



urde beendet am 9 januar 1921/nächst es an die 9 monate unvollendet gewartet hatte. es drück  
für eine trauer aus/ein vierfach opfer. i' konnte mi' beinahe nicht entschließ'/es zu beendig'. es is das un  
unction/das opferfülle wesen all' lebendig'.

Jung's painting of the four functions of consciousness from page 127 of the Red Book.<sup>1</sup>

# Psychological Types

John Beebe

## **Psychological Types**

The concept of psychological types, which we can define as the regular differences in the way people become aware of and try to cope with their psychological issues, even when they are dealing with challenges to psyche that are similar, is a distinctive contribution of C. G. Jung to the development of depth psychology.

Jung focused on the basic principle that in relating to the psyche, we are what we are observing. Therefore, our “personal equation” (Shamdasani 2003, pp. 30–31) must be taken into account when we look at our complexes and at the complexes of others who are sufficiently significant to us to become, in effect, parts of our own psychological life.

## **Antecedents**

Jung’s studies in Paris immediately after receiving his MD in Basel brought him into contact with both Janet, who was studying subconscious fixed ideas, and Binet, who was exploring different forms of consciousness that affected the way people learn. Binet’s notions of “introspection” (“the knowledge we have of our inner world, our thoughts, our feelings”) and “exterospection” (“the orientation of our knowledge toward the exterior world as opposed to knowledge of ourselves”) and his recognition that the former attitude makes one a “subjectivist” (with more “spontaneous imagination”) and the latter an “objectivist” (with more capacity to “control” the imagination) (Ellenberger 1970, pp. 702–703) clearly influenced Jung’s early scientific work. In Zurich at the Burghölzli Hospital, Jung undertook his own studies of the effect of the affect-toned complexes of representation that Ziehen had already determined could impact the flow of associations that form mental life (Ellenberger 1970, pp. 692–693).

## **Initial Observations**

Jung’s use of the word association test with normal subjects led him to recognize that there were indeed two types of people with regard to the way the test situation was approached. One was a “type who in the reaction makes use of subjective experiences, often emotionally charged” and the second was a “type who shows in the reaction an objective, impersonal habit of mind” (Jung and Riklin 1905/1969, p. 132). He then generated subtypes of the type that privileged feeling and the type that privileged impersonal observation. In this way, Jung first established the difference in rationale involved in the way people approach being reasonable in relation to their own undoubted tendency to have emotionally toned complexes. By 1913, this early view had crystallized the notion of two types of psychological stance, one that could be called extraverted and feeling and one that could be called introverted and thinking.

## **Jung's Discovery of Irrational Consciousness**

Under the pressure of both life and world situations of extreme stress, Jung – in the midst of realizing that he and Freud would not be able to continue their theoretical father/son relationship, that he and his wife Emma could not continue their marriage under the principle of strict monogamy, and that his own way of construing reality was strongly influenced by what Bergson (1911) had taught him to recognize as “irrational” forms of consciousness – radically expanded his understanding of what he had come to call the “type problem.” His discussions with his psychiatrist friend and colleague Schmid-Guisan in 1915–1916 underscored the futility of trying to explain everything involved in type differences through a two-type model that equated introversion with thinking and extraversion with feeling (Jung & Schmid-Guisan 2013). Moltzer's postulation in 1916 of intuition as a third type of consciousness (Shamdasani 1998, pp. 104–5) and Jung's own long-standing suspicion that sensation might be a consciousness that is not just a subset of feeling led him to begin to think in terms of two axes of consciousness, one rational (composed of thinking and feeling) and one irrational (composed of intuition and sensation), and to realize that these axes described the “functions” of consciousness, which could still be used in one of two ways, the “extraverted” way that required a privileging of what is external to the observer and the “introverted” way, which requires intensive attention to subjective experience of the observer.

## **Jung's Differentiation of Typology**

By the time this enlargement of Jung's perspective on the “type problem” had differentiated itself, Jung had also clarified the difference between interpersonal object relations (relations to others and the world) and intrapsychic object relations (relations to the internal perspectives at the core of the person's complexes Jung was now calling “archetypes”). In this way, Jung added to the four functions of consciousness, the two basic attitudes (toward actual others and toward enduring mental representations against which relations to actual others could be measured) that had originally oriented him to the type problem.

## **Analytic Applications**

Jung's other findings were that there is a dominant trend of consciousness that can be “typed” as rational or irrational, introverted or extraverted, and in terms of its function discriminated as to whether it uses sensation (which tells us that something we are attending to “is”), thinking (which gives it a name), feeling (which tells us what it is worth), and intuition (which tells us where it is going and, thus, what it portends).

This typology not only enabled Jung to understand the basis of the type problem, but it became a powerful method for analyzing the conscious attitude, an essential basis for understanding the “relations of the ego to the unconscious,” the core subject of his analytical approach to psychology and psychotherapy (Jung 1943/1966). It has been left to later authors (von Franz and Hillman 1971; Myers and Myers 1980) to unpack the enormous implications of Jung's model both for analytical psychotherapy and for the understanding of normal differences between people. What is important to recognize is that Jung's is a theory of consciousness that

presupposes a relation to the unconscious that we do not originally understand, and that it is the nature of our psyches to cloud and crowd our relations with both others and ourselves with complexes. That these complexes themselves form a reservoir of consciousness (Beebe) that can be typed according to Jung's model of eight basic types of function-attitude (extraverted sensation, introverted sensation, extraverted thinking, introverted thinking, extraverted feeling, introverted feeling, extraverted intuition, and introverted intuition) had led to the present-day notion of these different types of consciousness as "building blocks of personality type" (Haas and Hunziker 2011).

### **Applications outside of Analytical Psychotherapy**

Most people, however, continue to avoid an analytic, function-attitude by function-attitude approach and to rely on the MBTI® assessment, sometimes online, of their type preferences, which class them as persons using a particular dominant and auxiliary function pairing that leads them to meet the world in both extraverted and introverted ways. This is not a depth psychological model, but it does lead to useful insights in such fields as child rearing, education (Murphy 1992), and management.

### **The Promise and the Limits of Typology**

The subject of psychological types is not complete, however, without an understanding of the expanded relation to the unconscious that can ensue when the type problem is consciously recognized.

This for Jung was the "transcendent" function that could enable us, perhaps, to transcend the type problem itself, in a more unitary experience of consciousness (Myers 2016). This insight has eluded most analysts and type practitioners, and its own transcendent promise needs further study lest the shadow involved in defining a unitary perspective on the basis of one's own realized typology (Beebe 2016) goes unaccounted for. Fortunately, Jungian typology is an ongoing discipline that can look at its own biases, once it recognizes that the type problem itself is going to be with us, for as long as we look at ourselves and at others.

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<sup>i</sup> Inscription on top: ‘*Amor triumphat.*’ Inscription at bottom: ‘This image was completed on 9 January 1921, after it had waited incomplete for 9 months. It expresses I know not what kind of grief, a fourfold sacrifice. I could almost choose not to finish it. It is the inexorable wheel of the four functions, the essence of all living beings imbued with sacrifice.’ The functions are those of thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition, which Jung wrote about in *Psychological Types*.” (*The Red Book/Liber Novus*, edited by Sonu Shamdasani, WW Norton, 2009, p. 307) For one explication of the image, see *The Bulletin of Psychological Type*, vol. 35, no. 2, “Jung’s Vision of Suffering One’s Psychological Type,” by Adam Frey. (2012).