THE ANGEL IN ANNUNCIATION AND SYNCHRONICITY

Knowledge and Belief in C. G. Jung

TAMMY MONTGOMERY

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For Dan, Beth, and Joie

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Preface

Fear grips those who doubt that their existence has meaning. The prevailing notion that humans are situated on a dot in the middle of a dark, cold universe leaves people shivering in cosmic insignificance. Many would argue that science and technology have separated individuals from God. Others would say that people have lost their faith. And some would assert that God is dead. Many simply do not know what to believe. Today's self-help industry is a testament to the search for meaning in an age of uncertainty and faltering religious structures.

C. G. Jung was aware of the loss of spiritual meaning in an age of scientific discovery. As he observed in 1934,

> Our intellect has achieved the most tremendous things, but in the meantime our spiritual dwelling has fallen into disrepair. We are absolutely convinced that even with the aid of the latest and largest reflecting telescope . . . man will discover behind the farthest nebulae no fiery empyrean; and we know that our eyes will wander despairingly through the dead emptiness of interstellar space. (1969b, par. 31)

The truth is that technology and science now answer many of the questions that used to be left to God. This development has confounded people's ability to integrate what is known today with what was once thought.

The disparity between past and present beliefs may be observed in the concept of the *angel.* There are many who claim that any lingering belief in angels is merely the residue of imaginary or wishful thinking, and there are others who hold that angels (wings, halos, and harps) literally exist. How is one to reconcile such contradictory beliefs?

C. G. Jung's theory of *synchronicity* (meaningful coincidence) provides a vehicle for the exploration and possible reconciliation of such questions.

Rather than echoing the skeptic who says angels cannot exist or the religious enthusiast who affirms their immanence, one might reframe the entire discussion. Like the biblical concept of *annunciation*, in which an angel delivers a heavenly message to an earthly individual, synchronicity defines the moment at which the eternal touches the temporal.

Admittedly, the concept of the angel and its role in annunciation raises both metaphysical and theological questions which fall outside the realm of conventional academic inquiry. The theory of synchronicity, too, falls mostly outside the scope of conventional academic inquiry because it presents the notion of what Jung called *an acausal connecting principle,* an idea that contradicts the Western scientific method. Although quantitative methods and conventional academic sources provide much needed insight into these subjects, such methods and sources are limited given the scope of this inquiry.

Until recently, those processes which fell outside the conventional methods have been doubted, discounted, or misunderstood. Yet there is ample evidence to suggest that "human potentials or abilities [exist] beyond those that are mediated by conventional sensorimotor processes or conventional energetic and informational exchanges" (Braud and Anderson 1998, 39). As Jung suggested, other methods of evaluation should be applied to phenomena such as synchronistic events which fall outside the accepted scientific paradigm (1969l, par. 823). A transpersonal, integral approach not only allows for this, it facilitates such an inquiry.

This approach values objective and subjective methods of inquiry and does not privilege one over the other. Both methods are used where appropriate. A personal experience or narrative sometimes accompanies the scholarship on a given concept in order to illustrate it or provide an alternate perspective from which to consider it.

As the boundaries of academic disciplines give way to interdisciplinary discourse, the conversation expands and new possibilities arise. Individual and collective experiences and ordinary and non-ordinary states provide multiple vantage points for observation and evaluation of phenomena, experiences, and events. Finally, the space necessary for considering the meaning of phenomena from different eras and disciplines in relation to each other opens—and the concept of the angel may be explored.

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Introduction

Most Americans, more than two-thirds in fact, believe that angels exist. And more than half of the population professes a belief in a personal guardian angel.[1] Sacred texts describe angelic beings and their unique ability to traverse the expanse between heaven and earth to deliver God's messages to humans or to intervene on behalf of believers. Religious leaders of many faiths teach that angels are present in the world and active in the lives of believers, though they are careful to remind adherents not to worship angels in the place of God. New Age spiritualists promote methods for communicating with angels to find hope, healing, or financial relief. Alternative thinkers (such as biologist Rupert Sheldrake who asserts that modern physics can provide insight into understanding angels) offer new approaches to this ancient concept. Books on angels fly off shelves as people seek ways to connect to these enigmas of the spiritual realm.

For centuries, spiritual and religious leaders have urged people to recognize that angels exist and are at work in people's lives. Entire systems of faith have been built on the belief in the message delivered by an angel. A quarter of the world's population—adherents of Islam—accepts the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Muhammed and the subsequent revelations which have been recorded in the Qur'an. One of the fastest growing religious sects, the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, is also based upon the belief that the angel Moroni appeared to founder Joseph Smith and called him to restore the original Christian faith. In fact, Christianity, to which a third of the world's population professes an allegiance, is based upon the visitation of the angel.

Such a sweeping belief in angels is accompanied, understandably, by doubts and skepticism. Some people wonder why angels do not intervene in the lives of those languishing in poverty and misery if they are as prevalent

and helpful as believers claim. Some say that a belief in angels is childish, the equivalent of believing in the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, or Superman. The popular CBS series *Touched by an Angel,* which ran from 1994-2003, capitalized on this theme. Stories of angels rescuing people, healing the sick, granting an individual's most fervent wish, or convincing the wayward skeptic to simply believe provided the grist for the series mill, and people ate it up.

Sometimes people use their belief in angels to avoid taking responsibility for their own poor choices. Comedian Flip Wilson created a popular character in the 1970s around what would become his signature line: "the devil made me do it." The line (and Wilson's character, Geraldine) resonated with audiences because it tapped into both the myth that Satan—the outcast angel—tempts humans and the knowledge that many rely on the mythologized bad boy as a scapegoat for their own poor choices.

Even those who say that angels exist seem uncertain about what angels actually do or how (or even if) angels intervene in people's lives. When asked to describe what an angel looks like, most people offer up the iconic description which has prevailed since the flowering of Christian liturgical art—a luminous yet humanesque figure, draped in flowing robes, equipped with super-sized wings, and adorned by a golden halo. Depending on the scene, the angel may be accompanied by a trumpet, sword, or harp as a means of emphasizing its role as annunciator, protector, or member of the heavenly choir.

From time to time, people claim to have witnessed these iconic figures for themselves. A more common belief, though, is that angels take on the guise of humans to help people out, like the stranger who appears to help the stranded motorist change a tire on a lonely stretch of highway. Another belief is that angels are deceased loved ones who appear to those on the brink of death to guide them to the "other side." Some believe that those martyred for their faith are transformed into angels upon their death. Some claim to be angels themselves.

Most religions teach that angels fulfill a number of roles from guardian to messenger to advocate. No matter what the role, angels (with the exception of those who were cast out of heaven with Satan) are thought to be selfless creatures that are acutely aware of people's needs and deeds. They are poised to intervene physically, psychically, and spiritually as they fulfill God's will in people's lives.

One thing is known for sure. Angels are lingering symbols of ancient religions. Sacred texts and material evidence show that as polytheism gave way to monotheism, the lesser gods were relegated to a middle realm, the expanse between heaven and earth. Over time, the demoted deities were transformed into emissaries between the highest god and humans. The term used to describe this emissary is *angel,* which simply means *messenger.* By

the time of the great monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), angels were not only responsible for keeping an authoritative eye on people in the Almighty's absence but also for delivering God's most important messages to key individuals at pivotal moments in history. The term most often associated with this event in the life of the believer is *annunciation*.

For many believers today, the angel remains personified and fixed within the perceptual limits of the Judeo-Christian tradition. For others, the angel defies the limitations of a single tradition. Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, defined angels as "god-thought" (1934). Mythologist Joseph Campbell once proclaimed the computer chip a "hierarchy of angels" (1988), employing an angel metaphor to describe the ordered system for communication inherent in modern technology. Archetypal psychologist James Hillman revives the assertions of Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 BCE-50 CE) when he claims that words themselves are angels, considering the angel as expressive of the Logos (1975, 9).

Depth psychology provides an avenue for entertaining the notion that angels exist. Laurence J. Bendit (one of C. G. Jung's students) explains that as the individual seeks information within, there is bound to be a point at which that individual will dream or envision angels or other spiritual figures which are pregnant with meaning for them. He says that humans the world over have envisioned spiritual creatures—if not angels specifically—through recorded history. It is only in the past few hundred years that skeptics have emerged, suggesting a distancing from the spiritual, especially in the West. The feelings associated with the angel in Western culture are very real to people, says Bendit, and cannot be dismissed. Nor can one simply dismiss the reports of those who claim to have observed or interacted with angels. Although some reports come from unreliable sources, they also come from a variety of people, some of whom are credible witnesses. Bendit concludes that there may very well be a "divine messenger" of the spiritual realm that is "perceived at peak moments" (35-39).

Theologian and author Thomas Moore refers to "peak moments" as *annunciation*. Using the analogy of the virginal Mary poised for the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, Moore argues that the virginal soul awaits the angel's divine communiqué (1994, 19). In this fifteenth-century painting (figure 0.1), Fra Angelico (c. 1395-1455) captures the essential elements of the Annunciation of Mary—the virginal Mary in waiting, the archangel Gabriel shown humbled in the presence of the Mother of God, and the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove.

Figure 0.1. The Annunciation, 1425-1428. To the left: Expulsion from Paradise. On the predella scenes from the life of the Virgin: Birth Betrothal, Visitation, Epiphany, Purification and Death. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain. Photo Credit: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Centuries earlier the Catholic Church had standardized these elements. Also by this time Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise, which Fra Angelico includes in this scene, had become standard fare in liturgical art, a constant reminder to adherents why Christ became flesh.

With the Annunciation of Mary in mind, one can begin to imagine a correlation between the concept of annunciation and Jung's theory of synchronicity. Although borne of psychology, synchronicity is much like annunciation because it, too, defines the meaningful and often numinous intersection of psychic revelation and physical manifestation. In considering a relationship between synchronicity and annunciation, one necessarily opens to the possibility that angels convey essential meaning in synchronicities.

NOTE

1. From the landmark U.S. Religious Landscape Survey (June 2008) by The Pew Forum on Religious and Public Life.

I

Definitions

Chapter One

C. G. Jung's Theory of Synchronicity

Noting the extraordinary circumstances of certain coincidences, Jung came to employ the term *synchronicity* to refer to events that coincided in time, and shared a similar meaning, but appeared to have no causal connection. Many of these special coincidences Jung had observed through his clinical experiences and psychotherapy practice. To illustrate synchronicity, Jung described a particularly striking coincidence, which culminated in his presence during a session with a young female patient:

> A young woman I was treating had, at a critical moment, a dream in which she was given a golden scarab. While she was telling me this dream I sat with my back to the closed window. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, like a gentle tapping. I turned round and saw a flying insect knocking against the window-pane from outside. I opened the window and caught the creature in the air as it flew in. It was the nearest analogy to a golden scarab that one finds in our latitudes, a scarabaeid beetle, the common rose-chafer (*Cetonia aurata*), which contrary to its usual habits had evidently felt an urge to get into a dark room at this particular moment. (Jung 1969l, par. 843)

This set of events coincided in time (the appearance of the scarabaeid beetle occurred as the analysand relayed her dream about the golden scarab), yet the events had no apparent causal connection. What they did share, however, was a similar meaning. Since "the scarab is a classic example of a rebirth symbol," the symbolic appearance of the golden scarab followed by the literal appearance of the scarabaeid beetle served to weaken the "patient's animus, which was steeped in Cartesian philosophy," according to Jung, and prompt a psychic breakthrough in the woman's unconscious resistance which, in turn, reactivated an otherwise stagnant therapeutic process (par.

845). Jung applied the term *synchronicity* to this set of connected events and other meaningful coincidences like it.

The scarab example illustrates the basic components of synchronicity as Jung came to understand them. First, it suggests that Jung believed inner (psychic) and outer (physical) events could correspond in meaningful ways and that when they did, they did so for a reason. (In the scarab example, the coming together of inner and outer events prompted a new phase of psychic healing for the patient.) Second, it emphasizes Jung's belief that such events are related by simultaneity as well as meaning. Third, synchronicity alludes to an unnamed factor (something other than cause) at work in the natural world. Fourth, it suggests that the activation of an archetype (e.g., the scarab as a symbol of rebirth) is central to the experience and that the archetype's emergence, especially when charged during synchronicity, can strike awareness and even prompt psychological growth or healing in the individual.

JUNG'S EXPOSITION OF THE THEORY OF SYNCHRONICITY

In *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle* (1952), Jung establishes the context for understanding synchronicity by describing some of the more notable precursors of the theory. In the centuries leading up to the Enlightenment, there had been a number of explanations for meaningful coincidences.[1] Philosophers such as Avicenna and Albertus Magnus believed that the individual's soul possesses the ability to influence events and bring them together in meaningful ways (1969l, par. 824).

According to Albertus, the soul possesses a magical quality that may be activated by sincere desire. Goethe suggested a similar theory, asserting that an innate force could compel meaningful correspondences. He said, "We all have certain electric and magnetic powers within us and ourselves exercise an attractive and repelling force, according as we come into touch with something like or unlike" (quoted in Jung 1969l, par. 860). The notion of "correspondences" in the Middle Ages taught a sort of universal "sympathy" in which, according to Jung, "the universal principle is found in even the smallest particle, which therefore corresponds it to the whole" (par. 824).[2]

Since the Enlightenment, the scientific method has prevailed, supplanting the earlier theories mentioned. However, Jung asserted that an aberration of the scientific model could be observed in the synchronicity principle. He noted that occasionally a set of causally unrelated events occurred simultaneously yet appeared to share a common meaning. Such events he deemed *acausal* occurrences. Jung did not dismiss such groupings as coincidences. Instead, he began distinguishing between *mere coincidence* and *meaningful coincidence*—which he termed *synchronicity*.

For Jung, a *mere coincidence* is a grouping of similar events which are acausal *but* which share no essential meaning while a *synchronicity* is a constellation of similar events which are acausal *and* which express essential meaning. Jung asserted that this essential meaning was archetypal, resided in the collective unconscious, and rose to a level of personal consciousness (where it might be understood and assimilated) during the synchronicity experience (1969l, par. 846-849). In elucidating the limitations of the "causal principle," Jung hoped to expand the scientific conversation to include "a fourth factor" in nature in addition to the "triad of classical physics"—space, time, and causality (par. 961).

Besides challenging assumptions about causality, Jung also challenged commonly held assumptions about time. Henry Corbin who was present at the Man and Time conference at Eranos in 1951 when Jung presented his paper "On Synchronicity" reported that Jung's theory of synchronicity was "very much of its time," mainly because it was "itself the center of a new problematics of time" (1957, xiv, xvii). While initially asserting that the inner and outer components of a synchronistic experience had to be simultaneous (expressing the quality of that moment in time), Jung later relaxed this position. Eventually, he characterized time—as an essential component of synchronicity—as "relative" (1969h, par. 996).

Accepting to varying degrees Jung's shift from the idea of "simultaneity" to the "relative timelessness" of synchronicity, scholars have continued to debate the "synchronous" element of synchronicity. Marie von Franz emphasizes the importance of understanding the "key moment—a certain moment in time—which is the uniting fact, the focal point for the observation of this [synchronistic] complex of events" (1980, 9). However, Richard Tarnas says that synchronicity is more about "meaning that transcends time, even this looser time when we notice striking coincidental patterns that really don't have anything to do with time." Since Jung's speculations on synchronicity, the term has evolved and today stands for the "numinous meaning behind these coincidental patterns" (2006c).

In addition to his observations about time and synchronicity, Jung observed that synchronistic events often occurred during heightened, emotionally-charged situations: "Every emotional state produces an alteration of consciousness . . . a certain narrowing of consciousness and a corresponding strengthening of the unconscious." He referred to this process as *compensation.* Jung hypothesized that highly charged conscious states lead to a psychic override (to varying degrees) of the constrictions of time and space, temporarily altering mechanistic principles and giving way to underlying patterns of meaning. Jung reasoned that during such states, the unconscious exercises more influence, and, thus, space and time, which are of the realm of the conscious, become temporarily subordinate to the unconscious, allowing for

the expression of the activated, and often numinous, archetype (1969l, par. 856).

Jung believed that underlying all corresponding events was "an *a priori,* causally inexplicable knowledge of a situation which at the time is unknowable" (1969l, par. 858). This knowledge, which he termed *absolute knowledge,* emerges from the *collective unconscious*, the repository, according to Jung, of "the images of all creation" (par. 931).

When a synchronicity occurs, von Franz explains, it is as if an archetype is "activated in the unconscious of the individual concerned" and "is manifesting itself simultaneously in inner and external events" (1978, 226-27). As inner and outer events constellate around an activated archetype, essential meaning, or absolute knowledge, is transmitted. This explains why Jung viewed synchronicities as "*creative acts,* as the continuous creation of a pattern that exists from all eternity, repeats itself sporadically, and is not derivable from any known antecedents" (1969l, par. 967). In characterizing synchronicity in this way, Jung emphasized the concept of *unus mundus*, "the original, non-differentiated unity of the world or of Being" (1970, par. 660).

TOWARD A REFINED DEFINITION OF SYNCHRONICITY

In his 1951 Eranos lecture "On Synchronicity," Jung presented three categories of coincidence to help define synchronicity. In positing these categories, Jung positioned synchronicity within both the natural and paranormal realms. However, such a placement contradicts Jung's own belief that synchronicity is a natural process—a fourth factor in a construct in which space, time, causality, and *acausality* are of equal rank (1969l, par. 958). Although Jung's own experiences with and theorizing about paranormal phenomena may explain why he included such phenomena in his definition of synchronicity, most scholars agree that synchronicity is best defined separate from the paranormal.

Jung presented the following three categories of synchronicity in 1951:

1. The coincidence of a psychic state in the observer with a simultaneous, objective, external event that corresponds to the psychic state or content (e.g., the scarab), where there is no evidence of a causal connection between the psychic state and the external event, and where, considering the psychic relativity of space and time, such a connection is not even conceivable.
2. The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding (more or less simultaneous) external event taking place outside the observer's field of perception, i.e., at a distance, and only verifiable afterward (e.g., the Stockholm fire[3]).

3. The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding, not yet existent future event that is distant in time and can likewise only be verified afterward. (1969h, par. 984).

In the first category, Jung focused on the type of event that fits the definition of synchronicity as seen in the scarab example, which was described earlier in this chapter. The scarab example illustrates the simultaneous correspondence of a psychic (interior) event—the retelling of the dream of the golden scarab—with the physical (exterior) event—the actual scarabaeid beetle which tapped on and flew into the window during the psychotherapy session. In the unlikely coming together of these inner and outer events, the patient's severe rationalism had been shaken. As the veneer of her rationalism cracked, she awakened to another level of understanding, one based upon the archetypal meaning of the scarab—rebirth (1969l, par. 843-45).

In categories two and three, however, it is the individual who possesses a supernatural or extraordinary ability that gives him or her special insight or access to information. Jung's second category aligns closely with the concept of clairvoyance, "the supernatural power of seeing objects or actions removed in space or time from natural viewing," and the third with precognition, "knowledge of a future event or situation, especially through extrasensory means."[4] The focus on the supernatural and the individual's possession of extrasensory abilities in categories two and three leads one away from Jung's belief that synchronicities deliver meaning as psychic and/or physical events constellate around an activated archetype (1969l, par. 967).

SYNCHRONICITY AND THE PARANORMAL

Some suggest that Jung possessed paranormal abilities himself which could account for his connecting synchronicity and the paranormal. After suffering a heart attack in 1944, Jung had (and later wrote about) an out-of-body experience followed by a series of visions (1963, 282-92). Jung was convinced that these events had connected him to something primal, most likely the archetypal realm. In addition, Jung's extraordinary psychic abilities may have afforded him access, at times, to the continuum of past, present, and future. He admitted to experiencing, for example, the déjà vu of having lived before (254). He described events such as the near-drowning of his grandson that suggest he might have been clairvoyant (302–303). He also experienced precognitive dreams and visions about future events such as the outbreak of WWI (175-76).

Further, Jung relayed instances of contact with cross-dimensional realms and spirits. This is illustrated in at least one instance when his household was "haunted" [Jung's term] by a collection of spirits which he described as "the

numen of an archetype" but which others (housemaids and townspeople) described as "ghosts" (Jung 1963, 189-91). Because synchronistic and paranormal experiences defy conventional scientific explanations and often overlap, Jung considered all three categories essential to his exposition of synchronicity.

Finally, Jung observed firsthand how one could have a precognitive dream or a moment of clairvoyance marked by a simultaneous set of events, shared meaning, and an archetypal referent which would, therefore, qualify as a synchronicity. For example, Jung reported being awakened suddenly in the night and experiencing the "feeling of dull pain, as though something had struck [his] forehead and then the back of [his] skull." The next day, he was notified that one of his patients had shot himself in the head, leaving a bullet lodged in the back portion of the skull. Jung later notes, "I had perceived something which in reality was taking place elsewhere." Even though Jung identified this as a "genuine synchronistic phenomenon" that aligned with "an archetypal situation—in this case, death" (1963, 137-38), the paranormal nature of Jung's experience cannot be denied. However, as Victor Mansfield points out, the paranormal aspect was probably "incidental" rather than integral to the synchronicity Jung experienced (1995, 30).

Jung conceded the difficulty of distinguishing synchronicity from the paranormal. In a 1954 letter to parapsychologist J. B. Rhine, Jung distinguishes between the two:

> The main difficulty with synchronicity (and also with ESP) is that one thinks of it as being produced by the subject, while I think it is rather in the nature of objective events. Although ESP is a gift of certain individuals and seems to depend upon an emotional perception, the picture it produces is that of an objective fact. (quoted by Adler 1975, 180-81)

Jung explains that synchronicity is "in the nature of objective events" whereas extrasensory perception "is a gift of certain individuals" whose subjective experiences generate what appear to be objective facts. While this would appear to settle the argument by establishing a boundary between synchronistic and paranormal events, Jung finishes his letter to Rhine by comparing the concepts:

> I think all forms of ESP (telepathy, precognition, etc.) including [psychokinesis] have essentially the same underlying principle, viz. the identity of a subjective and an objective arrangement coinciding in time.[5] (180-81)

Ultimately Jung found Rhine's experiments in ESP and PK inconclusive since the experiments tended to vary with the "mood of the subject" (1969l, par. 863; 1969h, par. 980-81). He admitted that more work needed to be done

before conclusive parallels could be established between ESP and synchronicity.

Over time, Jung maintained his assertion that "[Synchronicities] have to do with spontaneous, meaningful coincidences of so high a degree of improbability as to appear flatly unbelievable" (1969h, par. 981), emphasizing the rarity of such events and the improbability of reproducing them. He also continued to emphasize that the individual is the beneficiary rather than the creator of the meaning. For Jung, "the observer [of a synchronicity] is in the fortunate position of being able to recognize the *tertium comparationis*" (1969l, par. 965), the meaning which brings together the inner and outer events.

Despite, perhaps, the misstep of including paranormal experiences in his definition of synchronicity, Jung still made significant progress in defining the theory of synchronicity. At its most basic level, Jung identified *synchronicity* as "meaningful coincidence" (1969l, par. 846), choosing to emphasize the relationship between events coinciding in time and sharing essential meaning. These two elements along with Jung's first category (of the three categories he shared) provide the starting point for an essential understanding of synchronicity.

DEFINING SYNCHRONICITY TODAY

The collective wisdom of those devoted to the study of synchronicity since Jung suggests that a definitive definition of the term is unlikely. Jung's original exposition of the theory continues to elicit debate. Still, scholars have attempted to clarify and refine the concept over the last six decades.

While holding differing opinions on how broadly to define the term, most agree that certain characteristics are likely to be true of synchronistic events. These are as follows: (a) the presence of the paranormal is possible during a synchronistic event although it appears to be tangential rather than integral to the synchronicity experience; (b) synchronicities happen unexpectedly and are not produced by wishful thinking or magical powers; (c) synchronicities point to the unity of inner and outer worlds, the unconscious and conscious realms, and/or psyche and matter; (d) synchronicities may exhibit the characteristics of the moment in which the psychic and/or physical events converge[6]; (e) they are unique events and, therefore, cannot be replicated in the laboratory; (f) they occur spontaneously and sporadically and, for this reason, are considered creative acts without immediate or recognizable antecedents; (g) they often occur during heightened emotional states or lowered states of consciousness in which the present physical conditions give way to emerging unconscious content; (h) and synchronicities constellate around eternal, archetypal patterns arising from preexistent meaning.

Additional aspects of synchronicity will be explored in the chapters to come. As will be shown, synchronicities may be experienced individually or collectively. They are often numinous and uncanny. And sometimes they are revelatory in that they expose what has lain hidden, most often archetypal meaning of teleological import.

Above all, *synchronicity* is a vehicle for the transmission of meaning. As such, a synchronicity may be described as a perceptible constellation of psychic and/or physical experiences which corresponds to emergent, archetypal content and delivers essential meaning. The transmission of meaning is both the point and result of synchronicity. Therefore, synchronistic events (especially when the accompanying meaning is purposefully integrated by the individual through analysis) have the potential to impel healing, initiate growth, and/or facilitate transformation or (what Jung terms) *individuation*.

Perhaps the most salient aspect of synchronicity is that it corresponds to earlier attempts to describe meaningful correspondences once deemed miraculous or divine. This may be observed in the comparison of the theory of synchronicity to the concept of annunciation.

NOTES

1. In *Cosmos and Psyche* (2006a), Tarnas notes a number of precursors to synchronicity:

> the Chinese understanding of the Tao, the ancient Greek conception of the cosmic sympathy of all things, the Hermetic doctrine of microcosm and macrocosm, the medieval and Renaissance theory of correspondences, and the medieval concept of the preexistent ultimate unity of all existence, the *unus mundus* (the unitary world). (58)

2. Predecessors of synchronicity differed in one significant way according to Tarnas. Jung was trying to move beyond the concept that "the affect or the emotion of the inner world" could "shape the outer world in a magical way." For Jung, says Tarnas, "the archetype . . . constellates inner and outer events, and there's no magical movement from the inside to the outside" (2006c).

3. The Stockholm fire is a reference to Emanuel Swedenborg's vision of the great fire of Stockholm in 1759. Although 300 miles away from Stockholm at the time, Swedenborg gave an accurate account of the fire as it occurred and prior to word of the fire having reached Gothenburg where he was staying.

4. *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.*

5. The coinciding of events in time would not apply to precognition as Jung's statement suggests.

6. Admittedly, such a determination can only be made after the event occurs, rendering the validity of this condition subjective at best.

Chapter Two

The Concept of Annunciation

A Christian term, *Annunciation* refers most often to a particular event, the *Annunciation of Mary*, "the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary of her conception of Christ."[1] As a general term, *annunciation* has been employed to refer to the angel's delivery of divine messages to other New Testament figures such as Joseph and Zachariah.[2] In this discussion, the term is employed in this broader sense (although the Annunciation of Mary provides the quintessential example of this idea) to refer to the single moment in which divine meaning is conveyed by the angel and conceived by the individual.

