

Circumstance in José Ortega y Gasset: approaches to Jungian unconsciousness

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Abstract: The human individual, according to the thought of José Ortega y Gasset, reveals itself as a *self* inextricably involved with its circumstance. The aim of this article is to reflect on Orteguian circumstance, especially its unconscious aspects, in an attempt to reach an approximation of this circumstance with Carl Gustav Jung's prospect of unconsciousness.

Keywords: circumstances, unconsciousness, Ortega y Gasset, Jung.

Introduction

The prominent Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955), in his first book, from 1914, *Meditaciones del Quijote*, wrote the sentence that is arguably his most famous one: "I am I and my circumstance; if I do not save it, I do not save myself"¹ (Ortega y Gasset, 1914-1966, p. 322, our translation).

This sentence marks Ortega y Gasset's thought on the human individual. The Orteguian man, as an individual, is considered a whole *self-circumstance*, which is based on the understanding that the *self* and the *circumstance* would inextricably be involved with each other. The *self* is touched and often filled by its circumstance, causing modifications to itself. This aspect is in the same way that the circumstance would be touched, influenced, and modified by the self. But what does circumstance mean to Ortega y Gasset? Well, circumstance can be understood as everything that is directly or indirectly in contact with the self. Its origin may be past or present, from the physical, historical, or cultural contexts, as well as from the self, i.e., from the self's own body and psyche. (Assunção, 2012)

Another point to consider is the obvious dependence, made explicit on Ortega y Gasset's sentence, when expressing the imperative lack of choice of the self regarding its salvation. If the self wishes to save itself, it must also save its circumstance.

At this point, it is important to attempt to understand what *save* means to Ortega y Gasset, either to save the circumstance or save oneself, since one situation would be inevitably involved with the other. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that, also in the book *Meditaciones del Quijote*, in the same paragraph of the sentence that we quoted, the author points out a way of understanding this by saying "That is, to seek the meaning of what surrounds us"² (Ortega y Gasset, 1914-1966, p. 322, our translation).

When seeking the meaning of what surrounds us, according to Ortega y Gasset, it sounds like a quest for understanding, or rather, apprehending meaning. Therefore, I highlight that, to Ortega y Gasset, the understanding (as expressed in an article of Revista *Metavnoia*, from 1998, by Vilson Ribeiro Santos) of *saving* would have a sense of seeking to understand, i.e., a personal effort to seek fullness of meaning, correlating, on the basis of mutual relevance, the facts that compose one's own circumstance, as well as correlating this circumstance to oneself. In short, "save" is characterized, for Ortega y Gasset, as the personal effort to search for meaning of the involvement *self-circumstance* in all its aspects.

Therefore, the idea of *if I do not save my circumstance I do not save myself* has a sense of *if I do not understand my circumstances, radically involved with me, I shall not be able to understand myself*.

The Orteguian individual inevitably needs, thereby, to keep the circumstances that act on it in the course of its life safe. However, these are countless, and in the overwhelming majority of time, are only felt unconsciously - therefore the individual must adopt a posture of personal and active effort when acting to understand his/her own life story, thus being aware that it does not live, neither did it ever live, dissociated from its circumstance. Such an attitude of conscious action regarding its own circumstances inevitably generates an understanding about the self, considering that the individual is inextricably involved with its circumstance. I stress that this is not about a possibility of *complete* understanding, but rather a *process* for understanding. The individual, by actively approaching his/her own, strictly personal, circumstantial life story does not find an end, but rather a conscious walk, both regarding the countless possibilities and countless limitations, since his/her circumstance is predominantly unconscious.

Following this line of thought, the perception of this study shall seek, in particular, to focus on the circumstances that we typically do not know or, better expressed, what exists within what we call unconsciousness. To do so, we shall use the perception of unconsciousness from the thought of Carl Gustav Jung, considering that this expanded the notion of

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1 In the original text: "Yo soy yo y mi circunstancia, y si no la salvo a ella no me salvo yo".

2 In the original text: "Es decir, buscar el sentido de lo que nos rodea".

unconsciousness beyond the personal level and repressed content, while also approaching the universal aspect, as a common framework from the collective substrate, which would act on the individual from contents with archetypal patterns (Penna, 2013). Therefore, for Jung, the individual would also be comprised by a broad context, as well as by Ortega y Gasset, considering that the comprehensive universal characteristic contents would be in constant action on the human psyche, and would not be, under any circumstances, only its consciousness, even if we imagined it to be.

Similarly, the Orteguian self shall never only be the *self*, since it will always be accompanied by its circumstances. It is born with its circumstances and shall walk with it for all existence, even if the self imagines itself to be independent from it.

