

# Individual Soul and World Soul:

## The Process of Individuation in Neoplatonism & Jung

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### **I. Introduction**

*Individuation* is one of the most important concepts defined by Carl G. Jung, and he and other analytic psychologists have developed a variety of techniques, including active imagination and dream analysis, to facilitate the process of individuation. Nevertheless, individuation is a universal human potential, and various spiritual traditions have their own practices to facilitate it. In particular, Neoplatonism has much in common with depth psychology and its techniques, which is not surprising, since Jung was influenced by Neoplatonism, both directly and indirectly through the related systems of Gnosticism and alchemy (as discussed in more detail later). Therefore we can learn from Neoplatonic spiritual practices, which also facilitate individuation, and thereby expand our range of analytic techniques.

Jungian psychology and Neoplatonism share a commitment to the reality of psychical experience and its phenomenological investigation; for both of them, archetypal Ideas are fundamental. Therefore they both are widely believed to sit uneasily with modern materialistic science. However, as will be explained more fully later, Jungian psychology is quite compatible with contemporary evolutionary psychology (e.g., Stevens, 2003), and therefore, for the most part, so is Neoplatonism. Indeed, each of the three approaches — Neoplatonism, Jungian psychology, and evolutionary psychology — may contribute to the development of the others; together they constitute a framework for understanding mind, matter, and human individuation.

### **II. A Dream**

Before addressing these matters it may be worthwhile, in the tradition of Jungian psychology, to begin by recounting a dream that I had in 2000. I was at my university attending a presentation in which an unknown woman was rejecting evolution on religious grounds. She was young, blond, light-skinned, and radiated a sort of honest

innocence and sincerity. After her talk was done and she left the stage to take care of some business, a black man, either a faculty member or an administrator, began to arrange a panel discussion between her and half a dozen faculty members, including me. While we were waiting for her to return for the panel, someone brought in a four-foot tall wooden statue of an ape, and I realized that one of the panelists (probably a friend of mine who is an ardent defender of evolution) was planning to ridicule her rejection of evolution. I felt sympathy for the woman, because she was obviously sincere, even if misguided, and I thought that she did not deserve a sarcastic attack. Therefore, I began to plan my remarks as a panel member with the intention of trying to achieve some mutual understanding and respect.

I decided to make three points. First, I would express sympathy for her (and others') unhappiness with the draining of meaning from the mechanistic worldview presented by science. "From the Big Bang, to the formation of the heavier elements, to the evolution of species," I would say, "we are facing the biggest machine of them all." Second, I would say, "If evolution didn't take place, that would be the biggest miracle of them all." For once you understand the principles of evolution, you see its inevitability in a wide variety of systems. Thus, if some complex molecules are more stable than others, then (in the face of thermal or other degradation) the more stable ones will be the ones to persist in time. And if some compounds are more prone to expand themselves or reproduce, then they too will come to dominate in time. So also the evolution of species. The point is not whether Darwin was right in every detail; one sees the inevitability of the general thesis. Third, I wanted to address the issue of how to restore meaning to the world. In other words, I had acknowledged our need and desire for meaning, and I had argued for the truth of evolution in some form. Therefore my goal would be to show that evolution need not exclude meaning or even spirituality. The basis of this was the connection between evolution and Jungian psychology. In addition to restoring meaning to a mechanistic world, Jungian psychology provides a basis for a theology that is compatible with science.

As I was planning my remarks, everyone drifted away except for the black man, and eventually he left too; they were all tired of waiting for the woman. She was in a sort of booth, making a phone call or checking her e-mail. Her daughter, who was perhaps five years old, blond, fair-skinned, and radiantly honest and innocent, was in the booth with her mother, and she was working with an educational program on a computer. I had stayed behind because I wanted to talk to the woman, not to ridicule her beliefs, but genuinely to help her understand. Eventually, as I continued to plan my remarks, the dream became lucid and I decided to wake up from it and to make notes for a paper or presentation. The thought occurred to me that the woman was a Muse (and, as it happens, I had been reading about the Muses before I went to bed), and she was apparently an Anima image. Be that as it may, I accepted her inspiration, and committed to explaining the connections between evolution and Jungian psychology, and how the resulting perspective might transcend the apparent opposition between science and spirituality. With this as background, we may turn our attention to Neoplatonism.

### III. Ancient Neoplatonism

#### A. Ancient Greek “Shamanism”

It is now well established that ancient Greek philosophy had roots in the shamanic practices common to many cultures (e.g., Dodds, 1951, ch. 5; Butterworth, 1966, ch. 4, 1970; Kingsley, 1994, 1995, ch. 15). The Greeks learned these techniques from the “Scythians” when they colonized the north shore of the Black Sea in the seventh century BCE and from the Thracians and Persian Magi, who also knew north-Asiatic shamanism (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996, p. 1375; Kingsley, 1995, pp. 226–7). These practices are reflected in the stories of Orpheus, who exhibits many of the features of a “great shaman” (Dodds, 1951, p. 147; Eliade, 1964, pp. 391–2); of Aristeas (8th–6th cents. BCE), whose soul could leave his body in trance and accompany Apollo as his raven; of Abaris (7th–6th cents. BCE), the healer-sage (*iatromantis*) who traveled on a magic arrow (a typical shamanic wand), which he later gave to Pythagoras; and of the semi-historical Epimenides (7th–6th cents. BCE), who purified Athens (596 BCE) and was also known for leaving his body while in a trance state (Avery, 1962, s.vv.; Dodds, 1951, pp. 140–2; Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996, s.vv.). They all exemplify many of the characteristics of shamanic practice, as presented by Eliade (1964, especially ch. 11), and were closely associated with Hyperborean Apollo (reflecting, again, the northern connections). Evidence of shamanic practice is also apparent in ancient biographies of historical figures, such as the pre-Socratic philosophers Pythagoras (572–497 BCE), who descended into the underworld and claimed to have the soul of Hermetimus, an ancient shaman, and whose followers venerated the *Orphica* and sometimes wrote under the name “Orpheus” (Dodds, 1951, pp. 141, 143–5); Parmenides (fl. 495), whose poem, with its progress from the illusory world of duality to The One, has many of the hallmarks of a shamanic journey (Kingsley, 1999, 2003); Empedocles (c.495–435), a magical healer who boasted that he could control the weather and retrieve souls from Hades (Dodds, 1951, pp. 145–7; Kingsley, 1995); and other less well-known figures. They all combined “the still undifferentiated functions of magician and naturalist, poet and philosopher, preacher, healer, and public counselor” (Dodds, 1951, p. 146) and bore the distinguished title “healer-seer” (*iatromantis*), as a good term as any for a shaman.

Ryan (2002) shows in detail that Jung’s (1963, ch. 6) own path of individuation fits the pattern of shamanic initiation known from many cultures. This process may be divided into three stages: call, crisis, and cure (Ryan, 2002, ch. 6). The *call* from the depths may take the form of arresting dreams, visions, and compulsions; these are the results of the psyche’s intrinsic dynamic toward psychic integration. However, since the conscious mind is unprepared to integrate these awakened psychic forces, their effect is an inclination to introversion, including retirement from the everyday world, depression, listlessness, moroseness, introversion, and a tendency to meditate, sleep, and be absent minded. However, active repression, that is, ignoring or refusing the call, may result in psychosis or other illness.

The *crisis* results from the dissolution of the structures of the ordinary personality, which would impede the transformation, and from an influx of chaotic and disturbing spiritual material from the depths, which can result in madness if not properly managed

(part of the shaman's training). As these psychic forces gain in strength, they take on archetypal and daemonic forms; if opposed, they attack the structure of ego consciousness, resulting in soul-loss or dissociation, but if respected and recruited, they can act as guides, for they are the psychodynamic processes, the *psychopompi* (soul guides), directed toward the end of psychic integration. As they lead deeper into the heart of living nature, they manifest theriomorphically, that is, as animal spirit guides (e.g., raven). Arrival at the creative center of the cosmos and of the psyche is signaled by the appearance of symbols of centrality, such as the cosmic axis, and symbols of completeness, such as circular figures with four-fold symmetries. There, the gem of eternal life, the *lapis philosophorum*, may be won. There, initiatory death and dissolution leads to the psychic reintegration and rebirth of the healer-sage.

Thus the *cure* results in a reintegration of the psyche, in which consciousness comes into communication and cooperation with the archetypal forces of the universe. The individual psyche takes its place as a blossom on the Tree of Life growing at the cosmic axis. Because shamans, like Jung, have experienced these psychodynamic forces for themselves, along with the resulting psychic integration, as *wounded healers* they are qualified to help others along the initiatory path toward psychic wholeness. As we will see, these shamanic practices, leading to *individuation* (psychic integration), were refined in the Greek philosophical schools, especially those culminating in Neoplatonism.

### **B. Ancient Philosophy as a Way of Life**

It may seem that neither shamanic practices nor Jungian analytic techniques have much to do with Neoplatonic philosophy, but it is important to keep in mind that ancient *philosophia* was a system of practices constituting a way of life (Hadot, 1995). This is most apparent in Pythagoreanism, the adherents of which included both monastics and lay practitioners. (Pythagoreanism is especially interesting because it is the lynch pin between shamanism on one side — Pythagoras is connected closely with Hyperborean Apollo — and classical Greek philosophy, especially Platonism, on the other.)

In general terms, ancient philosophy involved a teacher guiding students toward a better way of living, the philosophical way of life (*bios philosophikos*); toward this end, the primary goal was care (*therapeia*) for the soul. Much like modern therapy, this involved individual guidance and practice as well as group practices. The student might be assigned spiritual practices (*askêseis*) including meditation, contemplation, affirmations, visualization, and journal writing. Group activities included examination and encouragement of one another's spiritual progress. (More advanced practices, leading toward psychic integration, will be discussed later.)

