

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

LA VIDA ES SUEÑO AND THE ARCHETYPES: A JUNGIAN LITERARY
ANALYSIS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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Norman, Oklahoma
2016

LA VIDA ES SUEÑO AND THE ARCHETYPES: A JUNGIAN LITERARY
ANALYSIS

A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND
LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

To date there have been no comprehensive Jungian analyses of *La vida es sueño*, despite the play's extensive bibliography. A Jungian analysis provides a novel perspective on the fraught relationship between Basilio and Segismundo as the ego-consciousness's rejection of the contents of the personal unconscious, typified in Segismundo as the Child-hero Basilio represses. Further, a consideration of Violante as the archetypal Great Mother demonstrates her importance to Rosaura and to the play as a whole, and an analysis of Rosaura's development illustrates a successful individuation through a consolidation of the anima and animus. Finally, Clotaldo as the Wise Old Man gives counsel to Segismundo and Basilio, and Clarin the Trickster personifies the contents of Basilio's shadow and is ultimately instrumental in the king's redemption. It is hoped that this reinterpretation of the play will encourage further studies of *La vida es sueño* from a Jungian interpretative framework.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Criticism of *La vida es sueño* has tended to focus on the person of Segismundo, the captive prince whose presence is first suggested by a singular tower in the "desierto monte¹," observed by two travelers, Rosaura and Clarín (1.1.47). The sound of Segismundo's chains evokes a "galeote en pena²," and the two travelers' misgivings are justified as Segismundo, unseen, exclaims "¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Y ay, infelice!³" (1.1.78,102). This cry is repeated as Segismundo is revealed "con una cadena y la luz, vestido de pieles⁴" (Calderón 91). The monologue that follows communicates that despite his beastly state and appearance, Segismundo is aware of the natural right to liberty his captivity denies him. Nonetheless, that Segismundo inhabits "un estado salvaje, feroz y bravío⁵" is reflected in his violent reaction towards the travelers' discovery of him, and his subsequent threats to Clotaldo (Menéndez y Pelayo 257).

¹ Deserted mountain.

² Galley slave in chains.

³ "Oh, what a miserable, unlucky wretch am I!" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 93).

⁴ In chains, with a light, dressed in animal skins.

⁵ A savage state, ferocious and untamed.

Segismundo's physical barbarity is amplified in his conduct in the second act as he is transported from his tower to king Basilio's palace, made to believe his captivity was a dream and that he has always enjoyed the lavish life of a monarch. Despite his improved circumstances, or because of them, Segismundo "igual a sus derechos con sus instintos⁶" (Lapesa 91), a mistake resulting in the murder of a palace servant, violence towards Clotaldo and Astolfo, and the intended rape of Rosaura. Segismundo's "época de furor y de dar rienda suelta á sus pasiones, mandando y gobernando y queriendo imponer su voluntad y albedrío á cuantos se le acercan⁷," is used by his father, Basilio, as proof that he is unfit to rule (Menéndez y Pelayo 257). The prince is then returned to his tower, where he will ostensibly spend the rest of his life in captivity. Upon reawakening to his former imprisonment, Clotaldo uses the circumstances to suggest Segismundo change his behavior, counsel that fosters Segismundo's "growing humanity, the tempering of his violent impulses by experience combined with

⁶ Equates his instincts with his rights.

⁷ "Episode of fury and of giving free reign to his passions, ordering, governing and desiring to impose his will on anyone in his path."

reflection" (Fox 142). This is only one instance in the dialectical process of transformation Segismundo undergoes, evolving from an unruly savage to the "príncipe perfecto⁸" of the third act (Menéndez y Pelayo 262). It is in this final act that prince overcomes his animalistic nature and resolves the characters' interrelated predicaments, from the restoration of Rosaura's honor to the pardon of Basilio and its consequent cessation of the civil war.

Segismundo's primacy in and centrality to the play is undeniable. The prince's story is present in each of the three *jornadas*, or acts, and integral to the development of the play's other characters. It is only natural, then, that criticism has centered on Segismundo and his experiences. Nonetheless, he is only one of many compelling characters in the play and in order to truly understand Segismundo's situation it is necessary to carefully examine the play's other characters, namely Basilio, Rosaura and Clotaldo, both in and of themselves and in light of their relationships with or to Segismundo. Fortunately, there are many analyses of the play's other

⁸ Perfect or ideal prince.

characters, both primary and secondary⁹. Despite the breadth and inclusiveness of literary critics' consideration of the play's characters, there is a marked lack of psychoanalytic interpretations and (with the exception of Susan Fischer) a complete absence of Jungian criticism of *La vida es sueño*.

The play's impressive catalog of critical studies consists of a variety of approaches that can be divided into two principal categories. Firstly, philosophical or ideological approaches have focused on the thought processes or belief systems that appear in the play, with dramaturgy and character analysis considered as an afterthought. One such approach is Menéndez y Pelayo's polemic criticism in which the critic praises the ideas presented in *La vida es sueño*, yet criticizes their dramatic delivery claiming lack of coherent character formation and oversights in logical story progression. Another example, considerably more measured and less divisive, is Dian Fox's article which views the play in

⁹ Select studies on Segismundo are Bandera, de Armas, and Lipmann. For Basilio, see Ruiz Ramón, de Armas (1986), and Lauer (1994, 1998). Rosaura is analyzed in the works of Whitby, Gendreau and Serna. For ancillary characters, see Anthony for Violante, Suárez-Galbán and Fulton on Clotaldo, and Sloman and Lech on Estrella and Astolfo.

terms of Christian skepticism as evidenced in Segismundo's redemptive process. These studies are certainly useful in acclimating the audience to the religious, political, and philosophical realities of the time. However, they tend to fall short in character analysis. As a theatrical work *La vida es sueño* by nature owes much of its dramatic strength to its characters, and therefore purely ideological interpretations are insufficient on their own.

The second principal theoretical approach critics have taken is that which focuses on mythology and allegory. These analyses and interpretations have taken numerous forms, from comparisons with Plato's allegory of the cave (Sturm and Cope) to *Oedipus Rex* (Sèse and Sullivan) and Ruiz Ramón's "El mito de Uranos" in conjunction with Blanca de los Ríos's theory of *los diez Segismundos*. While these analyses are both interesting and useful, they do not address the work as a whole but rather highlight piecemeal elements the play shares with mythology, often to the exclusion of the play's other content.

In addition to these main theoretical frameworks, philological studies as an analytic framework have provided valuable observations on Calderón and his

characters. Other critics have taken a sociopolitical route¹⁰ and yet others root their analyses in psychoanalytic approaches. Among this final category, the works of Gisele Feal, Christine Bridges and Susan Fischer are particularly enlightening. Susan Fischer's study, the only existing Jungian analysis of the play, examines Segismundo against the archetype of the Wise Old Man, as well as the concepts of the anima and animus, straddling the line between myth and psychology. Unfortunately, due to the briefness of her study and its inclusion of *The Tempest's* Prospero, little mention is made of the collective unconscious and no comprehensive analytical framework is formed nor even attempted. Similarly, Parker examines Segismundo's Tower as an archetype, but with no mention of Jung.

In 1965, E.M. Wilson wrote that new interpretations of *La vida es sueño* tend to be "merely the result of a perverse desire for originality or at best a wrong-headed modification" of existing criticism, because of the play's already enormous existing bibliography (63). Although Wilson's pronouncement has proven to be true in certain

¹⁰See Dian Fox, as well as Rupp, Vivalda and G.A. Davies.

instances, a blanket dismissal of new interpretations risks critical stasis and the reproduction of faulty or incomplete ideas which are accepted as truth simply because of the amount of criticism in which they have been propped. Among these problematic assumptions are the summary judgment and dismissal of Basilio's character as ill-intentioned, certain inconsistencies in analyses of Segismundo, regarding both his character and motivations, and the minimization or whitewashing of Segismundo's repeated intent and efforts to rape Rosaura and his inappropriate physical advances to Estrella.

Regarding Segismundo, relatively little has changed from early critics' interpretations of the phenomenology of his character. Critical frameworks may vary, but the results are the same; Segismundo begins the play in an unruly, animalistic state and at the play's end has evolved into the ideal ruler. In this thesis I aim to show that the apparent stasis of Calderón's critics' opinions of Segismundo's transformation, in light of some glaring oversights and inconsistencies, suggests the need for alternate interpretations and a more careful consideration of Segismundo as he functions within the context of the play's interpersonal relationships. The alternate

interpretation I will attempt rests on the theoretical framework of Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, with special consideration of the archetypes.

Psychological approaches to literary analysis are beneficial in the insights they offer into characters' thought processes, actions, and interpersonal relationships within the context of the play. A specifically Jungian approach provides a comprehensive framework for archetypal analysis. Within the context of the collective unconscious as it relates to individual psychic development, primarily, and to the compensatory needs of the social conscious(ness) and unconscious, secondarily, observations gleaned from careful psychoanalysis, in conjunction with inductive reasoning, yield critical insights into the play and its characters. The comparatively neglected, yet important, concepts of depth psychology in psychological literary analysis have proven fruitful in Shakespearean studies (Fike, Van Meurs). Regarding Calderón, however, Fischer's critical contributions are the extent of Jungian practices in Calderonian studies. By building on and contextualizing existing psychoanalytic studies within the larger context of the psychic process of individuation, a comprehensive

Jungian literary analysis of *La vida es sueño* reveals the brilliant cohesiveness and consistency in both the play's internal structure and in the psychological makeup of its characters.

