The Imaginary of the Fantastic *Inventio*

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Abstract

In view of the historical evolution of human consciousness, sectarianism of academic disciplines, bigotry in theories and incompetence in foreign languages and literatures, defining fantastic literature is becoming all the more delicate and “fantastic.” The problematic crux resides in a general ignorance of the fantastic imagination and littérarité or literariness. However, the evidence that fantastic stories from different cultures feature homogeneity in representing the unknown phenomena such as dragons, ghosts and metamorphoses invites a hypothesis of a universal origin in the fantastic imagination. Accordingly, for the facilitation of further exploring the imagination of the fantastic, a makeshift definition of the genre is hence proposed: the poeticized storytelling apropos of the imaginary of the unknown. A thorough investigation of the imaginary, viz. the poetic *inventio*, in fantastic creation will thus reveal the quintessence of mythopoeia as a door open to the realm of the collective unconscious and thus the unknown archetype of Platonic chôra. An exploration of the imaginary of the fantastic necessitates a review of the definitions of the term imaginary. The imaginary of the unknown as the universal root of fantastic creation will be further investigated from the triple stratification of the unconscious: Archaic

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memory and dream from the collective unconscious and *unus mundus*, the reverie of the four elements and metamorphosis, and the fantastic storytelling and *la fantastique*. The fantastic imagination of the unknown as the *inventio* of poetics will be brought to light by the approach of the literary imaginary.

**Keywords:** fantastic literature, fantasy, imaginary, literary imaginary, poetics, *inventio*, Jung, Bachelard, Durand
The Imaginary of the Fantastic *Inventio*

The genre fantastic or *le fantastique* “retrieves” its niche in literary creation and studies with postmodernism downstream. The verb “retrieves” implies that the fantastic narrative had effectively enjoyed its prestige in the sanctuary of Classic and Medieval literature. The sparkling ephemeral resurgence of fantastic literature during the course of the Romantic Movement notwithstanding, its position in the literary academy proved to be overshadowed by realism, naturalism and symbolism. Though German authors distinguished themselves in the style of fairy tales and exerted an important influence on French writers, especially Hoffmann’s *Fantasiestücke* and Goethe’s *Faust*, French realistic and naturalistic fiction and symbolist poetry still lead the pack of literature. Charles Nodier inspired many of his contemporaries to excel in the genre fantastic, including great writers such as Gérard de Nerval and Théophile Gautier. Nevertheless, his visionary and universal theory of the fantastic has been ignored under the current of realism. In England, writers such as George MacDonald and Andrew Lang had to wait until Tolkien’s discovery and creation for a literary resurrection. In Chinese literature, the pejorative epithet of “Zibuyu” [“what Confucius refuses to discourse”] has made the fantastic zhiguai remain marginal.

The attention swerving towards fantastic literature in the academic world was actually triggered in Germany (by Freud’s analysis of Hoffmann’s “The Sandman” and Jensen’s “Gradiva”) and in France (by P.-G. Castex’s monograph on French romantic fantastic writers) at the beginning of the 20th century, whence emerged and evolved a series of systematic criticism, among others, psychoanalytical, thematic and structuralist studies. With the postmodern trend questioning all assumed weltanschauungs, this imaginary genre hereafter spreads
its enchantment and popularity among the Anglophonic academy, further exercising a sweeping influence on the rest of the world, in particular Asia. This Western stimulation interestingly arouses Chinese scholars and Western sinologists to explore the cultural heritage of the fantastic treasure zhiguai, a perpetuating narrative genre since Zhuang Zi, in Chinese literature. Ironically, however, certain sinologists even claim that zhiguai is not fantastic literature by forcing the genre into the procrustean bed of Todorovian theories. The fallacy in evaluating this literary genre naturally results from a limited linguistic and cultural knowledge of a literature. Suffice it to adduce the absence of inflection in Chinese verbs and the non-dualistic thinking mode that divulge the inadequacy in Todorov’s theory of fantastic literature. On the contrary, the long disregarded theory of Nodier, who traces the fantastic creation back to myths and Greek epics, proves to be universal and clairvoyant.

Be it fantasy, fantastique, fantastique or zhiguai, the thriving terminological polysemy and interdisciplinary polyphony of the theories and critiques nevertheless induce a perplexing and even fallacious vision of the genre. For example, the fantasy defined by Tolkien (a rather aesthetic term)\(^1\) is received differently by fantasy readers and emulators. This semantic lapse results in the confusion and alternation between fantasy and fantastic. Critiques and research on the fantastic genre continue to burgeon with various phases, such as la littérature fantastique, fantastic literature, literature of the fantastic, fantasy, low fantasy or French fantastic, horror or gothic, magical realism and science-fiction. Certain scholars content themselves with referring to some theories and advocating the theoretical bias by adducing the generally accepted renowned

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\(^1\) In his “On Fairy-Stories,” Tolkien employs fantasy to designate the narrative art that bridges imagination and the result of the sub-creation. Fantasy is apprehended as the aestheticized imagination, while Fairy-Story is treated as the genre.
fantastic fictions, including numerous films. Some others abase fantastic literature by treating it as an elucidation of psychoanalysis, feminism, deconstruction or cultural studies. In view of the aforementioned historical evolution, sectarianism of academic disciplines, bigotry in theories and incompetence in foreign languages and literatures, defining fantastic literature is becoming all the more delicate and “fantastic.” A general ignorance of the fantastic imagination and littérarité or literariness is the problematic crux resulting from the three branches of fantastic theorization. The thematic studies present an enumeration of analogous images and actions without delving into the inventive sources and poetics. Psychoanalysis orients the fantastic into a pathological diagnosis of the creating subject. The structuralist approach in the lines of Todorov, though declaring itself poetic, often simplifies the fantastic creation into a semiotic or mathematic system, ignorant of the poetic elements of invention and diction.

The evidence that fantastic stories from different cultures feature homogeneity in representing invisible phenomena such as dragons, ghosts and metamorphoses invites a hypothesis of a universal origin in the fantastic imagination. For the facilitation of further exploring the imagination of the fantastic, an eclectic definition of the genre is hence proposed: the poeticized storytelling apropos of the imaginary of the unknown. The term unknown is adopted to avoid the uncertainty in the words often employed by critics such as unreal and irrational, which cause epistemological problems. On the other hand, the term unknown conserves the future possibility in its semantic field: what is unknown today will be known tomorrow and the known comes from the unknown. The fantastic imagination of the unknown as the inventio of poetics

2 The underlying concept of Lao Zi's “The unknown is the commencement of all becoming; the
will be brought to light by the approach of the literary imaginary.

The poetics hence is received as in Antiquity, viz. from Plato, Aristotle to the Renaissance. While Kathryn Hume highlights fantasy as the other literary mode opposite to mimesis, we follow the perspective of Aristotle who treats epic (fantastic in essence) and tragedy as two principal types of mimesis in his *Poetics*. With this postulate, the poetics consists in three phases: mimesis and *inventio*, mimesis and *dispositio*, mimesis and *elocutio*. Bachelard, viewing poetics as the power to create imaginary worlds, indeed a phenomenological poetics, defines poetics on the basis of the poetics of the reverie on the four elements (earth, water, fire and air), effectively its “power of poeticization” (*Poétique* 14). This concept of poetics will be explored in the light of *inventio*. The *dispositio* refers to rhetoric, the study of which inquires into the discourse of fantastic literature as well as the situations of the author/implied author and reader/implied reader. In the dimension of *elocutio* or style, the emphasis is placed on the artistry of fantastic diction, such as archaism, musicality and visualization. With the meanings of the above poetic elements, the fantastic poetics is characterized by the mimesis of the primary imagination (to use Coleridge’s term), the rhetorical storytelling and stylistic virtuoso that brings humans back to touch with the mystery of pristine space of the unknown.

