

EVOLUTION, JUNG, AND THEURGY

Their Role in Modern Neoplatonism

Bruce MacLennan

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan>

The soul must take the hint from the relics our scientists have so marvelously gathered out of the forgotten past, and from the hint develop a new living utterance. The spark is from dead wisdom, but the fire is life.

— D. H. Lawrence

I. Introduction

This article explores the rich cross-connections between Neoplatonism, Jungian psychology, and evolutionary neuroethology, which provide three mutually consistent perspectives on human nature, each illuminating the others. My emphasis in this article is on the insights that Jungian psychology and evolutionary neuroethology can bring to Neoplatonism; in particular, I will use them to explicate theurgical practices.

Since I will be appealing to evolution, genetics, and neuroscience, it might be supposed that I am advocating a materialist reduction of Neoplatonism, but I am not. Rather, I will adopt the ordinary neuropsychological perspective that the phenomenological reality of psychological states and processes is not negated by their correlation with neurological processes. Therefore, it does not contradict the reality of the archetypal Ideas to propose evolutionary neurophysiological explanations of them. In this way we may begin to integrate physical, psychical, and spiritual phenomena into a comprehensive theory.

II. Evolutionary Neuroethology and the Archetypes

Instincts are perceptual and behavioral structures characteristic of each species. They are coupled to the species'

environment of evolutionary adaptedness; this is the term evolutionary biologists use to refer to the environment in which the species has evolved and to which it has become adapted through natural selection. These innate perceptual-behavioral structures are common to all members of the species and change very slowly (at evolutionary timescales).

As a species, *Homo sapiens* also has innate perceptual-behavioral structures, although there is scientific disagreement about what, specifically, they are. It is fundamentally an empirical question, although often distorted by ideology. For my argument, all that is essential is that we grant that such structures exist.

The instincts define a life-cycle pattern for each member of the species, which unfolds through the developmental program encoded in the genome. That is, the *phylogenetic* pattern, encoded in the genome, is expressed *ontogenetically* by the individual's development in, and interaction with, its environment. A particular organism's environment may differ from its species' environment of evolutionary adaptedness, which is especially the case with modern humans.

The archetypes of the collective unconscious are the psychological aspects of the innate perceptual-behavioral structures of the human species.¹ For example, Jung (*CW* 8, ¶404) says,

To the extent that the archetypes intervene in the shaping of conscious contents by regulating, modifying, and motivating them, they act like the instincts.

Thus the archetypes are not innate *images*, but *dynamic forms* shaping perception and behavior. Together they constitute the *collective unconscious*, so called because they are common to all humans and because they are unconscious until activated by a *releasing stimulus* (which may be internal or external). As Jung (*CW* 9, pt. 1, ¶91) remarks,

¹ Space does not permit a detailed exploration of the relation between the archetypes, studied by Jungian psychologists, and the evolutionary foundations of the instincts, studied by neuroethologists. My arguments are based on Stevens (1982, 1993), which should be consulted for a comprehensive presentation.

The hypothesis of the collective unconscious is ... no more daring than to assume that there are instincts.

When an archetype is activated, it causes the releasing situation or relationship to be experienced as numinous and significant; the individual may feel predisposed or even compelled to act in evolutionarily relevant ways. Mating behavior is the clearest example.

III. Connections with Neoplatonism

Jung's Debt to Neoplatonism

For our purposes, the important point is that the archetypes are essentially the Platonic Ideas. This, in itself, is not a new notion, nor is it surprising. Indeed, Jung (*CW* 9, pt. 1, ¶5) says, “‘Archetype’ is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic εἶδος,” and he cites its use by Philo Judaeus (*De opf. mundi*, I.69), Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.*, II.7.5), the *Corpus Hermeticum* (I.8, II.12), and pseudo-Dionysius (*De cael. hier.*, II.4; *De div. nom.*, I.6); the term is also used by Plotinus (e.g., 5.1.4). Indeed Jung (*CW* 8, ¶154) defines archetypes as

active living dispositions, ideas in the Platonic sense, that preform and continually influence our thoughts and feelings and actions.

Certainly Jung seems to have been influenced more directly by Gnosticism than by Neoplatonism, for the Gnostics, as Jung (1965, 200) says,

had been confronted with the primal world of the unconscious and had dealt with its contents, with images that were obviously contaminated with the world of instinct.

