

# When Imagination is a Killer: the Psychology of Racism

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This paper is based on the ideas of analytical psychology and presents an analysis of the role of imagination in the psychology of racism. It maintains that the structures created by imagination incite a person to kill when the collective complex comprising the ego of such a person is threatened or when the imagination of a person creates an enemy whose existence is incompatible with the existence of such a person. The paper treats German fascism and the actions of Anders Breivik as an attempt by the rapidly declining racist complex to defend itself against its imagined enemies.

**Keywords:** Imagination, racism, imagining communities, imagined worlds, collective complexes, faith, will, Anders Breivik.

## Introduction

One of the main goals of science is to find regular patterns in random events. If we were to prejudge a certain phenomenon as inexplicable or random, we would lose the opportunity to get to know it more deeply. This is also true with respect to Anders Breivik, who in 2011 killed 77 people in Oslo and on the island of Utøya. Despite numerous and diverse literature devoted to the analysis of this event, to this day Breivik's actions remain, for many if not most Westerners, the cruellest and most mysterious event in the history of postwar Norway. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the theoretical assumptions that help shed some light on Breivik's behaviour

and make it more understandable against the backdrop of the processes that are taking place in modern Western societies.

The first thing that catches one's attention when analysing Breivik's case is that he lived in an imagined world and considered himself a member of an imagined community – the Knights Templar. His imagined world was so strange that the first psychiatrists who evaluated him declared him mentally ill. However, this diagnosis was rejected by later experts. Breivik was mentally sound even though the world imagined by him prompted him to act in an insane way. When and how does an imagined world turn a person into a killer? This is the main problem dealt with in this paper.

Another important fact to remember when analysing this event is that Breivik's behaviour is easier to understand when seen in its broader context. Many of the ideological framework that first psychiatrists interpreted as delusional was so standart among far-right groups as to be almost derivative<sup>1</sup>. And how would Breivik's behaviour look in the even broader context of far-right ideology? This problem is also dealt with in the paper.

Political scientists, psychiatrists, and journalists<sup>2</sup> wrote the most about Breivik, and they all presented their own interpretations of this event, reflecting not only their own methodological positions but also certain of Breivik's personality traits. What differentiates this paper from other research papers is that these bloody events in Norway are discussed within the context of the development of the Western collective unconscious. This paper is based on two main assumptions.

The first assumption relates to the structure of the psyche. Analytical psychology distinguishes two main parts of the psyche – the conscious and the unconscious – and postulates that the unconscious part is superior. As Jung

puts it, “one can go on asserting that the psyche is consciousness and its contents, but that does not present, in fact it has-tens, the discovery of a background, not previously suspected, a true matrix of all conscious phenomena, a preconsciousness and a postconsciousness, a super conscious-ness and a subconsciousness.”<sup>3</sup> Within the context of the problems considered here, this means that Breivik's actions must be treated not only as a conscious decision but also as an act of certain powers of the unconscious.

The second assumption emphasizes the role of imagination in the structure of the psyche. According to Jung, “everything thought, felt, or perceived is a psychic image, and the world itself exists only so far as we are able to produce an image of it.”<sup>4</sup> In Breivik's case, this means that we need to examine not only what was imagined and what was true in his world but also in what way his imagined world differs from and is similar to other imagined worlds.

This paper consists of three main parts. The first part analyses the role of the unconscious in the creative process, imagining communities and imagined worlds, the concept of the collective complex, and the ways in which the ego integrates itself into collective complexes. The second part analyses the role of Nazism in the history of the collective racist complex, and the third part – the manifestations of the racist complex in Breivik's psyche.

1 Orange, R. *The mind of a madman*. A Kindle Single, 2012. Loc. 1311.

2 See Humphrys, E., Rundle, G. and Tietze, T. (editors). *On Utøya: Anders Breivik, right terror, racism and Europe*. Published by Elguta Press, Kindle/E-Book, 2011; Vallye P. *Breivik was narcissistic and racist... but sane*. [www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/paul-valley-breivik-was-narcisist-and-racist-but-sane-8081276.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/paul-valley-breivik-was-narcisist-and-racist-but-sane-8081276.html); (accessed 22.04.2013); Memocan M. *Breivik and racism*. [www.swp.le/content/special-report-breivik-and-racism](http://www.swp.le/content/special-report-breivik-and-racism); (accessed 22.04.2013).

3 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Bollingen Series XX. Vol. 8. Para. 356.

4 *The Collected Works of C. G. Gustav Jung*. Vol. 11. Para. 766.

### The subconscious and creative process

The imagination is a mental function that generates images, ideas, and feelings. Even though imagination plays different roles in the lives of different people, there is one sphere of activity in which its role is virtually unquestioned. It is creation. Everything, be it a work of art that was subsequently recognized as a masterpiece, a scientific achievement that changed the course of civilization, or a social or political theory that claimed millions of lives, was first born in someone's imagination.

Since everyone has an imagination, everyone can create something, although the results are not always interesting to other people. Plato, who was one of the first to come up with a deeper analysis of the problems of artistic creation, maintained that "poets do not compose their poems with knowledge, but by some inborn talent and by inspiration"<sup>5</sup>. This means that, in addition to the conscious efforts of the creator, certain subconscious powers that he can hardly control also play a bigger or smaller role in the creative process. If we call this power "nature", we can say that, in addition to the creator himself, nature takes part in the creative process and the bigger its role in creation, the better the results that can be expected. A genius is a man through whom, according to Kant, nature gives the rule to art<sup>6</sup>.