The present study will conduct a thorough investigation of the imaginary, viz. the poetic *inventio*, in the fantastic creation, the quintessence of mythopoeia as a door open to the realm of the collective unconscious and thus the unknown archetype of Platonic *chora*. From the perspective of the writing subject, Strada Vittorio proposes a metaphysical insight that the creation of the fantastic is being

known is the mother of all becoming” influences the Taoist writers who defend the genre *zhiguai* by claiming that “what is unreal today could become real in the future.”

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conscious of staying in the Platonic cave. However, the gulf between language and metaphysics requires a linking bridge. Delving into the sources of imagination, the imaginary approach will bridge the Ideal Form outside the cave and fantastic literature by the creative imagination. The transcendental ideas are revealed to be mediated by the rhetoric into a formalized language. This sends back to Barfield's association of myth and language through aesthetic imagination and Tolkien's assumption of "language is the disease of mythology." An exploration of the imaginary of the fantastic necessitates a review of the definitions of the term imaginary. The imaginary of the unknown as the universal root of the fantastic creation will be further investigated from the triple stratification of the unconscious: Archaic memory and dream from the collective unconscious and unus mundus, the reverie of the four elements and metamorphosis, and the fantastic storytelling and la fantastique.

1. Definitions of the imaginary

The substantive imaginary is translated from the French word imaginaire. Contemporary critics mostly adopt the translation to refer to Jacque Lacan's stage of the imaginary, the register of which comprises the images of primary narcissism and secondary narcissism. However, the imaginary here is received in the light of the translation of Wolfgang Iser's work, The Fictive and the Imaginary. Jean-Yves Tadié distinguishes the criticism of consciousness from

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3 The philosophical theory of Vittrio is presented in The Literary Fantastic from Gothic to Postmodernism by Neil Corwell. The original is in Italian.

4 In his sharp rejoinder to Marx Miller's statement of "mythology is a disease of language," Tolkien retorts that "language is a disease of mythology." Barfield's also criticizes that Miller makes the same mistake as he sees the naissance of metaphors as deriving from the literal meanings.
that of the imaginary by clarifying that the former focuses on the subject that writes and the latter explores imagination (107). Imagination is frequently associated with the fantastic given that this literary creation is germane to the supernatural, the unreal, the invisible or the unknown. Tolkien uses fantasy as the art of storytelling to bridge imagination and the sub-creation. Hence, imagination features as the hub in the fantastic creation. Then what is the imaginary? The investigation of the word’s semantic evolution is a prerequisite to delving into the imaginary of the fantastic.

Since the Middle Ages, “imaginary” has been an adjective that qualifies in general what is unreal. Maine de Brian first made this word a substantive in his Journal in 1820 to designate the domain of imagination. French novelist Alphonse Daudet defines “an imaginary” as a man that is not able to distinguish the production of his imagination from the objective reality, a dreamer surpassed by his subjectivity, an imaginative somewhat perturbed (Chelebourg 7). It is not until the French fantastic writer Villiers de l’Isle-Adam that the imaginary connotes the supernatural, a sacred part of the individual, a space not exterior to him but interior, and a composite of his psyche against reason. In his fantastic novel of the automaton, L’Eve future, the novelist endowed the imaginary with the meaning of an infinitive substance, a mysterious space or the spirit of the living that is able to meet the creatures of the beyond.

Jean-Paul Sartre’s publication of L’Imaginaire in 1940 announced the debut of the substantive as an object of studies. In order to avoid employing the old word “image” to signify the “images” generated by imagination, Sartre offered the name “imaginaries.” The imaginary is an object in image produced by the imagination of the imaging consciousness and thus distinct from the real object. Gaston Bachelard, grounded in the poetics of the material imagination relating to
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the four elements of cosmogony (earth, water, fire, air), defines the imaginary as our mind’s function of the unreal: “Le vocable fondamental qui correspond à l’imagination, ce n’est pas image, c’est imaginaire. Grâce à l’imaginaire, l’imagination est essentiellement ouverte, evasive. Elle est dans le psychisme humain l’expérience même de l’ouverture, l’expérience même de la nouveauté” [“The fundamental term that corresponds to imagination is not image, but imaginary. Thanks to the imaginary, imagination is essentially open, evasive. Within the human psyche, it is the experience capable of opening, the capacity for innovation”] (L’Air 7).

Responding to theories regarding image as a sign, anthropologist Gilbert Durand contends that the image is a symbol with an objective meaning. Viewing the process of the imagination as that which operates as an eternal coming and going between the objective (the percept) and the subjective (the percipient) dimensions of reality, he defines this anthropological route the imaginary:

Finalement, l’imaginaire n’est rien d’autre que ce trajet dans lequel la représentation de l’objet se laisse assimiler et modeler par les impératifs pulsionnels du sujet, et dans lequel réciproquement, comme l’a magistralement montré Piaget, les représentations subjectives s’explicuent « par les accommodations antérieures du sujet » au milieu objectif. (38)

[Eventually, the imaginary is no other than this route in which the representation of the object lets itself be assimilated and shaped by the urging demands of the subject, and in which vise versa, as Piaget authoritatively pointed out, the subjective representations are explicated “by the previous adaptations of the subject” in the objective milieu.]
This is a response to our anxiety before time and death by means of space. The imaginary, repartitioned into the diurnal and the nocturnal systems, also determines our representation of the world. German Reader-Response theorist Wolfgang Iser interprets the imaginary in two ways: “With flights of fancy it can wander off into worlds of its own, or as imagination, it can conjure up images, or, through the powers of the imagination, it can summon the absent into presence” (171).

The aforementioned definitions of the imaginary are characterized in common by a semantic field encompassing the elements opposing objective reality and reason: the supernatural, the unreal image and the power, psychic function of imagining the unreal or summoning the absent into presence. The imaginary is thus germane to fantastic creation, given that the genre in question is generally opposed to the mundanely received reality. Henceforth, the imaginary approach is deemed befitting to explore the imaginary poetics of the fantastic as a correlative of the unknown.

In general, the approach towards the literary imaginary derives from Lévi-Strauss’s paradigmatic methodology that analyzes the deep and imbedded structures of discourse in myths and from Carl Gustav Jung’s analytical psychology that probes into the intimate relations between dreams, myths and art in terms of archetypes and the collective unconscious. The imaginary theory resumes the concept of Jungian collective unconscious and attempts to restore meanings to language and thus claims that the content commands the form. The investigation of the inventio of fantastic literature as an archetypal genre goes in harmony with the stratification of the imaginary related to the unknown. From Jung’s perspective, the imaginary of the collective unconscious is rooted in archaic memory and dream that evokes the space of the Platonic chôra;
Bachelard’s imaginary hinges on the material imagination and reverie that mirrors the trace of the four elements departing from chôra; Durand’s imaginary is determined by human reflexes in reaction to time and space. Mythic storytelling is the hub of mythocritique or archetypocritique (as Brunel appropriately terms it) that reveals la fantastique. The first level concentrates on the qi (breath or vibration) or spiritual communion and imagination (mystical orientation), the second on the semantic abundance of images and the repercussion in connection with the four elements (phenomenological orientation), the last one completes the diachronism and synchronism of myth with isotopism of meanings and restores the pristine meanings to language, the figurative as literal (archetypocritical orientation).

