

the main iconographic collection, the boxes nonetheless suggested a form of epistemic kinship with Warburg's own image groupings – one that did not erase their difference, but made their proximity intelligible.

In 2014, over eight months volunteering, my time in the Iconographic Collection proved to be far more than an internship; it was an initiation into Warburg's intricate intellectual universe. My familiarity with Aby Warburg's work, gained through prior studies in visual arts and readings of Georges Didi-Huberman, had prepared me for this encounter; in the early 2000s, a shared excitement circulated among Francophone contemporary artists and students about Didi-Huberman's reflections on Warburg, particularly the *Mnemosyne Atlas*.²

Soon, I realised that Didi-Huberman's interpretation of Warburg was not universally shared within the Institute. Some scholars embraced Warburg's work as a pathbreaking method, rehabilitated by Didi-Huberman, Giorgio Agamben, and Philippe-Alain Michaud.³ Agamben, for instance, highlighted Warburg as the founder of a 'nameless science' – a discipline yet to be defined, characterised not by closure but by extension and openness⁴. According to Agamben, Warburg's intuitions resisted systematisation, opening art history to other fields and modes of thought.

Others at the Institute remained sceptical, seeing Warburg merely as an art historian of his time. They followed Ernst Gombrich's evaluation, in which the *Mnemosyne Atlas* was regarded as an unfinished enterprise and evidence of Warburg's inability to articulate a coherent theory.⁵ This divided reception reflects not only historical judgment but also the challenge of situating Warburg's work within disciplinary boundaries. Caught between expectations of system and openness, Warburg's thought defies simple classification – a resistance that invites engagement rather than closure.

The work of Aby Warburg is as uncanny as the Institute itself. For artists and contemporary cultural practitioners, his legacy often appears reduced to the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Yet Warburg devoted much research to the study of the *Nachleben* – the afterlife of what he called 'primitive thoughts' – from Antiquity to the Renaissance. For him, these thoughts were not merely intellectual constructs; they persisted as affective and bodily traces, emerging through gestures, drapery, and postures within artworks.

For Warburg, these primitive thoughts were to be understood broadly: far from being limited to a traditional

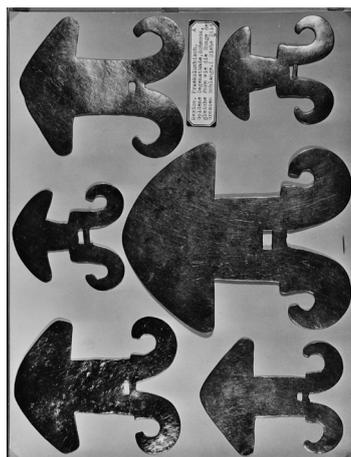
history of ideas, he reflected on the survival of deep feelings within the collective psyche as it unfolds through historical time. He argued that these afterlives reached a moment of coalescence in what he called *Pathosformeln*,⁶ resurfacing in bodily attitudes, gestures, and movements expressed in Renaissance works of art, for example, in the treatment of drapery. The term *Nachleben* referred to the survival – or continuity through death and metamorphosis – of images and patterns (poses, postures and gestures), rather than their rebirth after extinction or their replacement through innovation, implying that images are haunted by spectral memories.⁷

From Taxonomy to Assemblage

Following Agamben, Didi-Huberman reveals how Warburg opened a radically new way of approaching images: their meaning could never be grasped in isolation, but only in relation to other images. With the concept of *Nachleben*, Warburg showed how figures and formulas created in ancient Greece resurfaced during the Florentine Renaissance, returning across history in ways that were never entirely predictable. To trace the life of an image, then, is to step outside the linear clock of conventional chronology. Warburg spoke of an 'old present'⁸, a moment in which the past and present co-exist, where history is not behind us but appears anew each time it is encountered. Looking at these images is never a neutral act; it is a movement between rational understanding and the pull of the uncanny, a negotiation between what is known and what resists comprehension.

In *L'Image survivante*, Didi-Huberman deepens this insight by connecting Warburg's afterlife of images with Freud's notion of the symptom. A symptom, like an image, carries traces of the past into the present, revealing hidden layers of time, memory, and unconscious resonance. Each encounter with an image becomes a meeting within a complex temporality: a stratified present in which traces, returns, and repetitions demand to be read not as endings but as ongoing processes. With Warburg, Didi-Huberman suggests we encounter images that live in this layered time, prompting us to rethink how time itself operates in art history – not as a linear sequence, but as a field of returns, reverberations, and unexpected coalescences.

From my first glance at the Eranos Archive, I sensed a similar logic of the cohabitation of images. This intuition, combined with my serendipitous encounter with the Archive – not through formal research, but through the everyday labour of being with it – opened a subtle shift in



my approach. Moving among files of images, walking the corridors, navigating bookshelves, opening and closing cabinets, climbing stairs and descending again, and bearing the weight of its profusion of documents transformed my understanding: what had been a theory of taxonomy became a practice of assemblage. In the Archive, images were no longer merely classified objects; they became events, moments of co-presence that demanded a methodology attuned to movement, relation, and the experience of inhabiting the archive as a space of living encounters rather than a site of origin.

Even after my time at the Warburg ended, the constellations of images continued to linger in my memory, surfacing unexpectedly alongside other research and ideas. Their presence suggested that these images were not inert objects but traces of an ongoing project – an archive of encounters extending beyond the walls of the Institute. Returning to them, even years later, required not only tracing their historical and conceptual origins but also re-engaging with the ways they circulated among scholars, artists, and thinkers: a constellation of knowledge, practice, and imagination that demanded to be approached on its own terms.