But Gnosticism itself has many connections with Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism. Eventually Jung became interested in alchemy because he saw it as a “bridge that led from Gnosticism — or neo-Platonism — to the contemporary world” (*op. cit.*, 201).

As psychologist James Hillman (1975a, 198) remarks, “There are striking likenesses between the main themes of Neoplatonism and archetypal psychology.” He notes (Hillman 1975b) that although Jung cites Neoplatonists infrequently, he was

inspired at an early stage of his career by the Neoplatonist scholar Friedrich Creuzer, who later edited the works of Plotinus, Proclus, and Olympiodorus. Jung (1965, 162) says that he “read like mad” Creuzer’s *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker*, and “worked with feverish interest” through this Neoplatonic analysis of mythology. Hillman refrains from claiming a direct dependence of Jung on Plotinus via Creuzer, but he does

want to suggest, and strongly, that the reason Jung was so fired by Creuzer was because he and Creuzer shared the same spirit, a profoundly similar psychological attitude, an archetypal attitude, which tradition calls Neoplatonist (Hillman 1975b, 149).

He notes further affinities, calling the Florentine Neoplatonist and theurgist Marsilio Ficino the Renaissance patron of archetypal psychology (1975a, 200), and claiming, “Ficino was writing, not philosophy as has always been supposed, but an archetypal psychology” (1975a, 202). (See also Hillman 1975b on Ficino.)

In summary, there is reason to conclude that Jung was influenced by Neoplatonism both directly and indirectly (via Gnosticism and alchemy), but even were he not, *we* can see the connections now and use each to illuminate the other.

Characteristics of the Archetypes

To understand the relevance of the archetypes to Neoplatonism, we can begin by observing that an archetype is incompletely manifested in any particular concrete situation, which leads to it being recognized as existing independently as a field of structured potentiality. Thus an archetype is an independent, universal form guiding perception and behavior.

Since many of the human instincts govern our relations with other humans, the most familiar archetypes are personified. Indeed, as Jung stresses, the archetypes behave as autonomous personalities, independent of our conscious control. As a consequence, the personified archetypes are experienced as gods, and the relations among them provide the basic structure of mythology.

However, it is a mistake to think the archetypes are “merely psychological,” with the implication that they are in some way imaginary and subjective. Rather, they are objectively real in that they are *empirical*, *stable*, and *public*. They are empirical in that their existence and character can be inferred from their effects in experience; they are stable in that they are (relatively) unchanging; and they are public in that they are common to all humans. (Thus Jung calls the collective unconscious the *objective psyche*.) Therefore, the archetypes exist, but not in a physical way; they are immaterial forms governing the dynamics of perception and behavior. In this sense the archetypes are as real as the human genome, the laws of nature, and the laws of mathematics.

The archetypes are a source of transcendent meaning because they integrate individual lives into the greater patterns of humanity and the universe; the archetypes give transpersonal meaning and significance to situations and relationships in human life. Archetypally meaningful situations or relationships are numinous (that is, hallowed, miraculous, uncanny, supernatural, or the like); being in love is a familiar example (Stevens 1982, 67–8, 199), a θεῖα μανία (divine madness).

Hitherto I have stressed the grounding of the archetypal Ideas in human genetics. However, it is essential to recognize, as did Jung (*CW* 8, ¶420), that any physical process that has a psychical aspect and is common to all people is, by definition, archetypal (Stevens 1982, 71). Therefore any natural law will be archetypal, provided that it also has a psycho-spiritual aspect, that is, provided that it conditions perception, behavior, and meaningful experience. As Marie-Louise von Franz (1974, 7) says, “The lowest collective level of our psyche is simply pure nature.”

Human instincts mostly mediate interrelations among humans, therefore most of the archetypes are personified (that is, experienced as personalities: the gods). In contrast, the non-human-specific archetypes are not usually personified, and so they are experienced more as impersonal forces, but with a psychical aspect. For example, all animals make distinctions, and the experiences of discriminating one thing from another, and of settling into a course of action, *are* archetypal experiences, which

are correlated to fundamental neural processes. Therefore dichotomy and decision may have a numinous quality. The laws of nature obey the laws of mathematics, and like a true Pythagorean, Jung thought that the most fundamental archetypes are numerical (von Franz 1974, 9–10, 12–13, ch. 3). So, for example, duality (the Dyad) is the archetypal Idea underlying experiences of dichotomy, opposition, or clear differentiation.