Carl Jung's contributions to psychiatry are based largely upon conceptions (and perceptions) of the unconscious, understandably considering his formation as an early student of Sigmund Freud. Unlike Freud, however, Jung believed that the unconscious is more than an amalgam of the individual's repressed memories, complexes, and neuroses. Jung's conception of the unconscious distinguishes between the personal unconscious, whose contents originate almost exclusively from the individual's life experiences, and the collective unconscious. Perhaps Jung's most seminal idea, the collective unconscious can be defined as "a collective psychic substratum," shared between human beings of all civilizations and containing a common set of experiences and interpretative symbols (CW 233). These shared phenomena affect individuals and societies psychologically in the form of archetypes, described alternately as "pre-existent" forms or even a "tendency to form... representations of a motif," psychic junctures which

historically have manifested themselves primarily in mythology, but also in fairytales, dreams and visions (Jung, "Approaching" 58). While their content may be most apparent in myth, The contents of the collective unconscious "are never (or at least very seldom) myths with a definite form, but rather mythological components which, because of their typical nature, we can call 'motifs', 'primordial images', types or -as I have named them -archetypes," appearing in visions, deliria, and dreams (CW 227). These archetypes can be analyzed insofar as they appear in diverse cultures and circumstances, and Jung identified a group of common archetypes, chiefly the anima and animus, Child, Mother, daughter, the Trickster-figure, and the Wise Old Man.

Although the archetypes originate from the collective unconscious, and from there may appear or make their presence known in the psychic life of the individual, their compensatory function often corresponds directly to a psychic imbalance or repression of the individual's primordial drives. Consequently, in order to truly grasp the function of the archetypes it is often necessary to consider them in light of the makeup of the individual psyche. According to Jung, the individual psyche consists

of the ego, persona, and shadow. All three are necessary to the psyche: the ego for the existence of the individual; the persona, to function in society; and the shadow. The latter often functions as the storehouse of primordial drives, experiences and tendencies of the individual. Though the shadow's strength over the personal unconscious and conscious may vary, it always exists, threatening the stability of the psyche should the individual suppress or overly indulge it. Jung's classification of the makeup of the personal psyche is invaluable in examining Basilio and his motivations and decisions in the play.

A Jungian analysis provides an in-depth view of Basilio by way of a measured, if not objective, consideration of the king that serves the purpose of contextualizing Basilio's shortcomings without resorting to a sentimental condemnation of the king for the perceived cruelty of his actions towards Segismundo. Following a Jungian analysis we see the extent of the psychic conflict the king underwent in his dealings with Segismundo and, considering the perceived validity of astrology and alchemy during Calderón's lifetime, arrive at a better (if not more sympathetic) understanding of the

play's complicated father/son dynamic. Returning to the collective unconscious, it is important to note that while the repression of archetypes and their contents results in those archetypes overtaking the personal unconscious or conscious, their successful integration into the individual psyche (and the consequent balance between ego, persona, and shadow) results in individuation, a process which Rosaura successfully undergoes. Archetypes, then, serve a compensatory function for societies and individuals alike.

This thesis attempts an analysis within the framework of Jung's collective unconscious, first by examining Basilio's visionary experience and the interaction between his personal unconscious and the contents of the collective unconscious. Secondly, I address the archetypal figures that appear in *La vida es sueño*, specifically Segismundo as the Child-hero and his gaoler Clotaldo as the Wise Old Man. Additionally, Violante the Great Mother is responsible for Rosaura's presence in the play. Rosaura, in turn, is considered specifically in her "dialectical procedure" of individuation as the result of her protracted consolidation and incorporation of the anima/animus to form a complete whole, or self (Jung 74).

Finally, the Trickster-figure is examined as it appears in the form of Clarín, the play's *gracioso*. It is hoped that this analysis will provide a comprehensive new interpretation, shifting the interpretative focus from the feats and fate of Segismundo to a more inclusive consideration of the play's principal and ancillary characters, thereby situating character analyses within the larger context and underlying messages of the play itself, as a cohesive and consistent literary work.

Chapter 2: Basilio

While Basilio as Segismundo's progenitor is largely, if not universally, accepted for his biological¹¹ paternity and responsibility for his son's harsh upbringing¹², there is a third manner in which Basilio creates Segismundo. Through his over-identification with the persona, or the image of himself he presents to the world, and the psychic imbalance this over-identification creates, Basilio makes necessary the activation and appearance of the Child archetype in the form of Segismundo. The makeup of Basilio's particular persona is doubly problematic as it favors the intellect and consciousness to the exclusion of the primitive, instinctive psychic roots that form the unconscious. Jung warns "inasmuch as man has, in high degree, the capacity for cutting himself off from his own roots, he may also be swept uncritically to catastrophe by

¹¹ Alternately, de Armas argues that the play's inclusion of the *víbora humana*, or human viper, is indicative of "an illicit sexual relationship," given that its image is used in this manner in both *La devoción de la cruz* and *La hija del aire*, plays by Calderón. De Armas suggests that Basilio's "violent actions may be the result of personal suspicions, and these could have influenced his interpretation of the horoscope" (907). While I agree that his personal flaws affected Basilio's interpretation of the horoscope, the fact that aside from the use of the term *víbora humana* there is no indication in the play of Segismundo's illegitimacy makes de Armas' argument conjectural at best.

¹² See de Armas, Pring-Mill, and Maurin.

his dangerous one-sidedness" (*Two Essays in Analytical Psychology*, par. 243). It is precisely this one-sidedness that leads Basilio to break the law, spread lies and deceit, and subject Segismundo to such misery that he envies the liberty bestowed "a un pez, a un bruto y a un ave¹³" (1.1.171-72). In this manner Basilio creates his own catastrophe in Segismundo.

The Shadow and the Trickster

In addition to the Child archetype, Basilio's embrace of the persona as the whole of his identity results in the suppression the contents of his personal unconscious. These contents are manifest most clearly in the shadow. The shadow, Jung explains, is an archetype that "represents first and foremost the personal unconscious, and its content can therefore be made conscious without too much difficulty" (*Aion*, par. 19). Despite the relative ease of encountering the contents of one's shadow, given the nature of its contents it is not easily accepted by the individual. That it contains "weakness, namely a certain degree of inferiority and the existence of a lower

¹³ "What law, what powers of injustice or reason are capable of denying men the sweet privilege, the fundamental license that God grants to crystalline waters, to fish, to beasts, and to birds" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 94).

level of personality" makes this archetype particularly incomprehensible to Basilio, a man preoccupied with his strengths (*Aion*, par. 15). The makeup of Basilio's shadow, though not as explicitly clear as his persona, can be inferred from the content of his speeches. In his monologues, the king reveals a fixation with power and, more specifically, "el miedo a perder el poder¹⁴" (Ruiz Ramón, "El mito" 560).

Defined as the "parallel of the individual shadow," Basilio's, to be specific, in *La vida es sueño* the Trickster archetype takes the form of Clarín (*Archetypes* par. 485). By his appearance alone, the Trickster demonstrates the impossibility of a complete suppression of the darker side of the unconscious, carrying out its flawed premises to their natural conclusion. In his embodiment of the Shadow's contents, Clarín the Trickster shows "that certain types of behaviour," the futile attempt to avert or change fate, in Basilio's case, "inevitably bring about ridicule and humiliation and result in pain and suffering where they do not actually lead to death" (Radin 168). Ruiz-Ramón observes that in

¹⁴ The fear of losing power.

Clarín's final scene, "será por sus palabras -sus últimas palabras- como cambiará radicalmente la acción de *La vida es sueño*: a la guerra y a la violencia sucederán la reconciliación y la paz¹⁵" ("La muerte," 10). However, it is important to add, the pivotal change brought about by Clarín's words is itself the result of a change of heart in Basilio who, overhearing the dying man, is made aware of the wrongs he has committed. The Trickster works both as an agent of transformation and the signal that the "calamity," once passed, is "consciously understood," as it is precisely this understanding that is a necessary precursor to the plot's resolution (*Archetypes*, par. 487).

The Persona

Jung defines the persona as an arbitrary identity, a mask donned by the individual so that others perceive him or her in a certain light. That it is arbitrary does not indicate superfluousness; rather, the shape the persona takes is a response to the arbitrary, its contents are not inherent in the individual psychology but rather dictated by the individual and the society to which he belongs. The

¹⁵ It will be because of his words -his last words -that the action of *La vida es sueño* changes radically: war and violence will be followed by reconciliation and peace.

persona, as an arbiter of identity, allows the individual to belong to and fully participate in social or communal life. The other major psychic stratum within the conscious contents of the individual psyche is that of the ego-consciousness¹⁶ which is inborn and comprises the individual's memories, emotions, and thoughts. In a normally functioning psyche, the persona is complemented by the ego-consciousness and both of these psychic strata are complimented by the unconscious (both personal and collective). In the psychologically balanced individual, the ego-consciousness exists underneath the persona whose artifice the individual recognizes; there may be overlap, but not confusion between the ego-consciousness and persona. Of the persona, Jung writes:

Fundamentally the persona is nothing real: it is a compromise between the individual and society as to what a man should appear to be. He takes a name, earns a title, exercises a function, he is this or that (*Two Essays*, par. 246).

This aspect of the individual identity, while artificial, is a necessary bridge between the individual and the social structures that surround him. In addition

¹⁶ The shadow, while integral to the personal and collective unconscious, is not part of the individual consciousness and consequently is not included in the consideration of the ego's conscious contents.

to its bridging function, the persona conceals but does not erase the true individual residing in the ego and the personal unconscious. In the individual who over-identifies with the persona, however, this mask can impede or even block important contents of the unconscious, both personal and collective, from their intended synthesis with the ego-consciousness. Those who "become identical with their personas" reduce their psychic life to "[living] exclusively against the background of [their] own biography," thereby subordinating the ego-consciousness to the demands of the persona (Jung, *Two Essays* par. 221). The damage caused by over-identification with the persona, then, is twofold; not only is the ego subordinated to an artificial identity, but the contents of the unconscious are necessarily excluded as their dynamism is incompatible with the static, constructed identity that is the persona.