Ortega y Gasset, however, despite never having presented a model comprising the individual human psyche *per se*, established traces that may outline it, or, at least, assign a specific concept of functioning to it, touching on characteristic questions of the human being's complexity.

Thus, the traces of the notion of human individual, for Ortega y Gasset, can be described based on four constituents of the *Orteguian self*. Three of which are expressed directly in the book *El Espectador V*, from 1926, which are: *vitality*, *soul*, and *spirit* (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963). The fourth of these, which is more significant to this study, was cited in some texts, including *El Espectador I*, from 1926, and suggests the profound uniqueness of the human being: *el fondo insobornable*³. This fourth constituent presents itself with a characteristic of intangibility, which is particularly crucial to human destiny, as shall be pointed out throughout this text.

However, before quoting in detail the contour lines of a human individual, as proposed by Ortega y Gasset, and approaching the Orteguian circumstance to Jung's perspective of the unconscious, I shall first turn towards the description by Ortega y Gasset using two points that I consider essential for understanding how the human individual is inserted in the broad context of the circumstance that surrounds it, namely: the distinction between human and inhuman; and context of *self-circumstance* involvement, from the perception of the *Orteguian self*.

Inhuman-human

“The power that a man has, to withdraw, both virtually and provisionally, from the world, and collect within him/herself, or to say it with a wonderful word, that only exists in our language: that a man can *ensimesmar-se*” (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960, p. 57). The man, according to the thought of Ortega y Gasset, is different from absolutely everything on Earth, including animals, which would be, biologically, most similar to man, due to singularities that necessarily go through what he called *ensimesmamento*. On the other

hand, in counterpoint to the *ensimesmamento*, the state of *alteration* imposes itself naturally to man and also to animal, which Ortega y Gasset describes as the state of attention devoted solely to what exists outside of the self, to the other, to the world, so that in this case, the word *other* would be represented by its Latin form *alter*. To say that the animal is always in a state of *alter-action* would be to say that it cannot live focused on itself, since its focus is always geared towards the world (to what exists outside of the self), either by fear or by appetites. All in all, the objects and events of the world would have full ownership of the attention and action of the animal (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

However, man, in turn, also naturally in a state of *alteration*, surrounded by the things of the world, which also arouse his fears and appetites, is distinguished from animals by the unique possibility of stepping aside from what is around him/her and placing him/herself, for a moment, within him/herself, turning to his intimacy, *ensimesmando*. However, despite being a unique possibility of man, *ensimesmar-se*, as highlighted by Ortega y Gasset, is not a condition that belongs to man, since a great personal effort to turn moments of concentration to the self would always be necessary, to the point of keeping his/her attention fixed on the ideas that arise within him/herself and those that are raised from things of the world. Man required thousand of years to educate this ability to concentrate, since what is natural to him is to focus on the things of the world, to distract himself, as occurs uninterruptedly with animals (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

At this point, it is important to note that, even in the most primitive men, those who were virtually in a permanent state of alteration, this *ensimesmamento* effort, even if minimally developed, was responsible for radically separating human life from animal existence. Primitive man, after incipient and rudimentary *ensimesmamentos*, turns back again to the world, now being able to resist it a little more, increasingly considering the context of the future time as his focus of planning for new actions. The repetition of the effort of *ensimesmamento* has made man gradually become able to produce changes around him/herself, which, even though minimal, eventually enabled other moments, which were a little longer-lasting and more frequent, of the *ensimesmar*. Thus, authentically human life was conceived by Ortega y Gasset as being composed by three different moments, which are repeated cyclically: 1) alteration; 2) *ensimesmamento*; and 3) authentic action. It should be noted that human action, the aforementioned authentic, is definitely distinguished from animal action due to the effort of *ensimesmamento* (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

For Ortega y Gasset, a man's destiny should be understood as *action*. It is, therefore, important to note that human action differs fundamentally from animal action, since, while animals act based on the determination of their species, men are constantly in the *process doing* or *questioning what to do*, which makes their action *dramatic*. Human action is above all *dramatic* precisely due to the fact that the man can never be absolutely sure what will happen next, and that, therefore, he will always be at risk,

³ The incorruptible background (our translation).