IV. Some Implications for Neoplatonism

The Primal Nous and the Noetic Order

The archetypal Ideas are the psychical correlates of the perceptual-behavioral structures common to all human beings and so the archetypal Ideas are implicit in the human genome. However, there is no reason to suppose any simple correspondence between the individual archetypes and particular genes, each of which may have a large number of effects (Wilson 1975, 198). Thus the archetypes are implicit in the genome, and become explicit only when expressed in the psyche of a living organism. That is, in the genome the archetypal Ideas are “all in all, but each in its own way” (πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἑκάστῳ), which is how Proclus described the Henads (e.g., *El. Th.* pr. 118), which exist in an undifferentiated unity in the One. We may compare them to the spectrum of colors hidden in white light.

The genome corresponds to the unified archetypal Form or Idea from which all other archetypal Ideas derive, the εἶδος εἰδῶν (Form of Forms), in Proclus’ terms, the παράδειγμα (model) of the archetypal world (*Pl. Th.* III.15; Siovanes 1996, 164). In many respects, therefore, the genome can be seen as the abstract form corresponding to the hypostasis known as the Primal Nous, the Pure Nous, the First God, and so forth. Significantly, Syrianus says that the νοητά (“intelligibles”) exist in τὸ ἀντοζῶον, the “abstract animal” or “animal itself” (O’Meara 1989, 136), surely a good term for the genome.

However, we must recall that the human genome is a mathematical abstraction, and no living person has precisely this “ideal” form. Since we each have a different genotype, it is

possible, at least, that the archetypes are slightly different for each of us.

The Demiurge and the Noeric Order

Let us return to the biological correlates of the descent of the soul. The genetic material in the zygote governs the development of the fetus, including its brain. Therefore, the archetypal Ideas, which are implicit in the timeless pattern of the genome, come to be embodied in neural structures in the brain. That is, the archetypal Ideas become articulated in distinct information structures, although they are still timeless patterns, hidden unmanifest in the unconscious. They correspond to the νοερά (“intellectuals”), the articulated Ideas in the Logos of the Demiurge, or Second God, the “mediating dyad” who implants the Ideas into the womb of Nature (*Chald. Or.* fr. 8, 37).

It is important to remark that this developmental process is not independent of the environment. Therefore again, there will be individual variation in the corresponding embodied archetypal Ideas, and so they will be experienced slightly different by each person.

The Individual Soul

The articulated archetypal Ideas, the νοερά, are represented by static information structures in the brain, but they manifest to consciousness in dynamic patterns of perception and behavior. That is, the individual ψυχή (animate soul) embodied in the electrochemical activity of the brain, brings the archetypes into manifestation in space and time.

The νοερά, although represented in the material brain, are still fundamentally eternal Forms, which are — ignoring minor individual variation — universal, that is, common to all humans. The ψυχή embodies these Ideas in matter in a more fundamental way, for it particularizes them in a numerically individual body and activates them in particular events in time. The archetypal Ideas become divided and extended in space and time. Thus, ψυχή mediates between eternity and time.

Whether the Soul Descends Completely

A perennial problem in Neoplatonism is whether the soul descends completely, as Iamblichus, Syrianus, and Proclus say, or whether a part of it remains “above” in the noetic realm, as Plotinus says. On the one hand, our genes do not directly produce conscious experience. Thus the genome, and even the individual genotype, remain “above,” like the Ideas in the noetic sphere, where, in their undifferentiated form, the νοητὰ are inaccessible to our minds. On the other hand, the articulated noeric images of the archetypal Ideas are represented in our brains in the structures subserving archetypal behavior. The noeric Ideas are unconscious, that is, not directly accessible to our conscious egos, but under appropriate circumstances they manifest (incompletely) in consciousness, and we can know them in this way. This may happen spontaneously, when something, such as an external stimulus, triggers the activation of an archetype, with a resulting synchronistic coordination of inner, psychical and outer, physical phenomena, or it may be arranged by theurgical practices, directed toward establishing contact with the noeric Ideas, as explained later. Thus, from this perspective, we may conclude that our souls remain rooted in the noeric, or demiurgic sphere, but are cut off from direct connection with the noetic realm.

