

RUNNING HEAD: Interpreting Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, as a depiction of Jung's process of individuation through the use of archetypes

Interpreting Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, as a depiction of Jung's process of individuation through the use of archetypes

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	6
Introduction	7
Justification	9
Objectives	13
Limitations of the Study	14
State of the Art	15
Referential and Theoretical Framework	20
Chapter I: Fake rebirths and the Anima	34
Chapter II: Enter the Shadow	39
Chapter III: Separatio and false prophets	43
Chapter IV: Shadow Clubs and religion	46
Chapter V Haikus and Individuation	53
Chapter VI An inflated shadow	59
Chapter VII: Sacrifice	61
Chapter VIII: Facing the divide	64
Chapter IX: Solutio and Rebirth	69
Conclusion	72
References	75

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Abstract

The present paper identifies and interprets Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club* from the perspective of Jung's process of individuation as the driving force for the unfolding and evolution of the narrator and the shadow's characters. This relationship is evidenced in the verbal material and the events that take place in the novel where key elements of Jungian psychoanalysis such as the psyche, the unconscious, the collective unconscious, and the archetypes play an important role, as well as recurring themes like sacrifice, rebirth and religion. These are also analyzed and taken into account in the different stages that take place during the process of individuation.

Keywords: shadow, anima, haiku, sacrifice, rebirth, religion, project mayhem, collective unconscious, Self, divisio, separatio, solutio, psyche, transformation.

Abstract

Este trabajo es identifica e interpreta cómo Chuck Palahniuk, autor de la novela *El Club de la Pelea*, usa el proceso de Individuación postulado por Carl Jung como soporte principal para el desarrollo y la evolución de los personajes del narrador y la sombra a través de la novela. Esto se hace evidente en el material verbal y en los acontecimientos que transcurren en la novela al analizarlos e identificar elementos clave del psicoanálisis de Jung tales como: el inconsciente personal, el inconsciente colectivo y los arquetipos. Del mismo modo también se tienen en cuenta conceptos recurrentes como el sacrificio, el renacer y la religión en las etapas de el proceso de individuación.

Palabras Clave: sombra, ánima, haiku, sacrificio, renacer, religión, proyecto Mayhem, inconsciente colectivo, Yo, divisio, separatio, solutio, psique, transformación.

Introduction

The term *individuation* that does not refer to psychology or psychoanalysis is not easily found in literature; however, it seems to have found its way into pop culture through a best-selling fiction novel without anyone noticing it. In 1996, Chuck Palahniuk wrote *Fight Club*, a seven-page short story that would later turn into a novel by the same title and that would then be adapted into a film and become the center of attention, receiving both positive and negative criticism. As part of this criticism, several essays and articles were written, each one attempting to interpret and analyze what the novel's true purpose was. Nevertheless, none of them has managed to fully interpret or understand what the underlying forces that drive the narrator's actions are or what drives the main character into developing an alter ego in the novel. The purpose of this essay is to give a definite answer to that question by looking further into Jung's works on the Self, the archetypes and focus the interpretation on the process he called individuation.

According to Jung, individuation is a process all human beings have to go through in order to become full individuals. This is done by understanding the archetypes that live within the psyche, like the shadow and the anima, and the effect they have on both the conscious and the unconscious. Taking into account that this process is made up of three lengthy stages - *divisio, separatio and solutio* - and that the purpose of this essay is to unveil its existence in the novel, the character's development throughout the novel, I interpret it in a chronological manner that reflects that same stage-like unfoldment.

The essay begins by analyzing the events that led the narrator into having a psychogenic disturbance that would result in him beginning his individuation. It is followed by defining and interpreting the two most important archetypes found in this process: the anima and the Shadow. Afterwards, it acknowledges the importance that both religion and religious themes have in the novel, recurring concepts like sacrifice and rebirth are interpreted within a Jungian context and the structure of individuation.

On a similar note, another important religious concept that is taken into consideration is that of mandalas, assimilating them to Palahniuk's haikus. This is done due to the fact that Jung considered mandalas of utmost importance as markers in the individuation process since they tapped into the collective unconscious. Because of this, the fifth chapter is devoted to the interpretation of haikus and how they can be understood as written mandalas, as well as interpreting what purpose they serve and what they mean and represent in the main character's individuation.

Through a careful interpretation of both the verbal material and Jung's theories, the purpose of all the events, the characters presented and their purpose, becomes clear.

Justification

With all the media hype that started with David Fincher's movie, "The Fight Club", it is quite improbable that no one would know what it is about and has not seen it by now or at least had someone spoil the big twist at the end. Because of this, reading the novel becomes a challenge for the readers since they believe they are seeing signs and metaphors foreshadowing what will happen where there is nothing going on, making the reader feel warned and predisposed. Some may even feel the novel has lost all of its shock value and is not worth reading. But still in a similar manner, knowing that the two star-crossed lovers will fall in love and die, in *Romeo and Juliet*, does not spoil the magic and beauty of reading Shakespeare's entire play and his breathtaking monologues.

Chuck Palahniuk's novel, which goes by a similar name, *Fight Club*, proves them all wrong by giving the readers a unique front row seat into a journey of decay and destruction, of salvation and resurrection and even more, an insight into one of humankind's greatest ponderings, Who am I? Many will not agree with the main character's opinions, views, actions or methods, but still, is it worth it? Seeing someone go through a personal journey towards enlightenment and self-destruction is a unique experience that brings forth both knowledge and insights of one's own.

Nevertheless, may these insights not convince anyone that this is one of those self-motivation or self-help books. *Fight Club* is not an easy read, it will have the readers at the edge of their seat and in the midst of the main character's mental chaos, it will try to overwhelm the reader with an introspective look into his shadow and his own mental chaos,

making him wonder who he is, who he wants or would like to be. It achieves this by masquerading as a thrill ride while deeply remaining a truly philosophical novel. With ideas of Nietzsche, Sartre, Kierkegaard and Heidegger's, to name a few, and dealing with topics like existentialism, sacrifice, anarchy, nihilism and consumerism.

This enlightenment process results in the reader pondering on things he took for granted, reconsidering their place in the world, their role in it and who they currently are. It is because of this particular effect that the present study focuses on the main character's enlightening journey of construction, destruction and reconstruction of his identity and selfhood or as Jung would have it, his process of individuation.

This novel taps into humans' primal desires and fears in a way that none other has, up to the point where the readers may find themselves agreeing with some of Tyler's thoughts and methods, up to a point of even admiring him. It is in that precise moment that the biggest realization of the novel emerges: anyone can be both Jack and Tyler at the same time, finding liberation from the daily routine through the discovery of their own doppelgänger; their own shadow. And what is even scarier, is the thought that anyone may embrace Jack and Tyler's thoughts and begin to adopt them as their own, accepting them as a way to fill the void that emotional insecurity has left in the reader, insinuating that the solution may be the destruction or the reconstruction of the self.

Fight Club appeals to the ever-present human longings, to the basic feelings and instincts, to the highest of human aspirations both earthly and transcendent. It achieves all of this while continuously adding more wood to the Promethean pyre that can bring salvation

through knowledge or threaten to consume and destroy the reader's self. It is then that the reader is cornered into wondering: "Am I complete and sure of whom I am?"

Fight Club is a novel that has been creating controversy ever since it was written, be it as a short story, a novel or later on, a movie. Because of this, numerous essays, articles and interpretations from several points of view have been written. However, most of them fail to grasp the main essence of the novel and instead get lost in its shock value, preferring to get stranded in the most primitive aspect of the novel, criticizing it for its violence, chauvinism and its overall anarchic concept, leaving aside and taking for granted the symbolism, the psychology and the enchanting subtlety that all of its events, characters and actions have to offer.

The main purpose of the present study is to go beyond and understand the novel's inner workings from a psychoanalytical Jungian perspective. Why Jung? Jung was chosen after noticing that his research on archetypes and on the process of individuation has never been used to interpret *Fight Club* and that all of the existing Jungian interpretations run short and find themselves limited to specific events or characters instead of seeing the novel as a whole. Jung was also chosen after taking into account that there are no other dissertations or studies that take this branch of psychology as their backbone and refer exclusively to Freud or Lacan's work on the unconscious. The Jungian scope was chosen since it is much broader than Freud's psychoanalytical approach, which would only focus on the Eros in the novel, leaving aside important relevant aspects that help create a comprehensible profile of the narrator and what he is going through.

The second purpose is to approach the novel and Jung's theories, in order to interpret its symbolism and describe how the working of the unconscious becomes dangerous when ignored or tried to repress in its totality. Resulting in the narrator and the shadow going through a cathartic process that reveals their opposite moral standings.

The final purpose of this work is to interpret the novel as more than just a piece of fiction, as a gateway into the understanding of the personal and collective unconscious, to view it as the depiction how modern culture has tried to alienate and subdue the basic primitive instincts by demonizing them and trying to replace them with objects and meaningless life goals. At the same time, it is a depiction of the power that resides in self-knowledge and in the significance of achieving a state of selfhood.

Objectives

General objective

- To interpret Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight club*, as a depiction of Jung's process of individuation, understanding it as the driving force behind the narrator and his shadow's actions and how they led to the creation of the alter ego.

Specific objectives

To interpret Tyler's characterization as the archetypal figure of the shadow and describe his role during individuation;

to describe how the shadow takes control over the narrator;

to identify Marla Singer as an archetypal figure of the anima and to interpret the role she plays in the narrator's individuation;

to identify the different archetypal symbols found in the novel and interpret their role in the narrator's process of individuation;

to analyze how the verbal material pinpoints the stages of individuation;

to analyze the importance recurring elements such as sacrifice, religion and rebirth have in individuation;

Limitations of the study

Since this work focuses more on the development of the main character and the inner journey he undergoes, spatial features specific to the era and place the novel was written are not taken into account. In a similar manner, dialects and slang are not taken into consideration. Specific dialogs may be significant if they reveal valuable information on the process, the archetypes and the transformation itself.

Taking into consideration that this novel points out many different themes like philosophy, specific ideologies, psychology, politics and religion it is important to limit this study to psychological themes mainly. However, philosophy and Tyler's ideologies will be used as means for a more exhaustive psychological analysis and profile from a Jungian point of view.

No complete works besides Chuck Palahniuk's (1996) novel, *Fight Club*, will be taken into account. However, some chapters, essays, transcriptions of lectures and books by Jung will be used to give the theoretical and psychological background. In a similar manner, the theatrical adaptation by the same name will not be taken into account since it is just another interpretation of the novel. The novel will also be considered an isolated literary piece so that no other works by the author or interviews where he talks about this novel are considered relevant nor will they be taken into account.

State of the Art

As mentioned before, ever since the theatrical adaptation came out, the novel gained a cult status and became a best-seller. Because of its acclaimed and heavily criticized violence and raw themes, several papers, essays have been written about it. In spite of the many that can be found, most essays can be classified in one of these three categories: an analysis and interpretation of the author's purpose, of the novel or a critique of the novel itself or other essays about it.