These three phases of imaginative befittingly correspond to the totality of the fantastic imagination and its variation of narrative forms in literary representations. In general, the critical applications of the imaginary theory raise the interwoven images in general literary works or the mythemes so as to appreciate the mythopoeia of literature. Images are thus taken as figures that amplify the meanings of works. Metaphors and symbols are vital bearers of meanings that converge to bring to light the unconscious and consciousness. On the contrary, fantastic literature appropriates, literally, the imaginary in the text. The figurative meanings implied in the realistic but mythopoeic works manifest themselves as core meanings of the language through the fantastic storytelling.

5 Durand defines that the mythocritical reading (lecture mythocirtique) works to “décéler derrière le récit qu’est un texte, oral ou écrit, un noyau mythologique, ou mieux un patron mythique” (“discover behind the story what a text is, oral or written, a mythological core, or better still, a mythic pattern”) (Introduction 184). Viewing that Durand’s mythocritique is grounded in workings on the content of archetypal images and symbols, as opposed to the studies of formal mythemes, Brunel terms Durand’s mythocritique as archetypocritique to distinguish from his mythocritique based on the traditional definitions of myth.
They reverse the engrained belief that language comes first with a literal or arbitrary meaning. This idiosyncrasy of fantastic literature sends back to Todorov’s structuralist theory of the discourse, the enunciated of the fantastic is usually taken *au pied de la lettre* or literally.

2. Archaic memory and dream from the collective unconscious and * unus mundus *

Jung’s analytical psychology brings to light a feasible way, or a third way, to unite the physical and the psychic to transcend to the status of one-as-whole or * unus mundus*. Though mainly stressing spiritual transcendence in harmony with the material world, Jung touches upon the root of archaic memory and dream (according to Jung’s conception, not Freud’s) in the creative imagination, the third way accessible to the unknown truth. This creative imagination, grounded on myth and story, predominates over the fantastic imaginary. Exploring the imaginary sources of the unknown in the fantastic creation entails a resort to Jung’s psychic theory of the collective unconscious and archetype. Different from the anthropological perspective, grounded more on human culture and imagination of the consciousness, or individual unconscious at best, Jung distinguishes his archetype and the collective unconscious from others by characterizing them as predispositions or inherited forms, rather than inherited idea or patterns of thought. David L. Hart clearly delineates this idea, “Jung insists, however, that we do not begin life as a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate to be written on by what is outside us” (90-91). Jung’s conception of archetype can be grasped by envisaging the picture of or intuiting the spirit of his collective unconscious. The collective unconscious, innate and organized in human depth, serves to oppose Freud’s “repressed unconscious.” Jung avails himself of
applying the archetypes to expound the concept of the collective unconscious as primary imagoes or inborn images that organize the latter. However, he later revised archetypes’ attribute of images into innate releasing mechanisms that form coherent images, around which developed psychological complexes. Hence, Jung at times views archetypes as something analogous to Plato’s Ideal Form and sometimes regards them as representable images and ideas. Jung’s readings of and commentaries on I-Ching (or Yi Jing) and Taoist alchemical book The Secret of Golden Flower (both translated by Jung’s friend Richard Wilhelm) and his dedication to the researches of alchemy facilitate the prehension of Jung’s collective unconscious as the psyche extending to Plato’s concept of chōra, which can be glossed as the archetype of the unknown. In this light, Jung’s archetype is more irrepresentable than presentable images.

The anthropologists following the footsteps of Jung, in order to fit the logical tradition of research, often diminish Jung’s theory by exhausting his archetypal images to more seizable layers of the unconscious. This orientation of interpreting Jung’s theory ironically falls into the contradiction against the Jungian principle “that the rational mind may easily attempt to control and dictate meaning and thereby lose it” (Hart 97). In fact, Jung’s theory tends to bring us near the untouchable Ideal Form presumed by Plato since the collective unconscious that nourishes creative fantasy offers a solution to bridge the perpetual irreconcilableness between the material and the spiritual. This creative fantasy inherits myriads of images from the realm of the unknown, such as the imaginary figures of fairies, sorcerers, devils and sundry gods, drawn from the archaic memory of humans.

In the course of his researches in the archetypes, abstract or concrete, Jung affirms the biological origin of the archetypes, viz. archetypes are like the
instincts that bear a genetic heritage. We would propose to term this genetic heritage – “a human DNA of imagination.” This DNA connect us with the ultimate archetypes proposed to enter into the realm of the unknown such as the shadow, the anima, the animus and the Self. The imaginary of the unknown envisaged by this DNA constructs a continuation in the mystic participation that appears innate in primitive people. The mystic participation (or Barfield’s original participation⁶) enables these people to view the world with a symbolic thought, or rather a perception taken both symbolically and literally. Therefore, the thunder is heard as the voice from a furious god, water is normally the habitat of water sprites; the caves belong to monsters and the forests are saturated with fairies and other spirits; all these supernatural figures are indeed the creation in communion with our collective unconscious. Jung explains these primitive beliefs by the phenomenon of projection, one from the contents of man’s unconscious into nature. This projection is extended to define myths as “the symbolic expression of this interior drama and the unconscious of soul, which becomes knowable to human consciousness by way of projection” (Les Racines 16-17).

Different from representing symbols as spatial composition of art, myths express meanings by means of a story. Fantastic literature succeeds to this storytelling about the unknown in communion with the collective unconscious. The myths as metaphorical stories retrieve the veritable visage of unison of images and meanings. This communion between consciousness and the unconscious effectuates the conflation between the physical and psychical worlds,

⁶ In his Saving the Appearances, Owen Barfield divides the evolution of human consciousness into three stages: the original participation, the intellectual stage and the final participation. His original participation corresponds to Jung’s mystic participation where the contradiction of antithesis is absent.
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hence a union of the unknown and the known reality. Jung portrays this wholeness by the term of *unus mundus*:

Undoubtedly the idea of the *unus mundus* is founded on the assumption that the multiplicity of the empirical world rest on an underlying unity, and not that two or more fundamentally different worlds exist side by side or are mingled with one another. Rather, everything divided and different belongs to one and the same world, which is not the world of sense but a postulate whose probability is vouched for by the fact that until now no one has been able to discover a world in which the known laws of nature are invalid. That even the psychic world, which is so extraordinarily different from the physical world, does not have its roots outside the one cosmos is evident from the undeniable fact that causal connections exist between the psyche and the body which point to their underlying unitary nature... The background of our empirical world thus appears to be in fact a *unus mundus*. (*Mysterium* 537-538)

Borrowed from the medieval philosophy, *unus mundus* signifies “one unified world” that encompasses both the physical and psychical world. The universal symbol for this unitary nature is the magic circle mandala or a globe of circle and square or the Taiji circle of Yijing. With this nature of oneness in our psyche, Jung sees a psychic reality through a third way (between nominalism and realism; deconstruction and universalism) of imagining, creative imagination being the real Ground of the psyche.