2014 was a long time ago. My internship at the Warburg Institute came to its end but, reminiscing from time to time, the constellations of images of the Eranos Archive were still floating in my mind.

I owe the desire to immerse myself back into the meanders of the Archive's images to my encounter with Batia Suter. I met with Batia in 2019 at HEAD – Geneva, where I was a teaching assistant. She had been invited by the Department of Visual Arts, on the suggestion of artist Emmanuelle Antille, to lead workshops with students.

In her work, Batia Suter generates visual collisions through multiple rearrangements of hundreds of found images. Intentionally or not, her approach echoes Warburg's last project, the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Batia's practice resembles the delicate work of a tightrope walker: her assemblages—understood in the Deleuze & Guattari sense as existing in the in-between, along lines of flight that are often imperceptible yet generative of new forms and events⁹—emerge from layers patiently deployed one after another, which, from a Warburgian perspective, allow crystallized energies to be redeployed in new fields of force.

One day, after a presentation, I approached Batia and asked if she would like to see some images of the Eranos

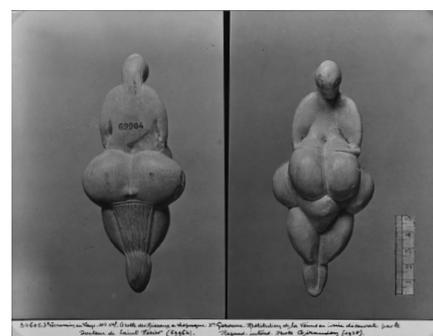
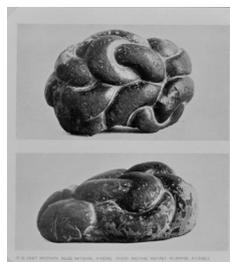
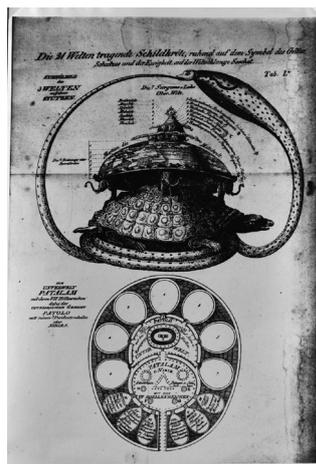
Archive I had already reproduced. Unfortunately, our plans for collaboration were delayed many times. The COVID-19 pandemic drove them away. I was confined in Geneva, Batia in Amsterdam, and the Eranos Archive in London. 2020 and 2021 passed, and despite the lack of access to the Warburg Institute, we never felt discouraged, trusting that a better time would emerge. I position this feeling at the forefront of my research, informing the way I might re-enter the Eranos Archive. This essay has emerged not only in spite but because of the necessity to approach its object of study at a distance. This has forced me to enter the research differently. The lack of physical access offered new possibilities to shift positionality – from 'what' to 'how', staking both the promise of return and the transformation of something anew.

Symbolic Images and Jungian Order

The Eranos Archive, or *die Eranos-Archiv für Symbolforschung*, as it is formally titled, was assembled by Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn over the course of twenty years (1930–1950) in Ticino, southern Switzerland. Fröbe-Kapteyn most certainly chose to settle in Ascona in part for its proximity to Monte Verità, a utopian community founded in the early 20th century that attracted artists, intellectuals, and seekers of alternative lifestyles¹⁰. Monte Verità was a centre for experimentation with vegetarianism, communal living, and a return to nature, offering a counterpoint to the industrialisation and urbanisation sweeping across Europe at the time. Ticino, more broadly, became a hub for communities and artists seeking spaces where new ideas could emerge and flourish, removed from the constraints of conventional academic or institutional structures.

Initially drawn to symbolism and mysticism, Fröbe-Kapteyn built a lecture hall near her house to serve as 'a place of encounter and experience',¹¹ where Eastern and Western philosophies could meet and dialogue. According to Frederika Tevebring, in the 1930s, Fröbe-Kapteyn began assembling the Eranos Archive, an extensive collection of images intended to provide 'a respite from logical thinking in words and concepts', relying instead on the 'magic wand of analogy'.¹² The Archive was grounded in Carl Gustav Jung's notion of the collective unconscious. Fröbe-Kapteyn regarded the images in her collection as archetypes: visual traces of deep symbolic and religious memory recurring across cultures and epochs.

The Eranos Conferences, beginning in 1933, took place yearly in September over ten days, hosting many speakers from diverse disciplines – psychoanalysis, art history,



comparative religion, oriental studies, archaeology, and biology – including Carl Gustav Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell.¹³ The Eranos project aimed to ‘create a common platform, bringing together themes from East and West, antiquity and modernity, arts and religion, to uncover their innermost commonality and pave the way to a new humanism and integrated view of humankind’.¹⁴

In parallel with the seminars (*Eranos Tagungen*), Fröbe-Kapteyn developed an Iconographic Collection of symbolic images, comprising approximately three thousand reproductions of artefacts and objects, organised under categories she associated with archetypes – precisely the images I would find decades later on the shelves at the Warburg Institute.¹⁵ As Tevebring emphasises, a central aim of the Archive was to function as a tool for understanding dreams: its images were intended to allow dreamers to cross-reference their visions with the full expanse of past and present human culture. The collection was organised into multiple ‘departments’: pictures (mostly archaeological and ethnographic), texts (from Christian mystics, alchemical treatises, and Eastern and Western meditation practices), other people’s dreams (historical and contemporary, arranged according to their archetypal content), excerpts from Jung’s writings, and a reference library on primitive imagery.¹⁶

For Jung, the Eranos Archive served as a constant reservoir of imagery throughout the development of his work on archetypes, as evidenced, for example, in *Psychology and Alchemy* – written in 1944 but inspired by two lectures he gave at Eranos in 1935 and 1936. Jung conceived archetypes as innate, universal structures of the human psyche, pre-existing in the mind and manifesting across cultures in dreams, myths, and symbolic imagery. Fröbe-Kapteyn, by contrast, treated the images themselves as archetypes: curated reproductions of artworks, ethnographic objects, masks, and symbolic motifs functioned as concrete visual tools for tracing recurring patterns across time and culture. In this sense, the Archive can be understood as a material enactment of Jungian theory: externalising archetypal patterns while always mediating them through human selection and archival curation.

