood transfixed, the mountains truly were God-like beings, full of immense power and majesty. After a while, I tore my eyes away and started on my long journey home cherishing the warmth of my experience. Yet, there was also a

feeling of frustration at not being able to journey over the mountains into Tibet. This project, in some part, is an answer to my frustration.

The literature of Tibetan Buddhism is a vast and complex subject and I cannot lay claim to more than a rudimentary understanding of it. Therefore, the material presented here should not be thought of as the gospel truth of Tibetan Buddhism. If any questions arise from this study concerning the nature of Tibetan Buddhism I would suggest that the reader seek out a qualified Lama for advise. My intention in this writing is solely to try and provide a mode of communication for the understanding of Tibetan Buddhism in the West.

There are a number of people who have given me a great deal of help with this undertaking. First of all, I would like to thank my committee members Roshni Rostomji and Gordon Tappan for their comments and criticism. I would also like to thank my friends and fellow Buddhists, Peggy, Scott and Matt, for their support throughout this project. A special thanks to Robert Greenway for his thoughtful advice, his editing and last but not least, his friendship. Another special thanks to my wife, Panda Kroll, without whom this work would have never been accomplished.

I would also like to give a special note of thanks to the Venerable Lama Lodro, of the Kaygu Munchab Drodan Center in San Francisco, who has introduced me to some of the experiential aspects of Tibetan Buddhism that are presented here. He has been a wonderful teacher and a fine example of a true practitioner of the Dharma.

This work is dedicated to the liberation of all sentient beings  
from suffering

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## Introduction

The major premise of this investigation is that there are profound similarities between Tibetan Buddhist Psychology and Western Archetypal Psychology. It will be our intention to compare the Western system of Archetypal Psychology with the psychological system of the Tibetan Buddhists.

Because we wish to proceed as simply as possible we will center on the prime issue common to both of these psychologies: the question of what to do with the ego. In the first part of this investigation we will look at the Tibetan view of the development of the processes called "ego" and then trace this development through the imaginal eyes of Archetypal Psychology. In more Jungian terms we will look at how Tibetan Buddhists view the development of the ego as emerging from the collective unconscious. Next we will look at how Tibetan Psychology views the interaction of the egoic processes with the unconscious imagination. This interaction is represented in the symbol of the Tibetan Wheel of Life. Finally, we will show how the Tibetan Buddhists use archetypes to de-inflate, or transcend the ego in their ritual practice, in order to experience what has been labeled the "ground unconscious", or what the Buddhists call sunyata.

In order to describe these ideas we have used terms from both Jung and Hillman which often appear to overlap. We are referring chiefly to the use of the word "soul". This will be dealt with below in detail but here we will briefly introduce the subject of Archetypal Psychology in order to more sharply define the tools that will be used in our analysis of Tibetan Buddhism and its psychological system.

Soul and the Unconscious

The concept of soul is not an idea new to the west, but is one that has been ignored in its namesake subject, psychology. The exception to the rule is the psychology of Jung and its recent revision by Hillman. (Jung, 1956, etc. Hillman, 1983, 1975) These two modern psychologists have recognized the importance of soul in its relationship to the collective unconscious and to the images that filter from this collective psyche. These images are characterized as being archetypal. It is the experience of the flow of these archetypal images from the deep layers of the psyche that provide a way of experiencing the soul directly. Accordingly, the soul is not an individual entity, but the connection of the individual with the collective unconscious and its images which manifest in the world. These images then, represent the "essence" of the collective unconscious, and its connection to the world. Hillman has designated this, following Corbin, as the Anima Mundi, or world soul;

imaginal

world

a  
b  
c  
d  
e

Let us imagine the Anima Mundi neither above the world encircling it as a divine and remote emanation of spirit, a world of powers, archetypes and principles transcendent to things, nor within the material world as its unifying panpsychic life principle.

Rather...let us imagine the Anima Mundi as that particular soul-spark, that seminal image, which offers itself through each thing in its visible form. Then Anima Mundi indicates... a face bespeaking its interior image...(Hillman, 1981, pg77)

This Anima Mundi expands the idea of soul beyond its personal confines into something collective. "The soul of things corresponds, or coalesces with ours" (Hillman, 1981, pg 78) In another place Hillman also says; "Human does not enter into soul, nor is everything psychological human. Man exists in the midst of psyche, it is not the other way around." (Hillman, 1975, pg173) These statements give us a feeling for the natural flow of soul from the collective, into the human. The importance of Archetypal Psychology for our investigation is that it explores this flow of the soul and its images through the phenomenology of our existence. Hillman has taken this movement to be the activity of images which he calls the imagination, and postulates that the major functioning of the psyche is this image making capacity.

Man is primarily an image maker and our psychic substance consists of images; our being is imaginal being, an existence in imagination. We are indeed such stuff as dreams are made on. (Hillman, 1975, pg23)

Whether the forms of the images are sexual (Freud), or religious (Jung), is secondary to the drive or flow of the images themselves. Archetypal Psychology works back along towards the unconscious in order to experience this archetypal imagery in its personified forms. This corresponds to what Hillman refers to as "soul-making" when he says,

The making of soul-stuff calls for dreaming, fantasizing, imagining...within these fantasies are the archetypal persons of myths. Their interrelations are the structural principles of psychic life. (Hillman, 1975, pg23)

By journeying to the layer of the unconscious where images dwell as personified beings, we are able to see through the limiting nature of an ego-centric consciousness into the pantheistic nature of the psyche. It is therefore the work of Archetypal Psychology to journey back along the imaginal flow of the unconscious, not in order to reclaim

lost territory for the ego, but instead to enable it to loosen its grip of psychic dominance and to allow it to become more imaginative and open.

This is where East and West meet and both the Tibetan system of psychology and Archetypal Psychology stand to benefit from each other. The Tibetan Buddhists offer us practical application of some of Archetypal Psychology's most theoretical ideas and Archetypal Psychology offers Tibetan Buddhism a profound and traditional Western mode of working with the imagination. Therefore, we will approach the psychic phenomena described by the Tibetan Buddhists with the tools and language of Archetypal Psychology and vice versa. Though there are some differences to be bridged, we maintain that these psychologies function with essentially the same paradigm of the unconscious as their basis and share the same goal. Both systems share the belief that humans are fragmented and alienated and they engage in the exploration of the psychic depths in order to bring about an understanding of the psyche in order to free it from its suffering.

## Chapter 1

### Ego Development

In most of the psychoanalytically derived psychologies, the development of the ego is afforded a position of importance. These psychological systems maintain that it is through the development of the ego that the mature ego/self processes are formed and maintained. (Wilber, 1980, Edinger, 1973) The goal of most psychoanalytically based psychologies is to install and insure the ego processes in a controlling place in the psyche. As Hillman maintains,

...psychology is engaged in ego-making and not soul making. The field dedicated to the very name of psyche expends its resources in strengthening and developing a phantom...By identifying the soul with the subjective ego and its aims, psychology becomes satanic. (Hillman, 1975, pg48)

Among the psychoanalytically based depth psychologies there is one exception: Archetypal Psychology. (Hillman, 1983, 1975, etc.) This psychology is based on a phenomenology of archetypal images. It does not put an emphasis on unifying consciousness

through the ego complex, but looks instead to the imaginal processes as they are experienced in the whole of the psyche. As Hillman says, "Its concern is with the phenomenon: the archetypal image" (1983, pg12)

This premise leads Archetypal psychology to question whether or not an egoic-based mind represents a healthy state of existence, or is in fact a state of mind cut off from the vast inheritance of the unconscious.