Instruction in the doctrines (*dogmata*) of the philosophical school has to be interpreted in the context of the so-called "therapy of the word" (Láin Entralgo, 1970). That is, words (*logoi*) were administered to the student as a kind of "talking therapy," suited to his particular psychological problems or stage of spiritual progress, as judged by the teacher, much as a doctor would tailor a medicine to a sick person's condition (Hadot, 2002, ch. 9). These verbal therapies operated on many levels of the student's soul through

their dialectical, rational, and emotional effects. Their manner of operation is connected with that of hymns, prayers, incantations, and spells. Therefore, we must interpret the surviving philosophical texts of the ancient schools in this context, because they were part of the panoply of means used to care for individual students' souls. Hence, the doctrine depends to some extent on the needs of an individual student and his progress toward the philosophical life. As Epicurus said, "Empty are the words of that philosopher who cares for (*therapeuetai*) no human suffering" (Porphyry, *Ad Marc.* 31).

Although they spoke with the vocabulary of ancient Greek religion and philosophy, it will become apparent that the Neoplatonic philosophers were describing the same psychological phenomena later investigated by Jung, and that they had similar techniques for psychological integration. This is, of course, no coincidence, for there is a direct line of intellectual descent from Plato to Jung. Jung's interests in Gnosticism and alchemy are well known, but shortly before his break with Freud he became engrossed in Friedrich Creuzer's *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völke* and its Neoplatonic interpretation of mythology (Jung, 1963, p. 162). (Creuzer became well known for his editions of the works of Plotinus, Proclus, and Olympiodorus.) Hillman (1975b, p. 149) argues that Jung's enthusiasm resulted from the Neoplatonic archetypal outlook that he shared with Creuzer. Conversely, Hillman (1975a, ch. 4; 1975b) observes that the great Renaissance Neoplatonist Marsilio Ficino "was writing, not philosophy as has always been supposed, but an archetypal psychology" (Hillman, 1975a, p. 202). Jung (*CW* 8, ¶154) makes the connection explicit when he defines the archetypes as

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

He cites as precedents the use of the term *archetypos* by Plotinus, Philo Judaeus, Irenaeus, pseudo-Dionysius, and the *Corpus Hermeticum* (Jung, *CW* 9 i, ¶5). Thus there are deep connections between analytic psychology and Neoplatonism. This is reinforced, not contradicted by Jung's use of Gnostic and alchemical insights, for the latter share with Neoplatonism a common worldview arising out of Middle Platonism.

Furthermore, although Jung was influenced by Neoplatonic philosophy and its relatives, there are deeper reasons for these similarities, for the Neoplatonists, like Jung, engaged in a systematic phenomenological investigation of the depths of the psyche, which they integrated into a non-dualistic conception of reality (Jung's *Unus Mundus*). The structure of the psyche, including the collective unconscious, was the same then as it is now, so they arrived at a common understanding and practice (as, indeed, have the explorers of the psyche in many cultures). This will be clear when we have discussed the Neoplatonic way of life.

### **C. *The Structure of Reality***

In order to explain the basis of the Neoplatonic way of life, it is necessary to understand the Neoplatonists' conception of reality. To this end, I will review the three

hypostases, as presented by Plotinus.<sup>1</sup> (Among the many excellent introductions to Plotinus' philosophy, I will mention only Hadot, 1993.)

At the top of the hierarchy of reality is The Inexpressible One (*to arrhêton hen*), which unites and transcends all the opposites (being/nonbeing, unity/plurality, stability/change, eternity/time, male/female, etc.). It is the *formal cause*, which implies the existence and being of the rest of reality, and the *final cause* toward which everything inevitably returns. It is equivalent to the *Unus Mundus*, the physical-psychical unity that Jung (*CW* 14, ¶659) described as “the original, non-differentiated unity of the world or of Being.” Although The One stands above and comprehends all of reality, the *macrocosm*, it has a similarly comprehensive image in the *microcosm* of each individual soul (sometimes called “the flower of our whole soul,” *anthos pasês tês psychês*). Therefore we can see that The One has much in common with the Jungian Self.

Below The One is the universal Mind or *Nous*, which contains the living, eternal archetypal Ideas; similarly, in the microcosm of our individual minds, the archetypal Ideas reside in one's own *nous* (intuitive mind), which is particular to each person, but collective in structure. More precisely, the universal *Nous* corresponds to that part of the collective unconscious in which the archetypes are more articulated than in the Self. The correspondence becomes more obvious when one realizes that in both Neoplatonic philosophy and Jungian psychology many of the archetypal Ideas are personified and correspond to the gods of the polytheistic religions. At the higher (or more interior) level of the Mind, these Ideas exist in a continuum and interpenetrate one another, but at the lower levels they are more distinct. (As an analogy we may take the colors hidden in white light, which are separated by a prism.) Nevertheless, like Jungian archetypes, the Ideas are not perceived directly, but only through their effects in time and space in our individual lives. Also, it is important to understand that *nous* does not refer to the rational faculty, which resides at a lower level in both the macrocosm and microcosm, but to the intuitive mind, which directly grasps the archetypal Ideas.

In both the macrocosm and the microcosm, the soul proper (*psychê*) is the mediator between the non-spatial eternal Ideas and the spatiotemporal material world. The macrocosmic World Soul conveys the Ideas into the World Body (material universe), and by means of them the physical world is ordered as it evolves in space and time. Similarly, in the microcosm of an individual person, the soul proper mediates the activation of the archetypal Ideas in that individual's life. So also, the soul governs thought that proceeds sequentially in time, such as deliberative reasoning (*dianoia*).

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<sup>1</sup> In discussing the Neoplatonism I am referring primarily to the works of Plotinus (205–269/70 CE), Iamblichus (245–c.325 CE), and Proclus (410 or 412–485 CE), which survive in relative abundance. There are certainly differences among their philosophies, but for our purposes they may be left to specialists. They constitute a reasonably coherent body of doctrine that we may call “Neoplatonic.” A clear, concise introduction to Neoplatonic philosophy from a contemporary perspective can be found in Addey (2000, ch. 1).

According to Neoplatonic philosophy, the eternal archetypal Ideas, which include the gods, are ordered into hierarchies. Below these eternal Ideas, but between them and the ever-changing physical world, are mediating spirits, which Neoplatonists call daemons (*daimones*), each of whom is in the lineage (*seira*) of some god. Since the gods, who reside in the realm of being, are impassive, that is, because they do not respond directly to events in the physical world, it is the daemons who are responsible for manifesting the providence and will of the gods in the realm of becoming. Furthermore, each person has several *personal daemons* (*oikeioi daimones*) associated with him, such as a “good daemon” (*agathos daimôn*), who guides him; indeed one’s ego can be considered a kind of daemon. Therefore, daemons may be deeply involved in the lives of individuals, both affecting and affected by them. Similarly, Jung has shown how complexes may grow, by means of association, around an archetypal core as a result of the activation of that archetype in the course of an individual’s life. Indeed, he observed that “complexes behave like independent beings” (Jung, *CW* 8, ¶253), and that they can *possess* an individual or be *projected* onto other people. That is, daemons and complexes are similar in their characteristics and relation to the archetypal Ideas.<sup>2</sup>

As we know from Jungian psychology, when an archetype or complex is activated in a person, it influences his perception and behavior in accord with its dynamical structure. Quite literally the person may be *possessed* by the archetype or complex (e.g., von Franz, 1980). Further, other persons, animals, or even objects may be incorporated into the archetypal relationship and have a role *projected* upon them, which causes them to be perceived as being charged with significance and even numinous. Similarly in Neoplatonism a person may be possessed by a god (archetypal Idea) or a daemon, which may seize his consciousness, altering his perception and influencing his behavior. The ancient Greeks described this state of inspiration as being seized (*katalêpsis*) or held down (*katoché*) by the divinity. Being in love is a notable and familiar example of archetypal possession, with coordinate projection onto another person. The ancients attributed this state to the action of Aphrodite, and Plato has Diotima tell Socrates that Eros is “a great daemon” (*Symp.*, 202d). As this example illustrates, although it has its risks, divine and daemonic possession is not necessarily as undesirable as the word suggests. The poet and the philosopher both understand that possession may be a potent source of inspiration, insight, and energy, if it is managed properly (a goal of both theurgy and Jungian analysis, as we will see).

#### **IV. Stages in the Neoplatonic Way of Life**

To explain the ancient Neoplatonic path to individuation, I will present its most developed form as found in the writings of Proclus (e.g., Rosán, 1949, pp. 205–13; Siorvanes, 1996, pp. 189–99). The process is in three phases, which are correlated with the “Chaldean Virtues” (or “Excellences,” *aretai*): Love (*erôs*), Truth (*alêtheia*), and Trust (*pistis*), which in turn correspond to three attributes of The One: its Beauty (*kallos*),

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<sup>2</sup> Additional information about Neoplatonic theology and daemonology can be found in Wallis (1972). See MacLennan (2003, 2006) for additional discussion of specific complexes and daemons.

Wisdom (*sophia*), and Goodness (*agathotês*). Both triads correspond to the three parts of the soul, the faculties of desire (or appetitive part, *epithymêtikon*), reason (or rational part, *logistokon*), and will (or spirited part, *thymoeidês*), respectively, as described by Plato (*Rep.* IV, 435e-444e). Each is important in the Neoplatonic way of life.

The basic idea is that this path is a return to the first principle (The One). Therefore, as The One processes outward, through the universal Mind (*Nous*) and the World Soul into the material world, so also the philosopher must ascend from the material world, through the World Soul and universal *Nous*, and beyond them in order to reunite with The One. This is accomplished by turning inward, first toward his individual soul (*psychê*), then to his *nous*, and finally to The One within himself, for the microcosm is an image of the macrocosm. “For every thing when it enters into the unspeakable depths [*arrhêton eisdyomenon*] of its own nature will find there the symbol of the Universal Father [*to symbolon tou pantôn patros*]” (Proclus, *Plat. Theol.*, p. 104).

The guiding principle is “like knows like,” and therefore the philosopher must first become more like the soul, then more like the *nous*, and finally more like The One. Since The One is the principle of unity, by this process the philosopher becomes whole and indivisible (*individuus*), that is, individuated.

