dream, he said, ‘was an initiation into the realm of darkness’, whose purpose was ‘to bring the greatest possible amount of light into the darkness’.[27]

These are not isolated constructions of Jung's imagination. The history of modern literature and art is full of images and symbols in which God dies to the upper world, falls from high, and descends into matter, sexuality and darkness, to be ‘rescued’ there by being recognised for what he is. There are images of this kind in Picasso, Cézanne, Miro, Klee and Kandinsky. In literature, we need only think of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Yeats's ‘The Second Coming’, or Lawrence's ‘snake’ in which he tells of his encounter with a serpent, and how it made him feel impelled to review his moral vision and understanding of the sacred.[28] Similarly, Jung's childhood dream transformed his sense of the sacred: ‘Lord Jesus never became quite real for me … for again and again I would think of his underground counterpart, a frightful revelation which has been accorded me without my seeking it’.[29] Jung and the writers mentioned are not talking about devil worship or a cult of Satan. They are experiencing a new darkness in the image of the divine. The dark does not replace the light, but is integrated with it in a new experience of God. This theme will be further developed in Chapter 6

The spirituality of wholeness

Stepping down from high culture and returning to the theme of popular spirituality, it would seem that spirituality has been radically redefined for a new era. It operates in a world-affirming manner, and serves the integration of body, psyche and spirit. Spirituality has become ‘darker’ and more chthonic, and is ‘burdened’ or constrained by the Self. It is subject to a new authority, one greater than the church or any established social authority. This is why the new spirituality is and must be a ‘scandal’ to traditional observers. I noticed this a few years ago, when a theology-based television team came to my university to interview my students enrolled in a course on spirituality studies. I am not sure what they were expecting, but the theologians were amazed to discover that the young adults they interviewed expressed no interest in a disembodied spirituality or in aspirations to piety. They were actively sexual, and yet were talking the language of the spirit, which, for them, included sexuality as part of its field of vitality.[30]

The confused theologians had come with traditional expectations that those 'called' to spirituality would need to sacrifice certain 'worldly' things, including the pleasures of the flesh. But in advocating 'spirituality', contemporary folk are not saying they want to become devout or pious. If they have wholeness on their minds, they realise this must include the body, sexuality, the instincts, drives and 'baser' elements of personality. In using the word *spirituality* they are suggesting that something beyond but within the personality might be supporting them in their bid to become whole. Clearly this 'something' is not a God who frowns on human embodiment or who urges us to strive toward 'higher qualities'. The image of the divine emerging in contemporary discourses is far removed from the traditional notion of a punishing God who strives toward perfection.

The holistic emphasis of the new spirituality is perhaps an expression of what Philip Rieff called 'the triumph of the therapeutic'.[31] Rieff used the phrase in a derogatory way, to refer to the ascendancy of 'therapeutic' values and to how these had replaced or overcome traditional verities, which he felt were higher. But we can retain his phrase while reversing his conservative agenda. It is true that our current ideas have been so influenced by psychoanalysis and its values of integration and holism that the assumptions of therapy are now embedded in culture. To seek a spirituality of perfection would be shunned by many today as a neurotic disposition, a hang-up or a problem. But the fact that young people see their spirituality as working in harmony with sexuality is something that the old traditions continue to puzzle about. The future will see the rise of a world in which old dualisms will be annulled, and conflicts between spirit and sex, 'cosmic' Jung and 'sexual' Freud, masculine and feminine, will be overcome. Holiness and wholeness not only sound similar as terms but are becoming merged with each other.

Theologians who are alert to the new spirit have noted the holistic direction of spirituality and commented on it. American theologian Sandra Schneiders has argued that spirituality has been redefined by our age and has now come to mean:

> the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life integration through self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives. It is an effort to bring all of life together in an integrated synthesis of ongoing growth and development.[32]

This seems like a ‘therapeutic’ spirituality. Her description of spirituality is almost a definition of Jung's theory of the individuation process, a process that Jung argues is governed by the Self. Although the term ‘individuation’ has never caught on in the popular domain, the meaning of the term has been incorporated into the ideal of spirituality. As with individuation, spirituality is prompted by inward impulses and is not subordinate to the rules of outside authority.

