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The Holistic Self: A Visual Analysis of Carl Jung’s *The Red Book*

Senior Project Submitted to
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of Bard College

by
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# Table of Contents

**Introduction**...........................................................................................................................................6  
Chapter I: The Interweaving Parts ............................................................................................................12  
   I.I: A Brief History of Carl Jung’s life before *The Red Book*.........................................................12  
      1.1.a: School Years.........................................................................................................................14  
      1.1.b: Sigmund Freud and the start of *The Red Book*.................................................................15  
   I.II: Early Life and Questioning Christianity.....................................................................................17  
   I.III: Tools, Technique, and The Creation..........................................................................................21  
      I.III.a: Environment.......................................................................................................................21  
      I.III.b: Tools and Technique............................................................................................................24  
Chapter II: The Healing Mandala............................................................................................................28  
   II.I: The Construction and Origin of Jung’s Mandala........................................................................30  
   II.II: Circle Mandalas..........................................................................................................................35  
   II.III: Holy Quaternity..........................................................................................................................40  
Chapter III: Rest and Regeneration.......................................................................................................46  
   III.I: Asps, Dragons, and Paradisal Snakes......................................................................................47  
      III.I.a: Artwork Analysis..................................................................................................................48  
      III.I.b: The Serpent in Alchemy......................................................................................................54  
   III.II: Struggle and Sacrifices...............................................................................................................56  
   III.III: Jung’s Ancestral Tree................................................................................................................56  
      III.III.a: Artwork Analysis................................................................................................................56  
      III.III.b: The Alchemical Tree.........................................................................................................56  
Conclusion..................................................................................................................................................68  
Images.......................................................................................................................................................71  
Bibliography..............................................................................................................................................91
Introduction

In 1913 Carl Jung experienced a breakdown which included hallucinatory episodes; he recalled having visions in an incessant stream as if they were rocks falling on his head.1 Looking at Jung’s artwork, however, it is clear that he felt he was not merely “sick” but also acting as a conduit for a higher power. Surrendering to these episodes (what he called his “communes with my subconscious”) Jung began to imagine a crater opening up on the floor and dragging him down to the “uncanny.”2 These episodes were then recorded, first in Jung’s notebooks, known as The Black Books and eventually transcribed, using both text and painted images, during a span of seventeen years 1914-1930/31 into The Red Book: Liber Novus. Jung left the Liber Novus unfinished, and in 1959 he attempted to complete this same work again, in what is now known as The Red Book: Liber Secundus; however, his epilogue abruptly ends in the middle of a sentence.3

In a letter to his future readers, Jung addresses the controversy of The Red Book, stating that “to the superficial observer it will appear like madness.”4 Though Jung’s breakdown is often referred to as a “psychotic break” Jung personally believed mental illness had nothing to do with his condition. Instead he believed himself to be on a deep-sea voyage, a time of great depression and anxiety where within one is communed with their own subconscious.5

Jung never quite hid The Red Book, though it is unclear if he ever wanted to have this manuscript published, however, in writing this epilogue it seems that Jung, upon finding the right audience, planned on its eventual publication. In this thesis I will illustrate how The Red Book

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became Jung’s magnum opus and how his personalized and un-conventional understanding of Christianity and Alchemy is depicted by the illustrations in his The Red Book. More importantly this thesis will examine how The Red Book acted as a process of healing for Jung and not just as the creation that came out of said healing process. Jung stated that The Red Book was never meant to be seen as art, instead the manuscript acted as a means to an end for Jung as he re-found his self. So, too, The Red Book acts as a healing mechanism for those who intensively study the manuscript as I have.

Throughout the seventeen years of writing The Red Book, Jung would lock himself in his study or later in his tower at Bollingen, at the lake’s edge in Zurich, “twenty miles and light years from his family home,” working tireless hours.6 It was not until after his death that the importance of the manuscript was discovered by his children. Realizing the negative effect that the revelation of his breakdown might have on his reputation and subsequent acceptance of his work, his children left the manuscript in the same safe in which their father had kept it for twenty years (before moving it to a Swiss bank vault in 1984 for an additional twenty-three more years). In 1975, in celebration of Jung’s one-hundredth birthday, a show was opened in Zurich which included nine facsimile pages from The Red Book.7 In 1984, when the manuscript was transferred to the Swiss bank vault, five photographic facsimilia of The Red Book were also made for the members of the Society of the Heirs of C.G. Jung. Finally, in 1993 it was decided that an inventory of all of Jung’s accessible visual works would be compiled by the Society as well.8 One hundred other works were collected by 1998, all of which relate to The Red Book, as if it were at the centre9 of all of Jung’s work. This is one reason for believing The Red Book is

6 Dunne p. 95
7 Hoerni, Ulrich, Thomas Fischer, Bettina Kaufmann, Paul David Young, and Christopher John Murray. 2019. The art of C.G. Jung, p.10
8 The Art of C.G. Jung p. 11
9 Centre refers to Jung idea of the one true Self, the centre as the pinnacle of a being or of matter or ones psyche.
Jung’s magnum opus. A magnum opus is not just an artist’s most important work but in alchemy it “refers to the process of working with prima Materia to create the philosopher’s stone.”\textsuperscript{10} The Red Book exemplifies the healing and renewing nature of the prima Materia and acts as such to Carl Jung.

As Jung had referenced The Red Book in his autobiography, and as there were facsimile copies of The Red Book in existence, many Jungian scholars hoped to get a glimpse of this infamous manuscript. However, time and time again the Jung family refused to even disclose the books’ existence, let alone allow others to view it. This continued until Sonu Shamdasani, an American Jungian Scholar, came to the family with a proposal in 1997. He proposed to edit and eventually publish The Red Book. Shamdasani, though expecting to be turned away like many others before him, happened to arrive at the perfect time. Franz Jung (son of Carl Jung) had recently died, and two articles denigrating Jung’s name had been recently published.\textsuperscript{11} Shamdasani also reminded the family that there were copies of The Red Book out there and that it was only a matter of time before it was published without their permission. After two years of back and forth, Shamdasani was allowed to view and start editing The Red Book in 1999. As well as allowing Shamdasani editorial rights, the Jung family paid him a salary in order to have the book published; in 2003 the money ran out. At that point, the Philemon Foundation was created by the Jung family with help from Stephen Martin to support Shamdasani’s work on the book. Shamdasani translated the German text and not only transcribed The Red Book but also included a footnote “map” of his and “Jung’s personal journeys through the text.”\textsuperscript{12}

The originally leather-bound folio manuscript, now a 12 in. by 16 in. bright red book includes the entire facsimile of the original untranslated text, images, and a complete English

\textsuperscript{10} Psychology and alchemy p. 25
\textsuperscript{12} Corbett
translation, and a forward by Shamdasani. Sara Corbett states that before its publication in 2009 fewer than two-dozen people had probably read the text including his wife, children, and Shamdasani. Therefore, ultimately all that we know of The Red Book is guesswork.

In 2009 Corbett, a British writer for The New York Times, wrote an article on the history, release, and common perception of The Red Book called The Holy Grail of the Unconscious. Corbett states, within the confines of the 100-year old, red leather-bound manuscript a “Man skids into midlife and loses his soul. A man goes looking for soul. After a lot of instructive hardship and adventure — taking place entirely in his head — he finds it again.” In 2007 Corbett flew to Zurich for a week to view the scanning of the manuscript with Sonu Shamdasani, Stephen Martin, and the Jung family. In Corbett’s article, she states that Jung’s grandson Andreas, “had sometimes gone and found his grandfather’s Red Book in the cupboard and paged through it, just for fun.” Knowing its author personally, Andreas said, ‘It was not strange to me at all.’ The existence of this magnificent text was unknown to all except for the immediate family and a chosen few until 2009 when The Red Book was published and put on view in New York City. The Rubin Museum of Art, in New York, organized an exhibit on The Red Book which later traveled to Los Angeles and The Rietberg Museum in Zurich in 2009.

In this paper I will examine the way in which Jung used the production of art as a healing mechanism. To Jung The Red Book was never to be considered art, instead merely a guide of one man’s descent into hell and subsequent rebirth. First, I will give the context in which The Red Book was created, as well as explain the methods and tools Jung used in order to achieve such a

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13 Corbett
14 Ibid
15 The head of the Philemon Foundation and prolific Jungian, as well as one of the first to propose publication of The Red Book to the Jung’s
16 Corbett
17 Ibid
18 The Art of C.G. Jung p.12
masterpiece. I will also examine various images from The Red Book as examples of Jung’s struggle with the weight of his subconscious. I will analyze motifs such as the mandala, the snake, and the tree, specifically investigating their Christian and alchemical symbolism as they relate to Jung’s process of healing. This thesis will follow the same structure of The Red Book starting with his visions, leading into the creation of Mandalas, whose production brought peace and healing to Jung, and finally ending in his rebirth and regeneration as seen in the repetitive symbols, the snake and the tree. All of the images within The Red Book and this paper are extensions of Jung’s psyche, thus they will be analyzed, as Jung’s inner image, in order to understand how Jung found healing through his creation.19

Primarily used in this thesis are various texts by Jung, including but not limited to Psychology and Alchemy, Alchemical Studies, Symbols of Transformation, Letters 1900-1930. These texts will be used in order to understand the exact symbolism Jung places on such things as the snake or the tree psychologically and spiritually. These texts also give Christian and Alchemical context for various symbols that will be analyzed in the following thesis. Lastly, I have also extensively searched his texts for images that resemble those in The Red Book, some of which have been found in the above texts.

I will also be using a series of biographies and autobiographies by Jung and others, including Memories, Dreams, Reflections by Carl Jung, and Wounded Healer of the Soul an illustrated biography by Claire Dunne. All knowledge about Jung’s childhood and visions have been gleaned from these texts, as well as various interviews of Jung.

The book The Art of C.G. Jung was created by the Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung as a chronology of Jung’s works including The Red Book and various other artworks he created. The book includes the Rietberg exhibit as well as newly discovered works and commentary on

19 Inner image/self-image – an image that depicts the totality of one’s psyche including its potential
Jung’s images. The text gives a detailed account of the various stages of artistic style Jung went through, as well as the techniques and ways in which Jung created *The Red Book*.

One of the key texts referenced to in this thesis is *The Red Book Hours* by Jill Mellick. *The Red Book Hours* is a one of kind text only just published in 2019, similar to *The Red Book*, *The Red Book Hours* is bound in soft red leather and is adorned with gold lettering. Jill Mellick took on an extraordinary challenge and wrote a book on the exact technique, tools, and pigments Jung used in his creation of *The Red Book*. Mellick gleaned her information from a series of powder pigment fragments dusted from *The Red Book*. From these particle Mellick was able to understand the exact brand and quality of pigments Jung used, as well as understand techniques he created. This text will be used in order to understand how he created the book and the context in which *The Red Book* was created.

*The Red Book* is incredibly hard to discuss for three reasons: one, it is dense and in calligraphic German, two, it is completely from Jung’s psyches point of view, and three, it was only published in 2009 thus all texts on the subject have been are from between the years of 2015-2019 primarily. There are a few articles on *The Red Book* that cite from around 2009 or earlier as is the case with Sara Corbett’s *The Holy Grail of Unconscious*. However, all books on the subject are from strictly 2017-2019; Thus there are only about 6 books in existence solely on Carl Jung’s *The Red Book*. 
Chapter One: The Interweaving Parts

In her book *The Red Book Hours*, Jill Mellick states,

Everything in Jung’s life is connected to everything else. His childhood experiences, his early dreams, his experiments with different medium, his relationship, his family house, its construction, the space in that house where he undertook his perilous descent…inner and outer spaces, and places, inner events and entities and outer events and people – all are interconnected.\(^{20}\)

Studying *The Red Book* is a painstaking life-long mission for this exact reason, that everything in Jung’s life was connected, interwoven together. In order to write on *The Red Book*, I have had to become acquainted with certain aspects of psychology, history, medicine, geometry, alchemy, and Christianity, all of which play a role in Jung’s art. To understand the art in *The Red Book* we must first look at the technique in which Jung created his works as well as the historical surroundings in which Jung found himself writing. In this chapter I will be examining not only the process, tools, and techniques in which *The Red Book* was created, but I will also give a brief history of Jung’s childhood, visions, and struggles with conservative Christianity as religion plays a fundamental role in Jung’s life as well as his artworks. This chapter will give the background that is needed to understand the later art analysis.

A Brief History of Carl Jung’s life before *The Red Book*:

Carl Jung is perhaps most well-known within popular culture today for laying the theoretical foundation for the notion of a Collective Unconsciousness and personality archetypes that would later lead to the Myers-Briggs personality test and Alcoholics Anonymous, among other programs. The first-born son of a parson in Kesswil, Switzerland, Jung (1875-1961) spent

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the first nine years of his life as his own best friend and confidant, as he found it hard to make close friends. His sister Gertrude was not born until 1884. Jung and his family lived in poverty in an eighteenth-century parsonage in Laufen, his parents perfectly exemplifying the “pious Protestant minister and his wife.” Not only was his father a parson but Jung’s eight maternal, two fraternal uncles were as well. The effect of having only religious male role models is quite apparent in the analysis of his artworks as many (if not all) feature Christian motifs.

From an early age (around five) Jung understood that he had two personalities: “No. 1”, a poor twentieth-century schoolboy with holes in his socks and “No. 2”, a powerful old man of the eighteenth century. This interplay between his personalities resulted in deep loneliness, as Jung’s No. 2 personality made it hard to make friends as he felt he was rarely accepted or understood by his fellow children. By day Jung felt his second personality slowly drift away as he was “pulled” into juvenile games with other children his age. By night, however, Jung’s No. 2 personality filled his brain with curiosities about psychology, philosophy, and religion. Jung believed and championed (in psychology) the existence of a dual personality in all people, however, he never met another soul other than his mother in which he recognized this phenomenon. Therefore, we must question why Jung experienced this revelation when others had not? Was this a past life? Was Jung being talked to by a spirit? None of these we can answer, as his second personality existed for him and him alone.