⁴ Ortega is referring to the Spanish language, however the term also exists in Portuguese.

as he constantly needs to decide, to choose, *what to do*, in order to create his own story. Man cannot even be sure that he is thinking for himself, *ensimesmando-se*, since he can assume that he/she is repeating the ideas of others', which, in addition to not being his, can even be totally impractical (illogical) or abstract (detached from real experiences). Thus, man is always at risk of not being himself, as a unique and nontransferable being, who is precisely this because he does not strive to *ensimesmar*, based on his unique experiences felt in life. Thus, man is always at risk, in his dramatic reality, of dehumanizing himself for lacking the practical effort needed for *ensimesmamento*, as well as being at constant risk as a result of not assuming his personal individuality, refusing what was highlighted by Pindar (Greek poet from 5th century BC) when stating "become what you are", which is a call for each human individual to own his/her personal drama in an attempt to be *itself*, in its quest of mysterious fulfillment as a man and as an individual (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

At this point, questions can possibly arise, especially regarding the reasons that would lead a human individual to seek the path of *ensimesmamento* and, therefore, personal fulfillment. Well, in this regard, Ortega y Gasset states that *human life fulfillment* would be directly associated with an *imperative of authenticity* and also linked to meeting a demand for *personal vocation*. According to a discussion pointed out by Gonçalves Jr. (2003), the *imperative of authenticity* manifests itself through an *intimate calling*, rooted in a strictly private field of the individual (his incorruptible background), functioning as a signal to the path of fulfillment, so that each individual would be compelled to be what he/she *must be*. An apparent paradox arises from this thought, regarding the aspect of personal freedom, considering that the human individual would have to fulfill a personal destiny, which, aprioristically, would be established as a unique project of *vocation*. In this way, where would human freedom be? It would be, roughly, precisely on the fact of fulfillment or not of his destiny, or even, would it be in the choice of the way to meet or not the *imperative of vocational authenticity*? In this way, human freedom would certainly be present, even if not completely so. *Complete* freedom is no more than an ancient human utopia. In this sense, the specific condition of individual vocation would eventually highlight the *personal drama* of the human individual even more, as he/she would not just be constantly forced to choose actions to manifest him/herself as human, from *ensimesmamento*, but above all to fulfill him/herself continuously as an individual, from private signals of fulfillment or not of his/her *personal vocation*, expressed by feelings of satisfaction or displeasure (intimate suffering), in carrying out its everyday activities, perceiving itself more or less distant from its personal fulfillment in life. So much so that during both in the first and second process of choice, the human individual is constantly surrounded by its various circumstances, and, based on his/her personal contact with them, must freely make decisions and act, whether for its material survival, or for human fulfillment, or even individual fulfillment (vocational).

I-Circumstance

While based on this line of thought, when considering the prospect of personal drama, it is possible to realize that the *Orteguian self* is inserted into a determined reality (circumstance), in which he will inexorably have to act, in a constant process, aiming at becoming. The uncertainty and indeterminacy of the path to be followed are his pressing companions, in a way that man should feel, inevitably, lost before he/she can look forward to finding him/herself.

it's constitutive of the man, unlike all other beings, to be able to get lost, get lost in the jungle of existence, within him/herself, and thanks to this other sense of loss, re-operate vigorously to once again find him/herself. The ability and displeasure of feeling lost are his/her tragic fate and illustrious privilege (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960, p. 77)

The human individual, in his/her perspective of personal drama, is compelled to act on circumstances where he/she is. To do this, he/she must understand how he/she is related to his/her circumstances, in short, how does the *self-circumstance* connection happen.

In this sense, we shall think on this connection from the thought of Ortega y Gasset, who, when dealing with the human individual, said "I am I and my circumstance; if I do not save it, I do not save myself", which is clear in regards to the involvement between the individual and his/her personal circumstances. Thus, he also highlighted the separation between the self and the circumstance, as absolutely distinct structures, so that it is the individual's (the *self*) duty to take responsibility for his/her *authentic* action in an attempt to understand and grasp his/her strictly personal circumstance, so that he/she can find him/herself and be fulfilled as an individual. In that sense, we could say, considering Ortega y Gasset, that man *lives*, while everything else *exists*. That is, things exist as circumstances whether we like it or not, as they *ex-iste* (from the Latin *ex*, "out", and *sistere*, "be given"), as a *radical* reality, in which each individual is rooted to survive at length, to *resist* (from Latin *resistere*, "contrary movement to what is given") his/her circumstance. On the other hand, circumstance as a whole *exists* because we found it set and we shall act on it to *persist* (from the Latin *persistere*, "movement through what is given") living (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

The individual at birth meets an already set circumstance (existing), the world is as it is, so the only possible choice is how to experience circumstance, which, in its time, reveals itself in a specific place and time, in a specific culture and family (in a broad sense), as well as in everything else that is already set. Thus, each individual always finds a *here* that is already present and, above all, a *now*, which is not eternal, but with a counted and finite time, which rarely exceeds 100 years of earthly life. We arrive in this world without bringing anything material (except our own body), completely helpless, and leave it without knowing

where we are headed and without taking anything material (not even our own body). This is the imposed human drama. This is the set circumstance.