#### A. *Love (Erôs) — the Erotic Ascent and the Turn to the Soul*

In the first stage, governed by Eros, the philosopher turns his attention away from the body and external world and inward toward the soul. In particular, he submits to the power of Returning Love (*Erôs Epistreptikos*), which calls his soul back to its source. Proclus enumerates the steps: (1) the philosopher turns away from the ordinary active life of the citizen, (2) he abandons the company of ordinary people and associates only with other philosophers, and (3) he detaches himself from material goods and comforts; finally, (4) he must extinguish (but not repress) his desire (*orexis*) for internal satisfactions as well (Proclus, *Comm. Alc.*, coll. 517–8, *Chal. Phil.*, fr. 3; Rosán, 1949, pp. 205–9). Therefore the goal of this phase is a purification and sublimation of *desire* (*erôs*). As a consequence, the philosopher begins to live the Erotic Life (*erôtikos bios*), in which his soul rejoices in its own goodness (*agathotês*), beauty (*kallos*), and justice (*dikaiosynê*).

This first stage may be compared to the *erotic ascent* described in Plato’s *Symposium* (209E–212C), in which the desire for beauty is elevated from the body, to the soul, and finally to the mind. Correspondingly, the philosopher’s desire for immortality is turned from physical union (in the realm of physical becoming), toward soul-union (in the realm of psychological becoming), and finally toward union with the Ideas (in the realm of spiritual being). By means of this erotic ascent, the initiate is called to a greater focus on the spiritual realm. Psychologically, this is a process of introversion, which is often the first step toward shamanic initiation, which was also recapitulated in Jung’s personal process of individuation.

**B. Truth (*Alêtheia*) — the Contemplative and the Turn to the Mind**

As the first stage, the erotic ascent, purified *desire*, so the second stage, the contemplative ascent, purifies *thought*, and thereby ascends to the level of Nous. As the first stage proceeded by the power of Eros and was directed toward the Beauty of The One, so the second proceeds by the power of Truth (*alêtheia*) and is directed toward the Wisdom (*sophia*) of The One; the goal is the Philosophical Life (*philosophikos bios*). We may distinguish in Proclus' philosophy seven kinds of things that can be known and the corresponding kinds of knowledge: sensation, imagination, opinion, reasoning, dialectic, intuition, and mystical union (Rosán, 1949, p. 64), and the contemplative ascent deals in succession with the first six of these (Rosán, 1949, pp. 209–13); the seventh is the goal of the theurgic ascent. (Plotinus' ascent is contemplative, because he recognizes nothing between The One and the Nous, so the power of Truth is sufficient to ascend to The One.)

The contemplative ascent begins with a three-stage withdrawal from contradictory impressions and judgments deriving from the world of becoming. First, the philosopher flees the sensations (*aisthêseis*), which are bound to the body and confuse the mind; then he eliminates imaginations (*phantasiai*), which are divided and have forms derived from sensation; finally, he ceases thinking in terms of judgments (*doxai*), which cloud the intuitive knowing of *nous* with contradictory ideas (Proclus, *Comm. Alc.*, col. 518, *Comm. Parm.*, col. 1025). Psychologically, the goal here is to still mental activity: the philosopher's attention is withdrawn from sensation, he ceases from wandering in his imagination, and he quiets the inner dialog of judgment.

These three stages of withdrawal of the mind from the world are followed by three stages of ascent, which successively refine the mind's power; the philosopher turns his mind away from knowledge of transient things and toward knowledge of the eternal. The first stage refines the reasoning power (*dianoia*) by means of the study of mathematics: first geometry, which still makes use of form, but then arithmetic, which is more abstracted from the material world. In this way the mind is trained to turn inward toward contemplation of the inner world of forms and ideas (Proclus, *Comm. Parm.*, col. 1025). (Even in our modern world, mathematics provides a compelling entrée to Platonism; see Balaguer, 1998.)

The next stage of ascent is enabled by dialectic (*dialektikê*), which awakens the *nous*, purifies it, and opens it to the Truth, comprehended as a unity, not as separate branches of knowledge (Proclus, *Comm. Alc.*, col. 518, *Comm. Parm.*, coll. 653–4). Dialectic is not idle argument, but proceeds by a systematic exploration of the archetypal Ideas. If the philosopher has adequate knowledge, an affinity for true Being (*to ontôs on*), and sufficient eagerness (*prothymos*) and striving (*tasis*), then the dialectic art will prepare him for an intuitive vision (*theôria*) of the eternal archetypal Ideas (Proclus, *Comm. Parm.*, coll. 926–7). In more psychological terms, we may say that through dialectical exercises the philosopher can achieve an intellectual understanding of the realm of the archetypal Ideas, but that it still falls short of the direct experience of them (the object of the following stages).

Having advanced upward by means of reason and dialectic, the last step in the ascent toward Truth is accomplished by means of *intuition (noêsis)*. This step, with its vision of the archetypal Ideas, will bring the philosopher to the threshold of contact with the gods (Rosán, 1949, 211–2). By this vision of the archetypal Ideas, which reside in the collective unconscious, the philosopher’s *nous* makes intuitive contact with the universal Nous (the unparticipated Nous, *nous amethektos*, in Proclus’ terms). That is, the images of the archetypal Ideas in the individual, participated *nous* form the symbolic bridge linking it to the universal Nous.<sup>3</sup>

According to Proclus’ cosmology, there are six levels below The One: Being (*On*), Life (*Zôê*), World Mind (*Nous*), World Soul (*Psychê*), Nature (*Physis*), and Body (*Sôma*); the second three are a material and spatiotemporal reflections of the first three, which are atemporal and progressively more universal in order of ascent: Nous, Life, Being; and therefore more comprehensive in their temporal and material extensions, as reflected in Psychê, Nature, and Body, respectively. Body represents the stability and identity of anything that has Being; Nature represents those things that can act and are governed by natural laws, i.e., that have Life (i.e., living and animate beings); and Psychê is the actualization in time and space of the eternal archetypal Ideas in Nous (and therefore is restricted to sentient beings). Complementing The One at the bottom of the hierarchy is undifferentiated Prime Matter (*Hylê*). The extremes (One, Matter) are alike in being utterly simple; the greatest complexities is found in the middle, in sentient beings having both *nous* and *psychê*, such as humans, who have the freedom of will to choose the life of the philosopher. See Proclus (*Plat. Theol. III*), Siovanes (1996, pp. 123–6, 185–6).

To recap, the philosopher has ascended to the universal Nous, which is the lowest of the triad of levels that lie between The One and the World Soul: Being, Life, and Nous. Therefore the philosopher must use his intuition to ascend through each of these levels in order. First he reaches the level of Nous, which is identified with Kronos, ruler of the Golden Age, and he begins to live the Kronian Life (*kronios bios*), in which the soul has returned to its original simplicity and reposes in contemplation of the Ideas. Then, by the power of Truth he continues his ascent to Life and Being; psychologically, he penetrates into the psychoid depths of the collective unconscious, corresponding to the processes of life and the inanimate world (Jung, *CW* 8, ¶840, *CW* 9 i, ¶291). But that is as far as Truth can take him, for Being is the cause of Truth Itself (*autoalêtheia*), and so ascent above the level of Being requires a higher power than Truth. Thus philosophy must yield to theurgy.

### **C. Trust (Pistis) — the Theurgic Ascent and the Turn to The One**

#### **1. Supra-intellectual Trust**

According to Proclus’ theology, the gods are unities (*henades*), which are images of The One; together with The One, they are above Being and therefore beyond the reach of

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<sup>3</sup> An alternative means of ascent is to go yet deeper into the individual, participated soul — to *participated Being*, for example — and from that place to make contact with unparticipated Being, its universal progenitor; see Rosán (1949, p.211, n. 132).

even the intuitive mind (*nous*). In psychological terms, the archetypes, and the Self, which comprises them, cannot be grasped by the conscious mind; they are transcendent (Jung, *CW* 8, ¶417). (Therefore, from the Proclan perspective, the Plotinian contemplative ascent cannot rise all the way to The One, but only to its image in Being.) Nevertheless, although the divine archetypes and The Inexpressible One cannot be made objects of thought, the individual soul can approach them, make contact, and achieve unity in them.

However, since this ascent rises above the realm of Being, it cannot be accomplished by any conscious cognitive process, not even by intuition, for this is the realm of the Silence (*sigê*) that is prior to articulated thought (*logos*) and that is superior to judgment (*krisis*) and intuition (*noêsis*) (Proclus, *Chald. Phil.*, fr. 4, *Plat. Theol.*, 4.31). Therefore Proclus tells us that it must be accomplished by the power of *Pistis* (Trust, Faith), the third Chaldean virtue, which he defines as “contact (*synaphê*) and union (*henôsis*) with The One” (Proclus, *Plat. Theol.*, 1.112–113). This is a kind of unfounded belief, but that is unavoidable, for rational belief is based on knowledge of causes, but The One has no cause other than itself, for it is the first cause. Therefore, contact with The One must be akin to the direct experience of sensation, for sensation is similarly incapable of grasping causes (Rosán, 1949, pp. 198, 215).

Therefore the last stage of the spiritual progress to individuation is accomplished by means of the spiritual practices of *theurgy*, by means of which the philosopher comes to know the gods through union with the gods, and thereby may live the life of the gods; “by this means we become god-inspired (*entheos*); fleeing all plurality and reverencing our own unity, we become one and act as a unity” (Proclus, *Comm. Alc.*, col. 519). This is individuation.

## 2. Definition of Theurgy

Theurgy (*theourgia*) is commonly explained as “divine works” (*theia erga*) to contrast it to theology (*theologia*), or “divine words” (*theioi logoi*), because theurgy involves both ritual actions by practitioners to contact the gods, and the resulting manifestation of the gods in the theurgists’ lives (Lewy, 1978, exc. IV; Shaw, 1995, pp. 4–5). Hence it is also called the “priestly art” (*hieratikê technê*). The term itself and its cognates (*theourgos*, *theourgikê*) are relatively late, first appearing in the writings of “Julian the Chaldean” and his son “Julian the Theurgist” (late second century CE), but it will become apparent that the practices have their roots in shamanism (see also Kingsley, 1995). Indeed, Neoplatonic theurgists claimed that the roots of their art were in the ancient traditions reflected in the *Chaldean Oracles* and Orphic poems.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Iamblichus *On the Mysteries (De mysteriis)* provides much of the Neoplatonic theoretical background for the theurgic art. Illuminating discussions of theurgy may be found in Rosán (1949, pp. 204–17), Dodds (1951, pp. 291–9), Lewy (1978, chh. III, IV), Majercik (1989, pp. 21–46), Shaw (1995, pt. III), Siorvanes (1996, pp. 189–99), and Clarke (2001). Addey (2003, ch. 6) presents theurgy in a modern context.