Archetypal psychology calls for the "heroic ego" to descend from its isolated position as psychic ruler in order to allow for an awareness of the archetypal layers of the psyche. (Hillman, 1975, 1972) To do this the ego must return to its imaginal origins, realizing that these origins are rooted in the flow of images stemming from the archetypal unconscious. "We need an imaginal ego that is at home in the imaginal realm." (Hillman, 1975, pg37) The ego then, is asked to become imaginal, to be at home with the processes of the unconscious. But the ego, is also asked to let images from the unconscious into its idea of self without literalizing these images. By undergoing these changes, the ego becomes more tolerant of the unconscious. It is less likely to become inflated by an assimilation of unconscious material or to fearfully cut itself off from its imaginal origins. (Jung, 1956, Hillman, 1975, 1972) Therefore, Archetypal Psychology

pays more attention to the interaction between the archetypal unconscious and the ego, than it does to the development of the ego itself.

Tibetan Buddhist psychology takes a similar view to that of Archetypal psychology in regard to the overemphasis of the egoic mind in psychology, but the Tibetan Buddhists also recognize the study of ego development as a necessary prelude to the understanding of their psychology. As C. Trungpa, a distinguished scholar and master of Tibetan Psychology says,

It is necessary, therefore to start in on what we are and why we are searching. Generally all religions deal with this material...the basis of ego. Most religions refer to this material in a somewhat perjorative way, but I do not think it is such a shocking or terrible thing. We do not have to be ashamed of what we are. As sentient beings we have wonderful backgrounds. These backgrounds may not be particularly enlightened or peaceful or intelligent. Nevertheless, we have soil good enough to cultivate; we can plant anything in it. Therefore, in dealing with this subject we are not condemning or attempting to eliminate our ego-psychology; we are purely acknowledging it, seeing it as it is. In fact, the understanding of ego is the foundation of Buddhism. (Trungpa, 1973, pg122)



The Tibetan Buddhists deal in great detail with the development of the egoic processes and upon the subsequent behavioral tendencies that arise from them. (Johanson, 1979) Since these egoic processes have been described many times in the West, we might question the advantage of another developmental schemata? The Tibetan Buddhist scheme of ego development is unique in that it does not come from an egoic standpoint. Like Archetypal Psychology, its point of departure is the broader base of the unconscious. It is not an ego psychology that analyzes itself, but rather an imaginal psychology that looks at the entrapment of the imagination by the ego. A close examination of supposedly egoic images, shows these images as imaginal processes which are distorted by the ego. Through an understanding of the interactions of the unconscious with the ego, Tibetan Psychology is able to see these images as phenomena of the imagination. It is able to see the ego in light of the unconscious and not the unconscious in light of the ego. When this is accomplished the ego is no longer seen as an entity separate from the rest of the psyche; the static entity we have called the ego disappears into the processes of the psyche as a whole. It is not destroyed, but seen as another psychic member with a voice equal in power to the others.

Only when the ego is examined in light of its origin in

the unconscious does its connection to image making and the imaginal unconscious become clear. Trungpa speaks of this in terms of visualization; "For the student to arrive at any proper understanding of visualization [i.e. image making]...he has to have developed...insight into the structure of the ego." (Trungpa, 1973, pg50) It is through image making that ego consciousness recognizes that it, too, is part of the greater, collective psyche. In this way, the ego becomes detached from its narrow individualistic perspective.

In Tibetan Buddhist psychology, the development of the ego starts in a way that is reminiscent of Western psychologies of conscious-development. (For a summary of these psychologies see Wilber, 1980) Though presented as a linear hierarchy in the West, the developmental scheme of the Tibetan Buddhists actually resembles more of a systems approach; it is a kind of mental ecological system involving feedback from one level of functioning to the next. Each state of the developing consciousness (Skandha) is both a part of and an influence on the next state. The difference between the systems approach that attributed to the Tibetans and the Western developmental schemata is that the Tibetan system is not built up of static levels but of processes, each unfolding to the next. Although these appear linear, the movement during each state allows diverse phenomena to work simultaneously in different ways.

The fundamental state of mind given by Tibetan Buddhist Psychology is pleromatic. It is without conscious conceptualization and is called "open space". As Trungpa says, "Our most fundamental state of mind, before the creation of the ego, is such that there is basic openness..." (Trungpa, 1973, pg122) This space may be thought of as a non-differential experience of a deep level of the unconscious. Because it is non-differential, it is wholly collective. (Jung, 1956, Evans-Wentz, 1960) There is a kind of perception occurring, but anything that is perceived is part of the perception. This perceiving constitutes an "activity in open space" and if it becomes too active, differentiation begins to occur. Trungpa describes the activity during this state of mind, "Because it is spacious, it brings the inspiration to dance about, but our dance became a bit too active, we began to spin more than was necessary to express the space." (Trungpa, 1973, pg123) A good analogy would be the heating of a liquid. At first the molecules of the liquid are active in an even way; although they move around they retain all the characteristics of a liquid. But should the liquid be heated, the activity or movement of the molecules begins to increase and when a certain temperature is reached part of the original liquid differentiates and takes on the properties of a gas. In the Tibetan Buddhist analogy of mind, the activity that causes the differentiation

See notes 1

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corresponds to the development of a primary image out of the original undifferentiated unconscious. It is from this primary image that all other images and hence the imagination, spring forth. This idea is supported by the origin myth of Tibet and the symbolization of the seed image in tantric ritual, as we shall see later.

The creation of images out of an undifferentiated mind and their subsequent activity is a movement of images, or the flow of imagination. This flow of imagination creates itself as "other", apart from the pleromatic space. Such imaging activity begins to conceive of itself more and more as a separate conglomerate; "I am dancing in space...This is the birth of 'form' or 'other'." (Trungpa, 1973, pg23) As an "I" somewhat differentiated from the "open space", it begins to ignore the collectiveness of its origins for fear of being swallowed back up in an undifferentiated unconscious. Here the idea of the death of the "I" begins, which for the egoic mind, later becomes the fear of death. Because of this fear, more images are created in order to reinforce the feeling of separateness of the "I". "The attempt to confirm our solidity is very painful. Constantly we find ourselves suddenly slipping off the edge of a floor which had appeared to extend endlessly. Then we must attempt to save ourselves from death by immediately building an extension to the floor in order to make it appear endless again..." (Trungpa, 1976, pg3) As this happens, the images are created as external

forms in order to "ignore" the imaginal flow out of the collective open space. The Tibetans call this "the ignorance form". (Trungpa, 1973, pg 125) After this has occurred or even concurrent with it, the sense of "I" starts to perceive the images of the imagination noumenally, instead of phenomenally. The world soul has become forms in the world, each with separate qualities and attributes; their flow has become static. "...we have solidified the whole space and turned it in to 'other'...(Trungpa, 1973, pg126) Since these forms have crystallized out, there appears to be an infinite variety of them and the "I" is compelled to explore. While exploring, the need arises for a way of comparing the forms with one another and for cataloging them. This leads the "I" to become a central processor. As Trungpa says, "In order to explore more efficiently there must be a kind of switchboard system, a controller of the feeling mechanism." (Trungpa, 1973, pg126) Since there are so many forms (feelings) of which to keep track of, the name of the form soon becomes substituted for the qualities of the form. There are too many for the "I" to consider. Finally the "I" gets around to naming itself, and the "I" conglomerate becomes conscious of itself as an ego. As Trungpa says,

It is an accumulation of a lot of stuff. It is a "brilliant work of art", a product of the intellect which says, "Lets give it a name, lets call it

something. Lets call it 'I am' ", which is very clever. "I" is the product of intellect, the label which unifies into one whole the disorganized and scattered development of the ego. (Trungpa, 1973, pg128)