For starters, in the particular case of "The Fiction of Self-destruction: Chuck Palahniuk, a Closet Moralist", Jesse Kavadlo (2005) attempts to identify the nature and the guiding force of the novel in an extrinsic factor, the author, Chuck Palahniuk, himself. He does this by analyzing three of Palahniuk's novels: *Choke*, *Tender* and *Fight Club* and finding how self-destruction is depicted in the novels. Kavadlo then proceeds to interpret the self-destruction as the author's pretext to remain as a "closet moralist", an expression he uses to make a comparison between Palahniuk's homosexuality that is now out of the closet and his morality that has never been disclosed. He concludes by stating that all of the philosophical, white male insecurities and ideologies portrayed in the novel are nothing more than a reflection of the author's own process of self-destruction.

From a different perspective, essays like "Even the Mona Lisa is falling apart: The Cultural Assimilation of Scientific Epistemologies in Palahniuk's fiction", by Jeffrey A. Sartain (2005), "Fight Club and the Dangers of Oedipal Obsession", by Paul Kennet (2005), and "Muscular Existentialism in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*", by Andrew Hock Soon Ng

(2005), focuses more on the novel itself to try and identify what guides it, makes it a best-seller and what creates the shock value it contains.

In the first essay, Sartain analyzes and interprets the novel from a scientific point of view and arguments that Palahniuk's concepts of modern hard sciences like non-linear dynamics, particle physics or information theory and their proper metalanguage, without having any particular interest in the topics, all in order to validate, argument and inform his fiction. He then uses the concepts of entropy, thermodynamics and the Chaos theory, some of the most influential theories in contemporary quantum physics, to explain the binary paradox found in *Fight Club* where two apparently exclusive characters share the same body. Sartain then states that the Chaos theory is the most prevalent theme that is depicted and metaphorized in *Fight Club*, even though it is never discussed as a concept in the novel. He concludes that the main character, Tyler, only represents the "ever-increasing disorder and entropy in the world". (Sartain, 2005, pag.45)

The second essay, "Fight Club and the Dangers of Oedipal Obsession", by Paul Kennet, focuses more on interpreting the role and the meaning that modern concepts of masculinity play in the novel. Here he proposes that the "true Enemy" in the novel is not the doppelgänger Tyler but the narrative of the Oedipal complex, which acts as a guiding force. He argues this hypothesis through Lacan's theory of "Name-of-the-Father" and claims that the main character's journey and search for identity and recognition only mimics a father-son relationship.

In the third, and most complete essay, Hock Soon proposes to conciliate the problematic

and fractured relationship between postmodernism, existentialism and masculinity shown in the novel. He does this by stating that a better understanding of the doppelgänger or double, found in the novel, results in the discovery of this element in itself as the common denominator of all these themes. The idea is initially elaborated on by the premise that Sartre's concept of transcendence is insinuated throughout the novel by a double motif that only creates Tyler Durden as the narrator's desire and necessity to exceed his existential limitations and to transform his being. Hock Soon (2005) will then go on to state that "*Fight Club's* homage to existentialism is heavily drawn along gender lines, which assimilate this philosophy with a masculine figure that guides the story's trajectory (sic)" (p.120), arriving to the conclusion that the post-modern society has favored an ongoing process of feminization that is reflected in the symbolic castration of an entire generation of men.

It then becomes evident that in the previous essays, Sartain, Kennet and Hock Soon (2005) the interpretations become limited to individual events in the book or to specific fragments. Thus, scratching only the surface by not taking it and its events as a whole.

The other kind of essays that have been written about the novel will mostly spin around other essays about *Fight Club* and support or criticize them. The best examples of this are "The Death of Sisyphus: Existentialist Literature and the Cultural Logic of Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*" by Robert Bennett and "Diagnosing Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*" by Peter Mathews.

Bennett's work reflects on the hate and love reactions that the novel has generated among readers, viewers and critics. Stating that most of its supporters and detractors have only focused on issues of gender, violence and class identity instead of analyzing Palahniuk's existentialist exploration of social alienation and the human condition. As a conclusion,

Bennett compares Dostoyevsky's *Notes From the Underground* and *Fight Club* to restate his thesis that the novel is an excellent unappreciated modern "proto existentialist" novel.

In the following essay, Mathews' purpose is to criticize literary critics such as Joan Evans and Blyle Frank, who praise the novel for exploring paradoxes found in contemporary identity politics, and Henry Giroux, Suzanne Clark, Thomas Peele and Mark Pettus who, on the other hand, states that in spite of its apparently subversive politics, the novel only ends up affirming the same set of values it condemns. The essay is structured as a rebuttal to these claims since the author believes them to be "the product of a poor and shallow literary analysis that misses the real intention of the novel". After a very detailed exposition of the inaccuracies of the other authors, Mathews arrives to the conclusion that both versions of *Fight Club* -the novel and the movie- actually act as an accurate critique of the totalitarian logic that underlines both sides of conventional politics and not only one or the other as thought before.

The final and most relevant essay to take into account is Shumate's (2011) essay "Personality Type in Depth: Shadow Boxing with *Fight Club*". This interpretation is the only one that takes into account the totality of the novel and uses Jungian theories such as the shadow and different archetypes, to interpret it. Nevertheless, it is also found to be insufficient since it only takes the process of individuation as something minor while giving most, if not all, the importance to Jung's personality types. By doing this, Shumate fails to give a specific explanation of any of the events that take place in the novel and of how they are all signs that point towards a subject who is on a journey to rediscover his Self, as well as his constant struggle to find a harmonic state where his unconscious and his consciousness

can coexist.

After reading these previous essays on the novel, two main problems stand out. The first one is that most of them do not take the novel and its events as a whole and the second one is that they do not give Jung's process of individuation and its archetypes a needed in-depth analysis from within the novel. Because of this, the following essay will emphasize on dealing with these issues and presenting a complete interpretation of the novel.

Referential and Theoretical Framework

In order to fully argument this interpretation of Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, first it is necessary to know where the core ideas come from. Because of this, all of Jung's main concepts are considered here.

The first concept is that of the *Psyche* since for Jung, and all of psychiatry, it is where all mental processes take place. The psyche is a thing of infinite complexity since it can be studied from several points of view and presents itself as something infinite and ever expanding (Jung 1927). However, in order to be able to grasp it from a psychological point of view, it can be limited and described as the totality of all psychic processes that take place within both, the conscious and the unconscious. This definition immediately separates the *psyche* from a term for which it tends to be confused with, *mind*. The main difference is that *mind* is a term used only to refer to the aspects of mental functions that take place in the conscious while ignoring the unconscious. The psyche also acts as a self-regulating system that strives to maintain a correct balance between the opposing qualities of the conscious and the unconscious while at the same time, it is actively trying to further develop itself through the process of individuation.

After the psyche, the next two main concepts are the conscious and the unconscious. In order to talk about the conscious, it must first be referred to as consciousness. Consciousness is considered to be the state or the quality of being aware, be it of an external object or of something within oneself¹. It is the element that allows human beings to experience and feel things, to have a sense of selfhood and it is what gives an executive control over the body and

¹ "consciousness" as defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary

mind (Farthing, 1992). All the contents found within the conscious become part of the ego. According to Jung (1951), the ego is formed at the center of the field of consciousness and is responsible for all feelings of personal identity and the conscious awareness of existing. It is also what comprises all thoughts, intuition, and emotions and has access to all unrepressed memories. Nevertheless, the ego does not make up the whole consciousness; it is only a picture of the conscious personality and the link between the inner and the outer world. Theoretically, no limits can be set to the field of consciousness since it is capable of an infinite extension. Yet, empirically, it finds its limits when it becomes confronted with the unknown. The unknown can be divided into two groups: the things which are outside and can be experienced by the senses, the unknown in the outer world, and those which are inside and are experienced immediately, the unconscious.

The unconscious is divided into two aspects: the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. The personal unconscious, on one hand, is the result of a process of repression and where all the inadmissible thoughts and wishes a person has throughout their life are sent, unknowingly and without any effort, to remain hidden from the conscious mind since it does not want to acknowledge their existence. On this topic it is important to note, that contrary to Freud's theories, Jung (1918) reaffirms that "these wishes and thoughts are repressed and not suppressed, since the suppression of this amoral and instinctive impulses results in a rupture within the thin wall that separates wishing and being conscious of the wish, presupposing that the wish remained conscious"(p.5). He clarifies this taking into account that suppression relies mostly on thoughts in the conscious mind that are minimized or muted willingly through effort but that can be recalled and dealt with at any moment if the subject decides to. In a similar manner, Jung opposes Freud's conception of the unconscious

by conceiving it as something much larger than the "egoless function below the threshold of consciousness"(Jung, 1934a, p.213) that Freud proposed and regards as something that is not only caused by conscious factors. All of the repressed and seemingly forgotten incompatible contents will go and exist in the unconscious and influence conscious processes. This influence acts as a way to compensate and supplement all the actions and thoughts the conscious contains through images of the inner world (Jung, 1918, p.19).

On the other hand, there is the collective unconscious, one of Jung's main concepts that has also been referred to as the suprapersonal unconscious. According to Jung (1918), the collective unconscious is something older than man itself and implies an extension of man beyond himself. It is something that has been around for the same time as mankind, it contains all knowledge, experiences and behaviors that we have as a species and it has been passed on by inheritance through the evolution of mankind and its experience to be shared by all individuals. It is one of the main parts of the psyche and can be separated from the personal unconscious by the fact that it does not need personal experience to exist, since it is not a personal acquisition.

Within the collective unconscious, the main elements found are the archetypes, universal images that have existed since the remotest times and represent instincts themselves by echoing patterns of instinctual behaviors. They are essentially unconscious contents that are altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, changing in form and appearance in accord to the individual's consciousness. Archetypes tend to appear mostly in dreams since they have the advantage of being involuntary, spontaneous creations of the unconscious psyche that cannot be falsified with any conscious purpose (Jung, 1936b, p.44). They act

through symbolism in order to aid the individual by attempting to make some unconscious content conscious. This process, however, tends to be met with denial, resistance and aggression from the conscious since it feels threatened by all of these uncontrolled emotions, amoral thoughts and seemingly chaotic unsystematic images (Jung, 1939, p.276). The archetypes are divided to symbols and icons that are relevant to all humanity and are found throughout all of history. For instance, there are archetypal symbols like the sun, the moon, water, fish, snakes, and so on, archetypal events like birth, death and separation and finally archetypal figures such as the mother, the father and the child, to name a few. The main archetypes to be taken into account are the persona, the shadow, the anima and finally the Self.

The persona, as described by Jung (1934b) is "that which one is not, but which oneself and others think one is"(p.221). In other words, the persona is the mask used to protect and hide the true self from the outer world. This persona is also referred to as the packaging of the ego or the ego's public relations person since it shields the ego by constantly adapting and changing for both personal convenience and out of need in order to achieve social development and awareness. The problem with this archetype originates when the ego gets confused and starts to identify itself in its totality with the persona. This causes many major traits of the personality to be left unrealized as well as leave the individual unsatisfied. The persona appears out of the child's necessity to adapt to the expectations of parents, teachers and peers. Making the persona carry all the positive and desirable traits, while leaving all the opposite undesirable traits to form part of the shadow.