Jung first witnessed the quality of a “dual-personality” in his mother, Jung stated, “by day she was a loving mother, but at night she seemed uncanny. Then, he elaborated, “she was like one of those seers who is at the same time a strange animal, like a priestess in a bear’s cave.” Jung was both awed and terrified of the woman his mother became in the instances where she let

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21 Dunne p. 27
22 Jung long believed in the feminine and masculine personalities each human being possesses, his understanding of their relationship began when his second personality began to emerge when he was a child
23 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 69
her dominant personality slip. The Priestess represents the uncanny nature of his mother when her No. 2 personality slips, this characterization shows Jung’s subconscious interest in the uncanny. The secret connection of the shared “dual-personalities” resulted in his parental relations shifting. Initially, Jung had idealized and identified with his father, particularly as his mother was in a hospital for an unknown mental condition for several years of his early life, thus resulting in his distrust of women throughout his childhood. However, as he began to experience and study his mother’s hidden personality, he began to grow closer to her.

School Years:

In 1886, Jung was sent to a secondary school in Basel, Switzerland, at which point he became fully aware of his own poverty and felt increasingly alone. Throughout his schooling Jung received high marks, excelling in multiple different subjects, however, he found mathematics “a torture”, divinity a “great dull”, and could only create art when “properly inspired.” In response, he became very bored and accident-prone. A fall “propelled him into a neurotic illness that let him stay home and solitary.” It was during this six-month period at home, racked by epileptic episodes, that Jung first discovered the meaning of neurosis. It was near the end of this time when he heard his father state that he was afraid that his son would never live a normal life. At that, Jung’s conscience pushed him to realize that now was the time to get diligently to work and to enroll back in school.

In 1895, due to increasing isolation and clashes with his father, Jung enrolled himself at the University of Basel, where he became an avid reader of philosophy. The same year his father

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24 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 23
25 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 35
26 Dunne p. 33
27 Ibid
28 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 48
was diagnosed with cancer and died. This caused an extreme change in Jung’s personality. No longer was he the “countrified bookworm,” but with this new-found liberation, Jung joined student life. Jung described his time as a student as “intellectually alive” and “a time of friendship.”

At age twenty-five, after earning his degree in medicine and psychology, Jung went on to apprentice at Burgholzli Hospital in Zurich and published his first work. While working at the hospital Jung “listened intently to the ravings of schizophrenics, believing they held clues to both personal and universal truths.” During this time, he also read Dante, Goethe, Swedenborg, and Nietzsche, taking what he learned and applying it to his study of the “Unconscious.”

In 1897, Jung met Emma Rauschenbach, a young woman from a wealthy family. Seeing her at the age of fourteen, Jung stated “I was deeply shaken by this, for I had really only seen her for a brief instant, but I knew immediately with absolute certainty that she would be my wife.” They later married in 1903, and in so doing, Jung forsook financial poverty due to Emma’s dowry thus allowing him to study alchemy in depth. As one of the first psychologists to do so, he transformed psychology from being a strictly factual scientific subject to one that considered the effect the “uncanny” and dreams held on an individual.

Sigmund Freud and the start of The Red Book:

After reading a paper by Sigmund Freud, Jung reached out and began a correspondence with the great scholar in 1906. This correspondence blossomed into nine years of friendship and collaboration between 1906 and 1915. However, due to Jung’s increasing interest in the mysterious and the unexplained—as revealed in the second section of his book Transformation

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29 Dunne p. 39  
30 Corbett  
31 Dunne p. 45
their relationship ended.\textsuperscript{32} It was in this paper that Jung struggled with the questions of the libido concept and incest taboos, completing veering away from Freud’s concepts. Freud and Jung’s correspondence became more and more strained until Freud at the end of his final letter tells Jung “I propose that we abandon our personal relationship entirely.”\textsuperscript{33}

After his break with Freud, Jung was written off by his friends and acquaintances, his book was declared as “rubbish”, and this contributed to a complete standstill in his intellectual life. Dunne states that it was within these six years that Jung was increasingly taken over by his No. 2 personality, “drawing him deeper and deeper into the unconscious of his own psyche.”\textsuperscript{34} Jung stopped fighting the visions he was sent, allowing them to fully take control of his psyche; he began to “seize hold of the fantasies…frequently imagin[ing] a steep descent … a crater …” sucking him down into the uncanny.\textsuperscript{35} It was in this state that Jung began to write \textit{The Black Books} where he recorded his experiences with his subconscious mind, this would later be copied and illustrated to become \textit{The Red Book}.

During his descent into his unconscious psyche, Jung started experiencing visions of “European catastrophe in rivers of blood.” This was in 1913, a year before the start of World War I. Jung stated,

\begin{quote}
An incessant stream of fantasies had been released… I felt as if gigantic block of stone were tumbling down upon me. One thunderstorm followed another…. When I endured these assaults of the unconscious I had an unswerving conviction that I was obeying a higher power…\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

For six years Jung continued to be badgered by incessant visions and dreams of death and renewal; at this point, it dawned on Jung that these were the signs of his secret identity as well as

\textsuperscript{32} Written in 1914/15, not published until 1959
\textsuperscript{33} Carl Jung, \textit{Letters 1900-1920}, p. 74
\textsuperscript{34} Dunne p. 67
\textsuperscript{35} Dunne p. 71
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Memories, Dreams, Reflections} p. 215
premonitions. During this “midlife crisis,” as Dunne calls it, Jung suffered insomnia and severe stomach issues on top of his mental anguish. “The fear of losing his hold remained as new fantasy figures rose out of his unconscious mind in dreams.”

At this point, Jung began to paint his visions/dreams, which allowed him peace of mind as well as offering new breakthroughs on the understanding of the unconscious. It was in 1916, while the death and carnage of war roared outside, Jung wrote his *Seven Sermons to the Dead*. In this text, Jung outlined “the skeleton of his most essential ideas, including the conflict of opposites and the concept of individualization.”

In these years of self-analysis, Dunne states that Jung’s isolation was at its peak, thrust into an “unconscious process” not knowing what to do while “the gulf between inner and outer worlds seemed irreconcilable.” For Jung, this time of reflection was one of the most important periods in his life: “it was then that I ceased to belong to myself alone, ceased to have the right to do so.” It took him almost forty-five years to understand that which he experienced and wrote at this time.

**Early Life and Questioning Christianity:**

Carl Jung was well acquainted with religion at a very young age. Jung stated that key male figures in his life were “secure in a conventional world of faith, Bible, and good works.” To a youthful Jung, conventional Christianity became increasingly stifling, perhaps accounting for his extreme resistance towards a Christian-based life throughout his teenage years. However, though he felt isolated from institutionalized religion, Carl Jung was still an especially spiritual man, his religion being a reimagined and non-conventional form of Christianity.

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37 *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* p. 215
38 Dunne p. 77
39 Dunne p. 78
40 *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* p. 233
41 *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* p. 55
Between the ages of three and four, Jung’s mother taught him that when someone has died that they are buried and “Lord Jesus has taken them to himself.”\textsuperscript{42} However, upon later seeing a burial from afar, Jung realized that “Jesus taking them” was a euphemism for “putting them in a hole in the ground.” It was after this that Jung started distrusting Jesus, stating, “he lost the aspect of a big, comforting, benevolent bird and became associated with the gloomy black men in frock coats… who busied themselves with the black box.”\textsuperscript{43} Jung began to not only distrust but also fear God, believing Christianity to be a “solemn masquerade… Lord Jesus seemed to me in some way a god of death… secretly his love and kindness appeared doubtful to me.”\textsuperscript{44}

At age four, Jung re-envisioned the “gloomy black man in frock coats” walking towards him, a figure that symbolized the part of Christianity that terrified Jung most in his early years. In running away from the figure that he thought had come to bury him in the ground Jung fell and broke his arm. This incident marked the shift in Jung’s beliefs from merely believing in his family’s God to a more personalized view of Christianity.

This and other traumatic incidents culminated in his first remembered dream. A dream “which was to preoccupy me the rest of my life.”\textsuperscript{45} In this dream, Jung learned of the Phallus. He equated this notion with the Lord Jesus and God, a “man-eater… a subterranean God ‘not to be named’.” Jung stated,

On this platform stood a wonderfully rich golden throne… something was standing. on it which I thought at first was a tree trunk twelve to fifteen feet high and about one and half to two feet thick… but it was of a curious composition: it was made of skin and naked flesh, and on top there was something like a rounded head with no face.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{42} Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 22
\textsuperscript{43} Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 23
\textsuperscript{44} Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 26
\textsuperscript{45} Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 24
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid
Jung stated that this phallus was a ritual phallus, identical with the Lord Jesus and Jesuits. Jung also emphasized the importance of the Phallus, if identical to Jesus, as a “man-eater.” This view of God as some sort of terrifying, ritualistic being stayed with Jung until his late teens, leading to the abandonment of his familial ideas of God.

During his teen years, Jung began to experience visions more and more frequently. It was through these visions that Jung experienced, what he later determined to be a personal idea of what the true God was. Jung’s retelling of his visions is incredibly complicated as many of the illusory motifs reference specific Jungian knowledge. For this reason, Jung’s visions will be taken at face value in this section, as Jung’s dreams/visions may be read in a multitude of ways, depending on the context in which one reads.

Jung simultaneously felt that God was beautiful and good as well as being “something else, something very secret that people don’t know about” him. Jung’s relationship with God became more intimate as he aged, leading to a vision in which Jung realized why he was chosen by God to experience the Lord’s Word. This fight with his subconscious led to his first psycho-religious experience. Back at his secondary school in Basel, Jung visited the local cathedral. While there, he was struck with the sheer majesty and beauty of this place of God. Jung began to feel his unconscious thoughts about Christianity and the uncanny begin to crash down on him, he stated, “don’t go thinking now! Something terrible is coming, something I do not want to think, something I dare not even approach.” On his walk home from the cathedral Jung fought his unconscious, instead, he tried to think of other things and to let these thoughts fade back into his unconscious. Upon arriving home however, Jung was propelled into a psychological crisis. For two nights after the incident, Jung was gripped by restless sleep, until the third night when the

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47 Dunne p. 36
48 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 53
“torment” became too strong and Jung opened himself up to what his unconscious was screaming. With this crisis, Jung’s entire relationship with Christianity was reformed and Jung realized that “God Himself had placed me in this situation.”

Jung describes this time as a battle between himself and God, believing that it was God’s intention that Adam and Eve should sin, and thus God also intended for him to sin. Jung began to question God’s intentions, and motives. He wondered whether it was “possible that God wishes to see whether I am capable of obeying His will, even though my faith and my reason raise before me the specters of death and hell?” As his understanding of the “True” God grew, his understanding and detestation of organized religion (Christianity, primarily) grew as well. From age sixteen forward, Jung became a devout believer in God, and ardently believed that nothing “mattered but fulfilling His will.” Jung became obsessed with finding out if others had experienced similar visions from God. However, to his great dismay, he never discovered a trace that others had also been touched by God. He stated that he had a feeling that “I was either outlawed or elect, accursed or blessed.” Feeling he alone had experienced visions from God Jung began to feel increasingly isolated and separate from the rest of civilization. This psychological crisis was perhaps a foreshadowing of what was to come, The Red Book.

As mentioned in the introduction, from age sixteen onward Jung’s relationship with God and his subconscious faded to the background, replaced by Jung’s burgeoning career as a psychoanalyst. However, in 1914 after his break with Freud and subsequent shunning from the psychological community, Jung decided to stop running from his unconscious and instead embrace that which it was telling him. The Red Book can essentially be read as a series of dialogues between Jung and God, or Jung and his unconscious. Through creating The Red Book

49 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 55
50 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 56
51 Dunne p. 58
Jung was able to not only familiarize himself with his self once again, but came to a point of balance/peace between himself and organized religion.

**Tools, Technique, and The Creation**

**Environment:**

Not only do the specific artworks from *The Red Book* illustrate a healing process through art production, but through analysis of the specific mediums, tools, and technique Jung decided to use, one can map the exact way in which Jung was reborn. In *The Red Book Hours*, Jill Mellick intensively examines the techniques and pigments Jung used, from this she is able to extrapolate how Jung was able to create such astonishing paintings. Jung always asserted he was not making art, to him *The Red Book* was not a piece of art, instead it was a verb and activity.\(^{52}\) Jill Mellick states Jung’s view of *The Red Book* is similar to how some Native American and African tribes view art. In many cultures there are no words for art, as the western world defines it, because it is in the activity of making the object or in using it that it finds meaning. A ceremonial mask hanging in a museum has no more meaning than a crumpled-up cup, however, when used in the ceremony for which it was made the mask transforms into a living, breathing entity. So, too, *The Red Book* is not meant to be “art.” Jill Mellick asserts that Jung’s hiding of *The Red Book* was not meant keep it from public view but instead keeping it from objectification. As long as *The Red Book* remained the process by which Jung healed and not a manifestation of it, I believe Jung would have wanted his magnum opus to be circulated.

The sheer size of Jung’s body of work is astounding. These include lectures, publications, buildings, paintings, *The Red Book*, carvings, traveling, psychotherapy sessions with patients, etc. It is clear that Jung never rested, instead finding solace in work and the creation of things.

