

Self-Exploration 6 – Quest for Wholeness

• January 12, 2018 • [Leave a Comment](#)
Quest for Wholeness

It is a necessary journey of self-exploration into our own unconscious and unrealized potential, soul's journey from the material world towards its source. We can intentionally build a soulful relationship between our conscious and unconscious being. In Jung's view, ego represents the conscious mind comprised of thoughts, memories, and emotions we are aware of. The ego is largely responsible for feelings of identity and continuity. But it has blind-spots, denial, and projections.

Jiddu Krishnamurti said, "The more you know yourself, the more clarity there is. Self-knowledge has no end - you don't come to an achievement, you don't come to a conclusion. It is an endless river." "There is no end to self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is only from moment to moment, and therefore there is a creative happiness from moment to moment." New Delhi India 1st Public Talk (14 November 1948)

James Hillman states our foundational condition in strong terms: "Each of us exists not as a material object but as an image. We are complex images given by the vocation of our soul that preceded our birth and all the dreams, missions and voices of our ancestors. ...We are images, not imaginations, but powerful images that are echoes of original or primordial images that belong to the time of origin and have produced in a legendary place: Olympus, mount Meru, Mount Popa, the home of the gods.We could say that our lives are the memory, the echo of those primordial images. Such images of origin can be defined as eidola, i.e. idols. We can only do in time what the gods do in eternity." (The Vain Escape from the Gods)

In knowing ourselves we also encounter the sacred dimension and come to know God, however such numinous experiences appear, Jung noted we never directly can know God, only the god-image in the psyche. The experience of the sacred or the holy is "numinous", mysterious, tremendous, or fascinating, with a powerful emotional quality. Mystical union is a felt-sense of the sacred, divine, or presence of God.

Typical phenomena include unity of opposites (a sense of Oneness, wholeness or completeness); timelessness (a sense that mystical experiences transcend time), and a feeling that we have somehow encountered "the true self" (felt-presence, a sense that mystical experiences reveal the nature of our true, cosmic self: one that is beyond life and death).

It can also initiate a transformative descent into darkness, a Dark Night of the Soul, with despair and alienation. The searching self trembles. Our suppressed darkness is exposed as we struggle to bring light to the darkness. This destruction precedes rebirth and awakening to the truth of the self. Joseph Campbell says, "The dark night of the soul comes just before revelation. When everything is lost, and all seems darkness, then comes the new life and all that is needed."

The Dark Night produces spiritual and existential crisis. We feel engulfed in darkness. The spiritual process creates varieties of dark nights, since each one is unique. Crises can follow life-changing events, a natural disaster, bereavement, a medical diagnosis, confrontation with mortality, mental or physical pain which can be opportunities for discovering depths of wisdom and awareness.

An unexpected collapse of identity and understanding of life creates depression that changes our worldview. It includes transformation involving deep, profound insights into our spiritual evolution and facing our shadow. General categories include fear, dryness, loss of meaning, desolation without consolation, and trauma of the spirit.

Our conditioned self breaks open. Such transformation is a natural evolutionary process that anyone can access. Trauma comes to the surface to be seen, felt, loved, examined, held in presence, aligned with reality, and healed. We may find that true surrender is not death but actually true life.

Everything depends on how we emerge from the trauma and deal with the struggles that emerge. It links the inner and outer worlds together, Resonances between the inner and outer world suggest guidance, insight, and encouragement. Thomas Merton, Trappist monk, claims "Our vocation is not simply to be, but to work together with God in the creation of our own life, our own identity, our own destiny."

The transcendent archetype guides the psycho-spiritual process. The deep intuitive mind has the power to connect us to spiritual reality and inner truth. It takes a leap of faith to turn away from conventional expectations towards our inner world of wisdom with acceptance and curiosity.

Mysterium Tremendum

Anyone can be an ordinary mystic. Each of us can find ways to express our inner journey. We may not experience a regular loss of ego and absorption in the divine. Yet, now and then we may feel lifted out of our bodies and become lost in a beautiful piece of art or scene in nature, or bliss at the wonders of life.

Being infused with a sense of the sacred is enjoyed for its own sake. Sacred sites and pilgrimages may inspire expansive feelings or humility in the living presence of the divine. A rush of personal or collective feelings and deep memories may engulf or flood us with emotion. Paradoxically, the soul, remains passive in divine infusion.

A common example is the nature mystic experience, an ecstatic nonordinary experience where transcendent nature, awesome vistas, or stupendous events inspire us with a sense of the external sacred that resonates and enters the body. This is the "perceptual" nature of experiences of God. The natural world bring blissful feelings, an altered experience of time, a sense of unity, and

luminous phenomena. The divine universal presence becomes accessible to the soul, and the nature mystic's experiential being becomes infused by the experience.

We may feel enveloped in glory, often with a felt-sense of unity. Inner spaciousness comes with contemplative engagement with the natural world. We can engage and open a conversation with the elements – earth, the wind, the fire, and the water, We renew our connection with the vital energy that makes our physical lives possible while it cleanses and heals.

These are deeply subjective experiences of the objective or autonomous psyche, which has a compelling life of its own. The Self not only shows up in dreams, but is the maker of dreams. More than just an understanding of our own capabilities, character, feelings, motivations, or self-concept, self=knowledge is an intentional relationship with soul, with psyche as The Beloved, the heart's knowledge or gnosis. Only a world with soul offers intimacy and resonance. For some it becomes a passion. This is the myth of Eros and Psyche.

Felt-sense is a symbolic bridge to our common co-belonging to the world. We turn toward nature and our own nature to find the authentic self, focusing on dreams, images, and perceptions. "Self-authenticating" experiences, from expressive arts to penetration by the sacred don't need collective dogma or tradition. These experiences break through our conditioning in both positive and dark ways that cause suffering.

The Quest for the Holy Grail of self-knowledge and self-exploration is a self-initiatory Way, a solitary endeavor that prioritizes psyche or soul. The sacred cannot be defined but only experienced. It is a way beyond the denial of false self-narratives and conditioned self-images, such as roles, persona, and shadow. We come to know and love our images, not as material and concrete, but as imaginal, metaphorical, spiritual. Anima Mundi is our soul relationship with self, others, and cosmos.

"It has to be found by yourself, because it is your life; and without the widening and deepening of that knowledge of the self, do what you will, alter any outward or inward circumstances, influences - it will ever be a breeding ground of despair, pain, sorrow. To go beyond the self-enclosing activities of the mind, you must understand them; and to understand them is to be aware of action in relationship, relationship to things, to people, and to ideas. In that relationship, which is the mirror, we begin to see ourselves, without any justification or condemnation; and from that wider and deeper knowledge of the ways of our own mind, it is possible to proceed further; then it is possible for the mind to be quiet, to receive that which is real." J. Krishnamurti Ojai 4th Public Talk 24th July 1949

The seemingly simple precept is at once familiar, mystifying, and profound. Yet, self-knowledge is the foundation of any beneficial practice. We cannot dismiss its claim on us, for it is simply our own

inevitable individuation, that distinguishes us from the collective through our unique experiences and understanding. Many worldviews compete for our attention.

Self-knowledge helps us find light and refuge in our suffering. There is a terrible necessity for reciprocity between us and the Gods, between us and our fate. We face the fragility, unpredictability and imponderabilities of our lives within the plots of our personal mythologies and necessary constraints of the environment. Self-awareness means the ability to monitor our inner world - our thoughts and feelings. Mindfulness is one method for enhancing this essential capacity.

Oedipus

The Delphic imperative was finally followed as a prescription by Oedipus, the unconscious, unreflective archetypal person. He did not know himself at all, but was convinced he did know until he entered his tragic revelatory period.

He did not know his origins, his character, or his visionary calling that eventually allowed him to reconcile with his transgenerational legacy and archetypal situation. The gods are not merely instincts, nor concepts, nor archetypes, but living forces with which we are inter-related through the soul of the world, Anima Mundi.

He could not distinguish his character from his personality. His blindness became a metaphor for our own lack of insight and self-understanding. We do not have to follow his path to the bitter end, but can make self-exploration and self-knowledge a daily part of our soul-tending practice.

Oedipus is reborn through unveiling a formerly unsuspected meaning, dealing with the limitations of rational thought and heightened awareness of unconscious dimensions of the psyche. He is a symbol of both the personal and collective unconscious – first in blind denial, then in visionary insight, from ignorance to self-knowledge. Revelation continues all the time if we know how to look.

In *The Power of Myth*, Joseph Campbell states, “People say that what we’re all seeking is a meaning for life. I don’t think that’s what we’re really seeking. I think that what we’re seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive.”

Such a profound reality is symbolic and generally invisible. It relates to the absence or presence of a true self. Such language allows us to apprehend certain truths related to the life of the soul, to interpret situations whose meaning goes beyond the ability of reason alone. Transgenerational analysis shares this language with mythology in order to apprehend how certain necessities in life

function and what role they perform in the orientation of our destiny. Thereby hangs our fate.
(Gaillard, Oedipus Reborn)

Knowing ourselves can be as simple as identifying our set of beliefs or accepting that we are ignorant of that which remains unconscious. We can never know completely know Absolute reality, universal absolutes, only our relative, subjective experiences, which appear in images as the content of psyche or soul. This is how we know what we know. We can never know all of the objective psyche, the absolute, only our relative self-awareness.

We like to make cavalier interpretations based on what we think we know, but that just stops the process cold with one a-ha solution. If we remain open to multidimensional meanings the images continue unfolding.

In Facing the Gods, James Hillman points out the common identity of Necessity and Chaos with anxiety: The psychological viewpoint sees Necessity and Chaos not only as explanatory principles only in the realm of metaphysics; they are also mythic events taking place also and always in the soul, and they are the fundamental archai of the human condition. To these two principles the paths (or motions) of the soul can be linked. Psychology has already recognized the faceless, nameless Chaos, this “sacred and crazy movement” in the soul, as anxiety, and by naming it such, psychology has directly evoked the Goddess Ananke, from whom the word anxiety derives. If anxiety truly belongs to Ananke, of course, it cannot be “mastered by the rational will.”

The image is a substance with a life of its own. We see it in our psychophysical responses, in our psychosomatic phenomena, and in our inherent genius, which is the spirit within us. In expressive arts we give form to the images arising in our mind’s eye, our dreams, and our everyday lives.

It is a form of spiritual practice through which knowledge of ourselves can ripen into wisdom. Arguably, all scenes in art are internal in the millennia-old search for self-knowledge. Art changes the totality of our human experience. It is a powerful natural therapy. Creativity draws out our self-awareness.

“There’s a long story in every sentence, every word we say has a huge story, every metaphor is full of historical symbolism. Our words carry all of that story that once was so alive and still exists in every human being .” C.G.Jung, dream analysis. Seminar held in 1928-30

Marie-Louis von Franz said, “Jung’s idea was that the goal of evolution on this planet seems to be to create more consciousness.” When we prioritize psyche and psyche’s perspective, we also bring in the balance of The Feminine and honor our own complexity. Reverie is the return of the

unconscious, the imagination, The Feminine. Jung said, “the descent into the depths brings health. It’s the way to the whole being, to the treasure that humanity so constantly researches.” Analytical psychology. Lectures at the Tavistock Clinic, PP. 16-17

“Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. Self-knowledge is cultivated through the individual’s search of himself. I am not putting the individual in opposition to the mass. They are not antithetical. You, the individual, are the mass, the result of the mass. In us, as you will discover if you go into it deeply, are both the many and the particular. It is as a stream that is constantly flowing, leaving little eddies and these eddies we call individuality but they are the result of this constant flow of water.” Collected Works, Volume 3, Ojai 1st Public Talk 14th May, 1944

Through self-knowledge you begin to find out what is God, what is truth, what is that state which is timeless. In self-knowledge is the whole universe; it embraces all the struggles of humanity. JK

Kahlil Gibran said, “Knowledge of the self is the mother of all knowledge. So it is incumbent on me to know my self, to know it completely, to know its minutiae, its characteristics, its subtleties, and its very atoms.”

Hermann Hesse notes, “I call that man awake who, with conscious knowledge and understanding, can perceive the deep unreasoning powers in his soul, his whole innermost strength, desire and weakness, and knows how to reckon with himself.” Narcissus and Goldmund

“Without self knowledge, without understanding the working and functions of his machine, man cannot be free, he cannot govern himself and he will always remain a slave.” —G.I. Gurdjieff

We can approach our own experience through “unspoken words,” enabling us to look into the inner world—the psyche, or soul—and to explore it. It concerns coming to wholeness more than achievement or self-development. It is concerned with love and felt-sense related to the whole fabric of existence.

We can look at what is happening on the margins of things; explore beneath the surface, and pay attention to silence that occurs for whatever reason. All these activities allow new understanding and opportunities to emerge, sometimes through dreams, passages, and archetypal experience. Learning to tolerate uncertainty leads to more openness to build a reflective capacity into our engagement with the world.

‘This magnificent refuge is inside you. Enter! Shatter the darkness that shrouds the doorway. Be bold. Be humble. Put away the incense and forget the incantations they taught you. Ask no

permission from the authorities. Close your eyes and follow your breath to the still place that leads to the invisible path that leads you home.’ -St. Theresa of Avila.

‘I am often asked if my psychic experiences ‘disturb’ my everyday life. On the contrary, they enrich it. One simultaneously lives a separate existence, aware of a tenuous level of experience as one rubs shoulders with one’s fellows, while underneath there is a pattern that plays unconsciously and perpetually, a web many-colored and delicate, and filled with awareness....I am aware of an intermediary field which contains us one and all, to hold our ‘signature’ so that we, as emotional beings, continue to add our stamp of personality to this unsuspected world within space. Perhaps one day this area within space and time will reveal itself to the scientific mind.’ - Eileen Garrett.

But we don’t need to be mystics or mediums to perceive the psyche’s content.

Our path is specific to our being. In this way we come to know that we are not gods, move beyond our narcissistic hubris, and develop a reciprocal relationship with the sacred, that allows us more openness, more tolerance for chaos and uncertainty. It allows us to experience the *Mysterium Tremendum* with greater surrender to our inherent necessities and fate. We may not know where we are going but we can learn to trust the instinctive process to get us just where we need to be to come face-to-face with ourselves – strengths and foibles.

Ancient and modern saints, philosophers, and mystics have repeated the injunction for self-knowledge as the most important and most difficult thing we can do. Goleman suggests in *Emotional Intelligence*, that “The purpose of developing Emotional Self-Awareness is that it allows us to understand how our bodily sensations and our emotions impact ourselves, others, and our environment.”

“...you find your genius by looking in the mirror of your life. Your visible image shows your inner truth, so when you’re estimating others, what you see is what you get. It therefore becomes critically important to see generously, or you will get only what you see; to see sharply, so that you discern the mix of traits rather than a generalized lump; and to see deeply into dark shadows, or else you will be deceived.”

– James Hillman, *The Soul’s Code: In Search of Character and Calling*

Though the Pythia is known for the saying, it likely is far more ancient, appearing in Pythagorean and Egyptian forms, *To de Lubicz*, Luxor was a kind of living organism, a colossal compendium of esoteric truth, whose every detail, from its total design down to its very materials, voiced one central revelation: that Conscious Man was the goal of cosmic evolution.

The Mysteries of the unconscious underlie and inform our self-awareness. The outer is the inner, and the inner is the outer. Lived reality is only experienced reality and is always transformed before

it is experienced. The eternal drama of suffering and life on earth culminates in the opening of the heart, in compassion, and understanding for self, others, and cosmos. Self-knowledge comes out of tragedy and tribulation.

We all have our own path to collecting wisdom, especially on the path of the lone practitioner. There is no right and wrong way, but we are shaped by the path we choose. An approach to the path is a significant and very personal decision. Finding our path is not about judgment but about being true to oneself, not who you want to be. We each walk our path on our own. But we may be surprised to find we learn as much about the nature of divinity, the imaginal, or the sacred dimension as ourselves, as well as the underlying patterns of human existence and the soul of our collective humanity.

In *The Power of Myth*, Joseph Campbell says, ““People say that what we’re all seeking is a meaning for life. I don’t think that’s what we’re really seeking. I think that what we’re seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive.”

Trying to turn oneself into a ‘spiritual persona’ is simply swapping a false ego perspective for a social mask, a rookie mistake of outward display of inner emptiness. A pleasure of such work is that it is never complete. We can always return to it for enrichment and refuge, despite whatever conditions we find ourselves in. We become more and more fluid in our choices within the field of possibilities. We learn to practice presence, sit in silence, and face our fears and pain.

Process is a way of doing, not what is being done. A process-oriented path emphasizes awareness of internal experience over external striving while emphasizing a connection with the sacred. This natural means of self-initiation demands self-honesty, self-responsibility and an overarching desire to live life as a spiritual path. Our search for the Beloved soul is the fire that fuels our journey. A world with soul, *Anima Mundi*, becomes intimate as we participate whole-heartedly with it reflecting our co-belonging, whether we see the world as artifact or drama.

By altering our own consciousness, we alter our relation to the universe, and this changes our world. We can discover our deeper nature as a multidimensional synthesis of subjective/objective, qualitative/quantitative, mind/matter, wave/particle. This worldview unites spirit and matter. Uniting physics with psychological and spiritual knowledge yields wisdom and gnosis.

Metaphors are instructive, symbolic bridges. They are a Way of leaping the chasm between old and new knowledge, old and new ways of essential being. Moving beyond conditioned self-images and roles, we can tap the source of creativity, healing and holistic restructuring through imagination and metaphor. They can be deeply transformative – more than mere language. They are a technology

for changing our behaviors, feelings, thoughts, and beliefs – our spirit and soul. Instead of interpretations, we focus on (spoken, mirrored, visual, and multisensory) images, felt-sense, and perceptions.

We are assaulted by diverse and contentious worldviews. Jung's notions of a heroic, striving Self have been transcended with imaginal, nonlinear, nonlocal models of consciousness, archetypes as strange attractors and metanarratives as healing fictions. New theories in astrophysics, quantum physics and depth psychology supersede the old, recontextualizing life in the 21st century, The relative and the Absolute are entangled.