The shadow, as mentioned before and as conceived by Jung (1951d), is the polar opposite of the persona, making it consequently, opposite to consciousness as well, since it carries all the rejected traits, repressed ideas, weaknesses, forbidden desires and instincts held by the personal unconscious. It is personified in dreams by dark and dubious characters that are usually of the same sex as the dreamer. It also presents an anthropomorphized version of everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself/herself but that haunts him/her directly or indirectly. It is both a part of the personality and one of the most common archetypes that has a frequent and disturbing influence on the ego.

The shadow presents a moral problem since it challenges the whole ego-personality by threatening to invade and to start filtering its contents onto consciousness if not treated and handled properly. This proves to be the ego's greatest primal fear since it would involve having to recognize all those instincts, unbound emotions, repressed memories and dark aspects of the personality something that is real and present. However, if the subject manages to handle this situation adequately, accept the shadow with good will and see beyond his ego's initial resistance and rejection, the shadow has been proven to be a source of great insights that leads to the path to self-knowledge, the anima or animus and creativity (Jung, 1951b, p.8-9). If instead of trying and arguing, the subject were to rationalize or try to suppress by minimizing and muting the shadow, he would only face himself with an impossible task since it is a living part of the personality. What all these negative reactions would achieve is to remind the subject of his absolute helplessness, affecting and diminishing his ego, and ultimately make the unconscious turn against the conscious, a process that, as Jung (1939, p.288) noted, will usually result in neurosis. Suppressing the shadow also results in an imbalance between the conscious and unconscious that ends up leading to a lack of

integration of the individual as a whole, and to the subject projecting their shadow onto others.

From a psychotherapeutic point of view, projections are an unconscious and automatic process where a content that is unconscious to the subject transfers itself to an object, so that it seems to belong to that object (Jung, 1936a, p.60). Since they are created by the unconscious and not the conscious, the subject can only meet with projections, not make them. The shadow tends to be one of the archetypes that is mostly identified as using projections since it projects onto others all of its qualities and makes the individual's consciousness identify them and be repulsed by them since they reflect all of their own flaws and obscure desires. Most projections cease to exist the moment they become conscious and the subject is able to interpret what they stand for.

However, Jung (1936a, p.60, footnote 17) realized that there are cases where this does not happen and despite the subject's seemingly sufficient insight, the projection and its reactive effect does not stop and the liberation does not take place. In these cases, meaningful yet unconscious contents are still bound up with the projection carrier and manage to keep the effect of the projection. The more projections are placed between the subject and their environment, the harder it is for the ego to see through their illusions. Even though it would seem as if all projections come from the shadow, this assumption becomes unsustainable after realizing that not all of the symbols related to it refer to the subject's same sex but instead refer to the opposite (Jung, 1951d). In this case, we are presented with the next contrasexual figure found in the archetypes, the anima and the animus.

The Anima is considered to be the personification of all female tendencies in a man's psyche, and the Animus, the personification of all male tendencies in a woman. The process of gender identification and gender roles occurs typically during an individual's childhood. Here, the qualities that the individual identifies with are further developed or enhanced while the other ones are suppressed or repressed, consciously or unconsciously correspondently, into the Anima or the Animus. They are some of the most complex archetypes to describe since they are derived from the notion of male and female but differ from the arbitrary stereotypes society has set on their roles. Instead, they refer to the abstract concepts of the Eros and the Logos. The Eros/Anima, is associated with human relationships, earthiness, creativity, passivity and receptivity. Meanwhile, the Logos/Animus is identified with power, abstraction and action. Both the Logos and the Eros are not experienced as archetypes but instead are projected into peculiarities of the individual's culture and of the people of the opposite gender they have met in their lives; particularly the mother and the father.

In the same way that they are opposites, they also have both positive and negative characteristics. In the case of the male's anima, from a positive-trait point of view, it can be said that it is responsible for feelings, emotions, tenderness, commitment and fidelity, friendship, love and compassion, romance and creativity of the male psyche. As for the negative traits, Jung (1936a) holds that when rejected, projecting itself in members of the opposite sex by causing a morbid fascination, the so called "love at first sight", the anima distorts all of its positive traits by replacing emotions and feelings with hysteria, mood changes. Fidelity becomes possessiveness: love and romance turn into turbulent destructive relationships. In the case of the female's Animus, it is said to grant women with assertiveness, courage, analytical thought, strength and a desire of achievement. Just like the

anima, if it is rejected, it will deform its positive traits into negative ones, turning assertiveness into aggression and ruthlessness, analytical thought into argumentativeness, and so on.

Both archetypes coexist in the collective unconscious and act as messengers between the ego and the personal unconscious through dreams and the imagination, serving as a link between both. If the Anima/Animus is not embraced as an active part of the psyche, it will be projected unto others who closely match the image that the individual has given to members of that gender according to the experience he/she has had with them. For example, if a woman's personal image of the Animus is based on her father's macho attitude, she will project her Animus unto any man that displays that same macho behavior. In the case of a man, he may discover a morbid fascination for a woman that is, without his knowledge, a projection of his anima based on his mother and that he will instead interpret as love at first sight.

For the purpose of the present study and taking into account that the main character is male, the archetype of the anima is the main focus. The Anima, which Jung (1936a) believes to be the representation of "the chaotic urge to live or to life" (p.26), it is not easy for the subject to identify, even if it is for others, since it relies on projections and symbolism to express itself. Because of these characteristics, it has been considered by some to be similar to the concept of the soul. However, Jung is adamant when stating that it has nothing to do with the dogmatic Christian idea of the soul or with any previous philosophical conceptions of it, since this is not an abstract concept but an empirical one². Another peculiarity of the

² This clarification is specifically important when noting that in German the same word, *seele*, is used to refer to both the anima and the soul.

anima is the fact that it lives in an outside world where time beats infinitely slowly and where the death and birth of an individual count little. Because of this, when it irrupts into consciousness it often leads to a psychosis break, making most of its aspects and characteristics emerge in schizophrenia (Jung, 1939, p.281).

The final and most important archetype to take into consideration is the Self. First of all, it is important to note the need to use the capitalized word "Self" instead of "self" since they both have different meanings and vary depending on the context. For Jung, the Self is the totality of the psyche and its job is to organize and direct the whole of the psyche, which is made up of the ego, the conscious and the personal unconscious. Since it is made up of the entire psyche, it is also responsible of being objective, accepting and to balance the opposites like the shadow and the ego, the persona and the shadow and any contradictory feelings and impulses that may arise.

In spite of being considered the whole psyche, it still lies within it at its center working as a nucleus that does not seek to replace the ego but instead, acts independently to it. Contrary to Freud's point of view, where all his theories are developed from the point of view of the ego, Jung takes the Self as the point of view and identifies it as something transcendent that makes up an unchanging part of human beings, unlike the ever-changing shadow, persona and ego. Jung (1916) identifies and describes one of the Self's main purposes; it is "to achieve in each and every individual a sense of fulfillment and wholeness"(p.46). In order to achieve this, the subject must first go through a journey of self-knowledge, called the process of individuation, that will allow him to make what resides in the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious emerge to the surface for consciousness to interpret. However,

this process relies heavily on getting to know the shadow and then the anima or animus. It is only at this point that the subject will be able to encounter the Self.

After a careful analysis, Jung (1951e) concludes that getting to know the Self will typically result in two main problems along the way. The first problem is that the Self is commonly mistaken with a greater view of the ego. This confusion only results in an inflated ego that will go on to give god-like qualities to itself while minimizing the actual Self. The second problem is quite the opposite, here getting to know the Self results in the subject weakening his ego, along with its structures and limits, by abandoning all in an attempt to embrace and rise within the Self's transcendence. In the ideal meeting, knowing the larger Self will lead the subject to be able to remove the ego from the center of his identity, while retaining it as a little Self and a still-valuable part of himself. By doing this, the Self grants new perspectives and is able to take some of the roles previously given to the ego, like conceiving our life goals with a calm, wise and balanced mind and aligning them with a real life fulfilling purpose instead of an ego-centered goal that will only lead to the enlargement of the ego.

As mentioned before, individuation is a natural transformation process that takes place in human beings and its main purpose is the creation and differentiation of psychological individuals (Jung, 1959). During this process, the personal and the collective unconscious are brought into consciousness and the person becomes an indivisible unit or "whole" (Jung, 1934a, p.490). This doesn't happen suddenly, it is a challenging task that usually takes years and involves the frequent torment and distress of the ego every time it is confronted with the unconscious. Jung (1973) believes that the unconscious and the conscious, just like their

representatives: the ego and the shadow, must find a harmonic state where they can coexist in balance. He also notes that these elements are unbalanced most of the time and, just like in alchemy, aims to find a way to symbolically unite the opposites. In order to do this, there must be a transformation that leads to enlightenment and, resorting once more to alchemy, he realizes that the way to do this is to have "the body (...) taken apart and dissolved into its constituents" (Jung, 1973. P.272). Following this logic, he sees alchemy as the most adequate metaphor for individuation and also takes its same basic steps to set the stages of individuation: *divisio*, *separatio* and *solutio*.

During *divisio*, Jung states that the subject must become aware of the need for transformation and must begin to isolate itself from his own thoughts as all others that might influence him. In the following stage, *separatio*, the subject must look for an even deeper way of isolation and separate from all other earthly and material bonds, such as family, friends, society and the person he/she used to be, as well as the role he/she used to play. Through this, a primal state is achieved where all that is left is the subject in it, along with his Self, his Ego and his unconscious. The final and hardest stage is *solutio*; here the subject must be able to watch all the structures in its life disappear and also be capable of offering itself as the ultimate self-sacrifice where it is fully conscious that it possesses itself and through a deliberate self-surrender proves that it is in full control of him/herself (Jung 1973). After is done, only the original undifferentiated contents will remain and then the Ego will be able to understand what parts of the personality come from itself and which come from the Self, returning to a state of innocence where it is in balance and can see itself and all that constitutes it and become a true whole individual. Individuation is not an easy process, even

Jung (1959) describes it as “not being for the faint of heart since every step forward along the path of individuation is only achieved at the cost of suffering”(p.411).

Nevertheless, Jung (1966b) also states that it is a necessary and indispensable process since “modern man's identity is constantly being threatened by contamination by others that put him in situations and make him commit actions which bring him disharmony with himself” (p.373). It is because of these situations and actions that the subject feels a compulsion to act against his own nature and places himself in degrading and unethical conditions, straying from his true life purpose. It is only through individuation that everyone is presented with the opportunity to restore or reconstruct their true Self and “make this apocalypse seem well worth the suffering by having a true rebirth” (Jung, 1959, p.401).