Apparently there were two degrees of theurgy, lower theurgy (or theurgy proper) and higher theurgy (Rosán, 1949, pp. 213–14; Sheppard, 1982; Majercik, 1989, pp. 35–6, 39–45). As we follow the path of ascent, we will begin with the lower theurgy and the principles upon which it is based.

3. *Lower Theurgy*

a. The Premises of Theurgy

As previously mentioned, each eternal, archetypal Idea (god) is the origin of a *seira* (lineage, line, chord, chain), which contains all the ideas, forms, and objects that participate in that Idea. Since they are manifestations or images of the archetypal Ideas, Neoplatonists call them *symbola* and *synthêmata*, which may be translated tokens, signs, and symbols. Originally these terms referred to tokens of recognition, such as the matching halves of a broken potshard, or a seal ring and its impression, used to confirm identity, contractual relationship, or *trust* between parties who might be unknown to one another. Thus they are a way of making the unknown known. Similarly, according to Jung, a symbol bridges the known and unknown, by linking a conscious image and an archetype forever hidden in the collective unconscious. Our goal then is to understand how symbols can be used as a way to contact the collective unconscious, the realm of the archetypal Ideas, the divine realm.

Some symbols, of course, are universal; that is, they are part of the structure of an archetype in the collective unconscious. These symbols may contribute to activation of the archetype, or manifest themselves (in dreams, for example) when the archetype is active; such symbols may be called *essential*, that is, part of the *essence* of the archetypal Idea. Other symbols are not universal, but are restricted to an individual or to a culture or other particular group; these symbols have a *contingent*, learned connection to an archetypal Idea. Such symbols are mediated by a complex, which is a learned network of associations between images and behavioral dispositions, all surrounding an archetypal core. The contingent symbols belonging to a cultural context are sometimes revealed in that culture's mythology, but one might have to use dream analysis and other analytic techniques to discover the symbols belonging to a personal complex.

These observations explain the importance of symbols in theurgy. Since each essential symbol participates in an archetypal Idea, it is in the "line" (*seira*) emanating from that god. We may think of it as a token, given to humankind, by which the god may be requested to manifest in an individual's life. Of course, as theurgists stress, no symbol or token can compel the manifestation of a god (for, according to Neoplatonic philosophy, the gods are impassive and already omnipresent); but the symbol can make the theurgist's soul more receptive to the energy of that god (like tuning a radio to a particular station). That is, although the archetypal Idea itself is impassive and exists outside of time and space, its image in the soul of the theurgist may be energized in time and space by the appropriate symbols.

An analogy may make this clearer. The gods (archetypal Ideas), which exist as an undifferentiated unity in The One (i.e., the Jungian Self), are analogous to the colors

hidden in white sunlight. Now, opening the window shades does not compel the sunlight to enter, nor does a golden object cause yellow light to appear. But if the sun is shining, and we open the shades, and look at a golden object, we will see yellow light, the yellow light that was already present in the sunlight, but which we were unable to perceive without the open shades and the golden object. So also, experiencing the manifestation of a god is more likely if we are open to The One and if we use appropriate symbols to attune our psyche to that god (archetypal Idea).

Each *contingent* symbol belongs to a daemon (complex); therefore use of that symbol may cause the daemon to manifest (i.e., cause activation of the complex), and, conversely, the daemon's activity may be signaled by corresponding symbolic images appearing in consciousness, dreams, etc. In this way we may learn the symbols belonging to a daemon. While the symbols associated with gods (archetypal Ideas) are universal, the symbols associated with a complex may be culturally relative or even peculiar to an individual person. Indeed, through repeated association, quite arbitrary signs and symbols may be used to contact a personal daemon (activate a complex); in effect, the daemon accepts the token as a means of invocation.

In fact, theurgy tends to deal more often with personal daemons (complexes) than with gods (archetypal Ideas), since all daemons are time-bound, and the personal daemons (complexes) incorporate material from that person's life and experience; they "know" us as individuals. Therefore, as the Neoplatonists state, daemons serve as intermediaries between the impassive, eternal gods and individual human souls, which exist in space and time. Nevertheless, because each daemon is in the lineage of a god (i.e., each complex has an archetypal core), the daemon provides indirect contact with the god. Further, by means of the signs and tokens belonging to a daemon, the theurgist may approach and make contact with the daemon's divine progenitor; that is, the theurgist may experience contact with an archetype of the collective unconscious.

Since many aspects of reality can participate in the same archetypal Idea, symbols can come in many different forms. For example, among the symbols of the god Helios, ancient theurgists list golden objects, the cock (which heralds the arrival of the sun), and heliotrope flowers (which turn toward the sun). Other symbols of the sun include the disk, eye, wheel, chariot, eagle, phoenix, white or golden horses, and rays (Stevens, 1998, p. 136). In addition to these images, theurgists use materials in the *seira* of the god; for example, Helios governs hot spices, such as cinnamon, the metal gold, the stone citrine, ginger, bay leaves, saffron, and many other materials (Agrippa, 1651/1993, I.xxiii). Non-material symbols include hymns, chants, invocations, and music associated with the god; these might be performed out loud or in the imagination (for it is the mind that must be attuned to the god). Intermediate between material and non-material, we may place abstract forms (*charaktêres*), such as geometrical figures and gestures, which might be drawn, engraved, or enacted, either in space or in the imagination.

Figurines might be assembled from various materials and forms in the god's lineage, their common symbolic significance unifying to converge on the intended divinity (Proclus, *De Sacr. & Mag.*, 150). Such a figurine might be burned, further symbolizing

the unification of the tokens and their ascent to spirit (*spiritus*). This symbolic unification helps to lead the soul towards its own unification (Rosán, 1949, p. 213–14).

In the following sections I will describe the principle theurgic practices and show how they contribute to the process of psychic integration.

b. Dream Incubation

*Dream incubation (engkoimêsis)* was an important means of access to the divine realms in the ancient world, especially among the Pythagoreans and their philosophical descendants (Dodds, 1951, ch. 4; Kingsley, 1995, pp. 284–8, 1999, pp. 77–86); it is also, of course, a common shamanic practice (Eliade, 1964, ch. II, pp. 101–9) and a fundamental technique in modern analytic psychology (Jung, 1974; Meier, 1967). Through their symbolism, dreams reveal gods and daemons (archetypes and complexes) who must be confronted and integrated in order to achieve individuation.

The basic procedure, especially as practiced in the Asclepeia, was as follows (Meier, 1967, pp. 53–69). First the supplicant purified himself, generally with a ritual bath; this prepared him for his encounter with the divine. Indeed, incubation is a kind of initiation (as is a shaman's initiatory dream), and so the supplicant must be properly prepared and acceptable to the god. Next there were preliminary sacrifices, with accompanying auspices and auguries, to determine when the god (Asclepius) was willing to give the supplicant a healing dream; in some cases this might take months. In psychological terms, symbols are used to constellate an archetype, which then, through its symbolic manifestations, reveals the immanence of a "big" (i.e., archetypal) dream. When the auspices were favorable, the supplicant entered the inmost sanctuary (*abaton*, *adyton*) at night time (as typical of the mysteries) and reclined on a couch near the divine image (*agalma*) of the god. Interestingly, a supplicant might have another person (e.g., a slave or priest) enter the *abaton* and dream for him; such vicarious dreaming occurs sometimes in modern psychoanalysis (Meier, 1967, p. 55).

During the night, the god (possibly in animal form) might appear in a dream (*onar*) or in a waking vision (*hypar*). The firm intention to awake in the dream world might induce a *lucid dream* (LaBerge & Rheingold, 1990, ch.3), and, as in Jungian active imagination, the supplicant might enter into discussion with the god, perhaps negotiating about the treatment. For example, if a Pythagorean objected to being told to eat meat, the god might change the prescription. Alternately, the god might have intended the prescription as a paradox (*paradoxon*), that is, the breaking of a taboo or another forbidden act; this *enantiodromia* could effect a *coniunctio oppositorum* to heal the soul and thereby lead to greater psychological balance and integration. Often, especially if the god himself appeared, the dream was healing in itself, and we know from Jung that archetypal symbols can facilitate psychic healing and individuation. Other dreams prescribed surgical procedures, but these were generally interpreting symbolically rather than literally (like the dismembering and reconstitution experienced by shamans during their initiations). In some cases the priests of Asclepius, who were called *therapeutai* (medical attendant-priests), assisted in dream interpretation. As in modern psychoanalysis, the ancient

patient was expected to record his dream in complete detail, and successful healing dreams were recorded on votive tablets that were displayed for all to see (as modern dreams may be published in the analytic literature). Finally, the supplicant made thank-offerings (*iatra, sôstra*), which often took the form of paeans or other artistic productions, which may be compared with the ritual actions or physical performances which should complete dream analysis or active imagination (Johnson, 1986, pp. 97–134, 196–9).

c. Telestikê

One of the best-known theurgic practices is *telestikê*, a ritual of consecration, in which a divine image (*agalma*) is completed by being given a soul (*empsychôsis*). The divine image is itself, of course, a symbol of the god, but it is augmented with other tokens and symbols, which might be placed in, on, or around the image. These might be accompanied by symbolic sacrifices (e.g., a cock for Helios), fumigations, and hymns or other performances. Psychologically, these all contribute to the activation of the archetypal Idea, and a consequent projection onto the divine image, which has been made a suitable receiver (*epitêdeia dochê*) for the projection. Therefore, the image becomes numinous, radiant with the divine energy (*energeia*). Thus the image may function as a focus for contact with the god, allowing the theurgist to make inquiries, petitions, vows, pacts, etc. (As already mentioned, contact with a daemon is more likely and more useful than contact with an archetypal god, but the principles are the same.) Except for its greater dependence on a physical image, this process is quite similar to Jungian *active imagination*, in which a personified archetype or complex is engaged in conversation (e.g., Johnson, 1986, pt. III; Jung, 1997). Such integration of unconscious content and processes into conscious life facilitates psychic individuation.