The role of the unconscious in creation is not merely that it begets ideas, images,

and meanings but also that it provides an important and often the main criterion in making selections – faith. In most cases, of course, the creator knows in advance the value of the piece he is working on, and faith plays a very small role, if any, in his life; however, this is not always true. Here, again, it is worthwhile to recall Kant's teaching about genius and talent. If talent may be based on knowing ("all who are knowledgeable about art will say that this is a good painting"), genius is based solely on faith in one's powers, in one's calling, and on faith that what one is doing is good even if the rest of the world says otherwise. This holds true not only for artistic but also for scientific, religious, social, and political creation. If a scientist, an artist, a philosopher, or a social reformer does not believe that the results of his creation will be meaningful to other people, he may end the creative process even before it begins. Not even faith can guarantee success at all times; however, its absence almost always guarantees failure.

The third factor influencing creative process is the will. It is especially obvious in social and political life. Various reformers may strongly believe that their activity is meaningful, but only those strong-willed leaders who know how to unite people of various interests and convictions and bring them together towards the attainment of common goals achieve or at least can hope to achieve success. The will, according to Jung, is the amount of psychic energy at the disposal of consciousness<sup>7</sup>. Consequently, the higher the quantity of psychic energy

5 Plato. *Apology. The Trial and Death of Socrates*. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. 1975. Para. 22.

6 Kant, I. *Critique of Judgment*. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. 1987. Para. 307.

7 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 6. Para. 844.

in one's unconscious, the stronger the will is, and the better the results that such an individual can expect.

The participation of the unconscious in the creative process is a necessary but insufficient condition for meaningful creation. Many people constantly experience pressure from the unconscious, but that pressure spills over in the form of incoherent – sometimes threatening and at other times attractive – contents that are insignificant or incomprehensible to other people. First of all, these are unrecognised geniuses, and they are numerous in the history of all spheres of activity. This group also includes the victims of the unconscious – people whose consciousness is penetrated and often completely overpowered by images, desires, and feelings that are difficult to identify and even more difficult to control. Currently, the only effective means of control is to suppress them with the help of drugs. And finally, there are those through whom the destructive energy accumulated in the collective unconscious is personified. Although the destruction of the old is a prerequisite for the emergence of the new, destructive energy is sometimes directed not against the outdated old, but against the new that is about to replace the old. This is exactly what happened in Breivik's case.

### **The concept of the collective complex**

Although imagination is a very individual thing, in certain cases the contents of individual imaginations may coincide. Consequently, in addition to individual imagination, we can talk about collective imagination. Images, ideas, and feelings

can become the contents of both collective and individual imagination.

The creative process is the birth and development of certain contents of imagination. The main objective of such development is the transformation of the individual contents of imagination into collective imagination. A group of people who speak the same language and create or at least support the same contents of imagination may be called an imagining community. According to Benedict Anderson, an imagined community is a group of people who imagine themselves to be a community<sup>8</sup>. However, the members of many communities not only imagine themselves to be something but also create certain images of themselves, their surroundings, and the world; therefore, the term *imagining community* can be used concurrently with the term *imagined community*. Sometimes the images created by an imagining community cover only one narrow sphere of theoretical or practical activity; at other times they cover the entire world. Culture is a process through which imagining communities create imagined worlds.

On the one hand, imagined worlds are created through the conscious efforts of the members of imagining communities; on the other – they determine their beliefs, feelings, and images. For example, someone who does not like Richard Wagner's music gradually grows fond of it and becomes a member of the imagining community of the lovers of such music by consciously forcing himself to listen to it over and over

8 Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991, p. 6–7.

again and by reading literature analysing and glorifying the works of this composer. Sometimes the imagined world transforms the psyche of a person just a little bit; at other times it manifests itself as a certain stimulus or, conversely, as a hindrance. In the latter case, the imagined world transforms itself into a collective complex. The collective complex is an imagined world or part of it that has turned into an autonomous psychic entity.

According to Jung, “whereas the personal unconscious consist for the most part of *complexes*, the content of the collective unconscious is made up essentially of *archetypes*.”<sup>9</sup> The concept of the collective complex is broader than that of the archetype because it provides an opportunity to better understand the processes taking place in the collective unconscious. For example, in an article written in 1937, Jung described German fascism as a rebirth of the archetype of Wotan, a Germanic and Scandinavian god<sup>10</sup>. But can this archetype alone explain the functioning of the unconscious and, by the same token, the psyche of the Germans during the years of Nazi rule? Obviously, the Germans were influenced not only by Wotan but also by many other unconscious factors or archetypes, and furthermore, different social groups – the ruling bureaucracy, the military, the peasants, and the civil servants – were influenced by different powers of the unconscious. The concept of the collective complex makes it possible to separate, systematize, and analyse these differences between various groups. The collective complex is a part of

the unconscious that is typical for a certain group of people and manifests itself as a system of archetypes, symbols, values, attitudes, feelings, and views. This notion is similar to what Herder called “the spirit of the people”<sup>11</sup> (*Volksgeist*) and some theorists of racism – “the soul of the race”<sup>12</sup> and what in analytical psychology is sometimes described as “the collective spirit”<sup>13</sup>.