To be, i.e., to continue being, the individual must always be doing something, but that which he/she must do is not imposed of a previously set circumstance; but rather: he/she must chose, decide, intransferably, for him/herself and in front of him/herself, under his sole responsibility. No one can replace the individual in this deciding about what to do. Even deciding to surrender to the will of another, is something the individual decides individually. This urgency of having to choose and, therefore, be condemned, like it or not, to be free, to be, by his/her own account and risk, comes from the fact that circumstance is never one-sided, it always has several perspectives. That is: it invites us to different possibilities of doing, of being. (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960, p. 83)

Circumstance imposes on the human individual the freedom to choose how to act in the environment in which he/she is inserted, since there will always be actions available for his/her choosing. The human individual is thus *condemned* to be free, so that his/her life shall have a biographical sense, since each individual will be responsible for his/her own life story, so that each individual has to live his/her own life, being personally responsible for it. Personal circumstance thus imposes a *radical truth* to every human individual, since each person has to live and feel their own life, and only their own. Everything else is not directly felt by the specific individual and will be, for him/her, a *secondary truth*, but never a *radical* one. As a *secondary reality*, for example, one can understand the pain of another, whereas, in a *radical reality*, the individual will feel the pain on him/herself. Only what is felt in oneself can be *rooted* in the individual. Radical reality means that human life will always be *personal, circumstantial, nontransferable, and responsible*, because each act will result in its consequences (Ortega y Gasset, 1957/1960).

Ortega y Gasset presents, in detail, based on human perception, the structure that makes up the circumstance in which every human individual must live. First, he clarifies that, since circumstance is composed by various elements, the attention of the individual will never be in more than one element, as its main focus, and even the observed element is not seen in all its facets at the same time. If we observe an object (such as a pencil, for example), we will not be able to see it all at the same time, to see it fully we have to move it, causing it to rotate to expose all its facets to our vision. Thus, we form a complete picture, but, even so, we can only see a single facet of the object at a time, while the other facets, stored in memory, can be added to what is being seen. In summary, we can say that we will always have one single facet visible at a time, a *present* facet, while the other facets will be remembered, called *co-present*.

Ortega y Gasset also signals another situation, when we are inside a closed environment, having only the memory of what lies outside it, or at least the perception that there is something outside, because we are *used* to the fact that, when we are inside an environment, there will usually be an external context (a landscape of any kind), so that we would be really surprised if, when leaving the environment, we did not find anything outside, i.e. is, if there were only a huge and disturbing emptiness. Then, to the notions of *present* and *co-present*, Ortega y Gasset adds others: *actuality* (related to the *present*, being seen) and *habituality* (related to the *co-present*, which the expectation of being seen or imagined that one shall be seen).

Based these notions (*present, co-present, actuality, and habituality*), Ortega y Gasset establishes what he calls the structural laws of the circumstance. The first says that the vital circumstance, concerning the radical reality of the individual, is composed by few visible elements (*present*) and numerous non-visible elements (*co-present*) that can also be regarded as *latent* or hidden. The second structural law establishes that one thing alone is never present, but, on the contrary, we always have a single element as our main focus (prominent figure) and other elements as our secondary focus (background of the prominent image), which are seen as the outline of the prominent figure. Outside this scope of vision there will always be a huge amount of *latent* elements. A *horizon* would be the structure established as a boundary line between the *patent* portion of the circumstance and its *latent* portion.

It is important to highlight that human perception is much wider than just the scope of vision. It was used here as an example, as a teaching strategy, aiming to provide a better initial understanding, since the cited *structural laws of circumstances*, according to Ortega y Gasset (1957/1960), comprise all the possibilities of a human feeling. Thus, the *Orteguian self* should be understood as being broader than the scope of vision or even of consciousness, and must be delineated from its four individual constituents: *vitality, soul, spirit, and incorruptible background*.

Constituents of the Orteguian I

Ortega y Gasset signals that the constituents of the *Orteguian self* compose what he calls the *structure of human intimacy*, which should be viewed along with an understanding of the psychological phenomena. For Ortega y Gasset, the human individual must be considered as an indivisible and non-homogeneous whole, since he/she is composed of different elements, which can only be considered as elements of an individual if perceived as an integrated set, with each having their own function and operation (sometimes in shock), which would be in permanent contact between them, in a constant attempt of harmonic integration to human and individual fulfillment (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963b).