Jung once wrote in a letter of January 1929, “I am indeed convinced that creative imagination is the only primordial phenomenon accessible to us, the real
Ground of the psyche, the only immediate reality” (qtd. in Kugler 79). The fantastic imaginary corresponds to Jung’s concept of fantasy: “The psyche creates reality every day. The only expression I can use for this activity is fantasy… Fantasy, therefore, seems to me the clearest expression of the specific activity of the psyche… Fantasy it was and ever is which fashions the bridge between the irreconcilable claims of subject and object” (Psychological 51-52). In psychic images, the inner and outer worlds of an individual come together. The Jungian psychic creative activity or fantasy, grounded on primitive creative imagination, underlies the artistic rendering of fantastic literature that tends to represent an image of *unus mundus* through openness to the unknown. This process through a connection between the consciousness and the unconscious into the perfect oneness is coined by Jung as the individuation of the ego into the Self. When one integrates into the collective unconscious, the wonder of synchronicity, like the secret of the golden flower, will manifest itself. The opposites will completely reconcile and transcend to a third energy as the transformation of the alchemy. Hart elucidates that the classical Jungian principle of exploring the inner world is “respect for what is encountered; respect for what is unknown, for what is unexpected, for what is unheard of” (my emphasis 89). The underscored elements deemed to be respected are also the essential qualities of fantastic literature.

From the age of original or mystic participation, an unknown devil-like creature seems recurrent in the human imagination. Jung anatomizes the emergence of the devil image in three levels: the first and the deepest level features the archetypal image of the devil as ancient as the conception of God; the second level originates with the magician type in the primitive tribe that is gifted in magic power; the third level presents the recurrent image in the personal
unconscious (*Psychologie* 168). Deriving from the archetypal devil are myriads of symbols like transformers of psychic energy that speak the language of the archetype. All these elements from the collective unconscious eventually rise to the surface by the creation of literature.

Jung distinguishes two forms of literary creation: psychological and visionary. Despite being a psychologist, he is little interested in the psychological literature. His attitude effectively explains the nexus between fantastic literature and the imaginary of the collective unconscious. Not all fantastic works are visionary; nevertheless, more fantastic works than realistic works are visionary, since the urge of creation comes from the unknown that vibrates the collective unconscious. Jung adduces Dante and Wagner, both are also great writers and composers of the fantastic, to illustrate that their visionary literature plunges into the collective unconscious by eliciting the archaic roots of creative imagination. Though both poets draw on myths (one Christian, the other Germanic) to fashion their masterpieces, Jung clarifies that the real literary creation lies in the writer’s original experience that meets the imaginary of the unknown, the corollary of which is the amalgam with mythological elements. In this manner, the artistic work is treated not as a personal creation but as a “super-personal production.” The *Faust* of Goethe, another example of fantastic literature drawn from the aforesaid archetypal devil, further explains the willingly mythological nature in excellent artistic creation.

It’s not Goethe who ‘made’ Faust; it’s the psychical component of Faust that made Goethe. Moreover, what is the Faust? Faust is more than a semiotic indication and more than the allegory of one thing known for a long time; Faust is a symbol, the expression of an active and alive datum, for always, in German soul, which Goethe, in
Jung divulges this archaic dimension of literary creation that connects the artist with the archaic soul into a one-as-whole creation process.

Such visionary creation abounds in fantastic literature; Tolkien is a visionary writer of our times par excellence. This process of visionary creation is akin to what Plato assumes in Ion as he attributes the divine inspiration that controls the poet. Moreover, Tolkien reveals his writing experience as being inspired and dominated by the divine power. This particular experience of fantastic creation can also be testified by Hoffmann’s hero Nathanael in “The Sandman” who claims that “the inspiration in which alone any true artistic work could be done […] was the result of the operation directed inwards of some Higher Principle existing without and beyond ourselves” (52). Such perceptual analogy in fantastic creation can be construed that the fantastic mimesis is a representation germane to the unknown linked to the collective unconscious. This creation process can be further assimilated with the dreamlike status. Jung’s conception of dream is similar to that in oriental mysticism, Taoism, Hinduism and Buddhism, which regard dream as a mediating space to commune with time and “ultra-space.”

In view of modern man’s lack of symbols as a result of the

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7 The oriental mysticism of Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism envisions the existence of an “ultra-space” that is accessible through meditation, alchemy and dream. Dream is believed to be representing a space that goes beyond our sensible vision of the three-dimensional space and thus connecting with time.
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Inventio progressive triumph of rationality, mystic participation is only possible through dream. Dreams possess an important key to bridge the consciousness and the collective unconscious. Archetypal symbols are released in dreams that also inspire fantastic writers to tell stories about unknown space. Most romantic fantastic writers recall archetypal images and symbols from their dreams. Nodier, though ignorant of the unconscious and an espouser of Neo-Platonism, acclaims the imaginative power cradled in dream (Castex).

Jung’s imaginary theory touches upon the most profound dimension that the human psyche is capable of communicating with. Writers with the imaginary inventio from this layer are visionary fantastic masters. Those who create from the imaginary incorporated with unus mundus are prophetic artists unbounded by the limited unknown reality, mainly constructed by alpha-thinking or logical thinking. The narrative representations grounded on this prophetic imaginary are classified as the fantastic literature with dream-discourse, the ideal of Tolkien’s sub-creation. Therefore, the fantastic works of grand style hold a similar teleological view as Jung. The individualization from ego to Self is taking place in the fantastic as a process of alchemical transformation of language to discover that the ancient and long obsolete idea of man as a microcosm contains an ultimate psychological truth. In the former times of mystic participation (Jung) or original participation (Barfield), this truth was projected upon the body, just as alchemy projected the unconscious psyche upon chemical substances. Hence an exploration of the substances will help trace back to the truth of the collective unconscious. Inspired by Jung, Bachelard launches an imaginary theory of the material imagination based on phenomenological poetics.

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8 The term is borrowed from Barfield to designate the logical, abstract and rational thinking mode. This is the mode of thinking the thought.
3. The reverie of the four elements and metamorphosis

Drawing on Jung’s insightful psychology, Gaston Bachelard proposes to complete the theory by a more representable method. If Jung focuses on the process of individuation and imagination, Bachelard accentuates the significance of literary images inspired by the predominating elements of fire, water, earth and air. He begins with the reverie, as opposed to dream, and proceeds through the preconscious to trace back to the deep collective unconscious. The imaginary of the substantial elements corresponds to the trace left by the manifestations of the four elements departing from the space of Platonic chôra. Bachelard’s imaginary of the material is the sublimation of the unconscious (Tadié) which hinges on the metaphors of animation and metamorphosis. This imaginary of animation and metamorphosis is indeed the core momentum of fantastic storytelling.

To emphasize the poetic reverberation in images, Bachelard further distinguishes the formal imagination from the material imagination in his work *L’Eau et les rêves*. The material imagination is more significant in the dynamic of creation than the formal imagination. The latter is distinguished from the former by its search for the beauty of forms and colors and the variety of languages, centering on the rhetoric to attract readers. The material imagination, in search of profundity, the primitive and the eternal, is essentially open. It invokes new metaphors that converge on the unity of substance. Bachelard sees the profound imaginary of substance as being linked with our first intuitions that are constantly born from our sensible contact with matter. In the process of this sensible contact, the material arouses in us the wills that activate gestures; for
example, the molding of clay, plunging into water, the consummation by fire and flight in the air. These gestures, with the attribute of animating movements, are the indices for us to identify the reveries. With this dynamic power, Bachelard declares that the material commands the form. While recognizing the immediate impression that the formal imagination appears first to readers, he maintains that the material imagination is the core source of writers' *inventio*.