Depending on what a group of people experiencing the influence of the same or a similar unconscious power is, it is possible to talk about cultural complexes, social complexes, ideological complexes. The following is an outline of the formation of the ideological collective complex.

A vision for the future of a people or mankind is born in someone’s imagination. It is different from ordinary fantasies that are constantly running through our minds because this person believes that it can actually be implemented. If other people start to believe the same thing, the individual content of an imagination turns into a collective one. As these contents become more concrete, feelings start to play an ever more important role in the structure of the collective psyche. The objects of love and hate, contempt and pride, violence and compassion are formed. The formation of the complex is completed by the reason

9 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 9.1. Para. 88.

10 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 10. P. 179–193.

11 Herder, J. G. *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1968.

12 See [http://www.wikinfo.org/index.php/Classical\\_definition\\_of\\_race](http://www.wikinfo.org/index.php/Classical_definition_of_race);

13 See Weissstüb, E. and Galili-Weisstüb, E. Collective trauma and cultural complex. In. Thomas Singer and Samuel L. Kimbles. *The Cultural Complex: Contemporary Jungian perspectives on psyche and society*. Hove and New York: Bruner-Routledge, 2004, p. 163.

which, to the extent possible, rationally grounds the psychic contents that have been created by imagination supported by faith and filled up with feelings.

As can be seen from this scheme, the formation of ideological collective complexes is a creative process that is largely or completely independent of our conscious efforts. We can control neither our creative imagination nor our faith. Our ability to control our feelings is very limited, too: one way to prove this is to try to fall in love with a person we find unpleasant or, conversely, to consciously hate someone we love. Our reason is the only component that we can control, but it plays a negligible role in the formation and development of collective complexes. Thus, a person controlled by a complex readily surrenders his mind for the sake of values that he deems to be nobler. Hence, those authors who accuse the Germans of mass stupidity during the years of Nazi regime<sup>14</sup> do not fully understand the nature of the processes taking place in the collective unconscious. The Germans were no more delusional than lovers, dreamers, or poets – all those in whose lives not reason but inspiration, imagination, feelings or other irrational unconscious structures play the major role.

### Collective complexes and the ego

The unconscious plays different roles in the lives of different people. There are those who constantly experience the influence of

14 As Michael Burleigh put it, the defeat of Germans in WWII was „the price of mass stupidity and overweening ambitions“. See Burleigh, M. *The Third Reich: A new History*. PAN Books: 2000, p. 1.

some kind of unconscious power; however, for many others the stories of the unconscious are as unreal as Gulliver's travels were to an 18th-century English audience. Based on the forms and intensity of their relation to the unconscious, people may be divided into the following four main groups: *conformists*, *complex sufferers*, *the called*, and *the possessed*.

*Conformists* make up the largest part of any society. They do not experience any unconscious powers and live according to the unconscious structures or, to use Jung's term, *matrices*, created by other people. Sometimes they consciously participate in the reinforcement or, on occasion, destruction of existing social, political, moral, or religious structures. In any case, conformists take part in the same game, only their roles are different: they are either *good* or *bad* guys.

Another part of society consists of those who suffer from various complexes. Jung writes that complexes “are psychic entities which are outside the control of the conscious mind”<sup>15</sup>. *Complex sufferers* live full lives that conform to the social norms of their time and only in certain situations experience the influence of certain unconscious powers. Some of these powers can be explained by the biography of the individual (i.e. individual complexes), while others – by social or collective history (i.e. collective complexes).

As Jung put it, “everyone knows that people “have complexes”. What is known not so well but theoretically is more important –that complexes can *have us*.”<sup>16</sup>

15 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 18. Para. 175.

16 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 8. Para. 200.

Each society has *the called* – people who not only experience the influence of certain unconscious powers but also give in to them, even though they can understand perfectly well that those powers conflict with accepted social norms. In everyday speech, such people usually justify their behaviour by saying that *they cannot help themselves*. Often such a calling manifests itself as a feeling of being destined for some individual purpose. According to Jung, “true personality is always a vocation and puts its trust to it as in God, despite its being, as the ordinary man would say, only a personal feeling. But vocation acts like a law of God from which there is no escape. The fact that many a man who goes his own way ends in ruin means nothing to one who has a vocation. He *must* obey his own law, as if it were a daemon, whispering to him of a new and wonderful path. Anyone with a vocation hears the voice of the inner man: he is *called*.”<sup>17</sup>

And finally, a certain part of society is comprised of *the possessed* – people whose egos are fully integrated into some collective complex. The main difference between the possessed and the called is that the former do not understand that they are being ruled by some complex and they consider their views, behaviour, and way of life to be the only true ones. Obsession is a common phenomenon in religion; however, it occurs in virtually all spheres of theoretical and practical activity, also in politics. As Wolfgang Giegerich put it, Islamic terrorists „are idealists, totally obedient to, indeed obsessed by, certain *ideas* (just as were the

anarchists, the Marxist-leninist and others during the first half of the 20th century.”<sup>18</sup>

The existence of the possessed is probably the best proof of the existence of collective complexes. If there are the possessed, there is something that possesses them. Moreover, when different people are possessed by the same or very similar powers, this means that one has to look for the source of these powers not in the individual, but in the collective unconscious. In different historical and cultural eras such powers took different forms and were given various names: good and evil spirits, demons, or ideas. As the significance of religious images in people's lives decreased, the role of social and political images grew in strength. As Jung puts it, “our fearsome gods have only changed their names: they now rhyme with *ism*”<sup>19</sup>. No other event of the 20th century has claimed as many lives as communism and fascism.