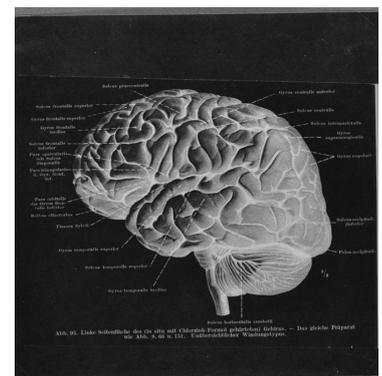
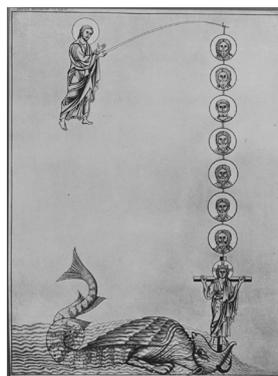
After my initial sense of fascination with the overwhelming number of hypnotic images in the Eranos Archive, I quickly

confronted a series of difficulties. The Archive inevitably led me toward Jung and his work, a figure whose thought is inhabited by substantial tensions: controversies around his political ideas, his antisemitism, and the theoretical claims of his psychology. The unease surrounding Jung was mirrored in the organisations of the Eranos Archive itself, which intertwined the generative potential of cross-cultural encounters with totalising and universalising ideas. This tension was compounded by the historical fact that many scholars who attended the Eranos Conferences were implicated in networks linked to antisemitism and National Socialism¹⁷, resonances that are embedded in the Archive. Forces from the past, present, and future interacted, demanding attention and listening; rather than condemning or rehabilitating the Archive itself in light of this deleterious influence, my aim became one of establishing the distance necessary to grasp what coursed through it and to deconstruct what needed to be challenged.

Totality and Enclosure

Jung’s archetypes and the collective unconscious build upon the Platonic ideal that form precedes perception, suggesting that psychic structures pre-exist individual consciousness. Archetypes, in his view, are universal, archaic symbols that crystallise experience over time and shape subsequent human behaviour. Jung connected the archetypes and their functioning to the instincts; for him, ‘the collective unconscious consists of the sum of the instincts and their correlates, the archetypes’.¹⁸ He found that imagery fell into patterns, that these patterns were reminiscent of myth, legends, and fairy tales, and that this material did not originate in perception, memory, or conscious experience. The images seemed to Jung to reflect universal human modes of experience and behaviour.¹⁹

How psychic energies from the past re-emerge in images for Warburg and in the collective unconscious for Jung shares certain similarities, partly due to their contemporaneity. Yet their difference at the core is crucial: Warburg traces the circulation of spectral cultural energies in images, while Jung conceives archetypes as universal structures of the psyche: ‘the archetype itself, in Jung’s view, is psychoid – it extends far beyond the boundaries of the individual personality. What is especially interesting is that, according to Jung, these archetypal structures are common to all human beings,



regardless of race, religion, or culture'.²⁰ Primal images such as the Wise Old Man, the Great Mother, and the Hero recur worldwide, giving myths a shared basis and providing a foundation for a universal human unity.

The Eranos Project, and Jung's doctrine of the archetypes, both pursued a common goal of total unity for mankind – a goal that Eranos actively reinforced by providing an institutional and symbolic space in which Jung's ideas could circulate, resonate, and acquire transdisciplinary authority. In that regard, the process of individuation – Jung's second doctrine – is a development to reach the opposite of disruption: that is, the unity of the Self, the totality of the whole psyche: 'Meaning a process by which the archetypes automatically lead each person toward his or her innermost fulfilment'.²¹