d. Desmos kai Ekklysis

Another theurgic operation is the binding (*desmos*) of another person, subjecting him to possession by a god or daemon, and his subsequent release (*ekklýsis*) from possession. The possessed individual may be called the held-down one (*katachos*), the seer (*theatês*), or recipient (*docheus*). The latter term reveals the similarity of this operation to the ensouling of images, for the symbols and tokens are used to effect a simultaneous *projection* of the divine spirit onto the recipient, and a *possession* of the recipient by the spirit. Psychologically, the recipient is inspired or energized by a personified archetypal Idea or complex, and therefore can speak with its voice. Ancient texts recommend the use of children and naive individuals as recipients, for they are more likely to serve as “pure receivers” and “empty receptacles.” Prepubescent children are less likely to be possessed of sexual complexes and personal daemons, and therefore less likely to color the divinity’s voice with their own unconscious or conscious content. Easy and transparent possession by the divinity depends on both native talent (suitability, *epitêdiotês*) and acquired skill (hieratic power, *hieratikê dynamis*).

e. Systasis

The preceding operations may be used to facilitate the theurgical operation of *systasis* (bringing together, meeting, introduction, friendship, alliance), which effects a *liaison* between the theurgist and a god or daemon. In psychological terms, the theurgist engages in a conversation with an archetypal personality or complex, in order to become consciously aware of its nature, needs, and inclinations. Conscious integration and accommodation of this unconscious content decreases the chance that it will result in unintentional and undesirable possession or projection. More positively, such complexes, and especially the Shadow complex, may be sources of untapped energy and inspiration, which may be recruited to advance spiritual progress, especially psychic individuation. Similarly, theurgists may use *systasis* as a means of recruiting a daemon as a *paredros* (familiar spirit or assistant), who can aid in theurgical operations, including the theurgic ascent (see next). Psychologically, a complex is used to facilitate individuation.

f. Theurgic Ascent

Finally I will discuss the most advanced operation of theurgy proper, the *theurgic ascent* (*theourgikê anagôgê*) or *hieratic ascent* (*hieratikê anagôgê*) (Lewy, 1978, ch. 3; Majercik, 1989, pp. 36–45), which has many of the structural features of a shamanic initiation. It takes the form of a “theurgic death” (*theourgikos thanatos*), that is, a symbolic death in which the initiate experiences the separation of his soul from his body and its ascent to the gods, even to The One. By “dying before he dies” the initiate actualizes Socrates’ statements that philosophy is a preparation for death (*Phaedo*, 64a) and that true philosophers make dying their profession (*Phaedo*, 67e). The ritual, which has the structure of an ancient Greek funeral (Garland, 2001), may be reconstructed as follows (cf. Lewy, 1978, ch. 3; Majercik, 1989, pp. 36–45).

Preparations for the ascent (as for the mysteries and for magical operations) might include dietary restrictions, fasting, sexual abstinence, and other ascetic practices; in addition to their symbolic meaning (a sort of death of the body), these practices serve to destabilize the ordinary personality, a common prerequisite for a shamanic journey (Walsh, 1990, pp. 162–5). The rite itself begins with purification (*katharsis*) by ritual bath and fumigation, which correspond to washing the corpse, and which make the soul’s vehicle “well-wheeled” (*eutrochon*) for the ascent. The initiate, like a corpse, is dressed a funeral robe (*chitôn timioeis*); similarly shamans often wear costumes suggestive of skeletons to symbolize that they have died and been reborn (Eliade, 1964, pp. 158–60).

The initiate must be well-equipped (all-armored, *panteuchos*) for the ascent, for he will face many challenges. Therefore he is provided with apotropaic charms and with protective prayers, spells, and hymns, all based on theurgic tokens and symbols. (Shamans have similar apotropaic charms; e.g., Eliade, 1964, pp. 151–4.) For example, since he is attempting to separate from his body, he must oppose the natural function of the *material daemons* (*hylikoi daimones*), who are responsible for the descent of the soul into the body, and therefore he needs to be shielded from their effects. In psychological terms, the material daemons are complexes that tie him to the materialistic concerns of

life or that impede his spiritual progress. On the other hand, other orders of daemons, such as the Teletarchs or “masters of initiation” (*teletarchai*), will assist his ascent, and so the initiate is equipped with symbols to recruit their aid; the three Teletarchs correspond to the three Chaldean excellences (virtues), by which the initiate may unite with The One. They are assisted by the three Connectors (*synocheis*), who unite the universe in bonds of *sympatheia* (affinity, sympathetic influence) and remind us of the transcendent function of symbols. In addition the initiate invokes the protection of the three *Jynges*, which also represent symbolic binding forces, especially of divine names. All three classes of helpers are closely associated with the archetypal Ideas in the universal Nous (Majercik, 1989, pp. 8–11). The initiate may also depend on the assistance of heroes for, according to Plato (*Crat.*, 398C–D), a hero (*herôs* in old Attic) is a daemon born of the love (*erôs*) of a god and a mortal, and therefore they are important mediators in man’s approach to the divine. Finally, if he has secured the cooperation of a *paredros* (familiar daemon), then he may invoke it (activate the complex) by use of its particular tokens. As is well known, shamans also typically encounter both helpful and hostile spirits in the course of their journeys (Eliade, 1964, ch. 2, pp. 88–95).

The subsequent rite is based on the funeral of Patroclus in the *Iliad* (XVIII.343–53). The initiate reclines on a garlanded bier spread with a bier cloth, and he is covered with a funeral mantle; this corresponds to the laying out (*prothesis*) of the corpse. When the initiate is ready for the ascent, his head is uncovered, because it was considered the home of the *nous*, for the head’s spherical shape is a microcosmic correspondent of the celestial sphere, which is the macrocosmic image of the universal Nous. Assistants facilitate the initiate’s ascent by means of chants and hymns, as is also common in many shamanic traditions (e.g., Eliade, 1964, pp. 200–4, 227, 290, 305–6). The theurgist invokes the winds and rays of the spheres to fuel the fire that will cause the separation, and he exhorts the initiate to shield himself with the “sounding light” and “three-barbed strength.” As the theurgist calls out the initiate’s soul, the initiate begins inducing a trance state and the separation from his body by a practice called “breathing and thrusting forth the soul” (*anapnoê kai psychês exôsis*), a common feature of various yoga-like practices (Eliade, 1969, pp. 55–65).

The chanting continues, but makes use of nonverbal formulas (e.g., *voces magicae*, *onoma barbara*, vowel chants), so as not to impede the ascent by words and conceptual thought (which belong at the level of Being and below); of course, rhythm and music are common features of shamanic trance inductions (Walsh, 1990, pp. 173–6). The initiate concentrates on his ascent, repeating in his mind the symbolic formulas to keep the material daemons at bay and to recruit the aid of the heroes. In particular he ascends first on the rays of the Moon, which is identified with Hekate, who rules the daemons and marks the gateway to the spiritual realms, and who may be compared with the Jungian Anima, and then he ascends on the rays of the Sun, which is the visible image of The One (i.e., the Self). As he ascends through the spheres, the outer layers of the soul fall away, until he approaches the stillness (*sigê*) of the gods, whom he may see in visions.

Eventually the initiate may experience unification (*henôsis*) with some god, and thus a kind of deification (*theôsis*), and perhaps even unification with The One, although that

is more properly the goal of the higher theurgy (see below); in this way he undergoes immortalization (*apathanatismos*) and experiences salvation (*sôtêria*).

Since the initiate is still tied to his body, he cannot remain in this ascended state indefinitely. Therefore, he must descend back through the spheres, donning again the layers of his soul, and reversing the process of ascent. When he has completely returned to his body, the bier cloth is removed, and he arises from the bier, initiated and transformed, a *theios anêr* (divine man); he possesses the “mana personality” (Jung, *CW* 7, ¶¶387–90) and may speak with the archetypal voice of the gods. Of course, this does not imply that he is fully individuated, but it does mean that, like the initiated shaman, he has established permanent roots in the divine realms and is able to journey to the *axis mundi* and to engage the archetypal forces for the benefit of the community and for his own psychological development.

#### 4. *Higher Theurgy*

There is controversy over the relationship of the higher and lower theurgy, or even whether there is such a distinction (Majercik, 1989, pp. 35–6, 39–45); nevertheless, there is a basis for some distinction of this kind. As we have seen, a common feature of theurgic operations is to use symbols to activate a complex or archetype in the practitioner; in Neoplatonic terms, the daemon or god manifests in the theurgist’s experience and he is filled with the divinity’s *energeia* (activity, energy). According to the principle of “like knows like,” contact will be more effective to the extent that the theurgist’s soul is similar to the divine force being contacted. Therefore, in order to contact the higher divinities (that is, the deeper archetypes), which are further removed from the perceptible world, it is necessary to use correspondingly immaterial symbols. At the more material levels, the theurgist uses correspondingly material symbols (statues, stones, plants, animals, etc.); at higher levels, audible hymns, songs, and chants, and visible abstract figures may be used. Beyond that (at the level of the World Soul), physical action is abandoned and the symbols are imagined entirely in the theurgist’s lower soul (*psychê*), immaterial, yet still enacted in time. To go higher (to the universal *Nous*), the lower soul must be quieted so that the individual *nous* can rest in the *energeia* of the eternal archetypal Ideas.