Even though the called and the possessed account for a relatively small part of society, it is they who create matrices for entire generations of conformists to follow. We will illustrate this with the following example.

Let us imagine 19th-century Russia. The egos of some people were integrated into the Christian complex, others' egos – into the boyar complex, and yet others lived socially oriented lives. In the second half of that century, a small but active group of revolutionaries emerged. Fyodor

<sup>17</sup> *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 17. Para. 300.

<sup>18</sup> Giegerich, W. *Islamic terrorism*. Luigi Zoja and Donald Williams (eds). *Jungian Reflections on September 11: A Global Nightmare*. Daimon Verlag, 2012 (2002). Kindle Edition. Loc. 926.

<sup>19</sup> *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Vol. 7. Para. 326.

Dostoyevsky thought that they were possessed by demons<sup>20</sup>. At the beginning of the 20th century, these people staged a coup and started to build a new society. It had its own conformists, its own called and possessed. Although the conformists accounted for the largest part of the population, their values, symbols, attitudes, and beliefs differed completely from those of the conformists of the 19th century. The unconscious did not play any role in the individual lives of conformists. It did, however, play a decisive role in the lives of the called and the possessed, through whose efforts a new type of society was created. Moreover, these people created a new unconscious matrix to which this new generation of conformists began to adapt.

The integration of the ego into the collective complex can occur in many different ways. Some complexes can penetrate the human psyche independently of and even despite the conscious efforts of the person himself. This has been illustrated perfectly well by Miguel de Cervantes in his well-known novel, in which Don Quixote de la Mancha is possessed for a certain period by the knight complex. Another possible situation occurs when an individual not only succumbs to the influence of the communist, fascist, or some other collective complex but also does his utmost to become a good communist or fascist, i.e. tries to turn his ego into an inseparable part of the collective complex. And finally, it is not uncommon that a person imagines that he is acting of his own free will whereas in

reality he is merely a pawn in a game played by unconscious forces more powerful than he is. As Jung puts it, "one or other basic instinct, or complex of ideas, will invariably concentrate upon itself the greatest sum of psychic energy and thus force the ego into its service. As a rule the ego is drawn into this focus of energy so powerfully that it identifies with it and thinks he desires and needs nothing further."<sup>21</sup> This is exactly what happened in Breivik's case.

The behaviour of each individual depends on the imagined world he lives in and on the powers of the unconscious he experiences. The more one's ego is integrated into the collective complex, the more the structure of that complex determines that person's way of thinking, life, and activity. The death of the collective complex means the death of all the egos incorporated into it; therefore, those whose egos are part of some collective complex try to protect that complex as best they can. We will illustrate this with yet another example.

Let us assume that a person whose ego is part of the communist complex starts a discussion with someone who opposes his views. As long as the communist feels moral or intellectual superiority, the discussion may be rather civil, but if the opponent comes up with new and ever more serious and compelling arguments undermining the very foundations of the communist ideology, the communist becomes nervous and angry until finally he loses his temper and resorts to violence or ends the discussion in some other uncivilized way. This is because the

20 The French title of Dostoyevsky's novel *The Demons*, *Les Possédés*, is therefore an accurate reflection.

21 *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol 7. Para. 111.



weakening of communist ideology is the weakening of his ego and the disappearance of the collective communist complex means the death of his ego. Maxim Nagulnov, one of the main characters in Mikhail Sholokhov's novel *Virgin Soil Upturned*, is another good example of such behaviour: he saw only one way of solving disputes – by shooting his opponent.

Thus, imagination kills whenever there is a threat to the world created by it, and the more the ego of an individual is integrated into such a world, the higher the probability that such an individual will sacrifice his life and the lives of others to protect this world.

### The imagined enemy

Nagulnov, just like Davidov, the protagonist of Sholokhov's novel, was fighting real enemies of the Soviet state. In Marxist terms, this was a class struggle, and both sides used methods that they thought were permissible and, not infrequently, also those that were not. However, in some cases a real enemy does not exist but is created. Soviet Russia is perhaps the best example: when all class enemies were annihilated, the killing of those who were sympathetic to Soviet power and had even fought on its side was initiated.

One-sidedness is the main feature differentiating an imagined enemy from a real one. An imagined enemy does not think of the imagining person as an enemy; he may not even be aware of his existence or deems him to be his ally. For instance, during World War II – not to mention World War I – many Jews fought in the German army, received various decorations, and

held senior positions<sup>22</sup>; however, this did not undermine or shake the foundations of Nazi ideology. Imagined enemies are usually created without observing the rules of logic or common sense. Imagination does not require a rational justification; it develops under laws that only it can understand or know. A hardly audible rustle in the bushes can grow into an image of a terrifying beast prowling around, or the absent-minded glance of a loved one can be transformed by our imagination into an image of a guileful rival who is up to no good (suffice it to recall Othello's torment upon becoming aware that Cassio is in possession of Desdemona's handkerchief). Imagination plays an equally important role in politics and in its most abhorrent manifestation – wars. As James Hillman puts it, „it is not the enemy that is essential to war and that forces wars upon us, but the imagination. Imagination is the driving force, especially when imagination has been preconditioned by the media, education, and religion, and fed with aggressive boosterism and pathetic pieties by the states need for enemies. The imagined phantom swells and clouds the horizon, we cannot see beyond enmity. The archetypal idea gains a face. Once the enemy is imagined, one is already in a start of war. Once the enemy has been named, war has already been declared, and the actual declaration becomes inconsequential, only legalistic.“<sup>23</sup>