The Impassivity of the Gods

We can also see that the gods (archetypes) are impassive because our personal experiences do not affect our genotypes. Therefore the gods do not change as a result of our personal experiences; in anthropomorphic terms, they do not respond to us as individuals or remember us, and they relate to us only as members of the human species. (Evolution is considered later.) Although the gods are impassive, they nevertheless may enter into each of our lives at different times and in different ways (as archetypes are activated at different times and in different ways). This individual interaction is mediated by the ψυχή, which thus plays an essential role in our congress with the archetypal gods.

Complexes as Daimôns

The genotype governs the development of the phenotype, in particular, the growth of the individual brain. This is an ongoing process, which begins with the development of the nervous system in the fetus, and continues with the experience-conditioned reorganization of the brain throughout an individual's life. *Complexes*, which are networks of associations, are created by intense or repeated activation of the archetypes in the ontogenetic psyche (Stevens 1982, 65). Therefore, each archetype becomes a nucleus for complexes, which constellate around the *universal* archetypal core, but incorporate *individual* associations, formed according to the laws of similarity and contiguity (Stevens 1982, 65).

Popularly, complexes are thought of as pathological conditions, but from a psychological perspective, they are a normal and necessary part of our psyches, for they mediate between the universal archetypes and our individual lives (Stevens 1982, 65). As Jung (*CW* 8, ¶253) stresses, “complexes behave like independent beings.” That is, each archetypal god engenders δαίμονες (*daimôns*) associated with an individual and constellated from their experiences (Stevens 1982, 66). These δαίμονες are in the god's σείρα (their “line” or “lineage”).

Thus a person's δαίμονες go through life with the person, and each δαίμων's nature is structured from those particulars of the individual's life that are associated with its universal, divine progenitor. Therefore, unlike the archetypal gods, someone's δαίμονες incorporate aspects of that person's biography and experiences, for they have developed out of the life of that person (e.g., Plotinus 3.5.6). Because one's δαίμονες are as much “inside the head” as outside of it, they may incorporate a person's inmost thoughts, fears, hopes, and so forth.

Unfortunately, space does not permit me to discuss such well-known complexes as the Shadow and ego complex, and their relation to the οἰκεῖοι δαίμονες (personal daimôns); see MacLennan (2002).

Possession and Projection

When we are in an archetypal situation, we are effectively under the influence or compulsion of a god or daimôn. Most archetypal situations have two poles, the *subject*, in which the archetype has been activated, and the *object*, often another person, which has activated it. The subject has been seized by the archetype, and we may say they are “possessed” by the god or daimôn. The other pole, the person, group, object, and so forth, at which the archetypal relation is directed, is perceived as especially significant, or numinous, and the subject *projects* an archetypal role onto it. Furthermore, because archetypal Ideas are common to all people, the human recipient of a projection may accept it, and thus become possessed by the projected role. That is, an archetypal relation can result in mutual possession (von Franz 1980, 16–17, 27).

Possession is not necessarily bad; it can be a powerful source of archetypal power and inspiration (von Franz 1980, 29). Poets and philosophers invoke the Muses; lovers appeal to Aphrodite and Eros; theurgists may call on Helios. Furthermore, we will see that possession and projection are essential to theurgy.

The Higher Self

In Jungian psychology a special role is played by the *Self*, which for clarity I’ll call the “Higher Self.” The Higher Self comprehends the totality of the archetypal field, and therefore it comprises all the archetypes. Thus, the Higher Self comprehends the collective unconscious, and so it must be carefully distinguished from the individual, conscious ego, which is just one of its organs.

The Higher Self is the psychical correlate of the human genome, and thus it represents the “phylogenetic destiny” of the human species (Stevens 1982, 76). That is, the Higher Self corresponds to the ἄνθρωπος, the Archetypal Human, familiar from Gnostic and Hermetic texts (Stevens 1993, 47). The Higher Self brings transpersonal meaning and purpose into our lives, and defines the πρόνοια (providence) governing all humans (Stevens 1982, 75–6). Further, as we have seen, behind the personified

archetypes are the more remote unpersonified archetypal Ideas corresponding to natural and mathematical law (Stevens 1982, 71–4). These, too, are part of the Higher Self, and therefore constitutive of our destiny.