According to Proclus, immediately below The Inexpressible One are its images, the *henades* (unities), which correspond to the gods proper. Therefore, since “like knows like,” the only way to contact The One and the gods themselves is by means of the unity that is in our individual souls, the highest part of our souls, which the theurgists call “the flower of the whole soul” (*pasês tês psychês anthos*); it comprises all our psychological faculties and transcends the opposites (conscious/unconscious, many/one, divided/undivided, etc.), that is, in Jung’s terms, the individual Self. As The One is the unifying source of the entire macrocosm, so the flower of the whole soul is the unifying source of the microcosm of the individual soul.

Therefore, the higher theurgy strives to quiet all of the soul except for this highest part, for The One reposes in Silence (*sigê*), as do the gods. Proclus (*Plat. Theol.*, p. 62)

says, “the theologians call the contact and union with The One *Pistis* (trust, faith),” for *Pistis* imparts Silence, which is superior to all cognitive activities, and is in the gods and therefore assimilates us to them (Proclus, *Plat. Theol.*, 4.9, p. 31). In this way, all the diversity within the soul is unified into its highest part, the Self, which is the flower of the whole soul and the microcosmic image of the gods and of The One. “The one that all the powers of the soul reverence is alone able to bring us to the Absolutely Transcendent (*to epekeina*) of all things” (Proclus, *Chald. Phil.*, fr. 4). Thus *Pistis* elevates the mind to the highest form of consciousness, union with The One, which Plato called the divine madness (*theia mania*). “This, friend, is the most divine operation of the soul, in which, working not by exterior motions but by interior, it becomes a god, insofar as that is possible for a soul” (Proclus, *Prov. Fato*, col. 172).

The curious Neoplatonic term for the highest part of the psyche, that is, for the Self, namely, “the flower of the whole soul,” may strike the reader as excessively poetic and somewhat arbitrary. Therefore, it is worth remarking that the “soul-flower” (or *seelenheilende Blume*) is known from several shamanic traditions, and that it symbolizes the microcosmic individualization of the central source of divinity, a symbol and agent of emerging individuation (Ryan, 2002, pp. 44–6, 53, 58, 186). The soul-flower is, of course, a particular variety of mandala (Jung, *CW* 9, i, ¶¶596, 604; 1972, *passim*). These images of the individual Self are associated often with a symbol of the Axis Mundi, the first cause and source, and a symbol of the path of ascent to that source. Therefore, the soul-flowers may appear as blossoms on the Tree of Life, which shows how the Self of each individual is rooted in The Inexpressible One. The branches of the tree are the *seirai* (lines) of the gods.

##### 5. *Theurgy in the Modern World*

In considering the application of these spiritual practices in the contemporary world, we must separate the universal symbolic forms linked to the archetypes in the collective unconscious, which are still potent, from culturally-conditioned symbolic forms (mediated, as we may say, by cultural daemons), which may have limited symbolic power for moderns. Interestingly, the cultural forms of the East are often more acceptable to modern Westerners than are their own. Thus many Westerners are comfortable with shamanic journeying, meditating on a *zafu*, chanting Sanskrit *mantras*, contemplating a Tibetan *thangka*, or even practicing Tantric “deity yoga,” but they would feel awkward (and inauthentic) chanting hymns, praying, or performing rituals of invocation before an image of a Greek god or goddess. Be that as it may, as demonstrated to some degree by contemporary Jungian analytic procedures, theurgic procedures may be effective if symbols are used that are alive for modern people.

## V. Neoplatonism and Evolutionary Jungian Psychology

It remains to address another issue raised by my dream, namely, the consistency of Jungian psychology (and Neoplatonism) with the theory of evolution. I will treat the matter briefly here, because I have addressed it at greater length elsewhere (MacLennan, 2003, 2005, 2006) and because my approach is generally similar to Anthony Stevens’

(1993, 2003). Certainly, one might wonder about the purpose of establishing links between evolutionary theory, Jungian psychology, and Neoplatonism, but I claim that this perspective will contribute to all three disciplines, as will be clearer after the evolutionary orientation is explained.

**A. *Evolutionary Jungian Psychology***

**I. *Archetypes and Instincts***

In order to explore fully the relation between the processes of individuation in Jungian psychology and in Neoplatonism, it will be helpful to discuss both from the standpoint of the theory of evolution. Therefore I will appeal to evolutionary psychology (e.g., Buss, 2004), which seeks to understand human psychology on the basis of the evolution of *Homo sapiens* and by comparative studies of the behavior and evolution of other animals. The linchpin of this approach is the archetype, which can be understood internally (phenomenologically) as an unconscious structure affecting our conscious experience, but also externally as a behavioral disposition, which can be understood in terms of its selective advantage in our environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA, that is, the environment in which *Homo sapiens* historically evolved). Indeed, Jung acknowledged the close connection between archetypes and instincts (*CW* 8, ¶¶263–282); for example, he said:

To the extent that the archetypes intervene in the shaping of conscious contents by regulating, modifying, and motivating them, they act like the instincts. (*CW* 8, ¶404)

Thus we have a single structure with two aspects: interior and exterior, or phenomenological and behavioral, or psychological and biological.

Various stimuli can trigger the activation of an instinct; they may be genetically determined *innate releasing mechanisms* (as biologists term them), or they may be learned (conditioned stimuli). Similarly, archetypes may be activated in the unconscious mind by either innate symbolic triggers (part of the collective unconscious structure) or learned symbolic associations (part of the personal unconscious structure). As examples, we may take the two archetypal forces identified by the pre-Socratic Pythagorean philosopher Empedocles: Love (*philotês* or *philia*) and Strife (*neikos*), which he associated with the gods Aphrodite and Ares. (More abstractly they are the instincts for cooperation and competition, which are fundamental to many species.)

For example, from a behavioral perspective, we may say that the perception or thought of a sexually attractive person may activate a mating instinct, which influences perception and behavior in accord with its evolutionary purpose (i.e., its selective advantage in our EEA). From a psychological perspective, an archetype is activated, which structures conscious content in ways characteristic of this archetype. In particular, since this archetype governs interactions between people, archetypal roles will be projected on the participants; for example, the beloved may appear numinous or even divine, and the lover may be possessed by Eros or Aphrodite. (Indeed, erotic madness —

*erôtikê mania* — was the highest of the four varieties of divine madness enumerated by Plato, *Phaedrus*, 265b.) There is more, of course, to human love than the mating instinct (for it includes all sorts of affiliative and cooperative behavior), but this instinct illuminates the evolutionary basis of the archetypes.

In opposition to Love, according to Empedocles, is Strife, which also corresponds to a fundamental archetypal-instinctual structure. Part of this structure is involved in power-seeking and competitive behavior, which serves to establish a dominance hierarchy in many species of mammals and birds. “This makes for social cohesion and cooperation and contributes to the competitive efficiency and survival of the group” (Stevens, 1999, p. 324). Further, Stevens conjectures that this instinctual system provides the archetypal structure for all pursuit of “higher things,” including “truth, beauty, consciousness, or God” (Stevens, 1999, p. 325), and he considers its role in individuation. On the one hand, power-seeking and competitive behavior contribute to a person’s discharge of their “biological obligations” in the first half of life, which solidifies the foundation for individuation in the second half. On the other, however, there is “much more than mere status-enhancement” to individuation (Stevens, 1999, p. 325), and indeed ego inflation impedes the process; nevertheless this structure underlies the desire, aspiration, striving, and symbolism of the ascent to The One, for the goal of individuation is submission of the ego to the Self.

Therefore, both Love and Strife are essential to the spiritual quest, as evident in such myths as that of Orpheus (Stevens, 1999, pp. 46–52). (For more on the biological importance of the archetypal systems underlying cooperative and competitive behavior — Love and Strife, affiliation and rank — see Stevens, 1999, pp. 45–6, 53–60.)

In humans, as in other animals, the instincts are implemented by neural structures that (like the other organs) are a result of genetically defined developmental programs operating in interaction with the organism’s environment. So also, the archetypes, as the psychical correlates of the instincts, have a neural basis. However, it is a mistake to imagine that there is a simple one-to-one relationship between the archetypes and structures in the brain. If we consider an archetype, such as the Mother Archetype, it will be apparent that it involves a wide variety of brain systems: perceptual, attentional, emotional, motivational, learning and memory related, and so forth. Corresponding neural structures will be found in many parts of the brain, from the brain stem and limbic system to higher cortical areas. Therefore, in attempting to understand the neural substrate of the archetypes, we should avoid the temptation to fall into simple neural reductionism. Similarly, we should not assume that there is any simple correspondence between individual genes and archetypes; more realistically, each instinct arises from the interaction of multiple genes, which, in turn, affect multiple archetypes (Wilson, 1978, p. 198).

It is also important to keep in mind that the neural structures underlying the archetypes are the result of a complex developmental process of which the genes provide the *initial conditions* and *program*, but of which the environment provides the *boundary conditions*. As a result of both sets of conditions, the neural structures and therefore the

archetypes will be slightly different for each of us, just as our bodies differ (while remaining obviously and objectively human). In terms of Neoplatonic philosophy, the archetypal Ideas are projected into individual souls, for they cannot otherwise become active in space, time, and matter.

If the archetypes are somewhat different for each individual, then one might wonder in what sense they are *collective* and whether we can still speak of the *objective* psyche. This is an interesting issue, especially in relation to Platonism (MacLennan, 2005), but I do not think that it undermines the notions of the collective unconscious or the objective psyche. From an ordinary scientific perspective there is no real problem, for, despite individual differences, species-specific physical and behavioral characteristics are objectively determinable. So also with the archetypes. (Further, it is worth noting that Person is itself an archetypal Idea; therefore our species is phenomenologically real kind.)

## 2. *Complexes*

Jung explained the formation of complexes in terms of a network of associations growing, according to the laws of similarity and contiguity, around an archetypal core as that archetype is activated repeatedly in an individual's life (Stevens, 2003, p. 74). In neurological terms, we may say that the archetypal core corresponds to neuroanatomy and gross patterns of interconnection among brain regions as they develop before and after birth, whereas the formation of complexes is based on the more plastic alteration of the fine structure of the connection between neurons (development vs. learning). In this way, behavioral patterns characteristic of a species are adapted to each individual. In Neoplatonic terms, we can say that the archetypal Ideas (shared by all people) engender daemons that mediate between the universal Idea and individual lives.