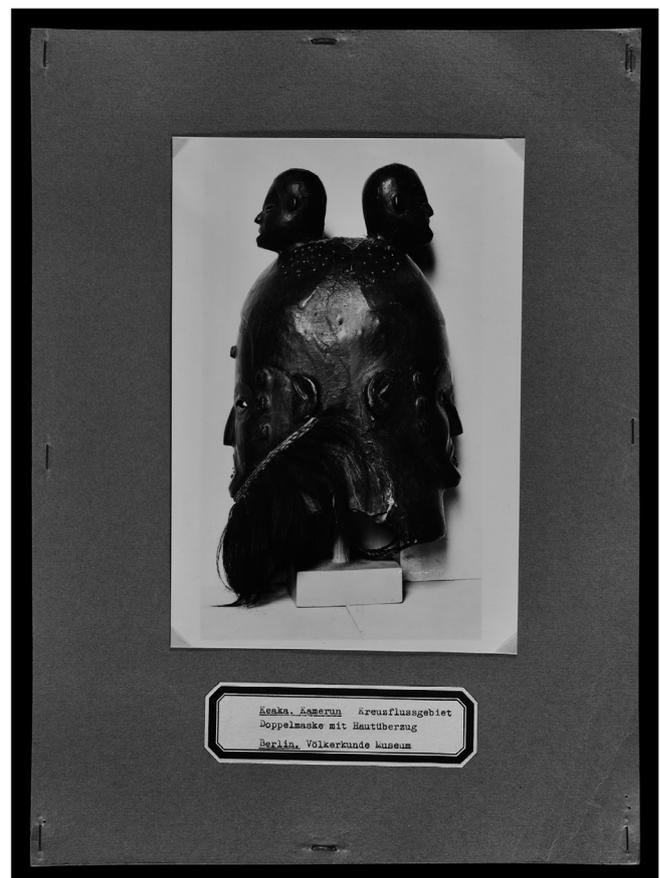
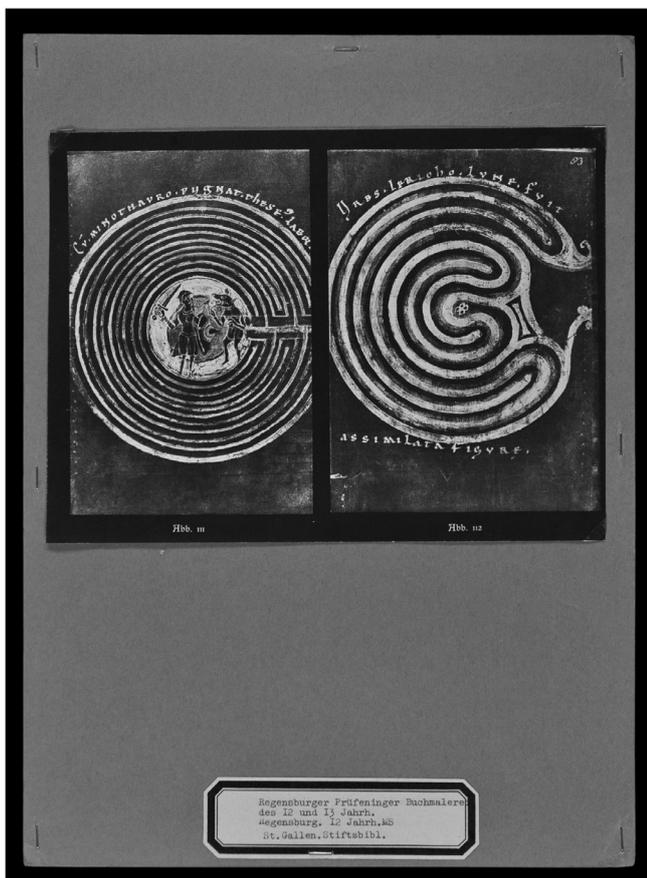
But, according to Jung, for this to happen requires 'put[ting] aside one's everyday mask, the persona, to become that which one truly is in one's most essential being'.²² For him, the emergence of 'the archetypal images as being all facets of the so-called self'²³ has to increase toward a totality that is the Self: 'At the end of the process all these images would come together to form a wonderfully harmonious mandala, in which the individual's contradictions would be incorporated without being disruptive'.²⁴

The doctrine of the archetypes and the collective unconscious carries significant conceptual risks. Among these is the pursuit of the whole – a drive toward total unity that tends toward enclosure and ultimately monism, echoing the Neoplatonic vision in which all derives from the One²⁵. This orientation toward totality must be understood against the historical backdrop in which Jung's theories were developed, coinciding with the inception of the *Eranos Tagungen*. Jung began articulating the concepts of the collective unconscious

and archetypes around 1916–1919,²⁶ and by 1933, the *Eranos Tagungen* had commenced, providing a forum for interdisciplinary dialogue that brought together Eastern and Western thought.²⁷ These intellectual developments unfolded in a Europe convulsed by the rise of fascism and National Socialism – a context that, as the Frankfurt School emphasised, particularly Theodor W. Adorno, tended to accelerate ideas of essentialism and metaphysical totality that could be harnessed to support totalitarian modes of thought.²⁸ From this perspective, the period underscores the dangers of surrendering critical reflection to collective myth-making and the allure of totalising visions. Jung's emphasis on unity, wholeness, and the reconciliation of opposites was articulated through mythic and symbolic narratives within this charged climate. While his project cannot be reduced to the political ideologies of the time, the language of psychic totality and universal structures inevitably resonated in an atmosphere increasingly attuned to notions of organic unity, destiny, and transcendence beyond individual difference.

As I pursued this research during a seemingly fraught and complex moment, it became fundamental to approach the Archive in a way that would not reproduce its problematic inheritances. In a contemporary context marked by renewed forms of enclosure and the resurgence of nationalist imaginaries and exclusionary identities, the risk of reinscribing totalising frameworks felt especially acute. My proposition, therefore, could not lapse into the diversion of attempting to define what the Eranos Archive *was*, through the unfruitful gestures of recomposing its origins or exhaustively tracing its history.

The Archive, rather, demanded a relational approach, echoing Aby Warburg, in which images must be embraced and



confronted *as* and *in* relations. Their opacities – manifest not only in relation to one another but also in the kaleidoscopic unfolding of their interplay – continuously generate ever-shifting modes of encounter.

Hence, I chose to enter the labyrinthine space of the Eranos Archive accompanied with the following questions: If we cannot stand with this conception of universalism, what do we nonetheless hold *in common*, and where might commonalities emerge across the Archive? More crucially, by refuting the universalist impulse articulated by Carl Gustav Jung and Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn and sedimented within the Eranos project, the task would become one of tracing how forms of commonality might still be revealed – not through sameness, but through encounters with difference.