Absolute space is the womb of creation and the physics of virtual photon fluctuation (undifferentiated potential) reflects not only Nature, but our nature. Spiritual traditions have spoken about emanation within the Divine and Illumination since the dawn of human history. But only now are we learning just how literal that experience of Light is, and the interactive mechanisms it engages in our holistic psychophysical Being. <http://www.scitechuniverse.com/.../why-does-universe-exist-p...>

The Seekers

The philosophical antidote to soul-loss, to crushing existential dread remains a viable conscious or unconscious response to more and more grotesque horrors emerging from the slack maw of our present reality. Our challenge is a constant stream of existential threats orchestrated by the powers that be, endless accounts of grotesque horrors, trauma, abuse and harassment, and the mind-bending futureshock of an apocalyptic technological whirlwind.

Culture is going through a collective breakdown in terms of values. When our culture is wounded, the soul of the world is wounded. Our struggle is to connect with the soul of the world. The arts are essential to the health of a culture. Nothing happens when we are estranged from art, the theater, music and dance that no longer work within the context of soul in the culture. Then a culture becomes decadent, and starts to rot from the inside. The only way of finding out what our values are is to turn within and go inside to differentiate ourselves from one-sided collectivism.

Ours is the myth of self-search. Mythological and archetypal perspectives take us into deeper dimensions. Myths are worldviews with multiple meanings –ways of seeing the world. Mythology is a way of seeing how we see or understand what we see. Understanding myth is a means of seeing through the stories that both shape and distort our experience of ourselves and others.

Mythology has both creative and deconstructive power. Mythology is a deeper ocean of being, providing a mythic perspective on our current situation. Finding meaning leads into mythology.

Mythic thinking helps us frame “what is comprehensible.” Mythology describes four dimensions of our existence:

- The transcendent mystery of life that cannot be expressed adequately in language.
- An cosmological image of the universe that is our environmental habitat.
- The psychosocial context or matrix that scripts and encodes our roles and relationships.
- The inner story that gives our personal lives purpose, coherence, and meaning.

The veil has lifted on the thin veneer of civilization in “collapse renewal”. We can be overwhelmed with waves of cultural chaos, violence, and animosity. We need to stay connected to depth of soul and our dreams for a better world. Long ago Homer said, “So they decreed the gods.

That, in getting lost, everyone can find themselves.”

Tension, catastrophe, and overwhelming disturbance can occur without warning- disturbing waves of chaos, violence, and and animosity. We need to connect to the depth of the soul, the values of our instincts. our own value, and to reconnect with the deep self and the dream of our lives. W each make a unique contribution, perhaps not by saving the world, but becoming more of who we are. Beauty, wisdom, and grace may be the only antidotes for despair.

Even despair finally tranforms at the creative edge edge of chaotic self-organization. Those who have experienced the “edge,” have a keener sense of what really matters, and a much sharper sense of what a healthy society might look like, Chaos theory provides a philosophical basis for exploring the relationship of psyche and matter since they share a common dynamics. It allows us to formulate a theory of consciousness and healing based on an organic model of transformation, rather than a mechanistic or cybernetic process, as other contemporary theories.

We ignore these unconscious forces and felt-sense at our peril. From relationship to imagination, the search for identity, depth, and artistic expression remain the core of the psycho-physical process which each traveler unpacks in their own unique way. We experience life more consciously and fully as both a psychological entity and as a soul. Jung called it a process of ‘coming to wholeness,’ of integrating body, mind,, and spirit. As searchers, researchers, and visionaries, we might be characterized as ‘seekers.’ Our real home is within ourselves.

Psyche means soul, and the psychic process is the core of our existential and imaginal being. This domain extends from the abyss of the primordial unconscious, to psycho-physical phenomena, to the spiritual heights. We learn how to ‘see through’ the literal and concrete to the expansive metaphorical and transpersonal dimensions of nature and our own nature. We participate in dialogues that translate into a deeper narrative of our lives and their meaning.

Understanding & Engagement

Our connection to the unconscious provides spiritual sustenance. We cannot describe the objective or autonomous psyche, We can only describe how we experience sacred phenomena. This experience of the sacred or the holy is “numinous.” It comes over us as something that is mysterious, tremendous, or fascinating. It has a powerful emotional quality of a much deeper and more essential level of creation, beyond the ordinary or mundane. All we have to do is recognize a certain quality in the experience, whether in dreams, imagination, or the natural world.

Traditional and nontraditional experiences of the sacred originate deeply in our own subjectivity, and not in some transcendent realm. They carry the intense emotional quality of something extraordinary, dreadful, and amazing. Visions or synchronicities are like waking dreams, uncanny but also with their own reality. The psyche is instinctively predisposed to an innate, organic wish to connect with something spiritual, something beyond the ordinary, Revelation is continuing all the time if we know how to look.

Without this internal compass, the alienated ego rejects both spirit and matter, body, and mystical awareness. Our particular genius is the spirit that is already within us. Turning toward the center heralds a return to healing, transformation, and rejuvenation as we traverse the labyrinth or razor’s edge of life. It is a metamorphosis through direct experience with the sacred dimension of life and being.

The transformative process happens to all of us in the course of our lives, largely in dreams, symptoms, and imagination. Metanarrative and sacred experience is an emotionally powerful universal healing Meta-Syn even creating a tremendous shift in childhood and core issues or mending our ancestral web.

Simone Weil said, “The false God changes suffering into violence. The true God changes violence into suffering.” Our God-image may be based on our own sense of connection to the objective psyche, to the bigger Self, to something that we don’t understand nor are able to envision.

Because we can’t intentionally create these kind of experiences, they appear as grace, especially if trauma has damaged our capacity to feel. They can occur when we suffer intensely because the veil or the barrier between the ego, the everyday consciousness and the transpersonal domain of consciousness, is thinner. The more religious even suggest intentional ‘living in the image of God.’

We can find inspiration in culture-heroes, but ultimately must make our own way through the ‘dark forest’, like the Grail Knights. Krishnamurti said, “I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect.” (The Dissolution of the Order of the Star, 1929). As Einstein remarked, “I think 99 times and find nothing. I stop thinking, swim in silence, and the truth comes to me.”

As Baudelaire suggests, symbolism and ‘correspondences’ help us “Extract the eternal from the ephemeral.” Generic symbolic languages such as esoterics, alchemy, and Qabalah articulate the phenomenology of inner experience. They help us wake up and grow up.

Our deeply human experience of awe spans from “awful” to the “awesome” and all ambiguous spaces between. including technology, storytelling, the narrative arc, and the evolutionary, even empathetic value of having our minds blown by direct experience of expansive knowledge. We can all get such concepts conceptually, but experience makes them real.”

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Learning from Mystery

Soul is a primary experience of embodied subjectivity. Soul lives on images and metaphor that are the basis of consciousness. Psyche is fundamentally associative, a combination of physical nature and transcendent spirit. The inherent self-mirroring function of the psyche is prelinguistic and postlinguistic.

The soul in depth psychology is imagination, fantasy, and creativity which is always in the process of becoming – images forming, and dissolving, and forming anew. Imagination is the essence of the life forces, both physical and psychic. These fantasies always permeate our beliefs, ideas, emotions, and physical nature. The world needs our imagining, not our escape into literalism. Often, knowing means realizing and admitting that we don’t know.

The world needs our participation, because how we image things makes all the difference in the world. It is not what we know, but a Way of Knowing even in Unknowing. An intuitive way of knowing ourselves is the ability to see through the world perceived by the senses to deeper knowledge of the structure of reality – the field-like dimensionality of psyche – a sensitivity to multidimensionality. Our archetypal method discovers root metaphors and operational myths.

Psyche is a complex network of associations among unconscious contents. “The rational mind is incapable of deciding what is best for the soul. The mind can discover what is needed only by listening to and reflecting upon the subtle movement of the soul as it expresses itself in bodily sensations, feelings, emotions, images, ideas, and dreams,” says Robert M. Stein in *Body and Psyche*.

In *Care of the Soul*, Thomas Moore contends that “it is impossible to define precisely what the soul is. Definition is an intellectual enterprise anyway; the soul prefers to imagine.... Soul lies midway between understanding and unconsciousness... its instrument is neither the mind nor the body, but imagination” (p. xiii). He also believes soul “is not a thing, but a quality or a dimension of experiencing life and ourselves. It has to do with depth, value, relatedness, heart, and personal substance” (p. 5).

Moore continues, “If we deprive sacred stories of their mystery, we are left with the brittle shell of fact, the literalism of single meaning. We tend to view phenomena literally rather than metaphorically. We are literally inundated with the world pouring through every opening and in this awareness we recognize a fundamental truth: we are of the earth.” Hillman suggested we can “see through” our personal history to its archetypal image, dissolving the literalisms that constitute empirical reality.

“The difference between psychology and religion boils down to the same as between psychology and science: literalism. Theology takes Gods literally and we do not... In archetypal psychology Gods are imagined... They are formulated ambiguously, as metaphors for modes of experience and as numinous borderline persons.”

Hillman (RVP:169)

Literalism is a rigidity of perceptual stance. Absolute surety in our inner experience has little or nothing to do with its outer truth. Making the symbolic concrete is a mistake. Taking fantasies literally confuses the literal and the concrete, emphasizing the self-centeredness of the spiritual point of view. The difference between a bias and a mirror is predictability. Corbin and Hillman emphasized that literalism is one of the chief strategies of the fundamentalist and totalitarian mind. Literalism encourages the uncritical use of power and coercion because it presumes that reality can be known with certainty. Humility, caution and critical self-awareness are essential for a life in tune with imaginal realities.

Insights mean the dissolution of literalism and the reconnection of fantasy (Hillman: 1972: 41-42). Most of us have clarity on the difference between real and imaginary much of the time, but then get totally stuck in literalisms of one kind or another. For example, danger lies not in the death fantasy but in its literalism. The death wish of the soul is metaphorical. Literalism also means interpreting religious symbols and stories at face value, and accepting them as factual descriptions of the world.

A poetic move away from literalism is an invitation to consider subtler realms beyond. Hillman observes, “The problem with literalism is that it takes itself to be the only valid point of view.” This makes it impossible for literalism to see through itself; to see the inherently metaphorical nature of all forms of knowing. The symptoms of literalism include an arresting or blockage of psychic energy’s flow, the source of fantasy, the fountain of soul.

Literalism is an incessant need to make all things purposeful. Taking fantasies literally confuses the literal and the concrete. Ego’s weapons are rationality, positivistic knowing, causality, literalism, strength, and growth. If truths are the fictions of the rational, our fictions are the truths of the imaginal. Without metaphorical

understanding, everything is only what it is and must be met on the simplest, most direct level. We can focus on keeping imaginal pursuit of value and insight free of literalisms.

Direct experience means living in the image and what it represents. If we gulp down images their shallow meanings specify exactly what we should think, feel and believe. Literalism means that the image is explained away: its uroboric, interminable, endlessness is terminated when one understands the image and can thereby end the gaze. But if we do not explain them away in words, they do not end. Not in time to begin with, the imaginal image is revelatory, nonlinear, discontinuous, inherently significant in itself.

Imagination is its own ground to be valued for its own sake. The concealed and mysterious are as important as the revealed and understood. The science fantasy relies on objectivity, technology, verification, measurement, and progress - in short, its necessary literalism. This is the either/or world, the world of "facts," and singleness of meaning — one end of a binary opposition, stiffening against paradox, ambiguity, irony — veiling psychic multiplicity.

"Literalism prevents mystery by narrowing the multiple ambiguity of meanings into one definition." says Hillman. It hardens the heart and hinders our imagination as it encounters the world. It prevents mystery. It narrows by making the multiple into one; multiple meanings, multiple definitions, interpretations are reduced into one, monolithic meaning. Literalism abhors the symbolic, the metaphoric, the "as-if" quality in words, in truth, in experience. Literalism revels in the concrete, the material, the one. Literalism, when taken to its extreme leads to fundamentalisms of all varieties.

Just because we believe something literally, doesn't mean it is metaphysically real. We may be troubled by historic and contemporary life dominated by literalism and simplistic ideologies. Extremes of literalism, like fundamentalism, are destructive. Literalism deadens psyche with single, simple, solid and stable meanings. Our approach is away from the crushing literalism of modern life toward the reanimation of soul in ourselves and the world — metamorphosizing through metaphor.

The prime expression of beliefs is through spontaneous imagery. We never experience directly, but interpret our experience of our perceptions through imagery. All our input comes through multi-sensory channels. We never directly perceive ourselves, soul, or God. We don't perceive our bodies directly, only our sensory impressions. But we do have first-hand experience of our body-image, soul-image, and God images. That is all we know directly. The rest is pure speculation. We have to go beyond what is taken for granted.

Depth is a particular trait of soul. Soul is a root symbol or metaphor for heart, life, warmth, humanness, purpose, character. It is a perspective that allows us to see through all of our activities and states.

Consciousness is emergent and self-referential, a way of looking back at and transcending ourselves. The true nature of reality is pure potential Consciousness.

Like the archaic Greeks we face an unprecedented time of expansion of inner and outer limits. The anxiety of new possibilities is forced on us whether we wish it or not. The Oracle's symbolic utterance means we should know ourselves as souls, not merely egos. This is the soulful approach to self-knowledge. From antiquity, dreams and imagination have been associated with soul. Myth opens culture from its literalism, liberating the mind, revealing the depth of experience.

Myth becomes heroic in the sense that it can release or liberate the mind, the imagination. We recognize the mythic dimension by active, reflective introspection, and connection with archetypal stories. We see through the darkness into images, resemblances, correspondences. We feel, think, or imagine and simultaneously are aware of it. When we don't have to respond to strong external stimuli, we automatically engage in narrative processes. What mythologems, images and narratives emerge? We often experience emergence as emergency.

Self-consciousness is a primary source of reflexivity in human thought and action. Memory is also self-reflexive as is the physical structure of the body as the biological form of memory. Grief gets trapped in the body. Self-referentiality means something refers to itself. Paradoxes of self-reference can serve as a guidance for consciousness. The living system, and the information processes underlying life consciousness reside at a much deeper, intrinsic level of the universe. All conscious experiences have reference to the self, but we can imagine many selves, Selves, or a network of selves.

Research shows no stable center of our functional identity or self-image. A literalism of Self is like a non-existent God absolutely believed in. Our selves are dynamic bundles of perceptions, sensations, desires -a sense-opening odyssey. We can obliterate it, philosophically, conceptually and chemically. Valuing one literal identity over another prevents us from seeing through the images we construct.

Such literalism does not promote healing, according to James Hillman. Consciousness can raise doubts about identity, but only direct experience can confirm it. When hidden assumptions are made explicit something very astounding may be revealed. Questioning about consciousness or self is radically self-referential as an act of consciousness.

A natural state, "shamanic trance" is at the core of religion. Consciousness naturally achieves a profound level of inner awareness. Myths are esoteric descriptions of psychophysical phenomena during trance in the human body. Knowing and understanding are passed on codified in myths. The intuitive mind has its own ways of plumbing the truth. As the oracle suggests, we find peace and equilibrium only through self-knowledge, the spontaneous image-making of the soul.

Hillman says it comes from holding ourselves up to the mirror of mythological situations which help us to understand and not live blindly. "If you know which mythical pattern, which archetypal drama, is being enacted in your dilemma you are already on the road to relief." (James Hillman, 2008, *Aphrodite's justice*, p. 32, Edizioni La Conchiglia). When we tune to the depths, our nightly dreams may reveal hidden oracles, though

metaphorical and symbolic, rather than literal. Dreams have just as much to do with our death as life. They are complete in and speak for themselves.

“Soul is the bridge that leads us across the river between the trees, both in the mud and in quicksand, making what is known more and more unknown. The deeper we come from the, the more the consciousness becomes opaque. So, in order to be able to follow it, we must like, explicitly stating that understanding is moving from what is known to what is unknown, in a epistemology based on the motto ‘ Ignotum for ignotius’.... Soul obfuscates, produces puzzles puzzles, prefers Esoteric and occult, where she can stay hidden: she wants uncertainty at all costs. Stripping everything that is known from its solid ground, brings every problem into deeper waters; and this is also a way of making a soul. The deeper we follow soul, the more amazing becomes the conscience .” James Hillman, soul, p. 171)

Our own oracle or spiritual guidance lies in the depths beyond the threshold of our inner temple and holds the deepest secrets of our individuality and fate. The injunction is an invitation to enter the world of soul, of psyche. Life as we know it is full of desire, passion, pathos, complexity, and paradox. This is the knowledge of experience that defies concepts and beliefs, a pathos that pines for the impossible in the face of the absolutely necessary.

“Desire is not enough: in reality, the ignorant desire disappoints itself or is consumed and extinguished, because desire is fulfilled, because Opus reaches its fruit - in Art, in love, in any process - learn everything possible on his Fire: its splendor, its flickering instability, its heat and its fury ... [...] Mastering the art of fire and possessing the key to alchemy means learning to warm up, excite, to light, to inspire the material we are working on, which is also the state of our nature, in order to activate it to move on to a further state. ” James Hillman

Interiorizing Vision

Confusion, symptoms, pathos, and complexes are the very things that connect us to soul, to core self-knowledge. Hillman called pathos, “the spiritual component of love or the erotic component of spirit,” and considered it “the longing towards the unattainable, the ungraspable, the incomprehensible.” Pathos cannot be separated from soul. It is the emotional speech of our suffering soul – the soul’s suffering of meaning.

Archetypal suffering is our experience of being buffeted by fate. Gravititas is the weight that holds us down to the world.

We all are wounded and suffering is universal. We are excruciatingly sensitized to what we perceive beyond our ordinary senses. It breaks open our hearts to self-compassion and the mythic dimension. Universal knowledge is a natural function of consciousness. From the field of potentiality, we can all access a wordless knowing awareness of different potential ways of expressing ourselves. In a fugue of meaning, our self-critical faculty is checked; we may lose perspective.