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\(^{52}\) Mellick p. 35/6
Jung’s first encounter with art was while living in the parsonage at Kleinhuningen, where there was an *orbis sensualism pictus* (visible world in pictures) the first children’s encyclopedia by John Amos Comenius.\(^{53}\) The other artworks he generally found himself surrounded by in his teen years were ones Christian inspired or landscapes. In 1902/03 Jung stayed in Paris and London where he visited the British Museum and The Louvre. In this time, Jung also began to paint his first watercolors.\(^{54}\) Books on Odilon Redon and Giovanni Segantini were found in his library as well as reproductions of Filippo Lippi, Ghiralandiao, and Franz Hals, made for Jung in Paris. Jung also collected images by Hans von Marees, Hans Thoma, Carl Strathmann, Fritz Muhlbrecht, Eugen Ludwig Hoess, and Reinhold Koeppel all of which Thomas Fischer states are artist little known about then and nowadays. Jung was also present at the Prinzhorn lecture “Artistry of the mentally ill” in 1921 where he would have seen artworks from the Prinzhorn collection, one of the most important outsider art collections in the world.\(^{55}\) Jung had a wide range of interests when it came to art, but it was clear that he was drawn primarily to the art that was created from an unknown unconscious impulse, he preferred simplicity and structure.

Jung found his environment highly effected his inner self, thus throughout his life Jung devoted unusually high energy, resources and time to securing and creating physical and architectural, visual and auditory environments that were harmonious with his inner needs and inner environment… that provided the ideal circumstances for undisturbed… research into his own psyche and those of others.\(^{56}\)

In his newly constructed Kusnacht house, Jung’s library stood two floors and several winding halls away from the main house, with only three small stained-glass windows for light. After the construction of the house Jung carved out an antechamber that would make one walk through the house, up to flights of stairs, down the hall, and through the library to get to. For the first fifteen

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\(^{53}\) Mellick p. 47  
\(^{54}\) *The Art of C.G Jung*, The Foundation of the Works of Carl Jung p. 20  
\(^{55}\) *The Art of C.G Jung*, The Foundation of the Works of Carl Jung p. 25  
\(^{56}\) Mellick p. 71
years this and the library were where Jung worked on *The Red Book* (1914-1930).\textsuperscript{57} Jung wanted this place to be free of stimuli, the light that comes through the windows throws patterns of color along the room, creating a feeling of fluidity between the inside and the outside.\textsuperscript{58} As a child Jung’s daughter remembers being allowed to study in the library while he worked on *The Red Book* as long as she was quiet and sat far away from him. The light in the study is not very bright making it unlikely that Jung painted in the study, however, he most likely did his calligraphy work here, using the standing-desk he had built.

Jung’s standing desk was found in the shed of Kusnacht only recently, upon Jill Mellick’s request she was allowed to examine it (figure 1 & 2). Used for years to store potting materials and chemicals left the desk in terrible condition however, some things can still be ascertained. For instance, the desk is to Jung’s exact specifications, taking into consideration his height, arm length etc.\textsuperscript{59} Not only was the desk tailored to his specifications however, it also follows the specifications as written by Edward Johnston in *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering* (1901).\textsuperscript{60}

Though no copy was found in Jung’s library, as Johnston wrote, it is too much of a coincidence for Jung’s desk to follow the exact specifications for eye to hand distance. As Johnston’s text was written in Germany around the same time as Jung started *The Red Book*, it would not be a surprise that Jung had indeed read the book. The top of the standing desk exactly fits an open copy of *The Red Book*, and the desk was painted to fit in with the room, making it work both physically and aesthetically.\textsuperscript{61}

In 1923, Jung felt the need to “make a confession in stone.” He soon after bought the land of Bollingen and began to build his stone tower (figure 3). He did not finish the tower until 1955

\textsuperscript{57} Mellick p. 72
\textsuperscript{58} Mellick p. 79
\textsuperscript{59} Mellick p. 93
\textsuperscript{60} Mellick p. 97
\textsuperscript{61} Mellick p. 96
allowing it to grow and evolve over time and to the whims of his unconscious. It was here that he finished the last seven years of work on *The Red Book*. The aesthetic of the tower is very similar to that of *The Red Book*, in walking into the tower one feels as if they had been transported into a medieval castle. The tower had no pump for water, nor did it have electricity. In the 1920’s Jung invited Robert Edmond Jones to help him paint one of the many murals that adorn the walls of the tower.⁶² Though the tower acted as his place of seclusion that did not mean that no one ever stepped foot in the tower but him. Much to the contrary Jung often invited friends and sometimes even patients to his tower. Jung’s family was also always allowed admittance, similar to the Queen when Jung wished to be alone in the tower, he would raise the flag, however, when it was lowered, he accepted visitors.

**Tools and Technique:**

Jill Mellick’s book *The Red Book Hours*, is an examination of the particular gathered particles found in *The Red Book*. Throughout its life span *The Red Book* has never had the chance to be properly dusted for stray particles; as the manuscript was incredibly fragile each task was laborious enough that gathering the particles didn’t seem a worthy endeavor. However, Mellick, a Jungian scholar, sought out a conservation scientist - Jost Hoerni, Jung’s grandson, finally accepted the task. He examined and gathered particles from *The Red Book*, Mellick’s analysis is based on these particles, they are also the only samples ever taken and possibly will ever be taken from *The Red Book*.⁶³ Upon her visit to Jung’s Kusnacht house Mellick also discovered twelve to fifteen different powdered pigments in the shed, as well as several color charts.⁶⁴ These particular pigments were used in creating Jung’s wall murals at Bollingen,

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⁶² *The Art of C.G Jung*, The Foundation of the Works of Carl Jung p. 25
⁶³ Mellick p. 156/57
⁶⁴ Mellick p. 166/67
however, in contrast to *The Red Book* the resemblance of the rich blues and shades of red are uncanny. Mellick compared the pigments from Bollingen with the particles taken from *The Red Book* in order to answer if these were indeed the pigments Jung used to create his masterpiece.

Jung often worked in different mediums subsequently or concurrently, including gouache, stone etc. However, for *The Red Book* Jung specifically focused on using water mediums such as watercolor and gouache staying away from tempera paint. In the *Liber Novus* Jung used thin parchment paper switching later to vellum when he started *Liber Secundus*. These bases are quite an odd choice as the techniques that he used in creating his artworks traditionally used heavy mediums which had a better chance of not bleeding and flaking. Jung never fancied himself an artist, yet he was able, through experimentation, to create absolutely astounding artworks by mixing materials. The artworks in *Liber Primus* throughout the years have begun to flake, which is where many of the particles Mellick studied came from. It was only later in the *Liber Secundus* that Jung began to cover the images in a varnish which was the key to keeping the artworks from cracking while still keeping their intensity.65

As previously stated, Jung used only water-based techniques in creating *The Red Book*, including watercolor, gouache, and possibly tempera.66 The main difference between gouache and watercolor is the texture into which they are ground. Gouache is usually left coarse, whereas watercolor is finely ground giving it is famous transparent quality.67 For both gouache and watercolor gum Arabic is used as the binder, and the water acts as the carrier. Jung specifically chose to use powdered mineral pigments because of the intensity of their color, however, he found he possibly bit off more than he could chew. First, as I have stated, the pigment is made for a hard surface, however, Jung chose to use flexible parchment and vellum. The second issue

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65 Mellick p. 232
66 Not currently known at this time
67 Mellick p. 225
Jung faced was that he bought the pigments as powder meaning he mixed it with the gum Arabic himself. This proved to be a difficulty as the addition of too much gum Arabic caused the paint to simply flake off the sheet. Lastly, with each pigment comes its own personality, each pigment acts differently when applied to parchment, thus Jung had to become “visually multilingual.”

The pigments Jung chose were also incredibly expensive, in fact all of the materials and tools he used were of the highest quality. Jung kept detailed charts of his use of pigments and his order history, he not only used the pigments intensively, but extensively. Along with the powdered mineral pigments, Jung used gold and silver powder as well as gold leaf in The Red Book (applied traditionally). The gold and silver powder were predominantly used in the Liber Primus to give the manuscript its opulence. The gold leaf on the other hand was used throughout both the Liber Primus and the Liber Secundus, sometimes Jung even filled entire pages in gold leaf. Mellick states that it is clear that Jung chose brilliance over “predictable application, optimal pigment grind, and binding for his flexible support.”

Though The Red Book seems like a free for all for the author’s unconscious mind, in fact Jung planned each and every page in incredible detail. First, he drew all artworks in pencil as well as having written out the text in pencil. In some cases, such as in figure 4 and 5, the pencil can still very clearly be seen in places where Jung didn’t quite fill in the paint fully. Jung does not try to hide these mistakes, but instead left them, no doubt, because the process of healing was what was important not The Red Book’s aesthetic. Jung also left pin pricks in order to register pages, however he ended on page 79, before the series of mandalas. Jung created his larger illuminations from small cells, each of which was not random, instead each was painstakingly drawn cell by cell, within certain restraints, in order to create the larger

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68 Mellick p. 226
69 Mellick p. 229
70 Mellick p. 230
illumination; this is also what gives *The Red Book* its iconic mosaic stylization.\(^{71}\) Jung’s cells include a myriad of organic and inorganic shapes, and each of his lines and circle are drawn freehand. This marks a particular change between the *Liber Primus* and the *Liber Secundus* where-as in *Liber Secundus* smaller cells are built up together in order to form the larger picture, *Liber Primus* did the opposite taking the image as a whole and then breaking it down.\(^{72}\) Each of the shapes differ in outline, color, and change thickness of lines, making there no one overall “type.” Mellick states, “these second-by-second, millimeter-by-millimeter decisions would defeat a personality less sturdy in commitment.”\(^{73}\)

The three specific techniques Jung used in creating his artworks were pooling, layering and tiling. Pooling is the carrying a color concentration in a defined area (figure 6 and 7). This was not ever seen in European Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts, however it is incredibly common throughout *The Red Book*.\(^{74}\) Secondly, he used layering which creates depth to a watercolor, creating almost a translucent glaze as can be seen in figure 8.\(^{75}\) Lastly, Jung used the tiling technique, using regular shapes, semi-regular, and even tessellation as will be seen in the snake in chapter three. The tiling technique also referenced Jung’s histology illustrations as seen in figures 9 and 10.\(^{76}\)

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\(^{71}\) *The Art of C.G Jung* p. 222  
\(^{72}\) Mellick p. 243  
\(^{73}\) Mellick p. 244  
\(^{74}\) Mellick p. 275  
\(^{75}\) Mellick p. 281  
\(^{76}\) Mellick p. 307
Chapter 2: The Healing Mandala

Mandalas, much like *The Red Book*, act as both the creation that comes out of the healing process as well as act as a healing process within its actual production. Jung’s inclusion of a series of 19 mandalas in the exact middle of *Liber Secundus* of *The Red Book* must then surely mean something. Each singular mandala images act as conduits for Jung’s fears, rage, feelings of isolation, and I propose that it was through creating each mandala Jung was able to heal. The mandalas insertion into several different pages throughout the text references an almost healing energy that seems to run beneath the surface of the book. *The Red Book* illustrates Jung’s descent into hell, process of healing, and rebirth, Mandalas act as the means by which Jung achieves regeneration. This rebirth motif will be analyzed in chapter three in the discussion of what the snake and the tree mean within the context of *The Red Book*.

Aniela Jaffe states in *C.G. Jung: Word and Image*, “the mandala is a basic form which can be found in nature, in the elements of matter, in plant, and animal worlds, as well as in objects and images created by man and his psyche.” 77 Some representations of mandalas can be dated as early as the Paleolithic times. However, for this thesis, as well as for Jung, mandalas will not be representations but instead True Mandalas, as Jung calls them. Though mandalas have a traditional structure, with a deity or object of most importance at the center, surrounded on four sides at the cardinal points. 78 A true mandala is one that is taken directly from one’s soul, thus becoming the image of one’s particular self. 79

Mandalas are referenced often in Jung’s textual works, however, for this chapter I will be primarily using *Psychology and Alchemy*, more specifically chapter three on “The Symbolism of

78 Ibid
79 Self as defined by Jung: “our life’s goal, for it is the completest expression of that fateful combination we call individuality” (*Complete Works* p. 7)
the Mandala.” Jung stated that he used the term “mandala” as it denotes “the ritual or magic circle used in Lamaism and also in Tantric yoga as a yantra or aid to contemplation”; along with this passage Jung included the image as seen in figure 11.\textsuperscript{80} I will also be referencing \textit{The Art of C.G. Jung} by the Foundation of the Descendants of Carl Jung, specifically the chapter on Jung’s creation of his mandala sketches, “Imitations of the Self: Jung’s Mandala Sketches for The Red Book” by Diana Finiello Zervas using Jung’s interpretation of “mandala dreams” and the visual analysis by Zervas I will examine two different forms of mandalas Jung paints in \textit{The Red Book}. Lastly, I will by using the text \textit{C.G. Jung Word and Image}, edited by Aniela Jaffe, in particular the chapter \textit{The Mandala. The Art of C.G. Jung} and \textit{C.G. Jung Word and Images} examine Jung’s mandalas years after their creation, and specifically look at the context in which his mandalas were created. On the other hand, \textit{Psychology and Alchemy} will allow us to view Jung’s personal understanding of the mandala through his work with patients and dream analysis.

Jaffe eloquently states,

Jung interpreted the mandala as a symbol of human wholeness or as the self representation of a psychic centripetal process (individuation). The dreams and fantasies the four-part mandala appears spontaneously, usually as an unconscious attempt at self-cure in states of psychic disorientation.\textsuperscript{81}

Throughout Jung’s life, starting as early as adolescence, he believed in the healing power of mandalas; there exist a multitude of mandala illustrations, paintings, sketches, stone carvings etc. Though it is clear he did this in order to crack the code of the mandala, one could also say he spent his life in an almost psychic disorientation. Stuck between his No. 1 and No. 2, between Christianity and the Occult. \textit{The Red Book} was the culmination of a life spent questioning everything, not that I mean to say it was in anyway negative, as it is the reason for Jung extensive amount of words and images produced.