With a keen insight into a long history of errors in science, except for mathematics, Bachelard develops his epistemology that delves into the functioning of scientific spirit. His theory is initially built on studying the obstacles that imagination erects in the way of scientific knowledge, thus the concept of *epistemological obstacle* is the core of Bachelardian imaginary philosophy. He presumes that the ‘premier intuition’ is the first cause of these obstacles, which hinder the formulation and solution of scientific problems. However, he affirms at the same time that these very obstacles function in alchemy as well as in literature. The departing point of his philosophy entails that such an epistemology develops in parallel with the analysis of imagination. He traces far back into the pre-Socratic philosophy to question the source of the errors in primitive science so as to analyze the four elements that exert fascination and imagination in human psychology. In the light of the four elements, initially introduced by Empedocles (5th century BC), Bachelard’s imaginary theory is a succession to Jung’s theory inasmuch as the latter extends into the realm of the irrepresentable collective unconscious akin to the Platonic chôra, while Bachelard centers on the diurnal revere of thinking man (instead of unconscious activity) leading to the materials as manifestations of the arcane chôra. With his debut of the imaginary theory in *La Psychanalyse du feu* [*Psychoanalysis of Fire*] in 1938, Bachelard offers a new concept of psychoanalysis different from the Freudian
definition. It is by no means an examination of the repressed desires in dreams, but rather an exploration of naïf thought, the reverie vibrating with the four elements, an exploration focusing more on the imaginary than the unconscious. Following the postulate of Greek philosophers Empedocles and Plato that all matters are composed of elemental particles of fire, water, earth and air and that all changes are caused by motion, Bachelard centers his investigation by grouping the complexes (consisting of primitive images) round the four elements, viz. the unknown realm traced by the materials.

The Bachelardian complex, like his psychoanalysis, reroutes Freud’s complex (deriving from the unconscious and universal origin) but follows the examples of Jung (isotopic complexes serve to seize certain archetypes). He thus displays the nuances of complexes begotten from the reveries on fire: the Prometheus complex, the Empedocles complex, the Novalis complex and the Hoffmann complex. The Prometheus complex, with the urge to know, often breeds the imaginary that tells stories of mad scientists, such as *Frankenstein* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. The complex of Empedocles “where love and the respect of fire, instinct of living and dying, unite together” (Psychanalyse 35), inspires the fantastic literature of transcendental love and alchemical transformation. Paulo Coelho’s *The Alchemist* also illustrates the imaginary of such a complex. While the Novalis complex represents the imaginary of the romantic poetry, the Hoffmann complex opens the way to a complete phantasmagoria that launches the romantic boom of fantastic literature.

It is clear that Bachelard’s theory centers on a cultural basis, different from Jung’s more spiritual oriented approach but akin to anthropologists’; he develops the conception of cultural complexes, for example the above mentioned complexes of Novalis and Hoffmann and the complex of Ophelia deriving from
the reveries on water. This complex unites water with women and desire of death (*L’Eau* 26). The literary work adduced by Bachelard to demonstrate his theory on the psychoanalysis of fire is effectively a romantic fantastic work in verse written by Lautréamont, *Les Chants de Maldoror*. He brings to light the significance of bestiary images correlative to fire by analyzing about four hundred terms of animals (Tadié 110). Out of the imaginary of fire, one of the four composing elements of all beings, the complex of aggressive and animal life marks one essential source of the fantastic creation, an ambivalence of fear and cruelty. Bachelard terms it the ‘Lautréamont complex’ which characterizes an urge towards animating in our imagination. This complex is vital to the fantastic creation drawn from the imaginary of deformation of the animate and the animation of the inanimate. While Bachelard centers on the groups of metaphors and assimilates them with metamorphoses by their nature of the deformations of images, we will focus on the imaginary of animation and metamorphosis deriving from the elements underlying the fantastic creation. The two important predecessors from the Antiquity of fantastic literature, Ovid and Apuleius, portray their imagination of metamorphosis and animation by poetizing into their fantastic narratives, *Metamorphoses* and *The Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses*, the philosophies of Pythagoras and Empedocles underlying the former and Platonism, especially the love philosophy in *Phaedrus* underlying the latter.

From the reveries of materials to the material imagination, albeit an inception with diurnal reveries of the consciousness, we touch back upon the collective or personal unconscious. In this manner, Bachelardian imagination gets connected with Jugian imagination. Once in contact with the unconscious, imagination invents not only plots and things but also a new life with a new spirit.
It opens our eyes with new visions. Vision, different from simply “view,” often refers to the invisible. This elaboration of reveries on materials presents as one of the inventive sources of fantastic literature, rendering the invisible visible. This conception of material imagination vis-à-vis vision echoes with Jung’s viewpoint on the imaginary predominated by the collective unconscious and the visionary writers.

The concretization of the fantastic imaginary into stories is like the alchemic transformation of language attaching the unconscious to the four elements. The central motor of the image deformation proposed by Bachelard is extended and incarnated through the temporality of storytelling. Bachelard sees in the material imagination a law of the four elements that predominates the imagination transforming into a specific poetics. This specific poetics lies in the functioning of imagination that deforms and forms images. The deforming of images here sends us back to Aristotle’s idea of strangeness in the diction of poetics. Bachelard finds the essence of the strangeness in the deformation of images. The decisive motor for this to be possible is the imaginary, the psychic function of the unreal, or deformation of the real, that governs our imagination. The imaginary allows for the escape from the ordinary perception of reality and the deformation of perceived images into imagined images. These imagined images are akin to literary images. Bachelard defines the poetic image as one able to make readers dream by its bridge of reverie between the author and the reader. It signifies other things and makes dream otherwise. Eventually we have to resort to language that manifests in itself an imagining power or demiurgic power begetting the poetic image. Bachelard elaborates his imaginary theory into the law of literary creation, in particular the coherence of poetic images converging to the unique material element.
Bachelard further develops the function of deformed images by juxtaposing them with perceived images of reality to construct his core approach of analysis, namely rhytmanalysis. Nonetheless, Bachelardian rhythm and dynamics generated from the imaginary focus more on the ambivalence in the dialectic of the perceived and imagined images, a kind of dynamic or rhythm created from spatial contrast, or specialization of temporality. To rhytmanalyse literature means to realize to profound rhythm of the vibrations that animate the poetics of an author. This rhythm comes from the weaving of the real and the unreal which enacts the literary language by a double signification. Accordingly, metaphors are the quintessence of poetic images. This rhythm of ambivalence from opposites returns us to Jung’s ideal of the reconciliation of the opposites, the ideal of unus mundus. However, Bachelard centers on the reconciliation of opposites on a smaller scale, viz. mainly the opposites of images. Poe is adduced to illustrate this rhythm by his poetic temperament, water being the reigning material that begets myriads of images. The rhythm takes place when the initially perceived water attributed with quality of limpidity is destined towards a deformation of darkening (L’Eau 16-17). Nonetheless, this analysis falls short of the very essence of Poe’s art of storytelling. According to Poe’s Philosophy of Composition, musicality and narrative temporality are important techniques in writing. Besides the demonstration with the rhyme schemes and meters of the poem The Raven, his stories like “William Wilson” can illustrate these musical elements in the fantastic narration. He creates his idiosyncratic tension by the consummately poeticized prose, for example, the plentiful various rhymes and alliteration. Thus the archetype of water should also encompass the imaginary of musicality and storytelling.