We need to not lose any ingredient: soul and body. Let us, finally, walk to a time whose motto shall not

be: “One or the other” – a theatrical motto, usable only for gesticulations. The new time progresses with letters on the flags: “one and the other”. Integration. Synthesis. Not amputations⁵. (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963b, p. 455, our translation)

To know the entirety of the *structure of human intimacy* it is necessary to outline the components of the *Orteguian self*, as described by Ortega y Gasset (1926/1963b), as four connected parts of human intimacy. The first part, *vitality*, would be intrinsically fused to the body, thusly also called the *carnal soul*. Such a part is identified as the cement of the structure of human intimacy, since in *vitality* the somatic and the psychological, the corporal and the spiritual, would merge radically, with both emanating from this portion and nurturing from it. The second portion of human intimacy was called *spirit* or *mind*, which corresponds to the center of human consciousness and is pointed out by Ortega y Gasset (1926/1963b) as the most personal part of the *Orteguian self*. The *most personal*, however, is not the *most individual*, considering that the *personal*, in this case, has a sense of protagonism, of authorship, since this part represents the center of the human will, the center of personal decision. The third portion is described by Ortega y Gasset as an intermediate constituent, located among the large, lasting and comprehensive constitution of *vitality*, which agglutinates and nourishes the other parts, as well as the particular constitution, which is instantaneous and specific to the *spirit*, manifesting itself in personal decision: it is the *soul*, which can be identified as the region of personal feeling (of the impulses, desires, feelings, and emotions). (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963b). As the fourth part of the structure of human intimacy, Ortega y Gasset identifies the incorruptible background, which would be the most *individual* of parts, considering that it would present itself as the most unique center of the *Orteguian self*, working as the specific driver to the realization of individual destiny, felt only from this that would be its most individual constituent. (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963a)

I was talking about . . . an incorruptible background is possess within us. Generally, this ultimate and very individualistic core of personality is buried under the cluster of trials and sentimental forms that out fell on us from outside. Only a few men gifted with a peculiar energy can envision, in certain moments, the attitudes of what Bergson would call the *deep self*. From time to time, its secluded voice comes to the surface of consciousness⁶. (Ortega y Gasset, 1926/1963b, p. 84, our translation, author's italics)

5 In the original text: “Necesitamos no perder ningún ingrediente: alma y cuerpo. Vamos, por fin, hacia una edad cuyo lema no puede ser: “O lo uno o lo otro” – lema teatral, sólo aprovechable para gesticulaciones. El tiempo nuevo avanza con letras en las banderas: “Lo uno y lo otro”. Integración. Síntesis. No amputaciones”.

6 In the original text: “Hablabo yo . . . de un cierto fondo insobornable que hay em nosotros. Generalmente, ese núcleo último e individualísimo de la personalidad está soterrado bajo el cúmulo de juicios y maneras sentimentales que de fuera cayeron sobre nosotros. Sólo algunos hombres dotados de una peculiar energía consiguen vislumbrar en ciertos instantes las actitudes de eso que Bergson llamaría el *yo profundo*. De cuando en cuando llega a la superficie de la consciencia su voz recóndita”.

For Ortega y Gasset, the structure of human intimacy would be composed, thereby, by four constituents of the *Orteguian self*, which could be perceived as four centers: *vitality*, the nourishing center, more diffuse and comprehensive (the *carnal soul*); the *spirit*, the decision-making and most personal center of the *Orteguian self* (its *conscious self*); the *soul*, the intermediate center between vitality and spirit (the *feeling region*); and the incorruptible background, the most unique center of the *Orteguian self* (its *deep self*).

Ortega y Gasset, when addressing the incorruptible background specifically, understanding it as a kind of *deep self*, contrasts it with something he called *farce*. Thus, the incorruptible background would correspond to an intrinsic truth of each human individual, in a way that all the realities existed a distance from that truth and would emerge as *farces*, or *faked realities*. The vocational mission of the human individual should be permanently manifested in his/her life story, otherwise he/she would experience the disappointment of a lifetime of farce (Gonçalves Júnior, 2003).

Consciousness-unconsciousness-individual

In order to enter, specifically, into considerations regarding Ortega y Gasset's circumstance, so as to approach it in regards to the Jungian unconsciousness, I must first elucidate a perception of what unconsciousness is to Jungian thought. To do so, I would point out that Ortega y Gasset did not exactly enter into deep discussions on the theme, even if he makes it clear when dealing with the human perception outside the scope of consciousness (*present* or *patent*), when considering the existence of the *co-present*, *hidden*, or *latent*.

From Jung's perspective, *unconsciousness* is the fundamental part required to study a human individual (*in-dividuum*), considering that this individual should be perceived as a unit or an indivisible whole, regarding that unconscious contents and processes, which are blatantly visible, should also logically compose the entire individual, extrapolating its conscious contents and processes, its *conscious self* (Jung, 1976/2002).

In this way, it is possible to consider that unconsciousness differs considerably from consciousness, considering that consciousness clearly has a central regulator, which is intertwined with the self itself, while for the unconsciousness, something analogous is not perceived, since the unconscious phenomena often manifest themselves, at least in the perception of the *conscious self*, in a chaotic and non-systematic way (Jung, 1976/2002).