*From Archetype to Anarchetype:
A Necessary Disruption*

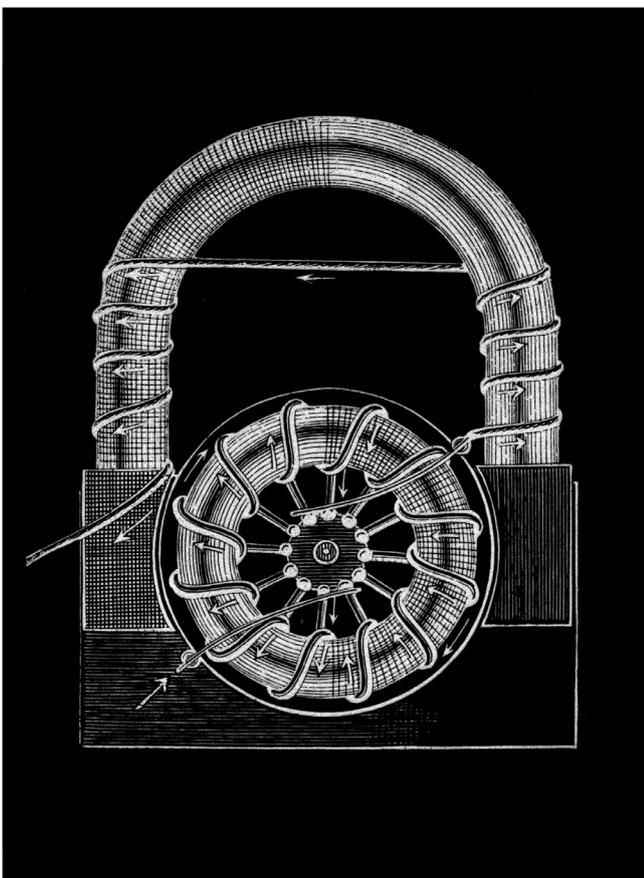
To counteract the claims developed by Jung, my proposition is to situate the collection of archetypal images in relation to Frantz Fanon’s arguments about psychiatry in the colonised world – particularly the Antilles and Algeria – and, more specifically, his critique of a collective unconscious that opens onto revolutionary and emancipatory potential.

Fanon reconfigures the conception of the collective unconscious: for him, it is not an imprint or engramme inscribed in our genes, but rather something shaped by habits and actions – in other words, by culture. Unlike Jung, archetypes for Fanon are mutable, and this mutability opens the possibility of shifting the universalist claim toward plurality and partiality.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon shifts the understanding of the collective unconscious. In the chapter ‘The Negro and Psychopathology’, he unveils the system of colonial culture and the imposed vision of the Black psyche in the Antilles, which generates an anti-Black sentiment among the Antilleans:

‘With the exception of a few misfits within the closed environment, we can say that every neurosis, every abnormal manifestation, every affective erethism in an Antillean is the product of his cultural situation. In other words, there is a constellation of postulates, a series of propositions that slowly and subtly – with the help of books, newspapers, schools and their texts, advertisements, films, radio – work their way into one’s mind and shape one’s view of the world of the group to which one belongs. In the Antilles that view of the world is white because no Black voice exists. The folklore of Martinique is meager, and few children in Fort-de-France know the stories of “Compè Lapin,” twin brother of the Br’er Rabbit of Louisiana’s Uncle Remus.’²⁹

Jung, in his monist comprehension of the collective unconscious, posits archetypes as derivatives of a universal structure: stories and myths had a common basis, providing a solid ‘foundation for a real unity of humankind’.³⁰ In contrast, for Fanon, folklore, stories, and myths are inherent to culture – and therefore, so too are archetypes. By redefining the collective unconscious, Fanon opens a breach, disrupting the universalist claim at the heart of Jungian thought:



Jung locates the collective unconscious in the inherited cerebral matter. But the collective unconscious, without our having to fall back on the genes, is purely and simply the sum of prejudices, myths, collective attitudes of a given group. (...) On the level of philosophic discussion, this would be the place to bring up the old problem of instinct and habit: instinct, which is inborn (we know how we must view this “innateness”), invariable, specific; habit, which is acquired. On this level one would have only to demonstrate that Jung has confused instinct and habit. In his view, in fact, the collective unconscious is bound up with the cerebral structure, the myths and archetypes are permanent engrammes of the race. I hope I have shown that nothing of the sort is the case and that in fact the collective unconscious is cultural, which means acquired.³¹

For Fanon, then, the collective unconscious depends on the cultures in which one is immersed. The subject, or the Self, will develop in relation to it, growing not from an essentialist origin, but from, among other things, the stories he is told.