Pathos is the quality or power in an actual life experience or in expressive arts. Art provides unique access to interior life. It becomes a conduit to intimate self-knowledge and knowledge of others, accessing meta-verbal ways of knowing. Pathos is our passion of the moment - personal, political, spiritual, emotional, moral, relational or intellectual. Pathos refers to arousing the emotional responses to what we encounter in our environment. We can't stop our intrinsic instinctual or visceral emotional responses anymore than we can voluntarily stop our heartbeat or breathing.

We hide ourselves in the joys and horrors of experience, in the borderlands of time between the eternities, in pathos, obligations, and reverence, in the necessary polarity of opposites of paradoxical experience, in the deepest desires of our hearts. The truth of our pathos is that we can never know what lies beyond. Pathos is the human keynote of both ancient and therapeutic gnosticism: the desperate longing for escape, for final liberation, for a return to the God beyond.

Our own transcendent mystery of human existence is solved or dissolved in naked awareness. In the face of tragedy, the sadness of the soul shapes us into a larger sense of what life is all about. When we feel abandoned, perhaps even annihilated, we recognize levels deeper than our pain. We can experience the entry of the gods and the ennobling of the self. Thus, in high tragedy pathos is a divine process working in the human soul.

We question natural process itself about the underlying nature of ultimate reality. We are immersed in the sweetness and pleasure born of the soul beyond the suffering, even in self-transcending experience – thrilled with the joy of life and death – the seal of the promise of eternal love as the instantaneous transformation of One to None.

A passion for the spiritual, like all passions, can veer toward pathos, fundamentalism, and fanaticism alienating other parts of the Self. Individuation is becoming the innate personality potential from the beginning of our life. The goal of individuation, unlike that of the religious quest, is not union with the divine or salvation but rather integration and wholeness, the forging of the opposites inherent in the Self into an image of unity and integrating this into consciousness.

There are many ways to enter the path. The popularity of genealogy and genetics has opened the field of Transgenerational Integration. This is an invitation to travel, but an inner journey to self-exploration, to make a return to our roots. Our ancestors become substantive possessors of a set of knowledge, experiences and secrets that come from far away, deep in our roots. Transgenerational integration is a road to self knowledge of our origins, complexes, psychosocial, cultural and spiritual issues.

Ours is a search for clarity. To be engaged with the psyche, inevitably means to be engaged with our ancestors. Genealogy is a reflexive discipline. Your family tree opens a vast inner realm of ancient, living symbols – your ancestors. We yearn toward eternity, longing for connection. What kinds of things actually exist?

Meta-questions include: What is existence? and What is the nature of existence? We ask, "What is the nature of the universe?" or "Is there a god?" or "What happens to us when we die?" or "What principles govern the properties of matter?" The entangled nature of quantum entities provides a plausible theory for how our ancestors might 'appear' in our own very material psychophysiology.

Death makes life possible. Facing mortality inspires us to live more fully. Perhaps we learn to live from the dead and dying. Burial rites are among the oldest ceremonies of mankind. Consciousness arises at the beginning of life and sinks back into the cosmic maternal womb at death. Unconscious psyche and matter are one. Beauty, mystery, and healing potential are related.

Experience of Death in symbolic or metaphorical dying is experience of Rebirth or the Philosophical Resurrection. Rebirth is synonymous with restoring the true history of our origins and integrating our transgenerational inheritance, somewhere between the loss of what we thought we knew and true self-knowledge.

The soul generates images unceasingly. The soul lives on images and metaphor, especially epistemological metaphors-how we know what we know. They help us probe our deepest fears, pain, and suffering. These images form the basis of our consciousness. All we can know comes through images, through our multi-sensory perceptions. So, this soul always stays close to the body, close to corporeality, to what "matters."

"For me, mythology is a function of biology... a product of the imagination of soma. What does our body say? And what is our body telling us? The human imagination is rooted in the energies of the body. And the bodies of the body are the determinants of these energies and conflicts between the impulse systems of organs and their harmonisation. These are the realities of the myth ". (Stanley Keleman, Myth and the Body. A colloquy with Joseph Campbell, Center Press, Berkeley, 1999, pp.10).

All knowledge has gaps, and our self-knowledge is no exception. Climbing our family tree helps us fill in some of those gaps with myth, symbol, history, and immediate experiences of the power of presence and healing transformation. An occurrence can appear and be understood as a material event or a psychological experience, depending on our attitude, faith, and worldview Some may explore through the expressive arts, travel, pilgrimage or exploring nature, The Feminine, meditation, gnosticism, or other self-initiated, self-reflexive paths. Almost any activity can be done with soul in mind and heartfelt spirit.

We don't have to come to any particular conclusions, as Hillman points out: *"So the wandering path also follows Plato and Plotinus, which describe the path of the soul as circular. Psychological reasoning tends to be circular, it thrives on repetition compulsion and cyclic returns over the same insoluble themes. If his knowledge proceeds through error, error does not mean rectification of mistakes and improvement, but learning through what is deviant, bizarre, odd, displaced in itself...*

“The wandering path certainly leads to the less known and the less certain, to a lesser knowledge as founded, accumulated in security. It comes to dissolve the known in doubt, in the freedom of uncertainty. Does not it say that knowledge makes us free? Knowledge allows us to abandon it on the way, to turn down the path of traps, in complete foolishness, risking windmills even larger and farther, old knight increasingly daring, old rascal more and more weird....” (Re-Visioning Psychology, p.280)

Intrinsic Awareness

We intuitively know what it means to have a self and an inner life. Interiority invites us deeper into the world and the continuous flow of life. In the depth approach, our life is psychological, and the purpose of life is to make psyche of it, and find waking and dream connections between life, soul, and cosmos. Intuitive spiritual knowledge includes the ability to see through the world perceived by the senses.

Cicero noticed that the injunction to ‘Know Thyself’ was followed by the command, ‘Know Thy Soul’, or ‘know oneself’ completely. Otto Rank said, “The new meaning of soul is creativity and mysticism.”

Why creativity?

“The unconscious itself is neither tricky nor evil - it is Nature, both beautiful and terrible. . . . The best way of dealing with the unconscious is the creative way. . . .” Carl Jung, Letters Vol. 1, Pages 108-109.

The unconscious plays a major role in our lives, prior to conscious decision making and insight. The creative source we tap into is the creative source of all being – an essence that also guides the body. Creative insights are related to conscious and unconscious processes – the creative and vital currents of life. Ancient and modern wisdom describe the subconscious as a muse, a wellspring of creativity, vitality, growth, and resolution of opposites. Sometimes, its function is lost, repressed, or unrealized.

Unconscious thinking is an active process which plays a key role in the generation of creative ideas and solutions. Jung described our creative unconscious as the sum total of all of the knowledge and wisdom accumulating in our psyches since the beginning of evolution. It guides us to realize, the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual stages of our development from the transgenerational past.

Order emerges from the murky depths of the unconscious. Research on unconscious thought suggests that it may be most effective in incubation, the divergent phase of creative thought, and breakthroughs. During an incubation period unconscious processes contribute to creative thinking often resulting in creative problem solving, especially if we have been stuck. The unconscious mind can knit together seemingly unrelated threads into insights and ideas – ‘Eureka’ moments we can use right away.

This is the same intelligence that created myths, legends, and great archetypal stories. Metaphors transform imagination into multisensory images. Sometimes breakthroughs, even in music and science, arise in dreams,

intuition, or fantasy thought-experiments. Producing groundbreaking discoveries or great artistic creations still requires a plethora of connected raw materials; we have to be able to focus on some options out of an associated array. In an instant, impasse can give way to revelations of unforeseen completeness.

As Jung informs us, “Naturally a new meaning does not come ready-made out of the unconscious, like Pallas Athene springing fully-armed from the head of Zeus; a living effect is achieved only when the products of the unconscious are brought into serious relationship with the conscious mind.” (CW 4, Para 760)

Why mysticism?

Plotinus: “The way to truth was the journey of a lonely person to that which is eternally alone.”

Mystics, saints, and philosophers of all eras have much the same message. Mysticism is self-transformation through self-knowledge. Nondual traditions have applied various terms to the experience of self-knowledge, or witness consciousness. Seeing ourselves as energy that remains invariant, infuses a felt-sense of constancy in us as experiencers of that energy. What is valuable is often hidden from the conscious point of view. We must seek the secret treasure which will be revealed fully only at some future moment of utter self-knowledge.

Paracelsus explained: “*The knowledge to which we are entitled is not confined within the limits of our own country, and does not run after us, but waits until we go in search of it. No one becomes a master of practical experience in his own house, neither will he find a teacher of the secrets of Nature in the corners of his room. We must seek for knowledge where we may expect to find it, and why should the man be despised who goes in search for it?*”

Jesus, Hermes Trismegistus, Moses, St. Augustine, Homer, King Solomon, the Buddha Shakyamuni, Padmasambhava, Mohammed, Eliphas Levi, H.P. Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, Swami Shivananda, Nicolas Flamel, Basil Valentine, Paracelsus, Dion Fortune, and others, all recommended self-knowledge, experiential knowledge.

Nondual traditions have applied various terms to the experience of self-knowledge, or witness consciousness. Seeing ourselves as energy that remains invariant, infuses a felt-sense of constancy in us as experiencers of that energy. But our aim in our own self-exploration doesn't have to be as lofty as illumination. Revelations are valuable at all levels of reflection.

Alan Watts portentously said, “Inability to accept the mystic experience is an intellectual handicap. Lack of awareness of the basic unity of organism and environment is a serious and dangerous hallucination. For in a civilization equipped with immense technological power, the sense of alienation between man and nature leads to the use of technology in a hostile spirit - to the ‘conquest’ of nature instead of intelligent co-operation with nature.”

In The Meno, Socrates said, *“I would not be confident in everything I say about the argument: but one thing I would fight for to the end, both in word and in deed if I were able—that if we believe we should try to find out what is not known, we should be better and braver and less idle than if we believed that what we do not know is impossible to find out and that we need not even try.”*

Rumi wisely notes, *“man is what his eye covers. He is essentially vision, and the rest is just flesh and skin. The mirror that hides facial defects to respect a person’s feelings is not a mirror; it is hypocritical. As long as you can, don’t look for such a mirror! You’re not a body, you’re the eye of the spirit. If you’ve contemplated the spirit, you’re free from the body. Anyone who is free from ego is all ego; when he no longer loves himself he is loved by all. When a mirror is devoid of images it reaches its splendor, since then it reflects all images.”*

“To locate a thing you need space, to place an event you need time; but the Timeless and Spaceless defies handling. It makes everything perceivable, yet itself is beyond perception. The mind cannot know what is beyond the mind, but the mind is known by what is beyond it,” says Nisargadatta Maharaj.

“One day man will be awakened from oblivion and finally will understand who he really is and who has surrendered the reins of his existence to a false, lying mind that makes him and keeps him slave ... He has limits and when one day he realizes it, he will be free even here in this world,” says Giordano Bruno, quoted in Giuliana Conforto, *the future science of Giordano Bruno and the birth of the new man, noesis and macro*, 2001.

Thomas Moore says, *“We know intuitively that soul has to do with genuineness and depth, as when we say certain music has soul or a remarkable person is soulful... Soul is revealed in attachment, love, and community, as well as in retreat on behalf of inner communing and intimacy.”* (Care of the Soul, xi-xii)

In The Gospel of Mary Magdalene, *“The soul answered and said, ‘I saw you. You did not see me nor recognize me. I served you as a garment, and you did not know me.’ When it had said this, it went away rejoicing greatly.”* ... *“And the soul said, ‘why do you judge me although I have not judged? I was bound though I have not bound. I was not recognized. But I have recognized that the All is being dissolved, both the earthly (things) and the heavenly.”* James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library*, revised edition. HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1990.

We can find inspiration in culture-heroes, but ultimately must make our own way through the ‘dark forest’, like the Grail Knights. Krishnamurti declared, *“I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect.”* (*The Dissolution of the Order of the Star*, 1929). As Einstein remarked, *“I think 99 times and find nothing. I stop thinking, swim in silence, and the truth comes to me.”*

Eliphas Levi describes how, *“Imagination is actually as the eye of the soul, and it is therein that forms are delineated and preserved, by its means we behold the reflections of the invisible world. It is the mirror of*

vision and the apparatus of magical life...for the sage, to imagine is to see, as for the magician to speak, is to create.” He also says, “Man is himself the creator of his heaven or hell, and there are no demons except his own follies.”

In *Alchemical Active Imagination*, M.-L. von Franz states, *“True knowledge of oneself is the knowledge of the objective psyche as it manifests in dreams and in the manifestations of the unconscious. Only by looking at dreams, for instance, can one see who one truly is; they tell us who we really are, that is something which is objectively there. To meditate on that is an effort towards self-knowledge, because that is scientific and objective and not in the interest of the ego but in the interest of “what I am” objectively. It is knowledge of the Self, of the wider, objective personality.”*

As Professor Wolfgang Pauli noted, *“We should now proceed to find a neutral, or unitarian, language in which every concept we use is applicable as well to the unconscious as to matter, in order to overcome this wrong view that the unconscious psyche and matter are two things.”*

Baudelaire suggests, symbolism and ‘correspondences’ help us *“Extract the eternal from the ephemeral.”* Generic symbolic languages such as esoterics, alchemy, and Qabalah articulate the phenomenology of inner experience. They help us wake up and grow up.

“There is a memory of Nature that reveals events and symbols of distant ages. The mystics of different countries have spoken of this Memory in several centuries ... [...] William Blake calls his images” the sculptures of the Sala de Los “And states that all events,” all love stories, “draw on their renewal,” notes William Butler Yeats in Anima Mundi.

Ralph Waldo Emerson is succinct: *“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”*

William James notes, *“One conclusion was forced upon my mind at that time, and my impressions of its truth has ever remained unshaken. It is that our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the finest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness quite different... No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded...”*

As Manly P. Hall suggested, *“Symbolism is the language of the Mysteries. By symbols men have ever sought to communicate to each other those thoughts which transcend the limitations of language.”*

Joseph Campbell summarizes, *“What is it we are questing for? It is the fulfillment of that which is potential in each of us. Questing for it is not an ego trip; it is an adventure to bring into fulfillment your gift to the world, which is yourself. There is nothing you can do that’s more important than being fulfilled. You become a sign, you become a signal, transparent to transcendence; in this way you will find, live, become a realization of*

your own personal myth.”

Jung’s basic ideas about the unity of knowledge and existence are in principle synonymous with the Platonic tradition, alchemy, Qabala and Gnosticism. Plato treated the end product of the evolution of mathematical concepts, (a fixed system of idealized objects), as an independent beginning point of the evolution of the “world of things.” This concrete form of philosophy was determined by the nature of Greek mathematics.

These philosophies seek to reconcile the actual condition with a hypothetical distant ideal, which expansively incorporates both personal and universal dimensions. It is an inward-oriented epistemology. By intuitive perception we can consciously reiterate the laws of Nature and mind which are equivalent to the archetypes themselves.

Jung told us in Two Essays, “...we are not concerned here with a philosophical, much less a religious, concept of the soul, but with the psychological recognition of the existence of a semiconscious psychic complex, having partial autonomy of function, [anima].” Psychological soul-making is recognizing and giving psychic elements an expressive voice – the metaphorical inner voice of the human psychological condition. An ensouled life is a deeper, wider, and fuller life, aware of symbolic depth.

We tend to seek from the world what is already in us – a soul-centered view, the symbolic activation of feeling-charged images, moods, and emotions within the undeveloped inherited part of our human psyche. Such a vision quest includes calling, purpose, life-themes, presence, and authenticity – the unknown as it immediately effects us. Its core is the vital reciprocal relationship of conscious and unconscious. Such knowledge comes from understanding the soul. Knowing ‘for’ ourselves, means direct experience, rather than a concept or instinct.

Psyche is our imaginal soul which flows mainly through images and dialogues in reveries, fantasies, reflections, and imagination. These are inner directives that bring us to a state of ‘awareness’ of our complex individuality and our unique individuality as a whole person. The true self underlies the ego as the eternal One. Breaking the bonds of ordinary life, the riddle of the self and our own nature remains our biggest puzzle.

An archetypal feeling of emptiness may be the reason we want to find ourselves. Talking about it is an expression of loss, desperation, insecurity, and a collective depression. This insecurity makes us upset. We live in conditioned trance states of hypnotic self-talk, roles, and automatic responses that take the place of an authentic life.

But what has been forgotten or ignored in ordinary life can be retrieved as another kind of memory or gnosis, precisely from the place of seeming emptiness. We already have an ordinary framework of honesty about our physical, psychological, behavioral, and spiritual condition – our worldview and beliefs, relationships, and capabilities.

The myths we enter most deeply choose us. We do not know exactly what archetypes are going to seize us. Collective archetypes are impersonal and don't care about our personalities or real needs in life. We feel helpless in these situations. We face the daemonic grandeur of archetypes and their creepy destructiveness. It is extremely difficult, and it scares us deeply, to think about looking archetypes in the eye.

We fear losing ourselves in both the dark and the light. Indelible archetypal memory cannot be erased. Our whole lives revolve around relationships, and the one we have with the autonomous functions of the collective unconscious is crucial to our well-being and wholeness. Our movement in depth maps our psychophysical space. Soul compensates too much escapist spirit by going into history, ancestry, into the valleys where shadows are cast and languish in the unconscious. We learn to work with our wounds in ways that bring imagination and creativity to our suffering, symptoms, and pain.

We are that one point of experience in the emptiness that becomes the whole Tree of Life in the infinite vastness. Our one point of view emanates from the clear Light, from Oneness, unity. We see objective reality by the light of our true nature, the heart of experience.

Hillman cautions that, "The soul loses its psychological vision in the abstract literalisms of the spirit as well as in the concrete literalisms of the body." The doorway of imaginal perception leads from the mind through the stream of consciousness to the experience of objective reality and primordial awareness.