Given the role of the persona in society's perception of the individual, it is only natural that a man as constitutionally vain as Basilio would be preoccupied with it. The primacy of Basilio's persona is evident from his opening monologue. Referring to himself in the third person, "el gran Basilio" proclaims that he is acclaimed

for his astrological divining (1.2.604-43). Basilio continues his self-adoration in presenting himself as a devoted monarch with pious intentions, a man who will ultimately prove to be a "rey invicto"¹⁷ (1.2.761-65, 820-23). That Basilio claims to possess these qualities suggests pride or arrogance. That he affirms, repeats, and exaggerates others' belief in his possession of these qualities demonstrates his preoccupation with the persona. This preoccupation includes both the image he is presenting to the world and its reception.

"Ya sabéis," he tells his niece and nephew, pretenders to the throne, "que yo en el mundo / por mi ciencia he merecido / el sobrenombre de docto"¹⁸ (1.2.604-06). At first sight the statement might seem relatively harmless (indeed, if Basilio is in fact regarded highly because of his work, why shouldn't he be able to say so?), but the king has only just begun. Three times Basilio states "Ya sabéis," directed at Astolfo and Estrella and the "corte ilustre de Polonia, / vasallos, deudos y

¹⁷ Unconquered king.

¹⁸ "You know well . . . that my science has earned me the nickname of Learned in world opinion" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 101)

amigos¹⁹," before recounting his catalog of impressive abilities and deeds (1.2.600-12). It is not enough that the king has the attention of the court, or that he has total liberty to laud himself and his genius; Basilio must repeatedly insist that his listeners have prior knowledge of his greatness. The assertion that "me aclaman el gran Basilio"²⁰, in its use of the third person plural, further reinforces the weight Basilio gives to public opinion of him, whether real or imagined (1.2.611). It is not enough that he is *gran* or *docto*; Basilio's identity is fundamentally shaped by the fact that the people hail him as such.

Before concluding his speech, Basilio emphasizes one last time his love for Poland (ostensibly the reason behind his imprisonment of Segismundo), claiming that "por lo que os amo, vasallos, / os daré reyes más dignos / de la corona y el cetro"²¹ (1.2.828-30). The substitution of Astolfo and Estrella for Segismundo, then, is presented as resulting from the noble intentions of a king who operates

¹⁹ "You know well . . . illustrious court of Poland, vassals, relatives, and friends" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 101)

²⁰ "They proclaim me the great Vasily across the globe" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 101).

²¹ In the English translation, Basilio states, "out of my love for you, my subjects, I shall give you a king and queen more worthy of my crown and scepter" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 104).

primarily out of love and esteem for his people. With this speech Basilio has succeeded in recasting his motivations for imprisoning, and now conditionally releasing, Segismundo. Basilio's personal stake in Segismundo's success or failure is not addressed, and Basilio has successfully manipulated the audience to project Basilio's goodwill onto themselves. The image the king has presented of himself, of his persona, as a benevolent ruler proves to be effective as Astolfo expresses agreement with Basilio's decision, and all declare "¡Viva el grande rey Basilio!²²" (1.2.857).

Clotaldo, Basilio's confidante and Segismundo's jailer, questions Basilio's plan asking as a reward for his obedience that Basilio tell him his intent (2.1.1088-94). The first person to question the king since the play's beginning, Clotaldo's first contribution as the archetypal Wise Old Man is conjured as a result of Basilio's "state of spiritual deficiency," his questions and suggestions "designed to fill the gap" of the king's self-awareness and perspective (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 398). However, Clotaldo questions Basilio only after

²² "Long live the great King Vasily!" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 104).

having drugged Segismundo and set in motion the king's plans. "Razones no me faltaran / para probar que no aciertas, mas ya no tiene remedio²³," he states uselessly after the fact (2.1.1150-52). In this manner Clotaldo blunts the usefulness of his insight, subordinating reason to loyalty and thereby maintaining his "dubious affinity with daemon and beast" of Basilio's paranoid cruelty (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 441). Of course, it is unlikely that the stubborn Basilio would have heeded advice in the first place; indeed, the king ignores Clotaldo's comments simply stating "Yo me quiero retirar²⁴," before instructing his faithful servant "como ayo suyo" to tell Segismundo the truth of his situation (2.1.1156-58).

In conclusion, the framing of Basilio's self-aggrandizement reveals the underlying psychic imbalances that make him such an unstable ruler. Basilio, instead of seeking to become a whole individual, has nurtured his vain persona above all else. He is so insistent and insecurely dependent on his identity as an astrologer and

²³ "I wouldn't be lacking in reasons to prove that this is not a good idea. But it's too late now" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 111).

²⁴ "I'm going to step out. You're his mentor; go to him and, with the truth, free him from whatever confusions are besieging his thoughts" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 111).

diviner that he cannot conceive of himself in any other way. Furthermore, the centering of his identity around his capacity to reason, to use constructed systems of knowledge and understanding, in its progressiveness has blinded Basilio to the equally important unconscious. What should be a mere persona, a mask he shows the world, constitutes the whole of Basilio's identity. It is precisely this over-identification with the persona that prevents Basilio from individuation, and ultimately results in his downfall.

In this manner, Basilio exemplifies civilized man's tendency to overdevelop the intellect and consciousness to the exclusion of his primitive, instinctive roots. Basilio's rejection of the child is more than just a refusal of the root condition; it is also an affirmation of the superiority of the differentiated consciousness. Moreover, the king demonstrates a self-image marked by superiority, above the need to consult or heed the consultation of others. Up to this point in the play, Basilio has successfully manipulated his persona into that which his people desire. It is with the introduction of his son, Segismundo the child-hero, however, that the façade breaks down. The child-hero, a product of Basilio's

over-identification with his persona, will necessarily prevail as the king refuses to adapt to the demands of the collective unconscious.

The Visionary Experience

When an individual subordinates the Self to the persona the contents of the unconscious require compensatory action, usually in the form of an archetype. Of the archetypes, Jung writes "When conscious life is characterized by one-sidedness and by a false attitude", as in Basilio's case, "then they are activated -one might say, 'instinctively' -and come to light" in dreams or visions (*Archetypes*, par. 231). The archetypes, always present in the collective unconscious, once activated by the psyche in need of them, "arise in a state of reduced intensity of consciousness (in dreams, delirium, reveries, visions, etc.)" (*Archetypes*, par. 231). Jung attributes this to the fact that in these states the

Reduced intensity of consciousness and absence of concentration and attention...correspond pretty exactly to the primitive state of consciousness in which, we must suppose, myths were originally formed (*Archetypes*, par. 231).

Basilio's astrological readings are one such state, as are Clorilene's dreams and deliria. However, it is important to note that it is not astrology alone that warns Basilio

of Segismundo's destructive nature; indeed, were it the primary or sole source of this information, Clorilene's predictions would not have been possible. Both dreams and astrology serve as a vehicle for the contents of the collective unconscious because of the relief they provide individual from the demands of the immediate physical world and of consciousness.

Basilio's first encounter with Segismundo is through Clorilene who sees "entre ideas y delirios / del sueño . . . un monstruo en forma de hombre²⁵," predicting her own death in giving birth to Segismundo (1.2.669-75). Adding to his wife's predictions, Basilio affirms that Segismundo was indeed born under an inauspicious horoscope, "El mayor, el más horrendo / eclipse que ha padecido / el sol²⁶" since the crucifixion of Christ (1.2.688-91). Basilio proceeds to claim that, "acudiendo a mis estudios²⁷" he saw that Segismundo was destined to be cruel and impious, and would destroy Poland (1.2.709). It is important to note that in this speech, aside from

²⁵ Clorilene, "seized by the images and hallucinations of dreams . . . a monster in human form" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 102).

²⁶ "It was the greatest, most horrendous eclipse the sun has suffered" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 102).

²⁷ "Resorting to my studies" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 103).

Clorilene's death in childbirth, the description of Segismundo's crimes against Poland includes no specific, concrete offenses. As Lauer writes, "lo que tenemos en la *narratio*, aparte del nacimiento de Segismundo y la muerte de Clorilene, es simplemente hipérbole y amplificación; me refiero a la metaforización de Segismundo²⁸" (257). Through hyperbole and amplification Basilio lends gravity to a situation that otherwise would not call for it. Through metaphor, in the eyes of his people, he transforms the child Segismundo into a monster, showing the lengths to which the individual will go in order to suppress the contents of his shadow.

The first, and only, actual offense Basilio names is against his own person. The offense, however, is not slight. Segismundo "había de poner en mí / las plantas; y yo, rendido / a sus pies me había de ver²⁹" (1.2.720-22). Strategically situated between hyperbolic claims of death and destruction, Basilio's vision that "las canas del rostro mio" would become Segismundo's figurative

²⁸ "What we have in the *narratio*, apart from Segismundo's birth and Clorilene's death, is simply hyperbole and amplification; I am referring to the metaphorization of Segismundo."

²⁹ Basilio states "he would trample me underfoot; and that I would find myself vanquished and prostrate before him" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 103).

"alfombra," or rug, reveals the core of his fear to be the idea of subordination to his son (1.2.724-25). To a nature as proud and concerned with appearances as Basilio's, the mere image of the prince's rebellion elicits the exclamation "(!con qué congoja lo digo!)"³⁰ (1.2.723³¹). This acute expression of emotion from a man generally shown to be "frío, caluculador, maestro en duplicidad y en el arte suasorio"³² is telling (Ruano de la Haza 60).