Jung stresses that the Higher Self is paradoxical — and even contradictory — because it comprehends all the opposites. He calls it the *Unus Mundus*, but in Neoplatonic terms it is τὸ ἄρρητον ἓν (the Inexpressible One), which unifies mind and matter, unity and plurality, stability and change — indeed being and non-being. The only way to bridge these contradictions, according to Jung, is by a symbolic process, which he calls the *transcendent function*. This is the basis for the essential role of symbols in theurgy (explained later).

The Anima and Animus as Psychopomps

I'll just mention a very important archetype, which incorporates the unexpressed contrasexual aspects of the psyche. Jungian psychologists term this archetype the *Anima* in a man and the *Animus* in a woman. As, in many respects, the complement of the ego, the Anima or Animus is the nearest archetype of the collective unconscious and therefore a natural psychopomp, who may introduce us to the noeric order, where all the archetypal Ideas reside; see MacLennan (2002) for more.

The Evolving Archetypes

Since the human genome evolves, so also must the archetypal Ideas, but we must consider carefully what this means, and avoid several common pitfalls. In particular, we must avoid *essentialism*, the notion that there is an “ideal kind” for each species. Although this would be a very Platonic way of looking at things, modern biologists have rejected it for a variety of good reasons. In modern evolutionary biology the genome is considered a kind of statistical average of the individual genotypes belonging to a species at a given time. Therefore, the genome is a mathematical abstraction (that is, an Aristotelian abstraction from particulars), rather than an eternal Platonic essence. Thus, as the population changes through time, so does the genome, for it is just an average over the population. The genome is not a fixed

essence, but a time-varying form; otherwise, the whole concept of the evolution of species would be inconceivable. (For more on the revolutionary shift in biology from essentialism to “population thinking,” see Mayr 1982.)

Thus, in contradiction to Neoplatonic tradition, we must conclude that some archetypal Ideas do change, albeit at slow, evolutionary timescales. These slow revolutions in the heavens may be symbolized by the turning of the astrological ages, from Aries, to Pisces, to Aquarius, and so forth. Indeed, Wilson (1978, 88) observes that significant change in human nature can occur in about 100 generations, which is not so different from an astrological age (about 2400 years).

Hence there are two realms of archetypal Ideas. The higher realm, that of impersonal psychical forces (e.g., archetypal numbers), is strictly eternal. The lower realm, that of the personified gods, is effectively eternal, but actually slowly changing across the cosmic ages through interaction with embodied life (that is, through evolution by natural selection). Jung also recognized evolution in the archetypal realm (Stevens 1982, 75).

Are the Gods Good?

The archetypal structures encoded in the human genome have conferred selective advantage on our species in its environment of evolutionary adaptedness. They have promoted the survival of our species, and in this abstract sense, the anthropomorphic gods may be called “good” for humans. However, I think it is more accurate to consider the gods to be “beyond good and evil.” This is the conclusion of Jungian psychology, and less likely to mislead us than highly rarified notions of “the Good.”

Further, we must not forget that behind the gods are the unpersonified archetypal Ideas, which correspond to natural and mathematical law, and which cannot be called “good” even in the sense of promoting *H. sapiens*. It is extremely parochial, I think, to suppose that universal Providence is directed toward what we

take to be the well being of one species on one small planet, let alone toward the individual interests of you or me.

Finally, we cannot forget that the archetypal gods may be in conflict. In biological terms, a stimulus may trigger conflicting instincts, such a fight and flight; in psychological terms, we may find ourselves in the grips of incompatible archetypes, warring gods or daimôns. Nevertheless, wisdom is living in harmony with divine Providence (our “phylogenetic destiny”), for this is what gives meaning and significance to life, and so we must contemplate what that entails (Stevens 1982, 140–2, 293–5).

Who are the Gods?

As is well known, the personified archetypal Ideas are represented in the pantheons of the polytheistic religions, but these pantheons, as we know them from art, literature, and anthropology, also incorporate much that is culturally relative. Is there any way we can know the gods common to all humans, independent of these accidents? The Jungian psychologist Anthony Stevens (1982; 1993) has some important insights.