It is first very important to note that Jung (1940, p.114) makes a marked differentiation between the terms “resurrection” and “rebirth”. For him, resurrection can only refer to the re-establishment of human existence after death where due to a transmutation or a transformation, the resurrected being is an absolutely different one, whose conditions of existence have been altered up to the point where he or she may even find him/herself in a different body. Meanwhile, rebirth is an event where there is a transformation that implies a renewal or an improvement that does not need a change of being. The personality may have changed but its essential nature and function have only been subjected to healing, strengthening or improvement.

Jung was one of the first psychologists that, in spite of having been heavily criticized, tried to find what religion and its rituals meant for the psyche and how it affected all

individuals beyond any mystical or spiritual connotation. This extensive research led him to identify two main kinds of transformations: an individual natural transformation and a collective experience of transformation. Jung (1940) separates them by defining the individual transformation as the one that takes place during individuation and is, therefore, expected to be permanent or at least, long-lasting. Meanwhile, collective transformation is a phenomenon that occurs when a group of individuals, that identify with each other and share a similar frame of mind, gather to share the same common emotion in a ritual. This sharing of emotion results in all the group members feeling united by a collective psyche that offers them a sense of transformation and overall wellness. However, Jung also noted that, since this transformation takes place on the lower levels of consciousness and below the individual psyche, its transcending effects are short lived. Due to the simplicity of this transformation, most of the group members involved would keep on coming just to feel whole and relive that short rebirth over and over again.

Following this journey towards an in-depth understanding of religion and its connection with the psyche, Jung began to look into Buddhism for answers and he found them in the pictograms called mandalas. For him, mandalas are “the psychological expression of the totality of the self”, a harmonious combination of the archetypal images of the conscious and unconscious” (Jung 1968). Because of this he went further into studying and analyzing them and realized that:

“Everything, all the paths I had been following, all the steps I had taken, were leading back to a single point – namely, to the mid-point. It became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the center. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the center, to individuation.” (Jung, 1963, p.239)

He also discovered that the study of all the symbols within them aided their creator to understand and have an in-depth insight of individuation since they serve as stepping-stones into all of its stages.

Mandalas, as such, are not found in the novel but are replaced by Palahniuk's written equivalent: Haikus. Haikus are a style of short Japanese poems that, as described by Kirschner (2003), are used to make the writer aware of his/her own awareness by stopping the flow of all ordinary experiences. Instead, they give him/her the opportunity and ability to reflect on their own experience the very moment they are having it. In a similar manner to mandalas, haikus offer their creator a means to discover and rediscover the order and the meaning of life for them, in a precise instant of their individuation.

It is thanks to *Fight Club's* haikus and the brief explanation on their purpose as well as Jung's analytical psychology and its core concepts along with its main theories, that it becomes possible to start exploring the importance they have in Palahniuk's novel by interpreting and analyzing how Jungian concepts and theories are intertwined with the novel's metaphors and own symbols. All of this in favor of providing enough relevant information that evidences how individuation is the driving force behind all the events in the novel.

Chapter I

Fake rebirths and the Anima

Fight Club begins with a seemingly innocent problem, the main nameless character, who will be called the narrator, cannot sleep. He has been struggling with a severe case of insomnia for the last two years and, despite taking heavy medications and seeing countless doctors, there is only one thing that helps him sleep, support groups for terminally ill. He started attending after a doctor told him that if he wanted to see real pain, this was the place to start. Now, despite the fact that, besides his insomnia, he has no other health problems, he can only find rest among those that will soon be no longer among the living. Here is where the novel manages to subtly but effectively present the narrator's true problem: he needs to have a rebirth, to transform into something that reflects his true nature instead of hiding behind the mask he uses on a daily basis. His unconscious is aware of this need and has been trying to manifest itself through insomnia, a phenomenon that Jung (1918) would call a nervous or a psychogenic disturbance.

Instead of paying attention to the reasons and motives behind this psychogenic disturbance, the narrator prefers to religiously attend these support groups and to continue hiding behind different masks, different pseudonyms in each meeting. The morbid scenario of a sane, not terminally ill man faking his way into these groups was not placed there for its shock value, as some may think, but rather to give the reader an insight into the state of the narrator's psyche at the beginning of the novel, to present the problem that will embark him on a journey of self-discovery and to introduce the most important characters in the novel, the

archetypes; in order to see and give a precise interpretation of what is going on inside the narrator's mind, inside his psyche.

The first step into understanding the narrator's psyche is to find out the purpose that lies behind these groups. Support groups have always been around, be it cults, fanatics, or just basically any group of humans that share a common interest or belief and that have an empathic feeling towards the other just by seeing themselves identified and reflected in the other members. In the particular case of churches, terminally ill patient groups and basically any group where there is a religious factor involved, there is a greater value to be found that separates them from the rest, the chance and promise of having a rebirth into something greater and better.

This same phenomenon is the reason for the narrator's urge to go to these groups where he admits that "Walking home after a support group, I felt more alive than I'd ever felt.(...) And I slept. Babies don't sleep this well." All of this was because "every evening, I died, and every evening, I was born" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.22). He has been doing this for over two years now, unaware of his addiction to that short-lived rebirth, and believes that it is the only way he can fill his empty void. In spite of the evident symbolism behind the narrator's insomnia, the novel goes a step further by foreshadowing the real problem through a doctor who warns him that: "insomnia is just the symptom of something larger." and advises him to: "Find what is actually wrong. Listen to your body." (p.19). Contrary to paying attention to that apparently innocent and generic warning, the narrator keeps on with this addiction, ignoring the bigger cause behind it all and always trying easy and fast fixes for his problem. The closer he actually gets to being aware of his unconscious' problem occurs when he goes

to a guided meditation session and meets its symbolic equivalent. During his meditation, the narrator opens all of his chakras and finds something of great symbolic value in his head chakra, a cave with his power animal: the penguin. The penguin, as any other power animal, makes part of what Jung (1936b) would refer to as "an archetypal image from the collective unconscious" (p.45). This penguin only stares back at the narrator and invites him to "slide"(Palahniuk, 1996, p.20).

From a visual point of view, the black and white colors of the penguin may refer to both the duality of the psyche and the suits that mindless working drones, like the narrator, have to wear on a daily basis to go to work. Now, it becomes important to make special emphasis on the fact that penguins are a particular case in the bird species that are unable to fly; all they can do is slide and swim. In a similar manner, the narrator feels like he is a particular case within the human species. This is because, in theory, he has the all the correct anatomy and is therefore considered able to do whatever he wants, to be free and to be capable of achieving his full potential, but in reality, he finds himself limited by society, moral issues and ultimately by his own ego. The penguin is aware that he cannot fly away from his problems but instead suggests that they both slide further into the unconscious and explore all of its tunnels and galleries. It is this in-depth knowledge of his unconscious what the narrator needs, in order to have a true long-lasting transformation. But still the narrator, once again, ignores this powerful insight and believes he has found all that he needs in Bob, a member of the "Remaining Men Together" support group.

Bob was a bodybuilder that ended up loosing his testicles to cancer. Because of this he had to take heavy testosterone injections that, as a side effect, increased his estrogen levels

and gave him large breasts. It is very interesting that the narrator would find comfort in this character since, as Jung stated, it would imply that the narrator relates and feels identified with him and what he represents, a man that has lost what he thinks gave him his identity, his masculinity, and that, despite the fact that he is no longer going to die, has also given up on life by unconsciously accepting a role that goes against his own nature, that one of his contrary, the female archetype of the mother. Accordingly, the same has happened to the narrator, he just hasn't been able to come to terms with it, he has lost his identity, he is no longer whole and his psyche's only defenses are to revert to a time when he was safe and felt complete, his childhood. He has now adopted the role of the child who has lost his mother. A mother who played the key archetypal role of the anima in his life by being the first female figure he knew and loved, the only one that made him whole, balanced and overall and individual. All the comfort he can find now is in the embrace of a surrogate fake mother that is willing to lend her bosom and say: "it will all be alright"(Palahniuk, 1996, p.16) , invite him to cry all he wants and provide him with "the only place where he can relax and give up" (Palahniuk, 1996,p.18). It is only ironic to see how they get together in a group called Remaining Men Together to do the exact opposite, to escape from being men altogether and hide in opposite roles that give them a fake sense of being. It is also during this symbolic embrace and moment of mutual defeat that the ignored unconscious decides to make its grand entrance into consciousness by presenting the narrator's anima, Marla Singer.

As the anima, Marla is a very complex character since she is meant to convey several emotions all at once. She is the embodiment of all dichotomies; she is enchanting but repulsive, beautiful but horrible, life and death and most of all, real but false. Nevertheless, being the "chaotic urge to live and life" (Jung, 1936a, P.26), she is the only one who can help

uncover what the narrator needs, in order for him to be whole and recover his will to live. The unconscious will also try to give clues to the narrator as to who she is and what her purpose is. It does this by altering the image of the penguin as the power animal in the narrator's guided meditation, to one where, after entering his mental chakra and his personal cave, all he finds is that now "(...) my power animal is Marla. Smoking her cigarette, Marla, rolling her eyes. (...) you can't escape." (Palahniuk, 1996, p. 35-36). The anima is such a powerful figure that, in the precise moment she walks into the room, she manages to disrupt the narrator's reality and makes his whole world start to collapse. Everything starts to fall apart the instant he sees her and sees part of his shadow projected in her; he understands that he is the real faker, the real tourist and that he is no better than a woman pretending to have testicular cancer.

This unconscious content coming into his consciousness is only received with an instant sense of fear and despair, which his ego will try to deny by responding to it with feelings of anger and disbelief. Nonetheless, it is through this first projection that the unconscious is unbound and instead of accepting defeat, chooses to send the anima as a bridge, a conciliator that will help and guide the narrator into a journey of self-discovery and transformation with the help of the shadow. Jung (1969a) acknowledges that it is not an easy process, that it is "not for the faint of heart since "every step forward along the path of individuation is only achieved at the cost of suffering"(p.411). Nevertheless, it is only through this process that the narrator will be able to have a true transformation and finally be one with his unconscious.

Chapter II

Enter the Shadow

With the coming of the Anima into consciousness, it was only a matter of time before the shadow, the next big archetype of the unconscious, made itself present. The shadow, whom the narrator calls Tyler, makes its big entrance through a deeply symbolic dream where he and the narrator are finally able to interact for the first time. It is important to note that this first encounter could only have occurred in the realm of dreams since that is the only place where “dreams have the advantage of being involuntary, spontaneous products of the unconscious psyche and therefore pure products of nature that cannot be falsified by any conscious purpose” (Jung, 1936b, p.48). In the dream, both the narrator and Tyler meet at an abandoned nudist beach where the narrator patiently observes as Tyler carries driftwood from the sea into the sand and builds a semicircle with five logs. Tyler prepares to leave but the curious narrator stops him from leaving and asks for the purpose of arranging the logs like that. Tyler responds by telling him that at precisely four-thirty, the sun would be in the precise spot to form the shadow of a hand with the logs and that then he would be able to sit on its perfection for a minute since “One minute was enough, (...), a person had to work hard for it, but a minute of perfection was worth the effort. A moment was the most you could ever expect from perfection.”(Palahniuk, 1996, p.33). The narrator then wakes up thinking that “that was enough”; that was all he needed and could take from the dream.