Basilio, as the "padre prístino u original"³³, is naturally threatened by his successor who will inevitably come to replace him, and the image of his humbling is too much for the king to bear (Lauer 254). Of course, this threat alone would hardly serve as sufficient reason for Basilio to imprison his son. In claiming that his motivation for imprisoning Segismundo is to shield Poland from a tyrant, Basilio gains his court's retroactive

³⁰ As Ruiz-Ramón notes, this is the first instance in Basilio's long speech wherein the king displays real emotion. That the exclamation of disbelief comes not after the thought of Clorilene's untimely death, nor of Poland's destruction, but rather upon the sight of Basilio being humbled by his son highlights the king's priorities. Contrary to his claims of high esteem or concern for Poland, Basilio's priority is clearly himself and the protection of his personal pride ("El Mito," 553-54).

³¹ "(Aside: What anxiety it causes me just to say the words!)" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 103)

³² "Cold, calculating, master in duplicity and in the art of persuasion"

³³ Primitive or original father.

backing of his unilateral decision to tyrannously deprive the people of their prince. Without his hyperbolic threats to the kingdom and his claims that Segismundo would be exceedingly evil, Basilio's horoscope of Segismundo is little more than a vision of the natural replacement of the old with the young, the primordial conflict between father and son³⁴.

The appearance of the child archetype with the purpose of instigating change and growth is necessarily brutal in its delivery. Indeed, "The actual process of individuation" described as "the conscious coming-to-terms with one's own inner center (psychic nucleus)" commences "with a wounding of the personality and the suffering that accompanies it" (Franz, ch. 3). For an individual as vain as Basilio, any "wounding of the personality," of the persona he cherishes and identifies with so strongly, is met with horror and total rejection -even if that wounding takes the form of his son. Instead of accepting the possibility (or inevitability) of his future replacement by and consequent subordination to his son, a ritual occurring in every generation in all hereditary

³⁴ For analyses of the father/son conflict between Basilio and Segismundo, see de Armas (1986) and Ruiz-Ramón (1990 and 1992).

monarchies, for Basilio "the ego feels hampered in its will or its desire" and as a result "projects the obstruction onto something external," or Segismundo (Franz, ch. 3). Unfortunately for Segismundo, Basilio has "excessive confidence in his astrological skill," equating the science of astrology with his personal ability to understand and interpret it (Hall 339). The king has such overarching faith in himself and his abilities that he does not even consider the possibility of error on his part until irrevocable damage has been done.

After Basilio's over-identification with his persona necessitated or activated the archetype, the child appeared in his astrological visions. Segismundo, as Basilio encounters him in his astrological studies, "represents the preconscious, childhood aspect of the collective psyche," its appearance to the individual suggesting a disconnection from the root condition (Archetypes, par. 242). The image that the child "había de poner en mí / las plantas³⁵," elicits a violent reaction from Basilio, resulting not in the intended lesson in humility but rather a hardening of Basilio's already one-

³⁵ "Would trample me underfoot" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 103).

sided view. Indeed, the image of being humbled by the child haunts Basilio and motivates him to preemptively imprison and punish Segismundo. The appearance of the child archetype typically signals the beginning of a "maturation process of personality," or individuation, a process Basilio most certainly does not undergo (Jung, *Archetypes*, par. 270). When there is a conscious refusal to integrate the child and its qualities into the psyche, a compensatory "vehement confrontation with the primary truth" must necessarily occur (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 274). In the play, this "vehement confrontation" takes the form of a civil war and Basilio's public humiliation before his son.

Basilio's initial rejection of Segismundo, demonstrated in his total alienation of the child from himself and all other humans aside from Clotaldo, is continued throughout the play. Even in the confession of his own wrongdoings, Basilio manages to place the onus on Segismundo to prove he is "prudente, cuerdo y benigno, / desmintiendo en todo al hado"³⁶ (1.2.809-10). Basilio's pattern of scapegoating Segismundo continues as the prince

³⁶ "Prudent, rational, and benevolent in complete contradiction of fate" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 104)

undergoes his trial in the Palace. When Segismundo condemns Basilio for his actions, the king ignores his son's just complaints and instead accuses him of being "bárbaro," "atrevido," and "soberbio"³⁷ (2.1.1520,23)³⁸: the very offenses of which Basilio is guilty³⁹. Once again Basilio manages to shift all responsibility and blame onto Segismundo. While it is undeniable that the prince has shown a lack of restraint, indeed his killing of *Criado* 2 and his behavior toward the women in the court is unseemly at best and criminal at worst, that Segismundo has done wrong does not relieve Basilio of responsibility for his own mistakes. There is still "ninguna ley"⁴⁰ that justifies Basilio in punishing Segismundo for crimes he has not committed (1.2.773).

The consequences of Basilio's rejection of Segismundo, of his repression of the child archetype, are not made fully apparent until the third act. While Basilio believes his troubles to be locked up safely in the tower he has constructed, the *vulgo* he has neglected is

³⁷ Barbaric, insolent, and proud.

³⁸ In the English translation, Basilio calls his son "barbaric and reckless," transgressing in his "presumption and gall" (118).

³⁹ Hall notes "ironically, on the many occasions when pride (*soberbia*) is mentioned in the play, it is often by Basilio and his faction, who attribute it to Segismundo" (339).

⁴⁰ No law.

orchestrating a civil war. It is during this conflict, because of Clarín's prescient words, that Basilio recognizes his errors. Clarín, an archetypal Trickster, unknowingly and adeptly speaks on Basilio's core issue, stating "que quien más su efeto huye / es quien se llega a su efeto," and that "no hay seguro camino / a la fuerza del destino / y a la inclemencia del hado"⁴¹ (3.3.3082-83, 89-91). Clarín's dying words have clearly affected Basilio as he exclaims "¡Qué bien, ¡ay cielos!, persuade / nuestro error, nuestra ignorancia / a mayor conocimiento / este cadáver que habla"⁴² (3.3.3098-3102).

Nevertheless, Basilio still does not appear to comprehend the full consequences of his offenses. In his admission of guilt, he states his error as attempting to "librar de muertes / y sediciones mi patria"⁴³ (3.3.3108-10). There is no mention of the wrongs committed against Segismundo. However, the king valiantly leaves hiding in order to face his death "cara a cara" (3.3.3135). In

⁴¹ "He who most tries to flee from [death's] reach is the one who will first fall within her reach . . . there's no road that will protect you against the power of destiny and the inclemency of fate" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 149).

⁴² "How easily -oh, heavens!- we are brought from error and ignorance to greater understanding by this corpse that speaks through the mouth of an open wound" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 149).

⁴³ "In attempting to save my fatherland from sedition and death" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 149).

placing himself at his son's feet, the severity of Basilio's confrontation with the primary truth -with the child he has abandoned, imprisoned, and openly disavowed- is blunted by Segismundo's own evolved identity. Segismundo has developed enough morally to forgive his father. However, while Basilio's life has been spared, he is publicly rebuked for turning Segismundo into "un bruto, una fiera humana"⁴⁴ (3.3.3175). Segismundo goes so far as to claim that "hubiera nacido dócil / y humilde"⁴⁵ were it not for the "género de vivir" to which Basilio and Clotaldo subjected him (3.3.3180-81).

In sum, although Basilio encounters the contents of the collective unconscious in the form of his son, the child-hero, because of his over-identification with the persona, and the defining personal pride that caused it, he is unable to grasp the meaning of his vision. As a result he is excluded from the transformative process of individuation. Consequently, even though at the play's end Basilio is forced to accept the new order represented by

⁴⁴ "A brute, a human beast" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 150).

⁴⁵ "Whereas my graceful nobility, genteel lineage, and fine character should have made me congenial and humble, my living conditions and upbringing were sufficient to cultivate a ferocious disposition" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 150).

the dictates from his son and the *vulgo* whose insurrection brought Segismundo to power, it is not clear that Basilio truly accepts or integrates into his own identity, ego and persona alike, what he should have learned from the destruction of his persona by the compensatory presence and intervention of his unconscious. However, it is safe to say he understands the gravity of his selfishness and insecurities as he confesses "pues yo, por librar de muertes / y sediciones mi patria, / vine a entregarla a los mismos"⁴⁶ (3.3.3108-10). Both Basilio's reaction to Clarín's dying words, and his subsequent deferral to his son suggest, at some level, a genuine remorse and acceptance of the inevitable.

⁴⁶ "I, in attempting to save my fatherland from sedition and death, have in the end turned it over to the very people from whom I was attempting to save it!" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 149).

Chapter 3: Segismundo, The Child-hero

Introduction

The child-hero, in the form of Segismundo, is arguably the central archetype in *La vida es sueño*. The extraordinary circumstances surrounding Segismundo's birth indicate a cursed fate that prompts the father, king Basilio, to abandon his son in fear. It is this abandonment of the sole heir that ultimately results in Astolfo and Estrella's presence in Poland and, indirectly, in Rosaura's arrival. It is thanks to Segismundo's constitutional indomitability and the intervention of his mentor Clotaldo that he survives years of imprisonment and, over the course of the play, develops a sense of right and wrong. The hermaphroditic characteristic of the child-hero, of uniting opposites and promoting progress through mediation, is manifested in Segismundo by his restoration of order at the play's end, and his arrangement of matrimony between Rosaura and Astolfo. By way of an analysis of the trajectory of Segismundo's life I aim to show that Segismundo is best understood within the framework of the archetypal child-hero.

