

Ambiguity and contradiction – outlines of Jungian dialectics

(abstract)

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The thinking strategies with which Jung deals with ambiguities and contradictions in archetypes distinguish him drastically from present-day normal science. If text books of logic and critical reasoning (and principles like *ex falso quodlibet*) were taken literally Jung's discourse would automatically collapse to triviality. Contradiction-tolerant paraconsistent logic, like Graham Priest's systems, are designed for special academic purposes (mainly to avoid the Liar paradox) and are quite useless in the depth-psychological context. Instead, useful hints for advice might be collected from the rich dialectic tradition of post-Kantian German Idealism (Hölderlin, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer) where the problems, such as contradictoriness of the Absolute and the preconceptuality of immediate sensuous experience, were frequently addressed. However, in order to avoid open conflict with modern science, the German tradition must be properly modified. This modification demands concessions from both sides of the conflict because the reality of the Jungian unconsciousness must be acknowledged by modern science too. If successful, this bidirectional modification renews the Western conception of rationality, and may finally help mending man's perplexed relation to nonhuman nature.