Annunciation implies the spontaneous creation of something new, unexpected, seemingly miraculous, and ultimately transformative. For this reason, it might be considered a precursor of synchronicity. Epitomizing the experience of annunciation and illustrating its most salient aspects, the Annunciation of Mary is the logical starting point for this discussion.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY

Mary was believed to be around thirteen or fourteen years old at the time of the Annunciation. The daughter of St. Anne and St. Joachim, she was raised in the Jewish faith. As New Testament accounts in Matthew and Luke explain, Mary was chosen to be the vessel through which the Messiah would enter the world. In *The Story of the Rosary* (1988), Anne Vail describes Mary's situation as a betrothed woman at the time of the Annunciation: "In the law of the time, it was not unknown for a child to be born to a betrothed couple, and such a child was considered legitimate. If, however, the woman had been unfaithful to her betrothed, death by stoning was the usual punishment" (123). That Mary submitted to the will of God in spite of the dire

circumstances an inexplicable pregnancy would create suggests Mary's unwavering devotion to God.

It also confirms Mary's belief in angels as God's messengers. As Vail says, "The angel left her without further ado, without any consoling explanation or comfort." Thus, Mary was left at the mercy of her betrothed. Vail continues, "Joseph knew [Mary's unfaithfulness] to be unthinkable, but . . . the depth of inward crisis this holy man must have undergone" was unimaginable (123-24). As a man with the power to publicly punish her, Joseph contemplated how to quietly divorce Mary instead. The writer of the gospel of Matthew explains that in a separate act of annunciation, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Joseph in a dream and reassured him that Mary was the chosen vessel through which the Messiah would enter the world (Matt. 1:20-21). The angel's announcement to Joseph not only exonerated Mary but transformed Joseph from husband to guardian and protector of God incarnate.

Mary's virginity, which is considered a factual element of the Annunciation by traditional Christians, symbolizes her purity of spirit or purpose. Many theologians maintain that the original version of Isaiah 7:14, upon which the prophesy of the virgin birth is based, does not necessarily indicate that a virgin would carry the Messiah but only that a woman of marriageable age would give birth to Immanuel (meaning "with us is God").

The text of Matthew from the Septuagint states, "Look! the virgin is with child and will give birth to a son whom they will call Immanuel" (Matt. 1:23 New Jerusalem Bible[3]). However, the text of Isaiah from the Hebrew Bible states, "Look, the young woman is with child and about to give birth to a son. Let her name him Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14 Jewish Study Bible[4]). As Stephen Harris (2007) explains, "Whereas Matthew's Greek source uses the term *parthenos* (virgin), the Hebrew text of Isaiah merely states that a 'young woman (*'almah*)' will give birth" (378, 383). The point, therefore, is that the mother of the Messiah was to be a fit vessel for God's use—not necessarily a literal virgin. Garry Willis asserts that Mary's virginity is "not a gynecological datum but a theological one." From the theological perspective, "virginity is the fresh start being given to history, God's breaking in on the run of human affairs with new things to be seen and done" (2005, 34).

As Moore states, the issue of Mary's virginity is intimately tied to the condition of her soul: "The soul is virginal as it waits to receive the greeting of the angel" (1994, 18-19). Building upon Meister Eckhart's view of the virgin as the person "devoid of ideas," Moore asserts that the virginal soul is representative of the individual who has an open mind and heart towards God's will. Eckhart—using himself as an example—expounds upon this notion:

> If I were sufficiently intelligent to comprehend all the ideas ever conceived by man or God himself, and if I were detached from them, so that I did not regard them as mine to take or leave, in either past or future, and if I were free and empty of them in this Now-moment, the present, as it is the blessed will of God for me to be, and if I were perpetually doing God's will, then I would be a virgin in reality, as exempt from idea-handicaps as I was before I was born. (1941, 207)

As Eckhart notes, the virginal soul is the individual who is not disarmed by preconceived notions of what God's will might be for his or her life. The virginal soul lives in the "Now-moment," awaiting God's revelation.

This does not mean that such a person is ignorant or naïve, however. As Moore states, "[Mary] is the virgin *sophia*, the sophisticated virgin" (1994, 19). Many paintings of the Annunciation depict Mary with the Bible open before her as though she has been reading and contemplating the scriptures. Gentile da Fabriano's tempura on wood painting of the Annunciation (ca. 1419) and Fra Filippo Lippi's oil on wood painting of the Annunciation (ca. 1455-1460) are just two among many examples in which an open Bible implies Mary's spiritual understanding and the anticipation of the visitation of the angel (Phaidon 2000, 46-47, 88-89).

In his essay "Madonna as Religious Symbol" (1968), Friedrich Heiler asserts that Mary's virginity is assumed in her role as the mother of God. The virgin birth, he explains, is "deeply ingrained in the human consciousness." Ancient peoples from diverse cultures have held the belief that the gods (or sometimes demons) impregnated virgins who gave birth to great kings, deities, and even philosophers. Heiler further asserts that Christianity has tended to interpret earlier virgin-birth myths as "anticipations of the mystery enacted in Mary's womb at Nazareth and in Bethlehem made manifest to the world." He finds support for the assertion that Mary was a literal virgin in a comparison of her body to the holy tabernacle:

> The belief that Mary was found worthy to be the mother of God implies that she was prepared in body and soul to receive and transmit this mystery. The creature from whom the infinite received flesh must have been a special vessel of grace. The holy one could make his dwelling on earth only in a true temple. (356-57)

If her body was considered the equivalent of the temple, then Mary's womb would be equated with the Most Holy Place, the one place according to Judaism where God's presence (or Shekinah) touched the earth. Therefore, it must be holy ground.

Edward Edinger draws a comparison between Mary and the tabernacle as well, explaining, "Mary's allowing the cloud of Yahweh to rest on her makes her symbolically synonymous with the holy tabernacle in the wilderness or

Solomon's temple that houses Yahweh's presence" (1987, 22). According to Edinger, Mary's body is a place of purity and of purification symbolically—but not necessarily literally. Heiler adds that a number of pervasive beliefs about Mary, including the Immaculate Conception (i.e., the soul of Mary, free of original sin), Mary's perpetual virginity, and the Assumption of Mary, led the Council of Ephesus to assert, ultimately, that through "the mystery of the Incarnation" Mary acted with Jesus in co-creating "man's salvation" (1968, 356).

The power of the Annunciation for Christians, therefore, cannot be overstated. In viewing Mary as virginal and sinless (the Immaculate Conception), she was "ripe" for the visitation of the angel, the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, and the realization of the Christ within. Rainer Maria Rilke poeticizes this moment in "Annunciation: The Words of the Angel" in which Gabriel addresses Mary: "Blessings to you, my soul perceives / you are ready and ripe to receive" (2005, 36). Although hers epitomizes the annunciation experience, Mary is not alone in receiving such angelic tidings from above.

THE BIBLICAL TRADITION OF ANNUNCIATION

The gospels of Matthew and Luke describe a number of annunciations in addition to the Annunciation of Mary, which prepare the way for the coming Messiah. The angel Gabriel initially appears to Zachariah, a devout temple priest, to announce that his wife Elisabeth will give birth to a son, one who will pave the way for the long-awaited Messiah (Luke 1:11-19 NJB). As already mentioned, Gabriel also appears to Joseph in a dream to inform him that Mary is carrying the Messiah (Matt. 1:20-21).

After the birth of Christ, a heavenly host appears to a group of shepherds to announce the birth of the Messiah (Luke 2:8-14). Indeed, the focus on annunciation in the gospels emphasized the importance of the "good news of salvation in Jesus Christ" (Stuhlmueller and Rouillard 2003, 474-75). In each act, the archangel Gabriel announces a seemingly impossible, transformational event. These same elements are apparent in accounts of annunciation from the Hebrew scripture.

Although the term annunciation is not usually attributed to narratives from the Hebrew scripture, Willis explains that the New Testament accounts of annunciation are built upon angelic "announcements that heralded the birth of great biblical figures" including the reigns of kings such as David (2005, 33). In the case of Abraham, the Angel of the Lord[5] announced that Sarah would conceive a son even though Abraham and she "were old, advanced in years" (Gen. 18:11 JSB). Such an annunciation is believed by Christians to foreshadow the New Testament account of Gabriel appearing to Zachariah and proclaiming that Elizabeth would become pregnant even

though she, too, was beyond the age of conception (Luke 1:8-19 NJB). The event also is believed to foreshadow the Annunciation of Mary, proving that "with God nothing [is] impossible" (Luke 1:26-38).

The prophet Daniel recorded two encounters in which the angel Gabriel announced the God of Israel's preeminence to those who challenged Him. When Jewish youths Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to worship the king's golden statue, King Nebuchadnezzar commanded that they be burnt alive. However, when the three youths were thrown into the furnace, a fourth personage identified as "a divine being" appeared among them. Upon seeing the angel, Nebuchadnezzar declared that the "God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego . . . sent His angel to save his servants" (Dan. 3:8-28 JSB). This annunciation of God's preeminence in Judaism was not lost on Nebuchadnezzar who, following the episode, declared it illegal for anyone to disparage the God of Judaism (Dan. 3:29).

In another episode during the reign of King Darius, the prophet Daniel was thrown to the lions for disobeying the edict that no one could worship a god other than the king. The angel (Gabriel) shut the mouths of the lions so that Daniel remained unharmed. Darius took note of this message, declaring that the God of Daniel "is the living God" (Dan. 6:17-28). In each case, the king's thinking was transformed by a visual message delivered by Gabriel.

Although known as a guardian of Israel in Jewish literature, Gabriel holds a special place in the New Testament as the *annunciator*. Because of his role in annunciation, in the Catholic tradition Gabriel also became known as the patron saint of communication. After being recast as a saint, Gabriel elicited a following that developed into a cult dating back to around the year 1000 CE (Zuffi, 2003, 360). Still known in the twentieth century as the great communicator, Gabriel was honored by H. D. in her 1921 "Tribute to the Angels" for "his special attribute"—that of "annunciator" (1998, 92).

THE ART OF ANNUNCIATION

The history of Christian liturgical art also reveals how depictions of annunciation and the angel have evolved. The earliest known painting of the Annunciation of Mary appears in the Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome. Art historians estimate that it was rendered as early as the second but no later than the fourth century. In this early painting (figure 2.1), Mary appears upon a throne, suggesting her exalted position. The angel Gabriel is portrayed in human form—wingless—which is in keeping with the Hebrew scripture which describes angels as appearing as men. It also clearly distinguishes Christian subject matter from pagan since the pagan deities were often portrayed as winged (and naked). Christian art was minimal and private before the Edict of Milan (313 C.E.) because Christians feared persecution. This

simple catacomb scene illustrates not only the Annunciation of Mary but also the transition of Gabriel from the annunciator of Judaism to that of Christianity.

Figure 2.1. Vault of the Cubiculum of the Annunciation. Early Christian, 4th Century CE Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome, Italy. Photo Credit: Scala / Art Resource, NY

Following the Edict of Milan, scenes of the Annunciation and attending angels became more complex as artists merged pagan elements with Christian doctrine. In a mosaic of the Annunciation from the fifth century (figure 2.2), Mary is depicted again in the position of queen. The attendant angels have been given wings in the tradition of Nike, the Roman messenger of the gods. At the same time, a dove, representing the Christian concept of the Holy Spirit (and, thereby, the Holy Trinity), descends from Heaven. Gabriel, who floats above the scene, alerts Mary to the dove, which represents the Holy Spirit.

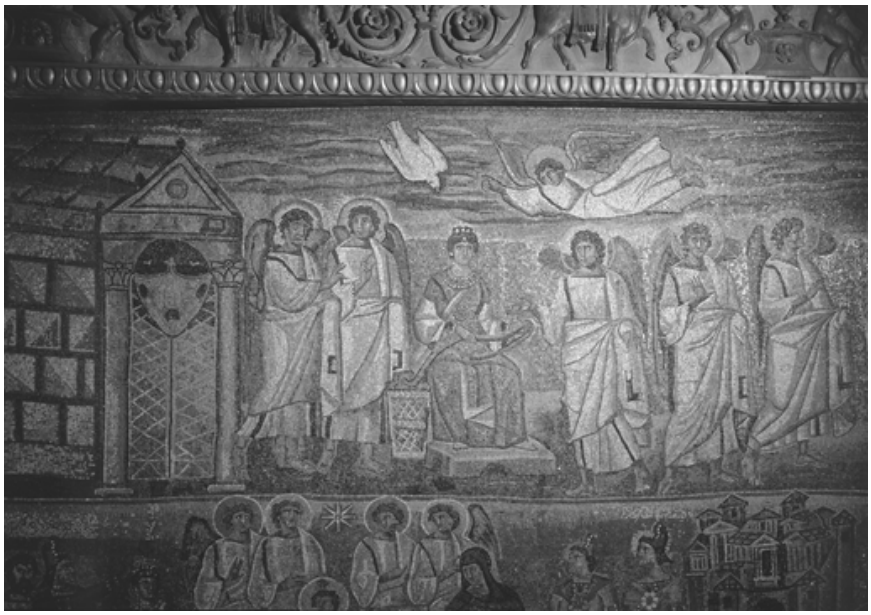

Figure 2.2. Annunciation. Mosaic on triumphal arch over high altar. Early Christian, 432-440. Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Italy. Photo Credit: Nimatallah / Art Resource, NY

Edinger asserts that paintings in which the dove descends upon Mary reinforce the belief "that conception occurs simultaneously with the Annunciation" (1987, 22). In commenting on the symbolism of birds, Jung notes that they often represent "spirits or angels" (1956a, par. 538). He also says, "The bird, an inhabitant of the bright realm of the air, is a symbol of conscious thought, of the (winged) ideal, and of the Holy Ghost (dove)" (1971c, par. 458). Elsewhere, Jung identifies the dove (of Noah) as "the emblem of reconciliation" or "the incarnation *Dei*, the union of God with matter for the purpose of begetting a redeemer" (1982, par. 381). In the case of the Incarnation, the Holy Spirit (dove) joins with matter (Mary) for the purpose of "begetting a redeemer," Jesus Christ. The angel is present to signify the message or meaning inherent in this union.

Other scenes of the Annunciation appear to focus on what Moore calls "the sexual nature of language." As Moore says, "The soul becomes pregnant through what is heard. Words impregnate" (1994, 21). In a fifteenth-century alabaster relief (Musée de Cluny, Paris) God's divine breath scrolls toward Mary in a slick alabaster ribbon illustrating "the word of God made flesh." In this case, Gabriel appears as the interpreter of the words which issue from the mouth of God and impregnate Mary. As Moore states, "from a certain point of view annunciation is nothing but divine intercourse arranged through the angel go-between" (20).

Mary's enlightenment at the moment of conception was another subject of liturgical art. In an enamel plaque dating to the twelfth century, Nicholas of Verdun renders Mary both surprised and transfixed by the powerful message Gabriel has been dispatched to deliver (figure 2.3). In this example, the transmission of meaning—expressed by the artist in lightning bolts—is the focus.

If, as Erich Neumann suggests, "the archetypes of the collective unconscious are intrinsically formless psychic structures which become visible in art," then clearly the ancient archetypes of the mother/queen and the maiden/virgin found renewed expression in Mary, the faithful servant/messenger found its expression in the angel Gabriel, and the divine concept, which is always pregnant with possibility, found expression through the symbol of the dove which is, in Christianity, also a symbol of the Holy Spirit. All respond affirmatively to the bidding of the king. They have simply changed "according to the time, the place, and the psychological constellation of the individual [or society] in whom they [have been] manifested." Indeed, art is the manifestation of the attempt "to understand, to interpret, and to assimilate the thing by which it was at first overwhelmed" (1957, 3-4).

The earliest renderings of the Annunciation of Mary were, no doubt, attempts to depict the gospel accounts of the incarnation of Christ. Subsequent artists built upon the more rudimentary archetypal elements of the earliest of these depictions, translating them, ultimately, into Christian liturgy. Draped in the trappings of contemporary culture, they came to be recognized by laypeople and clergy alike as visual dogma of the Catholic Church.

ANNUNCIATION THROUGH THE LENSES OF THEOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Moore compares annunciations to "epiphanies" or "ordinary moments full of significance and insight." He believes they can occur "every day in the plainest of circumstances" (1994, 12). Accordingly, the traditional elements of annunciation are reenacted in the festival of the Annunciation of Mary: (1) the angel appears; (2) the angel announces the impossible to the virgin; and (3) the virgin reacts with surprise, questions the angel, and then submits to God's plan. Moore emphasizes that all three elements occur simultaneously—in the moment of conception. He states, "Every time we use the word 'concept,' an annunciation, probably hidden and forgotten, lies in its history" (12-13). In considering the annunciation from Moore's perspective, the term *annunciation* would be most simply defined as the moment of conception.

In his book *The Soul's Religion* (2002), Moore responds to the question, Are angels real or symbols? Moore states they are "neither." He asserts that there is a "liminal place where spirit resides and religion happens—the place

Figure 2.3. The Annunciation. Nicholas of Verdun (c. 1150-1205). The Annunciation, from the Verdun Altar. Enamel plaque in champleve technique on gilded copper, begun 1181. Sammlungen des Stiftes Klosterneuburg Abbey, Austria. Photo Credit: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY

somewhere between or other than literal fact and symbol." He cautions that people expecting to measure the presence of angels also risk reducing "the reality of so spiritual a thing as love" to nothing more than "the detection of

genes and blood flow." Also, those who take the route of "rationalistic reduction of all poetic thought to abstraction" also miss the presence of angels (145-46). For him, it will only be as people "get beyond a simplistic notion of God—too anthropomorphic and too dominated by spiritual realism"—that they will be able to recognize that "we all have to grapple with the divine will every hour of every day" (147).

While Moore views the angel from the perspective of theology, Jung did so through psychology. James C. Aylward, a Catholic priest, remembers a conversation he had with Jung in the early 1950s about angels. Aylward quotes Jung as having said,

> Angelos is messenger. The word bespeaks the primary function of an angel, that is, to carry a message. . . . The messenger-complex wings upward out of the depths of soul and is pointed toward the fore of conscious awareness. The message is *spirit*. Spirit is the content which the angel carries from the unconscious source and tries to bring home to us in consciousness. (1982, 8)

One could argue that Jung is describing annunciation—an occasion in which spirit (meaning) wings its way from the unplumbed depths of the soul and breaks into consciousness for the purpose of conceiving in the individual the message of transformation.

In response to a number of Jung's insights in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1969b), Edinger equates the breakthrough of the Self with divine impregnation, a parallel to the Annunciation of Mary. As Edinger explains:

> When a woman (or the anima in a man's psychology) encounters the Self it is often expressed as celestial impregnating power. Danae while imprisoned by her father is impregnated by Zeus through a golden shower and conceives Perseus. Similarly, the annunciation to Mary is commonly depicted with impregnating rays from heaven. (1972, 70)

In each case, the woman has been impregnated by a divinity which means she will give birth to that which is divine. In the case of the Annunciation of Mary, he says, "Psychologically [the Annunciation] signifies the soul's acceptance of its impregnating encounter with the *numinosum*. The consequence of this encounter is the subordination of the ego to the Self" (1987, 26).

An annunciation might also be seen in the narrative of Jonah and the whale. Edinger explains that Jonah gestated in the belly of the whale until prepared to enter the vocation to which he had been called. Saul, too, experienced an annunciation when he opposed the very campaign he was being called to command. Not until forced to look inwardly (as a result of his being

struck blind by divine light) did Saul give birth to Paul, the reformed persecutor who turned champion of Christianity (1987, 76).

Von Franz adds another element to the psychological discussion of annunciation when she equates the Virgin Mary with the "window of eternity." Von Franz explains,

> In the Middle Ages the anima, or matter as the anima was identified with the Virgin Mary and there are many alchemical texts and also certain official ecclesiastical hymns in which the Virgin Mary is called "the window of eternity," or the "window of escape." According to our modern definition, the anima figure is, in a man, the bridge between the personal and the collective unconscious, and there also she carries the title of the window of escape, or the window of eternity (1980, 109).

Von Franz goes on to say that the personal realm of the psyche meets the collective unconscious at "the window of eternity *spiraculum aeternitatis,*" where eternity breathes into the temporal. This is the same window to which Mary has been compared (109). Jung identified this "breathing-hole into eternity" as "the experience of the Self." Von Franz explains, "[Jung] says that through the experience of the Self we can escape and be freed from the grip of a one-sided image of the world" as held by the ego (110). It is through this window or breathing-hole where the conception of the *Self*[6] takes place.

ANNUNCIATION AS THE MOMENT OF CONCEPTION

Moore asserts that the soul of the receiver who is "virginal, patient, expectant, prepared, receptive, modest—begins to carry new life and personality, a child, as the paintings often show, miraculously fully formed from conception" (1994, 12-13). The term *annunciation* is employed in this case to refer to the moment in which divine meaning is conveyed by the angel and realized within the individual. Stated simply, it is the moment of conception.

NOTES

1. *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (s.v. "Annunciation").
2. *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2nd ed. (s.v. "Annunciation").
3. New Jerusalem Bible. 1985. Ed. Henry Wansbrough. New York: Doubleday.
4. Jewish Study Bible. 2004. Eds. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. New York: Oxford University Press.
5. The Angel of the Lord in Hebrew scripture is often identified as Gabriel (Cohen 1949, 51).
6. For Jung, the goal of psychoanalysis is to help the analysand recognize the "relationship between the individual ego complex and the archetype of the Self, an archetype of wholeness and completion" (Hopcke 1999, 63). It is important to note, however, that Jung also used the term *Self* to refer to the "God within" the individual (Sharp 1991, 120).

Chapter Three

Revelation in Annunciation and Synchronicity

Most assume that the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary in bodily form at the time of the Annunciation. However, the earliest Greek manuscripts *do not* report that Mary literally saw, heard, or engaged in conversation with the archangel Gabriel although there is ample evidence to suggest that Palestinian Jews held a common belief in angels. Catholic scholars contend that "if God sent the angel Gabriel to communicate His message to Mary, the angel mediated some kind of interior locution within the silence of Mary's soul."[1] Essentially, what Mary experienced was a *revelation*.

According to John Baille, "Revelation literally means an unveiling, the lifting of an obscuring veil, so as to disclose something that was formerly hidden" (1956, 19). References to Mary having "heard the angel" appear only in later translations as writers attempted to describe the angelic intervention. The visitation of the angel, then, was more likely a psychic revelation about the coming Christ which corresponded to Mary's physical conception and convinced her (as well as Joseph who was "visited" by Gabriel in a dream—another psychic revelation) of the divinity of the child she was carrying. Revelation, then, could be considered both the purpose for and desired outcome of annunciation.

ANNUNCIATION AND REVELATION

That annunciation serves a revelatory function is readily seen in the creation of many religions. Dating back to the seventh century, the religion of Islam, for example, began with an announcement from Gabriel to the prophet Muhammed to "recite" the words of God. Over the course of 23 years, Mu-

hammed received a series of revelations which were recorded and comprise the Qur'an. Another, yet more recent, example is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The origin of this religion may be traced to an annunciation in which the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith and called him to restore the Christian faith. Smith received subsequent revelations that helped him facilitate the development of the church. Such examples illustrate how annunciation serves a revelatory function.

In Islam, angels are believed to serve as emissaries of God to the world. Two passages in the Qur'an emphasize the importance of the angel Gabriel in particular and his revelation of the holy book not only to Muhammad but to all Muslims. The scripture condemns those who reject Gabriel since "it is he who has brought down this Qur'an . . . by the command of [God]" (2.12:97). In another passage, believers are told that they are the receivers of the annunciation of Gabriel via the Qur'an since it has been revealed to their hearts and minds (26.11:193-94).

In relaying the word of the Qur'an to Muhammad, Gabriel embodies the Logos. As Peter Lamborn Wilson states, "If the Logos has a special Angel . . . it must surely be Gabriel. It is he who announces to Mary the descent of the spirit; it is he who brings to M[u]hamm[a]d the words of the Qur'an" (1994, 41). Muslims anticipate the same enlightenment Muhammad received via the words of the Qur'an since the words of this sacred text are themselves angelic messages transcribed in Arabic. In other words, anyone reading the holy scripture is experiencing an annunciation and the accompanying revelations of the book.

The nineteenth-century founding of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is based upon an annunciation as well. In the "Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith" (from The Book of Mormon), Smith describes his encounter with the angel Moroni. In September of 1823, Smith states, "[Moroni] called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do." Smith's discovery of the Book of Mormon stands as a testament to the power of revelation. As Smith further testifies:

> [Moroni] said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants. (1981 "Testimony of the Prophet)

Through repeated encounters with the angel Moroni, Smith discovered (what adherents accept as) the history and testimony of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Book of Mormon by the prophets of ancient America.

SYNCHRONICITY AND REVELATION

That synchronicity serves a revelatory function is evident in the experiences of Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and Francis Petrarch (1304-1374). A number of Jungian scholars have demonstrated that both men experienced synchronicities that led to revelation, spiritual renewal, and new direction in their lives.

In Book Eight of his *Confessions,* Augustine describes the culminating experience which led to his own spiritual transformation. Tarnas summarizes this event:

> In the garden of Milan in 386, in a frenzy of spiritual crisis, he heard a child's voice from a nearby house mysteriously repeating the words "Tolle, lege" ("Pick up and read"). Uncertain of their significance, he finally opened at random a copy of Saint Paul's epistles and there read words that spoke with uncanny precision to the nature of his lifelong conflict and its resolution. (2006a, 53)

Describing the moment of his own conversion, Augustine writes: "For in that instant, with the very ending of the sentence, it was as though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart, and all the darkness of uncertainty vanished away" (Sheed 1992, 995).

In referring back to the defining characteristics of synchronicity (from chapter 1), one can see why Augustine's experience would qualify as a synchronicity. He was in a heightened emotional state as he struggled with the "darkness of uncertainty." Such an emotional state can lead to the weakening of one's consciousness, thereby allowing unconscious content to leak into consciousness. It appears as though the child's voice in that critical moment expressed Augustine's own need to read as a child in order to understand. Because the child's voice had disarmed his ego, Augustine responded spontaneously without rationalizing away the child's innocent command. Flipping through the epistles, he landed on the scripture that spoke to him directly and led to a complete spiritual transformation.

Petrarch also recounts his own transformative experience in *The Ascent of Mount Ventoux*, which is based on a climbing expedition he took with his brother in April of 1336. In ascending the mount that day, Petrarch chose time and again what he hoped would be an easier path up the mount only to discover it meandered away from the steeper, more direct route that his brother had chosen. To his brother's amusement, Petrarch expended more energy catching up than he would have exerted had he taken the more efficient, but steeper, route.