Stevens observes that humans have spent over 99.5% of the 200-thousand-year history of *H. sapiens* as hunter-gatherers; this is our environment of evolutionary adaptedness (see also Wilson 1978, 84). Thus, we should expect our instincts, and therefore the archetypes corresponding to them, to be the perceptual-behavioral structures that have conferred selective advantage on our Paleolithic hunter-gatherer ancestors (Stevens 1993, 64). Further, in the comparatively short time (less than ten thousand years) since our ancestors began to abandon this *modus vivendi*, there has not been much opportunity for major evolutionary change (four archetypal “ages”); see also Wilson (1978, 34). Finally, as Stevens (1982, 48) remarks,

An archetypal system, once it has evolved as a characteristic of a given species, breeds true as long as the species exists, and does not disappear with disuse.

Therefore, our archetypal Ideas (gods) are largely the same as those of our Paleolithic hunter-gatherer ancestors.

These circumstances present humans with an ethical challenge (Stevens 1982, 240). Most of us are not hunter-gatherers and few would advocate a general return to that lifestyle. Nevertheless, their archetypal Ideas are also ours, a fundamental fact of our human nature. Since “Psychopathology results from the frustration of archetypal goals” (Stevens 1993, 86), we are ill-advised to ignore our ancestral archetypes (Stevens 1982, 122). “The archetypes will not allow us to deny them for long” (Stevens 1982, 240). So the challenge for φιλοσοφία — philosophy as a way of life — is to conduct our modern lives in harmony with the gods of Paleolithic hunter-gatherers (Stevens 1993, 67–70). How can this be accomplished? “To gain access to the archetypal world, to begin to know the unknowable, is at least a beginning” (Stevens 1993, 119–20). To this end, theurgy may be helpful.

V. Theurgy

I’ll briefly review the main techniques of theurgy from the perspectives of Jungian psychology and neuroethology.² As is well known, dreams provide access to the archetypal and daimonic realms (Johnson 1986; Jung 1997), and so dream incubation was common in the ancient world as it is in modern analytic psychology (Meier 1967). Because it is relatively familiar, I will not discuss it here.

Συνθήματα and Σύμβολα

In order to discuss theurgy, we must begin with the συνθήματα and σύμβολα, the so-called “signs and symbols,” with which theurgy operates. Originally these terms referred to means of recognition: a potshard was broken in half and the pieces given to two parties. Later, when the two pieces were brought together and the whole restored, recognition occurred, bridging the familiar and the unfamiliar, thereby establishing trust. So also in psychology, a symbol transcends differences and creates a connection between the known and the unknown, most commonly between ego consciousness and the unconscious, thereby

² Surveys of ancient theurgical techniques can be found in Lewy (1978, chh. III, IV), Majercik (1989, 21–46), and Shaw (1995, pt. III).

establishing meaning (Jung *CW* 9, pt. 2, ¶280; Stevens 1982, 242, 273).

In neuroethological terms, symbols are the many releasing stimuli that can activate an archetype or complex and cause it to manifest in experience with consequent possession and projection. Some of these stimuli are “unconditioned,” that is, instinctual, part of the universal archetype; they are, so to speak, in the *σειρά* (chord or line) of the god. Others are “conditioned,” that is, a result of individual experience, and thus mediated by personal *daimôns*. Intermediate between these extremes we may place cultural symbols (culturally conditioned stimuli), the operation of which is mediated by the *daimôns* of groups. Whatever their origin, by activating archetypes and complexes, these *σύμβολα* and *συνθήματα* invoke the gods and *daimôns* and invite them to possess and/or project.

Τελεστική

The theurgical practice called *τελεστική* is a means of *ἐμψύχωσις*, ensoulment or “animation,” of a sacred image (*ἄγαλμα*), such as a statue. It is accomplished by placing in or on the image appropriate *sunthêmata*, including stones, plants, animals, scents, and figures. These material *sunthêmata* are supplemented by immaterial *sunthêmata*, such as invocations, chants, and prayers intended to “persuade” the god or *daimôn* to descend into the image.

Of course, as Iamblichus explains (*De myst.* 47, 6), theurgy does not compel a deity or *daimôn*; rather it prepares a suitable *δοχή* (receptacle or receiver). This is like preparing an object to better reflect a particular color of light; a golden object does not “compel” yellow light to appear, but it allows the presence of the yellow in white light to become manifest. Similarly, although the archetype is ever present, it is not normally manifest to consciousness. Therefore appropriate *sunthêmata* (i.e., symbols linked to a complex or archetype) invite projection of the *daimôn* or god onto the image, which becomes numinous. In this way, the theurgist is in a conscious archetypal relation with the divinity, and the image becomes a medium for interaction, that is, for exploring specific archetypes and complexes residing in the unconscious.

