

Commentary on: The Climate Crisis-Bursting Bubbles

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Abstract

A psychoanalytical approach to the climate crisis in terms of the individual psychological background as object relations determine the relationship to nature as holding female representations and group dynamics at work in the reaction or lack thereof. A further exploration into the ability to sustain frustration as a key element to personal and societal development allowing to shed primitive libidinal patterns whereas certain psychological structures are hindered from this ability. As a result, the dysfunctional narcissism feeds relationships of dominance and power completing a self-destructive pattern where only adaptation and symbolization processes could counter the traumatic effects of sudden change to our modern lifestyles.

Keywords: Climate crisis • Psychoanalysis • Group dynamics • Trauma

Description

While cognitive knowledge of the climate crisis that we are currently facing seems to be widely spread in our modern societies, there is a disavowal of the impact it will have on our daily lives and habits which inhibits the necessary individual and societal changes. The article "Bursting Bubbles" is an attempt at understanding the phenomena based on clinical experience and research [1].

What comes to light in the patients' discourse is twofold: first, a significative inability to tolerate the needed sacrifices or to sustain frustration sufficiently in order to create change in behavior. In other words, the comfort of our current lifestyles has rendered this society intolerant to such frustration which could be described as a weak Ego deprived of the necessary mechanisms to "negotiate" with the imposing desires that tend towards immediate reward or satisfaction. The second important observation is the absence of the archetypal "feminine" in the Jungian sense, or Anima. Though Jung always opposes Anima to Animus, it is the notion of feminine as a non genderized description of what could be summed up as: creativity, empathy, altruism, wisdom, and further, more complex emotions that are only accessible to an individual once traversed the early stages of psycho sexual development [2]. These early stages are dominated by power, envy, greed and jealousy amongst others, where the drives are directed towards self-pleasuring. Keeping this in mind, it becomes evident that the relationship humanity has entertained with Nature in its largest sense, is one of power and domination.

Throughout the industrial revolution and now the technological breakthroughs, Nature has remained ignored at best and perceived as an enemy to pillage and dominate at worst. If technology is the

result of our imagination made reality, it is painfully clear that there is no Anima in that imagination. It is from this desolating revelation that the author investigates throughout clinical encounters in order to come to an understanding of how the lack of feminine manifests in the speech, in the behavior, in thought patterns and how it impacts relationships to others, to the Self and to the world that surrounds us. What are the consequences of this in terms of how one might perceive oneself within this environment and in turn, how do these interactions feed, or on the contrary, inhibit the Ego? The case study briefly presented in the article begins to interpret these "power" symbols which become sources of pleasure and narcissistic nourishment [3]. The patient describes a sense of loss, displeasure and lack of legitimacy without these symbols of power and domination. She is unable to exist as a whole but rather identifies with only partial objects that satisfy her fantasies. Without the sensation of being "greater than", "stronger than", "prettier than", "wealthier than" the list is endless; she would not be able to sustain the frustration of her condition which is that of a human amongst many other humans within a world, an environment that she depends on and which she cannot dominate or control.

Accepting the loss, accepting our lack of power or control is what allows one to access a higher level of awareness which reveals itself in the feminine where there is a unity, a deep rooting of our existence within the living, intertwined and interconnected, where each one has a place, a role, a sense and purpose [4]. The utter disregard and ignorance of Nature and the environment is only another symptom of the ignorance of the feminine, manifested in so many different ways and at so many different levels in our societies and within our individual psyches [5]. Unfortunately, the climate crisis is very real and imminent and we are not psychologically

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prepared to be suddenly confronted with the inability to maintain our current illusions. However, it has also been observed through psychoanalytic practice, that most individuals are able to free themselves from these archaic (childhood) representations and evolve towards the feminine, towards a balance of Animus/Anima. According to Jung: "The whole nature of man presupposes woman, both physically and spiritually. His system is tuned into woman from the start, just as it is prepared for a quite definite world where there is water, light, air, salt, carbohydrates etc."

From this quote, Jung establishes the relationship between the "presupposed feminine" and Nature. Our current development as individuals and as societies has not integrated the feminine and only knows of it in an intellectual aspect rather than having interjected, symbolized, experienced the feminine.

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