A note on the Hero's Misdeeds

It is important to note that the use of the appellation child-hero to describe Segismundo need not confer a sense of moral good, inherent or earned. Instead, the title simply refers to a specific cycle of experiences lived by an individual possessing certain characteristics, as will be seen in the discussion of the phenomenology of the child-hero. Ruano de la Haza highlights the play's reference to Phaeton and writes that, like Segismundo, "una vez que descubre su verdadero linaje, se comporta temeraria e imprudentemente⁴⁷" (Ruano de la Haza qtd. in Calderón 83, note 10). More than just a characteristic moral flaw of the Hero figure, Segismundo's violent nature serves a thematic purpose in the play. In his initial reaction towards Rosaura, and his threats to Clotaldo, Segismundo shows violence to be his natural reaction to virtually any human interaction. This not only establishes the severity of the character's bestial state, but also thematically provides evidence for Basilio's later claims to Segismundo's inherently violent and combative nature. That this reaction is a result of something fundamentally

⁴⁷ Once he has discovered his true heritage, he behaves recklessly and foolhardy.

wrong within Segismundo's character is reinforced by his behavior in the palace.

While his rage towards Clotaldo is to some extent justifiable, given the Old Man's complicity in Segismundo's upbringing, Segismundo's reaction to the *Criado* is not as easily excused. Likewise, while his lack of decorum with Estrella may be attributable to a lack of experience speaking with women in the context of a royal court, his intended rape of Rosaura is clearly understood by Segismundo to be the violation of another person's body. He claims "cosa es llana / que arrojaré tu honor por la ventana"⁴⁸ (2.1.1643-44). Again, here arises some critics' suggestion that Segismundo's brutality is a result of his upbringing that has desensitized him to the rules and expectations of civilized life. However, as Dian Fox writes, "All of *La vida es sueño* has chronicled the protagonist's growing humanity, the tempering of his violent impulses by experience combined with reflection" (142). Segismundo, then, by the third act must have some sense of right and wrong, and his ultimate overcoming of his violent impulses to harm and violate others,

⁴⁸ "I'll throw your honor out the window just to see if I can" (Calderón, *Life's a dream* 121).

specifically Rosaura, is hardly to be praised; even worse, aside from overlooking or whitewashing his repeated attempts or intent to rape Rosaura, critics have labeled his sentiments towards her as "deseo amoroso" (Lapesa 97), "pasión sensual" (Menéndez y Pelayo 263), and praised Segismundo for the "sacrificing" of "his passion" for Rosaura (Wilson 78).

The trivialization of Segismundo's violent impulses, though it may make for a more sympathetic character, in reality detracts from the play as it distracts from its message. The resulting palatability of Segismundo is accomplished at the expense of respect for Rosaura. Segismundo's actions are unjustifiable and inexcusable, and a reconsideration of his behavior from the context of the child-hero (or the Hero, in general) restores Segismundo to the characterization through which Calderón presents him. Finally, in conjunction with the fulfillment of the prophecy in both Clorilene's death and Basilio's defeat at the play's end, these violent acts illustrate that Segismundo was indeed fated to be "el príncipe más crüel"⁴⁹ (2.1.712). It is his overcoming of fate, of man's

⁴⁹ The cruelest prince.

capacity for "en las estrellas dominio⁵⁰," that makes Segismundo extraordinary, his history tragic, and the play so fascinating (1.2.737).

The Hero's Conquest: Darkness and Light

At its core, the purpose of the child-hero has traditionally been to conquer darkness with light. A central theme in the play, the struggle between darkness and light begins with Segismundo's mother, Clorilene. The darkness is carried through her to the tower in which Basilio stows the child representative of all the unconscious realities he refuses to face. The darkness into which Segismundo is born is fortified by the child's ignorance regarding his royal heritage, and through the destructive manner in which he is raised. Despite the instruction Clotaldo provides, without liberty Segismundo does not even have the option to exercise his free will. Consequently he is deprived of the normal social development of the individual, and his emotional and moral maturity suffer retardation as a result. This battle between darkness and light, between ignorance caused by secrecy and the natural inclination toward understanding,

⁵⁰ Dominion over the stars.

is mirrored in Segismundo's struggle between instinct and reason.

The Hero's Guide: Clotaldo, Wise Old Man

Though the specific "guise" he may take on can vary, the archetypal Wise Old Man generally appears "in a situation where insight, understanding, [and] good advice . . . are needed but cannot be mustered by one's own resources" (*Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, par. 398). Segismundo's imprisonment by Basilio is one such situation. First appearing to order the tower guards to seize or kill Clarín and Rosaura, Clotaldo may seem an unlikely aid to Segismundo. However, with his cold words Clotaldo provides Segismundo with a brutal honesty in stark contrast with the secrecy and deceit that mark Basilio's communication. In response to Segismundo's lamentations and threats, Clotaldo reminds the prisoner "que antes de nacer moriste / por ley del cielo"⁵¹ (1.1.321-22). In his confession, Basilio reveals that, besides serving as Segismundo's jailer, Clotaldo has been instructed the prince in sciences and the Catholic faith

⁵¹ "Even before your birth you were sentenced to death" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 96)

and been "solo / de sus miserias testigo"⁵² (1.2.758-59). Segismundo acknowledges as much when mentions Clotaldo to Rosaura as he who "mis desdichas siente" and because of whom "las noticias sé / de cielo y tierra"⁵³ (1.1.205-07).

It is because of Clotaldo's role as Segismundo's "ayo" that Basilio relegates to him the responsibility of guiding the prince through his trial day in the palace (2.1.1157). Clotaldo reveals the full truth of Segismundo's heritage and the cause of his imprisonment, encouraging the prince "que vencerás las estrellas, / porque es posible vencellas / a un magnánimo varón"⁵⁴ (2.1.1285-87). Unsurprisingly, Segismundo reacts angrily and attempts to kill Clotaldo, though his wrath subsides temporarily as an impudent *Criado* and the entrance of Astolfo interrupt him. Clotaldo is once again drawn to intervene stating in an aside "A Segismundo reducir deseo, / porque en fin le he criado"⁵⁵ (2.1.1619-20⁵⁶). Clotaldo

⁵² Alone, of Segismundo's miseries, a witness.

⁵³ "I know of heaven and earth" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 95).

⁵⁴ "With prudence, you can overcome the stars -because a virtuous man can do so" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 113)

⁵⁵ It is important to note that Clotaldo's reentrance to the scene is prompted not by Segismundo's behavior with toward Rosaura, but rather his responsibility towards Segismundo as the man who raised him. In this manner Calderón demonstrates the paternal aspects of Segismundo and Clotaldo's relationship, despite their lack of biological relation.

warns his charge "que seas más apacible, / si reinar deseas" considering that "quizá es un sueño⁵⁷" (2.1.1675-76,78). Segismundo's response that "A rabias me provocas / cuando la luz del desengaño tocas⁵⁸" reveals that, despite his rejection of it at the moment, he recognizes the "desengaño" Clotaldo is attempting (2.1.1680-81). This would suggest that the prince is, on some level, aware of the precariousness of his newfound power and the ultimate necessity for the light of a "desengaño."

Clotaldo continues to be the agent of Segismundo's ultimate *desengaño* in talking with the prince after he is returned to captivity. He warns Segismundo that "en sueños fuera bien / entonces honrar a quien / te crió en tantos empeños⁵⁹," emphasizing his role as guardian and the honor it commands (2.2.2143-45). Clotaldo expands the lesson to generalize that "aun en sueños / no se pierde el hacer

⁵⁶ "I must restrain Sigismund, for it was I, after all, who raised him" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 120).

⁵⁷ "Act more peacefully if you desire to rule; and you needn't resort to cruelty just because you have authority over others, because this may all be a dream" (Calderón, *Life's a dream* 122).

⁵⁸ "You provoke my rage by lecturing my about reality" (Calderón, *Life's a dream* 122).

⁵⁹ "But in your dreams it would be fitting, Sigismund, to show more respect to he who raised you with such care" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 131).

bien⁶⁰" before leaving Segismundo to reflect on his experiences (2.1.2146-47). True to the purpose of the Wise Old Man, Clotaldo's counsel is successful in "inducing self-reflection and mobilizing the moral forces" of the child-hero, providing "the unexpected and improbable power to succeed" (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 404). The prince is receptive to the Wise Old Man's counsel, concluding from his experience that "el hombre que vive sueña / lo que es hasta despertar⁶¹" (2.2.2156-57). Segismundo universalizes the uncertainty caused by his experience to encompass all of life, stating that "todos sueñan lo que son / aunque ninguno lo entiende⁶²" (2.2.2176-77). It is Clotaldo's advice that enables Segismundo to doubt his sense-perceptions, a doubt that eventually leads him to strive beyond earthly pleasures in favor of "lo eterno" (3.3.2982).

Both Clotaldo's influence and Segismundo's appreciation of it are seen in the final act as the Prince is once again freed from captivity. Clotaldo expresses

⁶⁰ "For even in dreams it pays to do what's right" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 131).

⁶¹ "He who lives dreams what he is until waking" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 131).

⁶² "And in this world, in short, everyone dreams what he is although no one realizes it" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 132).

defeat in stating "A tus reales plantas llego / ya sé que a morir⁶³," to which Segismundo replies not with his characteristic malice and fury of the second act, but with forgiveness and affection. Clotaldo's role as authority and guide is apparent as he is told "Levanta, / levanta, padre, del suelo," the reformed Segismundo stating "que tú has de ser norte y guía / de quien fíe mis aciertos⁶⁴" (3.1.2393-96). Segismundo then expresses his understanding that Clotaldo's role in his upbringing was motivated by the Old Man's loyalty to Basilio, his explanation echoing Clotaldo's earlier advice that he desires Segismundo "Obrar bien; pues no se pierde / obrar bien, aun entre sueños⁶⁵" (3.1.2399-2401). Segismundo's reform is challenged once more as Clotaldo confesses his loyalty still lies with Basilio, though the Prince is able to control himself and even commends Clotaldo for his virtue.