This is a brief summary of how the Tibetan Buddhists view the development of egoic consciousness. We have omitted many details pertaining to the role of the unconscious. This will become clearer later when we discuss the journey through the imaginal flow in relation to Tibetan ritual. This schemata is not to be understood in a literal way, but as a guideline. As Trungpa says, "This development does not take the shape of a solid entity. Rather, this development is illusory...Confused mind is inclined to view itself as a solid ongoing thing, but it is only a collection of tendencies, events." (Trungpa, 1973, pg122) These tendencies and events are the archetypes that flow out of the imaginal stream which resist classification. They are amorphous, and are always in flux. They appear in the light of consciousness only to submerge back into darkness at some other time. To classify them in one part or another of the psyche is to render them static and confined to a certain level of existence. This defies their phenomenal reality. As Hillman states, "'Archetypal', here refers to a move one makes rather than a thing that is." (Hillman, 1983, pg13) Tibetan Psychology has grasped this aspect of the archetypal

material of the imagination and has sought to explain it in such a way that the imaginal flow is understood to be moving between consciousness and unconsciousness. In this context, The Tibetans see the ego as the literalizer of the imaginal flow. The process of the ego serves to keep the imagination from moving. The ego's work with images -to logically categorize them, to name and project them, and to metaphorically put psychic forms under the entomologist's pin- keeps them from moving. It never fully succeeds. Since the ego is also made from the stuff of the imagination, it cannot stop the image-making of the imagination altogether or it would starve itself. Instead, the ego tries to sublimate archetypal energy to its control, to feed off it and let only enough rise to consciousness as it can manage at one time. The unconscious resists this and gives the ego a "meal" of powerful pathological imagery. As Hillman says, " Sick figures...have an exceptionally moving power...[which] leads out of the ego and into a recognition that through a pathologized experience I am bound to archetypal persons who want something from me and to whom I owe remembrance." (Hillman, 1975, pg83)

The more the ego constricts the imaginal flow, the more pathological the images become. These images serve to remind the ego of its connection to the imagination which causes the ego to fear a re-immersion in the collective. The ego

then, is in conflict with the unconscious, and this struggle can be thought of metaphorically as consciousness itself. We will see next how Tibetan Buddhism has described this consciousness symbolically in the Wheel of Life.



...Be angry at the sun for setting If these things anger you, watch the wheel slope and turn, They are all bound on the wheel, these people, those warriors,...Let boys want pleasure, and men struggle for power, and women perhaps for fame, And the servile to serve a leader, and the duped to be duped. Yours is not theirs. -Robinson Jeffers, 1941-

The Six Realms and the Wheel of Life

The successful development of the ego that we have seen in the last chapter is where most psychologies of the West place their goals. For Tibetan Buddhist Psychology, and the psychologies of Jung and Hillman however, this is nothing more than a beginning. Tibetan Buddhism searches for a deeper understanding of the mature ego-processes through their representation in the symbolism of the wheel. This exploration represents an excursion into pathology which investigates the ability of the ego to transpose and contain the flow of the imagination.

The symbol of the wheel in this specific usage is called the Wheel of Life and is usually divided into six sections called the Six Realms. (see Figure 1) In each section, there is a scene which represents one perspective, or mode of being.

The Six Realms, the different styles of samsaric

occupation are referred to as 'realms' in the sense that we dwell within a particular version of reality...As Human beings we may, during the course of the day, experience the emotions of all the realms...Nonetheless, a person's psychology is usually firmly rooted in one realm. This realm provides us with a style of confusion, a way of entertaining and occupying ourselves so as not to have to face our fundamental uncertainty... (Trungpa, 1973, pg23-24)

Each realm illustrates a style of suffering and often includes a figure of the Buddha, who leads us out of suffering. He does this by symbolically pointing to the path of liberation corresponding to the style of neurosis in that realm.

The center of the wheel contains three animals; the pig, the rooster, and the snake; each biting the other's tail. These animals represent the interdependent, driving forces of ignorance, greed and hatred. The next concentric circle from the center depicts a number of men in various attitudes. The men on the left are performing good deeds, while those on the right engage in perverse activities. Together, these figures represent a chain of events that show the ego as it fluctuates between good and evil. On the outside rim of the Wheel of Life twelve states of human existence are depicted. These range from birth to death and

show human development as part of the suffering of the Wheel. (for more information on these developmental states consult Blofeld, 1970, pg120)

We would like next to give a brief description of each of the Six Realms. Each realm represents a state of mind, or a kind of complex and will give us a deeper insight into the symbolic meaning of the Wheel of Life.

Working from the bottom up we can begin with the Hell Realm. This realm contains images of destruction and torture. The hate and fear in this realm give rise to an outlook that is claustrophobic and frustrated. Trungpa describes these qualities,

The aggression of the hell realm does not seem to be your aggression, but it seems to permeate the whole space around you. There is a feeling of extreme stuffiness and claustrophobia. There is no space in which to breath, no space in which to act, and life becomes overwhelming. The aggression is so intense that, if you were to kill someone to satisfy your aggression, you would achieve only a small degree of satisfaction. In the hell realm we throw out flames and radiations which are continually coming back to us. There is no room at all in which to experience any spaciousness or openness. (Trungpa, 1976, pg30)

As anger and aggression increases, hell becomes unbearable and we stop struggling. The scene then turns to that of desolation and separateness. The personality in this sense "...becomes paralyzed, frozen, remaining enveloped in pain, without struggling to escape it." (Trungpa, 1973, pg159) This is the cold hell of intense loneliness and despair.

In the Hell Realm of the Tibetan Buddhists, the Death God Yama holds a mirror, indicating that one's own projections create the hellish conditions. We think death to be the cause of our suffering, but the death god holds up our reflection, showing us we are responsible. "Then the Lord of Death will say, 'I will consult the Mirror of Karma'. So saying, he will look in the Mirror, wherein every good and evil act is vividly reflected. Lying will be of no avail." (Evans-Wentz, 1960, pg 166)

The suffering felt in the hell realm is not necessarily bad. The Buddha appears in the hell realm carrying the fire of purification, that represents the suffering which purifies us and lets us look calmly beyond the mirror, at death. In this way, we can see through the illusion of the hell realm. "...The Lords of Death are thine own hallucinations. Apart from one's hallucinations, in reality there are no such things existing outside oneself as a Lord of Death, or god, or demon...Act so as to recognize this." (Evans-Wentz, 1960, pg 167)

The intense suffering of the Hell Realm can lead another way. Instead of becoming purified through suffering, it is possible instead to feel impoverished and full of self pity. This leads us to the next mental state, the realm of the Hungry Ghosts. This is the state of mind where we feel we deserve better. Because of this we begin to think up many different possibilities of satisfaction. We spend so much time in despair, thinking up possibilities, that we ultimately never accomplish any one of them. This leads us to think up even more possibilities. The Realm of the Hungry Ghosts is characterized by infinite longing. As Trungpa says;

You are constantly hungering for new entertainment - spiritual, intellectual, sensual and so on...You consume one idea after another, trying to record them, trying to make them solid and real. But this becomes repetitive at some point. (Trungpa, 1976, pg32)

What is actually desired, is the desire itself and not the object of desire. The Tibetans depict this realm by a vision of the grotesque. It is an image of people with tiny heads and mouths, who possess large bloated stomachs. They live unsatisfied because they can never get enough food into their tiny heads to feed their large stomachs. A modern

image for this state of mind is that of a drug addict. Here again, hunger is the prime focus of life. When an addict obtains more of an addictive substance, it does not satisfy him or her, but serves to increase their hunger. "You wish you could be hungry again so you could fill yourself up again." (Trungpa, 1976, pg37) The Buddha appears in this realm with Amrita, the nectar of the gods, which enables anyone in such a state of mind to become satisfied and to bring a sense of completion into their existence.

In the event that this craving becomes intolerable, the easiest thing would be to block out the disturbance caused by the craving. This is the Animal Realm, characterized by the quality of ignorance. In this state of mind there is no reason to deal with a situation unless it is forced into your awareness. There is no looking about or braving anything new, there is only the blind acceptance of the Status Quo. "The animal realm is associated with stupidity, that is preferring to play deaf and dumb, preferring to follow the rules of the available game than redefine them..." (Trungpa, 1976, pg35)

This state of mind is fundamentally insecure and fearful of anything not pertaining to its comfort. It is not comfortable to look up and take notice of what is occurring. The Buddha, appropriately enough, appears in this realm with a book, symbolizing the power of discriminating knowledge.