As he climbed and his frustration mounted, Petrarch began to apply his physical ascent to his spiritual disposition. Upon reaching the summit, Petrarch experienced what at that time would have been the equivalent of

having the world at one's feet as his gaze extended in all directions. Yet his thoughts kept directing themselves inward. Eventually he pulled out a copy of Augustine's *Confessions*, randomly opened the book, and read,

> And men go about to wonder at the heights of the mountains, and the mighty waves of the sea, and the wide sweep of rivers, and the circuit of the ocean, and the revolution of the stars, but themselves they consider not. (quoted in Petrarch, *The Ascent of Mount Ventoux*)

In this moment, Petrarch recognized the coincidence of Augustine's words, which spoke to him from across the centuries. Tarnas explains the effect that this had upon Petrarch:

> Petrarch was so moved by the coincidental force of Augustine's words that he remained silent for the entire descent down the mountain. He at once recognized the coincidence as part of a larger pattern of such transformative moments that had happened to others in the history of spiritual conversions. (2006a, 53)

Petrarch's experience was clearly a synchronicity. His avoidance of the steeper path up the mountain mirrored the lack of effort he was making in his daily life. He had completed his education years before but had accomplished little since. During the hike with his brother, Petrarch began to physically enact his unconscious condition. The physical exertion and building frustration resulted in a heightened emotional state, making it possible for unconscious content to slip into consciousness. Augustine's words, at the moment Petrarch read them, confirmed the very thoughts which had arisen into consciousness.

Although both men's experiences may be characterized as synchronicities, it may be that Augustine's experience is more closely related to the concept of annunciation than synchronicity. Augustine's experience seems to align with the traditional concept of annunciation (and with Muhammed's or Smith's experiences) while Petrarch's is striking in its modernity and kinship to the concept of synchronicity. In addition, Augustine responded to an audible voice, from a messenger one might argue, who directed him to "read." In contrast to Augustine's, Petrarch's experience was not in response to a voice other than his own (although the words of Augustine certainly "spoke" to him from across the millennium). So while it is appropriate to use the term synchronicity to describe Petrarch's experience, it seems equally appropriate to use the terms annunciation and synchronicity to describe Augustine's experience.

THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION

In the cases of Muhammed, Joseph Smith, and possibly Augustine, angels revealed essential information that facilitated their spiritual growth and called them to the service of their respective faiths. For Augustine and Petrarch, the words of those who had come before informed and even facilitated the next stages of their individual growth, heralding in new epochs of cultural development, and calling each man to fulfill a higher purpose. Both sets of experiences are in keeping with Baillie's explanation of the dual purpose of revelation: "Not only is revelation always 'the revelation of a mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed,' but the mystery thus disclosed is nothing less than God's own will and purpose" (1956, 28).

Indeed, the one who is waiting, receptive, and open to revelation—just as Mary—is the one who has prepared for the day of visitation. It is not as though something new is revealed. It is the knowledge of something that has existed throughout eternity that becomes available, renewed, to the thirsty soul. Baillie describes the knowledge acquired through revelation and how it becomes known:

> There can be no valid knowledge except of what is already there, either waiting or striving to be known. The knowing mind is active in attending, selecting, and interpreting; but it must attend to, select from, and interpret what is presented to it; and therefore it must be passive as well as active. (19)

Baillie's words hold true for Mary, for Muhammed and Smith, and for Augustine and Petrarch, all of whom were searching—and found—something "already there . . . waiting or striving to be known." From a theological perspective, Baillie explains that revelation is not about discovering something about God, but about discovering "God Himself." In Jungian terms, this might be considered the discovery of the God-image, the imprint of *imago Dei* upon the human soul, since according to Jung, "it is only through the psyche that we can establish that God acts upon us" (1963 394-95).

NOTE

1. *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2nd ed. (2003, s.v. "Annunciation," 476).

II

Challenges

Chapter Four

Synchronicity and Its Skeptics

In spite of the numerous passages in which he describes synchronicity as a function of natural processes (comparing it to differentiation in biology and individuation in psychology), some critics have accused Jung of magical, infantile, irrational, or wishful thinking in the development and exposition of the theory. In addition, the challenging aspect of acausality, which Jung claimed to be a central feature of synchronicity, continues to provoke debate. Such concerns are understandable given the unusual nature of synchronicity.

Criticism of Jung's theory of synchronicity springs from a number of sources. Some critics simply dismiss the theory altogether. Philosopher Robert Todd Carroll, author of the *Skeptics Dictionary* (1994-2008), calls Jung's theory of synchronicity "inane" and suggests that those who believe they have encountered synchronistic events are suffering from *apophenia*, a serious mental disorder in which people perceive meaningful connections among unrelated elements or events (s.v. "synchronicity").

Jung would agree, no doubt, that those who are obsessed with finding coincidences in the non-coincidental are suffering from a neurosis. Tarnas addresses this issue by explaining that synchronicity has a "shadow side." The shadow side is apparent in cases in which the individual projects meaning onto an otherwise simple or nonexistent coincidence in order to stroke or afflict his or her own ego. As Tarnas notes, Jung found this darker side of synchronicity "pre-Copernican" and "egocentric" (2006a, 55).

Jean Gebser asserts that all "events not comprehensible causally [including synchronicity] belong to the magic realm and are pre-rational phenomena" (1949/1985, 400). Perhaps Gebser assigns synchronicity to this category because he equates it with the parapsychic experience which he believes runs parallel to "the normal course of psychic life" (448). However, the synchronistic event is not a set of psychic or physical events that run parallel, but

rather it is the intersection of psychic and physical elements. Indeed, parapsychic and synchronistic events not only occur differently but also are experienced differently. This is among the reasons why it is important (as noted in chapter 1) to consider any paranormal event that appears to accompany synchronicity as incidental to (as opposed to integral to) the synchronicity experience.

Another complaint lodged against Jung comes from the statistician who argues that coincidences or synchronicities should not really surprise us given the number of people in the world and the natural events occurring in and around us (Faber 2004, 219-27; Neimark 2004, 46-47). Jung would agree that the odds of coincidences occurring are quite high as he discovered in his own research and through the work of Paul Kammerer, who was noted for his theory of seriality (1969l, par. 824-25). Supporters of synchronicity theory such as Roderick Main would also admit that "our generally poor awareness of what can and indeed is likely to occur purely by chance may be responsible for our attributing special significance to events which in reality have no such significance" (2004, 27). Certainly "the law of truly large numbers" can account for a large number of notable coincidences. And a basic misjudgment of probabilities may cause people to be unduly surprised when coincidences occur (28).

Such concessions, however, do not discount the validity of meaningful coincidences when they do occur. As Jung states,

> Meaningful coincidences are thinkable as pure chance. But the more they multiply and the greater and more exact the correspondence is, the more their probability sinks and their unthinkability increases, until they can no longer be regarded as pure chance but, for lack of a causal explanation, have to be thought of as meaningful arrangements. (1969l, par. 967-68)

Agreeing with Jung that synchronicities often increase in number, frequency, and intensity, making them difficult to ignore, Tarnas adds that synchronicities sometimes appear to cluster in order to deliver a particularly powerful message. The accumulation of synchronicities at critical junctures in the individual's life, Tarnas says, "may have a revelatory effect on the individual and mark a decisive threshold in his or her psychological and spiritual development" (2006a, 55).

In responding to questions about the difference between *meaningful* and *meaningless* synchronicities, Michael Fordham explains, "Dispersions due to chance can be subdivided into *meaningful* and *meaningless*. The meaningless dispersions due to chance are made meaningful by the activation of the psychoid archetype" (1973, par. 846n). Jung used the term *psychoid archetype* to describe "the transconscious areas where psychic processes and their physical substrate touch" (Adler 1975, 22).

In addition to the criticisms already described are those aimed at discrediting not only the theory of synchronicity but also Jung's work as a psychotherapist. Psychologist M. D. Faber argues that synchronicity has become "a cornerstone of our current religio-magical age and a guiding central concept for those who adhere to the thinking of Carl Gustav Jung" (2004, 219).

Faber compares the theory to Leibniz's concept of "preestablished harmony." He also argues that those who believe they have experienced synchronicity have mistakenly projected their early infantile experiences with a caregiver "back out into the environment where the caregiver originally resided during life's early states." For Faber, the belief in synchronicity is the equivalent to a belief in miracles, and the psychotherapist who encourages such a belief has situated himself or herself in the seat of God. Clearly, Faber finds a belief in the theory of synchronicity misguided if not damaging to the individual's psyche (2004, 219-25).

Contrary to Faber's accusation, Jung distinguished synchronicity from the theory of "preestablished harmony." Jung explained that Leibniz's theory proposed a pre-existent coordination of "psychic and physical events" with God as the prime mover and humans as mirrored reflections of the universe which God set into motion. Such a view, Jung states, "postulates a complete pre-established parallelism of events both inside and outside" (1969l, par. 937-38). Because of their infrequency and irregularity, synchronistic events could not be attributed to a pre-established parallelism such as Leibnitz's theory of preestablished harmony. As Jung explains:

> In contrast to the idea of a pre-established harmony, the synchronistic factor merely stipulates the existence of an intellectually necessary principle which could be added as a fourth to the recognized triad of space, time, and causality. (1969l, par. 958)

In other words, synchronicity is a principle in nature and must be accounted for within this realm just as space, time, and causality are held to account.

Also, in contrast to Faber's accusation that synchronicity aligns with backward trends in "religio-magical" thinking, Jung asserts that synchronicity differs in at least two significant ways. First, Jung held that synchronicity is "an intellectually necessary principle" of nature and should be added as "a fourth to the recognized triad of space, time, and causality" (1969l, par. 958). Second, Jung held that the recognition of synchronicity and the application of its meaning by the individual both initiate and facilitate that individual's psychological growth, advancing the process of individuation. According to Gebser, *unconsciousness* is a defining feature of the magical period of human development (1949/1985, 60). To the contrary, *consciousness* is a defining feature of synchronicity.

Main asserts that Faber's analysis fails to take into account a set of three distinct features—that when present simultaneously—distinguish synchronicity from other psychoanalytical explanations. Main describes them as follows: (1) synchronicities are based upon empirical evidence; (2) synchronicity as a theory can account for the "psychological dynamics" which make a synchronistic event a "meaningful" experience; and (3) "Jung's theory remains open to the possibility of there being a transpersonal or spiritual dimension involved in the coincidences." It is this third feature which Main believes significantly distances Jung's theory from others' accounts of meaningful coincidence (2004, 34).

Yet it is exactly Main's third feature that Faber objects to most. For Faber, "On Synchronicity" is nothing more than Jung's thinly veiled attempt to promote a belief in God (2004, 227). Admittedly, Jung presented synchronicity as a concept with spiritual dimensions. Yet it remains a highly criticized theory—not because it promotes a belief in God, but because it challenges the Western mindset. What Jung called for, indeed what he promoted, was a radical reconsideration of the rational. Among the most controversial elements of the theory of synchronicity is *acausality*, the subject of chapter 5.

Chapter Five

The Challenge of Acausality in Synchronicity

As noted in chapter 1, Jung described synchronicity as "an acausal connecting principle," emphasizing his belief that synchronistic events contradict the standard cause/effect model of Western science. Jung also described synchronicity as a natural process and "an intellectually necessary principle which could be added as a fourth to the recognized triad of space, time, and causality" (1969l, par. 958).

More than sixty years after Jung's introductory lecture on synchronicity at Eranos, the issue of *acausality* in synchronicity remains a central yet disputed aspect of the theory. While some hold that modern physics and Eastern approaches provide sufficient support for Jung's argument that acausality is a defining feature of synchronicity, others question the validity of this claim.

EASTERN THOUGHT AND ACAUSALITY

Jung first aired the term *synchronicity* in a 1929 presentation at the Psychological Club in Zurich. In 1930, he used the term *synchronicity* again in a memorial address for the German sinologist Richard Wilhelm. Wilhelm, whose knowledge of Chinese language and culture had impressed Jung and fueled Jung's growing interest in Eastern thought, had published a new German translation of the *I Ching* in 1924. Jung had been studying the *I Ching* since the early 1920s, prior to meeting Wilhelm in 1923, and was grateful to Wilhelm for the new translation. From the chronology of events, one can see that Jung's early study of the *I Ching* coincided with his developing understanding of the synchronicity principle.

In his address for Wilhelm, Jung sought to establish a connection between the science of synchronicity and that of the *I Ching* since both, it seemed to him, were "in complete contradiction to our [Western] scientific and causal thinking" (1966b, par. 79). Jung explains:

> The science of the *I Ching* is based not on the causality principle but on one which—hitherto unnamed because not familiar to us—I have tentatively called the *synchronistic* principle. My researches into the psychology of the unconscious processes long ago compelled me to look around for another principle of explanation, since the causality principle seemed to me insufficient to explain certain remarkable manifestations of the unconscious. I found that there are psychic parallelisms which simply cannot be related to each other causally, but must be connected by another kind of principle altogether. This connection seemed to lie essentially in the relative simultaneity of the events, hence the term "synchronistic." (par. 81)

For Jung, the *I Ching* and synchronicity describe "certain remarkable manifestations of the unconscious" which are related by simultaneity but not by causality. They both, therefore, allude to a principle other than the Western scientific meaning of cause at work in the universe. Jung used the example of astrology, which he deemed "synchronicity on a grand scale," to demonstrate what he meant. Just as astrology illustrates the concept of the quality of a given moment, such as the moment of one's birth, so the *I Ching* "characterizes the moment of time" through the chance arrangement of yarrow stalks or coins that "fall into the pattern of the moment" (par. 81-84).

Again in 1935, Jung asserted a correlation between the synchronicity principle and the Chinese concept of *tao* during the Tavistock Lectures in London. In a discussion at the end of Lecture II, Jung commented on what he had learned about the ancient Chinese and Eastern thought from his collaboration with Wilhelm. As Jung explained to his audience at the time, "I use another word to designate [*tao*]. . . . I call it *synchronicity*." He continues,

> It is like this: You are standing on the sea-shore and the waves wash up an old hat, an old box, a shoe, a dead fish, and there they lie on the shore. You say: "Chance, nonsense!" The Chinese mind asks: "What does it mean that these things are together?" The Chinese mind experiments with that *being together and coming together at the right moment*. (1976d, par. 143-44)

Since the early 1920s, Jung had asserted a connection between Eastern thought and synchronicity. Specifically, he had noted the absence of cause between correlating events in Eastern science and synchronicity. He had identified the quality of the moment in which the events correspond. Just as the random casting of yarrow stalks or coins align with the wisdom of the *I Ching*, psychic and physical elements coincide in synchronicity. Jung had emphasized meaning as the reason for and goal of both the *I Ching* and

synchronicity. And he had demonstrated the essential relationship between Eastern thought and the principle of synchronicity by defining synchronicity as constituted by *meaning*, a term which Wilhelm equated with *tao*.

MODERN PHYSICS AND ACAUSALITY

Through his association with physicist Wolfgang Pauli, Jung came to understand that modern physics could support the possibility of non-causal, yet meaningful, correspondences in nature. The issue of acausality had been proven possible in modern physics by the time Pauli and Jung began discussing the theory of synchronicity. As Gebser explains, the principle of causality had broken down in the face of discoveries by Nobel Laureate Max Planck:

> As a consequence of quantum theory, physics also was compelled to abandon its venerable principle of causality. On the basis of the universal "quantum of action" discovered by Planck we now know that the basic course of events is acausal, discontinuous, and indeterminate. . . . both the constancy and the sequential consistency which represent the basic laws of conceptual thought have become to a considerable degree illusory, at least in physics. (1985, 376)

Planck discovered that energy does not flow continuously but is delivered, instead, in distinct increments of energy, which he termed "quanta." Planck's discovery marked the end of classical physics and heralded in the modern age of quantum physics.

Mansfield writes that advances in the study of quantum physics give modern physicists an advantage over Newtonian physicists who thought that "a well-defined agent invariably and predictably produces a well-defined effect" (1995, 75). At the quantum level, Mansfield says, "no underlying causal structure can account for the individual event" (90-92). Furthermore, the idea of "simultaneity" is considered relative in quantum physics since the once-fixed constraints of time and space are no longer absolutes. From the perspective of quantum theory, it would be possible for two events to occur simultaneously but without any exchange of energy. This concept, known as *nonlocality*, alludes to a deeply ingrained interconnectedness that supersedes the classical Western cause and effect model and implies another principle at work in the universe (122).

Applying the acausal principle, which quantum physics supports, to depth psychology, one may rightly conclude, says Mansfield, that although the archetype possesses the deepest meaning for the psyche, it need not be not the "cause" of a synchronistic event. Quantum mechanics allows us to see this while classical physics insists upon a cause/effect relationship (1995, 82). Mansfield asserts that the field of quantum physics offers a set of models

that when applied could help explain the possibility of acausality in synchronicity.[1]

In addition to quantum physics subatomic physics also lends support to the idea of acausality in nature. Some physicists believe the universe resembles a hologram, meaning it exhibits dimensional relatedness. In *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (1980), David Bohm discusses how the hologram "makes a photographic record of the interference pattern of light waves that have come off an object," effectively revealing how the "form and structure of the entire object may be said to be *enfolded* within each region of the photographic record." Essentially, when a particular region is highlighted, it is *unfolded,* but still provides a representation of the whole. This approach runs contrary to approaches in which the photographic lens provided "a very direct kind of sense perception of the meaning of the mechanistic order . . . by bringing about an approximate correspondence between points on the object and points on the photographic image." In other words, such an approach identified "separate elements into which the object [could] be analyzed" and gave the impression that everything might be perceived as comprised of "localized elements."

As Bohm explains, the hologram reveals what has come to be called an "implicate order," one in which "everything is enfolded into everything." It is in direct opposition to the "explicate order" which holds that "each thing lies only in its particular region of space (and time) and outside the regions belonging to other things." Bohm cautions that the hologram is but a tool to help elucidate the idea of the implicate order. But studies with light waves, sound waves, and electromagnetic fields show that they exhibit the basic principles described by quantum mechanics: discontinuity and non-locality (1980, 224-26), which are two of the conditions ascribed to synchronistic events.

More recently, physicist Joseph Cambray presented the view in *American Imago* (2002) that Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) may validate at least some aspects of synchronicity. The idea behind CAS theory is that all systems have what are called "emergent" or "self-organizing features" which tend to override expected outcomes when under unusual circumstances or when reacting to extreme conditions such as environmental threats or competition among species. According to CAS theory, "meaningful coincidences are psychological analogues that spur the evolution of both the personal and the collective psyche, organizing images and experiences into previously unimagined forms." Extreme conditions, then, warrant a reaching beyond the normal day-to-day mechanistic principle to an emergent, self-organizing principle much like the synchronicity principle. Cambray believes that CAS theory has implications for "Jung's vision of a transpersonal Self." For those living in the modern world, "emergent phenomena, especially in the human realm, can appear to ordinary, individual consciousness as meaningful, if

inexplicable coincidences." Indeed, such coincidences are thought to touch human cords of consciousness, often coinciding with the desire for meaning or purpose. For Cambray, then, "synchronicities can be explored as a form of emergence of the Self and have a central role in individuation or psychological maturation" ("Synchronicity and Emergence" 2002).

CAUSALITY AND SYNCHRONICITY

The question of whether or not some form of cause is at work in synchronicity remains a point of discussion among Jungian scholars. Tarnas and Sean Kelly assert that Jung's notion of *cause* was limited to what Aristotle termed *efficient cause,* meaning the primary impetus for the most immediate effect (Tarnas 2006c; Kelly 2006). Such a limited definition could be accounted for in the mechanistic worldview so prevalent in the West, especially in Jung's time. This narrow perspective may have prevented Jung from seriously considering other forms of causality in synchronicity (Tarnas 2006c) and/or forced Jung to use the term acausality to suggest a broader dimension of causality than accepted at that time (2006d).

A review of the causes set forth by Aristotle around 350 BCE suggests the possibility that a number of forms of cause may be present in synchronicity. Aristotle (384-322 BCE) presented what have come to be known as the "four causes" in *Metaphysics* (c. 350 BCE) and *Physics* (c. 350 BCE).

Affirming that the quest for knowledge underscores the desire to find a cause, Aristotle defined four categories of cause: (1) material cause, "that out of which a thing comes to be"; (2) formal cause, "the form or the archetype"; (3) efficient, "the primary source of change or coming to rest"; and (4) final cause, "the sense of the end or 'that for the sake of which' a thing is done."

Using the example of the creation of a bronze statue, Aristotle illustrated how each form of cause contributes in a different way to the completion of the statue. In terms of material cause, the bronze itself would be "that out of which [the statue] comes to be." The formal cause would be "the form or the archetype" upon which the statue would be based. The efficient cause could be either the artist who renders the statue and or the process(es) contributing to the construction of the statue. The final cause would include any reason(s) for which the statue is being created. In the case of the statue, the final cause includes not only the end result such as honoring the memory of an individual through having constructed the statue but also the "intermediate steps" which contributed to the desired result (*Metaphysics* V.2; *Physics* II.3). Aristotle utilized the extended example of the bronze statue to make it clear that oftentimes more than a single cause may be simultaneously in play in the same event or creative process.

Some suggest that Jung emphasized formal and final causes in synchronicities even while arguing that synchronicities are acausal. For one thing, Jung noted that synchronicity points to meaning "which is *a priori* in relation to human consciousness and apparently exists outside man." He also asserted that Plato's Forms provide a vantage point from which to view "the existence of transcendental images or models of empirical things . . . [which] we see in the phenomenal world" (1969l, par. 942). These examples align with Aristotle's definition of formal cause.

According to Kelly, the patterns, or formal causes, that arise in synchronicity are evidence of an *a priori* realm—the realm of the archetype and the source of all meaning. The final cause, or *telos*, which gives purpose to life, is present at all stages of a single synchronicity as well as at all stages in the series of events which lead to individuation (2006). As Aristotle explained, "Knowledge is the object of our inquiry, and [humans] do not think they know a thing till they have grasped the 'why'" (*Physics* II.3). If meaning is embedded in every synchronistic event, then formal and final causes would be present in synchronicity.

Mansfield agrees that it is not so much "what immediately generated the psychological event" as it is the "purpose or intent" behind the synchronicity that concerned Jung (1995, 20). As Mansfield explains,

> When Jung . . . says that the scarab beetle experience was acausal, he means no causal explanation for the event is possible (either vertically or horizontally). In this sense he parallels the quantum physicists. But, when he also says that synchronicity is an acausal expression of meaning there is an implication of a final cause of some teleology. (81)

As Jung understood synchronicity, there is an inherent "final or purposive cause," which means that there is also the possibility of "some transcendent principle" at work in the individual. Mansfield describes this as "the idea that there is some final cause operating in me, some foreknowledge of what I am meant to be." For Jung, this "final cause" was embedded in the individuation process as well as in synchronicities since they contribute to this process (20).

Because he recognized the reductionist tendencies of the scientific approach in his day, Jung could have advanced the notion of acausality to imply that there are multiple or richer dimensions beyond efficient cause. As Tarnas states:

> [For Aristotle, causes are] conditions that are necessary but not in themselves sufficient for something to exist. Cause is a condition that permits something to exist that is necessary for it to exist but in itself does not explain it because a multiplicity of causes might be necessary for something to exist. Modern sciences look at efficient cause with the recognition that matter is a material

> that is being used as part of the process of something happening, but they always leave out formal and final cause. (2006d)

In reference to Jung's scarabeid beetle example, described in chapter 1, Tarnas explains that formal cause was present in the "archetypal principle that gives the form to the dream of the golden scarab." He asserts that final cause is present in all synchronicities to the extent that they are serving the achievement of wholeness, the process of individuation, and the "healing of the split between inner and outer." Ultimately, Jung wanted people to recognize that causality is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to the more "Cartesian, mechanistic form" (2006d).

At this time, the scholarly debate continues over the degree to which causality is present (if at all) in synchronicities. Tarnas suggests that the archetypes, which are activated during synchronicity, possess a form of "subtle cause." Or perhaps some yet "unknown cause" is at work in synchronicity (2006e, 2006f). Main explores the concepts of "relative acausality," which he defines as "a cause that one can neither perceive at present nor readily believe possible, even though it may exist," and "nonnormal cause," which would include "paranormal," or "transcendent" cause (2007, 20).

Jung even used the term *cause* when referring to formal and/or final causes in synchronicities while holding the position that synchronicities were acausal occurrences:

> Whether we like it or not, we find ourselves in this embarrassing position as soon as we begin seriously to reflect on the teleological processes in biology or to investigate the compensatory function of the unconscious, not to speak of trying to explain the phenomenon of synchronicity. Final causes, twist them how we will, postulate a *foreknowledge of some kind*. It is certainly not a knowledge that could be connected with the ego, and hence not a conscious knowledge as we know it, but rather a self-subsistent "unconscious" knowledge. (1969l, par. 931)

In postulating *foreknowledge* in synchronicity, Jung alludes to formal cause and *telos*, or final cause, since both forms of cause influence the individual's trajectory towards individuation. So when Jung claimed that synchronicity is an acausal principle, Jung probably meant that *efficient cause* is absent in synchronicity. For Jung, all phenomena had been reduced by the prevailing mechanistic worldview to simplistic cause/effect relationships. Jung challenged modern thinkers to open to the possibility of something beyond such a relationship.

NOTE

1. Mansfield cautions that neither relativity nor quantum physics offers "a complete understanding of synchronicity." However, together they can help people shed their absolutist views of causality as well as space and time in relation to synchronicity (1995, 81).

Chapter Six

The Miracle and Its Skeptics

Adherents of the three Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) would agree that the annunciations recorded in their holy books qualify as miracles. Yet the miracle as typically defined—God's supernatural intervention into the natural world—defies scientific reason and rational thought. So it is not surprising that the concept of the miracle, much like the theory of synchronicity, has drawn its share of skeptics over the years. While it is not within the scope of this study to conduct an exhaustive investigation into the criticisms surrounding alleged miracles, it is important that general criticisms about the miraculous be considered since they appear to align with criticisms lodged against synchronicity, thereby alluding to a possible correlation between the two.

OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSES

Faber raises some interesting questions about the miraculous and its similarity to synchronicity as he considers them essentially interchangeable. Using the case study of a woman named "Karen"—who claims to have been given the unique ability to perceive angels and miracles—Faber asserts that a belief in such events only fuels an "egocentric position" and leads the individual to assume "special, inspired knowledge" (2004, 167).

As with the concept of synchronicity, philosopher Robert Todd Carroll discounts the belief in miracles and asserts that no modern historian would think of including an account of a miracle in a serious work:

> Only those who cater to the superstitious and credulous, such as the *National Enquirer* and a good portion of the rest of the mass media, would even think of reporting an alleged miracle without taking a very skeptical attitude towards it.