Despite the fact that this dream sequence is never mentioned again through the whole novel, it represents the shadow's coming to consciousness and marks the beginning of the

divisio stage of individuation. On a first instance the two of them meet in their most pure, natural and primitive state, naked, in what will be considered the beach of consciousness. It will be considered as such after taking into account that in Jungian psychoanalysis (1934a) any representation or imagery in dreams of water is considered the most common symbol for the unconscious. The metaphor of the beach perfectly serves to represent the narrator's psyche and how it contains the duality of the conscious and the unconscious within itself in what seems to be a harmonious state. This can be inferred after realizing that the sandy beach is a clear metaphor for consciousness, all that we know and can see, and the sea is also a metaphor for the unconscious, which can be taken as vast and unexplored. After this brief discovery, it becomes of utmost importance to understand what the narrator's and Tyler's roles are on the beach and the significance behind their meeting.

While the narrator is presented as a passive figure who only sits and observes, Tyler is instead, working hard by dragging driftwood from the sea and anchoring it on the beach. Through this scene, there is another perfect clear metaphor. What the shadow is actually doing is bringing contents that were floating in the unconscious and making them conscious for the narrator. This is not the first time that this has happened, even the narrator admits that, even though he has not witnessed it before, "Tyler had been around a long time before we met"(p.32). But something is different this time since, instead of ignoring the whole process, he pays close attention and wonders what those driftwood logs mean. It is here where Tyler's true purpose is foreshadowed; besides bringing contents into consciousness, he is trying to create perfection, to be perfection, to achieve a godlike status that will allow him to sit in "the palm of perfection he'd created himself." Even if it only lasted only a minute,

“a moment was the most you could expect out of perfection.” (p.33). This confession presents the real danger underlying the shadow's intentions; he is willing to do whatever is needed to be the creator of at least a perfect moment in society and within himself, where he can be in harmony and, therefore, whole.

The shadow, as conceived by Jung (1951d), is an archetype that, just like in the novel, is personified by a dubious character of the same sex that carries all the rejected traits, repressed ideas, weaknesses, forbidden desires and primal instincts that both the persona and the consciousness rejected and sent to the unconscious. It is the archetype that has the most influence over the ego, since it contains everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and has the power to filter some these contents into consciousness. Because of this, it is considered the absolute opposite of the ego, the persona and consciousness. In the novel, Tyler presents the ego with its greatest fear and its biggest threat: the threat of invading the conscious with unbound emotions, primal instincts, repressed memories and all his forbidden desires.

In that precise moment, after having this dream and after meeting the shadow, *divisio*, the first stage of individuation, is set in motion. During *divisio*, the narrator is first divided from himself and from others by acknowledging the existence of the other, his shadow. The narrator's way of bringing the shadow into existence in the conscious realm can be divided into three instances. First, he gives it a proper name, Tyler Durden; second, he projects Tyler in two seemingly menial jobs, a movie projectionist, a clear metaphor for what the shadow is

doing in the narrator's life, and a waiter, who just like the narrator, has to wear a uniform that makes him generic by playing a background role in society, with the particularity that this waiter has direct control over those who think they are above him, by manipulating both their food and minds. The final and most important event in the coming of Tyler occurs when the narrator gives him a physical way of direct contact in the real world, a phone number.

Chapter III

Separatio and false prophets

After going through the first stepping-stones in the process of individuation, the narrator is now faced with *separatio*, a stage that demands even more of him. For this second stage, he must now be separated from his family, his friends, society and the person he used to be in order to continue with his transformation (Jung, 1940). As far as the narrator goes, being separated from his family is not a difficult task since his mother is never mentioned in the novel and all we know about his father is that he abandoned him when he was six years old since that is all he knows how to do: "he starts a new family in a new town, every six years. This isn't so much like a family, as it is like he sets up a franchise." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.50). Separating from his friends is not a problem after it is taken into account that he has none.

For the narrator, the real test comes when he is confronted with having to abandon his culture and all his possessions. This is troubling for him because his ego created its mask based on all these items that, in the end, are the only things that give him a false notion of who he is and reflect the culture he lives in. Palahniuk (1996) evidences this in the novel when the narrator admits that he is a "slave to his nesting instinct" and that this is not only his problem, acknowledging that currently, all the people "who used to sit in the bathroom and read pornography, now (...) sit in the bathroom with their IKEA furniture catalogue."(p.43) This statement, besides criticizing the capitalist consumerist structure of society, also attests to the idea that everything the narrator is, or thinks he is, can be found in generic catalogues of expensive branded furniture and accessories which he has been collecting for a lifetime in the condominium he has been taught by society to call home. He also admits that this way of life and thinking only results in you being "(...) trapped in your lovely nest, and the things

you used to own, now they own you”(p.44). Another interesting metaphor for his lack of identity can be found when he refers to his collection of seasonings and comments on the irony of having “a house full of condiments and no real food”(p.45). Correspondingly, the same thing happens to him, he is full of all sorts of possessions but has no real use for them besides knowing they are there and finding relief in that thought. All of these factors help to better understand why he would oppose losing them all and give some insight into Tyler's real motives for blowing up this condominium along with all it contained. When Tyler incinerated the apartment, he was not only destroying a physical place but was instead destroying a whole life and giving him a chance to start anew, to be a blank slate and to, just like the phoenix, rise from its ashes.

As a new man that now had no nest to call home or life to go back to, the narrator is left with only one choice, to move on and call the only number and friend he knew, Tyler Durden. As mentioned before, the significance of this moment is the shadow's coming to the narrator's conscious world and it marks beginning of his quest to have total control over it. Tyler agrees to meet him and invites him to stay at his home on Paper Street. This house is the absolute opposite of what the narrator had before. It is as far away from society as possible and its only neighbors are “a closed machine shop and across the street, a blocklong warehouse” (Palahniuk, 1996,p.56). Additionally, it has no lock on the front door, faulty wiring that requires the use of candle-light when it begins to rain and has rusty nails sticking out all over the place. In other words, this house, just like the narrator's psyche, is only waiting to be torn down to pieces and to have something better built on top of it. The narrator later finds out that it was just before they met on the beach that Tyler had rented the house on

Paper Street, making it obvious that these were not random occurrences, that Tyler had already meticulously planned and foreseen all that was to happen from the start.

Going back to that precise moment when the narrator decided to call Tyler, it is of utmost importance to note that the first times the phone rang, Tyler was not there to answer. It was only until the narrator begged for him and for his coming as a savior through a bastardized version of the Lord's Prayer, also referred to as Our Father's Prayer, that he answered the phone. The prayer goes like this:

“Oh Tyler, please deliver me.
(...)
Oh Tyler, please rescue me
(...)
Deliver me from Swedish furniture.
Deliver me from clever art.
(...)
May I never be complete.
May I never be content.
May I never be perfect.
Deliver me Tyler from being perfect and complete.” (Palahniuk, 1996,p.46)

It is through this prayer, delivered intermittently through the lines and with the careful use of the word “deliver”, that the first attempt to associate Tyler with a savior that has the power to bring forth the salvation and the enlightenment the narrator is looking for. It is also at this point in the novel where the shadow realizes that it is meant to be worshipped so that it can grow stronger and spread its word to mankind. But first, in order to accomplish this, he must find a flock that will relate to the narrator's internal struggle, that is willing to abandon the world and its distractions for the wisdom found in the self and that is prepared to join him in a journey towards individuation. With this in mind, Tyler and the narrator create the first fight club.

Chapter IV

Shadow Clubs and religion

After answering the phone call, Tyler and the narrator agree on meeting in a bar. Here they both get drunk and Tyler, taking advantage of the situation, tells the narrator: "I want you to do me a favor. I want you to hit me as hard as you can." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.52). The narrator at first refuses but is later convinced by Tyler who explains that he does not want "to die without any scars" (p.52) and argues that it is only through fighting that he can get "to know more about himself. About self-destruction" and that "maybe we have to break everything to make something better out of ourselves." (p.52). This premise of having to destroy in order to create and to advance toward a better understanding of the self is directly related to Jung's (1969a) notion that "every step forward along the path of individuation is only achieved at the cost of suffering" (p.411) and follows the idea that it is all worth it, that "the restoration or reconstruction of our being, makes the travail of the apocalypse seem well worth the suffering" (p.401). After their brief conversation, the bar closes and both men go outside, prepared to start fighting against each other, without any restraints, in the parking lot. They quickly find themselves surrounded by a shouting group of grey-collar workers who gathered around them to see the fight. These people would then keep on coming every Sunday and eventually start joining in fights of their own; Tyler then, created the basic rules of conduct and the fight club was created.

The Fight club initially offers a practical, simple and physical way for men to confront their problems through what Jung (1966a) called a cathartic method of treatment. This method consists of releasing suppressed emotions through full confessions that result in those

emotions being willingly brought into consciousness. In the case of the novel, these groups of men initially get together to deal with their suppressed emotions by projecting them onto others and then fighting the projection. The narrator clarifies this when he states, "there's nothing personal about who you fight in fight club." (p.54) In Tyler's case, when asked by the narrator whom he had been fighting, he answered it was "his father". In spite of the initial achievements of this method, Jung (1966a) found that its success was limited since "(...) it is not always possible to bring the patients close enough to the unconscious for them to perceive the shadows." (p.137). The novel will also acknowledge this fact by saying that for most, "nothing was solved when the fight was over, but nothing mattered" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.53). However, this event does serve as a clear insight into the fact that they are dealing with repressed and not suppressed emotions since they are all fighting projections of what they think the problem is and the emotion it creates within them, instead of dealing with the actual person in the pit or the actual repressed thought since it can not be willingly brought into consciousness.

The fight club was built on two main rules: "you don't talk about the fight club" and "you don't talk about fight club" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.48). But, as time went on, it just kept on growing in numbers Sunday after Sunday. Tyler addresses this by acknowledging that most of its members "(...) are here because someone broke the rules. Somebody told you about fight club. Tyler says, 'well you better stop talking or you'd better start another fight club because next week you put your name on a list when you get here, and only the first fifty names on the list get in.'" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.54). Tyler's statement serves two purposes, to establish him as the authoritative figure in the fight club and to insinuate, and discretely encourage, the creation of more fight clubs that follow the same rules and ideals this one has,

since a club that does not follow these rules is exposed to people getting injured permanently or being killed, and therefore, having people that will never be able to transform and become functioning individuals.

Before following Tyler's rules and starting to fight, all the new fight-club members must be subjected to, what Jung (1934a) called an "unflattering mirror". This mirror, instead of showing the fake persona they use to protect their ego and interact with the world, will use the shadow's assistance to show them their true face like Palahniuk (1996) states: "Who guys are in the fight club is not who they are in the real world. Even if you told the kid in the copy center that he had a good fight, you wouldn't be talking to the same man. Who I am in fight club is not someone my boss knows."(p.49). After exposing their true self and embracing the primitive instinctual shadow that takes control of them when they enter the fight club, there is the question of what kind of men are able to do this and the reason behind its ever growing popularity.