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Psychology and Alchemy} p. 95
\textsuperscript{81} Jaffe p. 77
In The Red Book Jung illustrated a series of eighteen mandalas in the center of Liber Secundus. These are not the only mandalas to be found within the pages of The Red Book, in fact this series will not be included in this chapter as each image is related to the next and the one before. Thus, we would have to examine each, and every mandala Jung created, which is an insurmountable job to take on. Instead, I will be focusing on two mandalas that appear outside of this series, whereas the series seems to be based on Jung’s study of natural science (as can be seen when they are related back to his illustrations of protoplasmic lifeforms).

The Construction and Origin of Jung’s Mandala:

Jung had many mandala dreams throughout his life, with his first happening while he was still in secondary school. In the dream Jung found himself in a forest,

In the darkest place I saw a circular pool, surrounded by dense undergrowth. Half immersed in the water lay the strangest and most wonderful creature: a round animal, shimmering in opalescent hues, consisting of innumerable little cells… it aroused in me an intense desire for knowledge, so that I awoke with a beating heart.\(^2\)

This dream convinced Jung that his career path should be the study of natural science. A decade after this dream, Jung drew the first of his most significant mandalas. He called it Window on Eternity and dedicated the work to his deceased friend Hermann Sigg. Just as with Jung’s other mandalas, he created it from a dream experience. This mandala would later be included in The Red Book on page 159 (figure 12).

Jung claims he did not create his first mandala until 1916, after he had written Septem Sermones and Mortuos.\(^3\) The sketch was brought on by conversation between Jung and his soul about the “principle of individuation” after which he made an annotated sketch of the discussion.

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\(^2\) Memories Dreams Reflections p. 85/90
\(^3\) Ibid
in a visual form.\textsuperscript{84} Zervas states the sketch was made up of “seven concentric circles representing areas of the cosmos, moving inward from the infinity of the Pleroma.”\textsuperscript{85} This mandala, though no longer in existence, marked the beginning of a Jung’s interest in the symbolism and creation of soul-images.

In 1917, but not published until 1958, Jung wrote \textit{The Transcendent Function} on his process to generating inner images which led to his creation of mandalas. In 1938, Jung was given the opportunity to meet, in the Monastery of Bhutia Busty, the lamaic \textit{rimpoche} Lingdam Gomchen.\textsuperscript{86} Jung and Lingdam Gomchen talked about the \textit{khilkor} (or mandala), Gomchen depicted the mandala as a \textit{dmigs-pa} a “mental image which can be built up only by a fully instructed lama through the power of imagination.”\textsuperscript{87} Gomchen held that mandalas found in monasteries or temples meant nothing as they were merely “external representations.” Gomchen discusses the true mandala as well as what he calls “free individual formation of the mandala.” The true mandala, on one hand, is an inner image that is built through active imagination, which is created only at times in which the “psychic equilibrium is disturbed or when a thought cannot be found and must be sought for.”\textsuperscript{88} Jung posited that there is an unmistakable style to traditional mandala structures as well, derived from Lamaic dogma; directions for construction of these mental-images can be found in such texts as \textit{Shri-Chakra-Sambhara Tantra}. Jung believed that these images are from dreams and visions not created by some “Mahayana church father” instead they are some of the oldest religious symbols.\textsuperscript{89} Jung also observed in his patients, as well as within himself, when mandalas were created that they were created from one of two aspects,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} \textit{The Art of C.G Jung} p. 180
\item \textsuperscript{85} \textit{The Art of C.G. Jung} p. 183; pleroma – RB p. 347, note 82
\item \textsuperscript{86} \textit{Psychology and Alchemy} p. 96; lamaic rimpoche
\item \textsuperscript{87} Ibid
\item \textsuperscript{88} Ibid
\item \textsuperscript{89} \textit{Psychology and Alchemy} p. 97
\end{itemize}
either the unconscious, or from life “which if lived with utter devotion, brings an intuition of the self, of one’s own individual being.”

Jung was in the military service in 1918 as a British soldier at Château-d’Oex. Even during his service Jung continued to draw mandalas. He stated, “while I was there I sketched every morning in a notebook a small circular drawing, a mandala, which seemed to correspond to my inner situation at the time…” As he continued drawing these mandalas Jung became anxious as he wondered where this process was leading to. He finally realized that this process was leading him to “the center, individuation.”

In 1937 during an interview Jung was asked about the term mandala. In response Jung stated a mandala is a rather typical archetypal form, either of a circle in a square or vice versa. Zervas states “As an Archetype of inner order, it is used to arrange the multifaceted aspects of the universe into a world scheme or to make a scheme of the individual psyche.” Though he started creating mandala like images as early as 1915 in The Red Book Jung did not start to write about mandalas until 1929 when a friend, Richard Wilhelm sent him a copy of The Secret of the Golden Flower asking for his psychological commentary. This Taoist alchemical manuscript was the connection Jung needed between ancient and contemporary Western mandalas. Zervas states, “Jung explained that mandalas could be drawn, built, danced, or performed through life…” Jung in fact did just this both by painting, drawing, and building a mandala out of stone as seen with the Tower of Bollingen, which will be discussed later. Jung created multiple mandalas based on The Secret of the Golden Flower, only one of which is in The Red Book

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90 The Art of C.G. Jung p. 181
91 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 195
92 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 196
93 Memories, Dreams, Reflections p. 188
94 The Art of C.G. Jung p. 179
95 Ibid
96 Ibid
97 Ibid
however, I believe they should be included as their stylization is very similar to those seen in the mandala series in *The Red Book* (figures 13, 14, 15).

Richard Wilhelm was struck by the similarities between Jung’s ideas and the ancient Chinese lore. Wilhelm believed that this was not merely an accident but due to commonalities between their lines of thinking. Wilhelm stated,

… the Chinese sages and Dr. Jung have plumbed the depths of the human collective psyche and have there encountered living elements that are so similar because in fact they actually exist. That would prove that the truth can be reached from any direction, provided one digs deep enough.98

According to Wilhelm we can potentially understand the ancient eastern realm of thinking through Jung’s mandalas and vice versa. It is also from Jung’s commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, that he created figure 24 (which will be discussed later), a mandala based on his interpretation of the Taoist manuscript.

The mandala acted as the “psychic centre of the personality” thus the addition of varying mandalas across the pages of *The Red Book* cannot go unnoticed.99 Jung stated in *Memories, Dreams Reflections*, “the self, I thought, was like the monad which I am, and which is my world. The mandala represents this monad, and corresponds to the microcosmic nature of the psyche.”100 The mandala is of the most paramount significance to Jung’s process of healing it also appears most often in *The Red Book*, numbering at twenty-five. The process of creating *The Red Book* was lengthy, first Jung wrote down all of his visions in *The Black Books* in 1913-1916, then these pages were edited and given commentary becoming what is known as the *Liber Novus*, which eventually would be transcribed onto parchment and become *The Red Book*. The mandala sketches in *The Red Book* were created towards the end of this traumatic period in

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98 Jaffe p. 94
99 *Psychology and Alchemy* p. 99
100 *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* p. 238
1917-1919. Zervas states, the images in Liber Secundus of The Red Book become “progressively detached from its narrative. Proto-mandalas, circles, trees, golden flowers, mandala roses and other related forms attest to his increasing fascination with the mandala.”

There are a multitude of mandala images Jung creates throughout his lifetime, however here I will only be focusing on those included in The Red Book.

In 1957, Jung was asked about his mandalas during an interview with Richard Evans. Jung replied that the mandala is a typical archetypal form, the quadrature circuli: the square in the circle of circle in the square. One of man’s most ancient symbols, the mandala expresses either the deity or the self. As an Archetype of inner order, it is used to arrange the multifaceted aspects of the universe into a world scheme or to make a scheme of the individual psyche.

Jung argues that the mandala is the “main Archetype” meaning it was is a highly important and autonomous symbols throughout time, various cultures and religions. Though Jung created mandalas as early as 1915 with the creation of The Red Book, he did not write about mandalas until his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. Because of this Taoist manuscript, Jung became increasingly interested in the Golden Flower as a mandala symbol. Jung stated such a drawing is either “seen from above as a regular geometric pattern, or in profile as a blossom growing from a plant.” Jung believed the origin of such drawings was the “germinal vesicle”, the ‘seed place’” can be seen within most of Jung’s mandala sketches as well as within the mandala series in The Red Book. I will not be focusing on the series as the mandala drawings are highly based on Jung’s knowledge of natural science. Instead, I will focus on two mandalas that appear to fit outside the theme’s series.

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101 The Art of C. G. Jung p. 184
102 The Art of C. G. Jung p. 179
103 Ibid
104 Jaffe p. 13
Not only did Jung create mandala’s on paper but also out of stone, as seen with his Tower of Bollingen. The plan of the Tower is a glorified mandala and acted as a physical representation of Jung’s soul-image, or centre (figure 16). In creating the Tower Jung created a place free from all outside limitations and imposing sensory information; he was able to focus entirely on his healing within a place created for this healing specifically. The Tower perfectly encapsulates Jung’s “style,” where the space is both the process of creating and healing, as well as the aftermath of the healing process. The actual structure can be considered as art or as an architectural-feet however, just like The Red Book the tower was not meant to be looked at through an art historical lens. Instead, the tower shows the … Jung took in order to make a completely sensory free environment in order to be able to focus entirely on his unconscious without outside stimuli.

**Circle Mandalas**

The first image I would like to discuss appears on page 79 of The Red Book (figure 17). Though this particular mandala does not follow a traditional structure, in the color combinations and stylization Jung is able to form a comprehensive mental image out of what seem to be a rather straightforward painting of circles. Mandalas and circles are key elements throughout Jung’s artworks that he draws from Christianity, Hinduism and such esoteric sources as Alchemy. By creating his own mandala’s Jung created his own language through which to communicate and heal. Through the process of creating each mandala sketch Jung found a piece of his “self.”

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Though figure 17 appears quite straightforward, in order to fully grasp the meaning of this artwork, one must first understand the meaning behind the circle in Christianity and Alchemy. The circle in Christian artwork is generally used to symbolize the heavenly realm in deference to the square earthly plane; the circle portrays heaven as it is unending, a perfectly unified shape that is all-inclusive. The circle can also represent the notion of totality or original perfection as well as God themselves.

The circle, according to Jung, is a representation of “The Self” as described as a place in which conscious and unconscious meet.106 Jung stated, the circle illustrated the wholeness of an existing entity at a point where ones complete being existed on the same plane of existence.107 The circle, as the self, represents a self-contained process from birth to growth, decline to death. The circle is the lowest number in our system of numbering, thus the circle also symbolizes potential or the embryo (the beginning of life) and the process of individuation.108

Figure 17 illustrates a mosaic style mandala where four circles (of equal size and style) in red, blue, pink, and green appear at the center. Each circle contains multiple hues of the same singular tone, getting increasingly lighter as one gets closer to the center of the contiguous cells. Jung achieved this by varying transparency and opacity in singular cells. Each of the four central circles is outlines by a barrier of tesserae that follow the same color pattern; the barriers look like a checkered line with each cell following the color combination from the four central circles and the outer barrier circle. Building out of these barriers is larger circular barrier made up of different colored tesserae in the same colors as the four center circles, following the same mosaic patterning you see in the central circles. Each tesserae appears broken off from the center circles and reformed mosaically to create a unified barrier circle. Surrounding the barrier circle are

107 Psychology and Alchemy p. 105
108 Man and his symbols p. 240/1
individual tesserae in red, blue and green radiating out onto the black background. There is a second barrier circle surrounding the center illustration, it appears as a dotted line of gold squares, resembling the flecks of gold in the center of the painting. The gold barrier circle is cut off on either side of the page making it appear larger than the two-dimensional space. The overall composition is made of different contiguous cells placed together to create the feeling of movement between the different circles. The cells are three, four, and five sided in the outer fields of the illustration as seen in figure 18. The background is made up of four sided black and grey cells. At the center of the artwork are specs of gold leaf, the meaning of which will be discussed later. Although the work seems to be freely drawn and whimsical, it is not. Jung planned out each cell in his artworks in order to create a comprehensive image. Jung followed strict guidelines for each cell, only once these rules were fulfilled did Jung allow himself the freedom to draw free-hand.

Jung’s depiction of the circle in figure 17 perfectly exemplifies the Christian belief that the circle symbolizes wholeness and true individuality. The number of circles, four, references Brahma’s lotus petals and man’s four functions of consciousness: thought, feeling, intuition, and sensation. The four circles, like Brahma’s lotus petals, also symbolize orientation for prayer, the red as north, blue as east, pink as south, and green as the west. Similarly, in the Christian faith, the number four is derived from the creation story in which on the fourth day God created the sun, moon, and stars. This creation of sun and moon not only brought light to the world, but it delineated day from night and marks the beginning of days, years, and seasons. The number four also symbolizes a pure balance between the unconscious senses that man must achieve. The overlapping circles in the work may represent Jung’s overlapping functions, allowing for the

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109 Man and his symbols p. 240
110 Brahma – creator God in Hinduism, central figure of many eastern mandalas
emergence of other functions, such as thought, colored by feeling or intuition.\textsuperscript{111} The four circles, as representation of the four functions illustrates a the totality of ones personality as seen in figure 19, a diagram of the four functions of consciousness.\textsuperscript{112} The unification, the circle symbolizes, is seen through the melding of the colored pieces to create the outer circle, appearing as broken off pieces of the smallest circles remodeled to make a larger more colorful barrier circle.