The next realm is characterized by the qualities of discrimination and passion. This is the Human Realm. The state of mind in the Human Realm is attached to figuring things out. "The human mentality places strong emphasis on knowledge, learning and education, on collecting all kinds of information and wisdom. The intellect is most active in the human realm..." (Trungpa, 1976, pg31) There is a great emphasis given to the intellect in the human realm because there is a feeling that something is missing. This is what the discriminating intellect attempts to figure out. The Buddha appears here with a begging bowl and a staff. This is to illustrate that discriminating intelligence is best used on a spiritual path. When this path is taken the human state of mind is able to correctly judge all the realms of the Wheel of Life and to see the suffering inherent in each. The way out of suffering starts and ends with being human.

The next state we encounter is the realm of the Jealous Gods. This is a materialistic state of mind. There is a striving quality here; riches come from hard work, and once you have made it, you must strive to stay on top. There is a hunger here too, but it differs from the previous version (in the Hungry Ghost Realm) because it is a hunger for control. Therefore, the Realm of the Jealous Gods is characterized by a fear of failure that stems from the loss of control. A. Adler gives us a definitive psychological description of this state;

...other types take refuge from anxiety and doubt in a compulsion and unceasingly continue their pursuit of success. They are always expecting attacks, belittlement, injustice; trying desperately to play the role of the saviour and hero, not infrequently exerting their power upon unsuitable objects. They never attain...harmony in their striving...(Adler, 1968, pg22)

There is also a spiritual thrust in this state of mind, but it takes the form of spiritual materialism. (Trungpa, 1973) This is a spiritual path that is used to strengthen the ego.

The next realm is the God Realm. In this realm, the material struggle for control becomes completely mental and the the projections of the ego are strong. In fact, the ego has created a truly solipsistic state of being. The subjective world of the ego is projected on the external world. The intentionality of the world has become the intention of the ego. "Ego has extended itself so far that it begins to lose track of the boundary of its territory...Finally it concludes that there is no way of defining its boundaries." (Trungpa, 1973, pg144) It is like being fully awake in a dream you have created. Desires are satisfied by thought,



anything can be created by the power of the ego. But even this state of mind is subject to fatigue, and it becomes harder to maintain this god-like state. More and more energy is expended to keep up the level of concentration. The struggle so well hidden emerges once more and a falling out back down through the realms occurs. "Sooner or later the absorption wears out" and this state of being "...feels threatened, confused, vulnerable" (Trungpa, 1973, pg144) The Buddha appears in the God Realm with a lute. This is to remind us that this state, like the sounds of the lute, has a beautiful, yet fleeting existence.

The Symbolism of the Wheel of Life

Since we have briefly described the Six Realms of the Wheel of Life, let us now look at its meaning as a whole. The symbol of the wheel is found in many ancient cultures. In India it is associated with Surya, the god of the sun, and in Greece with Apollo. In the Zoroaster religion the wheel symbolized the light of the sun opposed to darkness, or good as opposed to evil. Jung speaks of the antiquity of the connection between the sun and the wheel; "The sun wheel is an exceedingly archaic idea, perhaps the oldest religious idea there is." (Jung, 1968, pg42) In these cases the wheel is associated with the god of the sun. The wheel is sometimes thought to be a wheel on the sun chariot of Surya and Apollo. As Talbot says; "All ancient Sungods seem to own such a wheel or a chariot". (Talbot, 1980, pg102) In this sense, the wheel is seen as the driving force behind the heroic sun gods.

The Tibetan usage of the wheel in the Six Realms is also representative of the driving force of the sun gods, in that the Tibetans are symbolizing the heroic power of the ego. The difference is that in the Tibetan system, the heroic journey is not thought of as an enlightening experience, but is understood to lead to

the confusion of the Six Realms.

We can work with the Wheel of Life in a Jungian way and look at its subdivisions as archetypal perspectives. These perspectives have come from an unconscious origin and each bears a great resemblance to Jung's notion of archetypes, as defined through myths and fables.

Another well known expression of the archetypes is myth and fable. But here we are dealing with specifically molded forms...the archetype appears in a form that usually reveals in an unmistakable way the elements of judgement and valuation introduced by conscious elaboration. (Jung, 1940, pg53)

The Six Realms are in service of the ego and describe the flow of the unconscious as it has been sublimated by the ego. Even though the images presented in the Six Realms are of archetypal origin, they should also be seen crossing over into an area of the unconscious thought of as personal. In this sense, the archetypes of the Six Realms behave like Jung's notion of complexes - that is, they are made up of of collective material from the unconscious, combined with repressed material from the conscious. (Jung 1956) These complex's waver between conscious and unconscious inducing habitual patterns of behavior. Thought of in this way, the

Six Realms are a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious. In this scheme there is a type of mental causality where the egoic process includes the attributes of each state and in turn interprets reality through them. The ego views the world through the imaginal portal of the the unconscious material it has captured.

We can break the perspectives of the six realms into three sets of dualities, for example; 1) God Realm / Hell Realm, 2) Jealous God Realm / Hungry Ghost Realm, and 3) Human Realm / Animal Realm. Each duality can be thought of as representing a continuum of a certain principle. In our example these are; 1) spaciousness - where the God Realm seems to have an infinite amount of space and the Hell Realm has none, 2) striving - where the Jealous God Realm would be striving to keep power and the Hungry Ghost Realm would be striving to get it, 3) discriminating intelligence - where the Human Realm has too much and the Animal Realm not enough. Though this kind of speculation about the Wheel of Life is useful, it should not be taken too seriously for danger of simplifying the archetypal character of each perspective.

What is more interesting to us is that there are three main dualistic principles, or a triad. Edinger writes of the significance of this; "Triadtarian symbols on the other hand imply growth, development, and movement in time." (Edinger, 1972, pg182) This corresponds to our idea of the wheel

*Edinger's Wheel*

powering the conscious egoic principle as, growth, development and structure are the psychological characteristics of the ego. (Edinger, 1972, Jung, 1956, Wilber 1980. It is also interesting to note here that in some tantric Buddhist texts, the Wheel of Life is called the kalachakra, or time wheel, see S.B.Dasgupta, 1974, pg67)

But what about a fourth principle? Jung felt that the Tibetan Wheel of Life, with its triad structure, was not a mandala figure because it is not complete without a fourth principle. (Jung, 1948, pg 170, 1955, pg66) Edinger carries this idea further;

Four is the structural wholeness, completion, something... eternal. Three on the other hand represents the totality of the cycle of growth and dynamic change - conflict and resolution and renewed conflict again. Thus in accordance with the trinitarian formula, the thesis three and antithesis four must be resolved in a new synthesis. (Edinger, 1973, pg188)

Following Edinger, we can extrapolate a relationship between the triad in the Wheel of Life and a fourth syzygy, leading to a "new synthesis". This might also be the point the Tibetans are trying to make with the Wheel of Life. As we pointed out in the God Realm of the Wheel of Life, the ego concentration of

the mind has become so proficient that it can no longer recognize its boundaries. Because the ego cannot observe itself all at once, it thinks that it has transcended itself and is in an egoless state. Yet it is still watching itself and is likewise still subject to the fatigue that comes from exerting control over an unwilling unconscious. This is in contrast to a true state of ego-loss where the realms of the Wheel of Life have been transcended and one enters into a state of what the Tibetan Buddhists term nirvana. (a term we have already alluded to as an undifferentiated collective unconscious) This is the final duality we have been looking for, between the states of existence in the Wheel of Life, called samsara by the Tibetans, and the true state of ego-loss, or nirvana.