> No scholarly journal today would consider an author rational if he or she were to sprinkle reports of miracles throughout a treatise. (*The Skeptics Dictionary* 1994-2008, s.v. "miracle")

According to Carroll, the bearer of the miracle story needs to find a good tabloid to which to peddle it. Indeed, a scholar's rationality (and no doubt his or her sanity) would be called into question if she were to suggest the occurrence of miracles be considered a viable concept of the modern world.

Carroll asserts that those who believe in miracles are not only irrational but also possibly unbalanced and certainly swayed by groupthink. To account for what some people believe to be miracles, Carroll claims they have been victims of a "collective hallucination." The conditions under which such a hallucination is likely to occur include "heightened emotional situations, especially among the religiously devoted." He further suggests that those who fervently desire to see a miracle often produce it themselves, perhaps by staring at an object until it becomes what they had hoped to see—whether it be the Virgin Mary's face in a cloud or her presence in the grotto at Lourdes (1994-2008, s.v. "miracle"). Interestingly, Carroll lodged similar objections to synchronicity, arguing that those who perceive meaningful coincidences are mentally disturbed (s.v. "synchronicity").

Carroll identifies "heightened emotional situations" as one of the conditions under which people claim to experience the miraculous. Although characterizing this state as frenzied (as in the collective hallucination of the masses), Carroll makes a significant comparison between the miracle and synchronicity without meaning to do so since both events tend to occur under heightened emotional states (1994-2008 s.v. "miracle"). As noted in chapter 1, Jung observed that synchronistic events often occurred during heightened, emotionally-charged situations: "Every emotional state produces an alteration of consciousness . . . a certain narrowing of consciousness and a corresponding strengthening of the unconscious." Jung reasoned that during such highly charged states a sort of "psychic override" takes place which allows for the expression of the activated, and often numinous, archetype (1969l, par. 856). The result of such an experience is the transformation of the individual.

Saint Paul's religious conversion experience on the road to Damascus was characterized by such a state. When known as Saul, the persecutor of Christians, his very presence struck fear in the heart of early believers. Yet Saul firmly believed he was fulfilling his duty to God under Jewish law by sending heretics to jail for punishment. Only the searing light of heaven (and a vision of the resurrected Jesus) could break through such a dogmatic religious fervor. As a result of this highly emotional experience, Paul experienced an alteration of consciousness which enabled him to recognize the risen Christ and his true occupation, which was to spread the gospel to the Gentiles

(Acts 9:1-9; Acts 22:1-16 JSB). Indeed, the heightened emotional state often provides context for the miracle as well as the synchronicity.

Approaching the concept of the miraculous from another angle, Carroll cites the "law of miracles" developed by Mathematician John Littlewood (1885-1977) to explain that most people can count on experiencing what might be termed a miracle about once a month. According to Carroll, Littlewood "defined a miracle as something deemed to have special significance and occurring with a probability of one in a million." Since the sighting of the Virgin Mary by Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, Carroll estimates a healing rate of about one in three million for those seeking the Virgin's mercy. Such statistics suggest that the individual has a greater chance of dying from "flesh-eating bacteria"[1] than of being healed at Lourdes.

Interestingly, Jung discussed the issue of miraculous cures, even making reference to Lourdes. Jung asserted that through the process of psychotherapy, the analysand often comes into contact with archetypal elements which cluster as synchronicities. Such events may result in the nearly miraculous or the miraculous. Jung could not tell which because, as he admitted, he did not yet know how the end result of a synchronicity is achieved. Jung also acknowledged that similar archetypal elements manifest in "numinous" places, such as Lourdes, where "Mary appears as a kind of rebirth-giving Earth mother." The implication is that the believer who goes to Lourdes and comes into contact with the archetype of the Mother Mary may have a healing experience just like the analysand who comes into contact with archetypal contents in the course of therapy (499-500).

As noted, Littlewood "defined a miracle as something deemed to have special significance and occurring with a probability of one in a million." However, his calculation is not precise enough to distinguish an ordinary event that might "feel" special from an event that is "deemed to have special significance." Who is to say that miracles cannot occur with the probability of one in three million, instead, suggesting that the occurrences at Lourdes are miracles?

COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE OR MASS HALLUCINATION?

Yet there is another issue to which Carroll alludes which is common to the miracle and synchronicity experience, the collective experience which Carroll associates with the term "mass hallucination." The idea that a miracle might be experienced collectively, and need not be considered a "mass hallucination," may be viewed in a number of biblical narratives. The story of Jesus's feeding of the five thousand serves as an example. A crowd had followed Jesus to an out of the way place to seek physical and spiritual healing. As evening approached, Jesus's disciples urged him to send the

people into town so that they could buy food. While the biblical account does not describe the group of five thousand, it is likely they were the poor, sick, and marginalized since Jesus was known to minister to the less fortunate.

The Matthew account says that Jesus dissuaded his disciples from sending the crowd away: "There is no need for them to go: give them something to eat yourselves." The disciples replied, "All we have with us is five loaves and two fish." Jesus instructed the disciples to gather the people and have them sit down on the grass. Then he demonstrated how to proceed with feeding such a large crowd:

> He took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing. And breaking the loaves he handed them to his disciples, who gave them to the crowds. They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected the scraps left over, twelve baskets full. (Matt. 14:15-21 NJB)

He simply said the blessing (thanking God for the food), broke the bread, and then passed it to his disciples who passed it to the people. Everyone ate, and everyone was filled.

While a skeptic might argue that feeding five thousand men (plus women and children) with five loaves and two fish is impossible, he or she would miss the point of the miracle. It matters little if the loaves and fish continued to reproduce themselves as they were passed along or if the people gathered before Jesus contributed their own meager scraps to the baskets that came their way. The point is that they were touched by the grace of God. If the people had been sent off to the town to buy food at dusk, many would have gone hungry that night. But collectively, they were fed both physically and spiritually—that is the miracle. Clearly, those events which are collectively experienced as miracles hold meaning for the group and need not be considered examples of mass hallucination.

Just as miracles, collective synchronicities are possible and need not be considered examples of mass hallucination, as a classroom of literature students discovered during a lecture by Professor Dennis Hock in the spring of 2006. Hock (who was skeptical about synchronicity until this experience) happened to be lecturing on the importance of maintaining the aesthetic of the poem. To emphasize his point, he began in some detail to compare the scrutinizing of the poem to the clinical dissection of a hummingbird. As he drew the comparison, the students let out a collective gasp. A hummingbird had appeared at the classroom window, flitting about in its natural glory, as though summoned to illustrate the aesthetic value of the poem in defiance of clinical analysis.[2]

Although some may argue that the miracle narrative and the synchronicity account are examples of mass hallucination, there are at least two main reasons why they probably are not. First, the experiences were not merely

exciting. They were meaningful for those present as evidenced by the narratives related above. Second, the meaning in each instance extended beyond the moment to something greater. In the case of the feeding of the five thousand, the narrative demonstrated something beyond the magical distribution of food. Rather, it manifested the collective generosity among those present. In the case of the hummingbird account, the appearance of the hummingbird astonished people in that moment and certainly reinforced the lecture topic of the day, but it also pointed to something beyond a memorable classroom experience to the greater ideal of beauty for beauty's sake.

JUNG'S APPROACH TO MIRACLES

Unlike Faber, Jung did not dismiss the validity of miracles, nor did he view those who believe in miracles as neurotic or guilty of ego inflation. Jung viewed miracles as psychic realities and, in some cases, a return to an earlier state of human consciousness. In a discussion of symbol-formation and the coming into consciousness of particular archetypal images, Jung mentioned the emergence of the Roman Catholic "dogma of the Immaculate Conception" and the "Assumption of the Virgin" as the reappearance of ancient archetypal figures. Because of their archetypal grounding, Jung concluded that miraculous events such as the visions of the Virgin "are genuine and legitimate experiences springing from the unconscious psychic life of the people" (1969f, par. 469).

Jung also asserted that much of the disagreement over the validity of miracles arises from the focus on the physical as the sole reality. Jung believed that if the idea of the "physical" were removed from statements such as "Christ was born as the son of a virgin," then there would be no dispute since the "'physical' is not the only criterion of truth: there are also *psychic* truths which can neither be explained nor proved nor contested in any physical way." Biblical truths would fit this category. If there is a general belief in a particular religious tradition that the Red Sea was divided so that the Hebrews could escape the Egyptians, then such a belief is a recorded fact even though it cannot be explained physically. Jung called these kinds of facts *psychic facts* and claimed they "[could] not be contested and need no proof" because "they refer without exception to things that cannot be established as physical facts" (1969a, par. 553-54).

Jung did, however, concede that humans desire to witness miracles. He came to this conclusion while reviewing J. P. Rhine's ESP experiments. Jung noted that the ESP experiments tended to elicit a peculiar reaction from test subjects:

> The questions set by the ESP experiment have an emotional effect right from the start since they postulate something unknowable as being potentially

> knowable and in that way take the possibility of a miracle seriously into account. This, regardless of the subject's skepticism, immediately appeals to his unconscious readiness to witness a miracle. (1969l, par. 848)

It was Jung's belief that such experiments appealed to an "unconscious readiness to witness a miracle." He viewed this phenomenon as a human proclivity towards "primitive superstition" (par. 848) and an indication that the more primitive mind tended toward concretism.

In addition, Jung argued that the miraculous must be viewed differently today than in the past. In earlier times, the seemingly impossible event was called a miracle. However, the Rhine experiments confirmed Jung's belief "that space and time, and hence causality, are factors that can be eliminated, with the result that acausal phenomena, otherwise called miracles, appear possible." In other words, the seemingly impossible used to be called a miracle because there was no known principle in nature to account for it. Once Jung identified what he called the *acausal principle* in nature, he was able to develop a new explanation for what was once called a miracle—his theory of synchronicity[3] (1969h, par. 995).

Jung's psychology provides a plausible approach to the idea of the miracle in the modern world. It may be that the concept of the miracle has been replaced by the concept of synchronicity as human consciousness has developed. Yet Jung's is not the only viable view. Contemporary theology may provide another vantage point from which to view the miraculous in general and annunciation in particular while leaving the concept of synchronicity undiminished.

NOTES

1. This statistic is from a segment entitled "Easy Money" from the PBS series *Frontline*.
2. Dennis Hock shared this experience in a personal interview in the spring of 2006.
3. Paul Bishop calls synchronicity a "quasi-miraculous phenomenon." As noted in Jung's scarabeid beetle example from chapter 1, Jung found his analysand gripped by "Cartesian philosophy," which Bishop describes as "a highly polished Cartesian rationalism with an impeccably 'geometrical' idea of reality." Bishop reasons that Jung's heightened concern over his analysand's rational mindset reveals Jung's preoccupation with the "Romantic yearning for totality" (2000, 18-21). As Bishop notes, "synchronicity involves the possibility of intellectual intuition and the yearning for the Absolute—two key motifs of the Romantic reaction and response to the divided world of mind and body in Descartes and *phenomenon* and *noumenon* in Kant" (377).

Chapter Seven

The Challenges of the Miraculous

Although many object to the concept of the miracle as an event in the modern world, the miracle remains a basic tenet of most faiths. According to John T. Driscoll, the word *miracle* comes from the Latin term *miraculum* (from *mirari*), which means "to wonder." When the Bible was translated from the Latin Vulgate into the Greek, the terms *terata*, *dynameis*, and *semeia* were used in different places to express the nuances of the Christian miracle (The Catholic Encyclopedia 1907-1922).

First, the term *terata*, meaning "wonders," was employed to designate those miracles which seemed to defy cause, usually for one of the following reasons: (1) the cause is unknown; (2) the effect does not appear related to the cause; (3) the effect is beyond what should be expected given the cause; or (4) the effect follows too quickly upon the heels of the cause. The term *dynameis,* which means "power," was used to emphasize God's ability (or the ability of his creatures) to subdue nature: (1) the event is powerful enough to go against the course of nature; (2) it violates the laws of nature; (3) the event implies God's might because it surpasses nature's power; or (4) the event suggests the employment of powerful creatures or instruments beyond nature to bring about the event. The term *sēmeion*, meaning "sign," was used to emphasize miracles in which the coming together of ideas and events symbolized and pointed to the supernatural world and God (Driscoll).

From the view of Catholic theology, then, there are three very different ways to view miracles. First, the miracle may occur, seemingly absent cause (or at least absent sufficient cause). In this case, either a divine or an unknown cause would be assumed responsible for the miracle. Second, miracles may be understood to occur when nature is subdued or overpowered by either God or His angels. Third, miracles may simply be the constellation of ideas and events that signify and/or point to an eternal truth and/or God.

Commenting on the veracity of miracles, Driscoll explains that for Catholics miracles are "material" facts. As such, they have been seen and/or experienced "like any natural fact." Catholicism teaches that the ability to discern a miracle is "a rational act of the mind, and is simply the application of the principle of causality with the methods of induction." Therefore, the individual either experiences and discerns a miracle personally or accepts the testimony of a credible witness that a miracle has occurred. Just as historical events are deemed factual because one accepts the historian's account, says Driscoll, so are miraculous events deemed factual because one accepts a witness's account (which could be in the form of a written account such as the scripture).

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TERM MIRACLE

David Corner, who developed the entry of the term *miracle* for the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2006), admits that the word is difficult to define because of widely divergent worldviews (e.g., the theist view in contrast to the naturalist view), the credibility of miracles (e.g., accuracy of witnesses and sources), and the variety of interpretations of the term over the years. At its most basic level, Corner explains, the term *miracle* simply means "to wonder".

Developments in the translation and usage of the term over time have created space for a broad debate over what constitutes a miracle. Corner summarizes a number of perspectives, but only three are mentioned here to demonstrate how a shift in definition has resulted in such a serious debate. St. Augustine (354-430) proposed in *City of God* that miracles do not defy nature but only seem to since human knowledge of nature is limited. Aligning in part with Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-1274) explained in *Summa Contra Gentiles* that miracles do not defy nature but rather suggested that they might stretch the boundaries of nature since all of nature is subject to God's will.

Later, David Hume (1711-1776) proposed in *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* that miracles must both defy natural law and express divine will ("Hume's Argument").[1] The notion that miracles defy the laws of nature became an accepted belief despite the challenges presented by some who like T. H. Huxley (1894-1963) argued that it is paradoxical to suggest that natural law could be violated by a miracle since we can only observe nature and the miracle occurs within nature ("Conceptual Difficulties").

As this brief overview of Corner's discussion suggests, the concept of the miracle shifted over time from the idea of the miracle as "a wonder" to the miracle as an event that defies the laws of nature. It appears that with time the argument over the degree to which the miracle may or may not interrupt

nature has trumped the idea of the miracle as a wonder. Yet the concept of the miracle as a wonder may yet be excavated from the layers of scientific, philosophical, psychological, and theological speculation which have accumulated since Augustine's day.

MIRACLES AND THE LAWS OF NATURE

Many traditional Christians have relied on the writings of C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), popular twentieth-century Christian writer and professor of English Literature, for much of their understanding of miracles. In *Miracles*, Lewis defines the term *miracle* as "an interference with Nature by supernatural power." He suggests that "unless there exists, in addition to Nature, something else which we may call the supernatural, there can be no miracles." At the same time, Lewis uses the term *interference* to express the idea of some kind of activity that disrupts the laws of nature. Also, he allows for the possibility that something "in addition" to nature or natural law may account for what "we may call the supernatural" (1974, 5).

Based upon his understanding of the miracle and its relationship to nature, Lewis summarizes (what he calls) the Three Laws of Nature. First, Lewis claims that understanding how nature works does not explain *why* it works. Given this fact, Lewis argues that there is no solid basis for believing that nature must continue to observe the same set of laws indefinitely. Second, Lewis maintains that natural laws are based on averages, so what people call the impossible is more likely the improbable. In other words, natural law explains the majority but not the minority (or the anomaly) occurrence.

Third, Lewis explains that mathematics demonstrates the existence of necessary truths, which are based on the concept of balance, one half balancing out the other half. Yet as Lewis also notes, "every prediction of what will happen in a given instance is made under the proviso 'other things being equal' or 'if there are no interferences.'" Therefore, any interference would affect the outcome of a given experiment. "Any agency, natural or supernatural," says Lewis, that has not been accounted for will change the outcome of the experiment. If one takes into account "the whole real universe" (which includes what we know and what we do not yet apprehend), then one is likely to notice interruptions in the course of events in the natural world (1974, 88-93).

LEWIS AND JUNG ON MIRACLES

It is important to note how close Lewis's account of miracles comes to Jung's account of synchronicities. First, Lewis asserts that no one knows if the "laws" of nature will continue to work as they have previously since we

do not know *why* they work as they do.[2] As noted chapters 1 and 5, Jung posited the concept of acausality to account for why synchronicity appears to defy the Western scientific method. Like Lewis, Jung made the point that natural law may not be fully understood. While Jung believed quantum physics could help account for the missing principle in synchronicity, it is certainly fair to suggest that Lewis, too, was open to the possibility that something else within nature might account for the miracle.

Second, both Jung and Lewis appear to agree that the Western scientific model can only account for that which falls within the normal range of expected outcomes. Any outcome which falls outside that range is considered an anomaly. Third, Lewis suggests a possible "natural" or "supernatural" intervention in the case of the miraculous. Positing what he called a "fourth" factor in nature to account for what occurs in synchronicity, Jung would not have been willing to accept Lewis's potential "supernatural" intervention. However, Jung might have agreed with Lewis on a "natural" intervention.

While suggesting a possible "supernatural intervention," Lewis also claimed that miracles do not "break" the laws of nature. As Lewis understood it, a miracle is the introduction of an additional creative element into the course of nature, something which adds a new dimension to the existing pattern of life. Using the example of the Annunciation of Mary, Lewis concluded that the Virgin Birth does not break the laws of nature. Nor would any event in which God introduced an added element break the laws of nature. For Lewis, "The divine art of miracle is not an art of suspending the pattern to which events conform but of feeding new events into that pattern" (1974, 94-95).[3]

One might argue that running parallel to Lewis's view of the "divine art of miracle" is the divine art of synchronicity since Jung viewed synchronicities as "*creative acts*," describing them "as the continuous creation of a pattern that exists from all eternity" (1969l, par. 967). Although Jung asserts such creative acts occur spontaneously within nature and Lewis believes God introduces a creative element into nature, they are in agreement that there is an eternal pattern from which such acts emerge.

CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY AND THE MIRACULOUS

Contemporary theology may provide the most satisfying and accurate account of the miracle. Paul Tillich (1886-1965), one of the most influential theologians of the twentieth century, asserts that the term *miracle* has lost its meaning in the popular definitions which take into account the laws of nature. He also notes (what he calls) the "overabundance" of miracle stories which have gone unsubstantiated and suggests this may be a reason to avoid

the use of the term altogether. However, he admits that there really is no other word that would serve as a suitable substitute. He set out to correct misconceptions about the term in order to make it understandable and useful (1951, 115).

Tillich explains that the Greek word *sēmeion*, meaning "sign," best aligns with "the religious meaning of the miracles." However, the term *sign* alone cannot account for the meaning of the miraculous since a miracle is also an event. For this reason, he suggests that the term *event* be used to accompany the word *sign* to distinguish the miracle from other occurrences. In other words, the miracle is a *sign-event*, "that which produces astonishment." It is not "a supranatural interference which destroys the natural structure of events." In other words, there is no need for the laws of nature to be violated for a miraculous or astonishing event to occur and deliver meaning (1951, 115).

Tillich approached the subject of miracles from the perspective of the development of human consciousness in history. He asserts that "the original naïve religious consciousness accepts astounding stories in connection with divine manifestation without elaborating a supranaturalistic theory of miracles [while] rationalistic periods make the negation of natural laws the main point in miracle stories." By the time the apocryphal Gospels were written, "there were no checks against absurdity." The shift from recognizing the divine in sign-events was complete. Now the focus was on the feelings evoked from having one's rational mind shaken by antirational occurrences. Tillich believes this shift has influenced the religious view towards the miracle ever since (1951, 115). This also suggests that people miss the miraculous because they are expecting a magical intervention which defies natural law.

Tillich describes three aspects which must be present for an event is to be deemed a miracle. First, it must be an astonishing event that doesn't violate the laws of nature. Second, it must point to "the mystery of being, expressing its relation to us in a definite way." Third, it must be "received as a sign-event in the ecstatic experience." Only those examples of the miraculous in the New Testament that emphasize the astonishing and revelatory power, that point to the mystery of being, and that are received in ecstasy[4] are miracles in the truest sense of the word (1951, 117).

MIRACLES AND SYNCHRONICITIES

The miracles of Jesus, Tillich notes, are not demonstrated to reveal his messianic power but to show his participation "in the misery of the human situation" and his attempt to "overcome it when the occasion offers itself" (1957, 161). Tillich argues that St. Paul emphasized this very point, but his teaching was lost in the ensuing years as the notion of supernatural interfer-

ence accompanied traditional rationalist theology. According to Tillich, "miracles cannot be interpreted in terms of a supranatural interference in natural processes" or else God would be divided against Himself (116).

The insistence that miracles must defy the laws of nature prevents people from seeing the miraculous in the everyday occurrence. According to Tillich, it is unnecessary for the structures of nature to be violated in order for the "mystery of being" to become manifest, nor should the "rational structure of the mind" be violated by the miracle or sign-event. If the individual understands these two points, then it is possible to come to an understanding of the doctrine of the miracle. The doctrine of the miracle, says Tillich, consists of "the sign-events in which the mystery of being gives itself consist in special constellations of elements of reality in correlation with special constellations of elements of the mind" (1951, 116-17). The idea that physical and psychic elements constellate in such a way as to reveal to the individual the "mystery of being" is not only true of the miracle but also of synchronicity.

NOTES

1. While he asserted that a miracle, in order to qualify as miraculous, must defy natural law and express divine will, Hume provided a number of reasons for being skeptical of miracles: (1) not enough people who have "unquestioned good sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion" have experienced miracles; (2) when events do not align with common experiences, then people assume such events are miracles; (3) the wonder connected to events people do not understand leads them to believe they have witnessed the miraculous; (4) stories of miracles tend to be propagated among the ignorant; and (5) in matters of religion, miracles are used to support particular religions in order to "prove" other religions wrong (Beauchamp 2000, 88-99).

2. Hume notes that uniform experience counts as fact only so long as it remains unchallenged by an experience that does not conform. As Hume suggests, the wise person will consider and weigh new evidence as it is presented (Beauchamp 2000, 84-86).

3. Lewis attempts to semantically sidestep "the idea that a conception with no human sperm suspends the usual laws of nature" (R. Tarnas, pers. comm.)

4. Tillich defines ecstasy as "the state of mind in which reason is beyond itself, that is, beyond its subject-object structure." He also states that no revelation occurs without the recipient being in a state of ecstasy. Finally, he distinguishes ecstasy from *enthusiasm,* which Tillich describes as the "state of having the god within one's self or of being within the god" (1951, 112).

III

Correspondences

Chapter Eight

Psyche and Soul

Synchronicities and annunciations may be described as constellated expressions of eternal principles because they are based (in part) upon the assumption of *a priori* knowledge. Plato's "theory of ideas" has, no doubt, influenced this assumption in the West. Tarnas explains that by "ideas" Plato did not mean simple thoughts held by the individual but was referring, instead, to ideas that "do not depend on human thought, but exist entirely in their own right" (1991, 10). Bertrand Russell states that in Plato's view, the very essence of ideas rests in a pre-existent, transcendent world, "a supra-sensible world, more real than the common world of sense, the unchangeable world of ideas, which alone gives to the world of sense whatever pale reflection of reality may belong to it" (1997, 92).

Plato explains this concept in *Timeaus:* "The world has been framed in the likeness of that which is apprehended by reason and mind, and is unchangeable" (360 BCE). According to Plato, this world and its inhabitants are but a copy of a master design. The unchangeable not only precedes this world but also embodies the eternal properties upon which this world and its inhabitants have been realized (360 BCE).

While Plato's Forms would become more apparent in Jung's later work, Immanuel Kant's perspective on forms and categories had a much greater impact upon Jung's understanding of archetypes during the early and middle years of his career. The "Cartesian-Kantian philosophical framework" of the modern world led Jung, during his early to middle years, to hold that *a priori* forms or archetypes were only psychological *a priori* realities. However, later in life as his understanding of synchronicity developed, Jung came to believe that archetypes transcend the human psyche. Through his observation and study of synchronicities, Jung began to see, as Tarnas notes, the "arche-

types as autonomous patterns of meaning that inform both psyche and matter, providing a bridge between inner and outer" (1991, 57).

PSYCHE AND SOUL AS INTERCHANGEABLE TERMS

Another fundamental aspect of Plato's influence on Jungian psychology may be seen in the interchangeable use of the terms *soul* and *psyche* to suggest the eternal in the individual. While assumed in Christianity, the interchangeable use of the terms in Jungian psychology sets it apart from other branches of psychology which tend to define the term *psyche* as *mind*, thereby reducing psychology in general to a science of the mind instead of a means for healing the soul.

The present concern, however, is not over the loss of focus on the soul in contemporary psychology, but rather on the correlation which may be drawn between Christianity and Jungian psychology in their recognition of the psyche and soul as interchangeable terms. In choosing to view the terms in this way, Jungian psychology emphasizes the healing of the soul through the process of individuation in the same way the healing of the soul in Christianity occurs through the redemptive process.

While in many branches of modern psychology the term *psyche* is considered the equivalent of the *mind*, Jung preferred the use of the term *psyche* in the Platonic sense. In equating *psyche* with *soul* instead of *mind*, Jung was able to explore not only the conscious aspects of the psyche but also the instinctual features, symbolic elements, and spiritual and religious aspects. Jung also used the term *psyche* to describe psychic functions. However, it is clear that Jung preferred to remain open to the spiritual possibilities that could present themselves when the term *psyche* is used in the Platonic sense.

Jung challenged people to recognize that the psyche, which extends into the unconscious, is "divinely created" for the specific purpose of refinement in the service of the divine. In a letter he wrote in his later years (1955), Jung makes reference to Isaiah 48:10: "Look, I have purchased you, but not for silver, I have chosen you out of the cauldron of affliction" (JSB). In this passage, Yahweh proclaims that He has paid the soul's ransom and has delivered the soul, refined, from its afflictions. As Jung states,

> The depth of the psyche, the unconscious, is not made by man but is divinely created nature, which should on no account be reviled by man even though it causes him the greatest difficulties. Its fire, which "refines" us "in the furnace of affliction," is according to Isaiah 48:10 the divine will itself. (quoted in Adler 1975, 236-37)

Jung emphasized that the individual must endure the "furnace of affliction" in order to refine the psyche. Jung called this process of refinement, *individuation*.[1]

NOTE

1. Robert H. Hopcke defines Jung's *process of individuation* as "the tendency of the psyche to move toward wholeness and balance" (1999, 63). The goal of this process when "consciously pursued," says Daryl Sharp, "leads to the realization of the self as a psychic reality greater than the ego" (69). For Jung, the goal of analysis was to help the analysand recognize the "relationship between the individual ego complex and the archetype of the Self, an archetype of wholeness and completion" (63).