The above bias derives from the employment of the word “verbal,”
disregarding the meaning of verb, to expound the importance of language in rendering the imaginary images, like most other theorists that mainly focus on verbal spatiality, namely the visual images. The case of Poe extends the verbal significance to the realm of verbs, and thus to the temporality of the imaginary. Since the formation of the four elements resides in the permanent dynamic movement from the unknown space of chôra, as Plato expounds, imagined images warding off thought, referent or sensation of the author through language are not sufficient to lead readers into the profundity of dreams. Refining the quality of dynamic movement in chôra, Kristeva, in her somewhat limited interpretation of this Platonic term, attributes an important feature of this unknown space - namely rhythm. This attribute of rhythm extends to the four elements and can thus explain the abounding rhythmic musicality and chanting storytelling in fantastic creation from Antiquity. Therefore, the musical narration from the “material imaginary” coupled with deformed or strange or unfamiliar images underpins the creation of the fantastic.

Bachelard contributes to the imaginary theory a concrete methodology that substantializes Jung’s irrepresentable archetypes by the Platonic seizable manifestations of the four elements and that grounds the demiuragic power of the imaginary in language. The perspective from the imaginary of the four elements and the reverberation of images facilitates the exploration of the inventio of the fantastic in terms of reverie and metamorphosis. This stratification of the collective unconscious aroused by the pure reverie of consciousness can be traced by the material imaginary. From the collective unconscious or dream to the preconscious or reverie, the dissection of the psychic imaginary moves from the abyss to an upper layer. This ascendant movement in the imaginary researches corresponds to the fashioning movement by the Platonic Demiurge from the state
of chôra to the manifestations of particles of the four elements, exactly the four elements predominating over Bachelard’s imaginary. The variations of fantastic creation through the diachronism (for example the dialectic of ego and shadow) and synchronism (universal images of the unknown) in the fantastic creation will be further illuminated by the semantic isotopism proposed by Gilbert Durand’s imaginary theory.

4. Fantastic storytelling and la fantastique

The Jungian archaic memory and dream underlying the fantastic creation stresses the spiritual imagination of human DNA correlative to the archetype of the unknown or chôra. The Bachelardian imaginary sheds light on the sources of the fantastic metamorphosis, literal transformation or figurative transformation of narration. Durand’s imaginary grounded on the human confrontation with time further probes into the physiognomy of the unknown creatures, such as sorceress and monster, deriving from the imaginary of the visage of time. Not content with staying with the analysis of immobile images, Durand highlights the semantic significance of story driven by the dynamism of converging images. The storytelling is essentially a mediation of the fantastic imagination or la fantastique. Espousing Jung’s theory, Durand defines imagination as “la racine de toute pensée” ["the root of all thought"] (27). Like Kant and Bachelard who see the cognitive function in imaging and imagination, Durand proclaims that imagination is the origin of all reasoning. Through imagination, the known comes from the unknown – a similar vision being illustrated in Taoist philosophy where all beings coming from nothingness. By the same token, literary history shows that the literature of the fantastic comes prior to the literature of realism. From Durand’s perspective, imagination is neither a phenomenon of
consciousness nor the enemy of reason. It is in reality the foundation of all consciousness, origin of all reasoning. Durand holds things and the images in high regard by asserting that “les choses avant les mots” [“things before words”]. This is the very antipode of the modern semiotic conception of words. Speaking against the reigning postmodern assumption, Durand tries to find a solution to link words and things. The linkage can be possible by imagination but not reason. This assumption of imagination evokes the revolutionary view of Kant. He proclaimed the process of imaging (Einbildungskraft) to be the condition of all knowledge. The process of imaging is productive as well as reproductive, and the process of imaging transcendent to reason, the knowing subject. In his conservative age governed by alpha-thinking, Kant did not go too far to rank imaging as the source of knowledge. Durand, in our times of alpha-thinking exhaustion and of consciousness of beta-thinking, affirms the supremacy of imagination.

Durand opts for a phenomenology of the imaginary against the ontological psychologism of the reflexive type, given that the imaging consciousness and the concrete images that semantically constitute this consciousness are inseparable. He conducts his classification of three groups of schemas (symbolized by the archetypes borrowed from Tarot symbols) by the three dominating reflexes: postural, digestive and copulative. Durand means by this schema the driving force that decides imaginary types. It refers to verbs, for example, to ascend or to fall. Archetypes constitute the substantiation of schemas or the incarnation of the schemas in the objects. Different from archetypes with universality, symbols are confined to a specific culture and thus naturally ambivalent and polysemic. Firstly, the verticalizing and diaïrétique schemas are symbolized by

9 Durand coins the neologism by forming with the prefix “di-” that means separation and “aireisis”
the archetypes of the scepter and the glaive, isotopic of a process of symbols. Then, the schemas of the descent and the interiorization are symbolized by the archetype of the goblet with its symbolic components. Lastly, the rhythmic schemas, with the cyclic or progressive nuance, are symbolized by the archetypes of the denier and the burgeoning staff, the tree. This tripartition is grouped into two systems: one is diurnal, that of antithesis; the other nocturnal, that of the euphemism strictly speaking. All these archetypal classes determine the following structural genres of the imaginary: the schizomorphic or heroic structures, the mystical or antiphastic structures, and the synthetic or dramatic structures.

Out of his archetypology of the imaginary, Durand further sketches a philosophy of the imaginary by coining the neologism "une fantastique transcendantale" in the attempt to corroborate an identical and universal reality of the imaginary.

En cette fonction fantastique réside ce «supplément d’âme» que l’angoisse contemporaine cherche anarchiquement sur les ruines des déterminismes, car c’est la fonction fantastique qui ajoute à l’objectivité morte l’intérêt assimilateur de l’utilité, qui ajoute à l’utilité la satisfaction de l’agréable, qui ajoute à l’agréable le luxe de l’émotion esthétique, qui enfin dans une assimilation suprême, après savoir sémantiquement nié le négatif destin, installe la pensée dans l’euphémisme total de la négatif destin, installe la pensée dans l’anarchie comme de la révolte philosophique ou religieuse. (500)

that means the choice or preference. The diairetical symbols signify the symbols of power and purity consisting in images relating to weapons and victories, such as swords and arrows.
[In this fantastic function resides this “supplementary soul” that the contemporary anguish anachronically looks for among the ruins of determinism, for this is the fantastic function that adds to dead objectivity the interest assimilative to unity, that adds to unity the satisfaction of the agreeable, that adds to the agreeable the luxury of the aesthetic emotion, which at last in a supreme assimilation, after having semantically denied the negative destiny, installs thinking in the absolute euphemism of the negative destiny, installs thinking in the absolute euphemism of serenity as of the philosophical or religious revolt.]

The “supplementary soul” mirrors Jung’s archaic soul to dilate to the illumination of the rhetoric of euphemism. The fantastic imagination or la fantastique will also be mediated by the imaginary language to reunite with the ideal of unity or one-as-whole.