As an answer to the first question, Tyler will broadly refer to all the men in the fight club as "a generation of men raised by women"(Palahniuk, 1996, p.50). What he specifically means by this is that they are men who were abandoned by their fathers and raised by their mothers, who acted as their only role model. This resulted in men like Bob, previously alluded to in the first chapter, who was forced to take an unnatural passive role than only ended with him repressing his primal instincts and his aggressive tendencies. The narrator is no different; he was also abandoned by his father at six and had been trying to get his approval and recognition ever since. For instance, he thinks to himself "My father never went to college so it was really important I go to college" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.50) and after

graduating he looked for his advice once more: "I called him long distance and said, now what? My dad didn't know. When I got a job and turned twenty- five, long distance, I said: - now what? - My dad didn't know so he said, get married."(Palahniuk, 1996, p.51). It was in that exact moment when he realized that his father really did not have the answers he needed and was looking for since he was only "a thirty-year-old boy, and I'm wondering if another woman is really the answer I need." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.51).

It then becomes obvious that all throughout the novel there is an underlying idea that a father, a male role model, takes the place of God in a young boy's life while he is growing up and that being abandoned by his father only serves to represent God abandoning him. It goes further into this idea by stating that:

"If you're male and you're Christian and living in America, your father is your model for God. And if you never know your father, if your father bails out or dies or is never at home, what do you believe about God? (...) What you end up doing (...) is you spend your life searching for a father and God. What you have to consider (...) is the possibility that God doesn't like you. Could be, God hates us. This is not the worst thing that can happen. (...) We are God's middle children, according to Tyler Durden, with no special place in history and no special attention. Unless we get God's attention, we have no hope of damnation or redemption."(p.140-141)

With this same notion in mind, there is an attempt to fill this void in all the men in the fight club with Tyler who will now be their new father, their new masculine role model, and ultimately, their new God. Tyler will embrace this God-role and take the fight club as the first stone in the foundation of his new church.

The concept of the fight club as a religion and a cult becomes clearer after seeing its similarities with actual religions and their rituals. For instance, just like a Catholic or Christian church, fight clubs meet every Sunday in several places around the world, to promise salvation and to deliver men from their every day meaningless lives by giving them a greater purpose. Just like the support groups for the terminally ill did before, participating in their ritual offers a collective sense of transformation, a rebirth for men. This transformative process is what allows the fight club to transcend its origins, as the narrator announces:

“You aren't alive anywhere like you are alive at fight club. (...). Fight club isn't about winning or losing fights. Fight club isn't about words. (...) There's grunting and noise at fight club like at the Gym, but fight club isn't about looking good. There's a hysterical shouting in tongues like at church, and when you wake up Sunday afternoon you feel saved.” (p.51).

Nevertheless, the members of fight clubs have something that no other religion has: they are aware of their own shadow and therefore, have the possibility to embark on their own journey towards individuation. The fight club gives them a shot at redemption and the opportunity to get to know the Self better as well as the God-image that, according to Jung (1969b), resides within it and the psyche.

Following the concept of there being something that transcends the fight club, Tyler reveals Project Mayhem, the bigger plan through which he aims to give select members a new level of therapy towards personal enlightenment. Project Mayhem is Tyler's way of presenting himself as the epitome of personal enlightenment, as the true father and God figure to be followed, identified with and worshipped. Jung (1971) had already mentioned what identifying with the father meant since, according to him, “adopting all the father's ways of behaving, as though the son were the same as the father implied not a separate individuality.”

And that this "Identification differs from imitation in that it is an unconscious imitation, whereas imitation is a conscious copying. (...) Identification can be beneficial so long as the individual cannot go his own way."(p.440). In this role, he begins to give each member of the club different tasks that offer a challenge and through which they will be able to get a better knowledge of themselves and get closer to his level of enlightenment. In no time, just like with the fight club, more members start to appear each day on the front porch of their house on Paper Street. Tyler will then proceed to determine who are worthy through what in his words is:

"(...) how Buddhist temples have tested applicants going back for bah-zillion years. (...) You tell the applicant to go away, and if his resolve is so strong that he waits at the entrance without food or shelter or encouragement for three days, then and only then can he enter and begin training." (Palahniuk, 1996, p. 129).

These three days results in their ego being beaten and will ultimately test how badly they want to be a part of this rebirth and enlightenment and how willing they are to begin the suffering individuation entails.

In order for Tyler to achieve that total identification of himself as a god-like father, he creates a group mentality, a cult way of thinking, by having them all repeat over and over the same mantra he has created:

"You are not a beautiful and unique snowflake. You are the same decaying organic matter as everyone else, and we are all part of the same compost pile. Our culture has made us all the same. No one is truly white or black or rich anymore. We all want the same. Individually, we are nothing." (Palahniuk, 1996, p. 130).

Through the acceptance of this mantra, he brainwashes them into thinking and feeling the same, working towards one common, collective goal and being all at the same level of enlightenment. Also, like fight club, Project Mayhem has some established rules that must be followed, being the most important one, having absolute and total trust in Tyler Durden, without question or doubt. This simple rule symbolizes his God-like status in the group,

Interpreting Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, as a depiction of Jung's process of individuation through the use of archetypes

52

since no one has the power or authority to question God's intentions or actions, they are only allowed to have blind faith in him.

Chapter V

Buddhism and Haikus

Before continuing with the narrator's final stage of individuation, *solutio*, it is important to consider two on-going processes that take place after the creation of the original Fight Club, the moment of union, brotherly love and identification with Tyler, and before the creation of Project Mayhem, the moment of the division and break up with Tyler. Despite having a secondary role, these processes are used to reform the novel around a new main ideology that will further serve to relate the narrator's journey and Jung's process of individuation.

Prior to the process of *separatio*, the novel seemed to revolve around a Christian ideology with the narrator using his version of The Lord's Prayer to invoke his messiah, Tyler. But all of this changes as soon as the narrator embraces *separatio* and moves to the house on Paper Street; from here on, the whole novel will start to take the shape of Buddhist and Zen ideologies, adapting their ideals, rituals and objective to serve Tyler's own purpose. This transformation results in a new conception of life that attempts, from this point on, to mark a path to enlightenment. However, this ideology will also be taken from a dual perspective since the narrator will only mock Tyler and his belief that this is the true way for enlightenment, beginning with him stating, "Until today, it really pissed me off that I'd become a totally centered Zen master and nobody had noticed". This ridicule is also the narrator's passive aggressive way of coming to terms with the idea of Tyler, his shadow, and Marla, his anima, having sex and the feeling of abandonment this creates in him since he feels he will lose Tyler to Marla stating, "Ever since college, I make friends. They get married. I lose friends." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.62)

He will then continue to sarcastically mention how ironic it is that when he is put in contrast with Tyler and Marla's relationship, he was:

“(...) the calm little center of the world. Me, with my punched-out eyes and dried blood in big black crusty stains on my pants, I'm saying HELLO to everybody at work. HELLO! Look at me. I'm so ZEN. This is BLOOD. This is NOTHING. Hello. Everything is nothing, and it's so cool to be enlightened. Like me. Sigh.” (Palahniuk, 1996, p.64)

Tyler notices the narrator's depression and as a way to cheer him up, he suggests different ways for him to kill his boss. The narrator lies and replies:

“The truth is, I like my boss. Besides, I'm enlightened now.

You know, only Buddha-style behavior.

Spider chrysanthemums.

The Diamond Sutra and the Blue Cliff Record.

Hari Rama, you know, Krishna, Krishna.

You know, Enlightened.” (Palahniuk, 1996, p.69).

Tyler will see straight through his façade and tell him that “sticking feathers up your butt, (...) does not make you a chicken”(p.69). A crude way of affirming that no matter how much he tries to convince himself that he is enlightened, stating it over and over will not make it real or get him close to what Tyler refers to as enlightenment. While this is going on, a small subordinate and seemingly innocent process is taking place within the narrator, he is writing haikus.

Haikus, paraphrasing Kirschner (2003), make us aware of our own awareness by stopping the flow of all ordinary experiences and instead, give the writer the opportunity and ability to

reflect on their own experience at the very moment they are having it. After considering the effect that haikus have on their writer, it becomes clear how they are used to symbolize individuation in the same way that Jung uses mandalas. For Jung (1968), mandalas are “the psychological expression of the totality of the self”, a harmonious combination of the archetypal images of the conscious and unconscious. Just like haikus, they offer its creator a means to discover and rediscover the order and the meaning of life. Likewise, the study of both of these symbols aids their creator in understanding and having a deeper insight into individuation; they serve as stepping-stones into all of the stages. It was through this observation of mandalas, and therefore haikus, that Jung (1963) found out “that everything, all the paths I had been following, all the steps I had taken, were leading back to a single point – namely, to the mid-point. It became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the center. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the center, to individuation.” (p.239), The narrator agrees from a Zen point of view and uses haikus “to center my enlightened spiritual entity.”(Palahniuk, 1996, p.167)

While being at work, he writes his first haiku and then faxes it to all his co-workers, it goes like this:

“Worker bees can leave
Even drones can fly away
The queen is their slave”
(Palahniuk, 1996, p.63)

Taking into account where and when it was written, it can be interpreted as a message of salvation to his co-workers. Here he wants to tell them that, even if they believe it to be true, they are not really trapped or defined by the limits set onto them by their pointless and unfulfilling lives and jobs. Then he reminds them that they are actually the only ones who can

choose to leave, to fly away, and change their lives whenever they want to and because of this, it is implied that their boss is the only one who can't, he is the real slave.

The second haiku is triggered by a bird that the narrator sees outside the office while being scolded by his boss for being covered with bruises and blood. He writes:

“Without just one nest
A bird can call the world home
Life is your career”
(Palahniuk, 1996, p.64)

This haiku serves as a reflection on the process of *separatio*, since it emphasizes the notion that all material possessions are unimportant and that by flying away without any possessions the whole world can be considered home. With the symbol of the bird, flight is implied and with that, the freedom it conveys. It ultimately expresses how living and being free should be the main purpose or the main path in anyone's life.

Whilst being at home and dealing with Marla and Tyler's relationship, as a third haiku, the narrator writes,

“Flowers bloom and die
Wind brings butterflies or snow
A stone won't notice”
(Palahniuk, 1996, p.67)

With this, he makes a powerful statement that seasons may change and with the passing of time, all living things will die but nature will still go on timelessly without even noticing, implying that regardless of who you are, you are meant to live and die but that it is up to you what you do with your life and how you live it since in nature's eyes, it will only last a blink of an eye to go away. With that in mind, Tyler tells the narrator that "Someday, (...) you will

die, and until you know that you're useless to Me. ", (Palahniuk, 1996, p.76), restating the importance that being aware of one's own mortality has in the enlightenment process.