Now is an eternal moment that unfolds all time. Now is the horizon of time that is eternal, the center of all experience, Outside the sphere of illusion Nothing is happening in the eternal now, or ever will in absolute space. This is remembrance and reflection. Now becomes the primary focus of our lives.

As Eckhart Tolle says, *"If you find your here and now intolerable and it makes you unhappy, you have three options: remove yourself from the situation, change it, or accept it totally. If you want to take responsibility for your life, you must choose one of those three options, and you must choose now. Then accept the consequences."*

Krishnamurti cautions against a transcendental escapist approach, *"Now, why are you seeking the ultimate certainty, that reality which you hope will give you happiness, explain the cruelty and the suffering of man? What is the cause of your search? ...Finding yourself in misery, in great emptiness, despair, you begin to seek a way out, an escape. This escape is called the search for reality, truth, or by whatever name you like to give to it."*

Our solitary journey is an expedition into the deep inner world of the personal and collective psyche. Our exhausted consciousness is forced toward the unconscious. The unconscious includes everything within us that is outside of our conscious awareness—everything we don't know or can't observe within ourselves. It begins simply by looking inside, at what is interior, both felt and imagined. The path opens a new route to our "Truth" or myth in this form of an inner journey.

Power and mystery are within our inner experience, psyche's inner world. The invisible becomes visible, matter is spiritualized, and the spiritual materializes in dreams, synchronicities, visions, and our psychophysical being. A tension between interiority and exteriority, psyche and its grounding in events and relations to others is a dimension within interiority itself. We can imagine that a real understanding presupposes a kind of love, out inspired or abandoned passion for our own subjectivity.

Self-knowledge should not be treated as a social industry that can be learned in books, or weekend workshops and retreats. It is a process of lifelong learning and deep transformative experience. Much depends on the quality of approach. It's about relationship as a bridge between fullness and emptiness, the finite and the infinite, between us and the world, between the world and us. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery suggests, "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."

Depth psychology provides a coherent and cohesive framework for understanding and relating to unconscious phenomena and psychic contents. The subconscious is a vast territory of dark forces which affect our lives and the integration of opposites within the psyche: feminine/masculine; conscious/unconscious; divine/human – drawing upon a previously untapped reservoir of inner wisdom.

"An image becomes not what we see, but the way we see it. Imagination can therefore be defined more closely as the subtle sensing of the prepositional relations among events - dynamic connectivity, or complexity. We experience fantasies as part of our conscious life. The unconscious is simply "unawareness of the all-pervasive presence of the imaginal in our so-called conscious life...The numinosity of the unconscious is due solely to its radically imaginal character which must remain invisible to our day-light consciousness." (Hillman)

Imagination is the realm of sacred psychology, which approaches the gods through imagining and personifying, rather than through explicit ritual, prayer, and sacrifice of a religious orientation. Likewise, the artist relies on the former process for inspiration. Imagination is the primary reality, with its own non-verbal logic. Naomi Goldenberg, (213-4) says, "The task then becomes one of awareness of soul through its own expressions - through its language of metaphor. Once imagination is recognized as the realm of soul, we need imaginal inroads."

To enter the archetypal region itself, a transcendent or visionary imagination is required. Through visionary imagination we come to know archetypes in dynamic interaction in every aspect of our lives and perceptions. They condition all our experience on an a priori basis. We don't see them, but see through them. They are the means, not the objects, verbs rather than nouns, dynamic not static, primordial not secondary constructions.

Archetypal imagining, the phenomena of our interiority, is a discipline of consciousness, which is first visionary, and second provides an orientation in the inner world, in the mindscape. The visionary state is heightened

awareness, a form of attentional shift from the mundane toward the more fundamental dreamworld, which undergirds it.



Quest for Wholeness

It is a necessary journey of self-exploration into our own unconscious and unrealized potential, soul's journey from the material world towards its source. We can intentionally build a soulful relationship between our conscious and unconscious being. In Jung's view, ego represents the conscious mind comprised of thoughts, memories, and emotions we are aware of. The ego is largely responsible for feelings of identity and continuity. But it has blind-spots, denial, and projections.

Jiddu Krishnamurti said, "The more you know yourself, the more clarity there is. Self-knowledge has no end - you don't come to an achievement, you don't come to a conclusion. It is an endless river." "There is no end to self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is only from moment to moment, and therefore there is a creative happiness from moment to moment." New Delhi India 1st Public Talk (14 November 1948)

James Hillman states our foundational condition in strong terms: "Each of us exists not as a material object but as an image. We are complex images given by the vocation of our soul that preceded our birth and all the dreams, missions and voices of our ancestors. ...We are images, not imaginations, but powerful images that are echoes of original or primordial images that belong to the time of origin and have produced in a legendary place: Olympus, mount Meru, Mount Popa, the home of the gods.We could say that our lives are the memory, the echo of those primordial images. Such images of origin can be defined as eidola, i.e. idols. We can only do in time what the gods do in eternity." (The Vain Escape from the Gods)

In knowing ourselves we also encounter the sacred dimension and come to know God, however such numinous experiences appear, Jung noted we never directly can know God, only the god-image in the psyche. The experience of the sacred or the holy is "numinous", mysterious, tremendous, or fascinating, with a powerful emotional quality. Mystical union is a felt-sense of the sacred, divine, or presence of God.

Typical phenomena include unity of opposites (a sense of Oneness, wholeness or completeness); timelessness (a sense that mystical experiences transcend time), and a feeling that we have somehow encountered "the true self" (felt-presence, a sense that mystical experiences reveal the nature of our true, cosmic self: one that is beyond life and death).

It can also initiate a transformative descent into darkness, a Dark Night of the Soul, with despair and alienation. The searching self trembles. Our suppressed darkness is exposed as we struggle to bring light to the darkness. This destruction precedes rebirth and awakening to the truth of the self. Joseph Campbell says, "The dark night of the soul comes just before revelation. When everything is lost, and all seems darkness, then comes the new life and all that is needed."

The Dark Night produces spiritual and existential crisis. We feel engulfed in darkness. The spiritual process creates varieties of dark nights, since each one is unique. Crises can follow life-changing events, a natural disaster, bereavement, a medical diagnosis, confrontation with mortality, mental or physical pain which can be opportunities for discovering depths of wisdom and awareness.

An unexpected collapse of identity and understanding of life creates depression that changes our worldview. It includes transformation involving deep, profound insights into our spiritual evolution and facing our shadow. General categories include fear, dryness, loss of meaning, desolation without consolation, and trauma of the spirit.

Our conditioned self breaks open. Such transformation is a natural evolutionary process that anyone can access. Trauma comes to the surface to be seen, felt, loved, examined, held in presence, aligned with reality, and healed. We may find that true surrender is not death but actually true life.

Everything depends on how we emerge from the trauma and deal with the struggles that emerge. It links the inner and outer worlds together, Resonances between the inner and outer world suggest guidance, insight, and encouragement. Thomas Merton, Trappist monk, claims "Our vocation is not simply to be, but to work together with God in the creation of our own life, our own identity, our own destiny."

The transcendent archetype guides the psycho-spiritual process. The deep intuitive mind has the power to connect us to spiritual reality and inner truth. It takes a leap of faith to turn away from conventional expectations towards our inner world of wisdom with acceptance and curiosity.

Mysterium Tremendum

Anyone can be an ordinary mystic. Each of us can find ways to express our inner journey. We may not experience a regular loss of ego and absorption in the divine. Yet, now and then we may feel lifted out of our bodies and become lost in a beautiful piece of art or scene in nature, or bliss at the wonders of life.

Being infused with a sense of the sacred is enjoyed for its own sake. Sacred sites and pilgrimages may inspire expansive feelings or humility in the living presence of the divine. A rush of personal or collective feelings and deep memories may engulf or flood us with emotion. Paradoxically, the soul, remains passive in divine infusion.

A common example is the nature mystic experience, an ecstatic nonordinary experience where transcendent nature, awesome vistas, or stupendous events inspire us with a sense of the external sacred that resonates and

enters the body. This is the “perceptual” nature of experiences of God. The natural world bring blissful feelings, an altered experience of time, a sense of unity, and luminous phenomena. The divine universal presence becomes accessible to the soul, and the nature mystic’s experiential being becomes infused by the experience.

We may feel enveloped in glory, often with a felt-sense of unity. Inner spaciousness comes with contemplative engagement with the natural world. We can engage and open a conversation with the elements – earth, the wind, the fire, and the water, We renew our connection with the vital energy that makes our physical lives possible while it cleanses and heals.

These are deeply subjective experiences of the objective or autonomous psyche, which has a compelling life of its own. The Self not only shows up in dreams, but is the maker of dreams. More than just an understanding of our own capabilities, character, feelings, motivations, or self-concept, self-knowledge is an intentional relationship with soul, with psyche as The Beloved, the heart’s knowledge or gnosis. Only a world with soul offers intimacy and resonance. For some it becomes a passion. This is the myth of Eros and Psyche.

Felt-sense is a symbolic bridge to our common co-belonging to the world. We turn toward nature and our own nature to find the authentic self, focusing on dreams, images, and perceptions. “Self-authenticating” experiences, from expressive arts to penetration by the sacred don’t need collective dogma or tradition. These experiences break through our conditioning in both positive and dark ways that cause suffering.

The Quest for the Holy Grail of self-knowledge and self-exploration is a self-initiatory Way, a solitary endeavor that prioritizes psyche or soul. The sacred cannot be defined but only experienced. It is a way beyond the denial of false self-narratives and conditioned self-images, such as roles, persona, and shadow. We come to know and love our images, not as material and concrete, but as imaginal, metaphorical, spiritual. Anima Mundi is our soul relationship with self, others, and cosmos.

“It has to be found by yourself, because it is your life; and without the widening and deepening of that knowledge of the self, do what you will, alter any outward or inward circumstances, influences - it will ever be a breeding ground of despair, pain, sorrow. To go beyond the self-enclosing activities of the mind, you must understand them; and to understand them is to be aware of action in relationship, relationship to things, to people, and to ideas. In that relationship, which is the mirror, we begin to see ourselves, without any justification or condemnation; and from that wider and deeper knowledge of the ways of our own mind, it is possible to proceed further; then it is possible for the mind to be quiet, to receive that which is real.” J.

Krishnamurti Ojai 4th Public Talk 24th July 1949

The seemingly simple precept is at once familiar, mystifying, and profound. Yet, self-knowledge is the foundation of any beneficial practice. We cannot dismiss its claim on us, for it is simply our own inevitable individuation, that distinguishes us from the collective through our unique experiences and understanding. Many worldviews compete for our attention.

Self-knowledge helps us find light and refuge in our suffering. There is a terrible necessity for reciprocity between us and the Gods, between us and our fate. We face the fragility, unpredictability and imponderabilities of our lives within the plots of our personal mythologies and necessary constraints of the environment. Self-awareness means the ability to monitor our inner world - our thoughts and feelings. Mindfulness is one method for enhancing this essential capacity.

Oedipus

The Delphic imperative was finally followed as a prescription by Oedipus, the unconscious, unreflective archetypal person. He did not know himself at all, but was convinced he did know until he entered his tragic revelatory period.

He did not know his origins, his character, or his visionary calling that eventually allowed him to reconcile with his transgenerational legacy and archetypal situation. The gods are not merely instincts, nor concepts, nor archetypes, but living forces with which we are inter-related through the soul of the world, Anima Mundi.

He could not distinguish his character from his personality. His blindness became a metaphor for our own lack of insight and self-understanding. We do not have to follow his path to the bitter end, but can make self-exploration and self-knowledge a daily part of our soul-tending practice.

Oedipus is reborn through unveiling a formerly unsuspected meaning, dealing with the limitations of rational thought and heightened awareness of unconscious dimensions of the psyche. He is a symbol of both the personal and collective unconscious – first in blind denial, then in visionary insight, from ignorance to self-knowledge. Revelation continues all the time if we know how to look.

In *The Power of Myth*, Joseph Campbell states, “People say that what we’re all seeking is a meaning for life. I don’t think that’s what we’re really seeking. I think that what we’re seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive.”

Such a profound reality is symbolic and generally invisible. It relates to the absence or presence of a true self. Such language allows us to apprehend certain truths related to the life of the soul, to interpret situations whose meaning goes beyond the ability of reason alone. Transgenerational analysis shares this language with mythology in order to apprehend how certain necessities in life function and what role they perform in the orientation of our destiny. Thereby hangs our fate. (Gaillard, *Oedipus Reborn*)

Knowing ourselves can be as simple as identifying our set of beliefs or accepting that we are ignorant of that which remains unconscious. We can never completely know Absolute reality, universal absolutes, only our relative, subjective experiences, which appear in images as the content of psyche or soul. This is how we know what we know. We can never know all of the objective psyche, the absolute, only our relative self-awareness.

We like to make cavalier interpretations based on what we think we know, but that just stops the process cold with one a-ha solution. If we remain open to multidimensional meanings the images continue unfolding.

In *Facing the Gods*, James Hillman points out the common identity of Necessity and Chaos with anxiety: The psychological viewpoint sees Necessity and Chaos not only as explanatory principles only in the realm of metaphysics; they are also mythic events taking place also and always in the soul, and they are the fundamental archai of the human condition. To these two principles the pathos (or motions) of the soul can be linked. Psychology has already recognized the faceless, nameless Chaos, this “sacred and crazy movement” in the soul, as anxiety, and by naming it such, psychology has directly evoked the Goddess Ananke, from whom the word anxiety derives. If anxiety truly belongs to Ananke, of course, it cannot be “mastered by the rational will.”

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[Self-Exploration 4 – Who Am I?](#)

• January 12, 2018 • [Leave a Comment](#)

From the dawn of time, humankind has instinctively taken on and embodied archetypal forms (meta-forms) and patterns of behavior, both unconsciously and with spiritual purpose. This invisible groundplan molds both individual and collective psychic behavior. Psychic patterns, shared across cultures in countless energetic forms are buried deep in the manifold essence of our collective unconscious.

Our stream of consciousness is a geyser of creativity. Creativity is an emergent property of extraordinary human development – a webwork of the interaction of various spheres of influence, and the complex feedback loops which bind them together. Emergent events are eruptions of the collective unconscious.

The collective psyche points toward and guides us through the transition period we now face. New images are arising, reframing the future. Images have healing properties – inner dimensions of the healing response; and emerging worldviews. They speak to us in our sleeping and waking dreams, forging shared stories relevant to everyone in the process as well as the Cosmos itself.

Emergent healing is about the edges of experience, trauma, and memory – the field of compassion. The ongoing flow of energy and life itself is the emergent soul-field. Emergence is an organic process which has superseded mechanistic models of healing. It is central to understanding consciousness and the brain. Emergence is a process by which order appears “spontaneously” within a system. It has specific properties – novel and coherent structures, patterns and properties:

The common characteristics are: (1) radical novelty (features not previously observed in systems); (2) coherence or correlation (meaning integrated wholes that maintain themselves over some period of time); (3) A

global or macro “level” (i.e. there is some property of “wholeness”); (4) it is the product of a dynamical process (it evolves); and (5) it is “ostensive” (it can be perceived). (Peter Corning)

Our life journey is an unpredictable series of chaotic twists and turns which mold our lives, despite our best intentions and plans, as we wend our way toward our certain end. The ‘journey’ is a core guiding metaphor for our multifarious experiences. It is a poetic journey of self-discovery – this complex trajectory of emergent order from disorder, the complex dance at the edge of chaos.

When spiritual emergence is very rapid and dramatic this natural process can become a crisis, and spiritual emergence becomes spiritual emergency. This has also been called transpersonal crisis. It refers to an awe-inspiring event that transcends the ego and can cause psychological and spiritual transformation. Normalizing and acknowledging the event can result in learning and transformation. Metaphors are only conceptual understanding without the experiential process of self-transformation to back them up.

We are endlessly remaking or discovering ourselves and therefore always transforming – neurologically, cognitively and emotionally. We make tacit assumptions about evolution, progress, collective consciousness, complexity, and why they matter. They permeate the environment, couched in religious, psychological, and new agey lingo from metaphors of “paradigm shift” and “awakening” to “ascending”, and “transhumanism.” This radical change in consciousness mimics the spiritual ascent to the temple at the peak of the mountain of the philosophers.

The umbrella term, “transformation,” becomes the new doctrine with its own dogma and sophisticated psychosocial marketing techniques with new accountability and top-down authority structures. Since ‘transformation’ is about moving toward the unknown and awakening the intellect to insight and realizations, it is virtually impossible to evaluate change processes meaningfully. How do we assess authenticity, validity, and issue-oriented change? Experiential reports don’t always coincide with events. The fulcrum of the process is our psychic being that includes our external nature.

The path from the oblivious to self-aware life is beset with obstacles. How do we know what a genuine transformative experience is? We transform ourselves by every act of self-knowing. Jung felt that self-realization was a natural process of transformation, orchestrated by the unconscious. The infinite depth of dynamic reality informs our worldview and personal sovereignty. Such is the journey of meaningful solitude into silence, ratified by the perennial wisdom.

Krishnamurti said, “To stand alone is to be uncorrupted, innocent, free of all tradition, of dogma, of opinion, of what another says, and so on. . . .What matters is to understand for oneself, not through the direction of others, the total content of consciousness, which is not conditioned, which is the result of society, of religion, of various impacts, impressions, memories – to understand all of that conditioning and be free of it. But there is no “how” to be free. If you ask ‘how’ to be free, you are not listening.”

Process-oriented therapies help us not only recover but make sense of our feelings and experiences by evoking our story, a meaningful narrative of our unique course. It is a combination of subjective healing fictions and our objective history, but expresses the reality of our psyche — our embodied soul. Dreamhealing uses images as portals for consciousness journeys to facilitate transformations ranging from mood alteration to profound physiological changes.