The mosaic style of the artwork creates a feeling of motion within the work, as well as illustrates a uniting of parts where each cell fits together to make an image. This mosaic style seen repeated in the \textit{Red Book} may be inspired by Jung’s trip to Ravenna in 1934 and the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia (figure 20). Upon his trip to Ravenna Italy Jung had one of his most important visions, after this vision he stated,

Here, what struck me first was the mild blue light that filled the room […] I did not try to account for its source, and so the wonder of this light without any visible source did not trouble me… the blue of the sea, individual chips of the mosaic, the inscribed scrolls proceeding from the mouths of Peter and Christ, which I attempted to decipher.\textsuperscript{113}

There are several motifs in the painting that have the same effect as Jung recounting of the mosaics in Galla Placidia. This includes the un-sourceable light which appears in the lightening of the colors in each individual circle making the two-dimensional image look like a stained-glass window with light shining through. The individual tesserae resemble religious Byzantine artworks, radiant, mystical, mysteriously whimsical and detailed craftsmanship. The repeated motifs of circles, mandalas, and stars throughout the Mausoleum (figures 21-22) also hold a certain resemblance with Jung’s artwork in the \textit{Red Book}. Though the illustration is two-

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Man and his symbols} p. 240
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Psychology and Alchemy} p. 107
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Memories, dreams, reflections} p. 260/61
dimensional, Jung brings perspective to the piece by continuing the mosaic theme in black and grey in the background. The longer one stares at the circles the more they appear as if they are moving and spinning on the page, making the perspective more dome-like than flat surface (much like staring at the dome of a Mausoleum).

It is clear in figure 17 that Jung was illustrating his interpretation of the steps he must take towards individuation. The number four and the mosaic style, allowed Jung to illustrate his process of healing and individualizing. The four circles represent Jung’s four functions of personality, the red as thinking, blue as intuition, pink as feeling, and green as sensation. Together the circles illustrate Jung’s complete self, as it grows and changes, as can be seen in the splitting off of tesserae from the central circles and its reformation in the larger barrier circle. Jung’s mandala amalgamates Christian and Alchemical philosophy as well as Jungian psychology in order to illustrate Jung’s true personality. The four circles in the center of the work depict the four functions of consciousness which fracture and separate due to psychic disorientation. The four separate functions, depicted by the four separate colors, then come back together and reform the all-encompassing circle, which is larger and more stable. The work moves both inward and outward, the grey and black tesserae in the background in the interior circle move towards the center towards the light, as the colored tesserae on the outskirts of the barrier circle move outwards. This mandala references Jung’s commentary on a patient’s dream, in his analysis Jung hones in on the aspect of squaring the circle, as Jung stated, “it is a symbol of the opus alchymicum, since it breaks down the original chaotic unity into the four elements and then combines them again in a higher unity.”114 Jung stated that this process, the creation of one from four, is called distillation which takes a “circular form.” The product of this process, Jung stated, is usually called the “quintessence,” the purest form of the “one.”115

114 Psychology and Alchemy p. 124
115 Ibid
between this mandala and the above process clearly delineate this artwork as a depiction of the process of circular distillation.

**Holy Quaternity**

The next image I will examine is the mandala which Jung created on page 105 (figure 24). This particular mandala was created before Jung started *The Red Book* and is a visual interpretation Jung made based on his commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. He created three mandalas based on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, the mandalas were all published anonymously, and it was not until his essay *Concerning Mandala Symbolism* that he specified what this particular mandala is portraying. Mandalas seem to be the only works Jung made before the creation of *The Red Book* which he then later incorporated. This accounts for the number of mandala works as well as hints at the psychic disorientation Jung felt throughout his life that caused him to create so many mandalas. This particular mandala is also one of the only mandalas Jung wrote an interpretation for. *C.G. Word and Image* states mandalas are one of the most depicted figures in *The Red Book* however, they are never once mentioned in the text.

Jung’s interpretation of this particular mandala is as follows,

In the center, the white light, shining in the firmament; in the first circle, protoplasmic life-seeds; in the second, rotating cosmic principles which contain the four primary colors; in the third and fourth, creative forces working toward and outward. At the cardinal points, the masculine and feminine souls, both again divided into light and dark.  

Jung gives an overall explanation of each of the levels of design, which in fact is the only reason we are able to correctly state what is happening in each level. At the center is a small white star outlined in blue, acting as the central point of the work, the point from which all else evolves.

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116 Jaffe p. 94
from. Surrounding the star in the center circle is a black background with brownish-gold blob like shapes which make up what look like a plant or cell membrane. Jung cites that these shapes acted as golden clouds upon a blue sky. In the next circle are “protoplasmic life-seeds” as Jung called them, to the untrained eye however, they look like a myriad of different kinds of leaves. The leaves or protozoa, as Jung called them, are separated by a red barrier between each creating grid-like pattern which leads into the second circle. In the second circle are sixteen smaller circles, each exactly a centimeter from the previous one. Each of the small circles within the second circle is split into four quadrants, each quadrant a different color and signifying the four alchemical primary colors, red, black, silver, and gold. As I will discuss later, these colors are the basis for all alchemical principles and are of great importance in this work as they represent life on a fundamental level. Jung stated, “the sixteen globes painted in four colours just outside this circle derived originally from an eye motif and therefore stand for the observing and discriminating consciousness.”

The next level of decoration in this mandala is no longer a circle, but instead looks like the petals of a flower growing out of the center circles. Jung stated that this level and the next portray the “creative forces working inward and outward,” that can be seen in the direction in which the detailing moves towards and out from the centre. Jung stated, “the ornaments in the next circle, all opening inwards, rather like vessels pouring out their content toward the centre. On the other hand, the ornaments along the rim open outward, as if to receive something from outside.”

The design of the ornamentation is reminiscent of other works within The Red Book such as figure 24, which details of some of the calligraphic work on the main pages of text. We must take into consideration the technique Jung used in creating these artworks, whereby Jung took

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117 The Art of C.G. Jung p. 54
118 Ibid
the time to painstakingly sketch each artwork, following a certain code of design only allowing himself to free-hand draw within cells that fit into the specific code. Each cell is drawn to represent the individuation process where “projections stream back ‘inside’ and are integrated into the personality again.”\textsuperscript{119} Lastly, along the outside are four circles outlined in black, each holds a different figure. At the top “an old man in the attitude of contemplation,” at the bottom is the Devil, Loki, or Hephaestus delineated by his flaming red hair. The older man at the top sits on the ground, cross-legged wearing a long powder blue robe. The circle in which he is placed, contains three interior circular levels. At the center, behind the figure, is a golden circle, surrounded by a blue circle, reminiscent of the central circle of the mandala containing the golden clouds on blue sky. Whereas the older man is surrounded by gold, Hephaestus is surrounded by a purple and blue circle. The last circle for all four of the figures contains half-crescents at each of the cardinal points, each of which is painted in one of the primary colors, in order from red, gold, silver, and black. Hephaestus, at the bottom of the mandala is shown standing wearing a long black robe that comes up to his rib cage. In his hands he holds a torch.

On either side are the “light and dark female figures” as Jung posits them. On the left is a figure dressed in a long red robe with black hair splayed around their shoulders. The figure is surrounded by a design of blue organic shapes on a black background on either side, however they stand alone against a silver background. Similarly, the figure on the right side of the mandala stands in a long blue robe, with their hair covered by a white head covering. Just like the figure on the left, the right figure is surrounded on either side with red decoration on a black background, however they again stand alone in front of a silver background.

Though Jung posits that these are merely the dark and light female figures, and the contemplative elder, and as Loki or Hephaestus, I find these figures to hold an uncanny

\textsuperscript{119} Psychology and Alchemy p. 105
resemblance with the four parts of the holy trinity. Namely, God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, which in this case would be the Virgin Mary. Lastly, there is the Devil at the bottom, as without one, there cannot be the other. Jung stated, “the Christian deity is one in three persons. The fourth person in the heavenly drama is undoubtedly the devil… the feminine element in the deity is kept very dark, the interpretation of the Holy Ghost as Sophia.”120 These four figures can be read in one of two ways, psychologically and as the Christian holy trinity. Jung stated in *Psychology and Alchemy*, “if we think of the psychological functions as arranged in a circle, then the most differentiated function is usually the carrier of the ego and equally regularly, has an auxiliary function attached to it.”121 Following this idea, Jung included an image as seen in figure 19, a diagram showing the four function of consciousness. If we were to compare figure 19 with our mandala, the contemplative older figure is a representation of thinking, Hephaestus represents feeling, Christ as sensation, and the Virgin Mary as intuition. The contemplative elder is the image of pure light, making this figure a possible representation of the Christian God. On the other hand, the figure in the lowest circle, either Loki or Hephaestus, represents pure feeling. The dark and light female anima represent sensation and intuition, in both cases an amalgamation of thinking and feeling.

The third register of design in this mandala showcases sixteen circles, each one split into four sections of color, namely red, gold, black, and white/silver. These four colors reference the four stages of the alchemical process: *melanosis* or *nigredo* (blackening), *leukosis* (whitening), *xanthosis* (yellowing), and *iosis* (reddening).122 This combination of these four colors together within each circle shows the complete process of individuation as an alchemical process.

*Nigredo* is the “initial state, either present from the beginning as a quality of the *prima materia,*

120 Psychology and Alchemy p. 151/152
121 Psychology and Alchemy p. 106
122 Psychology and Alchemy p. 229
the chaos...”  

From that *nigredo* comes *leukosis* within the union of opposites, followed by the death of the product of the union, the following washing or *baptisma* results in the *leukosis* or “the soul.”  

At this point the main stage of the alchemical process, the *albedo*, is completed.  

The red comes from raising the fire to its highest intensity, and the gold represents the *prima materia*.

In one of Jung’s commentaries, on a patient’s dream in *Psychology and Alchemy*, he posits that the inclusion of four persons in the dream represents the four functions, and thus represents the components of the total personality. In other words, this mandala can be understood as a representation of the total personality of Jung’s personal Self. Corresponding with this the centre of the mandala must then be a representation of “the self as the summation of the total personality.”  

Where in traditional religious mandalas the center represents the deity of most importance, in this particular mandala the star represents total personality as the pinnacle of individuation. Overall, this mandala on each level represents the individuation process, from the four functions of consciousness, to the ornamentation opening inward and outward to represent the projections of the self, streaming back into one’s personality.

Each register of design shows a different aspect of the individuation process, including the multi-colored circles, the protoplasmic life, and the design motifs moving inward and outward acting out distillation and individuation. Jung illustrated each of his mandala’s following the traditional structure, taking each motif and detail from his psyche, creating an image that is completely and entirely his own. Mandala’s are always a means towards contemplation, and encourage certain mental states in which the soul moves towards evolution,

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123 *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 230  
124 *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 231  
125 *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 232  
126 *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 106
from corporeal to spiritual. Though he does follow the traditional structure, plus free interpretation, for most of his mandalas previous to *The Red Book*, he moves far beyond the mere “squaring of the circle”, instead using color, patterning, and perspective to create a mandala that tells a story about the creator. Each mandala I have discussed acts as a step in Jung’s process of individuation, from the Circle Mandala, which illustrates the re-integration and emergence of Jung’s *self*, to the Quatrain Mandala which depicts the total consciousness complete with the four functions. These mandalas act as a secret window into Jung’s healing process, and through studying his healing images we in turn find healing.

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127 Christian Iconography Encyclopedia
Chapter 3: Rest and Regeneration

This chapter will focus on the repetitive symbols of the serpent/dragon and the tree, both of which symbolize regeneration and rebirth and are also often portrayed together. This is the case with the Mercurial serpent that rises from the roots to the branches of the tree, whereby the serpent is believed to be the “arcane substance that transforms itself inside the tree and thus constitutes it’s life.” As you will see, the tree and the serpent are both perfect symbols for the rebirth that Jung desperately sought. As a source of therapy for Jung, *The Red Book* reaches its pinnacle when he created the full-page snake and tree paintings in the Incantation series. It is at this point, after going through years of healing through word and mandalas, that Jung finds his solace in these images of rebirth. First, as they symbolize the struggle for rebirth Jung is searching for, I will discuss three images of the serpent. Lastly, I will discuss the importance of one specific tree image, as it culminates Jung’s deep-sea voyage and represents the final stage in which Jung finds his centre. These images are of particular fascination as they hold the key to the transformation that Jung searched for during his psychotic break.

In order to understand why the serpent and tree represent Jung’s rebirth, we must contemplate the Christian and Alchemical understandings of these motifs as gleaned from Jung’s various printed texts. As Jung never wrote, much less talked about what transpired within the pages of *The Red Book*, all analysis must be based on what seems to be Jung’s understanding of these particular symbols, based on his discussions of trees and serpents within dream analysis and psychology. There is also precedent for looking at these symbols with a Christian and Alchemical lens as Jung’s life was majorly shaped around these two beliefs. Thus, our

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understanding of Jung’s work can only be based off the analysis of various Christian stories, Alchemical knowledge, and myth we know Jung knew.

**Asps, Dragon, and Paradisal Snakes:**

The serpent in the Bible, traditionally, is seen as the embodiment of evil and trickery, therefore, the repetitive use of this motif throughout the *Red Book*, as well as in his previous works and even seen in his visions, provides evidence for Jung’s ongoing struggle with good versus evil. In *The Art of Carl Jung*, it states the snake is one of the most important single motifs in the entirety of the book. The *Red Book* has four full-page snake images as well as various small snakes scattered throughout other pages of the manuscript. In this section, I will discuss three examples of these serpents as they appear in the *Red Book*, as well as give a brief history of the symbolism of the serpent in various religions and in Alchemy.