In another essay, Schneiders contrasts old and new spiritualities in a way that reminds us of Jung's distinction between perfection and wholeness:

> The term ‘spirituality’ no longer refers exclusively or even primarily to prayer and spiritual exercises, much less to an elite state or superior practice of Christianity. Rather, from its original reference to the ‘interior life’ of the person, usually a cleric or religious, who was ‘striving for perfection’, for a life of prayer and virtue that exceeded in scope and intensity that of the ‘ordinary’ believer, the term has broadened to connote the whole of the life of faith and even the life of the person as a whole, including its bodily, psychological, social, and political dimensions.[33]

In these and other theological discourses on spirituality, commentators are sounding like Jungian therapists, but Jung is rarely mentioned. It is clear that scholars of spirituality are unaware of the way in which Jung foreshadowed recent developments in their field. It seems that spiritual activity is developing along lines similar to those advocated by Jung nearly a hundred years ago. Jung explored the psyche, saw what it was expressing, and what he saw has been vindicated. He knew perfection could no longer be upheld as a viable ideal and that wholeness would replace it in a new ethical dispensation.

The human species has been moving on an unecological and self-destructive course, and perhaps the forces of evolution have intervened, to stop the madness. Self-correcting forces have directed the psyche toward a more ecological or holistic goal. By ‘ecological’, I mean the ecology of spirit, mind and body, which has been out of balance in the patriarchal system. The need for an ecological psychology occurs alongside the need for ecological sensitivity in the natural world.[34] These forms of ecology, psychological and biological, belong together, and we cannot have one

without the other. The need for a natural ecology can only be based on a new awareness of an inward or spiritual ecology. The problems of human nature and physical nature mirror each other and have arisen as a result of dualisms that must be overcome.

Creation spirituality

The shift toward an ecological spirituality, one which includes embodiment, the instincts and the physicality of nature, is perhaps the most important spiritual change since the Reformation. This change is sometimes referred to in theological circles as ‘creation spirituality’, and has already produced a significant number of texts, including works by Sean McDonagh, Sally McFague, Paul Collins, Dennis Edwards and Matthew Fox. The fact that this new development can emerge from within Judeo-Christianity is a sign that the new spirituality can take root in traditions and transform them in accord with a new image of the sacred. However, there always remains tension between new developments and established authorities, as can be seen from the fate of at least two of the aforementioned authors, Collins and Fox, who have been maligned by their traditions.

Traditions remain suspicious of the new and can only tolerate a certain amount of change. This is especially the case when the change comes from below, and when the sacred is being found in areas previously regarded as outside the holy, such as animals, nature, earth. To see the sacred in nature was once dismissed as pagan or pantheistic, and early Christianity declared a ban on these traditions. To find the sacred in the body, sexuality and herbalism was once dismissed as witchcraft, and the late medieval Christians tried to extinguish it and to banish the ‘witches’. Jung is right to recognise that the wholeness celebrated by an embodied spirituality is feminine in nature, and it is often women who champion this kind of spirituality. Indeed the area of feminist theology is hugely focused on the sanctity of the body as the dwelling-place of spirit, and on the holiness of earth as the ‘body of God’.

Jung and Neumann were keen to point out that the word matter derives from the Latin *mater*, meaning mother. How we treat matter, physicality, embodiment is directly related to our experience of the archetypal feminine and the Great Mother. A patriarchal tradition such as Judeo-Christianity is

only able to tolerate so much adoration of the feminine or mother before it rebels against it and cries heresy. Feminist theologians have fared relatively well in academic institutions that strive to be progressive, but not so well in churches, which remain wedded to a patriarchal image of divinity. The feminist scholars are trying to change the dominant image of God, seeing God as Mother and Nurturer, as a compliment to God as Father and Judge. As soon as this agenda is made clear, patriarchal authorities close ranks and force such thinking to the margins.