As a consequence, we can see that complexes may be shared by groups, for if all the members of a group experience similar patterns of association with an archetype, then they will tend to form similar complexes. Therefore, between the two extremes of, on the one hand, universal archetypes shared by all humans (with some individual variation) and, on the other, personal complexes (which are saturated with the particularities of an individual life), we have the complexes of significant groups, including the family, community, and culture (Jung, *CW* 10). These complexes may possess members of these groups or be projected upon others by them, since, like other complexes, they behave as autonomous personalities (daemons).

## 3. *The Self and the Genome*

Psychologically, the *Self* corresponds to the totality of the archetypes residing in the collective unconscious (Jung, *CW* 12, ¶44); from a behavioral perspective, the *Self* corresponds to the repertoire of instincts of *Homo sapiens sapiens* (Stevens, 1993, p. 69). Although the archetypes each have their distinctive characters, as do the instincts, they nevertheless form a continuous and undivided whole, an *archetypal field* (von Franz, 1974, ch. 8).

As with all animal species, the human instinctual repertoire is implicit in the human genome, and, therefore, so is the Self. This is a straightforward conclusion, but we must be careful to avoid several unwarranted conclusions. First, as previously noted, we should not assume that there is a simple one-to-one correspondence between genes and archetypes. It is better to compare the genome to the Neoplatonic One, that is, to the monad, which holds the archetypal Ideas in unity and from which they all proceed (and to the actualization of which they are all directed).

Second, we must recall that the human genome is a statistical abstraction, for at any given time the human genome is a sort of average of all the genotypes embodied in the humans living at that time. Each person's archetypes will depend to some extent on his individual genotype. Therefore, the archetypal Self embodied in each person may be slightly different from the Selves of others. The most obvious difference, of course, is that between men and women. The difference between XX and XY chromosomes results in sexual dimorphism, the characteristic psychosomatic differences between the sexes; differences in male and female instinctual structures correspond to sex-linked differences in the archetypes.

Despite genotypic variation, the genetic differences among individual humans are slight, and so it makes sense to speak of a *human genome*. Therefore, provided that we do not forget that the human genome is a statistical abstraction, it makes scientific sense to talk of an *archetypal human*, that is, the Self, or pantheon of archetypes, common to all people. Further, the human, as an archetypal Idea, is phenomenologically real (an objective aspect of our experience). Thus the archetypal human is well known in the world's religious and philosophical traditions; in Gnostic, Hermetic, and Neoplatonic texts he is called *Archanthrôpos* (Archetypal Human), *Prôtanthrôpos* (Primal Human) or simply *Anthrôpos* (cf., Jung, *CW* 9 ii, chs. 13–14), for he is “the spiritual, inner, and complete man” (*CW* 9 i, ¶ 529). As the archetypal-instinctual totality that has preserved our species through its history and is the basis for its future evolution, the *Archanthrôpos* has been correctly viewed as the phylogenetic destiny of humankind (Stevens, 2003, p. 85).

## **B. Evolutionary Neuropsychology of Individuation**

### **1. Individuation from an Evolutionary Perspective**

The goal of individuation is “becoming one's own self” (Jung, *CW* 7, ¶266).

But the self comprises infinitely more than mere ego... It is as much one's self, and all other selves, as the ego. Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to one's self. (Jung, *CW* 8, ¶432).

Or as Stevens (2003, p. 174) says, “Individuation is a conscious attempt to bring the universal program of human existence to its fullest possible expression in the life of the individual.” Thus the individuated person has consciously integrated the archetypes, and so his ego is in conscious relationship with the Self.

The Self is implicit in the human genome, and so the Self is the psychological aspect of universal humanity and it encompasses the destiny (the possibilities of future evolution) of our species within a particular eon of its evolutionary history. By conscious participation in this collective destiny we give transpersonal meaning to our lives.

But what is the nature of the Self, that is, of the archetypal human? Much has been revealed by means of the analytic techniques of Jungian psychology, which follow in the tradition of phenomenological exploration of the psyche in Neoplatonism and other ancient philosophies, Eastern as well as Western. However, the investigations of evolutionary psychologists provide additional valuable insights, as emphasized in the work of Anthony Stevens (1993, 1998, 2003; Stevens & Price, 2000). As he points out, modern humans (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) evolved about 200 thousand years ago, and during 99.5% of that time we lived as hunter-gatherers; this was our *environment of evolutionary adaptedness*, that is, the environment in which our instincts have evolved, in which they conferred selective advantage, and to which they are adapted. It has been only about ten thousand years since animal husbandry and agriculture were developed; therefore, although now most humans have abandoned hunting and gathering as a means of survival, we still have, for the most part, a hunter-gatherer genome. To put it in other terms, the Primal Human (*Protanthrôpos*) is a paleolithic hunter-gatherer.

Therefore, we can learn much about the behavioral function and structure of our archetypes by observing contemporary hunter-gatherers. Certainly this is an external (behavioral) perspective on the archetypes, and cannot replace their phenomenological investigation through analytical psychology, but the two views are complementary and mutually informative. Stevens (1993, chs. 1, 3; 2003) discusses some specific psychological insights that may be obtained from the evolutionary perspective, but my discussion here will be limited to general considerations.

As Stevens (1993, p. 86) remarks, “Psychopathology results from the frustration of archetypal goals,” but the genetic adaptations of paleolithic hunter-gatherers are not necessarily good adaptations for contemporary people; therefore we have *das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. How can the demands of the archetypes (our paleolithic gods) be satisfied in the context of modern life? This is one purpose of both Jungian analytic techniques (such as active imagination) and Neoplatonic theurgy (and similar spiritual practices), which facilitate negotiation between the conscious ego and the unconscious archetypes and complexes. Such dialogue must respect the archetypes and complexes as autonomous personalities (gods and daemons), as well as our conscious ethical commitments (Johnson, 1986, 189–95; Stevens, 2003, p. 276). Therefore these practices are essential aids along the path of individuation.

## 2. *Neuropsychology of Individuation*

The psychological effects of individuation are familiar, but it will be worthwhile to consider the effects of individuation and Neoplatonic spiritual practices from a neurological perspective, to which end we may use a *quadripartite brain model*. Stevens (2003, ch. 13) extends MacLean’s (1990) triune model, comprising the “reptilian brain”

(especially the reticular activating system), the paleo-mammalian cortex (midbrain, especially the limbic system, and paleocortex), and the neo-mammalian cortex (neocortex), by observing that the left and right hemispheres are functionally differentiated in humans. Thus there are in effect four distinct brain systems. He also suggests that the archetypes have their roots in the midbrain and brain stem, because most activity in them is unconscious (Stevens, 2003, pp. 308–10). However, the neural systems subserving the archetypes also extend into the cortex, where they may influence conscious experience.

As is well known, in most people the left hemisphere is dominant and more specialized to verbal processing and discursive reasoning, whereas the right hemisphere is more specialized toward imagistic processes and intuition (these are very approximate descriptions, which indicate only the dimension of differentiation). Stevens (2003, p. 309) observes that the dominant left hemisphere may have difficulty interpreting the imagistic activity of the right hemisphere, which therefore seems mysterious and numinous. Also, the limbic system is likely involved in “feelings of conviction, of discovery, and of revelation” and in “the particularly Jungian experiences of numinosity and archetypal possession” (Stevens, 2003, p. 321). However, both hemispheres are capable of suppressing inputs from the limbic system (Stevens, 2003, p. 309).

The aim of Jungian psychotherapy is, in terms of the neurological model under discussion, to reduce the left hemisphere’s inhibition of the right hemisphere and to promote increased communication in both directions across the corpus callosum. (Stevens, 2003, p. 315)

This is accomplished by the *transcendent function*, which “resides in the mutual influence of conscious and unconscious, ego and Self” (Stevens, 2003, p. 315). Thus we can see how analytic techniques, such as active imagination, and Neoplatonic spiritual practices, such as theurgy, facilitate such communication, leading to greater integration of brain function. These practices compensate for the (largely culturally induced) dominance of the left hemisphere and its suppression of information from the right hemisphere and lower brain systems (Stevens, 2003, pp. 315–16). The transcendent connection is accomplished by symbols, which bridge the conscious and unconscious, ego and archetype (Jung, *CW* 9 ii, ¶280) or, in Neoplatonic terms, the worlds of becoming and being. (The same applies, of course, to shamanic healing; see Winkelman, 2000, ch. 5.)

It remains to mention briefly two other aspects of the neuropsychology of individuation. First, the ventromedial cortex (subgenual cortex) seems to control communication between prefrontal cortex and the limbic system, and it seems to be involved in the integration of thoughts and perceptions into meaningful wholes. Moreover activity in this region is correlated with mania and depression (Drevets & al., 1997). Therefore increased ventromedial activity may be associated with the blissful feelings of *unio mystica*.

Finally I should mention the well-known studies of Newberg and d'Aquili (e.g., Newberg, d'Aquili & Rause, 2001; Newberg & Iversen, 2003), which indicate that meditative and mystical states are associated with simultaneous heightened activity in both the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems and with decreased activity in the posterior superior parietal lobe (PSPL). This brain region seems to be responsible, at least in part, for integrating a variety of information in order to define the body's boundaries and to determine its position and orientation in space. It appears that meditative practices suppress neural inputs to the PSPL, so that it is unable to perform this function; as a result the subject may feel that his body is nonexistent, that he has merged with the universe, or that he is not in space at all (all experiences consistent with an ascent to The One).

Sometimes these results are used to argue that mystical experiences are effectively illusory, merely a material effect of brain physiology. However there is an alternative interpretation. We know from many neurological studies that one's body image (like the rest of the sensory world) is constructed by the brain (in interaction, of course, with the rest of the world), but this is an intellectual understanding that does little to change our ordinary experience. In contrast, by suppressing activity in the PSPL and other areas that construct these images, these spiritual practices give the subject a direct experience of the constructed (or even illusory) nature of the everyday world. Further, thanks to the involvement of the limbic system, this experience is numinous and convincing.