In the biblical book of Genesis, Eve, while in the Garden of Eden, was “tricked” by the serpent into eating the forbidden fruit, the fruit of knowledge. The serpent's trickery incited original sin thus earning the snake its reputation as a symbol of treachery. However, the serpent can also represent wisdom and dual nature as it sheds its skin and regenerates. In the biblical book of Numbers, chapter 21, God punishes the Israelites by sending poisonous snakes, however, Moses built a bronze serpent and whoever had been bitten by a serpent could view it and live.  

129 This symbolizes the serpent as both the bringer and the taker of life, as it was through being bitten that the Israelites were saved. Similarly, in John: 3, Jesus compares himself to a serpent foreshadowing his own death on the cross and offer of salvation. It states, "just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who

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129 Numbers 21: 5-9 (New Revised Standard Version)
believes may have eternal life in him.”¹³⁰ John Brinsely states in his text *The Mystical Brazen Serpent with the Magnetical Virtue Therefore, or Christ Exalted Upon the Cross*,

The bronze serpent was God’s means of salvation for the Israelites who were bitten by the serpents in the wilderness. Jesus Christ crucified is God’s means of salvation for everyone who has been bitten by the deadly venom of sin in the wilderness of this fallen world¹³¹

The conflation of Christ or God with the serpent is just as common as the conflation of the serpent with the devil, thus it acts as the perfect religious symbol depicting both good and evil. In understanding this symbolism, it becomes quite clear that Jung chose the image of the serpent due to its multifaceted nature, both good and evil, death and rebirth. It is clear Jung felt a certain amount of safety within the image of the snake as it, other than mandalas and trees, is one of the most common motifs in the entirety of *The Red Book*.

Artwork Analysis:

Figure 25 illustrates three blue snakes coiled around a lattice fencing painted in different shades of lilac gouache over a stark red backdrop. The snakes have no discernable heads, instead there are only various tails coiled around each other. The snakes are painted in different shades of blue which almost appear as individual tesserae, giving the serpents a mosaic stylization as well as bringing perspective into the work. Though the work does appear two dimensional, the weaving of the serpents around the lattice gives the work a three-dimensional feel where the red backdrop is separate from the lattice and the snakes. On the joints of the fencing are small purple flowers, and each pane is outlined by white gouache. The red backdrop has black smudging.

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¹³⁰ John 3: 14-15 (NRSV)
¹³¹ Brinsely, John. *The Mystical Brazen Serpent with the Magnetical Virtue Therefore, or Christ Exalted Upon the Cross*. p. 17
along the surface either to give texture to the work or to appear as shadowing from the latticework. Along with this image, Jung wrote,

Nature is playful and terrible. Some see the playful side and dally with it and let it sparkle. Others see the horror and cover their heads and are more dead than alive. The way does not lead between both but embraces both. It is both cheerful play and cold horror.\footnote{Carl Jung, \textit{Red Book}, p. 288}

The snake appears to embody this nature, burying its head timidly so that the viewer may not see it. However, it is still a vicious snake; one which strikes fear in most. The lightened tesserae create, as referenced in the text, an almost sparkling sheen. The image, as Jung stated, is astonishing by using royal blue and blood red he manages to weave together a picture of a writhing beast curled around itself almost like a reverse Ouroboros, all tails no head.

The Ouroboros is one of the most important symbols in Alchemy. It depicts a snake swallowing its own tail, as seen in figure 26. The Ouroboros symbolizes many things, wholeness, infinity, the meeting of good and evil, as well as the union of life, death, and resurrection. In his \textit{Collected Works} Jung states,

\begin{quote}
The Ouroboros is a dramatic symbol for the integration and assimilation of the opposite, i.e. of the shadow. This 'feed-back' process is at the same time a symbol of immortality, since it is said of the Ouroboros that he slays himself and brings himself to life, fertilizes himself and gives birth to himself. He symbolizes the One, who proceeds from the clash of opposites\footnote{Carl Jung, \textit{Collected Works}, Vol. 14, para. 513}
\end{quote}

It is clear the Ouroboros was not only an incredibly important symbol in his alchemical work but also to his own psyche. Just as the Ouroboros symbolizes the integration of opposites, Jung assimilates two supposed opposites, Christianity and the Occult, in \textit{The Red Book} as well as in his other works. So, too, the repetition of the serpent and its positive and negative symbolism suggests a certain identification Jung had with the struggle between good and evil.
In *Symbols of Transformation* Jung discusses the differing attributes and symbolism of the serpent/dragon. In this text, Jung offers a myriad of symbols the snake represents, including both Christian and pagan understandings of the creature. Similarly, to the Christian snake, as discussed previously, Jung illustrates the snake as an instrument of sacrifice and regeneration. The snake's regenerative qualities are quite clear as it sheds its skin, metaphorically stripping off its sins and starting anew. However, on the other hand, the snake as a symbol of sacrifice is not as explicit and draws from a variety of cultures and myths. Jung stated, “In St. Ambrose the ‘serpent hung on the wood’ is a ‘typus Christi’ as is the ‘brazen serpent on the cross.’” Jung also believed that the snake symbolizes Christ as a personification of the unconscious. As the Agathodaemon (good spirit) and as Philo, the serpent believed to be the “most spiritual animal,” the serpent perfectly exemplifies the positive qualities of our unconscious. However, as it is "cold-blooded and inferior brain-organization do not suggest any noticeable degree of conscious development", the serpent also represents the negative aspects of our consciousness, that of "cold and ruthless instinct." Jung believed that snakes not only personified the instinctual side of the unconscious but that snakes were a symbol for the world of instinct itself. Jung stated that all snake dreams indicate the disparity between the conscious mind and that of instinct, the snake personifies the conflict between the two. In the story of Cleopatra and the asp (Egyptian cobra), the asp is also clearly portrayed as Cleopatra’s instrument of sacrifice. According to popular belief, after Mark Antony’s death, Cleopatra allowed an asp to climb up her arm and bite her. Cleopatra’s death ended the Roman Republic.

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134 From this point, dragon will be synonymous with snake, and serpent.
137 *Alchemical Studies* p. 333
138 Ibid
war and saved her from the humiliation of being held, prisoner. In this story, the snake/snake bite acts as Cleopatra's savior as well as her demise, as is the case with Moses and the bronze serpent.

The story of Gilgamesh and the serpent depicts the snake or snake’s poison as the demands of the unconscious.  

139 Jung states,

he was so successful that the gods, the representatives of the unconscious, saw themselves compelled to deliberate how they could best bring his downfall. Their efforts were unavailing at first but when the hero had won the herb of immortality (cf. pl. XIX) and was almost at his goal, a serpent stole the elixir of life from him while he slept.  

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Jung believed the unconscious to be a paralyzing force to one’s energy, much like a snake bite.  

141 Just like the snake, the unconscious appears to us as an unfamiliar, and thus scary. However, just as the snake has a dual nature so does the unconscious. Along with the above quote, Jung included a Mesoamerican image of Quetzalcoatl devouring a man (figure 27) continuing the imagery of the snake as being a powerful but negative/evil symbol.

Figure 25 illustrates the metaphorical snake that terrifies yet delights us. It is a very real fact that humans are most intrigued by what scares and beguiles them, however, it is also unfortunately true that we despise that which we do not know or understand. Jung perfectly exemplifies this in figure 25 illustrating three creatures which have no end or beginning and yet have both. The lack of heads is especially chilling as there is no way to positively discern the beast Jung illustrates, instead the reader is faced with a writhing mass of something unknown. Also, unlike several of the other works in The Red Book, figure 25 does not resemble any other works included in Jung’s other books, nor are there any images in his house that quite resembles the figure. This makes this image even more mysterious as it was created entirely from Jung’s own psyche, making the beast mythical and thus more unsettling.

139 Symbols of Transformation p. 289/99
140 Symbols of Transformation p. 298
141 Symbols of Transformation p. 298
Serpents are seen throughout Jung’s works as well as within his art and architecture. As previously discussed, Jung built his Tower in Bollingen by hand, incorporating hand carved rocks around the perimeter with different Gnostic and Alchemical symbols. The one carved stone that is of particular interest is that seen in figure 28. Across the surface of the stone is writing in sunk relief with a serpent curved up the center in high relief. The curvature of the snake is uncannily similar to that seen in the next figure to be discussed.

Figure 29 illustrates a tree with the writhing serpent know-ing at its base. This work, from the incantation series of Liber Novus, is designed with the same Celtic backdrop as several of Jung’s other works. Although there is no clear foreground or background in the work the Celtic-esque stylization, as well as the darkening of the background from blue to black at the bottom, helps bring perspective to the piece. At the top of the work stands a proud tree stretching across the canvas, surrounded by blue and white embellishment. Below the tree a snake curves up a flood of lava. The lava, illustrated in differing shades of red and gold, is designed using the same geometric Jungian style as the background creating a sense of movement from top to the bottom of the work. The multicolored snake curves up the center of the work and swallows the base of the tree. The tree and snake appear both in the dead center of the work and are the only two things not illustrated using Jung’s specific style. Often snakes appear as the “earthly aspect” of the soul, whereas the bird represents the heavenly. The snake and tree placed centrally in the painting here represents the connection of the “spiritual above and the earthly below.”

Though the painting could have been finished without any of the background embellishment by adding the design Jung is able to create a three-dimensional artwork that moves before one’s eyes.

142 The Art of C.G Jung. p. 156
During the writing of *The Red Book* Jung felt he was communing and writing with God.

At the top of the illustration, Jung writes,

Amen, you are the lord of the beginning. Amen, you are the star of the East.
Amen, you are the flower that blooms over everything. Amen you are the deer
that breaks out of the forest. Amen, you are the song that sounds far over the
water. Amen, you are the beginning and the end.143

It is clear that Jung is speaking directly to God as he repeats his prayer using various names for
The Lord. However, why did Jung choose to illustrate a snake in praise to The Lord unless he
believed in the dual properties of the serpent, i.e. the serpent as both death/evil and life? Jung
states, "you are the beginning and the end" just as the Ouroboros, or serpent, represents the life
cycle: birth, death, and rebirth.

The snake eating at the bottom of the tree is of particular importance in this piece as there
are myths from various religions that tell the same narrative. For example, in Norse Mythology
the serpent named Nidhoggr, who lives protected by the World Tree, Yggdrasil, gnaws at its
roots. The name “Nid" coming from Viking society meaning social stigma implying a loss of
honor or social status as a villain.144 Similarly, in Mesopotamia, there is a story about
Ningishzida, an ancestor of Gilgamesh, known as the “Lord of the true/reliable/right tree”, who
is portrayed as a serpent with a human head.145 In Mayan mythology the serpent symbolizes
rebirth, it lies in the center axis atop the world tree, communicating between spiritual and earthly
planes.146 Threaded into much of aboriginal Australia is the symbol of the snake, most
importantly in relation to the rainbow snake or Wagyl. The rainbow snake was believed to be the
bringer of life as well as punishment.147 Throughout mythology, snakes are represented as both

143 *The Red Book* p. 284
144 The Poetic Edda. Grímnismál, stanzas p. 32-35.
145 http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/ningizida/index.html
146 *Man and his symbols* p. 52
the bringers of life and death, making it the perfect symbol to translate duality and the union of opposites.

Here I would like to take a moment to discuss the most common trait the serpent represents, that of death or as an omen of danger. As seen in Jung’s artwork and through the past text the serpent takes on many forms, however, underlying every other trait the danger of the serpent is never not acknowledged. Danger is clearly portrayed in figure 30 as the serpent eats at the base of a tree, one can only assume is the tree of knowledge and, or the tree of life. Not only is the serpent swallowing the tree, but, engulfed by flames, there is an apparent danger to the life of the tree, and thus for us as well. Figure 29 portrays the serpent figuratively killing life, knowledge itself, in the case of the paradisal snake this could be a sacrifice, in which the serpent takes away that which made man sin. However, as the tree symbolizes life and God and the snake represents the unconscious instinct, the artwork may be referencing Jung’s belief that in order to touch one’s unconscious, one must separate themselves with traditional religion.

The Serpent in Alchemy

The snake is an unmistakable alchemical symbol, as is seen with the ouroboros. Throughout Symbols of Transformation Jung deems the serpents, an attribute of sun-imagery, as the orbit of the moon, and as synonymous with the dragon, etc. The serpent is a fundamental symbol in Jung's psychology as well, Jung believed that if a snake were to appear in his patients' dreams it was a symbol of the discrepancy between the attitude of the conscious and the instinct of the unconscious mind.

148 Psychology and alchemy p. 34
149 Symbols of Transformation p. 100
150 Symbols of Transformation p. 108
151 Symbols of Transformation p. 396
The story of Chiwantopel in E. T. A. Hoffmann’s *Golden Bowl* holds an uncanny resemblance to figure 29. In the tale, Chiwantopel is the personification of Miss Millers “otherworldliness” and he “falls foul of a green snake.” Chiwantopel is bitten by the snake, the snake kills his horse and Chiwantopel finds’ himself in a volcanic eruption. The green, of the snake, Jung believed to be the “vegetation numen.” In the image we find a green snake eating at the base of a tree engulfed in lava, in keeping with the myth of Chiwantopel the green snake both symbolizes Chiwantopel as well as the instrument of his demise. This dual nature is also seen in Nietzsche in which the hero is the snake, both sacrificed and sacrificer. Jung states, this is why “Christ rightly compares himself with the healing Moses-serpent, and why the savior of the Christian ophites was a serpent, too. It is both Agathodaemon and Cacodaemon.” Christ was sacrificed for our sins making him the sacrifice. However, he knew of his imminent death and gave himself over to pay penance; this makes Christ, in some ways, the sacrificer as well as the one being sacrificed.