Feminists tend to see Jung as part of the patriarchal order they oppose, and this is true up to a point. Jung is a product of his time: he uses sexist language and he does not always appreciate the reasons for, or the urgency of, women's liberation. But he does seek to liberate the feminine principle in men and women and is a staunch advocate of the archetypal feminine in religion, culture and the arts. Although predating feminism, Jung is nevertheless an important supporter of the feminine impulses that have been oppressed by the patriarchal order. Jung's seminal essay ‘Answer to Job’ is an impassioned plea for allowing more of the feminine into our image of the divine. He may not win too many feminist supporters by arguing that the feminine and darkness are aligned in his symbolic system, but as a Western interpreter he is responding to a symbolic order in which the classic sequences are masculine = light = spirit, and feminine = darkness = matter. Some argue that these equations are patriarchal and need to be collapsed, but Jung is attempting to reach a spirituality of wholeness by working within the traditional Western paradigm and its binary oppositions.

Old and new age

Shifting from high to popular culture, it seems that the popular spiritual movement is a spirituality of embodiment, which attempts to regard the body, matter and nature as holy. This movement focuses on what has been left out of the patriarchal order, and that is why it gives such prominence to massage, body work, emotion, feeling, relationships, ‘sacred sex’and personal transformation. Its focus is on the feminine in its many manifestations, and typically it regards itself as a religion of Gaia, Mother Earth and the Goddess. As a popular movement, it is prey to various distortions and sentimental idealisations, such as the notion that there once existed an ideal, peaceful world governed by the Goddess and ruled by

women. Another distortion is the widespread belief that the Father's reign is over and the task is to reinstate the Goddess and promote her sovereign rule.

This mythos, however, is contradicted by the equally popular notion that the task is to balance masculine and feminine 'energies' and bring them into alignment. This expresses Jung's ideal of the integrated psyche in which the yin and yang are brought into a dynamic unity. The notion of the Mother replacing the Father and usurping his throne is what Jung calls, following Heraclitus, *enantio-dromia*, that is, a 'running in the opposite direction'. This does not point to wholeness but a new one-sidedness in favour of the suppressed forces. There are some wild elements in the new spirituality, but equally there is a great deal of sensible exploration in which integration is the stated aim.

The conservative religious pay little attention to these activities other than declaring them heretical. As an example, I refer to the 2003 document of the Catholic Church, 'Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life', authored by the Pontifical Councils on Interreligious Dialogue and Culture.[35] Making use of the reactionary sociology of Wouter Hanegraaff,[36] the Councils argue that all new forms of spirituality are 'inauthentic' and 'New Age'. This is a denunciation of the plurality of our times and an obvious bid by the church to reclaim its authority. In this same document, Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, theosophy, and Jung himself are all dismissed as unreliable, fashionable and shallow New Age phenomena. It is worth noting that in constructing Jesus as a 'bearer of the water of life' this attack on the New Age cashes in on the trendy Aquarian associations of the Jesus figure. The church is transparently saying: We have the best and only real water-bearer, and the others are frauds.

I recognise in this discourse the same aggressive posturing that is found in academic culture. Any activation of grassroots spirituality is invalidated by academia and ecclesia alike. Both church and university employ the term 'New Age' as a term of abuse. It is clear that these institutions, unlikely bedfellows for the most part, are threatened by the appearance of sacred activity in the wider community – but for opposite reasons. Sacred interest does not serve the university, which, as a product of the Enlightenment, is hoping that the world will become more rational and spirituality will go

away. Conservatives in the churches are hoping that everyone will go back to church and embrace the old forms.

‘New Age’ as shop-front

There is a New Age industry that deserves criticism, but not all of the newly arising spirituality can be categorised in this way. What the polemics of church and university fail to take into account is that society is making its own legitimate recovery of the spirit. Society is journeying into an intuitive and scientific apprehension of the spirit. There are many areas of scientific and artistic pursuit in which *spirit* is being included as a new and dynamic element in human experience, and these include the new physical sciences of quantum mechanics, the new biology, medicine and neuroscience, transpersonal psychology, postmodern philosophy, political theory, education theory, the arts, music and deep ecology.[37] These areas can hardly be dismissed as irrelevant, because they are serious intellectual developments within established fields of knowledge.