Background of the Child-hero

This archetype appears most commonly as either the child-god or child-hero. Representing "the hidden forces

⁶³ "I come before your regal feet, certain of my death" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 137).

⁶⁴ "On your feet, father, on your feet; you will be the compass and guide to whom I entrust my achievements, for I know that I owe my upbringing to your ceaseless loyalty" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 137).

⁶⁵ "I want to do what's right, for it pays to do what's right even in dreams" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 137).

of nature," the child archetype serves the purpose of reconnecting man with his root condition or "the preconscious, childhood aspect of the collective psyche" (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 273). As discussed in the previous chapter, Segismundo as the child-hero is the compensatory response of the collective unconscious to the psychic needs of Basilio. Jung notes, this archetype "represents not only something that existed in the distant past," meaning the root condition or primitive state of man, "but also . . . a system functioning in the present whose purpose is to compensate or correct, in a meaningful manner, the inevitable one-sidedness and extravagances of the conscious mind" (*Archetypes*, par. 276). Furthermore, Segismundo also serves the wider purpose of restoring order to Polish society, in undoing the damage caused by his father. The child reflects man in his primitive state, untouched by civilizing the forces of contemporary society.

This comes as a result of the general tendency "of the conscious mind to concentrate on relatively few contents and to raise them to the highest pitch of clarity," a practice resulting in "the differentiated consciousness of civilized man" (*Archetypes*, par. 276).

Despite the innumerable benefits to mankind from our collective intellectual and psychological advancement, the increasing differentiation between man's ego-consciousness and the personal and collective unconscious that complement it can be "a source of endless transgressions against one's instincts" (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 276). The child, then, by operating primarily from instinct and without regard to the artifice(s) of complex social realities, restores man's connection to his root condition. "The progressive ideal" that Basilio follows operates without regard to paternal affection or sympathy, and proves to be "more abstract, more unnatural, and less 'moral' in that it demands disloyalty to tradition," that tradition being hereditary rule (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 277). Basilio, in his presumed superior intelligence and judgment, has broken with tradition. In violation of "cristiana caridad" and with complete disregard for his son's birthright as prince, Basilio uses his reason to justify the unjustifiable, epitomizing one-sidedness (1.2.772). Conversely, "The retarding ideal," evidenced in Segismundo, proves to be "more primitive, more natural (in the good sense as in the bad) and more 'moral' in that it keeps faith with law and tradition" (Jung, *Archetypes* par.

277). Despite having been raised as an animal, it is Segismundo who insists on the rule of law, on his rights as a prince. It is through his "willingness to discover and to affirm his role in the classical order" that restores the integrity of the Polish crown (Soufas 289).

Phenomenology of the Child-hero

The first cycle of the child-hero's life, as described by Jung, commences with his abandonment. This is typically marked by a "miraculous birth and the adversities of early childhood -abandonment and danger through persecution" (*Archetypes*, par. 287). Even before birth Segismundo is marked by fate, through his mother's dreams, as "un monstruo en forma de hombre"⁶⁶ (1.2.672). His mother, in delivering him, abandons her son through death. The cursed child is born under "El mayor, el más horrendo / eclipse"⁶⁷, and predicted to become a cruel, iniquitous ruler (1.2.689-790). For this reason, and for others relating to his father's fear of humiliation, Segismundo is imprisoned in the tower from whose depths

⁶⁶ "A monster in human form" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 102).

⁶⁷ "The greatest, most horrendous eclipse" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 102).

"nace la noche, pues la engendra adentro"⁶⁸ (1.1.332, 72). Segismundo's subjects then abandon him (through no fault of their own, of course) as false news of his death is spread throughout the kingdom. Deprived of his rightful place as prince, Segismundo is also denied the protection of his people. In this manner Segismundo is condemned to a life in darkness, not only of the tower but also of his ignorance of the reason behind his imprisonment; repeatedly he asks what crime he has committed to merit the suffering he has endured.

The danger faced by the child in this first cycle of the child-hero's life reflects "how precarious is the psychic possibility of wholeness, that is, the enormous difficulties to be met with in attaining this 'highest good'" (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 282). This is not to say that the child embodies the highest good; rather, he works as the vessel through which the highest good may be attained. In the play this occurs in the final scene as Segismundo dispenses justice and restores order. Before this can happen, however, just as there are "all sorts of insuperable obstacles in the way of individuation," so too

⁶⁸ Rosaura remarks of the tower, in the opening scene, that from it the "night, conceived inside, issues forth" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 92).

the child must be subjected to seemingly insurmountable obstacles (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 282). In Segismundo, these challenges take the form of a damning horoscope and the consequent imprisonment his father imposes.

The second characteristic of the phenomenology of the child-hero is that of his invincibility. This quality appears in Segismundo as willpower, specifically in his compulsion to self-realization. As the child, Segismundo is "an incarnation of the inability to do otherwise" than that which his will commands, "equipped with all the powers of nature and instinct, whereas the conscious mind is always getting caught up in its supposed ability to do otherwise" (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 282). This is perhaps best evidenced in Segismundo's belief that "Nada me parece justo / en siendo contra mi gusto"⁶⁹ (2.1.1417-18). Segismundo's brutish inclination to impose his will is complemented, it should be noted, by the sense of perspective he shows when faced with Basilio. Although the king is right in condemning his son for the senseless killing of the *Criado*, Segismundo is also right to condemn his father for what he has suffered. Undeterred by

⁶⁹ "Nothing is right when it contradicts my delight" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 116).

Basilio's discursive tactics of distraction and assigning blame, Segismundo's power of reason leaves his characteristically erudite father with weak insults and accusations as his only argumentative recourse.

Thirdly, Jung proposes hermaphroditism as a key component of the archetypal child. Despite some problematic presumptions Jung makes regarding hermaphroditism⁷⁰, the underlying concept is both applicable and appropriate. Although Segismundo does not manifest outward signs of hermaphroditism, he does manifest the underlying unifying principal it expresses. In this context, the hermaphroditism may be symbolic as it is a "uniting symbol" and (Jung, *Archetypes* par. 293) Functionally, "It throws a bridge between present-day consciousness, always in danger of losing its roots, and the natural, unconscious, instinctive wholeness of primeval times"(Jung, *Archetypes* par. 293). It is the balancing of these two states that render Segismundo fit to live among others, and even to rule. Furthermore, he

⁷⁰ This point is problematic in that Jung does not distinguish between sex, gender, and sexual orientation (unsurprisingly, given psychiatry's backward stance[s] on non-hetero, non-cis people at the time). Beneath the convoluted application of sex and sex relations onto these principals, does apply.

is the direct cause for all the resolution we see at the play's end. Unification, his marriage with Estrella, and reunification, the restoration of the kingdom after a civil war and the restoration of Astolfo to Rosaura, are attributable directly to Segismundo.

Finally, the child is a "symbol of a renewed begetting," or "both beginning and end, an initial and a terminal creature" (Jung 267). On the psychological level, representative of the pre-conscious, Segismundo as child-hero is requisite for consciousness. In his compensatory capacity, Segismundo not only corrects his father's mistakes, showing him his errors, but also completes the cycle of hereditary rule. In his understanding, he accepts the inevitability of his own ultimate replacement (one may presume, if only from his imprisonment of the Rebel Solider which suggestions support for the existing power structures), deferring to the rule of law. The initial spark to Basilio's correction (in the form of the final act's vehement confrontation), Segismundo ends the cycle of over-identification with and reliance upon the conscious. Without losing his instinctual motivations, he uses reason to consolidate the pre-conscious, conscious and post-conscious while maintaining law and tradition.

Furthermore, his cool nature is evident in the final scene as he metes out justice.

Conclusion

Segismundo as the archetypal child "is all that is abandoned and exposed and at the same time divinely powerful; the insignificant, dubious beginning, and the triumphal end" (Jung 268). In him lies both the nucleus of evil predicted by Basilio and intimated by Clorilene, and the hope for the restoration of order. Dramatically, he serves as both the cause for the play's central complications and the source of its resolution. Through trial and error, we see in Segismundo the dangers of yielding completely to the flesh, as well as the fallacies of human reason and understanding (also seen in Basilio's case). His successful development is due, in no small part, to the intervention of the Wise Old Man, Clotaldo, and the counsel he provides. However, it is ultimately the child himself who makes the decision to fulfill his higher purpose. The child archetype proves successful as the proud and overbearing Basilio is brought to humility, and Poland has its prince.

Chapter 4: Rosaura

Of the many permutations of character appearances and interactions throughout *La vida es sueño*, Basilio and Rosaura are not made aware of each other until the final scene of the third act and, even then, they are united only through their connection to Segismundo. Nevertheless, both characters are submitted to a psychological test and where Basilio's inflexibility leads him to fail, Rosaura's adaptability results in her success. The process of individuation, previously discussed with regard to Basilio, is initiated in Rosaura with a "wounding" of the personality by the anima. To regain her honor, Rosaura is driven by the emotive force of the anima while her conviction rises from the archetypal animus. It is only through Rosaura's understanding and assimilation of both archetypes into the ego-consciousness and a consolidation of their contents that she individuates.