Chapter Nine

Symbols of Spiritual Wholeness

Evidence from the Second Temple period suggests that Judaism based its ranking of heavenly beings or a heavenly court upon what they had learned from the Persians and Babylonians while in captivity. The concept of the celestial hierarchy was readily adapted by Christianity. As early as the latter half of the second century, Athenagoras suggested a hierarchy of angels when he claimed angels were placed "over the things created and ordered by [God]; so that God may have the universal and general providence of the whole, while the particular parts are provided for by the angels appointed over them" (ca. 177, 142). In the early third century, Clement of Alexandria asserted a hierarchy of angels when he claimed those angels nearer in place to God are purer (ca. 200, 524). He also taught that the hierarchy of the church mirrored the hierarchy of the angels and the celestial realm.

THE CELESTIAL HIERARCHY AS A SYMBOL OF SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS

Christian Neoplatonist Pseudo-Dionysius of Syria (c. 500 CE)[1] may have constructed the most complete model of the celestial hierarchy although it would not be wholly adopted by the Catholic Church until the thirteenth century. His treatise *The Celestial Hierarchy* appeared first in Greek and was translated into Latin in 860 CE. In his work, Dionysius defines the unifying principle of hierarchy at work in the heavens.[2] Dionysius also describes a system consisting of three distinct levels of heavenly beings in which all are of equal importance, though their individual natures, tasks, and ranks are unique. While these hierarchies consist of three distinct levels of "celestial essences," they share a common goal. In this passage, Dionysius describes what he means by a celestial hierarchy:

> What is meant [by hierarchy] is a certain perfect arrangement, an image of the beauty o[f] God which sacredly works out the mysteries of its own enlightenment in the orders and levels of understanding of the hierarchy. . . . Indeed for every member of the hierarchy, perfection consists in this, that it is uplifted to imitate God as far as possible. (quoted in Luibheid 1987, 154)

According to Dionysius, every celestial being, no matter what its rank, has a part in "the supreme cause," and a purpose—to illuminate those on the level directly beneath them so that they might then rise to a higher level of understanding (table 9.1).

Each level of this hierarchy is believed to direct divine energy to the level just below it and to exude an image of God that may be comprehended by those at the next lower level. Dionysius illustrates the necessity for the levels through the example of Moses and the burning bush: "Even Moses did not have a direct vision of God but rather a vision adapted to his level of perception." In reviewing humanity's relationship to the hierarchy, one notes that humans are closest to the Level Three and most distanced from Level One. If one follows Dionysius's logic, one sees that the individual's vision of God would most likely emanate from the angels of Level Three since they are responsible for revelation and carrying messages from on high.[3] As Steven Chase explains, Dionysius's "focus was thus primarily on the angels as theophanies or illuminations of divine attributes" (2002, 26).

Others envisaged variations of the celestial hierarchy. Gregory the Great (c. 540-604), following Dionysius's lead, developed a similar hierarchy. However, his began with the lowest order of angel and ascended to the highest, in an attempt to reflect the soul's ascent to heaven. He also identified correspondences between the angelic and earthly realms, asserting that the ministry of the angels could be contemplated and imitated by the individual.

Table 9.1. The Celestial Hierarchy as Imagined by Psuedo-Dionysius

Level One:		
Seraphim (Fire)	Cherubim (Wisdom)	Thrones (Closest to God)
Level Two:		
Dominions (Justice)	Powers (Courage)	Authorities (Harmony)
Level Three		
Principalities (Order)	Archangels (Unity)	Angels (Revelation, Message)

Pseudo-Dionysius's view of the celestial hierarchy. Author's chart. Based upon the hierarchy described in *The Complete Works of Pseudo-Dionysius*. Trans. Luibheid (1987, 161-70).

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179 CE) recorded a vision of the celestial hierarchy as well, though hers reflects the planetary orbit:

> The firmament has a revolving orbit in imitation of the power of God which has neither beginning nor end—just as no one can see where the encircling wheel begins or ends. For the throne of God is his eternity in which he alone sits, and all the living sparks are rays of his splendour [*sic*], just as the rays of the sun proceed from the sun itself. (quoted in Carver 1990, 95)

From this perspective, there is no beginning or end to God. The "rays of his splendour" are his angels. In her vision, the angels proceed from God just as the rays of the sun so that his glory will radiate outward and shine upon all creation (96). In the twelfth century Alan of Lille (d. 1202-1203 CE) developed a hierarchy of note, containing angel levels and anti-angel levels, which he called the *exordo*. Apparently, his interest was in showing the struggles faced by humans who have access to God's angels but who are often confronted by the temptations brought by Satan's angels (Chase 2002, 30-31). The thirteenth-century Rose windows of Chartres Cathedral in France place Christ at the center surrounded by biblical scenes and figures which reinforce the notion of a circular hierarchy. The unique labyrinth (figure 9.1), too, which is embedded in the floor of the Chartres Cathedral suggests the pilgrimage of the believer whose life's goal is to reach the center.

In the thirteenth century, Neoplatonist and Franciscan theologian Bonaventure (1221-1274 CE) cultivated the idea of an interior hierarchy, something he referred to as the "hierarchic soul" with Christ as the "supreme hierarch." The angels of this hierarchy "provide a comprehensive map or method that reflects Christ and categorizes the spiritual paths by which we contemplate divinity" (Chase 2002, 28). Bonaventure explains this concept in chapter 4 of *The Soul's Journey to God*:[4]

> Our soul is also marked with nine levels. . . . In the human soul the first three of these levels pertain to human nature; the next three, to effort, and the last three, to grace. Having attained these, the soul, by entering into itself, enters the heavenly Jerusalem, where beholding the choirs of angels, it sees in them God. (quoted in Cousins 1978, 90)

While the three levels depicted by Dionysius are evident in the nine choirs of angels, Bonaventure's contribution was in aligning the progression of the soul with the nine choirs and perceiving it as an inner journey. It is in the perfecting of the soul, through grace (since effort can only take the soul so far), that the soul enters perfect beatitude, joining the choirs of angels through whom the image of God is expressed (90).

The notion of the universe as a reflection of the celestial hierarchy culminated in the literary treatise, *The Divine Comedy,* by Dante Alghieri (1275-

Figure 9.1. Danner, John. Labyrinth. Based upon the labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral. Ink on paper, 2012.

1321 CE). Dante had borrowed from those who had come before him, including Pseudo-Dionysius, Hildegard, Alan of Lille, and Bonaventure, especially as these reflect the shift away from the more traditional laddered hierarchy to the concept of concentric circles (as described by Hildegard). Perhaps the work of Thomas Gallus (d. 1246 CE) most influenced this concentric conception, however, for Gallus had defined the celestial hierarchy as

> a certain holy assembly representing divine beauty within itself and exercising special activities commensurate with its own virtue in accordance with the measure of power and knowledge of its holy preeminence, and made similar, according to its possibility, to its own origin, namely, God. . . . Thus within the

> order of a hierarchy, the lesser orders are purged, illuminated, and perfected by the superior orders. (1238/2002, 224)

Like Gallus, Dante imagines a cosmos of three geocentric, corresponding, graduated planes of afterlife—the Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso—in *The Divine Comedy* (1321).

It is in Paradiso, however, that one finds Dante's description of the highest of the celestial realms, Empyrean, where the cherubim and seraphim pulse in fevered chant around the Throne. It is here, too, that the concept of hierarchy culminates, for it is within Dante's vision in the last canto of Paradiso (XXXIII.85-90) that one encounters a metaphor that captures its meaning:

> I saw within Its depth how It conceives / all things in a single volume bound by Love, / of which the universe is the scattered leaves; /substance, accident, and their relations / so fused that all I say could do no more / than yield a glimpse of that bright revelation. (1466)

Dante compares the celestial realm to a book. Its scattered leaves are the materials and events of history, which have been drawn together and bound in a single volume. The cherubim and seraphim, faces flaming, surround the Throne of God beating their wings rhythmically and perpetually (figure 9.2), appearing almost as one, drawn like bees to the hive by Divine Light (XXXI.1-15).

But there is more to consider. Returning to the lines "substance, accident, and their relations / so fused that all I say could do no more / than yield a glimpse of that bright revelation" (XXXIII.88-90), Dante asserts that try as he might he does not have the words to express but a glimmer of what he experienced (1321, 1466). He reiterates this sense in lines XXXIII.122: "But oh how much my words miss my conception" (1467). As Dante's work reveals, the concept of the celestial hierarchy between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries had become much more than a means for describing the organizational structure of the heavenly realm and the angels' relationship to humans. It had become a metaphor for the interior life of the believer as the soul strives toward unity and perfection—which is found ultimately in the presence of God.

THE MANDALA AS THE SYMBOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WHOLENESS

The celestial hierarchies of the West—especially those imagined by Hildegard, Bonaventure, and Dante—may correspond to the concept of the mandala, an ancient form of organized expression used to symbolize wholeness in

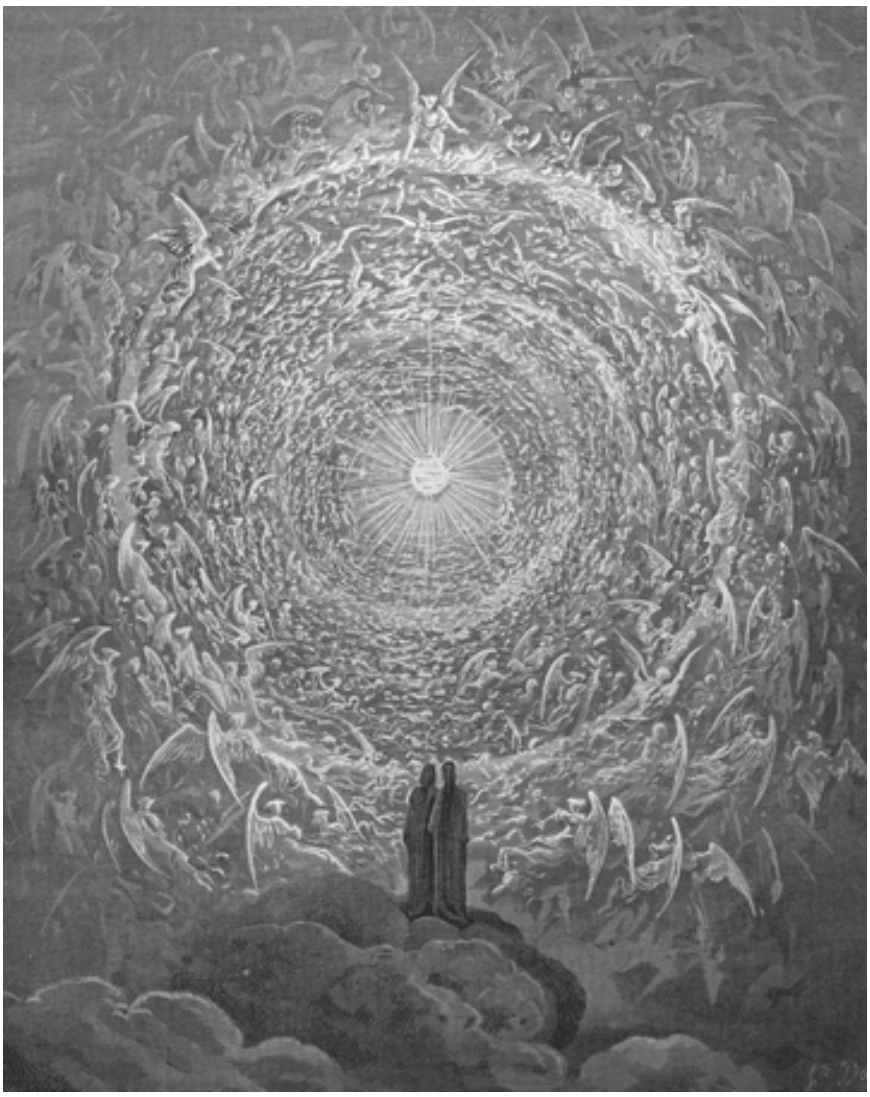

Figure 9.2. Doré, Gustave (1832-1883). The Celestial Rose, Paradiso, Canto XXXI, 1-3. Woodcut from The "Divine Comedy" by Dante Alighieri. 1868-69. Private Collection. Photo Credit: Alfredo Dagli Orti / Art Resource, NY.

the East. As Jung explains, the term *mandala* comes from the Sanskrit word for *circle* as in "circles drawn in religious rituals" and may be described as reflective of the inner state of the individual and the soul's striving for wholeness (1969e, par. 629).

Mandalas often serve as *yantras* or symbols of focus during the meditative process, helping the yogi to concentrate on and even embody the "universal totality of the divine state." Jung noted that some of the most elaborate mandalas have been rendered by the Tibetan Buddhists. He explained that most Eastern mandalas are depicted as a circle which has been squared (figure 9.3). Usually there is a central point that is the focus around which all the other elements correspond. As Jung states, "This centre is not felt or thought of as the ego but . . . as the *self*" (1969e, par. 629-34).

Everything that surrounds the *self* also corresponds to it in some way in order to illustrate the complete person. Jung says that "this totality comprises consciousness first of all, then the personal unconscious, and finally an indefinitely large segment of the collective unconscious whose archetypes are

Figure 9.3. Danner, John. Mandala. Ink on paper, 2012.

common to all." Some of these archetypes such as the anima, animus, and shadow fall within the realm of the individual's personality. Others are situated further from the center, though all contribute in some way to what Jung calls the "composite thing," what Hindu practitioners call the "conglomerate soul" (1969e, par. 629-34).

Even though the mandala is a recognized symbol of Eastern thought, Jung noted the tendency on the part of his own analysands to depict certain psychic states of mind or stages of progression in their psychic development through mandala imagery. This led Jung to equate the individual's drive toward wholeness, what he called the process of individuation, with the mandala. As Jung states, "The goal of the psychotherapeutic process, the self-regulation of the psyche by means of the natural drive towards individuation, is expressed by the . . . mandala" (1976b, par. 1162).[5]

THE ARCHETYPAL HIERARCHY

Finally, Jung notes attempts by two sixteenth-century philosophers to establish archetypal hierarchies. Possibly influenced by Plotinus, Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-d. 1534-5) sought to establish what Jung calls a "hierarchy of archetypes" (Jung 1969l, par. 931). According to Agrippa, "The soul of the world therefore is a certain only thing, filling all things, bestowing all things, binding, and knitting together all things, that it might make one frame of the world" (quoted in Jung 1969l, par. 931). By this, Jung says Agrippa probably means "what we would call the unconscious." Jung further states, "The spirit 'that penetrates all things,' or shapes all things is the World Soul." Jung also notes that alchemist Aegidius de Vadis (d. 1535) established an "alchemical table of correspondences." For Jung, these examples suggested not only the men's attempts to establish relationships among the archetypes but also the tendency of the unconscious toward ordering the archetypes (par. 931).

Given the era in which they lived, one might reasonably conclude that both men were aware of the celestial hierarchies imagined in Christianity. Perhaps these provided the blueprints after which their "archetypal hierarchies" were modeled. However, if (as Jung asserted) there is a tendency within the unconscious to order the archetypes, then this impulse may have informed the organizing of the celestial hierarchies as well. Perhaps the archetype of the universal pattern itself arises into consciousness during epochs in which efforts are made to describe it. This would explain the human impulse to describe the orders of angels.

NOTES

1. Originally the work of Pseudo-Dionysius was thought by many to have been the work of Dionysius the Areopagite, a convert of Saint Paul. However, scholars now credit the work to a fifth-century Syrian monk who probably adopted the name of Paul's Athenian convert (Keck 1998, 55).

2. As Jung discovered, Dionysius was among the earliest Christian writers to employ the term *archetype* in his work. Not even Augustine had used the term although the idea of the archetype is evident in his work as well (1969b, par. 5).

3. The hierarchy posited by Pseudo-Dionysius is interpreted later by Peter Lombard (1095-1160) and described in the second of *The Four Books of Sentences* (ca. 1147-1150). Lombard discusses the order of angels which is closest to humans and, therefore, interacts with them. Of these, the "Virtues" are devoted to facilitating miracles, the "Archangels" are responsible for announcing important events, and the "Angels" are responsible for announcing the smaller events (2008, IX.2).

4. St. Bonaventure's masterwork, *The Soul's Journey to God* is based upon a vision he experienced in 1259 while contemplating the "vision of the six-winged Seraph in the form of the Crucified." Reportedly, Saint Francis of Assisi had experienced the same vision in exactly the same place in 1224 (Cousins 1978, xix).

5. Jung's own drawings (plates 79-97 in *The Red Book*) depict a number of types of mandala images (Shamdasani 2009, 79-97). Some appear to follow the traditional Eastern approach of a circular image contained within a square. Others appear as circles within circles or a circle within an oval. Yet others combine a number of geometrical designs. One of Jung's mandala images looks like the rose window at Chartres (plate 79).

Chapter Ten

The Archetype in Synchronicity

In "On the Nature of the Psyche" (1947), Jung explains that his perception of archetypal phenomena had shifted over time. In his early work, he had asserted that archetypal phenomena were limited to the psyche, but later he revised his position in order to allow for and "clarify the empirical concepts" of the archetypal phenomena (1969g, CW 8, par. 419). Aziz explains that Jung's work expanded beyond the intrapsychic in the experience of synchronicity. The archetypes once believed to be limited to the psyche are now understood as present in nature itself. Jung came to see archetypes on "a psychophysical continuum present in nature as a whole" (1990, 47–49).

In "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious" (originally published in 1934 and later revised in 1954), Jung describes three essential aspects of the archetype as it manifests: "The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear" (1969b, CW 9i, par. 6). Three distinct dimensions of the archetype's coming to consciousness appear in Jung's explanation above. First, the archetype is initially unconscious content. Second, the archetype is "altered" in two ways: (a) "by becoming conscious"; and (b) "by being perceived." Obviously, the archetype must first enter consciousness, for only then can it be perceived by the individual. But note that it "is altered by becoming conscious." Third, the archetype "takes its colour from," which suggests it is distinguished in some way(s) by, "the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear" (par. 6).

Archetypal content enters the personal unconscious and/or consciousness primarily through experiences such as memories, dreams, and/or synchronicities. Or the archetype might be recognized and enter consciousness secondarily through tribal lore, myth, and fairytales (although it must be remem-

bered that these are second-hand sources, usually passed down and layered with interpretation). All such experiences are rendered unique to the individual in two ways: (1) through what has been inherited; and (2) through what has been experienced so far.

In the retelling of the synchronicity that follows, Jung illustrates how the manifestation of archetypal content seems to reference inherited and previously experienced phenomena. He also shows how archetypal phenomena unites psychic and physical landscapes. Jung once treated a male analysand who shared an uncanny, repeated observation that his wife had made. The man explained that his wife had observed birds gathering outside the window just before her mother's and grandmother's deaths on separate occasions. (Jung notes that in Babylonian and Egyptian tradition, the bird has represented the soul's flight to the afterlife.) At the end of this man's treatment, Jung suggested that the man see a heart specialist because Jung had noted some "innocuous symptoms" that he thought might be related to heart disease. A specialist examined the man and then wrote a note back to Jung saying he had not found anything wrong with the man. However, the man soon collapsed in the street and was taken home where he subsequently died (with the specialist's note to Jung still in his pocket). Jung later found out that the wife had become anxious just after her husband left home to see the specialist because birds had begun to gather outside the house. Recognizing the archetypal symbol of death in the gathering of the birds, the woman realized that her own husband's death was imminent—even before he had a heart attack (1969l, CW 8, par. 844–45).

In this instance, one can see that the archetype of death (represented by the birds) presented itself. The wife of Jung's analysand became aware of the archetype because she had experienced the same archetypal image before (in the flock of birds appearing at the time of her mother's and grandmother's deaths). Indeed, the archetype was distinguished by "the individual consciousness in which it happen[ed] to appear." For her, the archetype of death appeared on the physical plane in the form of a bird, a form that the analysand's wife was able to perceive as the imminent death of a loved one (1969b, CW 9i, par. 6).

HOW THE ARCHETYPE FUNCTIONS IN SYNCHRONICITY

Archetypes, when becoming conscious in synchronicities, appear to serve a number of functions. They may manifest as an indication of an impending event (as in the gathering of the birds). They may initiate the process of compensation (the rebalancing of the psyche). Or they might create disruption in order to prompt the individual to act or to face uncomfortable content.

In each case, however, the manifestation has the same purpose—to deliver significant meaning.

THE ARCHETYPE AS COMPENSATOR IN SYNCHRONICITIES

In Jungian terms, the psyche's ability to self-regulate or rebalance itself is termed *compensation*. Compensation occurs as a result of the *transcendent function* which refers to the psyche's process of resolving the opposition between consciousness and unconsciousness. Jung believed that the archetype facilitates this function in synchronicities. As archetypal contents enter consciousness (through the psyche and/or nature) during a synchronicity, the opportunity for rebalancing the psyche presents itself.

A profound synchronicity can sometimes initiate the process that will lead eventually to a full-scale rebalancing of the psyche. Tarnas says this usually follows a sequence of coincidences and patternings that grow more urgent and precise in their message. Such a sequence may "have a revelatory effect on the individual and mark a decisive threshold in his or her psychological and spiritual development" (2006a, 55). As explained in chapter 3, the synchronistic experiences of Augustine and Petrarch assured them of their vocations and initiated new directions in their lives. Their experiences serve as examples of how compensation works.

The following example, which occurred in recent years, illustrates how a profound synchronicity can initiate a change in the direction of one's life. A woman (who will be referred to as Esther) shared the following set of circumstances and subsequent dream. Esther and her family moved to a new town and began attending a new church (but of the same denomination as her family's former church). Her family's spiritual life had always revolved around the church, but rather than feeling uplifted in this new community of believers, Esther found herself depressed. The depression increased over a period of three years. One night as she drifted off to sleep, she had the following dream:

> I was sitting in the rafters of an auditorium looking down upon a scene. In the middle of the arena floor, a man with a long white beard lay on the floor surrounded by men on all sides who were dressed in dark velvet robes. The man on the floor was completely still, his hands neatly folded across his abdomen revealing long, white-tipped fingernails. His robe reflected a lighter palette in contrast to the bolder burgundies and browns of the robes of the men surrounding him. (I remember thinking he looked a lot like a sketch of Confucius that I had seen a long time ago.) One of the dark-robed men lifted a folded blanket, which the other men helped to unfold. They stretched the blanket among them and held it over the man on the floor. The men began to chant, and together they lowered the blanket to cover the face of the man on the floor. He did not flinch, and I watched with a mixture of amazement and distress as

> the man submitted to being smothered. Time passed, much too much time for the man to have lived through this—or so I thought. As I began to shrink from the sobering scene, with the feeling that all was lost, the shrouded figure suddenly came to life, flailing with all his might to free himself. Dark-robed men fell like bowling pins on all sides as he knocked down those who tried with all of their might to hold him down.

It was then that Esther awoke. She recalled how she instinctively looked downward toward her feet, surveying the blanket covering her, at which time she noted her own white-tipped fingernails and hands folded neatly across her abdomen. She sat up, and as she did, her hair spilled over her shoulders and onto her floral nightgown.

In that simple constellation of dream and experienced images, Esther immediately recognized herself as both the individual observing the scene and the man being smothered. Over time, she would realize much more about the meaning of the scene. At that time, however, Esther only understood that she was being suffocated. While this was the beginning of an ongoing process of spiritual awakening for her, the dream had alerted Esther initially to the reason for her despondency.

In referring to similar types of events, Jung notes that "any essential change of attitude signifies a psychic renewal which is usually accompanied by symbols of rebirth in dreams and fantasies" (1969l, par. 845). The archetypal contents which arose in the woman's dream state had been attempting to manifest over a period of three years in her emotional distress, and it was wearing her down. Interestingly, Jung asserted that the archetypes draw attention and energy to themselves as they attempt to manifest on the conscious psychic or physical plane. Drawing energy away from conscious content, the unconscious archetype effectively lowers the threshold of consciousness so that the otherwise unconscious archetype is able to "slip into the space vacated" (par. 841).

In addition to working on the individual level, Jung believes the contents of the collective unconscious can influence the religious, philosophical, social, and political ideas of the community or even humanity as a whole. As Jung notes,

> The activity of the collective unconscious manifests itself not only in compensatory effects in the lives of individuals, but also in the mutation of dominant ideas in the course of the centuries. This can be seen most clearly in religions, and, to a lesser extent, in the various philosophical, social, and political ideologies. (1976b, par. 1161)

It often manifests outwardly in the arts as well. For example, art historians believe, that the development of the art form *Mannerism* was as a reaction to the "severe intellectual, psychological, and cultural pressure" characteristic

of the High Renaissance (Cunningham and Reich 2006, 325-26). This bizarre style emerged in the work of artists like Parmigianino (figure 10.1) about twenty years after artists such as Raphael and Michelangelo had completed such classical works as Raphael's *Philosophy: School of Athens* (1509-1511, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace) and Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* (1508-1512, Sistine Chapel). It was not that "a new school of artists arose but that a mood touched some artists at some point in their careers and captivated others totally" (325).

As Mannerism developed, older art historians deemed this new form a sign of moral decay. For in contrast to the "controlled, measured, harmonious idea" expressed in the art of the High Renaissance, Mannerism was characterized by the "abnormal," "anormal," "disjoined," "spasmodic," "conflicting," "uncanonical," "confined," "overextended," "contrasting," "surprising," and "artificial"[1] (325). Such changes are obvious in Parmigianino's Madonna with the Long Neck and were considered scandalous at the time. Clearly, the development of Mannerism, as noted above, exemplifies how "the collective unconscious manifests itself not only in compensatory effects in the lives of individuals, but also in the mutation of dominant ideas" (Jung 1976b, par. 1161).[2]

THE ARCHETYPE AS ARRANGER OF SYNCHRONICITIES

Sometimes the archetype arranges content in order to deliver meaning in a synchronistic event. As Jung states, "By far the greatest number of spontaneous synchronistic phenomena that I have had occasion to observe and analyse can easily be shown to have a direct connection with an archetype" (1969l, par. 912). The example that follows illustrates how archetypal material is arranged through the psychic and physical components of synchronicity along with the individual's contributing associations and memories. Such synchronicities tend to constellate at critical junctures and may be stamped by the quality of the moment.

English instructor Connie Hood, who teaches at Eagle Rock High School in Los Angeles, describes a synchronicity she experienced on June 17, 2009.[3]

> The arts programs were being threatened once more. School administration had decided to cut the band rehearsal time out, close the auditorium for needed repairs, and have English teachers take over the drama classes instead of hiring a new theater teacher. As a former non-profit arts leader, I had determined that a threat to one art form or teacher is a threat to what should be a cohesive program, and that I would offer my services for some intervention.
>
> On Wednesday, June 17, I had decided to invite all the arts teachers to a Thursday luncheon and begin to outline a strategic plan for saving arts programs during serious budget contingencies. It was the second day of finals, and I was also cleaning out my classroom and administering examinations.