It is important to differentiate between a New Age industry and a *post-secular spirituality movement*. Too often, these separate though related phenomena are lumped together and condemned, such as we find in Carrette and King's *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*.[38] The authors of this work believe that new expressions of the spirit are illegitimate, but the authors are not advocates of old-style religion either. They are disturbed that the sacred is making its presence felt in society, and disrupting the secular order with an alien point of view. From their secular leftist position they set about to discredit all spontaneous spirituality, a view which ironically chimes in with the outlook of the religious right. The new spirituality has become a scapegoat for the non-rational impulses that the secular order wants to expunge from itself.

The New Age is a commercial, organised industry of packaged answers and programmes, designed to attract, and often exploit, the free-floating spiritual hunger in society. New Age is the ‘shop-front’ of the postmodern spiritual landscape. It offers a quick fix to our spiritual crisis, and its roots are in theosophy, occultism, paganism and the Aquarian movement.[39] Much of it is not about ‘spirituality’ so much as ‘spiritualism’, which is populist, sensationalist and literal-minded in its approach. Operating on a broader

scale than the New Age, and with only peripheral interests in spiritualism, the post-secular spirituality movement is an authentic development in consciousness, an awareness that the rational era has peaked and culture must now embrace spirit, intuition and the feminine.

It serves the political needs of the church and university to confuse the New Age with post-secular spirituality. There is a turning of a blind eye to what is genuine and new in the spiritual activity of our time. Strangely, it seems to serve the church to hold a basically Freudian view of the psyche, regarding it as an entity containing only the ego, id and superego and denying the psyche's potential to reach the sacred. The institutions of faith can then condemn psychic investigations as forms of 'narcissism'. If spiritual activity outside the church is dubbed New Age, this means it can be dismissed as fraudulent, which chimes in with the Vatican motto, *extra ecclesium nulla salus* – no salvation outside the church.

The devouring father and the child of renewal

The battle between old age and new is a conflict between two archetypal constellations: the ailing and dying senex or 'old man' and the vitalising and renewing 'eternal child'.[40] Naturally the ailing tradition does not want to die. It takes its anger out on the newly emerging spirituality of the child or *puer aeternus* archetype, which it seeks to render illegitimate and baseless.[41] The Pontifical Councils refer to all new forms of spirituality as 'superstitious'. This is ironic for those with historical memories, because the same term was directed toward the Christian church by the Romans during the late empire.[42] The belief system we value is called religion, and the one we want to debunk is called superstition. Today the new spirituality gives meaning to the popular demand – not for salvation, which no longer has much currency – but for wholeness, which is what is desired in the community. It is because the spirituality of wholeness is so attractive that the old religion seeks to debunk it as fraudulent.

The child archetype arose in the 1960s to compensate for the ailing senex figure who was symbolised by the patriarchal order.[43] The father was about to be eclipsed by the rising feminine and feminism, the shadow, sexuality, the body and all that had been suppressed. The child archetype, according to Jung, is a symbol of vitality and points to a future order:

> One of the essential features of the child motif is its futurity. The child is potential future. Hence the occurrence of the child motif signifies as a rule an anticipation of future developments, even though at first sight it may seem like a retrospective configuration.[44]

Jung urges us not to condemn this archetype for being 'childish', but asks that we find the patience to live with the child in its symbolic 'inferiority'. We should allow the child to demonstrate its creativity, because the child is 'an anticipation of future developments'. Many of the discoveries that have taken place over the last fifty years or so have taken place under the aegis of the child and its wonder, through which scientists, philosophers and artists have challenged old ways of doing things. Einstein, with his twinkling eyes and wispy hair, has been a popular symbol of this emergent creativity, and his 'hard' science has been matched by his playful interest in mysticism and spirituality.

However, the childlike experimentation casts a shadow, and the New Age has carried this shadow in recent years. It is seen as clumsy, awkward, gauche, infantile, simplistic, silly. It is condemned by 'mature' thinkers in science and religions, who are threatened by the emergence of the new. Such people make the new developments in the disciplines sound foolish and shallow. The new physics is often dismissed as a brand of mysticism. But behind this shadow lies the genuine archetype, with its gift of the future. The New Age is the shadow, and post-secular spirituality is the true expression of the archetype, which is often not seen because it is eclipsed by the 'childishness' of the New Age.