Violante, the Great Mother

Ruth Anthony's analysis of Rosaura views the young heroine primarily in terms of her being "Violante's daughter" (171). This novel perspective highlights the shared experiences between the mother and daughter, and

reveals the necessity of Violante to the play, specifically in her embodiment of the Great Mother⁷¹. Violante's role as Great Mother begins with the wounding experience she shares with Rosaura. Violante, caught up in the "intrigue and self-deception" characteristic of the anima, by the "chaotic urge to life" this archetype engenders, was easily preyed upon by Clotaldo (Jung, *Aion* par. 56, 64). Rosaura, "heredera de fortunas"⁷², explicitly acknowledges her mother's role in creating this fortune, stating, "corrí con ella una propia" (3.3.2776-77). Both women, relegated to "the land beyond the court, to a place outside of the ego where sexually active and reproductive women can be found," each in their own time have found themselves "left to carry the burden of passion and violence from which the men have escaped by denial" (Anthony 167). In this manner, Violante's first

⁷¹ While employing the term, that Anthony does not mention Jung (or any other psychologist, in referencing the Great Mother) suggests a vision of the archetype as more of a literary phenomenon than a psychological one. Thus I find it necessary to provide a brief explanation of the role this archetype plays in the psyche, and the ramifications it would have in Rosaura's own psychological development.

⁷² Kidd's translation lacks the nuance of the original, interpreting Rosaura's words as "And thus I needn't say that her story fortune ran me through many shipwrecks of my own" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 144). The passage is better understood as "heiress of [Violante's] fortunes," Rosaura followed in her mother's fate.

contribution as Mother to Rosaura is manifest in her life giving biological maternity, and an attendant inheritance of a cursed fate⁷³.

Where Violante has failed by example, however, she succeeds in initiative. It is Rosaura's mother who motivates her daughter to seek revenge. Abandoned by her lover Astolfo who seeks to improve his fortune in Poland through marriage to Estrella, Rosaura relates the misery she endured, "declarándome muda"⁷⁴ because of the unspeakable nature of the cause of her pain (3.3.2804). "Violante, mi madre, ¡ay cielos!, / rompió la prisión"⁷⁵ of Rosaura's silence, able to do so because of her own past (3.3.2810-11). Her daughter freed from silence, Violante then instructs Rosaura to follow Astolfo and make him fulfill his obligation "a la deuda de mi honor"⁷⁶ (3.3.2834). Furthermore, Violante is also the reason

⁷³ This quote follows another telling passage of Rosaura's monologue, in which she states "nací yo tan parecida / que fui un retrato, una copia, / ya que en la hermosura no, / en la dicha y en las obras" (3.3.2770-73; "I was born, so similar to my mother that I could have passed for her double, if not in loveliness then in luck and circumstances" [*Life's a Dream* 144]). Both quotes reflect the fateful knot between the mother and daughter, that Rosaura's experience is a reiteration of Violante's.

⁷⁴ "Refusing to talk about it" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 145).

⁷⁵ Violante, "oh, heavens! -she broke [my words] free of their prison" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 145).

⁷⁶ "To pay the debt of my honor" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 145).

behind Rosaura's transvestism, and provides her the sword needed to find aid among the nobles of the Polish court. Violante's responsibility, as life-giver and cause for renewed hope, for Rosaura's presence is clear. However, she is also indirectly the cause for much upheaval in the court; were it not for Violante's intervention in her daughter's fortune, Rosaura's disruptive presence in Poland would not have been possible. Violante is, then, "the Great Mother who is both the giver and destroyer of life, Violante stands in the play for that which sends forth life -and that which can cause the war of all against all" (Anthony 178).

Definition of Terms

Both the animus and anima are archetypes of the collective unconscious, and together with the shadow they are the primary influencers of the personal unconscious. The anima, in short, is femininity, identifiable with the principle of Eros (*Aion*, par. 58). As the "the chaotic urge to life" she is the "life behind consciousness that cannot be completely integrated with it, but from which, on the contrary, consciousness arises" (*Aion* pars. 64, 57). The animus, in turn, is the "masculine personification of the unconscious," representative of

Logos (*Aion* par. 296). Whereas the anima operates primarily in emotion and moods, the animus's strength derives from opinions that "have the character of solid convictions that are not lightly shaken, or of principles whose validity is seemingly unassailable" (*Two Essays* par. 331). These archetypes "cannot be integrated into consciousness while their contents remain unknown" (*Two Essays* par. 339).

Rosaura, Animus-Possessed

In the first act, "the cross-dressed, hippogryph-riding amazon Rosaura" has come to Poland from Moscow in pursuit of her former lover, Astolfo (Kluge 36). In order to make this journey, Rosaura has had to take on "los atributos del poder masculino"⁷⁷, thereby gaining access to both experiences (traveling from Moscow to Poland with little more than a lackey for company) and places (the forbidden tower⁷⁸ of Segismundo, isolated on a

⁷⁷ The attributes of masculine power.

⁷⁸ Feal calls the tower "un símbolo del seno materno" from whence Segismundo is born, supporting her claim with the prince's repeated references to birth (36). Anthony responds to Feal's comparison, adding to her equivalence of Basilio's impregnation of Clorilene to rape, that "The mob that penetrates the tower to which Segismundo was returned repeat in act 3 the act of rape and violent birth that Basilio had striven to disown" (175). While I do not share Anthony's belief in the necessarily violent nature of Segismundo's conception, she is correct in pointing out the penetrative nature of entering the

mountainside) prohibited to women (Gendreau Massaloux 1045). These masculine *atributos* extend beyond Rosaura's disguise as a man and the sword she carries, however. The very impulse behind the proactive reclamation of her honor stems from the animus. "Only in the 'manly' act of coming to Poland," of fighting for her honor, is Rosaura able to "reclaim the identity the conditions of her birth have denied her" (El Saffar 91). Despite its noble intentions and justified nature, Rosaura's quest to restore her honor proves to be premised on an unbending concept of honor that lacks nuance. In the first two acts, Rosaura seems to be in a state of animus-possession, and it is not until the third act that she identifies and consequently overcomes the influence of the animus.

"On a low level," in the case of animus-possession, "the animus is an inferior Logos, a caricature of the differentiated mind," Jung writes (*Alchemical Studies*, par. 60). This inferior Logos retains its characteristic conviction and determination, but in its caricaturized

tower, a womb-like structure whose entrance is strictly forbidden. It follows that Rosaura, too, in stumbling upon the tower and entering it to investigate the chains and laments she and Clarín overhear, has likewise penetrated the tower. In this manner, her action of discovering Segismundo is transgressive in its masculinity, penetration made possible through the violation of a royal decree.

obstinacy is devoid of its capacity for reflection and the critical evaluation of the ideas it espouses. In Rosaura, the inferior Logos that is the nucleus of the animus-possession is seen at work in her insistence on the idea of the restoration of her honor in the specific way that she wants it to be done, whatever the cost. In her argument with Clotaldo she demonstrates a moral relativism indicative of a disregard for or lack of understanding of the unreasonable nature of her request. As Kluge notes, this conversation reveals that honor's "elaborate and complicated 'laws' represent a kind of deterministic web that not only entangles the inflicted and the inflictor but also third parties who suddenly find themselves obliged by its social code" (37). Ultimately, Rosaura's argument rests upon "an absurd content" (Kluge 37). While Kluge attributes the absurdity of the situation to the Golden Age conception of honor itself⁷⁹, the structure of Clotaldo and Rosaura's exchange and Rosaura's subsequent flight to the battlefield suggest that the absurdity lies rather in Rosaura's insistence on holding Astolfo accountable. Indeed, Clotaldo offers his "hacienda" to

⁷⁹Kluge does, however, admit Benjamin and Reichenberger as two supporters viewing "Calderón's treatment of honor as uncritical" (38).

sponsor Rosaura in a convent. If honor were Rosaura's only goal, this is a perfectly honorable way of living out her life. However, she is bent on making Astolfo fulfill his obligation to her.

Eros as a Means

Despite her overt embrace of the animus, in the play Rosaura does not completely lose touch with Eros, her inherent femininity. Indeed, it is precisely this continued connection to her femininity, to all that is gentle, sensitive, and nurturing, that enables Rosaura to establish a connection with Segismundo. Moreover, in showing compassion to Segismundo, Rosaura is in a way protecting herself. In their initial encounter, Segismundo's violent reaction to having been overheard is tempered by Rosaura's plea that "Si has nacido / humano, baste el postrarme / a tus pies para librarme"⁸⁰ (1.1.187-89). Rosaura's words free Segismundo from the violent desire to "hacer pedazos" of her⁸¹, prompting the prince to confess "Tu voz pudo enternecerme, / tu presencia

⁸⁰ "If you're human by birth, my kneeling at your feet will be sufficient cause for you to spare me" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 94).

⁸¹ "Rip [her] to shreds" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 94)

suspenderme⁸²" and relate the story of his solitary life (1.1.190-91). Before her interruption by Clotaldo's entrance to the scene, Rosaura intends to relate her own misfortunes to Segismundo "por si acaso mis penas / pueden aliviarte en parte⁸³" (1.1.273-74). Rosaura, then, despite her painful past and the untold obstacles she has faced in her journey from Moscow to Poland, when faced with the pain of another is naturally inclined to compassion and a desire to alleviate suffering. It is this selflessness of hers that ingratiates her to Segismundo and allows the prince to see, for perhaps the first time in his life, human kindness.

Additionally, Rosaura's embodiment of femininity serves as a means to her ultimate end of reclaiming Astolfo. It is her closeness with Estrella as her sole confidante that allows Rosaura access to her retrato Astolfo still wears around his neck. In the Palace scenes wherein Rosaura retrieves her portrait from Astolfo, without Estrella discovering her secret: "Rosaura demonstrates that she has learned womanly ways of

⁸² "Your voice has filled me with sympathy; your appearance, with wonder" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 95).