Figure 10.1. Parmigianino (Francesco Mazzola) (1503-1540). Madonna with the Long Neck, 1534-40. Uffizi, Florence, Italy. Photo Credit: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

> That morning I dressed in black, and put on Eric's Celtic knot, a pendant that his band teacher would most certainly recognize. Before going to school, I asked for help.
>
> During the 2nd period final, I was doing a book giveaway. Sarah Leiber Mc Kinney, Eric's English teacher, had died of cancer about a year after Eric's death. Suddenly, I looked across the room where Adam Moreno had an instantly recognizable, but tiny yellow book. "Adam, what do you have?" "It's songs written in a lot of languages." "I know the book. Would you please bring it up here?" I had recognized its cover, because my uncle, Dr. William Westervelt, had taught me to sing from that book. It was the book used by the Experiment in International Living, which he had been part of from 1951 to his death in 1985. The songs had all come from the work camps after World War II. On the cover, in Uncle Bill's handwriting was "William Westervelt—Dr. Berlin."
>
> How did this ever end up in Sarah's things? Was she a member of a summer experiment group? Did she go to Berlin, where he met my aunt? I won't know those connections. But I do know that those songs began my lifelong experiences as a singer and performer, and that I did need to do my work with our arts teachers and the school administration.

In this example of synchronicity, there is little doubt that the arrangement of psychic and physical contents in a particular moment was essential to the delivery of meaning.

As a long-standing supporter of the arts in the community, the public school system, and her personal life, Connie could not stand by and watch the arts undermined. She had armed herself that day with the memory of her son's experiences in the band at Eagle Rock High School by wearing Eric's Celtic knot, and she had "asked for help" before leaving for school that morning. That her own Uncle Bill should appear through the songbook and signature affirmed her resolve. That the book appeared among the books of her son's English teacher (who had died of cancer only a year after Eric had succumbed to the disease) contributed to Connie's sense of being aided in this effort. That Connie "arranged" a book giveaway that day and recognized the book instantly revealed her state of heightened awareness. Indeed, the fact that psychic and physical experiences constellated on this day suggests that they were more than coincidental. Not only did these experiences reflect Connie's own associations and memory images but came together much like an answer to prayer.

THE ARCHETYPE AS DISRUPTOR IN SYNCHRONICITIES

In rebalancing the psyche, archetypal contents arising from the collective unconscious can be disruptive and may seem to drive the individual towards a predetermined goal—even against his or her own will. As Jung notes, "[The archetype] can be healing or destructive, but never indifferent, pro-

vided of course that it has attained a certain degree of clarity." On an individual level, an archetype may disrupt one's life in order to initiate the rebalancing process on a more local level. Jung explains that the archetype may even take on the guise "of a spirit" or behave "like a ghost" in order to prompt the individual to take action (1969g, par. 405). Jung experienced the "exteriorization of unconscious processes" through a series of synchronicities just prior to writing *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* in 1916.

Prior to this event, Jung reportedly felt restless about recording "what might have been said by Philemon," his *maggid*.[4] Soon, thereafter, the house in which he was living began to exhibit the common features of a haunted house. A white figure drifted through a room, the doorbell rang when no one was at the door, and a blanket was snatched away from his daughter by an invisible force or figure. Finally, his son drew a picture which embodied the archetypal elements of the situation. Jung described this combination of unsettling synchronistic events as "an unconscious constellation whose peculiar atmosphere I recognized as the numen of an archetype" (1963, 189-91).

Jung identified this as a "numen of an archetype" because of its "mystical aura" and "corresponding effect upon the emotions." In the following passage, Jung explains the purpose of the archetype that appears in the form of a spirit or ghost:

> It not infrequently happens that the archetype appears in the form of a *spirit* in dreams or fantasy products, or even comports itself like a ghost. There is a mystical aura about its numinosity, and it has a corresponding effect upon the emotions. . . . Often it drives with unexampled passion and remorseless logic towards its goal and draws the subject under its spell, from which despite the most desperate resistance he is unable, and finally no longer even willing, to break free, because the experience brings with it a depth and fullness of meaning that was unthinkable before. (1969g, par. 405)

In other words, the archetype manifests in a way that will gain the attention or disrupt the life of the individual until he or she gives in to the pressure of the archetype. In Jung's case, once he began writing about "the mythic land of the dead, the land of the ancestors," which happens to correspond to the collective unconscious, "the whole ghostly assemblage evaporated." In other words, the archetype no longer needed to manifest in order to prompt Jung to write. As Jung noted, "The room quieted and the atmosphere cleared. The haunting was over." Subsequently, Jung was able to write the entire piece, *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*, in only three evenings (1963, 191).[5]

SUMMING UP THE FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE ARCHETYPE

Robert Aziz explains why it is necessary for archetypal content to becomes conscious through synchronicity (in addition to dreams and other states in which unconscious content becomes conscious). If one understands Jung's concept of *unus mundus* as "a world that constitutes a dynamic inseparable whole in which the traditional notions of isolated objects, space and time, cause and effect are rendered meaningless," then the shift of unconscious archetypal contents into consciousness leads the individual from the recognition that one is not separate from but rather part of the greater whole (1990, 133).

NOTES

1. Cunningham and Reich (2006) base their discussion on the contrast between the art of the High Renaissance and Mannerism on a schema developed by art historian Frederick Hart (325).
2. Michelangelo employed some aspects of Mannerism in later works such as *The Last Judgment* (1534-1541, Sistine Chapel) (Cunningham and Reich 2006, 325).
3. Connie Hood lost her son Eric (a student at Brown University) to cancer in the spring of 2003. Although she had held a number of administration positions in the years prior to her son's death, she returned to the classroom to spend the remaining years before her retirement teaching English at the high school from which her son had graduated. Hood graciously shared this synchronicity expressly for this study.
4. Jung explains that Philemon was a fantasy figure from the unconscious which served as a *maggid* or guru psychologically since, as Jung notes, he "represented a force which was not [Jung]" (1963, 183).
5. Jung's experience appears to be comprised of paranormal and normal events. As noted at the end of chapter 1, the paranormal would be considered incidental to rather than integral to synchronicity. Admittedly, it is difficult to separate the paranormal from the synchronistic event in this case.

Chapter Eleven

Angels and Archetypes

As noted in chapter 3, the Annunciation of Mary contradicts the assumption that the angel must be physically or visibly present in order to convey God's message. Biblical accounts show that angels often appear in dreams (e.g., Jacob's ladder, Gen. 32:25–31), in various human disguises (e.g., guests of Lot, 19:15–17), as animals (e.g., Balaam's donkey, Num. 22:28), or even as features of nature (e.g., the burning bush, Exod. 3:2). Or the angel might not assume any form at all. The angel may embody the very thought of God and, in this respect, would be better termed *Logos*. The angel archetype (as in the heavenly messenger who superseded the Greek/Roman messenger Hermes/Mercury) might present itself such that those who participate in it—just as those who were present at the tomb of the resurrected Christ—are convinced of the eternal truth that the archetype conveys and subsequently share the good news.

In Systematic Theology, Vol. I, Tillich compares angels to archetypes. He states:

> The angels are concrete-poetic symbols of the structures or powers of being. They are not beings but participate in everything that is. Their "epiphany" is a revelatory experience determining the history of religion and culture. They underlie the figures of the great mythological gods as well as the decisive cultural symbolism before and within the Christian Era. (1951, 160)

From Tillich's perspective, angels are the embodiment of meaning, a revelation made manifest. He was heartened to see Jung's psychological approach to the angel, noting that "[the angel's] rediscovery from the psychological side as archetypes of the collective unconscious . . . [has] contributed to the understanding of these powers of being, which are not beings, but structures" (160).

In *The Vision of Zosimos* (1954), Jung describes the role of the angel in the myth of Zosimos as a "messenger of the sun who brings 'illumination,' that is, an enhancement and expansion of consciousness." In interpreting the myth, Jung concludes, "If angels are anything at all, they are personified transmitters of unconscious contents that are seeking expression"[1] (Jung 1967, CW 13, par. 108).

Jung used the term *psychoid archetype* to describe "the transconscious areas where psychic processes and their physical substrate touch" (Adler 1975, 22). In "On the Nature of the Psyche" (1954), Jung conceded that he found it necessary to move beyond viewing the archetype as a purely psychic phenomenon in order to consider its empirical implications and the relationship between the psychic and physical aspects of the archetype when it manifests. Jung explained that the point at which the archetype bridges the psychic and physical realms, it exhibits a *psychoid* factor (1969g, par. 419). When an archetype exhibits such a factor it might well be considered an angel.

THE PSYCHOID ARCHETYPE

Assuming that psychic and physical contents are two halves of a whole, one might imagine how Jung's concept of the psychoid archetype developed as a means for explaining how the archetype is able to manifest both psychically and physically. This is among the reasons why Jung suggested that a "fourth factor" be added to the accepted triad of space, time, and causality. According to Jung, such a factor "makes possible a view which includes the psychoid factor in our description and knowledge of nature—that is, an *a priori* meaning or 'equivalence.'" One's understanding of nature, then, presupposes meaning which is beyond the assumed law of cause and effect according to Jung (1969l, par. 962).

Yet because he had no empirical basis upon which to assess it, Jung was at a loss as to how to explain the psychoid archetype definitively. In one instance, he described it as a particularly "gripping" and "numinous" appearance of the archetype which is characterized by "a primordial form of archetypal seizure" much like the concept of *kairos* (fortuitous moment), Tao (way), or *satori* (enlightenment). In the same passage, Jung characterized it as *irrepresentable*[2] and transcendent (Adler 1975, 21-23). Elsewhere, Jung deemed it "spiritual." If spiritual, Jung explained, it could never be accounted for through science. It could only be known through the individual's experience (1963, 351).

In another attempt to describe this phenomenon, Jung explained that modern psychology (at least in his time) adheres to the idea that humans are "cooped up in an exclusively psychic world," meaning that humans can

know nothing except that which is comprehended through the psyche. Despite this belief, Jung says, there is "good reason to suppose that behind this veil there exists the uncomprehended absolute object which affects and influences us" (1963, 351). One can only speculate on what Jung meant by an "uncomprehended absolute object" since he considered it indefinable. However, because the psychoid archetype alone has the unique ability to bridge psyche and matter, one might conclude with Jung that the psychoid archetype serves as some sort of numinous intercessor between the individual and "the uncomprehended absolute object."

THE NUMINOUS IN THE PSYCHOID ARCHETYPE

Rudolf Otto employed the term *numinous* to describe the "idea of the Holy." Ascribing some of the following characteristics to the term *numinous*—mystery, majesty, urgency, wholly other, fascination, and feeling—Otto likened the concept to the aesthetic of beauty, which similarly eludes a simple definition. As Otto pointed out, the artist "has an intimate personal knowledge of the distinctive element in the aesthetic experience," just as the believer has an intimate personal knowledge of the distinctive element in the numinous experience (1950, 5-49).

When used in the context of or accompanied by the terms *numen, numinous,* or *numinosum*, the psychoid archetype may be understood to be *like* a divine power, spirit, or deity. Or it might be considered a manifestation of the mysterious or that which has yet to be understood—perhaps what Jung referred to as the *uncomprehended absolute object*. If (as Jung asserted) the psychoid archetype has the ability to bridge psyche and matter, then it might accurately be described as the numinous intercessor between (1) the psychic *and* physical realms, *or* (2) a combination of that which is understood (psychically and/or empirically) *and* that which is not yet understood (the mysterious—the unconscious absolute object mentioned previously).

Jung asserted that a synchronicity (or a series of synchronicities) could be so compelling that it would challenge the individual to accomplish an unexpected goal or fulfill a role that the individual seems almost destined to fulfill. He believed such synchronicities provided evidence of the psychoid archetype.

An example from WWII illustrates the possibility of the presence of the numinous in some synchronicities. Gitta Mallasz (1907-1992),[3] a former Hungarian sports hero, and her three close friends Lili, Hanna, and Joseph (Hanna's husband) lived in Budapest during WWII and found themselves victims of the Nazi occupation of 1943-1944. Over a seventeen-month period during this time, the four engaged in a series of dialogues with angels.[4]

Mallasz transcribed the dialogues as they occurred and eventually smuggled them out of Hungary fifteen years after the war ended. In the introduction to the book *Talking with Angels* (1998), in which the transcripts appear, Mallasz describes the condition of the four friends during WWII just prior to the beginning of their conversations with angels: "We felt ourselves to be standing before a world of lies, brutality and all-pervading evil. At the same time, we were convinced that the meaning of our lives must be buried somewhere, and that the cause of our not finding it must be in ourselves" (16).

Even before the Nazi occupation of Budapest, the four friends had begun to recognize the "all-pervading evil" around them, yet they recognized the importance of finding meaning in their lives in spite of this. Together, they discussed a variety of religious traditions, considering each to embody sacred truth. Also, they were careful not to privilege any religious tradition over another. As pressure around them mounted, the dialogues with angels began. They took place at 3:00 p.m. most Fridays over a seventeen-month period. Although their dialogues with the angels helped them find meaning within a world that no longer made sense, they are not the focus of the synchronicity which will be explained here.

By May of 1944, all of the Jewish residents of Budapest (including Lili, Hannah, and Joseph) had to wear the "yellow star." In June, Joseph was deported to a work camp along with all Jewish men in the city under the age of 40. Mallasz, a Christian, realized that it was only a matter of time before Lili and Hanna would be sent to the ghetto, so she was desperate to help in some way. A Catholic priest by the name of Father Klinda had been working with a number of high-ranking (but anonymous) officers in the War Ministry in an attempt to save the lives of as many of the Jewish women and children as possible. The idea was to set up a sewing factory in a cloister as a front for protecting 100 Jewish women and their children. However, to make this work, they needed a disciplinary figure—a woman able to run the factory, produce the expected goods, and maintain this "front" (Mallasz 1998, 328, 335, 345-46).

Mallasz, who had been agonizing over how to help Lili and Hanna, was approached to help carry out Father Klinda's plan. She had been targeted as the ideal choice. First, she came from a military family, her father having been a former high-ranking officer. Second, she was a well-respected sports hero in Hungary, having won a number of national titles in swimming in years past. Mallasz explains what happened next:

> My friend has just come to ask me to take on this task. Just as I am replying to him that I don't have the slightest clue of how an industrial production line should function, and even less of an idea of military discipline, it suddenly strikes me that this scheme might be just the way to save Hanna and Lili from the ghetto. And so I declare myself ready to take on the role of commander of

> this secret operation on the condition that Hanna and Lili be added to the already-completed list of women who are to participate. (1998, 346)

Mallasz realized that conditions had come together in a way (a synchronicity) that would allow her to protect her friends. Even though she lacked the skills to do the job, Mallasz volunteered for the position, on the condition that Lili and Hanna would be added to the list of 100 women.

Mallasz soon managed to get a production line moving. This enabled her to spend another six months with her dear friends Hanna and Lili. While this synchronistic event allowed Mallasz to protect Lili and Hanna, at least for awhile longer, it required that she become the guardian of 100 women (and their children) that she did not even know. In accepting the position, Mallasz accepted a greater challenge—that of protecting human life.

Although her friends Lili and Hanna did not survive the war, fifteen years later Mallasz smuggled the original transcripts of the angel dialogues out of Communist Hungary wrapped in bed sheets. The transcripts were eventually published in the book *Talking with Angels* and translated into a number of languages (including English in 1998). Mallasz would also be called upon to speak to students at the C. G. Jung Institute in Zürich in 1983. She agreed mainly because she had found comfort in Jung's writings following the war and later in his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963), particularly the portion in which Jung had discussed his inner dialogues with Philemon (Mallasz 1998, 7-9).

The synchronicity involving Gitta Mallasz and her friends Lili and Hanna occurred during a period in which they claimed to be engaged in dialogues with angels. However, it is difficult to assess the degree to which angels arranged the elements of the synchronicity described in the last section. Mallasz does make it clear, though, that angelic messages preceded many of the actual events she experienced and shares in *Talking with Angels*. Other examples from the manuscript support the idea that the angels' messages prepared the women for the events that were to occur (1998).

For example, in early November of 1944, just days prior to the arrival of the Red Army, Mallasz had transcribed a statement made by one of the angels. The Seventh Angel explains to Mallasz, Lili and Hanna:

> Without a wick, the candle could not burn. / Without a body, there would be no Individuality. / The Heart of Light beats high above, / If your gift of self reaches it, / heavenly Grace flames up. / THUS: / ONLY THROUGH THE HUMAN BEING / CAN GRACE DESCEND. (1998, 448)

The Seventh Angel has made the point that grace can only descend through the human being. A few days later, the Red Army (Hungarian Nazis) invaded. Just as the angel revealed, grace descended through humans. The German soldiers who were stationed next door to the cloister in which Mal-

lasz and the women lived helped the Jewish women and children to safety that day. Mallasz describes the scene as the Red Army descends:

> An incredible development unfolds in the backyard: the German Nazis stand guard for the Jewish women and children so that they can escape from the Hungarian Nazis. Two German soldiers take position on either side of the escape hole through our common fence and hedge, ready with their grenades to defend against any intervention by the Hungarians. With powerful gestures, they encourage the women: "Quickly! Run fast!" (468)

It had not mattered that the women and children were Jews and the soldiers were Germans. It was as though time had been suspended and the conditions of the war had been lifted so that grace could intervene through the soldiers' actions.

THE NUMINOUS IN JUNG'S EXPERIENCES

Jung concedes that he is limited in what he can say with certainty about *daimons*[5] or God. Scientists must use the neutral term "the unconscious," Jung says, because they can only know that which is experienced through the psyche. For this reason, Jung claims that "such terms as mana, daimon, or god can be neither disproved nor affirmed." However, he admits that dreams, inspirations, and otherwise unknown content seem to make their way into consciousness on their own and, therefore, "can be said to emanate from mana, from a daimon, a god, or the unconscious." But as a scientist, Jung believes he must leave the metaphysical terms to those better qualified to use them, especially since they are so rife with controversy. Despite having just set aside the more controversial terms, he admits that when he employs the term "the unconscious," he "might equally well speak of 'God' or 'daimon'" (1963, 336-37).

Jung also affirms the power of the individual's own experiences and concedes that those who claim to know of a metaphysical entity synonymous with the unconscious honestly *believe* they do. Still, Jung claims that science cannot comment on this since there are no empirical means for proving that such an entity exists. A belief in a metaphysical entity whether angel, daimon, or God may serve certain individuals better than the scientific term, "the unconscious," Jung says, since they can personify it, "raise it to a drama," and participate in enacting it as the birth of God as man (1963, 336-37). For Jung, if one looks at the unplumbed depths of the psyche or soul objectively, then one is limited to the neutral term *unconscious*. If one looks at these same depths subjectively, then one might use one of any number of terms including *unconscious, angel, daimon*, or *God.*

Jung cautions scientists to avoid the temptation of discounting those events which the senses or scientific instruments cannot detect. He warns that one must not come to such a conclusion too quickly since the senses and technologies may not be "capable of perceiving all forms of being." Evidence of the *psychoid* factor in the manifestation of archetypes, for example, suggested to Jung that a "partially psychic and possibly altogether different form of being" may exist. He is reluctant to admit personal knowledge of this "different form of being" although he does say that it is usually referred to as "spiritual." In his role as a scientist, Jung asserts that it really makes no difference what he thinks about such matters and, therefore, he pleads ignorance. What he can speak of with assurance, though, is that the archetypes "are real and actual" because he has experienced their effects (1963, 351-52).

In the fall of 1913, following his break with Freud, Jung entered a difficult period of his life. He sought to reestablish himself on his own terms and to cope with troubling unconscious content that had been arising for him in a number of ways. In October of 1913, Jung experienced a catastrophic vision in which "the sea turned to blood." The vision reoccurred two weeks later, but this time it was accompanied by an inner voice that told him to consider the scene: "Look at it well; it is wholly real and it will be so. You cannot doubt it" (1963, 176-77).

Troubling dreams followed, and so it did not surprise Jung when WWI began on August 1, 1914. He recognized from this stream of visions and dreams that a "task" was before him. As he states, "I had to try to understand what had happened and to what extent my own experiences coincided with that of mankind in general." Following this realization Jung faced a brutal period in which he was confronted by troubling unconscious content, which he describes as follows: "When I endured these assaults of the unconscious I had an unswerving conviction that I was obeying a higher will, and that feeling continued to uphold me until I had mastered the task" (1963, 176-77).

Jung began transcribing his fantasies in what seemed to him the "high rhetoric" of the archetypes, a style that he claims the unconscious had chosen for him. Describing this period in which he acted as the scribe of his own unconscious, he says,

> Sometimes it was as if I were hearing it with my ears, sometimes feeling it with my mouth, as if my tongue were formulating words; now and then I heard myself whispering aloud. Below the threshold of consciousness everything was seething with life. (1963, 178)

Jung's visions and inner voices continued, urging him towards understanding the meanings of the archetypal contents as he encountered them.

Eventually, Philemon, a "fantasy figure" with whom Jung would engage in interior dialogue, made its way into Jung's consciousness on the wings of

a kingfisher. The next day Jung painted the winged figure, and a few days later stumbled upon a dead kingfisher on the shore of the lake near his home. This incident (synchronicity) gripped Jung's attention, giving him a heightened sense of the importance of the insights brought by Philemon and other fantasy figures or spiritual guides as they rose into consciousness (1963, 182-83). Describing Philemon, Jung states:

> Psychologically, Philemon represented superior insight. He was a mysterious figure to me. At times he seemed to me quite real, as if he were a living personality. I went walking up and down the garden with him, and to me he was what the Indians call a guru. (183)

Later, Jung realized through a friend of Gandhi that Indians often have gurus who are in spiritual form. Upon learning this, Jung immediately considered the possibility that Philemon had served as his spiritual guide. He also realized that he was not so different from the Hindu practitioners who seek wisdom. For Jung, Philemon represented "spirit" or "meaning." Jung was visited by other figures who contributed additional knowledge, feeding his understanding of the unconscious and the depths of the psyche (184-85).

THE COMPLEX AND THE NUMINOUS

Mallasz and Jung share the distinction of having served as scribes for what might be termed angels (Mallasz's term), gurus (Jung's term), spiritual guides, or inner voices that were not their own. Their respective guides arrived as they struggled to find meaning in their individual lives. Whether called "angel" or "guru," such figures appear to have served similar functions and are remarkable in their congruity. Jung's concept of the *complex* may clarify how and why these spiritual figures are comparable.

In "A Review of Complex Theory" (1934), Jung defines the term *complex* as "the image of a certain psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is, moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of consciousness." A complex is unconscious material that the individual has not yet been able to assimilate. That material, therefore, erupts in fits and starts, often causing the individual varying degrees of distress. While a complex can be "an obstacle," Jung believed that it could also serve as "an incentive to greater effort" and "to new possibilities" (1971b, par. 925). Summing up Jung's comments here, one could define the complex as an urgent, otherwise repressed idea or personification seeking to reveal itself or convey meaning.

According to Jung, complexes can be personifications with names who take on lives of their own (1969k, par. 201). As noted, Mallasz and Jung admitted to having been guided in their respective tasks by inner voices *other than* their own. Both recognized the figures they encountered as guides. Both

experienced multiple guides, each of which had its own distinct lesson to teach. (Mallasz and her friends communicated with seven angels; Jung communicated with Philemon, Ka, his anima figure, and the spirits that delivered the *Seven Sermons of the Dead*.) Both found the information shared by the guides to be so significant that they had to write it down and/or draw it. Both discussed how they integrated the material into their worldviews and how they eventually came to share it. Finally, both encountered synchronicities that related in some way to the visitation of their respective spiritual guides and resulted in revelation.

In a conversation he had with James C. Aylward in the early fifties, Jung defined angels as complexes that "rise out of the unconscious life." Aylward recalls the conversation:

> Angels, [Jung] says, are complexes. They rise out of the unconscious life. They are not persons but may be personifications and be given names as functional complexes. . . . The messenger-complex wings upward out of the depths of the soul and is pointed toward the fore of conscious awareness. The message is *spirit.* Spirit is the content which the angel carries from the unconscious source and tries to bring home to us in consciousness. (1982, 8)

Later, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung refers to an angelic figure from a dream as a "messenger or emissary of the self." As such, they seek immediate expression through the delivery of essential meaning (which may be challenging and/or enlightening) (1989b, 243).

Thus, one might characterize angels in Jungian terms as the personified messengers of essential and/or transformational meaning which is at once disruptive *and* numinous, dark *and* potentially light, overpowering *and* empowering. It is not surprising that the concept of the angel appears to align with the concept of the psychoid archetype, which delivers meaning during synchronicity.

NOTES

1. This quotation was taken from the 1954 expanded version of The Visions of Zosimos, an Eranos lecture Jung delivered in August, 1937.

2. The term *irrepresentable* is used to emphasize Jung's view that the archetype cannot be adequately represented. Jung used the term *irrepresentable*, claiming that the psychoid archetype "is as irrepresentable as the nature of light" (Adler 1975, 21-23).

3. Gitta Mallasz (1907-1992) is widely known for a collection of dialogues, entitled *Talking with Angels* (1998). She claimed that the dialogues were based on a series of transcribed conversations she and three of her close friends had had with angels over a seventeen-month period in Hungary (in 1943-1944) during WWII. Of the four comrades, she was to be the only survivor. Her friends died at the hands of the Nazis. Fifteen years after the war ended, Mallasz smuggled the transcripts out of Communist Hungary. The transcripts were eventually published in book form (7).

4. It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the veracity of the four friends' subjective experiences with angels. They are just that—subjective. As noted in the preface of this study, no single way of knowing is privileged over another in this study. As will be seen later in this chapter, the angel dialogues may not be that different from Jung's own dialogues with his inner guide Philemon.

5. The *daimon* or *daemon* was, according to Greek tradition, another term for a god, lesser deity, attendant spirit, or demon according to *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (s.v. "daimon"). Philo of Alexandria used the term *daemon* to refer to angels (Schenck 2005, 120).

Chapter Twelve

Shadows and Daimons

The implications of the dark side of the unconscious and its accompanying shadow have not been addressed fully in this study thus far. Nor has the potential for a dark angel (what some might term a demon or daimon)[1] been considered. The presence of more shadowy figures in synchronicity and annunciation suggest that multiple and varied layers of meaning are features of both experiences.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

The term *unconscious*, even when qualified as a psychological concept, is not always considered a positive or useful term. Some argue that in using the terms *unconscious* and *conscious* one is reinforcing dualistic thinking. Others assert the term suggests a lesser realm, a dark place full of negative or primitive impulses. And there are those who object to Jung's use of the term since a focus on the unconscious in psychology means a focus on the Self. This seems to concern theologians in particular who argue that such a focus competes with a belief in God. An examination of these objections may help clarify the nature of the unconscious and its role in the process of individuation.