The creation of an imagined enemy is part of the protection of collective complexes. While a complex is forming, developing,

22 Rigg, B. M. *Hitlers "jüdische Soldaten"*. Paderborn: Schöningh Verlag, 2003.

23 Hillman, J. *A terrible love of War*. Penguin Books, 2004. P. 25.

and winning, most of the energy of those who belong to it is directed towards work or a fight against real enemies. An enemy is created when a complex begins to lose its power. On the one hand, an imagined enemy brings a community together; on the other – it explains failures.

Then there is a *deadly enemy* (an enemy whose existence is incompatible with the existence of a person or a community, when it comes to “it is either us or them”), who plays an exceptional role in the life of such a person or community. The Jews was such an enemy for the Nazis. In the world imagined by Breivik the role of a deadly enemy was assigned to the leaders of left-wing parties and their supporters, whom he called *Category A and B traitors*.

### The features of the racist complex

Racism is an inseparable part of the secular worldview, which can be traced back to the early modern period. The supremacy of the white race was accepted as a self-evident fact, and if anyone had doubted it, he would have simply been ridiculed: suffice it to recall the slave trade or the extermination of the Aborigines in Tasmania. In addition to economically motivated racism, political racism – the seizure of land and mass colonization of Africa and Asia – gathered pace. Because of all these activities as well as their concomitant rationalizations and supporting theories, the racist complex developed in the Western unconscious, and it had and has an effect on the psyches of both individuals and groups of people and sometimes even entire nations.

The fact that it took on the greatest importance not when racism was flourishing,

but when it began to decline is a characteristic feature of the development of the racist complex. When white people were the ruling race, there was no need to prove their superiority. Once the role of the white race in the world went into decline, papers to support its role in history started to appear. First of all, these were the works by Arthur de Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, but the most significant book in the history of Western racism was Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race or the Racial Basis of European History*, which appeared in 1916. This book was new in the sense that its author not only declared the supremacy of the Aryans but also proposed a strict eugenics programme for its preservation and reinforcement. This book was especially popular in the United States, where 1.6 m copies were sold before 1937. Hitler called it “my Bible.”<sup>24</sup>

The protection of the racist complex depended on how the enemy threatening the white race was imagined. Three stages can be distinguished – anti-African, anti-Jewish, and anti-Islamic. Anti-African racism was especially widespread in the United States and South Africa and manifested itself as a desire to retain the dominance or at least the purity of the white race. Anti-Jewish racism played a greater or lesser role in the Middle Ages, flourished in the Age of Enlightenment and acquired an extreme, if not hysterical, form in fascism. Anti-Islamic racism began to emerge after World II and has existed ever since.

<sup>24</sup> See Spiro, J. P. *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant*. Univ. of Vermont Press. <http://books.google.com/books?id=4NoE2VyfN7oC&pg=PA357>; (accessed 16.05. 2013).

Many social, political, economic, and, not least of all, psychological factors played a significant role in the emergence of German fascism. The defeat in World War I split the Germans into two major groups: some felt they had lost their ideals, meaning of life, and values, while others turned into fighters. The characters in Erich Maria Remarque's novels are the most characteristic examples of the first type. Those who did not want to accept defeat and recognize that their sufferings and sacrifices had been in vain joined the opposite side. Hitler was one of them. According to a legend that was actively propagated during the first stage of fascism, an unknown humble soldier was chosen by divine providence to be a great leader and to resurrect the trampled pride of two million dead soldiers<sup>25</sup>.

Faith played an important role in the formation and development of the imagined Nazi world. As far back as in 1927, when outlining the contours of a future Germany, Hitler said: "Be assured, we too put faith in the first place and not cognition. One has to be able to believe in a cause. Only faith creates a state."<sup>26</sup> Hitler managed to communicate his faith to others. In 1934, American sociologists were allowed to conduct a poll to find out the motives behind the Germans' support for Hitler. This is how one of the members of the National Socialist German Workers Party, a worker by profession, formulated his answer: "Faith was the one thing that always led us, faith in Germany, faith in purity of our nation and faith in our leader. Holy was our battle

and holy victory. ... Some day the world will recognize that the Reich we established with blood and sacrifice is destined to bring peace and blessing to the world."<sup>27</sup>

In the creation of collective complexes, the reason is only a secondary tool. This is especially apparent in relations between complexes, e. g. if someone is ruled by the fascist complex, it is impossible to prove by rational arguments that his worldview is merely one of several possible ones and in fact may not be the most correct. On the other hand, reason is indispensable when justifying the truths that were created by imagination and reinforced by faith: the more they are absurd, the more refined and pseudoscientific the arguments used to support them. It is no coincidence that the Marxist vision of a perfect society was elaborated by creating a discipline called "scientific communism". There were efforts to come up with rational arguments to support the fascist worldview, too. As Hitler put it, "National Socialism is a cool and highly reasoned approach to reality based on the greatest of scientific knowledge and its spiritual expression. ... The National Socialist movement is not a cult movement; rather it is a *völkisch* and political philosophy which grew out of considerations of an exclusively racist nature."<sup>28</sup>