The fourth haiku is written while still being in the house and pretending to listen to and take care of Marla, trying to fake his appreciation and understanding of her situation. He reflects on this while writing,

"A tiger can smile
A snake will say it loves you
Lies make us evil"
(Palahniuk, 1996, p.71)

This haiku points out to those dangers of going against one's own nature and pretending to be something they are not and how, in the long run, doing this is will have consequences in their own life by making them the evil one.

The fifth Haiku he writes is,

"Watching white moon face
The stars never feel anger
Blah, blah, blah, the end"
(Palahniuk, 1996, p. 89)

Here, the narrator is slowly starting to realize how Tyler has started to become more independent, after saving Marla, and how he has been trying to ignore him and his plans as well. This Haiku reflects on that surge of power within the shadow by seeing the moon as a symbol for Tyler, and even more, seeing him as the full moon that is now rising. He then proceeds to try and explain how all he can now do is watch and pretend to be okay with it, hiding his anger and comparing himself to a star, who despite having its own light in the sky is still subordinated to the moon and to only being seen during the night time. After all, he ends up expressing his frustration and needing to get to the end of it all, the *solutio*.

The sixth and final haiku written by the narrator is,

“Raindrops on roses
Happy Disney animals
This makes my parts hurt”
(Palahniuk, 1996,p.170)

He thinks this haiku while opening a freezer he knows is liable to be filled with frozen human testicles and bags of fat stolen from liposuction clinics. He first thinks about roses since, along with the fat, they are one of the key components of the soaps they make; then, he goes back to that movie theater where both he and Tyler worked as projectionists and thinks about the Disney movies they projected about happy animals and characters and about the porn movie scenes they had added, for a fraction of a second, to the reels of those films. Being his final consideration a reflection on how things have changed so radically with the coming of Tyler, starting with soap and splicing movies with male genitalia to the actual slicing of male genitalia as part of his assertion of masculinity during Tyler's reign.

Chapter VI

An inflated shadow

After the creation of Project Mayhem and Tyler's new disciples worshiping him as their prophet and God, the narrator begins to feel abandoned by his newfound father. "I am Joe's Broken Heart because Tyler's dumped me. Because my father dumped me. Oh, I could go on and on." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.134) And it is then, only from the distance of abandonment, that the narrator is able to realize the negative effects of his previous identification with Tyler as a father figure. Jung (1971) states that it is during that negative identification where that father figure reveals "its morbid character by becoming just as great a hindrance as it was an unconscious help and support before. It now has a dissociative effect, splitting the individual into two mutually estranged personalities." (p.440).

This disassociation and splitting of the personalities begins to become more evident as the narrator starts to comment on how he no longer sees Tyler at nights or at home, and further expresses his feelings of abandonment by realizing that he is now outside Tyler's inner loop in Project Mayhem. He no longer knows what is going on, what Tyler's plans are or where he is and no one will tell him. This splitting of personalities can also be exposed through the symbolism behind the images of opposing duality found in the sun and the moon. It is then interpreted that the conscious will assume the role of the sun, which can only act when it is daytime, while the shadow, as the moon, will only operate freely during the nighttime. In direct relation to this, the narrator reveals that he has been sleeping more and more and that this is starting to become a problem for him since he does not know how to differentiate

reality from dreams, for him now "it's not clear if reality slipped into my dream or if my dream is slipping over into reality."(Palahniuk, 1996,p.137)

This negative identification is also referred to as possession and is identified by Jung (1972) as a source of neurosis since the ego can only keep its integrity as long as it only balances both the conscious and the unconscious and avoids identifying totally with one of them. This is because, at the precise moment of identification, it becomes extremely difficult for the ego to get the proper insight and realize what is going on since the other side, Tyler, will try to focus all his insights only on its one-sided truth and true path toward it.

Chapter VII

Sacrifice

From the beginning of the novel to its end, the concept of sacrifice is always present, be it in Jung's (1969a) views of individuation as something that is "only achieved at the cost of suffering"(p.411) or in Tyler's analogous notion that human progress can only be attained as a result of sacrifice and suffering. For all of the members of Project Mayhem, this heroic sacrifice will ultimately be symbolized by soap, this is because as Tyler, further explains:

"In ancient history (...) human sacrifices were made on a hill above a river (...). The sacrifices were made and the bodies were burned on a pyre (...). After hundreds of people were sacrificed and burned (...) a thick white discharge crept from the altar, downhill to the river (...). Rain fell on the burnt pyre year after year, and year after year people were burned, and the rain seeped through the wood ashes to become a solution of lye, and the lye combined with the fat of the sacrifices, and a thick white discharge of soap crept out from the base of the altar and crept downhill toward the river (...). Where the soap fell into the river (...) after a thousand years of killing people and rain, the ancient people found their clothes got cleaner if they washed them at that spot (...). It was right to kill those people (...). You have to see (...) how the first soap was made of heroes (...). Think about animals in product testing. Think about the monkeys shot into space. Without their pain and sacrifice (...) we would have nothing."(Palahniuk, 1996, p.76-78)

Tyler's first move towards the improvement of mankind is made through the offering of Marla's mother as the first essential part, the creation of his soaps. She can be considered one of the essential sacrifices after realizing that the first soap bar both Tyler and the narrator prepared was made out of Marla's mother's lipo-suctioned fat. From that moment on, Tyler would begin to require all members in Project Mayhem to perform a sacrifice. These sacrifices will have a symbolic nature but still suppose an immediate transformation in both, the one who commits the sacrifice and the sacrificed man.

This short-lived transformation will occur first in the sacrificed man, after a member of Project Mayhem points a gun against their head and threatens their life; they will have a

“near-life experience” (p.148). By doing this, a basic primitive and instinctual response where survival is placed above all is triggered in the threatened man. Project Mayhem members will take advantage of this instinctual change in their reasoning to make them acknowledge what their unconscious really wants from them and their life. Briefly exposing their unhappiness with their everyday routine, their career and their current job.

After this realization takes place, the Project Mayhem members will proceed to take their driver's license as a sort of insurance, that they will follow this new road paved by their unconscious, and also as a reminder, that they are still in danger and need to maintain that instinctual nature awake. This process is intended to place all these sacrificed men on the right path towards individuation. By making some aspects of the unconscious suddenly become conscious, they must go through a mental process of recognition and admittance where they will find that there is something hidden and of value in their unconscious. At the same time, by making these men go through this realization, a minor type of rebirth will go on within the Project Mayhem members. Jung (1940) referred to this kind of rebirth as “an indirect change that comes about through participation in the process of transformation.” (p.115) But before the creation of this trail of sacrifices and soap, the original and first sacrifice must be mentioned: the narrator.

All throughout the novel two main arcs can be identified: a first one where the main focus is on the narrator, who is shown as someone who wants to die and, because of that, is always willing to offer himself in sacrifice, and a second arc where the novel changes its focus from the narrator to Tyler, initially presenting him as a messianic figure that is here to save all men but that will later use his almost magnetic appeal to get followers and instead, have them sacrifice themselves and others, instead of him. It is in that second arc where the original

sacrifice occurs; Tyler will offer the narrator, his first follower, as his own sacrifice. It all takes place after he abandons the narrator in a car with two Project Mayhem members. They start driving the car and, after repeating some of Tyler's ideas and mantras, swerve into the traffic and start going head on against an incoming truck. This moment will work as the near-life experience for the narrator and here, he will initially say that his wish was that he had quit his job. But as soon as they realize they are about to crash, he confesses his true wish:

“My wish right now is for me to die. I am nothing in the world compared to Tyler.

I am helpless.

I am stupid, and all I do is want and need things.

My tiny life. My little shit job. My Swedish furniture. I never, no, never told anyone this, but before I met Tyler, I was planning to buy a dog and name it “Entourage.”

This is how bad your life can get.

Kill me.

I grab the steering wheel and crank us back into traffic.

Now.

Prepare to evacuate soul.

Now.

The mechanic wrestles the wheel toward the ditch, and I wrestle to fucking die.

Now. The amazing miracle of death, when one second you're walking and talking, and the next second, you're an object.

I am nothing, and not even that.

Cold.

Invisible.” (Palahniuk, 1996,p.146)

Tyler has realized that he cannot truly live without the narrator giving him permission and entering into submission. This is a necessary sacrifice, just like Jung (1918) had stated, “(...) without the sacrifice of man as he is, man as he was – and will always be – individuation cannot be attained (...)” (p.10). The narrator must die so that he can be reborn into something better.

Chapter VIII

Facing the Divide

Ever since *solutio* started, a progressive splitting of the conscious and the unconscious, represented by the shadow, has been taking place. This division will start to become clearer in this second arc of the novel where the narrator must face the fact that he is not one but two, and that he needs Tyler in order to be whole again and achieve his individuation. This division is hinted by the duality of the symbolisms found in the same event; Tyler burning the narrator's hand with his lye kiss.

During this incident, Tyler leaves a wet kiss on the narrator's hand and then covers it with lye so that in all the places where it is wet, it will leave a chemical burn; Tyler's very own toxic permanent kiss that will "hurt more than a hundred cigarettes" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.73). The mention of cigarettes, specifically of cigarette burns constantly appears throughout the novel to reference this particular burn mark in his hand and also as a call-back to his work as a projectionist, where they are used to signal the two minute warning of an upcoming changeover for the projectionist to change the roll. Thus, making this the first subtle intention to foreshadow the change of the first arc in the novel.

Even Tyler will repeatedly acknowledge the importance of the mark and of this moment by saying, "This is the greatest moment of your life (...) This means something (...) This is a sign." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.77) It is also inevitable to notice its strong religious significance where it evokes Judas' kiss, a mark of betrayal. This kiss would in the same way foreshadow Tyler's betrayal by adopting an inflated role and attempting to take over everything.

After this takes place, Tyler will ask the narrator for a favor,

"Don't talk about me behind my back. Do you promise?" Tyler says.
I promise.
Tyler says, "If you ever mention me to her, you'll never see me again."
I promise.
"Promise?"
I promise.
Tyler says, "Now remember, that was three times that you promised."
(Palahniuk, 1996, p.72)

Once more, the novel refers to religion, in particular the story of Christ's crucifixion, specifically to two separate instances in The Bible where making a promise three times leads to opposite emotions. The first one is when the apostle Peter denied Christ three times before the night of the passion (John 18:15-27) only to avoid any possible repercussions and by doing so betrayed Christ, turning this into a symbol of betrayal. The second instance also involves the apostle Peter but in this particular case, he does the opposite, he reaffirms his love for Christ three times (John 21:15-22) and by doing so, he transforms it into a symbol of love. This same event compresses the two opposing emotions of love and betrayal at the same time while implying that the narrator is also trapped between them, as well as the fact that the shadow, like the double-edged sword that Jung considered it to be, is able to be both of them at the same time.