Such a manifestation can be more clearly perceived in the field of psychiatry, or even in everyday manifestations such as dreams, so that the revealed content, in these cases, seem to be totally disordered and, therefore, considered lacking in a logical sense. It is as if the individual were taken by an avalanche of content that cannot be understood, because they were far from consciousness' standard. Such an avalanche is sometimes so powerful that it can lead to the dismissal of the *conscious self* as a regulator, and thus the unconscious would assume a prominent position, which is usually understood

as the manifestation of “madness”, insanity and mental confusion, but, once there is such a demonstration, it is assumed that these unconscious contents should previously compose all of the individual’s psyche (Jung, 1976/2002).

It should be noted that, while the unconscious contents remain hidden, they shall normally appear as if they do not even exist. Until they suddenly emerge in an unexpected way. Thus, instead of understanding unconsciousness as something that does not exist, we must understand it as potentially *already existing and being active* in the psyche, both in the condition of something that has *already been done (instinctive world)*, and as *something possible (human potential world)*. As for this characterization of unconsciousness, Jung distinguishes them in two groups: the *personal* unconsciousness and the *collective* unconsciousness (Jung, 1976/2002).

The collective unconscious is a part of the psyche that can be distinguished from a personal unconscious as its existence is not dependable on personal experience, therefore it is not a personal acquisition. While the personal unconsciousness is essentially composed of contents that have already been conscious and, however, disappeared from consciousness for being forgotten or repressed, the contents of the collective unconsciousness have never been in the conscience and, therefore, were not acquired individually, but rather owe their existence solely to heredity. (Jung, 1976-2002, p. 53)

Regarding the collective unconsciousness specifically, we can understand it as an *instinctive world* and also as a *human potential world*. Regarding the instinctive world, it is noticeable that every human individual is born with an already set biopsychosocial load that makes up its ancestry and historical content, which is practically coincident with what Ortega y Gasset describes as being the circumstance found by the self at birth. With respect to this *human potential world*, it is noticeable that every individual, at birth, brings a series of potentialities that are specific to humans or to himself as an individual (Orteguian vocation, for example), which can be fulfilled or not. At this point, it is important to highlight that the unconscious comprises, either to the past (ancestry), or for the future (potential), a long period of time, since past millennia up to a complete earthly life (and offspring), while consciousness thinks the most present moment, therefore being more immediatist, and also often unfair regarding unconsciousness, as it does not perceive the unconscious as its originator, considering that it has already lived and acted since the beginning of human experience, while consciousness feeds and develops from present luggage, largely maintained by the unconsciousness. Based on the image of the originator and maintainer unconsciousness, we can consider that it cannot, contrary to popular belief, be comprised of a chaotic and non-systematic pile of things. In order to maintain as much coherence and consistency there must be a broader standard, in its balanced nature, of what can be conceived by consciousness. Often, when a human

individual deviates fundamentally from his/her *instinctive* or *potential world*, when he/she leans toward a situation of one-sidedness, unconscious forces tend to collaborate, in a rewarding way, to reorientate the goal, which aims to restore the lost balance (between unconsciousness and consciousness) and the individual’s fulfillment, even if such forces shall act in opposition to consciousness, and, sometimes, take possession of the individual, as a healthy measure (Jung, 1976/2002).

Thus, it is possible to conceive unconsciousness as the broader portion on the human psyche, bearing in mind that while consciousness, through its *conscious self*, is always limited to a period of life, it is limited to a field of conscious performance, unconsciousness is infinitely more ancient and long-lasting, comprising ancient contents passed and fathomable future possibilities, in addition to exercising a broader regulation through compensatory unconscious action (to compensate for the one-sidedness of consciousness). All in all, the human psyche is composed of two opposite parts, that are fundamentally significant, and that together have the condition of forming a whole, of composing the individual. However, these two parts can only compose an individual whole if they act in a balanced way (consciousness-unconsciousness cooperation), thus they lean towards the process of *individuation*. (Jung, 1976/2002)

Regarding this process of individuation and its relationship with the self, consciousness, unconsciousness, and the individual, Jung states:

I use the term “individuation” in the sense of the process that generates a psychological “individuum”, i.e., an indivisible unity, a whole. It is generally assumed that consciousness represents the whole of the psychological individual. The sum of experiences, explained only by appealing to the hypothesis of unconscious psychological processes, makes us doubt that the self and its contents are actually identical to the “whole”. If unconscious processes exist, they certainly belong to the totality of the individual, even if they are not components of its conscious self. If they were a part of the self, they would be necessarily conscious, since everything directly related to the self is conscious. Consciousness can even be equated to the relationship between the self and psychological contents. Phenomena said to be unconscious have so little relationship with the self that there is often no hesitation to deny their own existence. Despite this, they manifest themselves in human conduct. A careful observer can detect them without difficulty, while the observed individual has no consciousness of revealing his/her most secret thoughts, or things that he/she never thought of consciously. It is a prejudice to assume that something that was never thought may not exist within the psyche. There is a lot of evidence that consciousness is far from comprising the entire psyche. Many things happen in a half-conscious state, and others happen unconsciously. (Jung, 1976/2002, p. 269)