Transformations can be effected within the autonomous stream of imagery, through imagery processing via experiential journeys. The essence of this transformative process is revealed in the fractal nature of imagery and symbols-i.e. their ability to encode, enfold, or compress the informational content of the whole. Emergent consciousness is not an epiphenomenon of the brain. Rather it is the transformational process of non-manifest, undifferentiated consciousness emerging into manifestation.

Paradoxical opposites as Hillman writes: “The mythological thought, rather than distinguishing in contrast what is juxtaposed, unites it in pairs. The opposites lend themselves to very few types of descriptions: contradictions, contrasts, complementarities, negatives - formal and logical. Like brothers, or enemies, or lovers, or those who make a [symbolic] exchange, they show infinite variety of styles: couples prefer the relationship [we would say today the “relationship” - and the positions are innumerable. Opposite ‘is just a way of being in the couple.’”

Even if many have embarked on a similar quest, each of us makes this dramatic voyage of discovery for ourselves — we become our own Columbus of the soul, going where we do not know. It leads into the unknown where fearsome dragons (pain, suffering, loss, grief, illness, emotional devastation, mortality, our own personal demons) await to devour us. How we navigate those turbulent seas or traverse that undiscovered country is crucial to our wholeness and well-being...even as old explorers heading for the shores of death.

If metaphor is central to embodied experience, we can find healing meaning embodied in our personal tales, which speak from the soul of the resilience of human spirit. This participatory process, a soul-making practice, creates a unique message, meaning, and body with poetic expression. We remember our soul’s journey and calling, related to our soul’s stories and moved by our struggles. We participate in this sacred act by correlating our experiences in the world with archetypal dynamics and epistemic uncertainty in relation to Reality, weighing the difficulties of interpretive strategies.

Each spontaneous image can pull us out of our egocentric position into our emerging capacities and a panoramic view of cosmos and creation, the universal story of self-transcendence — a conceptually fruitful way of thinking. Artistic activities are flexible instruments for the investigation of imaginary worlds, metaphor of related real worlds.

The metaphor of artificial worlds produces imaginary hypothesis for the real worlds — the art of emergence. Emergence implies natural laws and processes, their inherent beauty, and their action to yield the universe, us

and the world we live in. Interactive artworks facilitate emergence and insight into the nature of emergent participant experiences.

Visualization makes meaning of our images. As an image and as a reality, a new field may transcend an old one. The resonant energy of the old is transformed into the new field and resonates with other fields. Its strength is determined by how many fields it resonates with, increasing its potential as an attractor. The living image connects us to what is emerging in a coherent and tangible way. Our imaginal emergent fields are our organizational edges.

Roy Ascott says, “Those of us involved in art and the technology of consciousness (technoetics) are prepared to look into any discipline, scientific or spiritual, any view of the world, however eccentric or esoteric, any culture, immediate or distant in space or time, any technology, ancient or modern, to find ideas and processes that allow for the navigation of mind and its open-ended exploration. The mind is an unknown territory.”

(Cybernetic, Technoetic, Syncretic: The Prospect for Art)

Realizing we share the same field, the new paradigm encompasses psyche and Cosmos. Real awareness is being present in the moment. The confluence of future and past is eternally present now, pregnant with potential. Collective psyche “remembers” the future before it arrives, runs all superimposed scenarios in the multiverse before collapsing into ordinary reality.

Participatory Wisdom

Ancient and traditional patterns are only fleshed out in conscious content, emergent knowledge, the emergent feminine, and embodied soul. Fundamental awareness has no intrinsic form, content, or characteristics. So awareness is less about the dualism of mind and matter, light or dark, reality and opinion, or polarized good and bad, but more about the dualism of awareness and the contents of the field of awareness – the symbolic, the mythic, and the subtle body, the emergence of new spiritual forms.

Emergence is an organization change involving self-organization, autonomy, and circular causality. Images generate fields through subtle associations and correspondences with other, related symbols. Global order emerges from an interaction in a local, dynamical system, so that a whole new set of properties emerge.

The emergence can be seen as unpredictable patterns of orders that appear through a process of self-organization. Emergence is a metaphor of nonclosure, of an open adaptive system. Complexity explicitly accounts for the interconnectedness of things and how that interconnectedness leads to fascinating characteristics such as adaptive behavior and emergence.

Jung proposes a depth model to attain self-consciousness through recognition of the symbolic content of psyche which can be described as emergent. Emergence can be seen when unpredictable patterns of energy self-organize. These messy complex dynamics, a fundamental drive in nature, like images and symbols, reveal

evidence of the creative power of incompressible “feedback”. Transformation is not linear or mechanical, but emergent. The emergent step is the critical turning point in the course of events.

So emergence is an unpredictable wonder of complex nature. The idea behind the concept of emergence is that there are some complex phenomena which cannot be explained by the mere analysis of its parts or conforming elements. Definitions of emergent include arising unexpectedly, calling for prompt action or urgent, rising out of or as if out of a fluid, arising as a natural or logical consequence, newly formed or prominent. Emergence is a universal process by which all behaviors, all structures, all networks, all ecosystems, all cultures are reinforced into existence.

Contemporary paradigms in emergence theory create new possibilities for understanding. Jung writes about the idea of “emerging” in a variety of ways. At times he regards it as an almost organic and regulatory part of the work of the psyche. Jung notes that, “a symbol emerging in dreams is rejected...and even provokes an antagonistic reaction corresponding to the invasion....” Implicated in this is the resistance produced by consciousness to its own emerging growth. Opposing psychic energies, a conflict between conscious attitude and unconscious imperative for example, are ‘reconciled’ through the emergence of a third entity, the symbol.

This observation feels closer to Jung’s somewhat enigmatic idea that individuation is a work against nature, or put another way, a work that seeks to transcend nature. Jung also writes about emerging as something that looks to the past for ideas in order to help with emerging in the present – a call to acknowledge the past interpenetrate the present as means for emerging new ways of being and doing, and bringing fresh insights into consciousness, innate longing for emergence of sacred revelation. The pattern of the whole must emerge full force, the emergence of new visions and values.

In a paradigm of emergent change, existence is not a problem to be solved, but a pathos of the unattainable to be deepened into a search for insight – the emergent sacred. The creed of ancient Greece was, “Know thyself, and you will know the gods and the universe.” When Albrecht Durer applied the maxim to himself and his work, he revolutionized art. Knowledge, especially knowledge of self, is the root of wisdom. We can explore ourselves in a variety of ways – as self-actualization, self-development, spiritual discipline, self-realization, or soul connection. Our quest may be that of the hero, the fool, or the knight errant.



The Oracle

“... when there is no other place to turn, turn to the face that is in front of you. Here is the goddess who gives the world a sense that is not myth or meaning, but the immediate thing that is an image: her smile is a joy, a joy that is forever.” -James Hillman

When we personally respond to the siren call of self-exploration, we follow the ancient Delphic Oracle’s compelling injunction to ‘Know thyself.’ The Oracle is a soul figure. We meet her when we inquire within with a feminine approach to imagination. It isn’t physical, mental, or metaphysical. The Oracle’s symbolic utterance means we should know ourselves as souls, not merely egos. The Oracle mediates between two worlds, as does psyche. She is Mother Nature and the daimonic. Jung says, “the soul... appears now as psychopomp, as the one who shows the way...”

Our own oracle or spiritual guidance lies in the depths beyond the threshold of our inner temple and holds the deepest secrets of our individuality and fate. The injunction is an invitation to enter the world of soul, of psyche. The oracle implies we will change our lives because the process of accepting the mysterious and our fate results in transformation. Our connection to the oracle – to nature, dream, and imagination – is a connection to the transcendent, to psyche.

The Oracle embodies our enduring desire to inquire into what is beyond the here and now, and to try to control what comes next. She is the feminine spirit of the place, the sacred center, the navel of the world. She is the incentive for us to examine our own expectations, to confront our own desires and our own ways of make-believe. She personifies our archetypal yearning, the opening of human consciousness toward individual destiny.

The collective unconscious guides the individual psyche through dreams, imagery, and imagination. The soul

guides us on an epic journey into the great mystery of life. Hillman suggests, “When you ask, ‘Where is my soul? How do I meet it? What does it want now?’ the answer is, ‘Turn to your images’” (such as dreams and art.). We struggle with the ways in which we can become more fully human in a deeply connected more-than-human world. The Oracle mediates between two worlds, as does psyche. She is Mother Nature and the daimonic.

The oracle helped identify which god or goddess was offended and what sacrifice would set things right. She was the true and only messenger of the gods. The messages of the Oracle were lofty but never arrogant. She always acknowledged the limits of knowledge. She protected the sanctity of life. Oracles revered the powers of the earth, its sacred springs and lofty rock formations — the suggestive power of the environment.

The oracle is the mystique of the nonrational, the liminal between uncertainty and necessity, the chaotic life urge, the living processes of the soul. She presides from the sacred center of the world. The Delphic Oracle was referred to as the Pythia, or one who can foresee the future. She embodies the serpent or dragon of the collective unconscious and symbolizes the archetypal threshold. The Pythia, the high priestess of Delphi, was the highest spiritual authority and the only channel of divine will.

Our own Oracle or spiritual guidance lies in the depths beyond the threshold of our inner temple and holds the deepest secrets of our individuality and fate. The injunction is an invitation to enter the world of soul, of psyche. Life as we know it is full of desire, passion, pathos, complexity, and paradox. This is the knowledge of experience that defies concepts and beliefs, a pathos that pines for the impossible in the face of the absolutely necessary.

“Right thinking comes with self-knowledge. Without understanding yourself, you have no basis for thought; without self-knowledge what you think is not true. You and the world are not two different entities with separate problems; you and the world are one. Your problem is the world’s problem.” “Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. In self-knowledge is the whole universe; it embraces all the struggles of humanity.” -Jiddu Krishnamurti, *This Matter of Culture* p 113

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” --Aristotle

“Those who are lovers of the vision of truth. . . the true lover of knowledge is always striving after Being — that is his nature; he will not rest in . . . appearances only, but will go on — the keen edge will not be blunted, nor the force of his desire abate until he have attained the knowledge of the true nature of every essence by a sympathetic and kindred power in the soul, and by that power drawing near and mingling and becoming incorporate with very Being, having begotten mind and truth, he will have knowledge and will live and grow truly, and then, and not till then, will he cease from his travail.” -Socrates: Republic, 475, 490

This essential question, ‘Who am I?’ lies at the heart of all philosophic, religious, spiritual, artistic, and scientific

endeavors. When we personally respond to the siren call of self-exploration, we follow the ancient Delphic Oracle's compelling injunction to 'Know thyself.' The Delphic maxims were all considered things we ought to devote ourselves to and practice, lest curiosity and the pursuit of beauty collapse into melancholy. Psyche is a source of knowledge. It is a refuge in times of doubt and uncertainty, where we can seek guidance straight from the deep source.

Terrence McKenna said, "*We have been to the moon, we have charted the depths of the ocean and the heart of the atom, but we have a fear of looking inward to ourselves because we sense that is where all the contradictions flow together.*" *The Archaic Revival* (1991).

The emerging Ground of our existence is the essence of wisdom. Emergent knowledge is the gnosis of direct experience aligned with modern empowerment, empathy, self-directed learning, and doing more than we consciously know. We develop an emergent perspective on the world around us. Emergence appears when systems are poised near a critical point of a phase transition, either by tuning or by self-organization.

Feedback between individual elements of natural systems gives rise to surprising ordered behavior. Emergent behavior is not only more than the sum of the (temporal or spatial) parts, but quite different and unexpected. Knowing a starting state offers no predictability about the mature or emergent state. At each change the quality of the complexity is expressed as a new simplicity. The emergent quality is the summing together into a new totality.

The phenomenology of images suggests that the nature of consciousness is emergent – self-referential, inclusive, and transcendent – individualized transcendence. The unconscious, inherent complexity, is organization without organizer. The process of self-knowledge is an end in itself; it never comes to a conclusion, yet encompasses our entire destiny. There is no clear, direct, one-dimensional path. The soul demands our courage and patience to reveal emergent mysteries while its labyrinthine nature leads us to deeper imagination. Insights in self-understanding come through grace, not labor or merit.

Our universal vision is as limited as our rational and irrational human vision. Intuition exalts and redeems us through connection with our core – the midpoint of our internal Cosmos. True gnosis is an expansion of the consciousness field. But according to our concepts, beliefs, and assumed truths (psychological presuppositions), intuition can produce understanding or danger and destruction – wisdom or nonsense.

Jung observed that belief is transformed into gnosis by individuation. Eternal knowledge or perennial wisdom is not intellectual but detailed knowledge of co-emergent forms of manifestation. Emergent complexity arises from one level that does not predict in any way the features on a related level of form and function.

Myths are renewed in retelling with new spiritual language. In psychological insight, knowledge and understanding correspond with symbolic expression of the myth. Myths die when they no longer live and grow. The chthonic part of the psyche – undifferentiated consciousness – is our life-sustaining structure. Experiential

knowing is a spontaneous creative phenomenon that reflects a rich reserve of ideas and images absorbed consciously and unconsciously, newly organized in novel ways — familiar material placed in a surprising and creative context — an achievement of particular genius.

The soul understands what is sacred within us. The archetypal sibyl carries and informs the message of wisdom with loving participation in the deep meaning of inner and outer nature. The prophecies feature insights, paradoxes, metaphors and images that are also the heart of poetic language. What does the soul want? Hillman says more 'soul-making' than self-development, disciplines, or aspirational individuation. It is less about social superlatives and more about autonomy. Nature exists and deals with her processes without human aid, and has everything in herself to bring about transformations.

Emergent Knowledge

The ancients who approach the Oracle were met with the hieroglyph Know thyself at the threshold of the inner sanctum. Entering the symbolic world, the threshold is a metaphor of conceptual boundary crossing, a portal to new knowledge. Existential knowledge — discovery of new insights — can be found in liminal or threshold experiences.

It can happen to us unsought and unexpected. It doesn't require belief, scripture, or Apocrypha. The transformative perspective, observable in its real effects, unlocks the hermeneutics of the creative imagination. The life of the unconscious goes on within us without our conscious knowledge.

Gnosis is an emergent property, not merely an introverted religious attitude. Embracing gnosis does not mean embracing Gnostic dogma or medieval doctrines — participatory convictions based on personal desires and fears. The secret is inside the creation and based in the study of nature and our own nature. We become more integrated by bringing more of the unconscious and mythic into consciousness.

Like the Oracle, it is a not-quite-understandable answer to our dissatisfaction. Formal, dogmatic Gnosticism is likely an inadequate container for our process. Gnosis is not Gnosticism. Such collective movements are not individual, and harbor old notions of perfection, evil, and idealism to be achieved through historical social and spiritual revelation, beyond human interference. But the natural process is existential, emergent, metaphorical, symbolic, and creative — not medieval and metaphysical.

Its essence is that we learn about new factor of existence from life's transitional or in-between experiences through deep reflection. It is a passage to new conceptual domains of understanding, interacting with, and perceiving human experience. The gnosis or knowledge we glean is the method of altering our being — a formula for our emerging self and spiritual autonomy without institutional organization.

Old certainties are challenged and presuppositions dissolved by moving from one state or position to another — other domains of knowledge, beliefs, ontologies, and disciplines. Feeling the opposite of an image created by an

original feeling has natural consequences. New attitudes are formed by contemplating the impermanence of self, knowledge, and world, reorganizing perceptions, projections, and awareness to empathic understanding. The liminal state instigates a dialogue between the old and new perceptions. Knowledge, experience, and meaning are conceptually restructured at each phase of reevaluation.

We can reflect at the threshold, looking both forward and back. Crossing a conceptual threshold feels liberating. Threshold experiences shape our emergent knowledge and perceptions of self and world. Reflection is the interstitial event where we find gnosis or knowledge. It is a structure of positions through which we are moving to a new state or self-image. It is ritualized in many cultures as a path transition to new understanding of phenomena, and thus a rite of passage. Thoughts and feelings play with and generate new modes and reconfigurations of being.

We create a plurality of new models for living that are part of the transformative process in the real world. We provoke change by applying those insights. The flux of human imagination shapes and reshapes our roles through regeneration, reconstitution, and appropriation. Gnostic 'mass movements' are an oxymoron and a modern invention.

Knowledge of self that does not match with reality is a mental fiction lacking attributed value and conventional certainties. We change one way of relating to the world to another. We understand everything around us through metaphorical associations, gaining new insight as we pass from place to place reflecting on the phenomenal world.

Informal emergent knowledge is rooted in the gnosis of direct experience, taking into account that mental activity is dependent on the situation or context. Interpolations of deep reflection and conceptual boundary crossing allow us to discover insights in life that shape our emergent knowledge. Pro-active Emergent knowledge is one effective method for healing solutions.

"Emergent Knowledge is an information centered process developed as a theory of self-discovery, to facilitate an individual's journey into the inner landscapes of mind, body and soul. This information contains knowledge which, when drawn on, provides a solution to whatever problems have been identified. This knowledge or wisdom resides in the inner world of the individual and can be used to resolve life's challenges or problems."
(David Grove, 2005)

"An emergent solution is one that is evidenced by a natural state of being in which mind, body, soul and spirit are of one accord, allowing the unexpressed shadow side of knowledge to have equal congress with the socially acceptable expression of the problem. When completed, an Emergent Knowledge solution has a natural and congruent fit for the subject and does not require the physiology of effort, such as practice, reinforcement or dint of will to maintain the solution." (David Grove, 2004)

The Oracle Speaks

The Oracle embodies our enduring desire to inquire into what is beyond the here and now, and to try to control what comes next. She is the feminine spirit of the place, the sacred center, the navel of the world. She is the incentive for us to examine our own expectations, to confront our own desires and our own ways of make-believe. She personifies our archetypal yearning, the opening of human consciousness toward individual destiny. We approach the world with passion.