This archetypology of symbols offers to elicit the semantic significance of the invented images in fantastic creation, at the level of diachronism and synchronism. Parallel to Bachelard’s classification of images centering on the material archetypes, Durand proposes an approach to categorize the images of isomorphism or polarization clustering around the archetypes deriving from the diurnal and nocturnal systems. This perspective exposes the imaginary representations in fantastic creation and the variations in narrative rhetoric. While Bachelard emphasizes the gestures in response to the four elements, Durand puts the accent on the gestures in reaction to time and space. From Jung, Bachelard to Durand, the imaginary hence pivots on human behaviors grounded in infancy. In order to deduce a regulation of various symbols converging on specific archetypes to crystallize the intrinsic signification (which determines our
world representation) of the imaginary products, Durand avails himself of the reflexology of psychological stages to establish the connection among corporeal gestures, nerve centers and symbolic representation. He integrates the original three reflexes of position, nutrition and copulation into two imaginary systems (diurnal and nocturnal systems) by combining the last two reflexes into the system related to darkness, stomach and sex. Though Durand's imaginary symbols are determined by the gestures vis-à-vis space, time is the animating factor that drives the gestures to ascend or descend. The two systems of day and night are thus divided according to the attitude towards time, resistance and rebellion vs. intimacy and submission. This insight into the diurnal and nocturnal systems of the human imaginary predominated by time not only illustrates the production of the universal invisible images but also elucidates the difference in the fantastic storytelling from different cultures, for example, the antithetic and schizomorphic rhetoric in French fantastic tales against the synthetic and euphoriant rhetoric in Oriental tales.

The diurnal system is fundamentally antithetical, against bestiality, darkness or dark semantics and fall. It is characterized by verticality, transcendence, purification, light and immortality quest. The attitude represented under this system is the heroic will to conquer or surpass. Since the diurnal system is rebellion against temporality, including mortality, the first isomorphic group of archetype is the visage of time. The human imaginary, before the relentless and ineluctable time, engenders three constellations of symbols: (1) theriomorphic symbols, (2) nyctomorphic symbols and (3) catamorphic symbols. In response to this animated visage of time, the imaginary functions to create the archetypes of scepter and glaive which signify the elusion from time or victory over death or destiny. The principal constellations of symbols converging to the archetypes
are (1) ascensional or elevatory symbols, (2) spectacular symbols and (3) diêretical symbols (neologism of Durand to mean isomorphism of weapons and ascendant archetypes). The isomorphism of the images of the diurnal system extends to construct the schizomorphic or heroic structures of the imaginary undergirded by the schizophrenic symptom and the fight against time and death. The structures are further partitioned into four categories: (1) the pragmatic deficit or autism or excessive retreat, such as the hero in *Melmoth réconcilié*, (2) *Spaltung* or abstraction or split Weltanschauung, e.g. the mental status of Dr Jekyll, (3) morbid geometrism or gigantism, the narrator’s hyperbolic expressions of the gothic surroundings in “William Wilson,” (4) the antithesis, the conflict with time, morbid planning or immobility and petrification, for example, the loitering knight from “The Autumn Sorcery.” The symbols of the above diurnal system hinge on the dominating reflex of the postural, the essential dynamic schemas being vertical and diêretical. The central structure activated by the isomorphic symbols underpins the rhetoric of hyperbole in language. The semantism hither is able to explain the syntactical variation in the fantastic narration. For example, the abundant expressions of hyperbole and pleonasm in fantastic storytelling at the age of skepticism can be traced back to the imaginary of the diurnal system.

In fact, most fantastic tales, myths and legends are couched in the imaginary of the nocturnal system. This imaginary orientation also discloses the ignorance of hyperbolic expressions with doubt in the fantastic narration in Antiquity or in other cultures. Confronting inescapable devouring time, the digestive and copulative reflexes dominate the imaginary to opt for (1) euphemism or antiphrasis or (2) harmony, cycle, rebirth or progress, the dominating archetypes of the first being the descent and the goblet, and the second the denier and the
The nocturnal system of symbols is thus established against the diurnal system. Contrary to the fight against time, the archetypes of the descent and the goblet aim at submitting to time to gain rest and tranquility. The antidote of time does not exist in superhuman or transcendent means but in reconciling to the reassuring, warm and intimate substance. Denying time on the mode of antiphrasis, symbols reduce its danger by euphemizing, denying and reversing. The symbols corresponding to the archetypes of the descent and the goblet are divided into two categories: symbols of inversion and symbols of intimacy. The symbols of inversion, with the idiosyncrasy of expression of euphemism and antiphrasis, encompass the isomorphism of symbols consisting in feminine figures, aquatic and telluric depth, nutrition, plurality, richness and fecundity:

It is, as Bachelard writes, by an ‘involutive’ process that commences all exploratory movement of the secrets of future, and Desoille in his second work studies the dreams of descent that are the dreams of return as well as an acclamation or consent to temporal condition. It is a question of ‘forgetting fear’ (my translation 227).

The symbols of inversion are subdivided into four groups: (1) Inversion and double negation or the descending into the depth of the earth or water, for example, Jules Verne’s Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea and Anderson’s “The Little Mermaid”; (2) embedding and reduplication, the most famous example would be Jonah in the whale’s belly that reverses the fear before the devouring time. Durand claims that the mythology and the legends are rich in this swallowing symbolism. The epic Kalevala illustrates a refinement of successive embeddings of the swallowing fishes. (3) Hymn to the night – the images offer a divine, melodious and colorful night, related to substantial
femininity which is opposed to the femme fatale from the diurnal system, such as the heroine in “Arria Marcella”; and (4) mother and material – with frequent images of the Great Mother or aquatic or telluric mother, e.g. Lady Galadriel from *The Lord of the Rings* features as such model par excellence. Different from antiphrasis in symbols of inversion, the imaginary of rest and intimacy orients towards the symbols of intimacy. This constellation of symbols comprises (1) the tomb and the rest, where death is imaged as sleep, for example, the representation in Grimm’s “Rose-Bud”; (2) the dwelling place and the goblet or the container that refers to enclosed and sacred space, e.g. nave, cup, chalice, grail, vase and sack; and (3) nutrition and substance often presents images of fluidity as milk, honey, divine wine and alchemical quintessence.

The interplay of both symbols of inversion and intimacy produces the mystic or antiphrastic structures of the imaginary under the nocturnal system. (1) Replication and perseveration or the refuge structure often portrays an action or interpretation of preservation towards different objects, especially the refuge related to intimacy obsession, to primitive, gynecological and digestive tranquility. *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* and many Chinese tales such as *Youxianku* ["Journey into Faerie"] and the dragon kings tales offer perfect refuge examples. (2) Viscosity of representative elements or attachment is a structure that depicts an individual attached to the world and thus leading him to a genuine fusion with it. The structure is characterized by words such as tie/link, viscose, sticky, confusion and agglutination. It aims at deleting differences and cleavage between things and beings by detail precision. In *The Alchemist*, the boy’s communion with Nature exposes such attachment. In Chinese literature, most Taoist fantastic tales are based on the philosophy of natural attachment. (3) Sensoriality of representations or sensorial realism demonstrates an overemphasis
on the depiction of sensations, for example, the colors are stronger than the form, feeling things closely as to animate their substance from the interior. For example the sensitive coloration in the backdrop of the night in Gautier’s “Arria Marcella” and “La Morte amoureuse” and his other fantastic tales, and Wilde’s elaborate style (the former in fact exerting great influence on him) of sensations in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. (4) The last mystic structure features minuteness and miniaturization or gulliverization as contrast to the diurnal system’s mad geometrism or gigantization, for example, the miniature universe in Japanese tale of “Taotailang” [“The Peach Boy”], Nodier’s “La Fée aux miettes” and Grimms’ “Tom Thumb.” This structure is connected with meticulous description of details so as to lose sight of the whole, thus delving into an experience of intimate eternity as a reality of microcosm. For example, one sole cypress is sufficient for Van Gogh’s to represent a cosmology; or just one bamboo or one pine tree suffices for a Zen painter to show his cosmology through a microcosmic imagination (318). Fantastic literature, like Gulliver’s travel and the aforesaid tales, represents concretely beyond the metaphoric language the microcosm through the myriad miniature worlds of faeries or gnomes. If poetry as the hymn to the night chants the imaginary images through metaphoric language or rhetoric of euphemism, fantastic literature stages the figures literally to restore the pristine visage to language through the imaginary poeticization. It is a return from formalization to *la fantastique*.