Love for Germany, hatred for enemies, faith, theories supporting the practice of racism as well as many other psychological factors resulted in the formation of what can be called the nationalistic fascist

25 Burleigh, M. *The Third Reich. A New History*. P. 115.

26 Quoted in Tal, U. *Political Faith of Nazism prior to the Holocaust*. Tel Aviv University, 1978. P. 30.

27 Abel, T. *Why Hitler came to power*. Cambridge Mass, 1986 (1938). P. 218.

28 Domarus, M. (ed). *Hitler. Speeches and Proclamations 1932-1945*. Vol. 2. London: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1990-1997. P. 1146.

complex. A person ruled by this complex felt good only when he thought of himself as part of a certain imagined or imagining community and any deviation from the role assigned to him in this community not only could lead to legal or corporal consequences but also caused mental discomfort. As Hermann Göring put it, „I have no conscience. Adolf Hitler is my conscience.“<sup>29</sup>

Several million of the most ardent representatives and defenders of the national socialist complex were killed on battlefields. Some of them began to have doubts about the infallibility of Nazi ideas, while others rejected Nazi ideology and became active participants in the anti-fascist campaign. Without this energy source, complexes grow weak and eventually die. In the modern world, the national socialist complex plays a relatively insignificant role, but the same cannot be said about the racist complex. The myth of white racial superiority has dominated Western consciousness for such a long time that its energy cannot dissipate in a matter of decades. A particle of it found its way into the psyche of Breivik and awakened there a creative process.

### Breivik's mental characteristics

Even though Breivik has on several occasions distanced himself from Hitler and national socialism, the role of Nazi ideology in his imagined world is very significant. First of all, Breivik and German fascists share similar views on the role of the white race in Western history, the only difference

being that national socialism was preoccupied with domination by the white race and Breivik – with its survival. Breivik's programmatic work, *Manifesto 2083*, is the fruit of the imagination of a scared Westerner whose aim is to show that unless radical measures are taken in the sphere of immigration, the local population will turn into a minority and be subjected to humiliation, indignity, and persecution<sup>30</sup>.

Breivik's view of his imagined enemies was similar to that of the Nazis. For them, it was *Bolshevik Jews*; for him – *cultural Marxists / multiculturalists*. They were the target of Breivik's attack. One of the main ideas in his manifesto is that “we, the free indigenous peoples of Europe, hereby declare a pre-emptive war on all the cultural Marxist / multiculturalist elites of Western Europe.”<sup>31</sup>

Breivik also offered two other groups of arguments to justify his attack against civilians. First, he tried to prove that the killing of civilians is a norm of modern warfare. In this respect, Breivik used the same logic as the Nazis did when building their crematoria: a little evil for a greater good. In Breivik's opinion, the Americans also used the same logic – that of pragmatism – when they dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As he said to his psychiatrists during his first session with them, the Americans “used a pragmatic approach. Better to kill 300,000 but save millions.”<sup>32</sup>

29 *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia. Vol.1.* Santa Barbara, Denevri, Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2006. P. 285.

30 Seymour, R. 2083: Breivik's 21<sup>st</sup>-century fascist manifesto. In: Humphrys, E., Rundle, G. and Tietze, T. (editors). *On Utøya: Anders Breivik, right terror, racism and Europe.* Loc. 321-2.

31 Orange, R. *The mind of a madman.* Loc. 239.

32 *Ibid.* Loc. 439.

The other group of arguments is based on the specifics of the Eastern mentality. If in the West the punishment of traitors is understood as a political or, sometimes, as a legal act (let us recall the trials of Nazi collaborators held after World War II in many Western countries), in some Eastern countries, first of all in Japan, the killing of real or alleged betrayers of national interests is often understood as an expression of patriotism or heroism. The psychology of this type of people is perhaps most accurately described by Yukio Mishima in his novel *Runaway Horses*. It is, therefore, not surprising that during his trial Breivik tried to prove that the ideology he represented was normal in Japan or South Korea<sup>33</sup>.

Spontaneous and uncontrolled outbursts provide the most revealing glimpses into the feelings that lie hidden in someone's unconscious. Breivik controlled his feelings most of the time, both during the massacre and in the court. "Those who saw the killer's face as he walked his circular killing path described his expression as hard and strangely impassive"<sup>34</sup>. And only when during one of the court sessions a mock-medieval chanting taken from the computer game *Conan: Age of Empires* was heard, did Breivik break down in tears, his face red with emotion. "It is because my country is in the process of dying, – it was the sorrow over seeing my country ... deconstructed", he would later tell the court<sup>35</sup>.

Great crimes are often committed out of great love – suffice it to recall Medea killing her children. Who knows, maybe Hitler

was not being hypocritical at all when in his will he wrote that "in these three decades I have been actuated solely by love and loyalty to my people in all my thoughts, acts, and life."<sup>36</sup> In Breivik's case, the music awakened an archetypal feeling – love for Norway, concern for its future, and that feeling, despite Breivik's conscious efforts, erupted to the surface.