The child archetype emerged first in America, where the Age of Aquarius was born. From America, land of hope and renewal, this movement spread across the world. At this time, people were talking about the 'inner child', the spiritual possibilities of the self, and the Human Potential Movement. The child brings with it a spirit of idealism and the expectation that society can be renewed by vitality and love. As Jung wrote of this archetype:

> The child motif…[arises] to compensate or correct, in a meaningful manner, the inevitable one-sidedness of the conscious mind.[45]

But not only is the child cute and adorable, it is egotistical and narcissistic, and these aspects arise on a broad scale wherever the archetype is

constellated. Jung admits that the expressions that arise from the child are ‘scarcely flattering’ from society's point of view:

> To the superficial ego, it looks like a retarding operation, and people speak of inertia, backwardness…and so on.[46]

It would seem that the positive features of the child archetype were evident early, but by the 1980s and 1990s the narcissistic elements began to predominate. From then, ‘New Age’ no longer connoted spiritual renewal and social idealism (as it did during the Aquarian movement), but egotistical indulgence and bourgeois infantilism. Jung's reputation was tarnished by his association with, or rather appropriation by, a new spiritual movement that seemed to be a ‘retarding operation’. Jung was adopted as a leader of the New Age, and numerous accounts of the movement make this a point.[47] I have explored this in another book and have no need to go further into this topic here.[48]

But the Vatican document, ‘Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life’ is partly right in its accusation that the new spirituality is indulgent. The narcissistic shadow of the new spirituality became painfully obvious by the 1990s, and this is why many sought to denounce it. But it is important to look beyond the façade to the integrity that can be found at a deeper level. The Vatican looks at the new activity and sees only its negative side. The Vatican, groaning under its senex weight, whose motto is ‘we think in centuries’, looks at the new spirituality and sees a silly child playing games with the spiritual. In this document we see the old order's aggressive impulses toward the new. It is like Goya's Saturn who devours his children lest the new generation grows up and usurps his authority.

Debunking Jung

We see Saturn devouring his son in the Vatican's handling of Jung. The Pontifical document claims that Jung's spirituality is inferior, pseudo or fake and his ‘mysticism refers not to meeting the transcendent God in the fullness of love, but to the experience engendered by turning in on oneself’.[49] Because it subscribes only to a God ‘out there’, it sees the idea of the God within as a dangerous illusion. Jung's ‘mysticism’, it says, is ‘turning inwards on oneself rather than communion with God who is

"totally other"'. But is God 'totally other'? Levinas, for instance, would locate the other in the same: 'The other is in the same, and does not alienate the same but awakens it.'[50] It is evident that the Vatican has no understanding of the psyche, no awareness that behind the ego is a larger Self, which is a meeting point between humanity and God. It considers Jung's enquiries into the inner life and sees only an eccentric encouraging us into narcissism. This is the same conclusion reached by Jesuit priest Mitch Pacwa, in his curiously titled, *Catholics and the New Age: How Good People are being drawn into Jungian Psychology, the Enneagram and the New Age of Aquarius*.[51]

None of this misreading would surprise Jung. He predicted the Christian tradition would read him in this manner, as can be seen in this passage:

> In [the Christian West] grace comes from elsewhere; at all events from outside. Every other point of view is sheer heresy. Hence it is quite understandable why the human psyche is suffering from undervaluation. Anyone who dares to establish a connection between the psyche and the idea of God is immediately accused of 'psychologism' or suspected of morbid 'mysticism'.[52]

It is uncanny how, sixty-four years before the Vatican's denunciation, Jung anticipated every weapon that would be used against him. Western tradition continues to pay a high price for refusing to see the objective realm within our subjectivity, the presence of God within. In the attack on Jung, the interior dimension is linked with darkness, evil and sin. There is so little regard for the soul that it automatically assumes Jung is leading us into perdition. It is claimed that Jung's thought is confused, gnostic, unorthodox and he has 'emphatically relativised Christianity', making it just one myth among other myths. The Vatican then asks: 'Why has the *New Age* grown so rapidly and spread so effectively?' It replies that Jung and Madame Blavatsky, whom it sees as the founding father and mother of the New Age, provide a feel-good approach to spiritual development, in which God is presented as 'therapy' and the self is regarded as the equivalent of God. On this matter, the document quotes Wouter Hanegraaff:

> Jung not only psychologised esotericism but he also sacralized psychology, by filling it with the contents of esoteric speculation. The result was a body of theories which enabled people to talk about God

> while really meaning their own psyche, and about their own psyche while really meaning the divine. If the psyche is 'mind', and God is 'mind' as well, then to discuss one must mean to discuss the other.[53]

Jung's notion of individuation is misread as a form of *theois*, a desire to become divine. It sums up his psychology with this formula: 'To realise one's potential, one had to go beyond one's *ego* in order to become the god that one is, deep down'. Jung never suggested that the human being should become divine. This is a deliberate misreading, to make him look a fool. His teaching is that we must not attempt to become like a god.[54] His instruction is to be wary of any desire to fuse the ego with an archetype or god. Forming a relationship with the divine through the psyche is not to be confused with *becoming* divine, which for Jung is equivalent to psychosis. No one could arrive at such a misreading unless they were inspired by a malicious imperative. Significantly, the Vatican does not quote from Jung, but only refers to him via his theological critics or New Age enthusiasts.

According to Jung, a modern spirituality that seeks to find God within is a form of gnosticism, and that is why the churches dislike it. It is a living vestige of an ancient religious outlook that is still alive in the psyche. Gnosticism, he argues, is not just a religious system of the past but 'an expression of a certain predominant psychological condition',[55] which has continuing a presence. Although it was 'stamped out completely' by the church, it began a secret life of its own, presumably because it contains values which must not pass away. 'In spite of the suppression of the Gnostic heresy, it continued to flourish throughout the Middle Ages under the disguise of alchemy.'[56] It is expressing itself anew today:

> It would not seem to me illogical if a psychological condition, previously suppressed, should reassert itself when the main ideas of the suppressive condition begin to lose their influence.[57]

The 'central idea' of gnosticism is that 'the *anima mundi*, the demiurge or divine spirit…remained in matter in a potential state'.[58] Matter is not merely material; there is spirit in it which can be released through certain procedures. When spirit is released from matter, it is redeemed, and so is the alchemist who performs the work of transformation. 'By "spirit" they [the alchemists] understood a semimaterial pneuma, a sort of 'subtle body',

which they also called … Mercurius [or] Hermes, the god of revelation.'[59] The myth of Hermes-Mercurius remains significant because it is the myth of the possibility that creation is able to redeem itself, that it does not require an 'external' agency to intervene in history, because it is already potentially spiritual.

Applied to human nature this is the myth that says we are able to reach the divine by discovering a deeper life within ourselves. We do not require the interventions of a messiah, church or outside authority to bring us into the light of salvation. In this sense, the myth of Hermes-Mercurius is the dominant myth of Jungian psychology, concerned as it is with the idea that redemption (theology) or transformation (psychology) is available to the person who is able to endure the process of coming-to-consciousness, or individuation. The church is predisposed by historical factors to reject this teaching, but Jung sees the anti-gnostic ethos as a matter of long-standing prejudice. To him, gnosticism does not run counter to the ministry of Christ, who asserted: 'the kingdom of God is within you'.[60]

Infantile and mature wholeness

I want to return to the question of wholeness, because the Vatican document focuses on this topic. I have argued that spirit in our time is linked to wholeness, and works toward wholeness when it is released. The same could be said of the child archetype which, on being activated, works toward a unification of the personality. Jung wrote:

> The child is both beginning and end, an initial and a terminal creature. The initial creature existed before man was, and the terminal creature will be when man is not. Psychologically speaking, this means that the child symbolises the pre-conscious and the post-conscious essence of man.[61]

The child represents the primordial nature of life and the spiritual possibilities of humanity. The child is pre-conscious and post-conscious, that is, a symbol of life before the formation of the adult ego, and after the transformation of the ego. It is Alpha and Omega, beginning and end.