⁸³ "If by chance my sufferings might give you some relief" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 96).

achieving her ends, and while she has not regained her honor, she has successfully foiled Astolfo's courtship of Estrella" (Lavroff 491). The retrato is symbolic of Rosaura's identity as a whole; in recovering her image, Rosaura recovers a part of herself. She is no longer beholden to Astolfo as his past lover in that her connection to him cannot harm her through Estrella. Furthermore, with the clever ruse she creates to explain her physical struggle over the retrato with Astolfo, she drives a wedge (however small) between Astolfo and Estrella's courtship.

Still unaware of Clotaldo's true relationship to her, Rosaura has nevertheless followed his advice to be patient and entrust in him the restoration of her honor. However, in the third act as Clotaldo refuses to battle Astolfo (owing to the royal having previously saved Clotaldo's life from Segismundo) and instead offers to sponsor Rosaura in a convent. This is unacceptable to Rosaura who, it now becomes apparent, is intent not only on safeguarding her honor but also on arriving at some semblance of justice for the betrayal she has suffered. As Astolfo's deception of her was premised on a false promise of marriage, the only way to right the situation is

through the granting of the promised matrimony. The purely feminine methods of persuasion Rosaura has employed in the second act prove to be insufficient and the muscovite finally appropriates both ends of the gender binary in order to regain what she has lost.

Consolidation of Anima and Animus

In the third act, Clarín announces Rosaura's approach, describing the heroine as "airosa una mujer"⁸⁴ (3.3.2687). From Clarín's gendering of Rosaura it would seem that despite her battle garb, Rosaura is clearly a female. However, as Rosaura makes clear in her own words, that in addition to now being a "monstruo de una especie y otra, / entre galas de mujer, / armas de varón me adornan"⁸⁵, she also understands the implication of her past manifestations as man and woman (3.3.2725-27). Speaking to Segismundo of the times he has seen her, Rosaura states "La primera me creíste / varón" while Segismundo was still imprisoned, "donde fue tu vida / de

⁸⁴ "A remarkable woman" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 143).

⁸⁵ "Like a monstrous hybrid, I mix the fine clothes of a woman with the weapons of a man" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 144).

mis desdichas lisonja⁸⁶" (3.3.2716-19). Rosaura associates her first apparition as a man, an embodiment of the animus, with both suffering -both her own, and Segismundo's. "La segunda me admiraste / mujer," she continues, relating her time in the palace, "cuando fue la pompa / de tu majestad un sueño, / una fantasma, una sombra⁸⁷" (3.3.2720-23). Femininity is here associated with Segismundo's glorious, but ultimately substanceless, *sueño* in the palace, and Rosaura recognizes the inconstancy of the anima. Finally, she has now become a combination of the two, a *monstruo*, before narrating the events that brought her to Poland.

Rosaura's knowledge and understanding of both archetypes is made abundantly clear as she lays out her request to Segismundo. In the recognition of their natures, contents, and functions, Rosaura is able to master both and consequently become liberated from them. Eros moves Rosaura to expresses her desire to "persuadirte

⁸⁶ "The first time was in your cruel prison, where you took me for a man and your life made my misfortunes seem flattering" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 143-44).

⁸⁷ "The second time -when you saw your majestic splendor reduced to a dream, a ghost, a shadow -you beheld me as a woman" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 144).

/ el remedio de mi honra⁸⁸," using her ability to "enternecerte / cuando a tus plantas me ponga" and move Segismundo "que me valgas / en mi agravio y mi congoja" (3.3.2902-11). From Logos she shows appreciation for the ideas underlying Segismundo's restoration, stating "vengo a alentarte / a que cobres tu corona⁸⁹," in service to Segismundo "cuando a tus gentes socorra" and finally "varón, vengo a valerte / con mi acero y mi persona" (3.3.2904-05, 08-09, 12-13). While the Rosaura of the third act identifies herself as a monster, in reality she is at her most human in her consolidation of the anima and animus. It is in this state, as a half-man, half-woman, possessed not by the anima or animus but rather the master of both, keenly aware of both their strengths and the demands they make, that Rosaura, now master of her fate, joins the battle. Despite the lack of a definitive commitment or even answer from Segismundo, Rosaura is true to her word and fights for Segismundo.

⁸⁸ "As a woman, I come to move you to the cause of my honor. . . I come to beg your sympathy by throwing myself at your feet . . . As a woman, I come to request your support in my dishonor and anguish" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 146).

⁸⁹ "As a man, I come to encourage you to recover your crown . . . I come to serve you by aiding your soldiers . . . I come to support you with my sword and my character" (Calderón, *Life's a Dream* 146).

In conclusion, while Rosaura's ill fate is due in part to her mother's legacy, it is also Violante's intervention that sends Rosaura to Poland disguised as a man (and charged with the masculine singleminded determination to reclaim her honor). Rosaura, more than a mere extension of her mother, grows from the animus-possessed woman bent on revenge to a being marked by equilibrium. Throughout the play she shows a continued connection with Eros, her feminine nature, that allows her to accomplish feats that would otherwise prove impossible (e.g. her connection with Segismundo, her deceptions in the Palace). In the third act Rosaura's intimate knowledge of herself, of both her masculine animus and her feminine anima, enables her to reach Segismundo, to connect with his intellect and his growing sense of honor. While the decision to aid Rosaura ultimately lies with Segismundo, as she appears in the third act as "the 'woman' is in control of her horse," the symbol for her passion, she has overcome her psychic shortcomings and individuated as a complete, realized being (Lavroff 493).

Chapter 5: A Constellation of Archetypes

A Compensatory Text

In the 1930 essay "Psychology and Literature" the Swiss psychiatrist defines two categories of literature, psychological and visionary. The former deals primarily in the common day-to-day experiences of man that are easily grasped by the conscious mind. Considering the depth of its characters and the complexity of its central themes, it is undoubtedly to the category of visionary literature that *La vida es sueño* belongs. Jung explains that in visionary literature "the material . . . is no longer familiar. It is a strange something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind -that suggests the abyss of time separating us from pre-human ages, or evokes a super-human world of contrasting light and darkness. It is a primordial experience which surpasses man's understanding, and to which he is therefore in danger of succumbing" (Jung, "Psychology" 220-21). The "hinterland of man's mind" Jung mentions resides in the collective unconscious, in "that matrix of life in which all men are embedded" (Archetypes, par. 230).

Of the visionary work, Jung poses the vital question "In what relation does it stand to the conscious outlook of [the artist's] time?" ("Psychology" 227). To attempt an answer, *La vida es sueño*, more than the dramatic sum of its parts, reflects the identity crisis Spain underwent in the 17th century. When viewed as a visionary work of art, *La vida es sueño* is shown to be the embodiment of the archetypes of the collective unconscious, affecting not only the characters who walk among them, but the collective audience of the play, the epoch or social reality in which the play was made. "Whenever the collective unconscious becomes a living experience and is brought to bear upon the conscious outlook of an age, this event is a creative act which is of importance to everyone living in that age" (Jung, "Psychology" 227). In this manner *La vida es sueño* in its use of the archetypes reveals both the roots and nature of ills both psychic and social. "Every period has its bias, its particular prejudice and its psychic ailment. An epoch is like an individual," sharing both psychic flaws and a tendency toward ill-advised repression of one's flaws (Jung, "Psychology" 227).

King Basilio's repression of Segismundo is symbolic of Spain's own rejection of the realities of its past. With "El programa de reforma iniciado en 1621," Tovar de Teresa writes, "España rompió el vínculo dinámico entre sus glorias pasadas, sus intentos purificadores en ese presente y su incierto futuro cada vez más amenazador" (68). Just as Basilio excludes the contents of his unconscious to the detriment of his psyche and ultimately his nation, Spain denies its past and in the process becomes fractured and ultimately unsustainable. Reflective of Basilio's grotesque treatment of his son, in Spain "El resultado" of its fracturing "fue la deformación más profunda que una nación haya sufrido en su historia; deformación que se manifestó en una vehemente locura colectiva de delirios y resentimientos" (Tovar de Teresa 69). In the context of a Jungian interpretation, then, Spain of the 17th century can be understood as a flawed entity struggling between what it believes itself to be, its national identity or persona, and the suppression of the contents of its unconscious.

In Violante and Rosaura, we see both the cruel psychic reality of the abandoned dishonored woman, as well as the limitations social beliefs placed upon women,

rendering them virtually defenseless against dishonor once perpetrated. Rosaura and Clotaldo's intense arguments reveal the fraught question of honor during Calderón's time. Violante in her solitary absence from the play (though her words are communicated through Rosaura, and her history with Clotaldo, she is never physically present) typifies woman as excluded from society, her honor and livelihood dependent upon the retractable promises of her lover. Rosaura herself demonstrates the never-ending cyclical nature of dishonor and betrayal, once perpetrated. In order to even begin the quest to restore her honor, Rosaura must conceal her womanhood, already risking the appearance of "liviandad," of impropriety or looseness, for her transvestism (2.1.202). That Rosaura must undergo the play's intense trials in pursuit of her honor, a quality valued so highly by her society, is indicative of a national ill in want of reform. In Violante and Rosaura, honor's demands are shown to be cruel, its victims rendered powerless by its contradictory standards.

Naturally, in addition to these characters and the interpretations I have provided, there is virtually endless potential for analysis of *La vida es sueño* by way

of a Jungian framework. Within the context of the play, limiting the analysis to the relationships between characters, much can be contributed to character studies by employing Jung's approach to the individual psyche. Contextually, the archetypes that appear and the circumstances surrounding them can reflect the primary social preoccupations of the time and even provide the keys to their resolution. I would be remiss in drawing too many conclusions from this study as Jungian studies on Calderón are in their infancy. It will take interdisciplinary expertise to address the finer problems of the relationship between the ego, persona, and shadow, to fully explore the process of individuation, and to perform comparative analyses of the archetypes as they appear in *La vida es sueño* and beyond.

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