This is where the idea of tantra comes in. Tantra can be thought of as a practice for bringing together samsara and nirvana. This tantric practice can be accomplished because the Tibetans have realized that samsara and nirvana are dependent on each other. As Trungpa says;

Tantric wisdom brings nirvana into samsara. This may sound rather shocking. Before reaching the level of Tantra, you try to abandon samsara and strive to achieve nirvana. But eventually you must realize the

futility of striving and then become completely one with nirvana. In order to really capture the energy of nirvana and become one with it, you need a partnership in the ordinary world. (Trungpa, 1973, pg220)

Tibetan Buddhists do not transcend away from the world into nirvana, but effect its return into the world. It is this essence of nirvana in the world that we have called the Anima Mundi. This is where we find a "new synthesis", as a balance between samsara and nirvana, where they blend together. As Hillman says;

...there can grow a third realm, a sort of conscious unconscious. It is rather non-directional, non-ordered, non-object, non-subject, it is not quite a reality of the concrete kind...This third reality is a psychic reality, a world of experiences...a large and open space. (Hillman, 1979, pg66)

With the addition of a fourth principle the movement of the triad ceases. What was thought to have been moving is seen now as an illusion. There was really no place to go, the wheel was spinning forever into itself. By stepping outside of it a stable

viewpoint is obtained. This is the viewpoint of the Tibetan Buddhism, which effects a reconciliation between the transpersonal and the worldly, where Hillman says, in a state of soul "...we feel connected to nature and to ourselves." (Hillman, 1979, pg66)



Soul in Tibetan Buddhism

The Tibetan Buddhist system of psychology and its structure has been reported on by many authors. (Gyatso, 1975, Johanson, 1979, Guenther, 1972, Trungpa, 1973, 1976, etc.) When examined by Western scholars, Tibetan psychology tends to be viewed as a hierarchical system. In this paper we would like to depart from this systematic Western perspective and present Tibetan psychology in a way that is phenomenal, poetic and metaphorical. Therefore, I have purposely left out many of the terms that the Buddhists themselves use to describe the phenomena of the mind. (e.g. the skandas and the system of Abidharma) It is our contention that these hierarchical systems are not so important to the understanding of the "essence" of the Mahayana and Tibetan forms of Buddhism. As Keizan Zenji wrote, "Do not look for Shakyamuni Buddha outside the whole world, the ground, and animate things." (Kennet, 1975, pg166) It is exactly in "animate things" that we recognize the soul in the world, or as Hillman says about the Anima Mundi; "our imaginative recognition, the childlike art of imagining the world, animates the world and returns it to soul." (Hillman, 1982, pg78) The Tibetans practice this animation by grounding the imagination in the world. Tibetan Buddhism can be thought of as bringing soul into the world.

The immediate problem with this is that the "soul" is a persona non gratis with Buddhist commentators. In fact the non-existence of the soul is usually reported as a basic Buddhist tenet. In the sense that the soul is individual, this is correct, but this is not the same soul that Jung and Hillman speak of. Their soul is grounded in a collective unconscious and is essentially its essence, or how it is felt, or "seen" when it manifests in the world. Therefore, Jung and Hillman do not follow the popular Western tradition. Jung explains the Western view of the soul in his commentary to the Tibetan Book of the Dead; "For him [the Westerner] the 'soul' is something pitifully small, unworthy, personal, subjective..." (Jung in Evans-Wentz, 1960, pg xxxvii) For Jung the idea of soul corresponded more closely to the German word 'seele', which signifies a greater transpersonal psyche of mankind. (Evans-Wentz, 1960, pg xxxv) Hillman has expanded the idea of the soul even further than Jung, by tracing it back to its imaginal origins and then bringing it into the world;

In Hillman's psychology a return to the imaginal implies re-souling the world. This is not as far fetched or as romantic as it may sound...imagining and fantasizing is not just an interior process going on in our heads, but much more like a way of being in the world...(Avens, 1980, pg 63)

In this way the paths of Archetypal psychology and Tibetan Buddhism converge, by both affirming the value of being in the world. This affirmation is symbolized in the earth touching gesture of the Buddha; when he defeated mara (illusion) and became enlightened, his enlightenment was given validity by being witnessed by the world.

As we have indicated, the misconception of the idea of soul is due to rhetoric. Soul in the sense used by Jung and Hillman is not to be equated with the individual self or atman. When the Buddhists refute the existence of soul, they are disavowing the reality of soul as being individual. The soul of the Buddhists is possibly more like the earlier Hindu idea of para-atman, which was a transcendent, collective soul, except that the soul of the Buddhists is brought back to "the world and animate things". The idea of a collective soul plays an important role in Tibetan psychology. For the Tibetans, this is something between samsara and nirvana. It is not the world removed from the imagination, or the imagination removed from the world, it is a balance between extremes, the middle way.

The use of soul or imaginative reality in the spiritual practice of the Tibetan Buddhists makes it the most "archetypal" form of Buddhism. It also makes it the most complex and the most delicate. By delicate what is meant is that it has the greatest potential of all Buddhist practices

to become decadent. Tibetan Buddhism is sometimes called the short, hard path because the greatest results can be made in the shortest amount of time, but the pitfalls are many. An analogy of Tibetan Buddhism is like a path that goes straight up the mountainside, while the other paths wind slowly to the top.

The ritual practices of Tibetan Buddhism work in reverse of the developmental processes of the ego. These practices explore through the stages of consciousness towards the imagination. In Hillman's terminology this is an opus contra naturam or a work against nature. (Hillman 1972) The work of Tibetan psychology follows the flow of the imagination, i.e. the activity of archetypal images, back to their origins. Jung calls this an act of reflection, when he says; "...reflection is a spiritual act that runs counter to the natural process; an act whereby we stop, call something to mind, form a picture...and come to terms with what we have seen." (Jung in Hillman, 1975, pg84) This works like a boat rowing against the current in order to find the starting point of the river. The starting point of the river was first thought to be a spring, but on finding the spring we see that the river is still there, only it is underground. Following the river underground and back even further, we eventually work our way up the slope of a mountain, where we see water collecting into small streams and tributaries. If we go back only a little further we see

the river as the rain or snow that falls from the sky. This process is analogous to Hillman's imaginal reduction, (Avens, 1980) but the Tibetan practice goes even further. Where does the rain come from? It comes from the sky. How does the moisture get to the sky? It evaporated from the ground. So where is the water to begin with?

The ground is everywhere and the moisture is spread out evenly throughout this space. The river explorer is right back where they started from; standing on the ground watching the river. Other forms of practice would be content to just sit by the river, watching it until its nature was realized. This is like climbing the mountain of our earlier example along the switchbacks. It takes a long time, it is an organic natural process, while the Tibetan tantric practice is not. In this way the Tibetan practice is much like alchemy; given enough time one metal will change into another naturally, (e.g. the decay of Uranium) but with works of the imagination, Lead quickly becomes Gold. This is not to suggest that the Tibetans say that instant enlightenment is possible; they make no such claim. They do however, claim that their path is quicker than the other forms of Buddhism because it is harder and more complete.

### The Use of Images in Tibetan Buddhism

The Tibetan tantric practice that we have been

describing is characterized by "active imagining", or visualization. As Jung says;

...it contains a fantasy of intensely visual character, something which in the language of the ancients would be called a 'vision'. Not a 'vision seen in a dream', but a vision perceived by intense concentration on the background of consciousness, a technique that is perfected only after long practice. (Jung, 1956, pg222)

The work of the Tibetan monk then becomes - "This sort of contemplation- the creation of 'special appearances'...to nullify 'ordinary appearances' and clinging to 'ordinary ego'." (Beyers, 1978, pg77) The work then of the Tibetan practitioner is to visualize what Jung would term, archetypal images. As Jung says; "Archetypes are, by definition, factors and motifs that arrange psychic elements into certain images." (Jung in Jacobi, 1959, pg31) Through his or her visualization, the Tibetan practitioner begins to know these "factors and motifs". By contemplation the archetype is revealed and at the same time the "ordinary appearances" fade. This brings about a loosening of the grip of the ego and its perspective can be transcended into an awareness of the psyche as a whole.