Circumstance and unconsciousness

Based on the subjects considered until now, it is possible to envision a broad performance of the unconscious in the circumstance of the human individual. Such a performance can be perceived, both in the context of the *self-circumstances* involvement and, more specifically, in the functioning of the various constituent parts of the *Orteguian self*. I, thus, intend to (considering that the conscious self, according to Ortega y Gasset, does not comprise all its constituents) enlarge the conception of circumstance so that it can also include the functioning of constituent parts of the *Orteguian self* in its structuring of human intimacy, since such parts, which are often unconscious, also involve the *conscious self* and act on it.

I take the liberty of considering that the famous sentence by Ortega y Gasset, cited at the beginning of the text, imposes a huge psychological involvement, as the one I intend to consider here, based on the assumption that the involvement between the constituents of the *Orteguian self* would present itself as more intense than that which involves the relationship between the *conscious self* and its circumstances, considering that, when it involves its own individual constituents, that there will certainly be a relationship comprising the individual's own identity and his/her intimacy structure. Thus, I consider that part of the constituent parts of the *Orteguian self* would also work as circumstances that act on the conscience of the individual, as unconscious aspects could be identified as *circumstances* involved with the *conscious self*.

To unravel the *Orteguian self* in its constituents, which constitute the structure of human intimacy, I can imagine that they would be characterized by both *consciousness* (represented primarily by the portion called *spirit* or *mind*, and also the *soul*, as the region of feelings and emotions) and unconsciousness, which would be present in the parts: (a) *soul*, by means of impulses and unconscious desires; (b) *vitality*, for its comprehensive constitution, nurturing and maintaining, fundamentally unconscious; and (c) the *incorruptible background*, which is characterized as a booster and signaling a *deep self* of the human individual's vocational destiny.

Therefore, we can see the *Orteguian* personal conscious center act on the unconscious forces and contents, both through its external circumstances and its own constituent parts. We must highlight, among these, the strength of *vitality*, the impulses and desires of the *soul*, and the deep sense of the *incorruptible background*.

Jung (1971-1987), regarding the role of unconsciousness, says:

the unconscious is not just a reactive mirror, but also a productive and autonomous activity, its field of experience is a reality, a world of its own. In regards to the latter we can say that it acts on us in the same way that we act on it, i.e., we can say the same about the empirical field of the outside world. But while in the outside world the objects are the constituent elements, on interiority the constituent elements are psychological factors (pp. 60-61).

I take this quote from Jung, specifically, as highlighted above, to use as an example, to conceive a rapprochement between *Orteguian circumstance* and the Jungian *unconsciousness*, considering that, in the quote, Jung considers the unconscious as an autonomous and active reality from a world of its own, which differs substantially from the world of consciousness. This unconscious world acts upon us (*conscious self*) and we act upon it, in the same way as we act on the outside world (exterior circumstance). Jung also highlights that objects are the constituent elements of the outside world, which relate to *consciousness*, while psychological factors are the constituent elements of the inner world (interiority) regarding the *conscious self*. Therefore, the *conscious self*, in Ortega y Gasset, identified as spirit or mind, would relate with two substantially different circumstances: exterior and interior (circumstance as constituent parts of the *Orteguian self*). Nevertheless, circumstance in Ortega y Gasset might be perceived as *unconscious* both concerning what is identified as external circumstances, as well as in the constituent parts of the *self* that act on personal consciousness. On exterior circumstances, the unconscious aspects would be present in what Ortega y Gasset identifies as *co-present*, *latent*, or *hidden*, especially in what transcends the personal and collective memory, as we do not know more in regards to its existence, but it continues to act on personal consciousness (ancestry to Jung). As for inner circumstances, the unconscious aspects would be related to what is personal, more specifically in what Ortega y Gasset identifies as constituent parts of the *Orteguian self*, which, despite integrating its personal composition, does not integrate, however, its consciousness (*conscious self*). As previously mentioned, the constituent parts of the *Orteguian self* act unconsciously, without interruption, on its personal center of consciousness (mind or spirit).

Final considerations

The considerations presented in this study are incipient and intend to design the scope of the self-circumstance involvement according to Ortega y Gasset, which are beyond the reach of conscience. As the author himself explains, the attention of the individual cannot be directed to more than one object (content) at the same time. Most of the total content (known and unknown) will occupy secondary or hidden positions (background of a prominent figure or some content that is beyond the perception horizon).