Δεσμός

Another theurgical operation is δεσμός (“binding”), in which a κλήτωρ (caller) invokes a god or daimôn to possess another person, called the δοχεύς (recipient), θεατής (seer), or κάταχος (held-down one). In principle this process is similar to the ensoulment of an image, but in this case the “tuned receiver” is a person. It has the advantage that, by accepting the projection and becoming possessed, a human recipient can embody an autonomous divine personality better than an inanimate object can. A “pure receptacle” will manifest the archetype with minimal contamination from their own complexes.

Σύστασις

A common practice in Jungian analysis is *active imagination*, in which a person engages in dialogue and negotiation with an archetype or complex (Johnson 1986; Jung 1997). This is closely related to the theurgical practice of σύστασις, or liaison, with a god or daimôn in order to establish an alliance with it. As in the previous operations, *sumbola* and *sunthêmata* may be used to activate the archetype or complex; often they are suggested by dream imagery.

Spirits engaged in σύστασις are not always truthful about their identity (or other things) for gods and daimôns are “beyond good and evil.” Therefore, theurgists are very concerned with discerning the identities of the spirits they evoke (e.g. Iamblichus *De myst.* Bk. II). Similarly, one is advised to maintain a conscious ethical stance in active imagination (since that is, in fact, part of the function of ego consciousness: Johnson 1986, 189–95).

Active imagination allows a person to interact with archetypes and personal complexes and to engage them in a critical dialogue concerning their desires, functions, and potential gifts. In this way one may benefit by living in accord with archetypal reality and avoid futile attempts to deny the archetypes and complexes. Further, psychological individuation proceeds by conscious integration of these otherwise unconscious personalities. In theurgical terms, συστάσεις are important for acquiring familiarity with the archetypal realm and for bringing the theurgist

into the ἐνέργεια of a god, in order to turn toward its essence and be actualized in it. In this way theurgists may learn the will of the god so that they may act in better accord with it. Συστάσεις are also important for negotiating with personal daimōns, who may otherwise possess others or ourselves in undesirable ways. Finally, a daimōn may be recruited as πάρεδρος (familiar spirit or assistant) to help in various ways, including in the theurgical ascent.

Ἄναγωγὴ

The last theurgical operation is the most important, the ἀναγωγὴ or theurgical ascent. In all the preceding, the divinity is experienced as “other,” but in the ἀναγωγὴ the theurgist ascends so that their soul, so far as possible, unites with the god; that is, they experience deification. The union may be with an individual god, especially the Demiurge, or more rarely with the Inexpressible One. (Porphyry, *V. Pl.* 23, tells us Plotinus achieved it four times while they were together.) In the latter case, by this contact with the Higher Self and by uniting with the archetypal Ἄνθρωπος, the theurgist is better enabled to live a fulfilling life in accord with πρόνοια. That is, at least for a time, the theurgist experiences themselves as a psychical whole, integrating the conscious, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious minds.

“Like knows like,” so in the ἀναγωγὴ the parts of the soul that are most like the One (or the intended god) must be separated from those least like it. Therefore the conscious and personal unconscious minds must be quieted; that is, the ego and other personal daimōns must be pacified. Separation is accomplished by the initiate enacting a symbolic θάνατος αὐθαίρετος (voluntary death), which therefore functions as a sensible *symbolon*. Death-and-Resurrection is an archetypal Idea; therefore, through symbolic death and ascent the initiate participates in this Idea’s ἐνέργεια and actualizes it in themselves (i.e., the archetype manifests in them).

VI. Conclusions

It will be apparent that there are many loose ends in what I've said, but I hope the basic theses are correct. Mind and matter should be understood as two sides of the same Inexpressible One. Thus, since Jungian psychology and evolutionary neuroethology are describing two aspects of the same phenomena, each may inform and reinforce the other. Both reconcile Neoplatonism with contemporary science, and confirm its basic insights and practices, while suggesting resolutions of some issues. In fact, the three combine to yield a consistent body of theory and practice.

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