

Review of: "Who Am I Really? – Illusions and Splits in the Mirror"

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"Who Am I Really? – Illusions and Splits in the Mirror" discusses an interesting topic. In the era of social media, people tend to present "ego/persona images, and absorption with 'likes' on the internet." The author has made an in-depth analysis of this prevalent phenomenon, penetrated into the root causes of the "As-If" personality, and come up with the Jungian treatment for potential healing. The article has integrated a popular social trend with a profound academic investigation, satisfying public curiosity with enlightening explication.

Moreover, the carefully culled illustration perfectly dovetails with the thematic investigation. In our society, everyone wears a mask to build his/her persona to the outside world, and, even inside his/her inner world, there is a twisted mirror to further distance his/her individual unconsciousness from the collective unconscious or the primitive archetypes. This well-chosen picture epitomizes Carl Jung's theory of personality: Self, Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus. The gate further intrigues the picture, promising a potential healing.

However, several points, in this reviewer's opinion, need to be further explicated.

First, the cause of the "as-if" personality calls for consistency. The article primarily ascribes the reason for the "as-if" personality to "the void, emptiness." For example, "The internal dissociation develops as a survival attempt and reflects there is a void where the feelings and emotions should be." "The self is felt as fragile and vulnerable, empty, and dead, as if nothing was there."

However, in many other passages, she also regards "fractured attachments and internal discontinuity" as the reason for the "as-if" personality. "The necessary acknowledgment of vulnerability and incompleteness provides an end to the flight from reality." "Underneath is a personality quaking, insecure, frantic to cover the holes with the acceptable persona."

"Emptiness" and "incompleteness," in this reader's opinion, differ a lot in psychoanalysis. For Sigmund Freud, a child is never empty, and he/she is always identifying himself/herself with somebody, first with the mother and then the father. Similarly, for Jacques Lacan, the child identifies with the comfortable surrounding environment in the Real, then builds his blurring concept of self at the Mirror Stage, and finally with the "Name of the Father" during the Symbolic. If the article could ascertain this central point and provide compelling evidence, its quality would be greatly improved.

Second, the article should include the discussions of Jacques Lacan and Sigmund Freud, who are two indispensable

figures in the topic. Lacan's theory of Mirror Image, which deals with the paradoxical relationships between the infant's fragmented bodily experience and unified corporeal image in the Mirror, is precisely the theme of this article. Freud, from whom Jung first learns and then departs, is another essential theorist in the discussion of Narcissism.

Finally, is it appropriate, both in theory and in wording, to seek "an authentic self, or a true self?" For Freud, the ego is to strike a dynamic balance between the id and superego. For Lacan, the subject is sustained by the perpetual (re)production of desire (lack), and desire defies an authentic self. For Carl Jung, the process of individualization embraces persona, shadow, anima/animus, and ushers consciousness into the individual unconsciousness and the collective unconsciousness. If a patient is cured, he only temporarily regains health, and to what degree, he becomes his "authentic self?" Thus the article should conduct a more comprehensive review and explicate the nuance among the self/identity/subject before arriving at the "authentic self," if there exists one.