The question may arise: if Breivik cared so much about Norway, why did he not feel pity and compassion for his victims? The simplest answer is that the racist complex had completely taken over his emotions, and had even transformed his sensory perception. As Hannah Arendt put it, "ideological thinking becomes emancipated from the reality that we perceive with our five senses, and insists on a "truer" reality concealed behind all perceptible things, dominating them from this place of concealment and requiring a sixth that enables us to become aware of it."<sup>37</sup> In Breivik's imagined world, there were no real parents and no real children; instead, there were representatives of the ruling Labour Party, which in his opinion was responsible for the Islamisation of Norway, and his behaviour towards them was dictated by the cruel and merciless laws of a race war.

Virtually all far-rightists are unhappy with the immigration policies of Western governments, but hardly any of them believe that it is realistic to expect any radical changes in this area. The major difference between Breivik and those whom he called

33 Ibid. Loc. 814.

34 Ibid. Loc. 46.

35 Ibid. Loc. 1028.

36 *The private and political testament of Hitler, April 29, 1945.* [www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1945/450429a/html](http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1945/450429a/html)

37 Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973. P. 470–471.

“keyboard generals” was that at some point he came to believe that it was possible to prevent the Islamisation of the West and to bring back ethnically homogeneous states. This belief determined his subsequent actions<sup>38</sup>. The fact that these actions were extremely cruel only shows that there was very little chance that his dream could become a reality. Terrorism is a policy of despair. People resort to it when all other measures have been exhausted or when it is clear from the start that they will not succeed.

Thus, Breivik’s ego was largely integrated into the racist complex and acted in accordance with the rules dictated by it. He was not possessed because he understood well the antisocial nature of his actions. Breivik was the called – a person who understood but very incorrectly interpreted the processes taking place in the collective unconscious. Breivik can easily be imagined in the uniform of an SS officer quietly and methodically doing his unpleasant but, in his opinion, necessary job. As Breivik’s lawyer put it in his closing argument, “he thought it was gruesome having to commit these acts, but to his mind they were necessary.”<sup>39</sup>

The decades following World War II transformed the Western unconscious in a rather significant way: more and more people in Western countries are withdraw-

ing from their social environment and integrating into virtual reality<sup>40</sup>. This process had its effect on Breivik as well because he spent a great deal of his time in the virtual world and even in prison he often played the computer game *Civilization*<sup>41</sup>.

The greater the part of the psyche that is devoted to networking, the more the individual obeys the rules and laws of virtual reality in the real world. Time in virtual reality is, in a manner of speaking, condensed. Processes that in real life take centuries or millennia in virtual reality are completed in minutes, hours, or weeks. Breivik lived in the imagined world of the birth and decline of civilisations. Against this backdrop, the transitoriness of Western civilisation becomes even more apparent; the growing numbers of immigrants and the declining numbers of the white population seemed not like a long but hardly inevitable process, but like a question of decades if not years. During his trial, it was repeatedly shown that Breivik distorts official statistics and misinterprets the thoughts of well-known political scientists or politicians. When some Western leaders said they had doubts about whether multiculturalism was a success or not, Breivik quoted them as saying that they opposed it. According to Breivik, in England and Norway Muslims will make up about 38 per cent and in France 70 per cent of the population by 2070<sup>42</sup>, even though most demographers have come up with much

38 In a solitary Twitter post a week before launching his attack, Breivik paraphrased John Stuart Mill to write: „One person with belief is equal to the force of 100,000 who have only interests.“ By the way, the John Stuart Mill quote, unparaphrased, is: “One person with a belief is a social power equal to ninety-nine who have only interests.”

39 Orange, R. *The mind of a madman*. Loc. 206.

40 See Turkle, Sh. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2011.

41 Orange, R. *The mind of a madman*. Loc. 941.

42 Ibid. Loc. 316-317.

lower figures. However, even though the Islamisation of the West is happening, Breivik's imagination dramatized this whole process and made it seem faster. He created his own civilization with its own characters and rules, and he lived and acted in it.

The existence of an imagined community is a necessary tool for the development and reinforcement of an imagined world. Without such a community Breivik becomes a "lone wolf" and, at worst, a mentally ill person. This is why over the course of his trial, when confronted with facts, he retracted many of his previous statements. The one thing which he insisted was real was that there was an anti-Islamic network underlying it all<sup>43</sup>.

When creating his imagined community, the Order of Knights Templar, with him as its Grand Master and virtually only member, Breivik used certain historical analogies. He began by creating the attributes of this community. He compared it to the Scouts. Their founder, Robert Baden-Powell, designed the uniforms, greetings, and badges before the organization became a reality. Many things he had thought would help give additional force to his manifesto and his ideology, such as wearing a homemade uniform in court and inventing medals and initiation rituals, he later realized, made him look ridiculous<sup>44</sup>.

Breivik did not succeed in creating an imagining or, at least, imagined community; he lacked the willpower – not in the sense of personal effort, but rather in the sense of collective psychic energy. This

means that he reflected the processes taking place in the collective unconscious but in a way that was completely the opposite of what he thought. Breivik hoped that his attacks would become "the first drops of water in a big storm"<sup>45</sup>. In fact, they were not the first drops of an impending storm, but the last drops of a storm that had moved across Europe some time ago. The white race has carried out its mission and, whether anyone likes it or not, is stepping down from the world arena.