Those who see dualistic thinking inherent in the use of the terms *unconscious* and *conscious* suggest these "realms" oppose each other. Gebser discusses this common concern in *The Ever-Present Origin* (1949/1985), noting that dualistic thinking is evident in psychology's "recurrent reference to the psyche in terms of 'opposition.'" However, he also notes that Jolande Jacobi (in her understanding of Jungian concepts) emphasizes the "compensatory" nature of the two realms as opposed to a "contrasting" nature (an idea that comes from Jung). Furthermore, Gebser points out that "Jung's theory of

individuation, with its demand for a Self, shows itself to be an attempt at overcoming . . . psychic dualism" through the pursuit of wholeness (397). Gebser adds that the work of G. R. Heyer has also contributed to overcoming the limiting view of dualism by "reformulat[ing] our concept of 'degrees of consciousness,' using the more fortunate term 'frequencies of consciousness'" (397).

Furthermore, Gebser identifies a potential complication concerning Jung's concept of the Self, especially if "the 'Self' becomes an 'inner God,' or merely an anthropologized and psychologized form of the dethronement of God" (1949/1985, 397-98). In *God and the Unconscious* (1953), Victor White (a Catholic priest whose previous collaboration with Jung had proven too risky to his religious sensibility) admits he is concerned about this possibility. He notes that Jung's postulate of the unconscious "is employed precisely, though not exclusively, to account for phenomena which in ancient and medieval times were attributed to God or gods, to angels or demons." White was concerned that religious facts might be displaced by "physical or biological factors" (37).

In her book *Seventy-Eight Degrees of Wisdom* (1997), Rachel Pollack offers another perspective on this issue, asserting that modern psychology simply applies new terminology to long-standing ideas about the unconscious. As Pollack states:

> Where archaic people spoke of the "other worlds" or the "land of the gods," today we speak of the "unconscious." The terms change but the underlying experience remains: a realm of being in which time does not exist and knowledge is not limited to the images received from our senses. (272)

While White might agree with Pollack, he would probably add that it is no small thing that such an exchange has taken place. For him, modern psychology has co-opted the phenomena of the soul's yearning for God and reframed it as a search for the Self (1953, 37). Moore asserts that the term *unconscious* is an unfortunate name given by the modern world to the soul. He writes: "We call [the realm of the soul] 'the Unconscious,' a negative name which implies that the world we know has more variety and substance and consciousness than that other realm where angels soar" (1994, 25). While he did not intend for the term to be reductive, Jung's application of the term *unconscious* nonetheless continues to draw criticism.[2]

In *The Vision of Zosimos* (1954), Jung employs the metaphor of the alchemical process, the process whereby transformation from copper to silver and then to gold occurs, to illustrate the individual's "spiritual growth." He also relies on the myth of the hero to explain this process:

> The dragon or serpent represents the initial state of unconsciousness, for this animal loves, as the alchemists say, to dwell "in caverns and dark places."

> Unconsciousness has to be sacrificed; only then can one find the entrance into the head and the way to conscious knowledge and understanding. Once again the universal struggle of the hero with the dragon is enacted, and each time at its victorious conclusion the sun rises; consciousness dawns, and it is perceived that the transformation process is taking place inside the temple, that is, in the head. (1967, par. 118)

To become whole, the individual must sometimes lure the unconscious content out of its lair in order to engage it. (This could occur with the help of a therapist, for example.) Much of the time, however, the unconscious content confronts the individual head on. When squared off against such content, a struggle usually occurs. Such a struggle, Jung believed, is best embodied by the "universal struggle of the hero with the dragon." In engaging the dragon, the hero must become keenly aware of the complexities of the foe and consciously strategize in order to conquer the larger and more powerful predator. To do less would mean certain death. According to Jung, however, the hero's victory over the dragon means "consciousness dawns." In reference to Jung's focus on alchemy as a metaphor for the process of individuation, Erich Neumann reiterates, "The path of transformation followed by the individual resembles the hermetic process in alchemy; it is a new form of dragon fight culminating in a qualitative change of consciousness" (1954, 412).

Clearly, the concept of the unconscious is central to Jung's approach. The unconscious (both personal and collective) contains the contents that can lead to the individual's maturation and transformation. Jacobi suggests that the concept of the unconscious has been misunderstood in theological and philosophical circles as a negative concept. Assuming that it comprises that which is "below" the threshold of consciousness, many theologians and philosophers mistakenly label the unconscious as inferior or immoral and categorize it as the "lowest level of the psyche." Focusing on the collective unconscious, that aspect of the unconscious which is *other than* one's own personal unconscious, Jacobi makes two essential points. First, she asserts that the collective unconscious is best seen as an indefatigable "suprapersonal matrix . . . of fundamental psychic conditions accumulated over millions of years." As such, it might well be described as "an inner cosmos as infinite as the cosmos outside." Second, the collective unconscious is a "neutral" concept. As Jacobi explains, "The collective unconscious is in every respect 'neutral,' [for] its contents acquire their value and position only through confrontation with consciousness" (1959, 59-60). If anything, then, it is the coming into consciousness and the contact with conscious content that determines the degree to which it will be perceived as negative or positive.

THE SHADOW

Among the fundamental principles of Jung's psychology of the unconscious is his concept of the shadow. "Just as any bright light must always cast darkness somewhere, the conscious brightness of the ego always casts a shadow in one's personality," Hopcke states (1999, 83). David M. Wulff explains that the shadow is comprised of the following:

> all the reprehensible qualities that the individual wishes to deny, including animal tendencies that we have inherited from our infrahuman ancestors, as well as all the modes and qualities that the individual has simply not developed, some of which may be wholly good and desirable. (1991, 424)

Contained within the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious, these "reprehensible qualities" seek expression despite the individual's efforts to keep them at bay. Yet in denying the shadow the expression it seeks, the individual is likely to experience "a compensatory demonic dynamism" or to project the "repressed tendencies" onto other people. Additionally, Wulff explains that "the image of the devil and serpent, as well as the doctrine of original sin, represent variants of the shadow archetype" (424).

The shadow may be interpreted in two different ways. First, the shadow may be seen as comprised of the repressed or projected elements of the unconscious that seek expression in spite of the individual's reluctance to admit them into consciousness. Hopcke states that the individuation process begins with the "humbling integration of the shadow into one's conscious sense of self." By bringing the shadowy contents to light, one at least partially disarms them, and the newly-revealed contents enter the realm of "moral choice," meaning that the individual must now come to terms with "the often difficult ethical decisions and the distasteful self-discipline sometimes avoided through neurosis." The shadow of one's personal unconscious is influenced by individual and cultural impulses while the shadow of the collective unconscious takes on the drama of the mythologies of the past (1999, 83-84).

Mythology provides examples of a hero encountering shadowy content, conquering it, and then integrating it. Typically, the hero of the myth must face the cloudy mists, shadowy underworld, or oceanic depths in order to vanquish the dark forces. The hero Odysseus does just that in *The Odyssey*. Only in facing several cloaks of darkness and integrating them as life lessons can Odysseus finally return home as a fully integrated hero. It must be remembered that Odysseus, though heroic throughout, faces increasingly painful and desperate moments in which he does not appear to have the power to overcome the forces that are set against him. At such times, Odysseus must reach deeper inside himself, utilizing his wiles as he did, for

instance, in outsmarting Polyphémus. Failing to have done so would have put him at the mercy of the gods. In Odysseus's case, Athena pled for him before the gods, begging for his release from Poseidon whom Odysseus had offended at the end of the Trojan War. At other times, dark contents wrestle their way into Odysseus's consciousness as they surface metaphorically in his encounters with such ominous creatures as Scylla and the Sirens. As Gebser suggests, myths like the *Odyssey* provide evidence of the human search for "illumination of the soul." Additionally, he states, "the emergence of consciousness which effects its presence in these myths reminds us that not just the sun but also the darkness within man is thereby rendered visible" (1985, 72).

Rosemary Ellen Guiley comments on Jung's own period of "psychic intensity" which occurred between 1912 and 1917. During this time, Guiley explains, Jung's consciousness was overwhelmed by archetypal contents, which, she adds, "previous ages would have declared to be divine and demonic." Comparing his own descent to Odysseus's journey to the underworld, Jung deemed this period *Nekyia,* the term originally used by Homer in describing Odysseus's descent to the underworld. During this time he experienced surges of creativity amidst bouts of self doubt and depression. Out of this came *The Red Book*, Jung's own creation which he filled with both light and dark figures that might be considered angels and demons. He also channeled the *Seven Sermons of the Dead* during this period, a document that Jung believed to have been transmitted by Basilides of Alexandria, a second-century Gnostic (2004, 206).

Jung also considered the shadow from the perspective of the collective unconscious. Here Jung saw "the shadow as the archetype of darkness itself, the absolute evil that, Jung posits, must exist in the collective unconscious as the only logical counterpart to the shining light of absolute good" (Hopcke 1999, 85). In many spiritual philosophies, the dark is identified traditionally as complementary to the light. This belief is expressed in the Chinese yin/yang symbol (figure 12.1), which expresses the marriage of opposition in Eastern thought, or mandala (sacred circle) of wholeness.

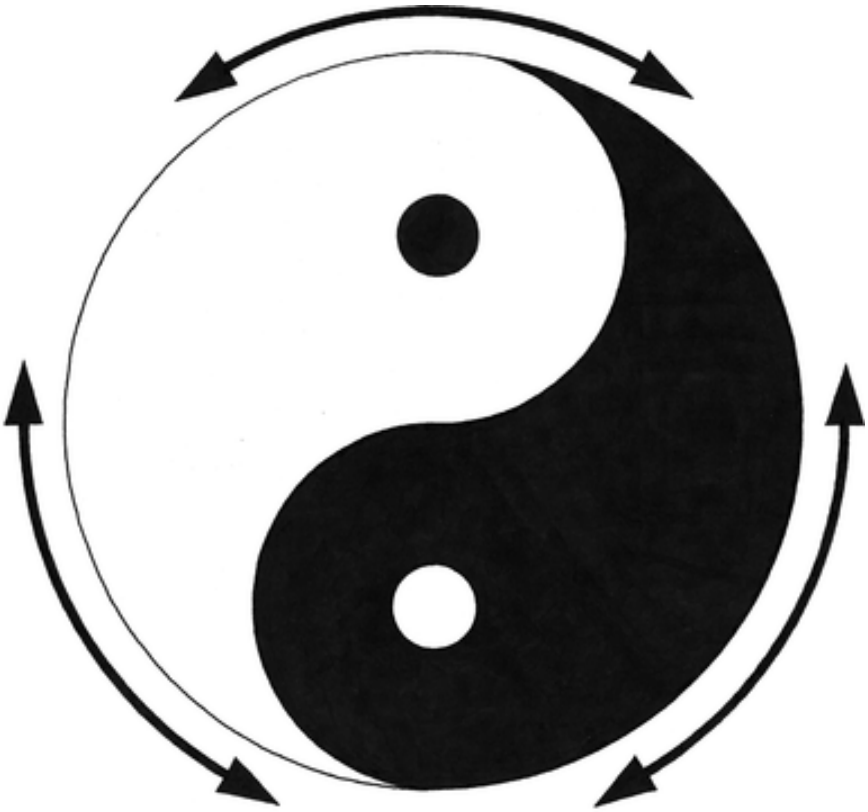

Figure 12.1. Danner, John. Yin/Yang. Ink on paper, 2012.

While Eastern philosophical systems embraced the marriage of complementary concepts, Western systems tended to separate the two, resulting in a dualism of opposing forces and conflicting concepts such as good versus evil. However, according to Jung, such forces could be resolved. This was the work of the individual—to cultivate a context within one's consciousness where dark content could erupt, be confronted, and then integrated with the light. For although opposites, both light and dark reside within nature and within the individual as two halves of the whole—as artist John Danner suggests in his drawing, Opposition (figure 12.2).

Figure 12.2. Danner, John. Opposition. Ink and graphite, 2012.

THE SHADOW SIDE OF CHRISTIANITY

Jung explains that in the early mythology of Christianity, good overcame the powers of evil. This theology remained fairly intact for approximately a thousand years, until a "further transformation of consciousness began," at which time the seeds of doubt were planted and eventually flowered into what Jung termed "giantism" or the "hubris of consciousness." Modern scientism exemplifies Jung's point. By the twentieth century, the shadow side had peaked, meaning that the Christian world would have to face "the principle of evil" and "the coercion of conscience," as exemplified in the manipulative acts of megalomaniacs in WWI and WWII who turned good and evil upside down. At this time, says Jung, "the transcendence of the Christian myth was lost, and with it the view that wholeness is achieved in the other world" (1963, 328-29).

Jung concluded that what had been a task of the church now became the task of the individual in this life. It was up to the individual to develop his or her own ethical position and enact it, even if it meant ignoring "the known moral good and do[ing] what is considered to be evil, if our ethical decision so requires" (1963, 328-29). Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* serves as a classic example of this modern moral dilemma. For those who seek "an answer to the problem of evil" in contemporary society, Jung says "*self knowledge"* is key:

> He must know relentlessly how much good he can do, and what crimes he is capable of, and must beware of regarding the one as real and the other as illusion. Both are elements within his nature, and both are bound to come to light in him, should he wish—as he ought—to live without self-deception or self-delusion. (1963, 330)

Such self-knowledge was sought by Gitta Mallasz and her three friends (as described in chapter 11) during WWII. The atmosphere of impending doom hung heavily prior to and during war. In response to the long-repressed evil impulses of the collective unconscious forcing their way onto the world stage, Mallasz and her friends Lili, Hanna, and Joseph turned inward, hoping to find meaning that would inform their ethical decisions against the forced "moral good" of bigotry. Mallasz's actions almost cost her her life. The ethical actions of her dear friends did cost them theirs. Although she faced fifteen years of painful introspection and hard work following WWII, Mallasz emerged from her experiences whole (1998). In retrospect, it seems that the only way to reconcile the shadow when it arises is to bring it fully to light so that one might make decisions that, as Jung notes, must be free of "self-deception or self-delusion."

THE SHADOW SIDE OF SYNCHRONICITY

Some synchronicities are quite painful. The example of the dark omen of the gathering birds (from chapter 10) presented a painful reminder of the constellation of meaning the woman had experienced at the time of her mother's and grandmother's deaths and now at her husband's death. Indeed, synchronicities sometimes deliver dark content which one might otherwise avoid or repress. There are also instances in which a coincidence may not be a synchronicity at all but may be considered such by someone suffering from mental illness or inflicted by an inflated ego. Such situations allude to several types of the shadow synchronicity: (1) the dark synchronicity that leads to a painful realization (and sometimes introspection and action); (2) the inflated coincidence (or seeming coincidence) which is mistakenly identified as syn-

chronicity; and (3) instances in which the trickster inverts or trips up the individual in a synchronicity.

Chapter 11 recounted Esther's dream sequence in which she had observed someone being smothered only to awaken to the realization that it was she who was being stifled. The following event, which Esther also relayed, occurred a few days after the dream and reinforced the dream's message:

> It was the final Sunday of an eight-week promotion at my church. Every Sunday school teacher had been admonished to increase their class attendance by twenty percent during this time. Usually at the end of such a promotion, the teacher who had brought in the most new people would be awarded a plaque or given a certificate. However, this was not to be the case that day. Instead, the pastor stood at the podium and asked that the teacher with the *lowest* increase in enrollment be escorted forward. This happened to be a frail woman of about fifty who worked with nursery-school children. She had not met the goal of increasing the nursery school attendees by twenty percent. So she was escorted to the front of the auditorium by two deacons. The pastor then asked that the cheerleaders from the Christian elementary school come forward to lead in a special "cheer."
>
> Just before the "cheer" began, the pastor knelt behind the pulpit, as was often the case when he led the congregation in prayer, but this time he pulled something out from behind it—an old milk can, the kind which had been used on dairy farms for centuries. It was beaten up, rusty, and splattered with mud, broken glass, and scraps of garbage. "Before we start," he said, "I just want to award Nancy [not her name] this ugly cup for her poor service." With a deacon on either side of her, Nancy was forced to stand facing the congregation holding the filthy (and quite heavy) metal milk can—to the amusement of many of the congregants. Then the pastor motioned to the cheerleaders who began to chant over and over: "U-G-L-Y, you ain't got no alibi. You're ugly. Absolutely ugly. Heh! Heh! Heh!"[3]
>
> Congregants joined in the second time through, and I watched—horrified—as the poor woman stood there, weighted down by the filthy milk can, taking the abuse. I attempted to cry out on her behalf, but the chanting and laughing had become so fevered that I could not be heard. It was as if a literal version of my dream was playing out before me. The frail woman stood there silently, weighted down by the ugly cup, flanked by deacons who held her in place. In that moment, I grasped my children's hands, pushed past fellow congregants, and left the religion.

The correspondence between Esther's dream and the events she witnessed in the awarding of the ugly cup that day confirmed what her unconscious had known for some time and brought to light that day. This church and its congregants were dying spiritually, and the ugly cup symbolized the decay.

As noted previously, Jung explained that archetypal contents arising from the collective unconscious may be compensatory for the collective as well as the individual. Although others did not leave the church as abruptly as Esther did, many left the church over the ensuing months. Esther has little doubt that

they were as troubled as she had been about how to reconcile the conflicting messages the pastor was delivering in that church and, therefore, had no choice but finally to leave or else succumb to spiritual death.

Sometimes synchronicities are simply misunderstood or nonexistent. As noted in chapter 4, there are some who mistakenly find meaningful connections among unrelated elements or events. "The paranoid or morbid character sees patterns as threatening," Tarnas says (2006b, 35). "An example would be the person who happens to have the same initials as Adolf Hitler [and reads meaning into this]. This would suggest that the individual has a persecution complex." It would not constitute a synchronicity. It's also possible that those who are desperate to find meaning in their lives could try to create it by imposing their own meaning on simple or nonexistent coincidences. Because of the potential for exaggeration and misinterpretation, psychological discernment is essential if one is to identify an actual synchronicity when it occurs. Tarnas quotes Jung as viewing synchronicity as a "defeat for the ego and a victory for the self." In other words, synchronicity corrects the ego; it does not fuel narcissistic tendencies (2006b, 55).

In their book *Synchronicity: Through the Eyes of Science, Myth, and the Trickster* (1996), Allan Combs and Mark Holland discuss the role of the trickster figure in synchronicity. They describe the trickster as the "master of boundaries and transitions" who "surprises mundane reality with the unexpected and the miraculous." Using the Greek deity Hermes to make their case for the trickster in synchronicity, Combs and Holland suggest that Hermes represents the "psychological nexus where transformation occurs." Indeed, Hermes possesses the ability to move between "psychological reality on the one hand and physical reality on the other" (82-84).

The focus in this chapter is on the challenging side of the trickster figure, which is known historically to tease and trip up the individual. As Combs and Holland note, the Coyote trickster of the American Plains Indians is both "clown and creator, gift giver and thief" (1996, 86-87). It is the trickster of mythology who descends with the soul to the underworld. As Combs and Holland explain, "It is Hermes who symbolically conducts our nightly transition to the dream world. In doing so he reenacts his timeless role as guide of souls to Hades." Thus, Hermes guides the individual into the recesses of the unconscious where "events are seen from a perspective that is reversed from that of the daytime world." With the world inside out, the trickster leads the soul through the darkness of the unconscious. Whether it is the "height of inspiration or the depth of depression," Hermes is capable of leading the way although he may take a detour just to challenge one's patience (88-89).

THE SHADOW SIDE OF ANNUNCIATION

There is also a shadow side of annunciation. Edinger points to the term *overshadow* (*episkiazō*) in relation to the Annunciation of Mary which "refers to being enveloped in the cloud of divine presence." The cloud is bright when viewed from the outside but causes darkening when one is enveloped in it (*skia*, shadow, shade)." On the one hand, this overshadowing, Edinger believes, parallels the transfiguration of Christ in Luke 9:34. On the other hand, it magnifies the human element of the Annunciation since illegitimacy was severely judged in first-century Judaism (1987, 22-24).

Although the Annunciation of Mary is often pictured alongside the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden (as seen earlier in figure 0.1 in the Introduction) in order to illustrate the opposing experiences of obedience and disobedience, Edinger asserts that Mary's innocence is not as certain in some renderings, suggesting there was a level of disappointment in both human scenes. According to Edinger, stories of Mary, the mother of Jesus, as an adulteress were common among Jews and Gentiles in the centuries following the life of Christ. However, Edinger believes such "legendary material helps to round out the Annunciation . . . as a human experience" (1987, 23-24).

THE SOMBER ANGEL AND ANNUNCIATION

The discussion of the dark side of annunciation suggests that a consideration of the dark side of the angel is called for as well. While the image of Satan and the fallen angels are common features of the Christian landscape, representing sin, temptation, transgression, and evil, there is another aspect of the angel which has yet to be considered. This is the dark angel, a somewhat different creature. It is neither the luminous white-winged figure of heaven, nor is it the red-tailed demon of hell. Instead, it is the grave or somber angel, the equivalent of Jung's shadow, which commands the moment of annunciation, demands the attention of its target audience, and inspires the individual's journey. Such an angel appeared to guard Eden after the fall. Such angels are noted in the annunciations of Muhammad and Black Elk as well.

Six hundred years after the Annunciation of Mary, Muhammad received an announcement from the angel Gabriel. It occurred during the night on the seventeenth day of Ramandan as Muhammad lay sleeping in a cave. As Karen Armstrong explains, "Muhammad was torn from sleep and felt himself enveloped by a devastating divine presence" (1993, 137). Muhammad experienced the dark side of the annunciation, and, like Mary, he would be expected to bear the divine Logos. Immediately, the angel Gabriel gripped Muhammad and commanded him to "Recite!" But Muhammad answered, "I

am not a reciter!" Then, as Armstrong describes it, Gabriel "simply enveloped [Muhammad] in an overpowering embrace, so that he felt as if all the breath was being squeezed from his body." The angel released him and commanded again that he "Recite!" Still refusing, Muhammad found himself pressed by Gabriel a third time. After this, the following words of God spilled from his lips: "Recite in the name of thy Sustainer, who has created—created man out of a germ-cell! Recite—for thy Sustainer is the Most Bountiful, One who has taught [man] the use of the pen—taught him what he did not know!" (137). One might think that the visitation of the angel Gabriel and the direct words of God would have left Muhammad awestruck. But as Armstrong explains, "Muhammad came to himself in terror and revulsion, horrified to think he might have become a mere disreputable [soothsayer]" (137).

Ready to fling himself off the mountain, Muhammad experienced a vision which he later shared with others. In the vision, Gabriel stood "in the form of a man with feet astride the horizon." Every direction Muhammad turned, Gabriel was there. There literally was no escape. As Armstrong adds, Gabriel "was no pretty naturalistic angel, but an overwhelming ubiquitous presence from which escape was impossible" (1993, 138). Fearing for his life, he crawled home. It was only through revealing what had happened to his trusted wife Khadija that Muhammad would come to accept the annunciation—that he would be the vessel through which the word of God would enter the Arabic world (139).

It would seem that Gabriel, the archangel of annunciation, is much more than the gentle figure of Renaissance art. He is a powerful mediator who simultaneously strides the horizons and takes one's breath away. The visitation of the angel Gabriel and his subsequent messages to Muhammad were not easily heard or translated. Muhammad struggled over twenty-three years to bring to light the contents of the messages which Gabriel delivered. As he later reported, the messages were always painful. They were also not easy for him to understand. Armstrong quotes Muhammad as saying: "Sometimes it comes unto me like the reverberations of a bell, and that is the hardest upon me; the reverberations abate when I am aware of their message" (1993, 140). Indeed, the angel speaks through the pulsating voice of the cosmos.

In addition, the angel delivered the messages through conscious visions and semi-conscious states, both of which left Muhammad wrenched with pain and the difficult task of articulating the messages in Arabic. Armstrong suggests that

> it is not surprising that Muhammad found the revelations such an immense strain: not only was he working through to an entirely new political solution for his people, but he was composing one of the great spiritual and literary classics of all time. (1993, 140)

She further states that Muhammad's own growth is evident in the Qur'an. As the time passed, his concerns widened until they were "universal in scope" (140).

Evidence from the Qur'an and Muhammad's own statements reveals the serious nature of the messages which Gabriel bore. The presence of the somber angel, then, does not signify the presence of evil. Instead, it signals the conveyance of sobering information or insight into what once lay hidden. As Muhammad's experiences show, the process by which these dark contents come to light is often dreadful, painful, and inescapable. However, when embraced and interpreted, the dark angel's somber message contributes to a widening vision and a broader understanding on the part of the individual (in this case Muhammad) and/or the *ummah* (the community of believers which comprise Islam).

ANNUNCIATION AS TRANSFORMATION

In *Black Elk Speaks*, Black Elk[4] witnesses the arrival of the ominous dark angels when he was but five years old, although he remembers having heard their voices as early as the age of four. A thunderstorm was approaching and from the dark clouds came two spirit guides who "sang a sacred song" to the drumbeat of the thunder. Black Elk recounts the chant: "Behold, a sacred voice is calling you; All over the sky a sacred voice is calling." Then he watches as the beings fly directly towards him and then suddenly turn toward the horizon leaving him in the wake of a raging thunderstorm (1932/1972, 18-19).

Another of these beings confronts Black Elk at age nine with this announcement: "It is time; now they are calling you," at which point the young boy falls ill and enters an expansive visionary state in which he not only realizes his calling but also envisages the future suffering of his people, the loss of the buffalo, and the broken circle or sacred hoop. This dark vision informs his vocation and directs his life ministry. After recounting his life story so that it might be preserved for posterity, Black Elk comments on the visionary gift he felt he squandered: "And I, to whom so great a vision was given in my youth,—you see me now a pitiful old man who has done nothing, for the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead" (20-21).

In a postscript to Black Elk's narrative, author John G. Neihardt says that after recounting his life story, Black Elk asked to return to the mountaintop where he had been taken by his spirit guides in his childhood vision. The trip was arranged, and Neihardt recalls Black Elk telling his son Ben: "Something should happen to-day. If I have any power left, the thunder beings of the west should hear me when I send a voice, and there should be at least a

little thunder and a little rain" (1932/1972, 271). Neihardt took note of the fact that it was a sunny day in one of the worst seasons of drought in many years. However, as Black Elk stood on the mountain and cried out to the Great Spirit, a "striking coincidence," as Neihardt calls it, occurred. Upon Black Elk's admonition to the spirits that they nourish whatever "small root of the sacred tree" remains, Neihardt reports that "thin clouds had gathered . . . A scant chill rain began to fall and there was low, muttering thunder without lightning." Black Elk stood in the rain weeping as he cried out, "O make my people live!" (273-74). This powerful and numinous synchronicity or renewal came at the end of a life of heartbreak for Black Elk. It represents the future rebirth of the people, the archaic roots holding fast, awaiting new rain.