The reason that the egoic perspective of the world fades is because of the in-depth nature of the

visualization. If it is profound enough "...the deities visualized in front of oneself are pleased and send a duplicate of themselves into the meditator. One suddenly turns into the Lama and Buddha..." (Sopa and Hopkins, 1976, pg xvii), or possibly any of the multitude of the Tibetan pantheon. Through visualization of the deities one learns to identify with their perspectives and leave the narrow viewpoint of the ego. The identification with a certain deity engages the self in a perspective that is seemingly like one of the perspectives of the samsaric Six Realms, but with an important difference. The archetypally identified self is no longer grounded in the ego, it has merged with the archetypal figure, which as Hillman tells us,

...present themselves each a guiding spirit (Spiritus rector) with ethical positions, instinctual reactions, modes of thought and speech, and claims upon feeling. These persons by governing my complexes, govern my life. My life is a diversity of relationships with them. As persons they do not differ from Gods, heroes and daemons... (Hillman, 1975, pg36)

Unlike the reality of Six Realms, here the archetypal outlook is not subsumed to the egoic. Instead the ego surrenders and begins to look out of the eyes of a transcendent enlightened being. It begins to take on

characteristics of these archetypal experiences. The ego is invested with soul and begins to become "imaginal". Hillman speaks of these archetypal experiences; "The more profoundly archetypal my experience of soul, the more I recognize how they are beyond me, presented to me, a present, a gift, even while they feel my most personal possession." (Hillman, 1975, pg36) Hillman's thoughts on the reality of the archetypal pantheon are similar to those of the Tibetan Buddhists, "One drops all consideration of them as visualizations, ceases any thought that they are actually somewhere else, and views these visualizations as the real beings themselves." (Beyers, 1978, pg xix)

The Tibetans do not just stop here. They realize that the archetypes, as real as they may be, still are only pointing the way to a realization of the psyche. Therefore, the identification with the archetypal layer of the unconscious, must also be transcended. This is done by effecting the dissolution of the archetypal figures. As Hillman states in his processional exit at the end of Revisioning Psychology, "Soul-Making needs adequate ideational vessels, and it equally needs to let go of them." (Hillman, 1975, pg229) From the empty void where they originated, they are once more returned. "These are as T'songkapa said, the roots of his thoughts of enlightenment, which he now actualizes by the dissolution of everything into Emptiness." (Beyers, 1978, pg30) At first thought this



might seem confusing, but it is here that Tantric Buddhism joins with the other Mahayana forms, giving up its image-making tools, its archetypal trappings, for fear of literalizing them into the total sum of psychic reality. This way the archetypal quality of the psyche can be kept flowing through the stream of imagination. The Tibetan Buddhists are aware, like Hillman, that the definition of archetypes, this literalization we have been speaking of, leads to archetypes imbued with conscious deliberation. This archetypal identification, where the ego tries to control and subject the archetypes to its categorization, leads to destructive behavioral patterns. These archetypes, begin to lose their archetypal characteristics. (It is interesting to note here that the Tibetans do not apply this reasoning to the dream state as Hillman does. The Tibetans in fact have a practice for bringing waking consciousness into the dream state. Their explanation of this is that this way the practitioner will see that consciousness is identical to the dream state, or in terms of what we have already said, consciousness proceeds from, and is part of the imagination. For more on this, see Blofeld, 1970, pgs 230-232.)

Western psychology has begun to recognize the importance of the origins of the archetypal material of the unconscious, as for example in this explanation of archetypes given by Jacobi;

The origin of an archetype remains obscure its nature unfathomable; for it dwells in that mysterious shadowy realm, the collective unconscious, to which we shall never have direct access and of whose existence and operation we can have only indirect knowledge, precisely through our encounter with the archetype, i.e. their manifestation in the psych. (Jacobi, 1959, pg32)

Although the Tibetan Buddhists would disagree when Jacobi says we "shall never have direct access " to the archetypal origins of the collective unconscious, they would have to agree that the way to this point of origination lies through the manifestation of the archetypes in the psyche. It is perhaps a good idea to look back on Jung's work on the unconscious as a continuum, stretching from the collective to consciousness itself, (Jung, 1956, 1968a, etc.) and to Hillman's and Avens' work on the imagination. (Avens, 1980) It is possible through the ideas presented by these authors to see the Western corollary to the Tibetan Buddhist idea of mind as a creation rising out of the collective unconscious. (We will look at this again later when we discuss the idea of sunyata.) The point that we wish to make here is that the Tibetan Buddhists, like Jung, deal with the manifestations of the archetypes as a tangible exercise. They also know better than to try and separate the archetypes from their

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angles

origin, however strange the experience of that place may be. Once the Tibetan practitioner has reached a level of understanding where the use of archetypal tools has become a hindrance to his or her practice, these tools must then be dropped no matter how difficult this might be. It is only after this step has occurred that the Tibetan practitioner can begin to explore the experience of the origins of the archetypes in the collective unconscious.

Morality and Tibetan Ritual

We have brought up the point about making and dissolving of archetypes in order to bring us to a discussion of the role of ritual in Tibetan Buddhism. The ritual is an activity that acts as a container for the imaging that takes place in contacting the archetypal layers of the unconscious. It creates a reality in which we may open ourselves up to the archetypal images, both visual and auditory (mantra).

The rituals of Tibetan Buddhism have several distinguishing characteristics in their role as archetypal containers. To begin with they must be able to withstand the power they create without breaking apart. As some Tibetan rituals evoke immense imaginative power, they must give the participants of the rituals a structure to channel this imaginal energy. It is important to note here that magic rituals which deal with the attainment of power are usually always preceded by a preliminary self generating ritual. This is the part of the practice described above, where one imagines themselves as the deity. Another purpose that these preliminary rituals serve is to make sure that the participant is morally fit for the attainment of power. As Beyers says,

Any society that regards magic as a real and potent force would certainly desire its magicians to possess attitudes of renunciation and benevolence outlined above. Tibetan culture has erected a system wherein the very exercises that allow the acquisition of magical power guarantee their proper use; and it is interesting to note how these basic attitudes are perpetuated and constantly reiterated in the contemplative rituals themselves. (Beyers, 1978, pg29)

This view of the structure of ritual makes sense in the light of some of the more horrifying visualizations that can occur. For example in the Chod ritual, the practitioner offers up his body to be eaten by demons. This terrifying experience enables the practitioner to cut off his ego and to show compassion for the unfortunate demons by feeding them with his body.

It should be mentioned however, that before the Tibetan practitioner can even begin to learn the tantric rituals, he must go through the phases of learning that correspond to the practices of the Hinayana and the Mahayana Buddhists. Some understanding of the moral qualities and basic meditational exercises of these systems of Buddhism must be shown before the aspiring student is allowed to learn the tantric rites. In some sects of Tibetan Buddhism there are

special foundation practices (also called guru-yoga) which are difficult enough to deter most people from beginning to learn the tantric rites. These basic ideals, culled from all different types of buddhism are repeated throughout the different levels of Tibetan practice.

Tibetan rituals have been subject to a lot of misunderstanding as far as their morality is concerned, due to the connotations that the west has mistakenly attached to the word tantra. While it is true that the Tibetan tantric practitioners say that any type of energy can be used towards the gaining of enlightenment, including those drives and instinctual functions that are normally repressed by society, Tibetan Buddhists are first bound by the Bodhisattva's vow not to harm other sentient creatures and to help them gain enlightenment. In this way Tibetan ritual in no way gives itself over to hedonism and if anything just the opposite is true. As Trungpa says,

People have heard that the tantric approach is to accept samsara fully. The idea developed that therefore we are declaring everything -sexuality, aggression, ignorance- as legitimate and pure; that we accept the crudeness as one big joke. 'The crudeness is fun'...The misunderstanding seems to be that tantra comes into being out of some kind of desperation; and since we cannot handle the of confusion, we accept the

convention of tantra as a saving grace...Actually far from beginning by exalting crudeness, the introduction to tantra is fantastically precise and pure, clean and artful...There is a great appreciation of purity and cleanliness...Tantra is by no means associated with marginal lifestyles...