After this event, everything begins to fall apart, the insomnia comes back and the narrator tries to absolutely destroy something in the fight club to recover his sleep. But it is then that he confesses to Tyler that it is not working any more,

"(...) I said I felt like crap and not relaxed at all. I didn't get any kind of buzz. Maybe I'd developed a Jones. You can build up a tolerance to fighting, and maybe I needed to move on to something bigger.
It was that morning, Tyler invented Project Mayhem." (Palahniuk, 1996,p123)

Tyler creates Project Mayhem as the following step in helping him become something else, someone else, through sacrifice and transformation but still, the insomnia remains. The

narrator begins to realize that he is now trapped in the "insomnia distance of everything, a copy of a copy. You can't touch anything and nothing can touch you" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.97) and tries to go back to his support groups. At the support groups he realizes that there is not much to go back to, the only person he finds there is Bob who will then tell him about the fight club and all of its wonders. The narrator realizes that fight clubs have replaced everything and that his only solution is to get back in touch with Tyler.

After his own sacrifices and his small tasks within Project Mayhem, the narrator will look for Tyler all over the place until he finds out more than he intended to; everywhere he goes there seems to be another fight club and when he asks about Tyler, people call him sir and wink at him. He will first blame this on his newfound similarity to Tyler, "Tyler and I were looking more and more like identical twins. Both of us had punched-out cheekbones, and our skin had lost its memory and forgot where to slide back to after we were hit." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.114) but then realize that is not the case when one of the bartenders, with Tyler's kiss on his hand, acknowledges that the narrator is Tyler. The narrator will then begin to question if he was actually awake or only sleeping on his insomniac nights. He needs to get another opinion and calls Marla, breaking all the promises he had made to Tyler about not talking about him behind his back.

Tyler will then come back and first state that the narrator will never see him again, since he broke his promise and then, acknowledge that,

"We're not two separate men. Long story short, when you're awake, you have the control, and you can call yourself anything you want, but the second you fall asleep, I take over and you become Tyler Durden."

But we fought, I Say.

The night we invented fight club.

"You weren't really fighting me"(...) "You said it yourself, You were fighting everything you hate in life"" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.167)

This confrontation is what Jung (1936b) would refer to as "the first test of courage on the inner way, a test enough to frighten off most people, for the meeting with ourselves belongs to the more unpleasant things that can be avoided (...) but if we are able to see our own shadow and bear knowing about it, then a small part of the problem has already been solved (...)" (p. 20). The narrator now knows what Tyler is and symbolizes, along with what his insomnia meant but still cannot avoid resisting to this very knowledge, since

"It is not easy to get accustomed to the idea of not only being I and nothing else (...) to the idea that we are not absolute masters in our own house. (...) we are the confronted with that inner friend or foe, and whether he is our friend or our foe depends on ourselves." (Jung, 1939, p.131)

Tyler started as the narrator's closest and only friend but has now become a threat to his whole psyche and his ego. Jung (1936b) warns that the shadow cannot be argued out of existence or rationalized into harmlessness" (p.21) but still that is what the narrator will try to do by stating,

"So, now that I know about Tyler, will he just disappear?
"No," Tyler says, still holding my hand, "I wouldn't be here in the first place if you didn't want me. I'll still live my life while you're asleep, but if you fuck with me, if you chain yourself to the bed at night or take big doses of sleeping pills, then we'll be enemies. And I'll get you for it."
Oh, this is bullshit. This is a dream. Tyler is a projection. He's a dissociative personality disorder. A psychogenic fugue state. Tyler Durden is my hallucination. "Fuck that shit", Tyler says. "Maybe you're my schizophrenic hallucination."
I was here first.
(...) "yeah, yeah, yeah, well let's just see who's here last" (Palahniuk, 1996,p.168)

This problem not only challenges the narrator's whole psyche but also reminds him of his helplessness and ineffectuality (Jung, 1936b, P. 21) and it is through this that he is ready

Interpreting Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, as a depiction of Jung's process of individuation through the use of archetypes

68

for the final step of individuation. He understands that in order for him to transcend and take back control over his life he must die and be rebirthed.

Chapter IX

Solutio and Rebirth

Following this individuation journey, the narrator has gone from being just a simple man with insomnia, to a split man who is now divided by the traits of both his unconscious and his shadow. The solutio stage of individuation is now set in motion since he is at his lowest and has seen all of his life structures being totally demolished and destroyed by his shadow. It is at that point where the narrator realizes that in order for him to be whole again, to be a complete individual, the only and best solution is to shoot himself and through this, to symbolically end with the shadow's hold over him. Tyler, being an essential part of him, also wants to die but believes that they cannot die in a small sad event, that this has to be their "big martyrdom thing. Your big death thing." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.203) and to achieve this effect, Tyler makes the narrator climb to the top of the Parker-Morris building at gun point and lets him know that they are going to blow up the building with them inside. The narrator has already embraced that this is how he, how they die, that this is their ultimate sacrifice, but that suddenly changes when Marla walks in with all the people in the support group behind her.

The anima, in spite of her love-hate triangle with the narrator and Tyler has always been there to show the right path for him to be whole. She had done this by presenting the problem he has and how he was incomplete at the beginning of the novel, and now, at the end, she presents him with a chance to be reunited with his unconscious after their big divide and become a new whole individual. Her coming into the room makes the narrator change his mind and before putting the gun in his mouth states "this is like a total epiphany moment for

me. I'm not killing myself (...) I'm killing Tyler. (...) I remember everything." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.205). The Narrator is now fully aware of how the shadow had changed his life and had destroyed everything he knew, everyone he knew and everything he believed in. It is time for him to change into something else and take control of his new life. In this final instance, their roles are reversed and now the narrator offers Tyler as the final sacrifice for the good of all humanity, for the good of his psyche and his individuation. He pulls the trigger.

Then, the narrator states,

"Of course, when I pulled the trigger I died. (...)
And Tyler died.
With (...) Marla and all the support group people who couldn't save themselves,
with all of them trying to save me, I had to pull the trigger.
This is better than life.
And your perfect moment won't last forever.
Everything in heaven is white on white.
(...)
I can sleep in heaven." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.207)

While he is stating this, the shadow's voice still lurks in the background and reveals that he is still lying, that he is still faking it. The shadow reveals that the narrator isn't dead, but in a mental institution, after a neurotic breakout, and that Tyler wasn't killed, but instead went back to the unconscious in the background, without any of the privileges that taking over the ego had granted him.

Through this experience, the narrator now knows more than anyone else about himself, his unconscious and what he really wants and is supposed to be. He went through the sacred rite of death and rebirth where through the death of his shadow, who embraced the role of God or at least that of a god-like hero, he was allowed to return to life as a new individual and is now

aware of the dangers that the shadow presents for his ego and of the valuable knowledge it contains. It becomes clear that he is now a new whole individual and that in spite of being in a mental institution he now knows who or what his shadow is and wants, what lurks in his unconscious and has also embraced his anima who he admits still "writes to him". However, the most important insight comes by acknowledging that going through individuation does not mean getting rid of the shadow or anima but the opposite, it means getting to know them, to understand them and by doing so, attain a full understanding of the Self; that is the true rebirth of the Self.

Conclusion

Using a thrilling, dynamic and modern take on Jung's theories, *Fight Club* presents an exciting and thought-provoking novel that through constant, yet subtle, hints and metaphors provides a unique insight into the narrator's psyche mainly through the use of the archetype of the shadow. The present study establishes parallels between the novel and the theories by focusing specifically on the process of individuation, what it is and how it acts as the main driving force of the novel, along with the benefits and the challenges it presents to the narrator. This Jungian perspective, along with a chronological approach to all of the events, also allows the novel to be taken as a whole, instead of interpreting isolated events, and is able to track the narrator's psyche and all the changes he undergoes on his way to individuation. It then becomes clear how individuation acts as the driving force that, through the use of archetypes like the shadow and the anima, steers the narrator towards the understanding of his unconscious while also providing the tools for him to be whole again.

Acting as the main antagonist, the shadow, Tyler, takes an active leading role in the novel by pushing and forcing the narrator into the main stages of individuation, as well as continuously gaining more control by giving the naive weak narrator access and direct insight into his own unconscious, along with its repressed thoughts and feelings. At this point in the novel, the shadow's power as well as its ambivalent qualities can either be beneficial or detrimental to the state of the Self and the psyche stand out. According to Jung, if the shadow is embraced at an early stage of development, it will act as a beneficial force by using its knowledge on the unconscious and its inner working to aid the individual into having an understanding of himself, ultimately resulting in an integrated and well-balanced individual. If its repressed and ignored, like in the novel, it will go rogue and try to take control of the

whole psyche by flooding consciousness with elements from the unconscious and destabilizing the subject to a point of fracture. This negative type of controlling shadow is further depicted in the novel by Tyler, whose control over the narrator grows up to a point where he presents himself as perfect and leads the narrator into accepting and embracing him by taking his thoughts and beliefs as if they were his own thus, weakening his ego more and more. With a powerless narrator under his control, the shadow is then able to manipulate and make him go through all the pain he has to endure during the different stages of individuation: *Divisio*, *separatio* and *solutio*. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Tyler is only the means to an end, giving the narrator the extra push, the extra step he is not willing to take but at the same time, only following the natural instinct that requires him to be whole again.

The unstoppable and imminent need of becoming an individual is not only suggested by Tyler's relentless attempts to push the narrator, by any means necessary, but also by additional key elements that, aside from his influence and manipulation, manage to give an in-depth insight into the process as such. The first of these elements are the haikus he writes and the way their content, writing style and emotion they reflect change along with his personal development. Starting with plain simple haikus that mostly reflect on his daily life and his overall boredom, to his last haikus that transform into somber ones that inspire melancholy, anger and frustration, reflecting a fractured psyche. The other element is introduced with the creation of Project Mayhem that goes beyond the narrator and his search for individuation by presenting it as a modern global pandemic where most people, especially men, have lost their purpose, are incomplete and are desperately in need of a rebirth. This event marks the parting of Tyler and the narrator, and event that apparently ends when Tyler

finally accomplishes his goal by allowing the narrator to take control and voluntarily enter the final stage of individuation; by doing the ultimate sacrifice and shooting himself. Finally, the narrator can finally be a free and whole individual. However, this long-awaited conclusion is uncertain and leaves the reader to interpret and decide whether the narrator achieved individuation, if he had a meaningless temporal rebirth or if all he managed to do was suppress the shadow once more.

This essay focused mainly on what drove the narrator; most of the attention was set on analyzing the archetype of the shadow in depth and how his actions led to the different stages of individuation. This was done after noticing that most of the novel revolved around it, its actions and how they were affecting the narrator. However, doing this meant not giving the other big archetype, the anima, and what the implications of his creation of Project Mayhem meant, as much importance and thorough analysis as it could have received. Any further Jungian interpretation of *Fight Club* focusing on Marla as the anima, her intricate interactions with the narrator and the shadow, what her role in the novel is and what her motivations were as well as what her purpose is, would be greatly recommended. In this same manner, an in-depth and detailed Jungian approach to what lies behind Project Mayhem would be encouraged since most of it is also left unexplored and with several questions unanswered surrounding the meaning behind their different committees, acts, philosophy and rituals and well as what happens to the group on the moment Tyler leaves them and on how it all fits Jung's theories.

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