

Abstract

The topic of this paper is the disenchantment of the world and a possible ontological status of “mystical beings” such as fairies or power animals. I deal with this topic in three areas, namely in the positivist hegemony, where the existence of such beings is absurd, in the depth psychology of Carl Gustav Jung, where they are identified as archetypal symbols, and in the urban shamanism, where the existence of these beings is presented as a matter of fact. At first, I use the method of Foucault and the analysis of Adorno and Horkheimer to trace the ontological prescription that made the existence of such beings unthinkable for us, and I identify it in the select theories of John Locke and Henri Bergson. Here I find the prescription of homogeneity to be the principal ontological condition which allows only one possible mode of being and all beings that do not fulfill this condition can exist only as psychological entities. I read then Jung’s work and urban shamanism as answers that aim to justify the status of these beings on this ontological ground. Jung finds in them an articulation of deep psychological forces in his theory of collective unconscious, and thus guarantees their significance but does not deny their ultimate psychological status. However, shamanism postulates their existence in a stronger sense, and the analysis of the shamanic altered state of consciousness and discourse demonstrates how it is possible even in the context where their existence is otherwise absurd. They are initially experienced as autonomous psychological entities, and so shamanism at first respects the prescription of hegemonical ontology, but this inner experience can then be also used as a key to understand outer experiences. Therefore “mystical beings” in the shamanic framework do not dwell only in psyche but also in the “re-enchanted” outer world.

Key Words

shamanism, positivism, Jung, hegemony, Foucault, ontology, fairies, power animal, archetype