(Guenther and Trungpa, 1975, pg48)

The necessity of precision is further seen in the practice of the rituals. Without the purity of mind and body Trungpa speaks of, it would be difficult to make headway into the complex multi-leveled visualizations. While practicing tantra properly, one does not have time for any extraneous, hedonistic activities. At an advanced level of practice, the ritual is no longer performed as a "church service". Instead the practice is to be seen as interpenetrating every moment of life. The Tibetan Buddhists strive to see every moment as- " the sacred in the profane" and at least some of the everyday world in the sacred. Perhaps, they believe, if people behaved as if they were always in some way connected to the sacred, there would be no need for the conventions of morality, as the behavior that these conventions would call for would occur naturally and spontaneously, without struggle. This might be why the Tibetan Lamas laugh so much and are usually not so strict in

etiquette as their counterparts in other forms of spiritual practice. The duality between sacred and profane, between a ritual leading to nirvana and the actions of a person in samsara, must like all dualities, be overcome.



The Outline of the Ritual

Now that we have looked at some preliminary questions concerning Tibetan practice, it is possible to look at the ritual itself. We would specifically like to do this from an archetypal viewpoint, paying close attention to the movement and manipulation of the imagination. The ritual we will outline here is the Chenrezig Puja, which is a ceremony for invoking Avalokiteshevara Boddhisattva, the Buddha of compassion. There are two reasons why we will outline this ceremony as an example. First, this is a popular ritual and can be attended without having been initiated, though it is not as effective without the initiation. Secondly, the archetypal elements we have discussed are well represented by this rite. To our understanding there is no secrecy attached to this teaching and in any case the outline here is too brief to have any practical use without the presence of a spiritual instructor.

The ritual begins, as all Buddhist rituals, with the taking of refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. That is, one identifies with the Buddha, as the possibility of enlightenment, with the "skillful means" of attaining enlightenment, and with the others on the path towards enlightenment. The Tibetans also take refuge in a way that

is peculiar to their brand of Buddhism. In addition to taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, they also take refuge in the root guru Vajradhara, a particular Yidam, and the lineage of teachers from Vajradhara to their present, living teacher. The meaning here is basically the same as the original taking of refuge, only there is now a deeper more archetypal level of understanding that is employed. Vajradhara symbolizes the qualities of the Buddha as embodied in an archetype, the Yidam signifies an archetypal personality that is closest to the practitioner's character. The practitioner is then able to identify with a psychological type like him or herself who has turned the characteristics of that type towards the seeking of enlightenment. Finally, the lineage of teachers or guru's represent a continuum from the realm of the archetypes to a living teacher who embodies these archetypal characteristics in human form. (For more about this lineage and its archetypal connection to memory, see Bishop, 1981, pg67)

The qualities of taking refuge, besides insuring many of the moral qualities we have spoke of, also inspire the student, showing him that the reaching out towards enlightenment is possible. The student understands this accomplishment through the archetype of the Buddha, or an enlightened being. The student also sees that there is a way of achieving this enlightenment, and finally, he or she sees

that the connection is valid and that they are not alone on the path.

Through the taking of refuge, we can see in a psychological sense, that the Tibetan practitioner is connected to the very foundations of Buddhism. For these reasons the Tibetans place a great emphasis on taking refuge. In fact, it is the refuge mantra, which must be repeated 100,000 times, while the disciple performs 100,000 full prostrations, as part of the foundation practices. Obviously, the the connection to the archetypal source is most important.

Another part of the refuge ceremony that is common to both Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhist practices, is the Bodhisattva's vow. This is the vow not to harm any sentient creatures and to help them realize enlightenment. A further qualification of this vow is not to gain enlightenment before all other creatures have gone before you into nirvana. This vow helps to undermine any goal-oriented ideas the practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism might have in regard to spirituality. The Bodhisattva's vow is usually expressed by dedicating all the merit and power gained during the performance of the ritual to all sentient beings. This once again serves as a guard against the misuse of personal power that is generated in the ritual. The Bodhisattva's vow is also a reminder that the practitioner is (through the workings of karma, or the fact that his or her behavior

affects others) connected to the whole of humanity through the common heritage of the collective psyche. It is a realization that we are not really isolated from one another and therefore we must be responsible for any actions that might affect others. This is a realization that the ego tends to mask.

The ritual proper begins with the visualization of the seed syllable of the deity, or archetypal figure involved in that particular ritual. The seed syllable is seen resting upon a full moon that is lying horizontally on a white lotus. The full moon and the lotus are symbols that are present in most Tibetan ceremonies. The moon symbolizes the pure qualities of enlightenment, reflected in the world, while the lotus can be seen as the striving up out of the world towards enlightenment. (For a more extensive treatment of these symbols, see Beyer, 1978)

Each deity has a seed syllable that corresponds to their archetypal characteristics. In the case of our example of Chenrezig, the syllable is HRI, which has the characteristics of divine essence, which translated into Buddhist terms, may be understood as the essence of compassion. As the visualization proceeds, the seed syllable becomes radiant and the practitioner imagines multi colored light emanating out of it as an offering to all the Buddha's and Bodhisattva's and places of refuge. Then a pure white light is seen as merging back into the seed syllable so that

the syllable is absorbing and radiating out at the same time. The practitioner then imagines that the light is purifying the universe and all who dwell within it.

The presence of light or luminosity throughout the ritual is of the most importance to tantric practice. In fact it is this luminosity that gives rise to the sexual symbolism and exercises that have made tantra so infamous. Eliade speaks of this in connection to the Tibetan origin myth;

At the beginning men were asexual and without sexual desires; they had the light within them and radiated it... When the sexual instinct awoke, the sexual organs appeared but the light was extinguished...Perhaps we have here an explanation of the Tantric rite...if the appearance of sexuality forces the light to disappear, the light will inevitably be found hidden in the very essence of sexuality, the seed.(Eliade, 1962, pg42)

In the case of the ritual we are describing here, "the seed" is obviously represented by the seed syllable and it is here in the ritual that we look for the primal luminosity. (For the connection of this luminosity to sacred sound, or mantra, see Blofeld, 1977) In a practice that is as advanced as the tantric sexual yoga, the radiant seed is actually looked for in the body, and is as Eliade says,

"sufficient justification for this bold exercise." (Eliade, 1962, pg43)

It would seem that the idea we have presented of tantric practice, following the unconscious back towards its origin, is born out by this analysis. The light represents the experience of the origin of the unconscious. (This is called the clear light in Tibetan Buddhism, see Evans-Wentz, 1960, and Trungpa and Freemantle, 1975, For a more comprehensive discussion) It appears that light, luminosity and radiance are all archetypal characteristics of the state of nirvana or enlightenment. This idea is supported throughout the ritual because the personified archetypes, which point the way to enlightenment and represent isolated characteristics of it, also appear as radiant. Eliade speaks of this;

The divine essence divinities are necessarily luminous or reveal themselves to their worshipers in manifestations of light. But men also radiate light when they have destroyed the system of conditions under which worldly life is lived, that is to say when they have acquired supreme knowledge and attained plane of liberty. (Eliade, 1962, pg44)

The seed syllable now becomes transformed into the image of the archetypal figure or deity. The archetypal essence represented by the seed syllable becomes

personified. Not only does the figure of the archetypal deity represent these archetypal characteristics, but also all the ornaments and gestures (mudras) of the figure help convey symbolic meaning to the visualization. Each symbolic representation is extremely significant, and though unfamiliar to the western mind, these symbols have for the Tibetan Buddhists at least, a universal and collective meaning.