The snake also symbolizes the transformative act as is seen with the legend of Gabricus and Beya. Gabricus and Beya (royal siblings) were involved in a sordid incestual relationship, the death of Gabricus is said to be due to his disappearance into Beya’s womb during coitus. While in her womb, Gabricus transformed into the soul serpent, *serpens mercurialis*. In alchemy, the soul serpent is also known by the name Mercurial serpent which symbolized psychic transformation. The serpent as Mercurius is common alchemical symbolism, one in which Mercurius is formed in water and “swallows the nature of which he is joined.” As has

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152 Ibid p. 396
153 Ibid p. 396
154 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 382/ glory and eternity Nietzsche, p. 425
155 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 382
156 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 436
157 *Psychology and alchemy* p. 331
158 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 436
159 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 100
160 *Psychology and alchemy* p. 252
been seen in the previous text, the snake is often amalgamated with the tree, whether it be the tree of knowledge or Yggdrasil. The alchemical (mercurial) serpent is exemplified in figure 29 where the serpent swallows that which it is meant to protect. However, whereas the Mercurial serpent is born of water, the serpent seen in figure 29 and is engulfed by lava. This references several artworks which Jung include in his pinnacle work, *Psychology and Alchemy*, and where the mercurial serpent is seen frolicking amongst fire (figures 30 & 31). Often the fire is synonymous with the water that formed Mercurius. In these images the serpent (salamander or dragon) is seen engulfed in flames yet completely unfazed. Figure 31 shows the serpent as the one creating the fire. As we have seen Mercurius has a myriad of forms, it is this changeability that is to key to the alchemists.

**Struggle and Sacrifices:**

The next image I will examine depicts a man being speared through the heart with a golden rod while a snake rears by his feet (figure 32). The image is painted in blue, red, black, and white gouache, and lacks any sense of perspectival space. Two figures appear in the painting, the figure on the left is painted in the same colors and texture as the background making him appear as if he is fading into the background or a part of it. The blue figure stands in profile, he carries a shield in his left hand and raises his right arm, holding the goldenrod, by his face prepared to strike the red figure in the heart. The blue figure stands in contrapposto, taking up a pose referencing St. Michael the Archangel defeating Satan as seen in figure 33.

Jung’s choice to make the blue figure appear as an archangel draws a direct focus to his penchant for God. The Archangel is painted using the same pattern as the background making the archangel appear as if it fades into the background. As the Archangel merges with the painting, God envelopes the work as the backdrop. Though the patterning of the work appears
random at first glance, the longer the voyeur looks the more perspective and objects can be made out in the painting.

To the right of the archangel is a red figure standing with his arms outstretched in a crucifixion pose. The figure is drawn in bright red and black gouache making him appear separate from the background which surrounds him. As the background represents God, one sees the figure as separated from God, though God still envelopes him across the space of the canvas. By the red figure's feet, painted in white and black, a snake plays. The snake also appears separate from the painting. The snake curls around the red figure's feet raising its head as if to strike the figure just as the goldenrod penetrate the figure's heart. Traditionally the snake represents the devil and or evil incarnate. This being said, one can only assume the painting represents Jung’s struggle with good and evil. As the archangel stabs the red figure, he helps the figure resist Satan’s grasp as represented by the snake. This painting exemplifies the feelings of persecution Jung, due to the visions, felt he had received from God. As previously stated, Jung questioned why he was chosen for God’s visions, believing himself to be a sinner and thus not worthy of them. However, Jung later determined that God made him sin, just as God made Adam and Eve do so. It is because of his sins that Jung was chosen, and thus it is his duty to accept God in all his forms into his heart, as is depicted with the goldenrod. However, the snake can also be read another way, Jung stated in *Symbols of Transformation* the poisonous bite of the snake is a mercy “so that the living may die and be born again from darkness.”

Above the archangel flies a bird of prey watching the scene unfold between the red and blue figure. The bird further symbolizes the sacrifice narrative as it waits in the wings for the death of the red figure. The bird of prey, just like the snake, is generally conflated with an offensive manner or the defiling of the dead. The bird is depicted in the same way as the

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161 *Symbols of Transformation* p. 382/83
archangel, as a part of the background. The bird has also been symbolized as the dark omen of death, thus the inclusion of the creature within the artwork helps support my conclusion that this artwork depicts a death narrative.

In the work one can also see either the evil eye or the eye of horus. The eye of horus is the Ancient Egyptian symbol of protection, whereas the evil eye was believed to be a curse cast by a murderous glare. Again, we are faced with the fight between good and evil. One interpretation of Jung’s artwork portrays the eye as a benevolent spirit protecting the red figure from harm (whether that harm be the bird of prey, archangel, or serpent). However, the eye can be understood differently, that as another sign of evil/Satan’s presence just like the snake. This is an important detail as it exemplifies Jung’s ability to not only form a comprehensive narrative of the fight between good and evil through clear symbolism, but also his ability to further depict it within the differing meanings for each symbol. By doing this, Jung perfectly encapsulated the sacrifice and struggle of an individual’s fight with sin, both on the surface of the work as well as in the details.

The pose of the red figure references a traditional sign of the anointing of one with the stigmata, as seen in the painting of St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata by Giotto (figure 34). The red figure stands with his arms outstretched almost as a welcome to the golden spear, just as St. Francis welcomes the gift of the stigmata from Christ. Similarly, the light in Giotto’s work which symbolizes the stigmata is painted as a golden beam of light. Though the golden rod in the work only pierces the red figures heart and not in the traditional places of the stigmata (hands, feet, abdomen) the similarities between the two works is uncanny as both St. Francis and the red figure accept this gift from God.
The stance of the figure also references the traditional orans prayer stance, where one stands with one’s hands outstretched and open, as seen in figure 35. This posture is often seen in paintings of the Virgin Mary where she opens herself up to God. In figure 35, we are able to see at her heart is Christ standing in orans as well. Similarly, the red figure stands in orans, however, his heart is depicted as a rose window. The rose window is found in churches and gothic architecture, where again we are faced with the union of the figure’s soul with God. We colloquially state, “the eyes are the windows to the soul” but, in this case, the heart is the center of man, and only God (symbolized as the archangel’s golden rod) is able to penetrate that.

Jung references multiple scenes that showcase the power of God, from the archangel and dove to the Anointing of St. Francis with the Stigmata, both of which hold an almost pained relationship with religion. The red figure is stabbed through the heart (drawn like a gothic rose window, a repetitive motif in Jung’s works) however, he stretches his body out in welcome. The figure is simultaneously struck with the golden rod, representing God, and struck by the serpent, showing the equal hold both good and evil have on the figure, and Jung.

The stabbing of the red figures heart references Our Lady of Sorrows in which the Virgin Mary’s heart is stabbed by seven swords, as seen in figure 36. The sorrows of Mary are referenced in Luke 2:35 and John 19:26-27, where the swords have been believed to represent Mary’s sorrow. There are seven joys and sorrows of the virgin. The sorrows include Simeon’s prophecy, the flight into Egypt, Jesus lost in Jerusalem, the Meeting of Jesus on the road to Calvary, Crucifixion, Descent from the Cross, and the Entombment. In Luke, Simeon predicts that Mary’s soul will be pierced by a sword, stating ‘Yea, a sword shall pierce through they own soul also.’ In John it relates the words of Christ to his disciples and his mother as he died on

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162 Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Volume 11
163 Encyclopedia on Christian iconography p. 235
164 Luke 2: 35
the cross.\(^{165}\) As he died Christ tells the disciples “Behold, your mother” giving Mary a specific role within the Christian Church.\(^{166}\) And just as Christ died on the cross, Mary feared not death but offered herself to her persecutors in order to stay by her son. In the same way, the red figure stands welcoming the archangel to take his life, and he offers his soul to God.

Along with every image, Jung painted he also wrote a passage for this work he stated,

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\text{My soul speaks to me in whispers, urgently and alarmingly... have you recognized. your madness and do you admit it? Have you noticed that all your foundations are completely mired in madness? Do you not want to recognize your madness and welcome it in a friendly manner?... Be glad that you can recognize it, for you will thus, avoid becoming its victim... Life itself has no rules. That is its mystery and its unknown law. What you call knowledge is an attempt to impose something comprehensible on life.}^{167}
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One can only assume the red figure to be a representation of Jung. The serpent represents the pull of evil, as well as the pursuit of knowledge for in Genesis Eve was “tricked” into eating the fruit of knowledge by the Serpent, just as Jung feels the need to understand the world outside of traditional religion. Jung’s reference to “madness” is particularly interesting in this excerpt because the meaning of madness is reimagined by Jung to emphasize his relationship with the uncanny. In the aforementioned letter to the readers, Jung stated his writing will appear mad, Jung fully understood the way in which his deep-sea voyage would appear to others.

Though the background seems to have no perspectival space the positioning of the red figures feet as well as the snake coiled on the ground creates a moving space while on a two-dimension canvas. The patterning of the background also creates motion on the page, using an almost random dimensionality and curving across the page the painting revolves around the red figure. The work, though on the surface, appears like a traditional narrative about sacrifice and

\(^{165}\) Luke 2: 35
\(^{166}\) John 19: 26-27
\(^{167}\) The Red Book, p. 298
death, it is clear, after analysis, that Jung intends to portray not only the struggle between good and evil, but the importance of allowing God into one’s soul, so as to save them from evil.

**Jung’s Ancestral Tree**

It is not surprising to find that in the symbolism of every religion and culture, one of the most repeated motifs is that of the tree. In Jung’s *The Red Book*, he employs multiple different artistic styles in the creation of the two full sized tree paintings in *The Red Book*. This section will analyze one of the two paintings, found on page 63. In the analysis, I will specifically look at the alchemical and Christian symbol of the tree, as well as the symbolism found in the image and how the symbolism shows Jung’s pursuit for rebirth.

Figure 37 illustrates a tree painted in blue and white gouache with gold accents painted in a Celtic-esque style. The tree has six branches with a broad top, each branch holds a medallion with six along the top branch. This design references Medieval stained-glass windows and other depictions of the Tree of Jesse as seen in figures 38 and 39. This Celtic-esque style, as exemplified in the painting of a Tree of Jesse is similarly seen in images from the *Book of Kells* (figures 40 & 41). However, Jung’s color combinations are far more intense than those found in the *Book of Kells*, possibly due to his use of gouache. Because of the intensity of the colors and the whimsical stylization of the design, Jung’s style appears as an almost modern take on the *Book of Kells*.

The Tree of Jesse normally depicts the ancestors of Christ, shown in a tree that rises from Jesse of Bethlehem, who was the father of King David. Though Jung’s representation does not look like a most classic representation of a Tree of Jesse, in that each crest shows a different image, possibly illustrating Jung’s psychological ancestral tree. It is important to note that though I refer to the circles on the tree as “crests” they do not exhibit the motifs of a family crest,
but, instead, the images appear to be a repetition of some of Jung’s earlier works in the Red Book. The repetition of motifs from earlier works present in this artwork illustrate the amount of planning that actually went into Jung's artworks. Jung knowingly repeats themes and has reoccurring dreams about the same symbols which now appear as crests of a Tree of Jesse. The insertion of these symbols transforms the tree into an image of Jung's specific deep-sea voyage evolution. This tree also perfectly exemplifies the detail through which Jung’s manic mind is manifested. Each medallion, though incredibly small, details a different artwork from the Red Book, exhibiting the way in which Jung took his cluttered mind and self-therapized himself using detail-oriented art.

Though this appears like a Tree of Jesse, it does not follow the style of more traditional representations. I have chosen the following images as they represent traditional Trees of Jesse for comparison with Jung’s tree. In figures 40 and 41, one can see it is laid out hierarchically in order of birth, with the individual whose ancestral tree placed in the center or at the base. By placing one individual above another the Tree is able to say, “I come from thee.” However, in Jung’s work, other than the repeated artworks coming from the same section of The Red Book, there seems to be no reason for their inclusion. Why are these images specifically important to Jung? By organizing these symbols as a Tree of Jesse, Jung placed importance on these images within his personal evolution, as within his ancestral tree.

**Artwork Analysis**

Each of the crests resemble an illustration from the incantation series of The Red Book, the twelve pages leading up to the illustration of the tree. Starting on the bottom left branch, the crest resembles Jung’s illustration on page 50 that depicts text in a center box surrounded by

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168 Deep sea voyage – a state of conflict and depression where one is forced to attend the unconscious (Symbols of Alchemy p.148)
illustrations of castles. Though the small medallion does not match the exact details of figure 42, the stylization and organization of the artwork using lines and shapes are the same. Moving up a branch, the crest again illustrates a text page with design motifs running up the side (figure 43). Detailed medallions, colorful circles, and flowers adorning the bottom resembling a Byzantine illuminated manuscript and stained-glass windows. On the third branch up the crest illustrates figure 44 on page 54, in which a snake slithers up a mountain and eats at the base of the burning bush/tree of knowledge. The tree, represented in gold gouache, is clearly standing out in stark contrast to the all-white and blue crest.