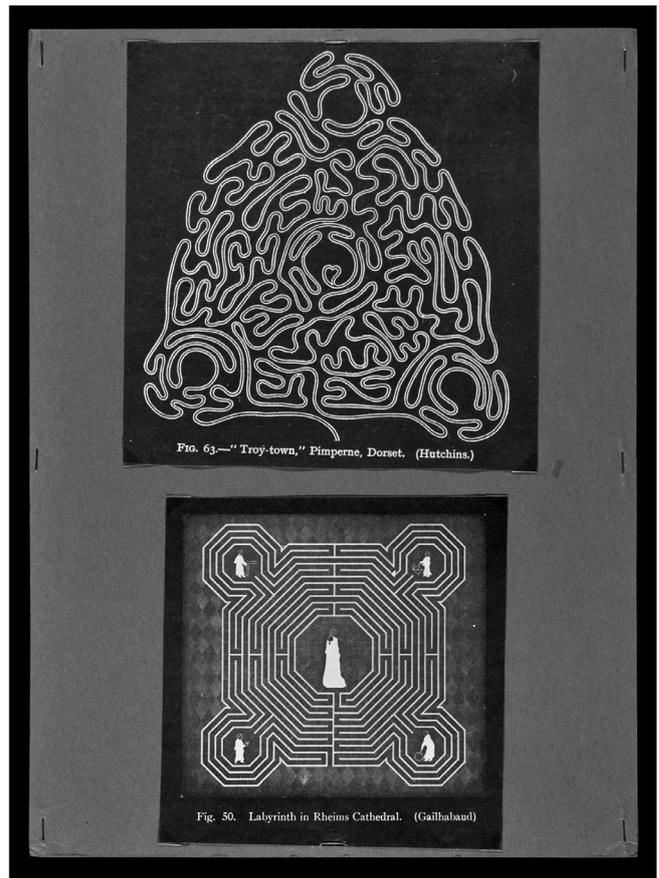
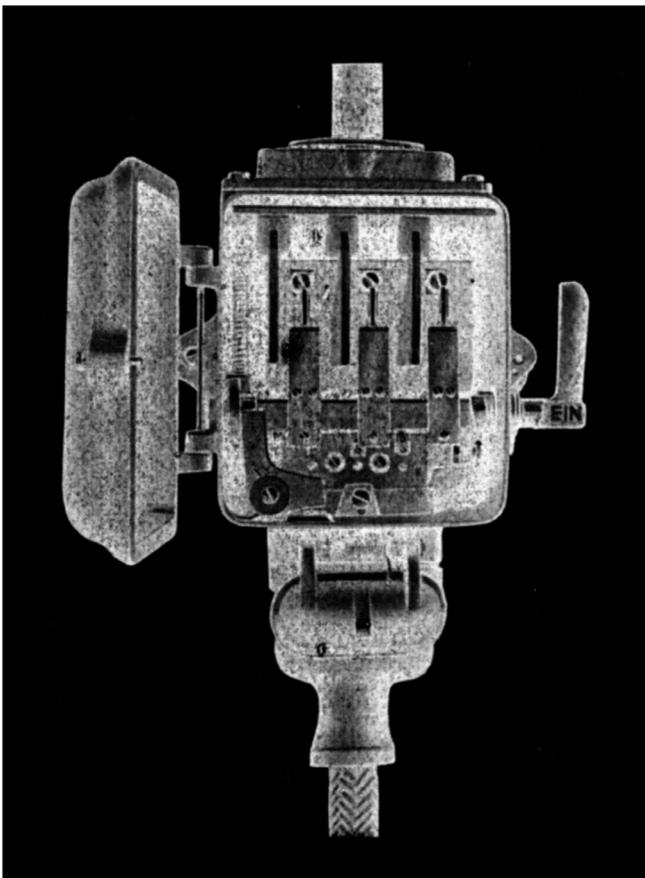
It is precisely in this tension – between the apparent order of archetypal classification and the Archive’s resistances – that the concept of the anarchetype takes shape. The anarchetype does not oppose the archetype by proposing another fixed structure; rather, it emerges as a practice of suspension, of remaining with images without imposing a singular origin, universal meaning, or teleological function. Where the archetype seeks grounding and closure, the anarchetype embraces movement, multiplicity, and contingency. In the Eranos Archive, the anarchetype names not a new category,

but a way of entering into relation with images, letting them circulate, collide, and transform without being subsumed under unifying structures.

Jung’s theory of archetypes initially offered a compelling framework to approach the Eranos Archive. Faced with its immense constellation of images – recurring motifs, gestures, and symbolic forms across cultures – the promise of an underlying psychic structure seemed almost self-evident. The Archive appeared to confirm Jung’s intuition: images return, persist, and insist beyond individual histories. Classification, then, seemed to reveal a continuity beneath cultural difference.

Yet, as I remained with the Archive, this promise of unity began to falter. The images did not repeat; they resisted alignment. Their recurrence was uneven, fractured, and often contradictory. Far from converging toward a stable symbolic core, they proliferated in excess, producing frictions rather than syntheses. The Jungian archetype, grounded in the belief that psychic forms precede historical experience, began to feel less like a key and more like a closure. What it illuminated came at the cost of what it rendered invisible.

This discomfort intensified when considering the historical and geopolitical conditions under which the Archive was assembled. The universality implicit in Jung’s collective unconscious risked masking asymmetries of power, violence, and history. Here, Fanon became unavoidable, not as an external critique, but as a voice revealing what the archetypal framework cannot contain. For Fanon, psychic structures are neither timeless nor evenly shared but formed within specific cultural and historical conditions marked by colonial domination, racialisation, and alienation. Folklore, myths, and archetypes are mutable, culturally embedded, and



historically produced rather than universal.

Through Fanon, the limitations of Jung's theory became clear: archetypes presupposed origin, stability, and repetition, while the Archive revealed circulation, displacement, and transformation. Images were produced, transmitted, altered, and reappropriated; meaning emerged through encounter rather than from a primordial psychic source. From this fracture, I developed the concept of the anarchetype. Unlike the archetype, it does not claim foundation or universality; it is a gesture of suspension, a way of staying with images without imposing on them a primordial source or teleological function. Where the archetype stabilises, the anarchetype keeps forms in motion.

Practices of Horizontality

In the Eranos archive, the anarchetype functions neither as an additional category nor as a symbolic counter-model. It operates as a relational practice: it allows images to remain in tension and to form constellations without resolution. Psychic life is no longer conceived as the unfolding of pre-existing forms, but as a process continually shaped by history and difference.

In this sense, the anarchetype shifts the centre of gravity of depth psychology. It is no longer organised around hierarchical structures or closed totalities, but around forms of horizontality. This shift does not aim to replace one theory with another, but to transform the very way of entering into relation with images and archives.