The practitioner continues to visualize the deity sitting on the moon and lotus, only now there is a replica of the original image visualized above the practitioner's head. This image also radiating out light, which purifies the practitioner. Next, a third image of the deity is produced, only it is different in that the practitioner must visualize his or her self as the deity. This visualization of the deity is called Dam-Tsig-pa in Tibetan, which means the "imagined one". The second image, above the head of the practitioner, is called Yeshe-pa, which means "one of the supreme wisdom". During this part of the ritual the recitation of the mantra has begun, adding an auditory component to the image-making that is taking place. Finally, the deity above us, and the deity we are imagining ourselves to be, merge together and become one.

At this point, when the practitioner has united with both of his visualizations and has become the deity, he or she once more imagines the seed syllable, but this time it

is located in miniature above the heart. (actually at the heart chakra) In this visualization the seed syllable is again sitting upon a moon/lotus disk. The petals of the lotus, however, are different. They are inscribed with the mantra of the deity -in our case this would be the six syllable mantra of Chenrezig- OM MANI PEME HUNG. The mantra is then seen whirling around and around the moon. The visualization of oneself as the deity is then slowly absorbed into the whirling lotus petals and the seed syllable resting above the moon. (This whole construct is called the Darini.) The whirling lotus then becomes absorbed into the seed syllable, which finally itself begins to dissolve. When the entire visualization is dissolved, the practitioner should be in a state of emptiness or sunyata. In this state the sense of self, or ego should be dissolved and the practitioner is immersed in what the Tibetans call formless meditation. (as compared to the visualization exercises, which are called form meditations). This stage of the ritual is much like the meditation practice of the Zen Buddhists.

When the meditation period is over, everything suddenly reappears, but with the difference that the essence of the archetypal deity is seen in all things. The ritual is then concluded by once again sharing the merit with all beings



and by praying for rebirth in a place conducive to the practice of Buddhism in order to fulfill the Bodhisattva's vow. This is followed by prayers to the teachers of the Tibetan lineage.

The Ground Unconscious And Sunyata

What we have described so far could be likened to "the transcendence of the ego". In order to effect this transcendence we have had to follow the flow of the imagination through the unconscious to its collective and primal origins; we have left samsara for nirvana. The big question is what next, and maybe more importantly is, so what?

*Sounds like  
if going  
down the  
ego to the  
ground  
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direction*

What good does it do to travel back into the space of original consciousness? Have we unwittingly gone back to a more primitive state of existence, that Jung (1956, pg150) thought was evolutionarily backwards and unable to become differentiated from the collective psyche of the human race. Jung formulated these questions for us in a clear way, "But now we have an entirely new task before us; the question of how the the ego is to come to terms with the psychological non-ego." (Jung, 1956, pg97)

First of all it might smart to ask what this "psychological state of non-ego" is in more precise terminology. The Buddhist term for this state is sunyata, which is almost always translated as void or emptiness.

This does not leave us much to work with psychologically and is confusing. Fortunately, there are a few Tibetan Buddhist scholars who feel that the translation of sunyata to mean void, is not at all that accurate or clear. Guenther has this to say,

Shunyata is usually translated "emptiness" or void. These translations are thoroughly misleading because shunyata is a highly positive term...Shunyata can be explained in a very simple way. When we perceive we usually attend to the delimited forms of objects. But these objects are perceived within a field. Attention can be diverted to the concrete limited forms or to the field in which these forms are situated. In the experience the attention is on the field rather than on the contents. By 'contents' we mean those forms which are the outstanding features of the field itself. We might also notice that when we have an idea before our mind, the territory as it were, delimited by the idea is blurred, it fades into something which is quite open. This open dimension is the basic meaning of Shunyata. (Guenther and Trungpa, 1975, pg27)

Guenther's analysis of the principle of sunyata gives

us a way of discussing it psychologically by use of the figure/ ground relationships of Gestalt psychology. Jacobi has done an analysis of archetypes using Gestalt concepts, understanding archetypes as "fundamental forms". (Jacobi, 1959, pg54) We can extrapolate on her ideas here, by asking the question, if the archetypal layer of the unconscious is the "fundamental form", or figure, what is the fundamental ground or field?

The obvious answer from Guenther's passage is that this ground would be what the Tibetan Buddhists call sunyata. The "open dimension" that Guenther speaks of and that we have already mentioned in chapter one, is essentially the perception of the ground in the psyche of an individual. As Avens says,

Buddhists have called this ground 'primordial awareness', 'original mind', or 'no mind'. No mindedness refers not to vacuity of mind, but rather to its ubiquity -to a complete openness to experience, unblocked by calculations and deliberations, a pure witnessing and observing of the flow of what 'is' without interfering with it, commenting on it, or in any way manipulating it.(Avens, 1980, pg100)

Following Jung, this ground is essentially the same for people due to their common evolutionary heritage.

(Jung, 1956, pg66) We may even make a bolder statement; that the ground is identical to the collective unconscious, though this collective unconscious must be thought of in a wider sense than Jung implied. It can be thought of, as we have said, as an undifferentiated unconscious where the archetypes originate. As with figure/ground relationships, the figure is just part of the ground that appears isolated. Yet the figure originates in the ground and is really part of the ground; it only appears isolated from the vantage point of the figure. As we have tried to show, Tibetan Buddhist psychology regards consciousness in the same way as the figure/ground relationship. The conscious mind develops through a stream of imaginal events, out of the collective unconscious and thinks of itself as isolated from the imaginal flow. This isolation persists if only the figure is perceived, but if the ground is perceived, the duality between figure and ground is destroyed, and the psyche is experienced in its totality.

Jung speaks of this idea and comes up with the notion of a transpersonal based self; "...consciousness and unconscious are not necessarily in opposition to each other, but complement one another to form a totality, which is the self..." (Jung, 1956, pg128).

The goal of Tibetan Buddhist psychology in this

sense, is to get the individual to see the larger context of the psyche; to see the conscious mind as part of the unconscious that extends to the transpersonal. The wider your viewpoint the more sane you are. This is essentially the Buddhist definition of sanity;

A mind that goes narrowly on one track like this is crazy. If a person's mind is a little wider it is not so crazy. Wider still, it is only a little crazy sometimes. If your mind is clear like space, then you are completely sane. (Seung Sahn, 1982, pg70)

This definition follows closely to Jung's idea of a widened personality; "The widened consciousness is no longer that touchy, egotistical bundle of personal wishes, fears, hopes and ambitions which always has to be compensated..." (Jung, 1956, pg127) Jung continues from this line of thought into an idea that is very close to that of the Bodhisattva's vow in Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism.

The complications arising at this stage are no longer egotistical wish conflicts, but difficulties that concern others as much as oneself. At this stage it is fundamentally a question of collective problems...(Jung, 1956, pg128)

But Jung, unlike the Tibetan Buddhists, cannot quite comprehend the sunyata quality of a mind that is "clear like space";

But it transcends our powers of imagination to form a clear picture of what we are as a self, for in this operation the part would have to comprehend the whole. There is little hope of our ever being able to reach even approximate consciousness of the self... (Jung, 1956, pg128)

The problem here is that Jung is right, it is impossible for the part to comprehend the whole. Instead of coming to the conclusion of the Tibetan Buddhists, that there is no separate self, Jung has further split the figure from the ground.

Tibetan Buddhism takes a slightly different angle with essentially the same system of psychology. It feels, like Jung, that experience with the collective nature of the psyche will lead to a wider consciousness, a healthy personality and most importantly, compassion for sentient creatures. But rather than try to widen the ego by applying it to the unconscious, the Tibetan Buddhists ask, how can we let the collective unconscious apply itself to the ego. In other words, how can we bring the experience of sunyata into our individual awareness. This gives us the meaning of

tantra, which is to experience the essence of the collective psyche in everyday life. It is here where we again see the analogy of soul in Hillman's sense of the Anima Mundi, in Tibetan Buddhism. This manifests itself into our individual awareness, through our everyday life experiences.



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*Handwritten notes:*  
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