The desire to be fully present here right now clashes with the knowledge and desire for death which informs our life and the nature of our imaginative possibilities. Myth makes the psyche, and soul informs individual experience with a psychic viewpoint made of psychic images. Psyche is the first reality and we are always soul. The dark oracles of the priestess arise from the unconscious, the primordial sea of time and space. Over and above knowledge itself we have to make a moral choice. We have to discern whether or not we can trust our instinct.

Hillman says, "...put it my way, what we are really, and the reality we live, is our psychic reality, which is nothing but...the poetic imagination going on day and night." (We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World Is Getting Worse, p. 62) He calls soul, "that mode which recognizes all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical,...that unknown component, which makes meaning possible, turns events into experiences, is communicated in love, has religious concern [deriving from its special relation with death]" (Re-Visioning Psychology, p. xvi).

In *A Blue Fire*, Hillman says, "Why do we focus so intensely on our problems? What draws us to them? Why are they so attractive? They have the magnet power of love: somehow we desire our problems; we are in love with them much as we want to get rid of them . . . Problems sustain us — maybe that's why they don't go away. What would a life be without them? Completely tranquilized and loveless . . . There is a secret love hiding in each problem."

Tolerating the Unknown

It is never a celebration of certainty. Tolerating the Unknown is our uncertainty, including our anxiety, ambiguity, illusions and pretensions. We follow on the invisible path. We have to tolerate uncertainty to face the unknown, acknowledging that there is a degree of the unknown in everything we do, unconscious trauma, and mental states without representation.

The unconscious is the true psychological reality; in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world. By definition the unconscious represents all that is true, but unknown, about ourselves. It is all that escapes actual consciousness, unconscious association of ideas and memories with unknown points of attachment, and unintended behavior.

The source or cause remains unknown to us. The unitive processes of the instinctual unconscious remain the core mystery of the feminine principle. Unitive consciousness, original wholeness, accompanies the numinosity of the body, the collective cellular – the numinosity of the body.

Soul has its own directions it wants to take. We don't know what comes next, so we must stick with the images. The invisibles forever defy our definition and can only be imagined as metaphors. They have emotional power to possess us and govern consciousness invisibly, offering us a coherent way of perceiving, experiencing and imagining.

Thus, we are left with intuiting the relevant unknown. But Intuition is not a replacement for being present, in intimate relationship to the unknown – transcendence, mystery, intuition. An attitude of expectation, a perceptive and penetrating vision this mode of knowledge is instinctive apprehension, intrinsic certainty, and conviction. We can follow our pre-reflective intuition into the vast unknown. We can unlock marginalized intuitive faculties that see subtle energies or imaginal prescience.

EVERYDAY INTUITION:

Associations, Feelings, Emotions, Embodied Knowledge, hunches, gut reactions, embodied soul

EXPERTISE BASED INTUITION: Tacit knowledge, Pattern recognition processes

VISIONARY INTUITION:

Surpassing expertise, Working with self, Connectedness with the target

DIRECT KNOWING INTUITION: Oneness, Connectedness, Receiving information

“Intuition is not mere perception, or vision, but an active, creative process that puts into the object just as much as it takes out.” Jung said. (CW 6, para 610). Strong intuition comes from quality observation of our life experiences. The art of looking, listening and sensing (feeling) is what our experiences are trying to show. It isn't perception of the unconscious but via the unconscious.

The primary function of intuition is to transmit images, or perceptions of relations and conditions, which could not be gained by other functions. Its form varies from tacit knowledge to pattern recognition and constructive intuition. In this type of intuition, emotions may play a significant role, as well as various types of pre-conceptual ways of knowing.

The Oracle mediates between two worlds, as does psyche. She is Mother Nature and the daimonic. Jung says, “the soul... appears now as psychopomp, as the one who shows the way...” (CW XII, p. 63) Nature is an incomparable guide if we know how to follow her. Seers, prophets and shamans are archetypal spiritual figures who promise us insight but they reveal the struggles of life as much as its joys. Even when the guide appears, we may be uncertain how to find our soul and reconnect with soul life, much less how to heal our psychic wounds.

Our inquiry doesn't enter into inflexible definitions and fixed answers. Soul is unique, creative, and changeable. Our quest can be more like The Fool than the Hero, heroically self-centered and truth-seeking. We don't need to impose a heroic attitude or imaginal pattern on all events. Rather than emphasizing the hero we return it to relationship with other archetypal patterns inherent in the unconscious. The 'hero invites subtle forms of self-deception.

Hillman supersedes the concept of the archetype as objective inherited pattern, replacing it with a multiplicity of archetypal images as existent within the natural world. Hillman emphasizes the development of a mythic sensibility in confronting the complexity and multiplicity of psychological life. Psychic reality is a continually creative process of imagination and metaphor coextensive with the world of myth and shaped by necessity and dramatic reversals.

The Oracle is a soul figure. We meet her when we inquire within with a feminine approach to imagination. It isn't physical, mental, or metaphysical. The collective unconscious guides the individual psyche through dreams, imagery, and imagination. The soul guides us on an epic journey into the great mystery of life. Hillman suggests, "When you ask, 'Where is my soul? How do I meet it? What does it want now?' the answer is, 'Turn to your images'" (such as dreams and art.). We struggle with the ways in which we can become more fully human in a deeply connected more-than-human world.

The oracle is the mystique of the nonrational, the liminal between uncertainty and necessity, the chaotic life urge, the living processes of the soul. She presided from the sacred center of the world. The Delphic Oracle was referred to as the Pythia, or one who can foresee the future. She embodies the serpent or dragon of the collective unconscious and symbolizes the archetypal threshold.

Here we cross the border from the ordinary to netherworld, a threshold into a new, more dangerous world, gaining a wider perspective from one belief to another, or the shift from one state of being to another. Thus threshold is both place and process. Threshold is a powerful place of communication between the opposing worlds: profane temporal world of history, of human affairs and events, and the sacred metaphysical world of soul or psyche on the other (Eliade, 1987). Unconscious symbols are lived but not perceived. (Edinger, 1992, p. 113)

Inside and outside, sacred and profane, psyche and matter, conscious and unconscious; the stable center that mediates between and holds the tension of the opposites; it is a place of possibilities where both sides have the potential to be seen and where energy has the opportunity to flow in either direction. We learn how to live our fate and craft our character in relationship to archetypal figures, numinous modes of experience; seeing through our personal and collective experience to the archetypal image behind it.

Things always remain uncertain through our inner and outer, upward and downward movements. The invisible world reveals itself to our understanding in dreams and fantasies, visionary experiences, psychosocial

interactions, and the depths of solitude. We never know in what form and to what purpose the gods will appear in our exploration of experience. Only through symbolizing the physical experience in the soul space are we elevated to an inner movement of the soul, and subsequent transformation.

But we don't have to force the change with our desire, strong ego compulsion or personal ambitions for spiritual metamorphosis. Sometimes we must undergo a major transformation in how they we the world. Sometimes not, if we save image, symbol, and even the "mystical," from an analytic, disembodied reductionism.

There is nothing inherently better about a story where we transform. Our questions are not heroic: What am I here to do? Do I have anything to offer the world? Am I any good at anything? What do I enjoy? The ambitious, developmental heroic attitude grabs onto fixed solutions and interpretations, slays dragons, and kills the imagination unless it serves a power greater than ego.

The oracle in Delphi doesn't speak or conceal, but gives a sign. She is contact with the supernatural for divination and healing. For those who participate in them, symbols and myths carry their own healing power. The priestess surrenders to what flows through her, and what flows through is the whole world, the cosmos – the primal vital power of life. When we first turn in this direction we have no idea where it will lead or what is hidden in the depths of the psyche. But, psychic archetypes guide the individual psyche towards wholeness.

Our own "messages" from the unconscious are often as cryptic and ambiguous as the oracle's utterances. She does not reveal hidden consequences or specific predictions of the future. She favors truthful, but ambiguous and hidden answers. The catch is, if you ask the Delphic Oracle for advice, you are bound to fulfill the advice. With the power of presence, she commands we know ourselves now. Our complexes, symptoms, and dreams are all oracles.

Consulting her is a life-changing, transformative, and numinous experience of encountering extraordinary powers of transfiguration. Our wounds drive us into ourselves, and can genuinely allow us an immediate and intimate contact with our soul. This will only happen if we can receive it as a numinous event, an archetypal moment. Possibilities rather than probabilities direct our attention towards those choices, attitudes, and decisions shaping our lives – feeling and sensing through to the heart of the daimonic.

Eldo Stelluci says, *"Each of us lives in the course of existence his own and multiple personal mythologies (term coined by Joseph Campbell). Our task is to recognize them and interface with renewed awareness because from these meetings the psycho-biographical and myth-biological difference between "destiny" and "destination" is emerging, that is, between epigenetic patterns, consciousness and individuational transformations. We live the myth that guides us in our evolutions, choices, emotional paths, etc ..."*

The Greeks called it "daimon," the Romans "genius," the Christians "guardian angel". We call it "heart," "spirit," and "soul." – anima or anima mundi. Anima is the ongoing source of life, the very breath of life that is generative, not only of the body, but also of what makes us human, giving us identity, personality and

character, thereby shaping the way we perceive, understand and make sense of the world. The ancients understood soul as the carrier of one's genius or daimon. This invisible otherness is an animating force connecting us to the ancestors and to the gods themselves.

She embodied the holiest of all mysteries: of the possibility of human connection and communication with the divine. The Pythia eludes all attempts to demystify her. She helps us align with our destiny. We learn how to be who we are, not simply shaped by collective and cultural forces. Her mind still moves through all time and space in divine ecstasy.

The oracle helped identify which god or goddess was offended and what sacrifice would set things right. The Pythia, the high priestess of Delphi, was the highest spiritual authority and the only channel of divine will. She was the true and only messenger of the gods. The messages of the Oracle were lofty but never arrogant. She always acknowledged the limits of knowledge. She protected the sanctity of life. Oracles revered the powers of the earth, its sacred springs and lofty rock formations – the suggestive power of the environment.

Our connection to the oracle – to nature, dream, and imagination – is a connection to the transcendent, to psyche. The oracle implies we will change our lives because the process of accepting the mysterious and our fate results in transformation. James Hillman refers to soul as “the imaginative possibility in our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and fantasy.” He reminds us that the World Soul is “that particular soul-spark, that seminal image, which offers itself through each thing in its visible form.”

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[Self-Exploration 3 – Fields/Telos](#)

• January 12, 2018 • [Leave a Comment](#)

Fields Within Fields

By exploring complexity and chaos theory, with its “strange attractors,” “phase portrait,” and “bifurcations,” we explore a world where order or meaning is created without a designer but rather out of an intricate system. Mythic consciousness and its practice, ritual life, requires a telos to create momentum—the dynamics of consciousness. Psyche is a mirror, as matter is a mirror of imagination.

The fictional carrot is ever-present before us. As a culture, we are in the position of having to take ritual fictions (including scientific theories) seriously, while recognizing their status as fiction at the same time. This means being in two ontological “places” at once, facilitating the development of new ways of thinking about the nature of knowledge, being, and reality.

According to Hillman, it is “spirit’s self-knowledge in the mirror of the soul, soul’s recognition of its spirits.” The “new myth” seems to be one of “guiding fictions,” even “healing fictions.” Mythic consciousness and its practice, ritual life, requires a telos to create momentum—the dynamics of consciousness.

The Field is the only reality; we are essentially standing waves in space. We suggest that spacetime and matter are the emergent properties of a more fundamental entity, where all fundamental forces are derived from one field. Field theory is a holistic theory which examines patterns of interaction between the individual and the total field, or environment. We use such concepts metaphorically, even if they are mathematical models.

Self-knowledge is an emergent field of information – a conceptual epistemology of the dynamic psychic field – how we know what we know and what it is like in endless iterations. Somehow we process information without understanding fully just what informs us. The dynamic field is like a stream, constantly flowing while changing slightly.

Of course a magnetic field is not a stream of fluid, but as a mental picture, an imaginary fluid streaming in the direction of the magnetic field lines is quite useful. The magnetic flux through a given area is a measure of this imaginary 'streaming' through that area, much like the imagery of our stream of consciousness.

We think and talk metaphorically, and all metaphors are both technically wrong, yet embodied. Wrongness is what makes metaphors meaningful. For one thing to be like another means they are not the same, yet are meaningfully similar. Mind is inherently embodied. Thought is largely unconscious. Concepts are mostly metaphorical. Mind matters deeply.

It's analogous to undifferentiated psychic energy or libido – the fuel of instincts - be it power, hunger, hatred, sexuality, or religion, aggression. Jung thought, libido can only be apprehended in a definite form; it is identical with fantasy-images. Myths, and their corresponding symbolism, are libido analogues: symbolic manifestations of psychic energy. Jung thought of four general modes of application within the personality: progression, regression, extroversion, and introversion.

Field theory has the idea that no part of a person's field can be viewed as being pointless. Every part of a total field must be viewed as having possible meaning and importance. This must be done regardless of how pointless or non-important the part of the field may seem, it should still be accounted for. Emergent phenomena correlate psyche and matter. The emergence of life in the universe is itself a process of self-organization.

Fields are domains of influence. Storytelling describes a deep field of myth and archetype. Elements are woven together by narrative, metaphor and illustration. A semantic field is a set of words grouped by meaning referring to a specific subject, much like symbols are held in the subtle net of an image. The language of symbols is older than the Ouroboros, Vortex, Yin-Yang, Ankh, Pentagram, Solar Cross, Circumpunct, Vesica Piscis, or Flower of Life.

Noetics, direct knowing, is the connection between mind and the physical universe - how the 'inner cosmos' of the mind (consciousness, soul, spirit) relates to the 'outer cosmos' of the physical world - the somatic field of our psychophysical being. A noetic field consists of all mutually interdependent facts and symbols. All are components of the ritual field of mythic sensibility.

The mythic field is the realm of the unconscious. The form of myth emerges as patterns from the field of the Collective Unconscious. Pattern is a language, using fields to describe dynamic relationships and energetics. Each pattern is a field. The field of myth is emotional – emergent, resonant, challenging – inviting ritual enactment to animate and embody it.

Thus, we recognize and develop our own style of mythic consciousness, stepping in to join with others, daring to live our larger lives within the field of historic life. Such journeys are rites of passage. Components of the unconscious emerge in conscious life. Personal myth is a biochemically-coded internal model of reality and a field of information. It shapes individual behavior as cultural myths influence social behavior.

Symbolic content is a mythic field. Shift the field, change the myth. Rituals shift the field. Transcendence parallels the emergence of myth as new life experience. Jung described the transcendent function as a reconciliation of conscious and unconscious elements, remapping our boundaries. Metaphors are interpretations of reality.



Emergent Phenomenon

We can imagine an incidence field and an emergent field of experience. The totality of an individual's field seems to have no bounds, as epigenetic research shows, due to the change in field. This is a good example of how broad field theory can span, as a personal pre-consciousness may be altered due to field changes that occurred before any major development.

The mind is enveloped in the full universal nature in a complex conscious universe with inherent self-organized teleological principles governing its evolution. Noetics is a branch of metaphysical philosophy concerned with the study of mind and intuition, and its relationship with the divine intellect.

Consciousness emerges from the noumenon of the conscious universe. We understand emergent intelligence in terms of a field effect rather than trying to reduce it to Newtonian mechanics. Field theory can model subjective human behavior and cognition as an emergent property of interacting psychological fields, rather

than as a causal network of variables as it is in the classical worldview. The modern human soul emerged with the appearance of art. We return and reconnect back with the moment of emergent soul each time we encounter our images.

“Self-organizing” processes produce emergence. Knowledge and experience create a feedback loop, an emergent, flexibly changing field. Once emergent the field influences the lived experience, impacted by non-specific aspects of the ambience of the emergence field. Permutations in the field result from recognition of patterns of motivation and dream imagery. Emergent phenomena are variations of variations, a virtually infinite repertoire of imagery and novel explanations.

Perspective transformation is cognitive and emotional. Self-exploration is a functional probe field.

Transformation of meaning is linked to therapeutic change, a modification of behavior by modifying attitudes and beliefs. Important traits include extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. The progression here is to an emergence and givenness we can articulate as physis, self-emergence and self-unfolding.

Transformation is self-initiation. The initiatory journey is “instinctive self-initiation.” Life is an individual journey, no one can solve it for us because there is only self-initiation. When a dream-figure is compared and contrasted to figures from mythology and religion, literature and art, the dreamer is initiated into an awareness.

We undergo a process of inner development, or the initiation into inner reality, involving the exploration of, and adaption to, the inner world of the unconscious. Initiation results in an intimate encounter with our destiny. But more, our wounding activates a deeper, transpersonal process of potential healing and illumination that we could not have initiated by ourselves.

Integrability

The integrative potential within us is self-realization. Emergence is the essence of paradigm shift and self-transformation. Few of us pass the full extent of our lives comfortably reconciled with our natural selves. Even prosperity and success cannot silence the grinding notes of discontent and un-lived potential that trouble our days and disturb our dreams by haunting our sleep.

In dialogical emergence our narratives address evolutionary, developmental, and functional emergence. However, intelligence emerges with symbolic language. The primitive spirit expresses many phenomena including paradoxical opposites by sexual metaphors, mystical, and generative unions.

Meta-artist Roy Ascott describes the creative process: “Within the matrix that integrates questions of society, the self, materiality, and consciousness there is a kind of five axes involved in amplifying thought (concept development); sharing consciousness (collaborative processes); seeding structures (self-organizing systems); making metaphors (knowledge navigation); constructing identities (self-creation).”

Metaphors create realities in our conceptual system. We relate emotionally to the notion of 'transformation' in typical metaphors, such as from being asleep to awakening. At best, they are "as if" realities. Classical metaphors of transformation include death to rebirth, darkness to enlightenment, fragmentation to wholeness, journey to destination (arriving; homecoming), and organic unfolding.

What is the journey? What is the search? In the master narrative, we are travelers, or miners, or ascender/descenders. In the poetic tradition, primary imagination has the ability to form a central image in ourselves. It makes sense of all the disparate besieging images. A primary theme is the unification of paradoxical opposites in sexual imagery.