The image of wholeness rising in our time is ambivalent and two-sided. On the one hand, the new image signifies a pre-conscious state, or the

wholeness of life before consciousness separated the opposites. This archaic wholeness is what Erich Neumann refers to as the *uroboros*, the Greek symbol of the tail-biting snake, a primal unity before life.[62] On the other, the new wholeness can anticipate the recovery of unity after the world has been torn apart by opposites. This kind of wholeness is what Jung refers to as the *mandala*, the Sanskrit term for unity.[63]

It is important for our fragmented time that the archetype of wholeness has been activated. Jung saw this archetype stirring in the drawings of his patients, who drew 'mandalas' out of a need to restore unity to the psyche. It is not that the mandalas indicate unity attained, but rather, like the child, they are an anticipation of a desired or possible unity. After the Second World War, Jung noticed mandala symbolism in the 'sightings' of UFOs from 1947 onward.[64] Again, the activation of this archetype occurred first in the United States, and from there it spread throughout the world.

Our primary energies, spirit and matter, have been split apart in our Western religious system, which no longer serves to bring them together, but seems to hold them apart. Wholeness is required to protect us from further splitting and losing the connection between light and dark, self and world, inside and outside. But the nostalgia for wholeness can activate the longing to return to the Edenic state before consciousness. Some of us are fearful about whether the human experiment has gone wrong, and whether we might find the courage to set it right. In this climate, the archetype of the beginning, the Alpha, the great round, paradise, insinuates itself, especially if the ego is weak and unable to press forward with the task of integration. The regressive aspect of the New Age is often found in its depiction of a paradisal world before creation, and in its invitation to renounce the tensions of consciousness and sink into bliss.

As the Vatican document is keen to point out, the popular idea of wholeness is often absurdly sentimental, leading to a world view where self and 'other' cannot exist, because all exists in a primordial soup:

> The Western universe is seen as a divided one based on monotheism, transcendence, alterity and separateness. A fundamental dualism is detected in such divisions as those between real and ideal, relative and absolute, finite and infinite, human and divine, sacred and profane, past and present, all redolent of Hegel's 'unhappy consciousness'. This is

> portrayed as something tragic. The response from New Age is unity through fusion: it claims to reconcile soul and body, female and male, spirit and matter, human and divine, earth and cosmos, transcendent and immanent, religion and science, differences between religions, Yin and Yang. There is, thus, no more alterity; what is left in human terms is transpersonality.[65]

This is an accurate depiction of a saccharine notion of wholeness that is popular in the New Age. We see the operations of the mother archetype: life is returned to an amniotic, womb-like state, in which everything is united because nothing has yet been 'born'. The Vatican is right to criticise this notion of wholeness, because if this view dominated, there would be no life at all, since the emphasis would be on returning to the womb, the *uroboros*, the uncreated source.

When this image of wholeness rules, the static mother archetype has triumphed over creation. The cosmos is conceived as an inchoate reality in which nothing can become independent, because to reach independence is to question the authority of the archetype. This is a situation which is inimical to consciousness, opposed to the spirit, and antagonistic to the idea of incarnation. As the Vatican argues, this idea of wholeness is 'questionable' and 'lacks intellectual cogency'. But the patriarchal tradition is viewing this through a negative lens. As with the archetype of the child, the archetype of wholeness is able to be developed. The *uroboros* is not merely a nullifying image, but a precursor of a possible future wholeness in which unity is attained through the reconciliation of opposites. If we look at it through its regressive aspect, it appears hostile to life and 'looks like a retarding operation' as Jung said. But through a positive lens, wholeness can be the balm that unites our fragmented world.

The symbol of wholeness is capable of transformation, as is the child. The fact that 'wholeness' appears in a negative form, is no reason to scoff at it, because it can transform into a mandalic unity if consciousness is able to understand its meaning. Jung often warns that life-giving and replenishing symbols appear first in ambiguous or dubious form. They have to be 'kissed' into life, a motif that is often found in fairytales. Ghastly images or figures may reveal their positive face once they have been embraced. Symbols well up from the unconscious, and are only able to reveal their transformative capacity with the participation of consciousness. The child

looks like it will retard us, but it is a symbol of rebirth. The image of wholeness looks like it will submerge us in a cosmic soup, but it is the harbinger of a higher integration. To the struggling senex tradition, Jung looks like he is leading us into narcissism, but he is showing the way to an authentic encounter with the sacred in a time that is desperate for renewal.