### ***C. Psychoid Processes and Archetypal Numbers***

Jung proposed that in the deepest levels of the collective unconscious, at the level of the instincts and below, were *psychoid processes*, in which there was no clear distinction between psychical and physical causality (Jung, 1959, pp. 46, 54), and that the resulting coincidences of psychical and material events explained synchronous phenomena (von Franz, 1974, p. 14). As von Franz (1974, p. 7) said, "The lowest collective level of our psyche is simply pure nature." We can understand this from the perspective of the material correlates of the psyche, for beyond the *human* brain structures are those common to all mammals, and beyond them are the physiological processes common to all animals, and beyond them is the biochemistry common all terrestrial life, and beyond that, the physical law common to everything in the universe (*CW* 8, ¶420). However, not all physical processes have psychical correlates (so far as we know), therefore not all physical processes are part of the collective unconscious. Rather, the lowest levels of the collective unconscious comprise those biological and physical processes that, like the other archetypes, can manifest in our experience through their influence on perception and behavior.

If the deepest levels of the collective unconscious correspond to fundamental physical processes, then we must consider the fact that physical law is mathematical in form. Indeed, late in his life Jung became convinced that numbers were a key to understanding the structure of the collective unconscious. He wrote much on the archetypal characteristics of unities, dualities, trinities, quaternities, etc., and he thought the

combined psychical and physical characteristics of number might explain synchronicity (von Franz, 1974, chs. 1, 3). In a letter Jung remarked,

I have a distinct feeling that number is a key to the mystery, since it is just as much discovered as it is invented. It is quantity as well as meaning.  
(quoted in von Franz, 1974, p. 9)

Similarly, many Neoplatonists, Neopythagoreans, and Middle Platonists saw the numbers as fundamental to the structure of reality and placed them high in the hierarchy of being. This view was not so much a prescientific form of mathematical physics, as it was a reflection of deep insights into the structure of the psyche and its processes. For they, like Jung, were investigating the *archetypal numbers*, which are as much quality as quantity.

How can we understand qualitative numbers, the archetypal monad, dyad, triad, tetrad, and so forth, in the context of modern science? We may begin by considering the psychical processes associated with them. For example, the archetypal dyad governs experiences of clear differentiation (dichotomy), opposition, and dilemma. Similarly, the triad manifests in experiences of mediation, balance, and transition from one state to another (the middle connecting the beginning and end). The monad is the unconscious root of our experiences of integration, wholeness, and completeness. Next we may consider the neurodynamical processes correlated to these experiences (MacLennan, 2003, 2005, 2006). Some of these are simply neural instantiations of processes common to all dynamical systems (e.g., attractor dynamics), which are described by the mathematics of dynamical systems. Therefore, the archetypal numbers (like other psychoid processes) can be experienced internally as psychical processes (and analyzed phenomenologically), but also can be understood from an external perspective in terms of the abstract mathematics of physical processes. Complex systems, in turn, and the mathematical laws governing them, may be understood from a Platonic perspective, which remains a viable philosophy of mathematics (Balaguer, 1998). Thus both sides, the internal and the external, or the psychical and the physical, are rooted in the archetypal numbers.

#### **D.     *The World Soul and Individual Souls***

In Neoplatonism the macrocosm, that is, the hypostatic structure of reality, comprising The Inexpressible One, the Nous, the World Soul (*tês pantês psychê*), and the natural world, is reflected in the microcosm of the individual soul, comprising the “Highest Flower of the Whole Soul,” the individual *nous*, the *psychê*, and the body. Therefore it will be helpful to see what additional insight into this parallel structure may be gained from the perspective of evolutionary Jungian psychology. In order to accomplish this, we must recall that a key characteristic of *psychê* is that it is the mediator between the eternal archetypal Ideas (residing in *nous*) and their actualization in space and time in the material world.

We may begin with an individual's genotype, which is an eternal mathematical form (a sequence of 'A's, 'C's, 'G's, and 'T's approximately 300 million characters in length, equivalent to a binary numeral of twice that length, or to a decimal numeral of approximately 180 million digits). The archetypal Ideas as they will be experienced by that individual have their basis in that eternal form, although, as we know, there is no simple correspondence between the archetypes and this sequence; as Proclus said, the archetypal ideas are "all in all, but each in its own way" (e.g., *Elem. Theol.*, prop. 118). However, the genotype has no effect in space and time unless it is embodied in a specific DNA molecule (that is, formed matter); then, under the appropriate environmental conditions, this abstract form can govern the further organization of matter that constitutes fetal development. Of course, this process does not stop with birth, but the genotype continues to govern the development of the individual (both mind and body) through the stages of its life. In particular, it governs the development and organization of the neural structures that subservise the archetypes. These processes, by which the abstract form of the genotype governs the unfolding of the individual in space and time, correspond to the individual *psychê*; they mediate between the formal and the material.

The individual *nous*, by means of which a person encounters the archetypes, can be divided into two parts. On the one hand, are the eternal forms encoded in his genotype; on the other are the neural structures subserving the unconscious archetypes, which unfold throughout the stages of his life. The latter can manifest in consciousness and are accessible by means of theurgy, the former are not (which is one way to address the perennial Neoplatonic question of whether the soul descends completely; see MacLennan, 2005).

Now let us turn from individual souls to the World Soul. We have seen that the universal *Nous* corresponds to the human genome, a mathematical abstraction implicitly containing all the archetypes common to humankind. However, it is also important to recall that, according to modern biology, the human genome is not an "ideal kind"; rather it is a sort of statistical average of all the genotypes embodied in living people at a given time; thus the genome changes slowly, at evolutionary time scales (Mayr, 1982). For some purposes it's more useful to think of this time-varying genome in collective terms, as the set of all genotypes embodied at that time; from this perspective, the *instantaneous genome* (i.e., the genome at a given point in time), is still a mathematical abstraction (indeed, it's just a set of natural numbers). Correspondingly, we may replace the human species, considered as an ideal kind, with the population of humans living at a given time; that is, we are thinking of humankind as a collective object comprising all human bodies. The World Soul can also be understood collectively, as the mediating element that brings the instantaneous genome into spatiotemporal manifestation in the collective body of humankind; it mediates the participation of collective humanity in the abstract instantaneous genome as a set of genotypes (the correspondence, which constitutes the collective *psychê*, is one-to-one except in the case of genetically identical individuals, such as twins). (The ensouled collective body may be termed the *Makranthrôpos*, or Great Person.) The evolution of *Homo sapiens* is conditioned by the behavior of this collective body, including its cognitive processes, as governed by its collective *psychê*. Individual humans contribute to this process, more or less consciously to the extent they

are individuated and consciously involved with the archetypal Ideas of the species. In this way individual souls may articulate their relation to the World Soul, and thereby to the phylogenetic destiny of our species.

As we have seen, the deepest (or highest) archetypes, such as the numerical archetypes, are common not just to all humans, but to all animals, or perhaps even to all physical systems. Thus we must expand our conception of the World Soul to include this wider domain, for the deepest levels of the psyche are just the psychical aspects of basic physical processes. Therefore, the universal Nous, which comprises the eternal abstract forms governing all change in the universe, corresponds to physical law, and the World Soul in its widest sense is the spatiotemporal manifestation of these laws in the physical universe. Hence, by becoming individuated we enter into conscious relation with the laws of the universe as they structure psychical experience. In this way we consciously coordinate our individual souls with the World Soul (the universal process, Providence), which gives meaning to our lives, each a unique and individual contributor to the whole.

Before concluding it may be worthwhile to say a few words about The One's attributes according to Neoplatonism, namely, its Beauty, Truth, and Goodness. These may seem to be, at best, sentimental relics from anthropomorphic ideas of God or, at worst, wishful thinking and denial of harsh reality. For The Inexpressible One — like the Jungian Self — transcends and unifies all the opposites: spirit/matter, being/non-being, truth/falsehood, beauty/ugliness, good/evil. Certainly, the archetypes (gods) implicit in the human genome can be considered good in the sense that the corresponding instincts have promoted our survival and flourishing up to the present, but whether they will continue to do so is, I think, an open question. In any case, if we step back and consider the laws of nature (“the lowest collective level of our psyches”), we would have to be anthropocentric in the extreme to think these laws are crafted for the benefit of one species on one planet circling one star in one galaxy.

Nevertheless, there is, I think, a sense in which The One may be considered absolutely good, and that is that the natural laws implicit in the universal Nous are such as to permit the self-organization of particles into atoms, and of atoms into molecules that are capable of self-replication and of evolving into the self-reproducing nonequilibrium thermodynamical systems that we call living beings, some of which, at least, are sentient. As we know, if the laws of physics were much different than they are, there would not be an organized universe. (Needless to say, I hope, these observations do not imply a human-like conscious or willful act of creation or design.) Therefore, the possibility of the existence of sentient beings such as ourselves is a basis for saying The One is good.

## **VI. Conclusions**

What is accomplished by this combination of evolutionary psychology, Jungian psychology, and Neoplatonism? First, understanding the evolutionary basis of Jungian psychology allows it to be integrated with modern biology and evolutionary psychology, thus dispelling the misperception that Jungian psychology is inconsistent with science (Stevens, 1993, 1998, 2003; Stevens & Price, 2000). Second, Jungian psychology may

compensate for the primarily behavioral orientation of contemporary evolutionary psychology (e.g., Buss, 2004), and expand its range, by contributing the phenomenological orientation of Jungian psychology, that is, its commitment to the reality of interior experience. Third, Jungian psychology and evolutionary psychology together validate the Neoplatonic world-view (in its broad features, even if not in every detail) and its spiritual practices, and they provide an alternative framework in which to understand Neoplatonism and to answer some of the questions it poses (MacLennan, 2005). Fourth, an understanding of the relation of Jungian psychology to Neoplatonism allows Jung's contribution to be understood in a broader cultural and spiritual context than just psychiatry and psychology. Finally, Neoplatonism, when properly understood in its relation to modern science, can contribute to a revitalization of the latter's mechanistic worldview and an improved relation of humans to the rest of nature (MacLennan, submitted).

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