Identifying this focus, pictorial intelligence, holds the many images and complex qualities, knows where to place itself, and exactly what to say. Each person's authentic voice emerges through the basic tenets of expression: writing, listening, movement, self-inquiry, gesture, intonation, and speaking aloud with personal authority in a way that is humanly poetic. Fully engaged in the world around us, we discover an innerness without which dedication to soul life is impossible.

Telos

- *Telos* means function, purpose, end, goal.
- The Greeks believed that all beings had some sort of function by nature.
 - Knowing a thing's function or purpose is a necessary part of knowing what that thing is—its nature, essence, or form.
 - Can't know what it is unless you also know what it does.
- The *telos* is universal to all members of a particular kind or species.
 - All dogs have the same *telos* or *teloi* (plural) because they all share the same nature ("dogness")

Entelechy

1. The essential purpose encoded within every living thing.
2. The life force that drives the full evolution of an organism.
3. The dynamic principle that realizes or actualizes what is otherwise merely potential.

Telos is our destiny or innate potential for becoming. Wholeness is the goal and end-point of conscious realization. Our task, as we journey through life, is to listen to the still small voice of our soul as it struggles to remember what it already knows about who we really are. But we cannot know the end at the beginning because spontaneous possibilities arise and emerge along the way.

Our destiny leads us to soul-work; *telos* is the urge that propels the soul. Affected have *telos*, and it is through the transformational process that the *telos* is invoked. The locus, of our eternal individuality, the *telos* of that

spiritual motion is the Angel, genius, or daimon. the “telos” or end-goal of eternity is not just at our personal end or the end of time, but in each moment. All psychic events have an innate telos. Telos compels life force.

Aristotle’s philosophical telos is final purpose, “that for the sake of which” something exists or an action is done. Our ‘end’ pulls us forward from the very beginning — a sort of psycho-iretrocognition. For example, if the final purpose of aging is character, then character finishes life, polishes it into a more lasting image. We cannot cure and eradicate pathos, or discard old myths to replace it with a new one. Individual telos finds its expression through our vocation, our calling.

Recognition of fate is not fatalism. We have a latent purpose but may fail to recognize it, however, its literalization into definite, overriding goals must be avoided. Hillman says to follow the image is to discover the “telos,” direction of the soul’s path, its destiny. This telos is also clearly illuminated in the body, which is also a metaphorical field.

Psychic events have a telos or integral aspect. We sense their purpose is therapeutic. Imagination bridges body and soul — the material beating heart and the imaginal heart. Looking or seeing through events and things to their imaginal image is not a method, but a way of living. Subjective perspectives deepen vision, reflection, rhetoric, values, and ideas. The telos, the inner direction and goal, of the Western mind has been to reconnect with the cosmos in a mature participation mystique.

Telos is the prospective aspect, or forward-looking aspect of the psyche, that within us which is looking to the future and signaling the potential and even the necessity to grow and develop. Jung (1977/1917) “the pull of the future,” is part of the dream’s mysterious energy, clues about the future possibilities available to us from the perspective of the unconscious. Darker images reflect necessities.

Telos even shows in our symptoms as the purpose of the symptoms and the masks and fictitious roles we are destined to enact. As well as metanarrative, we can also notice the phenomena that happen along the way as we work with images. The image’s movement expresses the telos, a kind of manifestation of the god within, and it is followed, not interpreted. Each dream presents the full narrative: tension, telos, and treatment all within the sense data of the image. We embrace feeling tone, “plot” and telos, amplification, dominant(s), and personal associations.

Entelechy, in philosophy, is emergent evolution, genetic intelligence, the kernel of the ‘true self’ — that which realizes or makes actual what is otherwise merely potential. The concept is intimately connected with Aristotle’s distinction between matter and form, or the potential and the actual. This dynamic purpose is encoded in us.

Defining characteristics of this experiential process include emergence of the authentic self, self-actualization, or self-realization. They are expressed in the emergence of spirituality and integrity; wisdom, understanding, and compassion; a realistic self appraisal; and a continued ability for evolutionary change and creativity, with

the emergent potential for and possible stabilization of illuminative or unitive experiences. Personal experience and expression of existential, humanistic, and transpersonal goals can lead to fulfillment of human potential. The direct experience is of wholeness, personal connectedness and expansion of consciousness.

A relationship with psyche extends our view of reality beyond the material. Our awareness can journey beyond the mere body, emotions, and mind to perceptions and insights which enlarge our sense of self-image in a functional and evolutionary manner, superseding merely personalistic, narcissistic, regressive tendencies in a permanent reorganization. These experiences occur in the context of normal adult passages, the spiritual quest, and in the psychotherapeutic setting. Sometimes expansive experiences are initiated by the awesomeness of nature, alone.

Self-actualization works dynamically within us integrated by the paramount characteristic of unity. Both “archetype” and “entelechy” are summarizing principles. The successive stages of becoming are all emergent from this unity. Entelechy implies the archetype as a kind of inner psychical “code” or “field of information.”

It is an informing spirit that gives life to something and our faith in life. *“This entelechy principle can be expressed symbolically as a god or a guide. We feel its presence as the inspiration or motivation that helps us get life moving again after times of stress or stagnation. There are many ways to engage the symbolic forms of the entelechy principle...”* (JeanHouston, *The Hero & the Goddess*, 1992) It guides our authentic choices, clarity, and creative flow.

David Bohm noted, “Life is enfolded in the totality and-even when it is not manifest, it is somehow implicit.” Entelechy originally meant “being complete,” or telos, a force that calls itself into being, having the end or purpose internally. The resulting manifestations have sensory existence. James Hillman spoke of our potential unfoldment. “Each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived7... The soul of each of us ... has selected an image or pattern that we live on earth.”

What is the nature of this soul? We fear what we don’t know. When we “take heart” fear subsides. The form is entelechy or act; in the case of living beings, the principle of life, or Soul, is the Form, potentiality, active power, effort/striving, or urge/desire, primary force, internal principle of change, the vital force thought to direct the life of an individual, and even light. And Jung observes, “love is the dynamism that most infallibly brings the unconscious to light.”

Light illuminates the transparent imaginal. Aristotle present a playful analogy between light as what makes things visible and man, and so perhaps cognitive soul. If light is the first entelechy of sight in its actualizing of the transparent, then it is analogous to the living body actualized by soul. Everything is made of Light. Only light matters. Nothing arises but standing waves from the seething zero-point field.

According to Kabbalah, "Light" is the living power of the Creation. It fills every part of reality, and allows its existence. We connect to the Light when we experience anything positive in life. The Light provides us with an infinite sense of peace, satisfaction, enjoyment, faith, pleasure, love and joy. All these are an expression of the character of the Light. Health is a result of positive flow of Light in our body and a sense of good luck is the result of the flow of Light in our daily actions.

Each and every one of us is unique and significant. We exist for ourselves and not for another. In the last analysis every life is the realization of a whole, that is, of a self. The development of the spirit, self-realization, goes hand in hand with an enlargement of the area of consciousness, and every step forward is an extremely painful and tiring achievement.

We could almost say that nothing is harder for us than giving up even the smallest part of our unconscious. But, we are called back by the nature within us. We have a deep fear of the unknown, Still we take those first steps, opening the doors to possibilities...

As Joseph Campbell says, 'The big question is whether you are going to be able to say a hearty yes to your adventure. '

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[Self-Exploration 2](#)

• January 12, 2018 • [Leave a Comment](#)

"the body advances its claim for equality; it radiates the same fascination as the psyche. If we are still stuck in the old concept of confrontation between spirit and subject, this condition must be an intolerable contradiction. If on the contrary we can reconcile with the mystery that the spirit is the life of the body from the inside and the body the outer manifestation of the spirit, being the two one thing, then we can understand why the commitment to transcend the current level of consciousness Through the acceptance of the unconscious, it must give the body what is due and why the recognition of the body cannot tolerate a philosophy that denies it in the name of the spirit." -C.G. Jung

SOULFUL SELF-KNOWLEDGE & SELF-EXPLORATION

in Depth Psychology, Self-Care, and Art

by Iona Miller, (c)2018, Life On the Edge

"...we are not concerned here with a philosophical, much less a religious, concept of the soul, but with the

psychological recognition of the existence of a semiconscious psychic complex, having partial autonomy of function, [anima].” -C.G. Jung, Two Essays

“Before the birth, the soul of each of us chooses an image or design that then we will live on earth, and receive a companion to guide us up here, a daimon, which is unique and typical. However, when we come to the world, we forget all this and we believe we have been empty. It is the daimon who remembers the content of our image, the elements of the chosen drawing, he is the bearer of our destiny.” -Hillman “The Code of the Soul” (p. 23)



Interactive Field

“When God sends his angel to the soul It really begins to know.”

-Meister Eckhart, German sermons

We welcome the reader into their own journey of self-discovery. We sometimes feel lost, sometimes validated, sometimes illuminated. But, we always once again pick up the connective thread. Ideally, there is a co-creation with readers, listeners, and viewers bringing their own innermost responses, experiences, and perceptions to the reflective process, whether in agreement or disagreement. Then we know how we think and how we feel and a spontaneous internal dialogue begins.

More books and information don't change your soul, but active participation and engagement with psyche can open new vistas. The living stream of psychic material weaves the imaginal journey together into patterns with seasons of agony and grace, the ecstasy of radiant intuition and emergent knowledge. The interdisciplinary path is our trajectory of change.

Wisdom is an orientation, like an internal compass. The most difficult human experiences are potential sources of wisdom. “It's very hard to know what wisdom is,” James Hillman notes. The wisdom of a lifetime is paradoxically atemporal and cumulative. Constant reorganization and reintegration is part of the life process at the edge of chaos. Integration is never done because we live in a spontaneously changing inner and outer environment.

The remembrance of wrong is transformed within a wider context. Jung suggested, the salt of bitterness is transformed to the salt of wisdom. The Greek word *sophia*, translated as the word “wisdom,” comes from crafts—carpenters and hand work, sort of technical skill needed in a particular craft.

The Greek word *psyche* means “butterfly,” and is linked to the Greek *anemos*, meaning “wind” or “breath,” as well as “soul” and “spirit.” *Psyche* is the ‘butterfly effect’ that permeates our unconscious dynamics. Small changes trigger larger ones rooted in initial conditions. Denying soul and complexity creates a chaotic dimensional system. So what we do as individuals matters.

Jung emphasized, “*the experience of the sacred, of mystery, and of the ineffable. . . [is] an approach that is at home with myth and symbol, with the religious and spiritual traditions of the world, with anthropology and archeology, with art, poetry, and literature.*”

‘Depth’ includes the inner and outer context of our lives and the depths of nature herself. It includes what is below the surface of psychic manifestations expressed through behaviors, conflicts, relationships, family dynamics, dreams, including cultural, social and political events. We harbor an abundance of fears between the surface and abyss of the unconscious. Depth is essentially limitless, the mystery and creative potential of the unknown.

Psyche is characterized by wisdom, internal complexity, and depth. It is the natural pathway to our own depths, a more inclusive participation in conscious and unconscious life. Without authentic guidance we explore at our own peril, because as Ginette Paris claims, “the human psyche seeks to destroy relationships and lives as well as to sustain them.” Heartbreak, for example, can be as painful as torture.

Like fractals, the closer you look at *psyche*’s complexity, the more there is to see; more complexity emerges. It is dynamically fluid, ever changing, mediated by complex, recursive, feedback loops existing simultaneously at physical, social, cultural, and historical levels.

Self-image emerges to form self-referential loops in consciousness. Because our images correspond with our own nature, they have a power drawn from the soul, to hold our attention. Deep energy sources fund constant renewal. The soul concentrates our entire life in the present so that the heart comes to resemble a mirror, reflecting the identity of the personal and superpersonal.

Gordon Axman describes a metaphor: “*Psyche can be of different complexity and can in this respect be compared with a mirror globe that has more or less reflectors on its surface. A globe with less mirrors gives a simple image of reality whilst a globe with many mirrors gives a highly complex image of reality. It is obvious that a highly complex psyche is able to represent reality more sophisticated but on the other hand is more prone to picture distorted images of reality.*”

Our excursions into the unknown wilderness of the psychic landscape and deep, dark recesses may be an inner pilgrimage, archetypal adventure, a voyage of descent into our suffering and vulnerability. It can be a path “sharp as the edge of a razor,” a poetic journey through remembering, labyrinthine descent, an alchemical, shamanic, healing, or initiatory journey — even a genealogical search.

The relationship locates us in a larger story. It arouses and reacquaints us with our ancestors, soul-guides, daimon, and wisdom figures. Phenomena are the observed facts of the holistic system and pattern of psyche’s innate image-making capacity. Psyche’s self-organizing activities unify many parts into an organism.

We may play the Fool, Lover, or Knight Errant. The Imaginal Realm is the realm of Soul and it is irreducibly plural in its perspectives and outlooks. The movement toward spirit is a journey of ascent, a journey of transcendence, while the movement toward soul is a journey of descent into our depths.

The way of depth involves the discipline of establishing a more compassionate relationship with the image where we witness the expression, suspend judgment, open and respond to its presence. The mystery of imagination is present in symptom, dream and vision, in disease and health, in personal and collective unconscious.

Our way is bringing imagination into the world. We learn how to shift consciousness to connect with non-rational consciousness. This complex multidimensional field beyond our normal perception is something larger than ourselves. Psyche begins to manifest. We feel what our body is doing, but the unconscious acts without our observation, understanding, or approval.

We struggle to emerge in that field, a constituent part of our soul in loving relation to the images of soul. They help us carry our suffering more graciously through resilience. Pain is a signal that our natural psychological needs are not being met. Depression is a form of grief -- for yourself, and for the culture we live in — that sets us on a quest for deeper resources. Personal artistic expression is a primary mode of inquiry.

Lack of autonomy, feeling powerless, controlled, and unappreciated can lead to stress. Depression is grief for ourselves, and our own legitimate unmet needs. Our journey may be motivated by trauma, extreme distress, abandonment, adventure, illness, grief, death, or love, that is, by whatever awakens the imagination to existence, including therapy. It challenges, deepens, and enriches us. Trauma is an overwhelming injury to the capacity to feel and its subsequent defense.

Traveling in “Foreign Countries” is a symbol of the undiscovered country — psyche’s unknown realm and language. To leave the physical and “travel in foreign countries” opens the door to knowledge through the autonomy of living memory images and imaginal remembering. We don’t know what is going to change or where we are going to go.

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Does the image release and refine further imagining? The depth of the image is limitless due to its implications. Its "source" is complex: a self-limiting multiple relationship of meanings, moods, historical events, qualitative details, and expressive possibilities.

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Engaging with powerful, living images is at the heart of our worthy and therapeutic journey. Symbols are complex facts not yet apprehended by the unconscious. We can build a creative, symbolic bridge between conscious and unconscious.

Implicit, unfinished processes are held in the body in some form, such as somatic sensations, general anxiety, tension or other symptoms. Narrowed or blocked interaction or experiencing, an interrupted or unfinished condition is an incomplete process. Incongruence is a doorway to deeper self-awareness.

Healing allows what has been repressed, rejected, denied or ignored to emerge so we can understand, explore its significance and integrate it as a transformation in consciousness. If we carry our processes and responses forward, images restore flow and open depth to the emergent sense of self-agency.

We empty the mind and engage the body and images in a tangible way, including inner dialogue, gestures, and ethical confrontation to come to terms with the imaginal. The ultimate goal of any inner process is to develop a relationship to what is encountered inside, with openness, curiosity, even reverence. The Imaginal realm is the realm of soul with its irreducible plural perspectives and outlooks. The archetypal image precedes and determines the metaphysical hypothesis of a noumenal archetype.

Living images and felt-sense operate with a certain autonomy. They can interact with us as much as we can interact with them. An ecological, interactive view of inner world is inseparable from the outer world, as interactions inseparable from our environment. Deliberately attending to the body can open vivid, living images,

repeated with progressive changes. This is a process of continually becoming one's self rather than achieving a once-and-for-all state of being.

Filled with emotion, these encounters speak for themselves without interpretation or process guiding. The visceral felt sense of the image is clearly present, and the image itself has a life of its own. The whole of the situation, as it is felt in the body, might be overwhelming. Images can be experienced as 'not-me', a too-intense felt sense. An image can feel very other, even if it also represents a part of oneself.

Listening inside and interacting with what we find there nurtures felt-sense with deep and indispensable insights. Felt sense is the embodiment (bringing awareness inside the body) of our ever-changing sensory/energetic/emotional landscape. It moves our focus from actions and things happening outside us in the world to qualities of our present, internal experience (e.g. textures, colors, sensations).

Experiential process is as, or more important than content, potential not yet developed fully. Unfinished or unconscious processes can be blocked and not be carried through. We may be aware of them but not their meaning. Awareness moves attention from the image to direct feeling. Change comes with directly felt tangible, feelings, and attitudes.

Jung called this the transcendent function, the process by which we are guided in a teleological way toward the person we are meant to be. The cooperation of conscious reasoning with the data of the unconscious progressively unites the opposites.

This symbolic bridge is a psychic function that arises from the tension between consciousness and the unconscious and supports their union. The tension of opposites produces a new, uniting function that transcends them. Difficulties arise from our becoming too one-sided in dealing with opposing functions.



Self-knowledge is more than just the vanity of wanting to be the one who knows. Self-knowledge brings humility. In the end, we can only have a partially examined life. We long for soul and depth, to find the greater human in us. When we reach a threshold point in our life, it is no longer enough to live unconsciously. Our attempts to become conscious impel us on a long journey. The soul's telos is the directions it wants to take. We see into our soul's sacred wounds, finding a sort of destiny as soul begins to outline its true shape.

We don't need to concentrate on the self-oriented motivations that animate conventional soul-oriented spirituality. We give up the story of a separate soul as if it were the center of its universe. We discover our common soul finds its way through our unique expression into the whole world of relations. It is enacted archetypally, through many energies, enacting many stories, correlating and resonating with each other on many levels of complexity. This is the domain of soul-making.