The aforementioned symbols dependent upon the diurnal and nocturnal systems are the images and motifs as progeny of the literary imaginary linked to the great memory of the human unconscious, in an anthropological sense. The studies of these imagined symbolic images centering on the polar systems excavate the significant images and concrete creatures recurrent in fantastic
literature. It is not fortuitous that most examples adduced by Durand are fantastic stories as well as myths, legends and folkloric tales. The departing point being the gestures dominated by reflexes in reaction to time and space – the very source of the unknown, most symbols abound in the imaginary of the fantastic, whether it is in the diurnal system or nocturnal system. Nevertheless, the essential function of la fantastique will be mediated only through mythic story.

Jung’s proposal of the creative imagination as the third way leading to the amalgamation of the psychic and the physical is enhanced by Durand’s mythic story as the third way beyond the dialectic of the diurnal and the nocturnal. Born from the nocturnal system, the archetypes of the denier and the staff (bolstered up by the reflex of copulation) feature the cyclic and progressive symbols. The cyclic symbols are subdivided into the lunar cycle, the agro-lunar drama, the bestiary of the moon and the technology of cycle, all converging to the archetype of the denier. The rhythmic schema also drives the imaginary into producing the progressive symbols, including the cross, fire and tree, constellating the archetype of the staff, or the burgeoning staff. With the clustering of these nocturnal symbols driven by the rhythmic schema, Durand presents four synthetic structures of the imaginary and the styles of story. The first structure is harmonization of contraries with the musical imagination, ideal as a victory against time. Bach’s music composed with harmonious system demonstrates this musical imagination. The second structure centers on the dialectic which corresponds to the law of musical contrast. Beethoven’s music, especially his symphonies, illustrates the relations between drama and music of this structure. In addition to the musical structures, the rhythmic schema impels the symbols to a structure of history and fable. Durand uses the rhetoric of hypotyposis of the
past and the presence of narration to characterize its styles of story. The last structure is termed as that of progress, the rhetoric being the hypotyposis of the future, a prosperous future by the mastering of time and technical acceleration of history through messianism and alchemy. Durand's synthetic structures bring to light the quintessence of mythic story apart from the symbols rich in meanings: the often ignored imaginary of music and the rhythm of storytelling. Suffice it to refer to Bachelard's analysis on the rhythmic based on the dialectic. Durand associates music and myth (diachronism and synchronism) to illustrate the semantic form of myth (isotopism).

Underscoring the untranslatable quality of myths and analysis of their semantic structure simply for meanings sake, Durand criticizes Barthes's semiotic interpretation of myth and Lévi-Strauss's linguistic interpretation of the synchronicity of myths as establishing a mathematic of myth. He affirms in the imaginary the inventive power of la fantastique, the transcendental sources of the imaginary symbols whose fantastic space, different from physician space, is Euclidian and imaginary (the unknown) space that transforms into the communion with time, and thus spatializing time. It is exactly this fantastic in the feminine (la instead of le) that constructs the inventio part of the mimesis of the fantastic. With the épaisseur sémantique or semantic richness of Durand's theory of the mythic imaginary, fantastic literature recuperates its semantic substance and deviates from the semiotic interpretation of the fantastic as a mere system of signifiers and from the dialectic exegesis of the fantastic as mere abstract logic. The formalization of language indeed results from the mediation of the rhetoric, such as hyperbole, euphemism or hypotyposis. Fantastic literature, as myths – the imaginary – purges language back to la fantastique, the very source of its imaginary.
5. Conclusion

The imaginary theory offers an anatomy of the *inventio* of the fantastic mimesis from the deepest archaic soul of the human imagination linked with the arcane and unknown space of chôra, through the material imagination vibrating with the universal elements of fire, water, earth and air (departing from chôra). This soul enacts either literal or figurative metamorphosis, from the isomorphic figures rooted in the imaginary space of *la fantastique* that transforms into stories from intrinsic semantism to extrinsic momentum. The imaginary theories that delve into the unknown dimension of imagination eventually converge on the significance of meanings and the creative power of myth and language, the quintessence of the fantastic narration. Vittorio’s definition of the fantastic as the aestheticization of the supernatural further reinforces this poetic quality of the fantastic. Jung examines the spiritual power of mythic symbols in the human psyche; Bachelard sees the reverberation of myths and complexes in poetic language open to semantic substance. Durand restores myths to their imaginative throne by complementing the diachronism and synchronism in the traditional mythic analysis with the isotopism of images to demonstrate myths’ being untranslatable.

The imaginary exploration of the fantastic *inventio* helps recover the universal roots of the fantastic imagination beyond cultural boundaries. Moreover, the discrepancy in the imaginary can further shed light on the differences in the narrative rhetoric of the fantastic; for example, the narrative variations in telling ghost stories by the Irish Stoker, the French Maupassant and the Chinese Pu Songling. From the perspective of Durand’s imaginary theory, the Todorovian hesitation in the fantastic discourse is effectively one of the
corollaries of the schizomorphic structures from the diurnal system. Contrary to the structuralist or semiotic perspective that the form decides the content, the imaginary exploration of fantastic literature orients towards the hypothesis that the content predominates over the form. Nevertheless, the form of rhetoric and style in the fantastic narration are significant given that they conversely and artistically aestheticize the imaginary content to make a literary one-as-whole ideal.

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幻奇創造的虛構想像
陳鏡羽※

提 要

鑑於人類意識演化歷史之異同，學院派別之偏見，理論之固執和外國語言文學認知之不足，為幻奇文學下定義變得愈來愈棘手和「幻奇」。過去定義幻奇問題之中心在於對幻奇想像和文學性的忽視。然而來自不同文化的幻奇故事共同描述未知現象如龍、鬼、變形等母題引向假設幻奇想像有普遍的根源。因此，為了便於進一步探討幻奇的想像，在此先提出對於此文類權宜之定義：相關於對未知虛幻想像詩學化之說故事創作。對於幻奇創作之虛幻想像徹底的研究，即詩學之想像創造部份，將揭示神話創作之精髓，一如通往集體潛意識之門，因此也通往了柏拉圖太極初變（chôra）的未知原型。探討虛幻想像之前必須先闡明虛幻想像的定義。幻奇創作對未知虛幻想像之普遍存在將透過潛意識三層面作深入探究：來自潛意識古代記憶和夢與宇宙同一性，四大元素之幻想與變形，幻奇說故事與幻奇想像。文學之虛幻想像理論將闡明幻奇文學對未知之想像，即其詩學之想像創造。

關鍵詞：幻奇文學、奇幻、虛幻想像、文學想像、詩學、虛構創造、榮格、巴什拉、都宏

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