Certainly other visitations of the dark angel and accompanying synchronicities might be described here. However, the point has been made. The dark angel does not necessarily announce the kinds of events for which one hopes. Yet it does announce what one must do—if one is to be transformed.

NOTES

1. In Greek tradition, the *daimon* or *daemon* serves as another term for a god, lesser deity, attendant spirit, or demon according to *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (s.v. "daimon"). Philo of Alexandria used the term *daemon* to refer to the angel (Schenck 2005, 120). However, Augustine warned early Christians to avoid the Platonists's *daemons*, stating that whenever the term comes up in the scripture, it refers "only to wicked spirits" (ca. 426, 298). In *The Soul's Code* (1996), James Hillman uses the term *daimon* interchangeably with other terms such as *soul* or *angel* (10, 12).

2. Even though the term continues to draw criticism, it should be remembered that "it opened up the way for the modern mind to re-engage other dimensions of reality and experiences" (R. Tarnas, pers. comm.).

3. Apparently, the pastor took the opening line from a song entitled "UGLY" by Fishbone from *Fishbone EP*, which had been released September 21, 1985.

4. Poet and historian John G. Neihardt recorded the life story of Black Elk as related to him through an interpreter, Black Elk's son Ben. A shaman as his father before him, Black Elk was also the second cousin of Crazy Horse and a member of the Oglala Sioux nation (Neihardt 1932/1972, xv-xix).

Chapter Thirteen

Individuation and Redemption

Many have noted the spiritual, if not the transcendent, implications of synchronicity. Main asserts, for example, that Jung left the discussion of synchronicity sufficiently open enough to accommodate a "transpersonal or spiritual dimension" (2004, 35). In a later discussion of synchronicity, Main suggests that synchronicities point to an *inferred transcendent* realm which some people imagine "as a spiritual dimension inhabited by a plurality of higher beings: gods, demons, angels, ancestors, and so on." He notes that the human ability to perceive an array of higher beings "reflects [the] diverse features of our psychological makeup" (2007, 55).

According to Mansfield, synchronicities provide opportunities for understanding the interrelatedness between the internal (psychic) and external (physical) states and offer "abundant evidence that a superior intelligence takes a particular and specific interest in our psychological and spiritual development" (1995, 199). Further clarifying his point, Mansfield identifies this world as a vale of *soul-making* to describe the process of individuation which is facilitated oftentimes by synchronistic events (6).

JUNG IN THE SHAMANIC TRADITION

Clearly, Jung was interested in facilitating the process of soul-making. Like the shaman who carries on the family tradition as healer of the soul, Jung picked up the mantle of minister from his forebears. However, he faced the difficult task of forging a new path as the rituals and beliefs of the Christian tradition had become static and meaningless for him. The meaning of the Holy Trinity, for example, had been lost to Jung's own father, himself a minister, who carried out the tradition of those before him—but without the meaning (1963, 52-53). In the shamanic tradition, Jung became, as Mircea

Eliade called the shaman, a "specialist in the human soul" (quoted in Aziz 1990, 11).

Aziz explains that the shaman oversees the "spiritual crisis" or "creative illness" of the individual and is in the unique position of guiding that person through the underworld and back into the light:

> Like the shamanic initiate who enters the spirit world under the direction of the old master shaman, the modern day analysand is too led into the mysteries of the unconscious by a "knowing advisor" who has himself undergone such a journey. As with the shamanic initiation, the knowing advisor serves as a guide only, with the real burden of the work falling on the initiate himself. (1990, 14)

Jung's insistence that his analysands confront painful content as it arose is a testament to his powers as a minister to those in spiritual turmoil. Jung recognized that the individual could not achieve "vicarious atonement," but must "walk the path and bear the burden of the suffering that is invariably part of this process of transformation," the coming into full knowledge of the Self (14). At the same time, he recognized that, for some (especially those for whom organized religion had lost its meaning), a new approach would be needed.

As Jung explains in "Transformation Symbolism in the Mass" (1954), "the numinous experience of the individuation process is, on the archaic level, the prerogative of shamans and medicine men; later, of the physician, prophet, and priest; and finally . . . of philosophy and religion" (1969m, par. 448). Tracing the development of the individuation process from archaic to medieval times, Jung concludes that the individual by medieval times could not help but see his or her need to be transformed and the necessity of becoming psychologically prepared for that transformation. This, Jung states, was accomplished through the acts of "confession and repentance of sin" and through the promise of release from the "imprisonment of matter" (par. 448).

In the modern world, Jung explains that the psychologist can do no more than provide "a description, couched in scientific symbols, of a psychic process whose real nature transcends consciousness just as much as does the mystery of life or matter." The psychologist cannot explain the mystery itself. He or she can only, "in accordance with the spirit of Christian tradition, [bring the mystery] a little nearer to individual consciousness." The process of individuation is "an actual and experienceable fact" that points to this mystery (1969m, 448).

JUNG'S RESPONSE TO THE SHIFTING RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

In his 1937 Terry lectures, Jung asserted that analytical psychology provides an avenue for reenacting the personal religious experience. Mass religiosity had led to the deadening of the personal religious experience for many people as they repeated religious rituals without understanding their original purpose and without reaching their intended outcome—an interface with what Otto described as the *numinosum*. Jung believed, however, that one could experience the *numinous* personally as one comes to know the *Self*, an authentic reflection of God (1969c, par. 6-7).

Some have criticized Jung, accusing him of drawing people away from organized religion. But Jung was not guilty of this accusation. He intentionally distinguished between Christian adherents for whom the message of the Church is still viable and those for whom the message had lost its meaning. As Jung states, "I am not . . . addressing myself to the happy possessors of faith, but to those many people for whom the light has gone out, the mystery has faded, and God is dead." For the latter, Jung believed that analytical psychology could provide a portal through which the faith-challenged individual is able to experience the divine (1969c, par. 148).

Even though religious rituals such as the Catholic sacraments are attempts to reproduce the *numinous*, Jung believed that the *numinous* most often erupted spontaneously and gripped the individual. The example of Saul's encounter with the *numinosum* on the road to Damascus illustrates Jung's point. Struck by the *numinosum*, Saul falls to the ground as though against his will. The conversion of Saul into Paul, Jung suggests, includes "the experience of the *numinosum*" coupled with a "trust or loyalty, faith and confidence in a certain experience of *numinous* nature and in the change of consciousness that ensues" (1969c, par. 5-9).

The point is that Paul could no longer be Saul following his experience of the *numinosum* (in this case the Holy Spirit). The scripture illustrates Paul's conversion when he regains his sight: "It was as though scales fell away from his eyes and immediately he was able to see again" (Acts 9:17-18 NJB). Paul's attitude, indeed his entire purpose, stood transformed by a power beyond his once-limited egocentric view, a power that commanded his attention and elicited his devotion. Indeed, Paul manifests the "marks of religious experience" which Jung deemed essential. According to Hans Schaer, Jung believed the religious experience was characterized by "its kinship with experience of the numinous, its absoluteness, and its quality of wholeness" (1950, 20).

JUNG, EMPIRICIST AND PHENOMENOLOGIST

While he identified himself as an empiricist, Jung admitted that his scientific work extended beyond the collection and classification of facts since "experience is not even possible without reflection, because 'experience' is a process of assimilation without which there could be no understanding." However, Jung also made it clear that he addresses "psychological matters from a scientific and not from a philosophical standpoint." It is not that Jung considered the philosophical or metaphysical invalid. It is just that philosophy and metaphysics were not among his areas of expertise. This is why, most often, he applied a phenomenological approach to religious truths (1969c, par. 2).

Using the Virgin Birth as an example, Jung explained that because the idea of the Virgin Birth exists, it is a psychological fact. As he saw it, "[psychology] is only concerned with the fact that there is such an idea, but it is not concerned with the question whether such an idea is true or false in any other sense. The idea is psychologically true inasmuch as it exists" (1969c, par. 4). As Schaer explains, for Jung "the psychic is reality, i.e. is real (actual) because it *acts.*" Furthermore, psychic reality is no less real, no less important, nor any less substantial, than physical reality. What Jung wanted people to understand is that just as the physical is governed by "laws, forces, causes, and goals of development, so the psychic has its own energy, its own course of life, its own causes and purposes" (1950, 23).

It is not the scientist's job, Jung argued, to determine to what degree "a psychic content is dependent on and determined by the existence of a metaphysical deity." Such a determination, he claims, is up to the theologian who must also struggle with the concept of God, but from a different perspective than the scientist. However, even the theologian's assumptions are informed by "autonomous psychic content which is defined one way by [the Protestant] and in another by the [Catholic]" (1976c, par. 1507).

While Jung distinguished his role as scientist from that of the theologian, he also made the critical point that theologians are confronted by the additional problem of determining the extent to which a metaphysical deity either does or does not exist and, if believed to exist, how it chooses to reveal itself to the individual. For this reason, Jung argued that it is inappropriate for the practitioner of one religion to judge the extent to which a metaphysical deity is believed to have revealed itself to the adherent of any other religion (1976c, par. 1507).

At the most essential level, the image of God cannot be seen except through each individual's psyche or soul. As Jung explains:

> God has indeed made an inconceivably sublime and mysteriously contradictory image of himself, without the help of man, and implanted it in man's unconscious as an archetype . . . not in order that theologians of all times and

> places should be at one another's throats, but in order that the unpresumptuous man might glimpse an image, in the stillness of his soul, that is akin to him and is wrought of his own psychic substance. This image contains everything he will ever imagine concerning his gods or concerning the ground of his psyche. (1976c, par. 1508)

Here Jung suggests the origin of the God-image and explains why the image of God (or the deity of any other religion for that matter) is so widely interpreted. Simply put, the God-image, while anchored in the archetype, is uniquely reflective of each individual's psyche or soul.

In summary, depth or analytical psychology developed upon the remnants of a broken traditional religious system in the West. According to Edinger, at one time the church was a collective "container of the Self for a multitude of individuals" who "share[d] a common living myth or deity." Within this container, everyone projected his or her own interior "God-image (the Self)" (1972/1992, 64-65). When that container, the church, faltered in its ability to carry this projected image, then that which had been contained seeped out and returned to the individual who had to deal with it alone. Edinger believes that the loss of the projected God-image has resulted in modern feelings of alienation and an accompanying sense of meaninglessness. However, Edinger also believes that "if [the individual] is able to work consciously and responsibly with the activation of the unconscious he may discover the lost value, the god-image, within the psyche." This means that "the connection between ego and Self is now consciously realized . . . which leads to the development of an individuated personality" (65-68).

THE JUNGIAN MYTH

Lawrence W. Jaffe describes what has come to be known as "the Jungian Myth." As Jaffe says, "The Jungian myth affirms the centrality of the process of individuation," which he describes in three ways: (1) "the lifelong process of becoming a conscious individual"; (2) "the place in this world which, for good or ill, we are intended to fill according to our own nature"; and (3) "the continuing incarnation of God for the purpose of divine transformation." Jaffe believes a "new religion" may be found in connection to Jung's idea that becoming conscious implies the notion of redemption through individuation (1999, 22-23).[1] Returning to the discussion of psychotherapy as new religion, Jaffe explains, "One hoped-for result of both psychotherapy and religion is that the patient/devotee will forge a connection to a power greater than the ego. Jung's term for this power is the Self. The religious term is God" (24). One might concede that this notion is in keeping with the Hebrew scripture which demonstrates that believers from Adam to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets engaged in personal relationships with God. In seeking

consciousness through what Jaffe describes as "new religion," one is attempting to restore a lost companionship with God. However, this time it is a reciprocal relationship based upon the knowledge that God sees Himself reflected in the individual just as the individual sees himself or herself reflected in God (29).

While perhaps one avenue towards "new religion," analytical psychology is certainly not the only path to the divine. On the one hand, Jung recognized and honored the symbols and practices of both Eastern and Western religious paths as long as they held meaning for the individual. On the other hand, Jung offered an alternative route for those who had found the traditional paths inaccessible. Rather than asserting that Jung established "new religion," which implies that analytical psychology has supplanted "old religion," it is more accurate to suggest that he recognized another avenue in the plurality of approaches to the divine. Ultimately, Jung believed, as had fourteenth-century mystic and theologian Meister Eckhart, that each individual's path to God is a personal one.

Eckhart reminded the parishioners of his day of the narrative of the "woman at the well." This woman encountered Jesus at the well, recognized him as the Messiah, and left her water jug behind to go and tell others what she had seen and experienced. However, the townspeople did not take her word for it. They investigated for themselves and found her words to be true. Then, they reportedly said, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have seen him ourselves" (quoted in Eckhart 1941, 119). The point is that each individual must seek his or her own experience of God.

Jung held that while we can neither prove nor disprove God by scientific means, "we can, however, establish that the sense of strangeness connected with the experience of something objective, apparently outside the psyche, is indeed authentic" (1963, 336). Jung attempts to describe this objective reality:

> We know that something unknown, alien, does come our way, just as we know that we do not ourselves *make* a dream or an inspiration, but that it somehow arises of its own accord. What does happen to us in this manner can be said to emanate from mana, from a daimon, a god, or the unconscious. (336)

Because the terms *mana, daimon*, and *god* evoke emotional responses, Jung preferred using the term *the unconscious* for scientific purposes although he admits he "might equally well speak of 'God' or 'daimon' if [he] wished to express [himself] in mythic language" (337). Herein one can see the dichotomous picture of Jung holding the objective view required of the scientist while simultaneously holding the subjective view of the individual in his or her own personal experience of God. From either perspective, one can observe or experience elements of the unconscious as they manifest sporadical-

ly in the theater of one's dreams or upon the field of consciousness. The timing of such events, though, appears to be outside of one's control.

INDIVIDUATION AND REDEMPTION

For Jung, the process of individuation is the coming into full knowledge of one's unique self. It is, according to Jung, the goal of the individual life. The process of coming to know one's self means "to divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona on the one hand, and of the suggestive power of primordial images on the other." It is necessary to pull down the conscious barriers and take off any masks of pretension while opening to the dark or primal content seeking the light of consciousness. The religious conversion, says Jung, illustrates how individuation may be achieved (1966a, par. 266, 270).

Normally, there are "certain external factors" (such as "suggestion") which tend to contribute to the conversion experience of the individual. However, these do not account for all conversions. Jung asserts that those experiences that cannot be accounted for through exterior processes must "rest upon independent interior processes culminating in a change of personality" (199b, par. 270). Jung points to William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* as a compendium of conversion experiences which provide evidence proving that exterior events alone do not account for the experience of conversion (par. 266, 270).

Similarly, Jung explains how individuation may be seen not only as a conversion experience but also as *redemption*. In a letter of response to Reverend David Cox dated September 25, 1957, Jung defends his psychological approach to religion. Reminding Cox that all one really knows is that which is perceived by the psyche, Jung asserts that what he "know[s] of regular religious phenomena seems to indicate that they are psychic events." Seeing religious phenomena in this way, Jung says, is only problematic for those theologians who, like Cox, believe the psyche (and, therefore, the psychological approach) must be devalued (1976a, par. 1648-49).

Jung suggested that the individual re-envisage the psyche as a location for engaging revealed truth and expanding one's consciousness in order to revivify the symbols of Christianity for one's self. In his therapeutic work, Jung learned that the religious need could be expressed through psychological experience if one recognizes that the Christian tradition finds a parallel in the psychological experience. Jung explained that psychological terminology may be substituted for Christian terminology to facilitate this experience. As Jung suggests,

> Instead of using the term God you say "unconscious," instead of Christ "self," instead of incarnation "integration of the unconscious," instead of salvation or

> redemption "individuation," instead of crucifixion or sacrifice on the Cross "realization of the four functions" or of "wholeness." (1976a, par. 1664)

In substituting psychological for religious terminology, Jung also notes that "religious tradition . . . coincides with psychological experience." Jung further states, "I think it is no disadvantage to religious tradition if we can see how far it coincides with psychological experience. On the contrary it seems to me a most welcome aid in understanding religious traditions" (par. 1664). If one takes Jung at his word, then one ought to be able to establish further parallels between religious and psychological terms. This would include (but would not be limited to) pointing out correlations between the term archetype and angel, the shadow and the somber angel, and synchronicity and annunciation.

In establishing corresponding terminology between religion and psychology, Jung was able to help his analysands revitalize their understanding of the Christian myth and where they stand in relation to it. As he states,

> It is my practical experience that psychological understanding immediately revivifies the essential Christian ideas and fills them with the breath of life. This is because our worldly light, i.e., scientific knowledge and understanding, coincides with the symbolic statement of the myth, whereas previously we were unable to bridge the gulf between knowing and believing. (1976a, par. 1666)

Here Jung emphasizes the potential for bridging the gap between scientific *knowledge* and religious *belief* through analytical psychology.

For Jung, "Science is an honest-to-God attempt to get at the truth and its rule is never to assert more than one can prove within reasonable and defensible limits" (1976a, par. 1671). Yet Jung admits that where religion is concerned, this proves problematic at best since even the church is at odds with itself. For who knows, asks Jung, which church is the true church, which religion the true religion, or which faith the right faith (par. 1673-74)? And who among the community of believers is allowed to utter the alien truth without being ostracized (par. 1676)? Such questions demonstrate why Jung found it useful to substitute modern psychological terminology for traditional Christian terminology. It frees the analysand from any perceived expectation that he or she must defend a particular creed or dogma. It also enables the analysand to grapple with the unconscious and often dark content without fear of reprisal, condemnation, or judgment.

CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN ANNUNCIATION AND SYNCHRONICITY

A number of correspondences might be made between the religious concept of annunciation and the psychological theory of synchronicity (table 13.1). These parallels, and the degree to which each set of parallels corresponds, indicate Jung's attentiveness to the framework of Christianity as he formulated his approach to analytical psychology in general and the process of individuation in particular. It is important to note that this chart is based on a fundamental principle established in chapter 3—that both annunciation and synchronicity are forms of revelation.

Table 13.1 illustrates how annunciation and synchronicity are both unique but parallel concepts. Almost all of the correlations illustrated in the chart have been examined in this study. The main difference between the two, of course, is that annunciation is considered a religious concept whereas synchronicity is a psychological concept. Given this fact, one must expect a number of variations between the two concepts. Still, on the micro-level, the subcategories and the list of characteristics under each suggest how the concepts may be seen to correspond. On the macro-level, the concepts are unified initially as forms of revelation and finally as forms of soul-making.

Additional parallels may be made between annunciation and synchronicity. The concept of the threshold between the temporal and eternal or between the conscious and unconscious realms appears to correspond. The dream state, for example, illustrates the lowered threshold (or liminal state) in which unconscious content can surface as in the scarab appearing first to Jung's analysand in a dream. In annunciation, the dream state provided the perfect situation for Gabriel to speak to Joseph (to whom Mary was espoused) since his guard was down. Otherwise, he might have objected or ignored the angel in his concern over what he believed to be Mary's indiscretion. In the Matthew account, Joseph is portrayed as being troubled by Mary's pregnancy. The cognitive dissonance he experienced over Mary's ostensible infidelity served to heighten his emotional state. The subsequent dream in which Gabriel appears to ease Joseph's mind effectively resolves the inner dissension and enables him to trust that Mary was still the faithful woman to whom he was espoused (Matt. 1:19-21 NJB). As noted in chapter 1, Jung describes synchronicity as "the coincidence of a psychic state in the observer with a simultaneous, objective, external event that corresponds to the psychic state or content" (1969h, par. 984). Joseph's experience is as much a synchronicity as it is an annunciation.

The fact that even the thresholds of consciousness align when comparing annunciation and synchronicity implies a significant relationship between the two concepts and suggests how Jung attempted to help his analysands achieve a form of redemption through the process of individuation. Among

Table 13.1. A Comparison of Annunciation and Synchronicity

Annunciation (religious form of revelation)	**Synchronicity** (psychological form of revelation)
Conditions/Time	
Providence (right moment)	Synchronous (same moment)
A priori/Eternal (metaphysical)	A priori/Eternal (atemporal)
Causality/Acausality	
Miraculous	Acausal
Constellation of events	Constellation of events
Nonlocality	Nonlocality
Teleological	Teleological
Location of Meaning	
Soul	Psyche/Soul
Inner/Outer	Inner/Outer
Nature of Meaning	
Transcendent	Transcendent
Numinous	Numinous
Logos	Logos
Arranger of Meaning	
God	Cosmos /Self Archetype
Angel	Psychoid Archetype
–deliver meaning	–deliver meaning
–constellate meaning	–constellate meaning
–arrange	–arrange
–disrupt	–disrupt
–compensate	–compensate
Structural Components	
Celestial Realm	Collective Unconscious
Hierarchical Structure	Archetypal Structure
Angels	Archetypes
–embody form & meaning	–embody form & meaning
–teleological	–teleological
–embody numinosity	–embody numinosity
Results/Effects	
Revelation	Revelation

	Understanding	Understanding
	Healing	Healing
	Correction (flesh/desire)	Correction (ego/desire)
	Spiritual growth	Spiritual growth
	Transformation (religious and/or spiritual)	Transformation (psychological and/or spiritual)
Ultimate Goals		
	Redemption	Individuation
	Realizing God within	Realizing Self within
	Soul-making	Soul-making

A Comparison of Annunciation and Synchronicity. Author's chart.

the most dramatic annunciations and synchronicities are those in which the conscious threshold is transcended by the intensity or urgency of revelation. Muhammad's annunciation is a prime example of such intensity as are the synchronicities of those who have experienced the direct revelation of their life's purpose such as Augustine and Petrarch.

In addition, the attitude of the individual who prepares for annunciation or synchronicity appears to be similar in that he or she is open and receptive. Annunciation, as noted in chapter 2, embodies the concept of the virgin. "The soul is virginal," Moore says, "as it waits to receive the greeting of the angel" (1994, 18). The virgin is patient, open, contemplative, and expectant. She is "poised to receive the angel" at the moment of Annunciation (28). The individual who prepares for the possibility of synchronicity is also open and receptive. In addition, such an individual has developed "a disciplined alertness" that enables him or her to recognize synchronicities as "sources of potential psychological and spiritual significance" (Tarnas 2006a, 56).

Whereas annunciations and synchronicities can penetrate the threshold of consciousness in their intensity or urgency, it is often the case that some preparatory work has occurred internally or unconsciously prior to such a dramatic revelation. Such was the case with Muhammad, for example, who often went to the mountain to meditate and who was, therefore, prepared for the visitation of the angel. Such was the case with Augustine whose internal struggle over whether or not to convert to Christianity erupted into a spontaneous conversion experience.

While it would be an exaggeration to suggest that annunciation and synchronicity are interchangeable ideas, clearly they are compatible, and it is likely that the concept of annunciation is a precursor of the theory of synchronicity. Tarnas asserts that Jung initially perceived archetypes as limited to the realm of the human psyche. Over time, however, "Jung began to open up the possibility of a fundamental redefinition of both the modern religious

situation and the scientific world picture, beyond the closed universe of the spiritually aspiring psyche encompassed by a disenchanted world" (2006a, 60). Indeed, Jung would come to believe, says Tarnas, that "nature itself supports the unfolding of human spirituality and each person's struggle towards individuation" (59).

THE ANGEL OF SYNCHRONICITY

Given the parallels between annunciation and synchronicity, it seems reasonable to claim that the set of religious and psychological elements might, at times, overlap. Such a case could be made in the instance of anthropologist Wayne Olts who lost his wife of 40 years to cancer in December, 2005.[2] Understandably, Wayne found himself engulfed in unutterable grief. As an anthropologist and knowing the importance of documenting events, however, Wayne made himself the subject of his own exposé on grief. Over the course of the days and months following his wife's death, he documented the face of grief by photographing his own.

Nearly a year later, in November, 2006, Wayne participated in an exhibition at the Gavilan College Fine Arts Gallery entitled "Passing Through: Personal Expressions of Life, Love, and Loss." Here along with a number of other artists Wayne posted a progression of self portraits through his initial year of grief. I attended the opening reception to support Wayne who was going to speak publicly about his wife for the first time since her memorial service nearly a year before.

Stepping up to the microphone, Wayne pulled out a folded page of notes and drew a deep breath. His voice quivered as he began to speak. He paused, as if to muster the strength to continue. Everyone in attendance was enveloped with Wayne in this moment of wrenching grief. Then, somewhere off in the distance bells began to ring, tinkling out the tune of "Bridge over Troubled Water." Those in attendance were privy to the comforting hymn which gently punctured the heavy grief that night and strengthened Wayne in this most intimate confession.

Certainly this was a synchronicity. The time was just so. The conditions were aligned. The need was pressing. The interior and exterior events had constellated in that moment to uphold and console Wayne. Could a clearer message have been delivered? Following Wayne, an artist stepped up to speak. Her topic and the product of her grief were the angels of the Bardo which she had sculpted in the absence of her loved one. Indeed, it seemed as though she had brought the angels with her that evening, and they had delivered a comforting message in this dark sharing of grief.

NOTES

1. Once again, a connection between annunciation and synchronicity might be made here. For just as annunciation leads to redemption, so do synchronicities pave the way for individuation.
2. Wayne Olts shared this experience in a personal interview in 2006.

Conclusion

Like annunciation, synchronicity defines the moment at which the eternal touches the temporal. The concept of synchronicity, just as annunciation, is inextricably bound to long-held beliefs about the eternal. The deep structural archetypes which Jung asserted are activated during synchronicities might well be compared to the celestial hierarchies since both refer to a realm of *a priori* knowledge from which all that is emanates and to which all that is corresponds. Furthermore, since both sets of ideas arise from the individual's teleological need to realize and actualize his or her own purpose, the Christian concept of redemption and the kingdom of God within may be seen to parallel the process of individuation and the realization of Self. The final correlation between synchronicity and annunciation becomes clear when one considers both concepts as forms of soul-making. If such comparisons are possible, then it is possible to imagine angels participating in synchronicity: manifesting at critical moments, constellating inner and outer events, and facilitating the process that leads to individuation and a greater cosmic consciousness.

In his book *In Search of Angels* (1993), David Connolly writes about discovering through responses to a questionnaire which he had distributed that most people who claim to have communicated with angels did not actually see or hear them. As Connolly explains,

> These men and women stated that their perception of the presence of angels was experienced chiefly on the level of their feelings or intuition, or in the heightened sense of awareness many people have during circumstances of extraordinary "coincidence," or "synchronicity." (25)

In other words, most respondents intuited the presence of what they described as angels during synchronicities. Admittedly, the idea that angels

may not appear visibly does not prove that angels are present in synchronicity. However, such an idea does open the door for considering the angel (however imagined) as present in synchronicities.

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