The notion of the anarchetype thus emerges at the intersection of several critical traditions: anarchism as

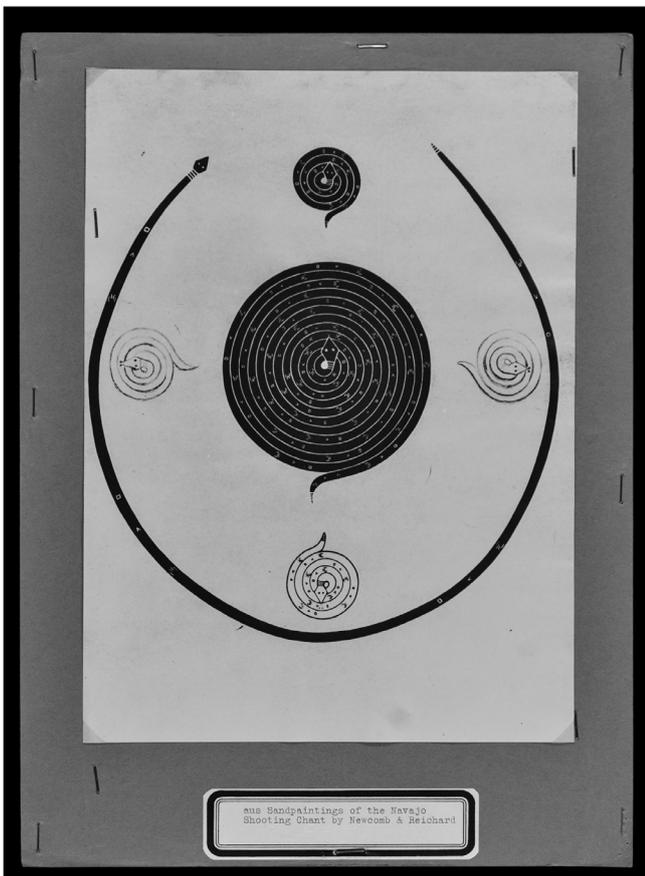
envisioned by David Graeber³², the ontology of *being-with* articulated by Jean-Luc Nancy³³, and the poetics of relation developed by Édouard Glissant³⁴. These perspectives share a common refusal of transcendent origin.

By situating the anarchetype within the conceptual frameworks of these thinkers, we can trace its operation both at the conceptual level and in practice. The term is a graft formed by the words *archetype* and *anarchy*, inspired by the notion of the 'ungoverned' developed by Pierre Kropotkin³⁵. This is not merely a linguistic gesture, but a conceptual shift. In Graeber's work, anarchy does not signify chaos or the absence of rules, but a form of collective life. Modes of organisation emerge that are grounded in mutual responsibility. The anarchetype is not an abstract concept: it exists in practice, in the negotiations, adjustments, and encounters that make it effective³⁶.

It does not follow a representative regime but organises itself according to the very conditions of the lived social situation.

Ontologies of Relation

Approaching the Eranos archives through the lens of the anarchetype made clear that the Jungian promise of archetypal unity could not be sustained. The images did not converge on a shared symbolic centre; rather, they existed only through relations – among themselves, through their modes of reproduction, and in relation to the hands that handled, classified, and displaced them. Meaning did not precede these relations but emerged from them, shaped by the meticulous curatorial practice of Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn.



This experience of circulation, rather than any desire to impose a new theoretical framework, makes the work of Jean-Luc Nancy indispensable. His ontology of *being-with* conceives existence not as autonomous or self-contained, but as intrinsically shared – a constitutive co-presence. No subject precedes relation, and no essence can be extracted from the network of encounters that constitutes the world. Being is always already *singular plural*.

For Nancy, relation – the *with* – is not a secondary link between entities that are already formed, but that through which something exists at all. As he writes, ‘being could not be anything but being-with-one-another’,³⁷ circulating in and as the *with* of a singularly plural coexistence. Circulation is therefore not a movement added to ontology; it is its very condition. Relation is what made a world.

Nancy’s framework resonates with Aby Warburg’s approach in the *Mnemosyne Atlas*, where images are understood relationally – through gaps, overlaps, and temporal disjunctions – rather than as linear or unified. Approaching the Eranos Archive through Nancy allows one to step away from Jung’s teleological notion of individuation. Within the Archive, alongside Nancy, there is no psychic totality, no harmonious Self—only frictions, overlaps, and repetitions without closure. Nancy’s refusal of individuation as a final state, and his insistence that community constitutes the condition of existence, makes it possible to remain with this unresolved multiplicity without forcing resolution.

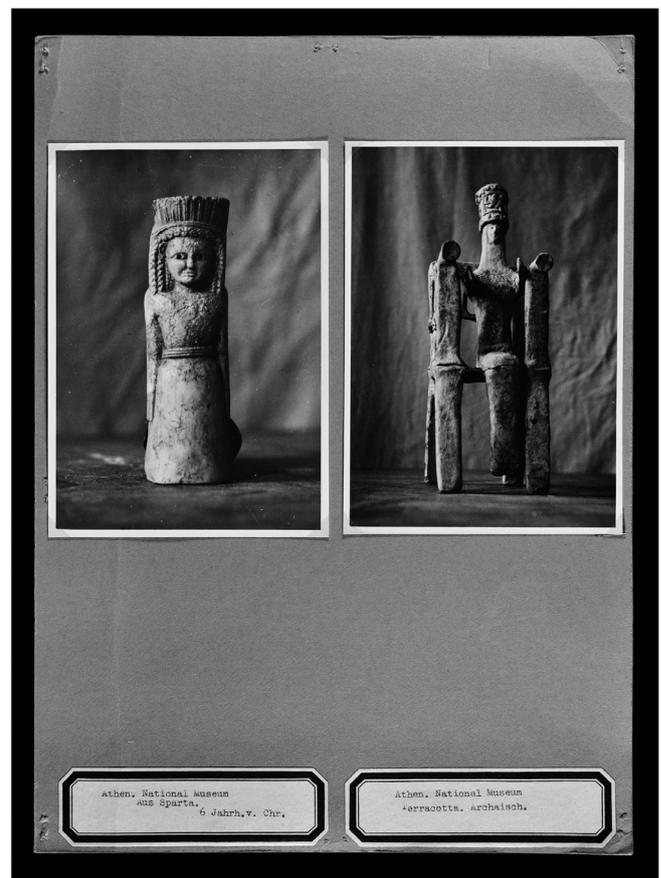
However, while Nancy’s ontology has been decisive, it has remained largely abstract and relatively detached from the historical and political conditions in which relations take shape. This is where the thought of Édouard Glissant becomes indispensable. Whereas Nancy had describes the ontological

condition of *being-with*, Glissant explores its cultural, poetic, and political implications.