The memory of an individual only comprises part of what is experienced by him/her, and most part has been either forgotten or never known. The individual's consciousness is certainly distinguished by being able to perform great deeds, but is, at the same time, unable to establish control over everything that relates to the individual, either the unconscious part that is within the self, or the unconsciousness that is in the world. Nevertheless, the consciousness of the self cannot comprise, or even conceive, the unconscious contents in constant performance on the circumstances, either while personal unconsciousness, or as a collective unconsciousness.

Considering the *Orteguian* concept of *self-circumstance*, based on this comprehensive range of the

unconscious, which is present in the exterior circumstances and also in the self (inner circumstance), it is possible to assume that the *Orteguian self*, when seeking its salvation (understand the meaning of its as of the self-circumstance involvement), faces its limiting disability, as not all contents can be perceived and memorized by its conscious senses, which is due to the numerous unconscious contents that shall remain unconscious. In this way, the drama of the individual is intensified by the lack of ability to consciously understand (rational), as it is comprised by constant uncertainty and indeterminacy. The presence of the unconscious causes the individual to feel lost and thus motivates (longs) him/her to always seek the sense of his/her life by alternating his/her attention to the exterior circumstance (state of alteration) and to the inner circumstance (state of *ensimesmamento*), if we assume the three cyclic moments of Orteguian authentic action. His/her attention alternates and only then may the individual experience his/her uniqueness.

When considering this context, it can be affirmed that the uninterrupted parallel living of the Jungian unconscious world is noticeable, unconscious because of forgetfulness, but which is active, productive, and autonomous, and that, in its turn, is independent of consciousness or even of the individual to exist, with this being prior to it.

This unconscious world is an indelible reality that acts on the individual and is involved with him/her, as an Orteguian circumstance. Archetypal images would form the basis for this world (collective unconsciousness circumstance), which would boost human existence and action. The individual, in his/her turn, also acts on this unconscious world, which

is performed similarly to on the sensible world of concrete forms (its empirical world).

The personal unconscious contents, arising from the individual-circumstance interaction also have the strength to act on the individual, and, of course, act on a kind of constant feedback. However, in terms of strength and potential, this personal unconscious circumstance does not compare to boosting the character of the archetypal circumstance (collective unconsciousness and its archetypes).

Ultimately, I believe that the circumstance with which the human individual is inextricably involved is significantly wider and intrinsically related to the Jungian unconscious (especially the collective), so that the importance of the unconscious circumstance involved with the individual's conscience can be easily distinguished in the following words from Jung:

The collective unconscious is everything but a personal encapsulated system. It is a wide objectivity, as wide as the world, and open to it. I am the object of all subjects, in a total reversal of my usual consciousness, in that I am always a subject who *has* objects. There I am in a more direct link with the world, in a way that I easily forget who I really am. "Lost in yourself" is a good expression to characterize this state. This self, however, is the world, or rather a world, as if a conscience could see it. Therefore, we must know who we are.

As soon as the unconscious touches us, we already are it, to the extent that we become unaware of ourselves. (Jung, 1976-2002, p. 32)

A circunstância em José Ortega y Gasset: aproximações ao inconsciente junguiano

Resumo: O indivíduo humano, conforme o pensamento de José Ortega y Gasset, revela-se como um *eu* indissoluvelmente coimplicado com a sua *circunstância*. A proposta deste artigo é refletir sobre a circunstância orteguiana, sobretudo em seus aspectos inconscientes, de modo a ensaiar uma aproximação dessa circunstância com a perspectiva do inconsciente de Carl Gustav Jung.

Palavras-chave: circunstância, inconsciente, Ortega y Gasset, Jung.

La circonstance chez José Ortega y Gasset : approximations de l'inconscient junguien

Résumé : L'individu, selon la pensée de José Ortega y Gasset, se révèle d'un « *Moi* » indissolublement co-impliqué avec sa *circonstance*. La proposition de cet article est de réfléchir sur la circonstance « *Orteguienne* », en particulier dans ses aspects inconscients, afin d'essayer une approximation de cette circonstance avec la perspective de l'inconscient de Carl Gustav Jung.

Mots-clés : circonstance, inconscient, Ortega y Gasset, Jung.

La circunstancia en José Ortega y Gasset: aproximaciones al inconsciente junguiano

Resumen: El individuo humano, según el pensamiento de José Ortega y Gasset, se revela como un *yo* indisolublemente coimplicado con su *circunstancia*. La propuesta de este artículo es reflexionar sobre la circunstancia orteguiana, sobre todo en sus aspectos inconscientes, para ensayar una aproximación de esa circunstancia a la perspectiva del inconsciente de Carl Gustav Jung.

Palabras clave: circunstancia, inconsciente, Ortega y Gasset, Jung.

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