Going from left to right, the crests across the top branch depict the illustrations in order from pages 56-61. The first crest depicts Jung's image on page 56 which illustrate the view looking into a cloister onto a grove of pointed cypress trees, often symbolizing death. There are three main trees in the image, of which the two on either side of the center tree are painted in blue and white. Similarly, in the original work, the trees appear as dark shapes in the background (figure 45). In the center of the illustration is a gold tree, or possibly a lamp or flame, standing in the foreground. This might refer to the crucifixion of Christ as the three trees represent the three crosses with Christ's cross, the center cross, painted in bright gold. The next two crests moving right, do not depict narrative illustrations, but instead copy the design motifs seen at the bottom of pages 57 and 58 as seen in figures 46/47. Moving on, the next crest depicts a central golden circle surrounded by clouds and fire with a symmetrically curved snake below it. The crest appears like a random bunch of white shapes on a blue background, however, in comparison to figure 48 where one can see the resemblance between the general organization of the illustrations. With flames pouring out of the top, next to the circle crest is a crest with two jars on either side of a central plant that stand in front of a red backdrop (figure 49). The crest uses gold gouache to accent the key elements of each artwork, in this crest, it is used to illustrate the fire
and the plant. Lastly, on the top row of crests is a very simplified version of the monster illustrated at the bottom of page 61 (figure 50). The monster curves along on the bottom of the page supported by twelve stubby legs as it perches above a small egg. In the crest, Jung separates the sections of the body into individual shapes which are linked together, and he accents the egg in gold gouache which make it stand out from the page.

The right side of the tree holds three crests parallel to the left. The top branch crest depicts a golden boat floating on the water above a large white fish, this resembling Jung's illustration on page 55 (figure 51). Below this is a crest which depicts a pedestal, with two peacocks joined together to make the arms, and a bright gold orb floating above the pedestal (figure 52). It is surrounded by white rings and the pedestal has three circles joined together to make the base. Lastly, the bottom right crest illustrates a tripartite screen at the bottom with floral designs weaving up the sides (figure 53). At the top, there is a central image of a man sitting cross-legged on a throne wearing a crown. In this crest, we again see the simplified version of Jung's earlier artworks, in which organization of space stays the same, but the details are taken away.

At the base of the tree, there are three gold accents and two triangles curve over a middle divot in the tree. Inside of the divot is a small white egg laying on a black altar, protected by expansive tree above it. The egg symbolizes not only birth and fertility, but it is also meant to bring hope and purity, something Jung sought during his episodes. To Jung, the egg represented the primal self, slumbering in the womb of unconsciousness. In my interpretation, the egg placed at the base of the tree symbolizes the new life a tree depicts, rising up from God’s creation, earth, and into the heavens.

I have found that the archetype of “The Tree” represented multiple things to Jung simultaneously representing the Tree of Life, Tree of Knowledge, World Tree, and the Tree of
Evolution. The tree is a symbol representing a universal archetype uniting temporality, the world of death, as well as the paradise myth from Adam and Eve. Jung stated in his memoir Memories, Dreams Reflections,

Trees, in particular, were mysterious and seemed to me direct embodiments of the incomprehensible meaning of life. For that reason, the woods were the place where I felt closest to its deepest meaning and to its awe-inspiring workings. 169

Trees are repeated throughout Jung’s work, as seen in figures 54, and held a powerful symbolism to him as it is both was shelter as well as the embodiment of life. Along with figure 37, Jung writes,

What does power avail us? We do not want to rule. We want to live, we want light and warmth, and hence we need yours. Just as the greening earth and every living body need the sun, so we as spirits need your light and your warmth. A sunless spirit becomes the parasite of the body. But God feels the spirit.170

It is clear in this excerpt that the tree represents God positively as the bringer of life and savior of Jung’s soul. Jung uses the term “parasite” to define the “sunless spirit,” making it into an unwanted entity. This spirit of darkness persona is repeated throughout Jung’s biography Memories, Dreams, Reflections, The Red Book, and various other texts on symbolism and the psyche. Generally, the sunless spirit it used to delineate the religious, pious man from the heathens, those without the sun in their heart and thus without God.

The Alchemical Tree

The tree as a symbol represented a myriad of things to Jung, as well as within various religions, the occult, and alchemy. Jung stated that the tree was key to many medieval alchemical texts and “in general represents the growth of the arcane substance and its transformation into the

169 Memories, dreams, reflections. p. 89
170 The red book - Liber Novus. p. 286
philosophical gold… the transformation process is like a ‘well-tended tree, a watered plant’.”  

Though the tree’s symbolism is quite clear, as it represents rebirth, growth, and the connection between the heavenly plane and the earthly, the alchemist and Jung however, take from various myths and illustrate the tree instead as the opus.

In *Man and his Symbols*, Jung discusses the meaning of the tree in dreams. Jung states the tree has a vast array of symbolic meanings “it might symbolize evolution, physical growth, or psychological maturation; it might symbolize sacrifice or death… it might be a phallic symbol.” Jung also states that it is the tree, or more specifically the double tree, that represents the process of individuation. This is seen in the symmetrical nature of the branches of the trees as well as with Jung's choice to use only blue and white showing a melding of two opposites into a whole in figure 56. Similarly, the tree symbolizes the connection between heaven, earth, and hell, acting as the world axis. The tree also represents the aging process, as the tree loses leaves and has an active regeneration. This particular tree is represented without leaves, appearing almost as a cross like structure, rather than a living, breathing plant.

A section of Jung’s *Alchemical Studies* is entirely devoted to the individual reception of the tree as a symbol. Using Jung’s art psychoanalysis technique while looking at figure 37 gives more personal insight into the meaning of the images in *The Red Book* for Jung. Looking at similar images, figures 55 and 56 which were created by patients of Jung’s who tried to “express their own inner experiences.” These two figures, in particular, resemble some qualities seen in Jung’s tree. For example, Jung’s commentary on figure 55 tells us that the solitary/axial position of the tree in the center of figure 1 references the world-axis or world-tree. Similarly, figure 56 suggests the solitary positioning of Jung’s tree to be a spiritual isolation. Jung also states that the

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171 *Alchemical Studies*. p. 274  
172 Otherwise referenced to as “centre”  
173 *Man and his symbols*. p. 90  
174 *Alchemical Studies*. p. 253
use of gold bits suggests the artist does not have a living conscious relation to the painting, but nevertheless she has an intuition of its value.\textsuperscript{175} If we direct these comments at Jung’s artwork it is clear the feelings of isolation he feels as well as the struggle he feels between his conscious and unconscious mind.

This particular tree unlike any other depictions of nature within The Red Book stands alone as an idealized symbolic depiction of a tree rather than representing a living, breathing plant. The tree is set against a stark white backdrop, making it feel very isolated, as many of the other full-page illustrations are fully decorated. This tree is particularly important as it does not portray a natural family tree, nor tree of Jesse, instead is illustrates symbols that were of personal importance to Jung. Smaller versions of previous artworks in the Incantation Series show the tree as the culmination of the series. The series must then express something of particular importance, as they are the only images in which the tree image is perfectly re-rendered. Healing was not just a simple step by step path, instead Jung, as seen in the Incantation Series, had to work through different series, different episodes, in order to heal himself as a whole. The tree acted as the culmination of Jung’s individuation process, and as the pinnacle moment in the Incantation series in which Jung came to terms with the relationship between the conscious and subconscious.

\textsuperscript{175} Alchemical Studies. p. 255
Conclusion

Throughout these chapters, I have endeavored to argue that the process by which Carl Jung wrote *The Red Book* represented the journey through which he endeavored to heal himself. Though often argued that Jung was afflicted by schizophrenia or psychotic diagnosis, he, instead, was more likely suffering from manic-depression. Personally, as one also afflicted with the same diagnosis, I posit that Jung’s illness reflects a certain uncanny resemblance of mania, particularly exhibited documented by his inability to sit still. This is evident in the exorbitant amount of material Jung created throughout his lifetime. Jung himself cited the period in which he wrote *The Red Book* as a time of deep turmoil and depression, in which he came closer with his psyche than he had previously thought possible. Jung in fact allowed himself to be dragged into manic-depressive episodes so as to understand that on which unconscious may have been fixated. Throughout his life, he questioned most everything around him, making him both a prolific scholar as well as deeply troubled by those things which he could not explain. Prior to the creation of *The Red Book*, Jung had experienced a personal tragedy: the loss of his closest friend and mentor, Sigmund Freud. This led to the period in which Jung was struck by vision after vision, a time in which his mind was full of unconscious thoughts and urges. Therefore, *The Red Book* was Jung’s way of working through his unique visions. *The Red Book* acted as a means for Jung to understand that he was not, in fact, going crazy, but instead that his subconscious had important information for him.

It is clear *The Red Book* is a manuscript that could easily take one’s entire career to translate, let alone understand. Isn’t that the point, however? *The Red Book* was not meant to be read, to be researched, it was merely an outcome of Jung’s process of healing. It was not meant for outsiders to understand, but only for Jung himself. Not only is *The Red Book* a challenge to understand, but due to its sheer size, and that it is written in calligraphic German, it is the magnum opus of Jung’s work as it illustrates ideas and motifs that are seen in earlier works by Jung. *The Red Book*, from the locale of its creation to its content, is entirely and completely
personal to Jung. His environment included a tower that was built by his own hand, free from all outside stimuli, even having no running water or electricity. The content of The Red Book is a discussion between Jung and Philemon, or his unconscious. It reflects Jung’s vast range of knowledge as well as his own personal history. Thus, it is unwarranted for us to believe that we might be able to understand that which the author discussed in the pages of The Red Book.

Jung’s paintings, with their uncanny movement and color combinations, immediately draw the viewer in. The longer one stares at the pages the more details and symbols and their meanings begin to emerge. The images in The Red Book require a certain amount of attention that can only be extracted from a hyperactive imagination such as Jung’s. The meaning of each and every piece becomes what the viewer believes or wants to see, and in each piece, a multitude of meanings can be siphoned. In each mandala, snake, and tree, Jung puts his entire self and allows us to search our own souls. Using Christian and Alchemical symbols, Jung effectively creates an image of his internal mental and emotional processes and allows us, through the reading of his texts, to, perhaps, see the way in which he came to have the close relationship with his psyche.

The Red Book appears to most, as merely a beautiful manuscript written by the renowned psychologist. Anyone, however, who has taken the time to try and understand it, can unequivocally state this is not the case. His magnum opus not only represented a healing process for the author, but I posit for all those who have researched it since. Through my personal journey with The Red Book, I have become aware of my burgeoning need to illustrate that which I feel. Like Jung, I feel an inability to sit still and accept that which I feel or that which I question. In studying his healing process, I have come to witness my own self-healing. Though the year prior to my work with The Red Book was easily the hardest and worst of my life, from the moment that I cracked open the spine of the large bright red book I have felt a certain amount of peace.
Images

Figure 1: Carl Jung Desk, Kusnacht House, Switzerland, c. 1915

Figure 2: Andreas Jung, Carl Jung Desk Specifications, Kusnacht House, Switzerland
Figure 3: Carl Jung, *Tower at Bollingen*, Bollingen, Switzerland, c. 1913-1950

Figure 4: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, detail from p. 109

Figure 5: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, Gouache, detail from p. 105
Figure 6: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, 1914, Gouache, detail from p. 55

Figure 7: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, Gouache, detail from p. 109

Figure 8: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, 1914 Gouache, detail from p. 129

Figure 9: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, Gouache, detail from p. 135
Figure 10: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, detail from p. 135

Figure 11: Shri-Yantra

Figure 12: Carl G. Jung, “Window on Eternity”, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 159
Figure 13: Carl G. Jung, *Detail cat. 89*

Figure 14: Carl G. Jung, *Detail cat. 90*

Figure 15: Carl G. Jung, *Detail cat. 91*

Figure 16: Carl G. Jung, *Floor plan from the Tower of Bollingen, c. 1930*
Figure 17: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 79
Figure 18: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, detail from p. 79

Figure 19: Diagram showing the four functions of consciousness
Figure 20: The Mausoleum at *Galla Placidia*, Ravenna, 425-450 AD

Figure 21: The Mausoleum at *Galla Placidia*, Ravenna, 425-450 AD
Figure 22: The Mausoleum at *Galla Placidia*, Ravenna, 425-450 AD

Figure 23: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 105
Fig. 24: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 50

Figure 25: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 71

Figure 26: *Cleopatra the Alchemist* in MS. Marciana gr. Z. 299 (*10th Century*)

Figure 27: Quetzalcoatl devouring a man, *Codex Borbonicus*, Aztec, *16th Century*
Figure 28: Carl G. Jung, *Serpent stone*, H: 57 cm, W: 28 cm, D: 30 cm. Photo: Vaughan Hart

Figure 29: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 54

Figure 30: The Mercurial spirit of the *prima materia*, in the shape of a salamander frolicking in the fire, *Scrutinium chymicum*, 1687
Figure 31: The Mercurial serpent devouring itself in water or fire, Barchusen, *Elementa chemiae*, 1718

Figure 32: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 108
Figure 33: Guido Reni, *St. Michael defeating Satan*, c. 1636

Figure 34: Giotto, *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata*

Figure 35: *Mary of Panagia*, 13th century, Yaroslav

Figure 36: Iglesia de la Vera Cruz, *Our lady of sorrows*, Salamanca
Figure 37: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 63
Figure 38: 12th century, *Tree of Jesse*, page from a northern French manuscript

Figure 39: 12th C, Lambeth Bible: ms. 3, fol. 198 Tree of Jesse. Place: Lambeth Palace Library

Figure 40: late 8th century. Book of Kells: Chi-Rho page, fol. 34v.

Figure 41: 1st decade 9th C. Book of Kells ms. A. I. 6 fol. 33 Carpet Page with Cross. Place: Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland). Library

Figure 48: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 59

Figure 49: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 60

Figure 50: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 61
Figure 51: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 55

Figure 52: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 53

Figure 53: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 52

Figure 54: Carl G. Jung, *The Red Book*, 1914, Gouache, p. 131
Figure 55: Unknown, from *Alchemical Studies* by Carl Jung

Figure 56: Unknown, from *Alchemical Studies* by Carl Jung
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