For Glissant, relation never aims to dissolve differences into a common identity. On the contrary, it affirms difference as the primary element of world-making. Relation does not bridge pre-existing identities; rather, it produces identities through encounter. Identities do not precede relation – they are woven within it. There is no origin to return to, no transparency to restore. Instead, Glissant proposes opacity as an ethical stance: the right not to be reduced, translated, or subsumed. Difference, he argues, is the ‘primary element of relation’: ‘the different, and not the identical, [is] the elementary particle of the fabric of the living, or of the woven web of cultures’.³⁸

This insistence on opacity offers a way to think about the Eranos Archive beyond the violence of its universalist taxonomy. There, images have been extracted from their contexts, reproduced, displaced, and reclassified according to symbolic categories that often erase their specific histories. Approaching these images through Glissantian relation is not about restoring a lost origin or an original meaning, but about recognising and keeping active the irreducible difference they carry. In this sense, what the new world³⁹ brings is relation itself, an idea that complements, yet diverges from, Nancy’s concept of circulation and the ontological utterance of Being-with.

Where Jungian archetypes assume a common symbolic reservoir founded on similarity, Glissant asserts that the common is not built on identity, but on relation. This shift proves fundamental for the anachetype. Thus, returning to the Eranos archives with Nancy and Glissant does not resolve their contradictions. On the contrary, it allows one to render



them legible. The archive ceases to appear as a reservoir of universal symbols and instead presents itself as a field of relations – historical, cultural, and affective—always in motion.

Two Practices, a Space of Relation

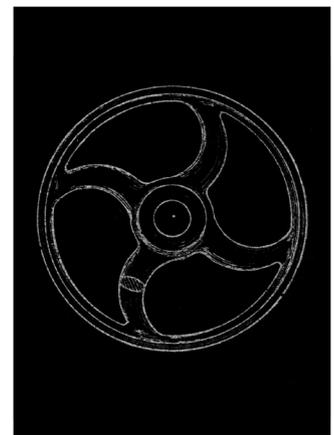
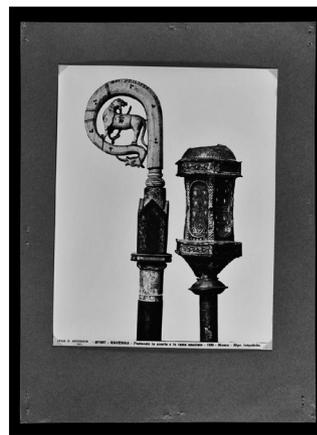
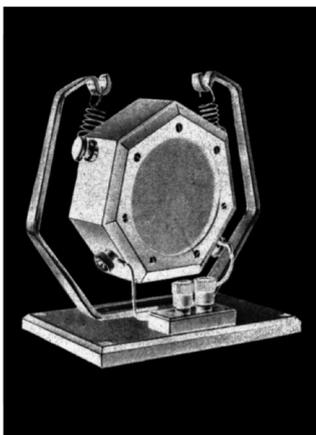
The collaboration with Batia Suter did not emerge from a shared methodology or a common theoretical framework. It took shape through a friendship founded on trust, curiosity, and a mutual understanding of our respective approaches to images, thought, and work processes. We began from the *middle*: we entered the subject without preamble, without seeking permission, through repeated exchanges in which ideas and fragments of life were intertwined. Our work rarely unfolded side by side in the archives; our practices never aimed to converge into a unified form. The collaboration developed within a physical distance, composed of intervals and asynchronous gestures, each of us responding to the same images without attempting to stabilise their meaning. Working with Batia renders this tension tangible. Our practices do not mirror one another – they touch. Neither of them illustrates the other.

This collaboration consisted of proximities and gaps, shared attentiveness and misalignments. The meaning that emerges is negotiated in the in-between, in what is taken up and in what remains suspended. In this sense, the collaboration can be understood as a concrete enactment of *being-with*, as conceived by Jean-Luc Nancy. Each practice remains singular, yet none exists in isolation. The relationship is not a prerequisite for the work: it emerges through it.

Édouard Glissant’s concept of relation offers a decisive extension of this dynamic. Concretely and symbolically, none of the archival images with which we worked belong to us. They carry histories of reproduction and extraction that persist despite everything. Working together was not intended to restore an origin or produce a shared interpretation, but to accept that this opacity remains active. What is shared is not a language, but a responsibility toward difference.

This collaborative space functions in anarchetypally: no centre, no guiding authority. It unfolds horizontally, through encounters that are contingent and provisional. There is no completion, no synthesis – only the promise of a new arrangement, a glimmer of an alternative reading.

After we reproduced the images of the Eranos Archive, they returned to the large grey boxes on the shelves of the Warburg Institute’s iconographic collection, where, quietly, they regained their archetypal categories. Through a series of attentive, parallel gestures within the new space of this collaboration, we sought to stir the forces frozen in the fixity of the archives – redistributing them, allowing their latent energies to drift ever so lightly across the horizontal plane of our engagement.



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