Could Breivik's terrorist acts have been prevented? If we mean this specific person – yes, of course. As we have mentioned before, Breivik was not possessed; up to the last moment he had doubts about the appropriateness of his actions<sup>46</sup>. The suppression of the processes taking place in the unconscious usually results in a neurosis<sup>47</sup>. This outcome, although not ideal for himself, would have been a blessing for society. The neuroses of individuals are a prerequisite for a healthy society. Antisocial personalities must suppress their destructive inclinations, desires, and actions because otherwise – as in Breivik's case – the consequences can be catastrophic.

Different conclusions may be drawn if Breivik is analysed against the backdrop of the processes in the collective unconscious. When a certain amount of destructive energy accumulates in the col-

43 Ibid. Loc. 827.

44 Ibid. Loc. 757.

45 Ibid. Loc. 1076.

46 "Should I do it, or should I not?" "The future, he thought, was up to him. If he did not act, his country would lost for ever . That, he told the police, was enough to overcome the barrier" (Orange, R. Op. cit., loc. 528).

47 *Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol. 9.1. Para. 99.

lective unconscious, it must sooner or later burst out. For example, when many of the people in some society hate the people of another race, there will always be an individual whose hatred is especially intense and who will eventually move from words to deeds. In Western countries, a certain part of the population is unhappy about the rising number of immigrants coming from Islamic countries. Some people feel more strongly about this than others, but wherever there is “more or less”, there is also “the most”. The amount and cruelty of the racist psychic energy that burst through Breivik’s psyche was extraordinary.

## Conclusions

Imagination is the most marvellous and mysterious human quality. It permeates all our desires, feelings, and thoughts, creates heaven and hell, and inspires both the noblest and the basest actions. Without exaggeration, one can say that the human world is a world of imagination. Part of this world comes into existence through conscious effort, and part – through intuition or inspiration. What are the laws governing the creative process of our imagination? In order to answer this question, we need to understand the essence of creation; therefore, in most cases all we can do is to observe how our imagination works and note the fact that sometimes we control it and other times it controls us.

In analytical psychology, the term *unconscious* is used to describe uncontrolled psychic content. The unconscious plays a triple role in the creative process. First of all, it provides some of the content of imagination; second, it provides faith – an

important and often the only selection criterion for such content. And finally, the unconscious provides the power for the implementation of the socially significant content of imagination. It is through the unconscious that the creative power of nature manifests itself in people. This is true of both individual and collective creation.

Although collective imagined worlds are created and supported by the conscious efforts of an imagining community, once the pent-up energy reaches a certain level, it breaks free from the control of consciousness and turns into autonomous psychic entities – collective complexes. Sometimes such collective complexes transform the psyche of some individual in an insignificant way; other times they hound him obsessively or completely take over his ego and turn it into their servant although the person himself believes that he is completely free and all his actions are the result of free will and conscious decisions.

It seems that throughout the entire history of the West no other collective complex has taken over as many egos as the racist complex. It became especially powerful in German fascism. German fascism absorbed, systematized, and transformed the *völkisch* movement, the ideas of racist theoreticians, Wagner’s music, Kant’s teachings about duty, and Nietzsche’s about the superman as well as many other forces that had accumulated or were being accumulated in the German and, more broadly, the Western unconscious. After being permeated with faith and fused by the collective will, these forces created one of the most powerful collective complexes of the 20th century.



Since collective complexes are a continuation of nature's creation in man, certain laws governing the development of the natural world also apply to the development of the unconscious. First of all, this is true of the instinct for self-preservation. Just as any species, genus, or family wants to live, develop, and dominate, complexes underlying such species, genus, or families want to live, develop, and dominate in the same way. A beast in agony is especially frightening. German fascism was the agony of the complex comprising the psychological foundation of the white race. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that its consequences were so catastrophic.

The collective unconscious is an area of the psyche that lies outside space and time. The structures of the collective psyche that were formed long ago can after many years burst through someone's consciousness in a geographically distant country. A piece of the collective racist complex ended up in Breivik's psyche and activated a creative process. During it, Breivik borrowed some things from history, some – from the ideology of other terrorist groups, and yet other things – from virtual reality. Breivik's imagined world, which was created in part by conscious powers and in part by powers of the unconscious that even he himself could not always comprehend, subjugated his ego and forced him to sacrifice on the altar of racism a new group of victims. However, neither nations nor races are eternal. If German fascism was the agony of the white race, the desperate actions of Breivik and other far-rightists are its death throes.

Modern Western society is composed of many imagined and imagining, creative and disruptive communities, and in the life of each of its members consciousness and the unconscious play different roles. People subjugated by various complexes look the same. Only a person's actions show whether or not he *is a wolf in sheep's clothing*. This means that it is impossible to avoid attacks committed by those who are overpowered by aggressive complexes: just as when going into the jungle we know that we can be bitten by a poisonous snake or when swimming in a warm sea we know that we can become a victim of a shark, those who live in modern Western societies know that they can be attacked by terrorists, racists, drug addicts, or gangsters.

Herein lies the importance of research into the unconscious. This research makes it possible to learn more about the powers which lie deep within the psyche and determine the actions of individuals and groups of people and to create a map of sorts of the unconscious. Just as a person going into the jungle must always know what snakes he may encounter, even though this may not always protect him from being bitten, a person living in modern society must know what he can expect from those ruled by various complexes. In addition, by analysing the processes taking place in the unconscious researchers reduce the probability that they would burst out with destructive consequences. As Jung put it, "by understanding the unconscious we free ourselves from its domination."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol. 13, Para. 64.

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