We can be gripped by overwhelming mystery. We feel psyche inside us, but it also reveals itself in the world and as a self-arising cosmos. We experience conscious appreciation of a living universe, co-extensive with our own deepest being.

There is deeper meaning in necessity, toward which spiritual life points. Jung saw a telos of union between the individual self and the larger 'Self.' The unconscious is the key to healing old wounds and learning about our destiny, the telos of our life. Meaning flows into the present from the future.

The proverbial Quest for the Holy Grail is human curiosity and discovery, purposive movement. The unconscious is the Holy Grail of consciousness, the supreme value of life. The Grail is a Mystery and the search for it a Quest for self-actualization. Human consciousness has taken many forms, transcending primitive myth, spirituality, religion, philosophy, and science.

The free soul finds its telos only in the limitless, its source. There is a living, active, directing force within. Learning from one's soul gives life a telos or overriding purpose. It matters ... the soul, the locus of our deepest yearnings, is fulfilled.

Today's quest combines elements of them all. That evokes and challenges our spiritual beliefs and faith, the nature of existence and reality, and our rational materialistic view of self, others, and cosmos. We dream our own personal and collective end, sensing some alchemical telos in our history, a cosmically apt collision of warring principles. Our dreams of apocalypse are initiations to the underworld, the final end, the telos, of the soul. In the liminal present, Apocalypse is a rite of passage, our own revelation. We see more through our closed eyes, than open.

As James Hillman says, "*When the gods arrive on stage, everything becomes silent and the eyelids close. Plunged into oblivion by this experience, we re-emerge and without knowing exactly what is happened, we know only that we have been transformed.*" "*The eye of the heart that 'sees' is also the eye of death that sees through visible presentations to an invisible core.*" (Hillman, *Soul's Code*, p146)

Nothing can be known if it does not appear as a psychic image. The source of images — dream images, fantasy images, poetic images — is the self-generative activity of the psyche itself. Awareness of telos provides evidence regarding an image; but is not a mandate or predestination.

Reflection more adequately and sensitively echoes the poetic basis of the mind. Symbols, images and archetypes are the language of the soul, of the collective unconscious — perceptions of supra-normal comprehension. Images include infinite combinations of interacting networks not only of graphic or visual images, but a set of perceptions, thoughts, ideas, emotions, behaviors, relationships, interactions and identities.

We seek ideas that bring justice to the variety and depth of the soul. Hillman says, *“ideas give us eyes” and are ways to see and to know, or to know through an inner vision activity. “Psychological ideas are ways to see and to know the soul, so that a change in psychological ideas means that there is a change over the soul and a respect to the soul .”* (RVP)

Our soul calls to us in many ways, including radical faith in the deep psyche’s capacity to produce these images of soul to guide us down. It leads us into our depths where the truth of who we are and what we are for still pulses, glows in decades-old embers, and awaits our courageous reclamation. Soul-work is deep-diving inner work to consciously disassemble, sever, re-member, and over time, integrate long-lost but reclaimed pieces of who we are. We have to learn to inhabit a world where our human and the more-than-human abide in mutual presence.

Every human manifestation tells us about an aspect of psyche, knowledge of the psyche. They interact with existing collective structures of meaning at all levels, including body parts, in language and culture. All human knowledge and theories are filtered through the psyche. We construct our reality according to our psychic filters. Thus, we gain knowledge of, and participate in, the domains of matter (senses), mind (reason; language), soul (feeling; nonordinary states), and spirit (intuition; silence; gnosis). Nature is conformal with herself, says Murray Gell-Mann.

Jung suggested that psyche and matter share a common transcendent essence. The psychological and physical features we perceive in the world are dual aspects of one underlying reality. When the deep levels of the unconscious become activated, synchronistic events can occur. All levels of energies unite in consciousness of soul. Field theory is a way to conceptualize any specific moment, relational systems, latent potentials, and self-states. The paradigm of the emergent field is an energetic metaphor of motion, emotion, and psyche.



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LIFE ON THE EDGE

We all share a similar destiny – a longer or shorter lifetime, of which we must make the best, whatever that means to each of us. Self-knowledge is a basic orientation to being and a Way of life. We all share the denial and suffer traumatization by the inhumanities of modern life – the fragmenting reality of human conflict and destructive rage we cannot comprehend. Transpersonal stories hold our inner pain before our personal story can be told.

Instead we deny, shut down, or dissociate and yearn for the sacred to counteract the destruction of human spirit. The unconscious is synonymous with the opening of imagination. When we find our own way of belonging in the world, it deepens our experience and the imaginative possibilities of our nature, realized in reflection. Trauma survivors often overvalue and become enmeshed with the mysteries of the inner world in a defensive way, so need to be grounded or re-connected to life.

We experience external reality through out consciousness or unconsciousness. Soul is the source of unconscious longing that launches our innate instinct to search for ourselves. Life on the edge is experienced through the personal unconscious, acting as a bridge, threshold, or a life-sustaining transition phase between conscious and unconscious. An ensouled life helps us be more resilient and aware of the ultra-real.

Life is created and sustained at the very edge of chaos and the fringe of consciousness, conditioned by unacknowledged terror, about death, impermanence, human limitation. The inner world of the trauma survivor is often mythic before it is personal, blurring the boundaries of ordinary and non-ordinary awareness. Fantasy and life-saving encounters with the numinous become defenses against symbolic individuation and the pull of reality and the dark side of the self and interpersonal struggles – the larger narrative of our soulful foundation and unique lives.

What cannot be represented personally is represented transpersonally. What can't be registered symbolically or in language gets embedded in the body. The traumatised psyche becomes self-traumatizing, self-sacrificing, and self-damaging to the distressed ego. The self-defense system ends by turning against us. We are all more or less traumatized by the unbearable reality of man's inhumanity to man. We inherit the longterm effects of intergenerational transmission of victimization. Heartbreak overwhelms the self-care system.

The frontier is the edge between what you know and what you don't know that sustains being at the threshold of the conscious and unconscious. Complexity lies at the edge of chaos, a transition phase, where life itself is created and sustained. The unconscious is self-generating, self-arising, self-iterating (or repeating-chronic), and self-organizing.

When we are identified with a defense from unbearable trauma, psychic pain, and anxiety we cannot see it and it turns back on the self. We put up protective shields against stimuli. We have to constantly question our perception of reality and dig beneath our self-image and assumed truths to reveal deeper awareness of psychical realities and daimonic defenses of the unconscious. By considering the soul, self-knowledge helps us learn to live between the worlds.

"All knowledge is the result of imposing some kind of order upon the reactions of the psychic system as they flow into our consciousness ... it is not a question of ... asserting anything, but of constructing a model, which opens up a promising and useful field of inquiry. A model does not assert that something is so; it simply illustrates a particular mode of observation." (The Structure and Dynamics of Psyche, Volume 8, par. 362, 381)

Nature is matter, soul, and spirit. Thales recommended a look inward to "know thyself," many centuries before Augustine. Hillman speaks in *Healing Fiction* how "'Know Thyself' is revelatory, non-linear, discontinuous; it is like a painting, a lyric poem, biography thoroughly gone into the imaginative act."

But those who are in this process often cannot see it, cannot see its imaginative metaphorical quality and mistake it as literal and concrete. Creating any approach to the image and results attained are skewed by our presence. We move to the 'edge of chaos,' the creative edge, to solve problems between stability and instability. On this edge everything is in flux, dynamic and changeable. We have to uncouple ourselves from our subjective ideas about the nature of things—from the things themselves—and separate affect from perception.

Chaos theory provides a natural yet scientific metaphor of this complex trajectory of emergent order from disorder, the complex dance at the edge of chaos. We learn from chaos theory that physically and mentally we need chaotic disorder to function smoothly. Dipping into that disorder shakes everything loose and allows creative restructuring to occur. Forms emerge, dissolve, and reform through the creative process known as

autopoietic self-organization. It demonstrates the unfolding of creative process itself, the emergence of form or structure from formlessness and chaos.

Self-organizing systems, both organic and inorganic, naturally evolve toward the “edge of chaos.” All the creative action is at the boundary of any field, the creative threshold, the leading edge. It is in finding meaning and expressing that meaning that we exalt our humanity in our individuation. We don’t actually change but our experience of reality does and this experience is largely outside of our “conscious” grasp.

It is the means of creative self-organization which arises from the undifferentiated disorder that lurks within the processes of creation. Chaos holds infinite possibilities of new form, and these forms are eventually revealed and emerge from chaos as new structure. This is also an apt way to describe consciousness dynamics, such as thought, spontaneous behavior and creativity.

Reality is neither structure nor chaos, but a process in which structure and chaos dance between form and formlessness. The ability of a system to move in and out of chaos gives it the greatest creative advantage — spontaneous adaptability. Healing is biological creativity. We can embrace this disruptive chaos, trusting that it is an emergent self-organizing process. This boundary domain is the creative “edge of chaos,” “the twilight zone,” “the crack between the worlds,” where the two meet and progressively meld into one another.

The edge of chaos is important to self-organization. Giving up control and embracing uncertainty allows the unpredictable to arise. The creative edge of chaos is implicated in the creation of the universe, as well as in human creativity and learning processes. Creativity and healing are emergent properties of self-organizing systems. The edge of chaos is the point of emergence for new behaviors, enhanced capacities and transformed identity. The top-down process meets the bottom-up process at the creative edge.

Perhaps the best claim we can make for our approach is that at least it is a fertile one. ‘Know Thyself’ is more of an invitation than a heroic exhortation driven by ego or will. The cutting edge of the evolutionary condition to seek greater horizons and to always want to transcend whatever our limitations are at the time. Plotinus admonished, “The way to truth was the journey of a lonely person to that which is eternally alone.”



“the body advances its claim for equality; it radiates the same fascination as the psyche. If we are still stuck in the old concept of confrontation between spirit and subject, this condition must be an intolerable contradiction. If on the contrary we can reconcile with the mystery that the spirit is the life of the body from the inside and the body the outer manifestation of the spirit, being the two one thing, then we can understand why the commitment to transcend the current level of consciousness Through the acceptance of the unconscious, it must give the body what is due and why the recognition of the body cannot tolerate a philosophy that denies it in the name of the spirit.” -C.G. Jung

SOULFUL SELF-KNOWLEDGE & SELF-EXPLORATION

in Depth Psychology, Self-Care, and Art

by Iona Miller, (c)2018, Life On the Edge

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Living images and felt-sense operate with a certain autonomy. They can interact with us as much as we can interact with them. An ecological, interactive view of inner world is inseparable from the outer world, as interactions inseparable from our environment. Deliberately attending to the body can open vivid, living images,

repeated with progressive changes. This is a process of continually becoming one's self rather than achieving a once-and-for-all state of being.

Filled with emotion, these encounters speak for themselves without interpretation or process guiding. The visceral felt sense of the image is clearly present, and the image itself has a life of its own. The whole of the situation, as it is felt in the body, might be overwhelming. Images can be experienced as 'not-me', a too-intense felt sense. An image can feel very other, even if it also represents a part of oneself.

Listening inside and interacting with what we find there nurtures felt-sense with deep and indispensable insights. Felt sense is the embodiment (bringing awareness inside the body) of our ever-changing sensory/energetic/emotional landscape. It moves our focus from actions and things happening outside us in the world to qualities of our present, internal experience (e.g. textures, colors, sensations).

Experiential process is as, or more important than content, potential not yet developed fully. Unfinished or unconscious processes can be blocked and not be carried through. We may be aware of them but not their meaning. Awareness moves attention from the image to direct feeling. Change comes with directly felt tangible, feelings, and attitudes.

Jung called this the transcendent function, the process by which we are guided in a teleological way toward the person we are meant to be. The cooperation of conscious reasoning with the data of the unconscious progressively unites the opposites.

This symbolic bridge is a psychic function that arises from the tension between consciousness and the unconscious and supports their union. The tension of opposites produces a new, uniting function that transcends them. Difficulties arise from our becoming too one-sided in dealing with opposing functions.

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[Dream Genealogy, Iona Miller](#)

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“Acorn“, Io Miller

In James Hillman’s ‘acorn theory’ of soul we already hold the potential for unique possibilities inside ourselves, much as an acorn holds the pattern for an oak tree. It shows in our calling and life’s work when fully actualized.

DREAM GENEALOGY

Inner Ways of Knowing

“All the works of man have their origin in creative fantasy. What right have we then to depreciate imagination? In the ordinary course of things, fantasy does not go astray; it is too deep for that, and too closely bound up with the tap-root of human and animal instinct. . . . The creative activity of the imagination frees man from his bondage to the ‘nothing but’ and liberates him in the spirit of play. As Schiller says, man is completely human only when he is playing.”

-C.G. Jung, CW 16, §98

Psychic and Personal Rootedness

It may seem strange at first to think that collective dreams could have any relevance to ourselves. We have cut ourselves off from the past to such an extent that it is difficult to realize that the experiences of remote people can still have meaning for us. Yet it is so.

Unconsciously we still think like our distant ancestors, and to understand this is to deepen our experience, and open up new possibilities. We remain connected through the language of dreams. It is not a supernatural power of some, but a phenomenon recognized from the dawn of mankind. Turning the inside out, we bring it through the senses.

While some dreams may be compensatory (balancing our conscious viewpoint), ancestral dream content often appears as not substantially different from conscious functioning. There is no need for defense or surrender to the dream material. We might dream of cemeteries, family records, ancestors themselves, or any other variety that informs our genealogical quest.

As Jung suggests, “There is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self.” (MDR, Pgs. 196-197)

Even more than blood, we are bonded by respect and joy in each other’s lives as true family. We may wonder about our ancestors who lived closely attuned to the land, and what were their lives like

Who were the indigenous Celts and Anglo Saxons, or our other more archaic progenitors?

Although we may never truly know our indigenous ancestors' ceremonies and rituals, we may be able to remember aspects of them and their world through dreaming. Even dreams about genealogy sometimes lead to real discoveries. Recurring dreams are even more compelling. Significant, impactful or highly-memorable dreams can be bizarre or beautiful. Some dreams have a life-long effect on us.

Integral Dreaming

Dreaming *with* the ancestors is perhaps more accurate than dreaming *about* them. 'Dreaming with' we may explore the power of dreams to recover deep ancestral, cultural, planetary, and cosmic memory. Hillman argued dreams tell us where we are not what to do. The dream is a descent into the underworld. Dreams saturate our consciousness with the mysterious customs of the dark and impenetrable underworld.

Somewhere within the total personality, there appears to be a continuing integrative force, a homeostasis or self-regulating function. Even when we feel overwhelmed by experience, some part of our mind still seems to observe, evaluate, comment, and even attempt to integrate this otherwise hidden material with the knowledge of conscious life.

This may disappear for brief periods, but most of the time it is clearly at work. No one knows what type of

‘thinking’ this is. It appears different both from ‘reality thinking’ and ‘autistic thinking,’ from the patterns of conscious thought and the imagery of fantasy a kind of bridge between two types of mental process. It can appear symbolically as distinctly ‘Other.’

Jung’s concept of wholeness, linked with the Self. Such compensatory dreams connect with is best seen in the collected dreams by an individual undertaking their own personal journey to self acceptance and integration. Through an overview of dreams gained in this way, the two aspects of compensation become much more clearly drawn.

The dream work, aimed at meeting the neglected or hurt parts of oneself, opens the way to more pronounced compensation – the gaps in our experience. Following our dreams means following our uncertainty. Root metaphor dreams may arise in times of crisis and help us adapt and help one another.

Dreams teach by revelation, but there is no reason to objectify that. There is no work to it, no interpretation, no theorizing. We are each simply unrepeatable and utterly inexhaustible entities, whose mystery cannot be objectified or reduced to any single interpretation.

The process of compensation also links with patterns of love and strength actually lived by others. They are then patterns remaining in the collective experience of humanity that can be accessed. When

we touch these powerful racial memories we may clothe them in the image of our cultural hero or savior. The power we find is a release of our own potential emerging from our core self, our own innate potential. This emerges from our unconscious clothed in whatever imagery or ideas we can accept or allow, as do dreams.

Dreams *are* the underworld. Imagination and the psyche are two key components of the underworld, a dreamland of souls where the human mind retreats and interacts with other psyches present.

In the Hero's Journey, Campbell notes, "*Mythologies are in fact the public dreams that move and shape societies, and conversely one's own dreams are the little myths of the private gods, antigods, and guardian powers that are moving and shaping oneself: revelations of the actual fears, desires, aims, and values by which one's life is subliminally ordered.*"

The 'nekyia' is a night sea journey, a descent into the underworld or into the belly of a sea monster, and a meeting with the dead. It is a myth which occurs in many cultures in different forms and symbolizes the struggle towards spiritual or psychological revelation and transformation.

In a *Fortune* article, Lawrence Lessing describes recent sleep research: '...recent evidence shows that there may well be a second, lower level of dreaming extending down even into deep sleep, consisting

largely of abstract thoughts or isolated symbols, much harder to recall than the generally vivid, active imagery of rapid-eye-movement dreaming.’

“But why on earth,” you may ask, “should it be necessary for man to achieve, by hook or by crook, a higher level of consciousness? This is truly the crucial question, and I do not find the answer easy. Instead... I can only make a confession of faith: I believe that, after thousands and millions of years, someone had to realize that this wonderful world of mountains and oceans, suns and moons, galaxies and nebulae, plants and animals, exists. From a low hill in the Athi plains of East Africa I once watched the vast herds of wild animals grazing in soundless stillness, as they had done from time immemorial, touched only by the breath of the primeval world. I felt then as if I were the first man, the first creature, to know that all this is. The entire world round me was still in its primeval state; it did not know that it was. And then, in that one moment in which I came to know, the world sprang into being; without that moment it would never have been. All Nature seeks this goal and finds it fulfilled in man, but only in the most highly developed and most fully conscious man.” (CW 9i, §177)

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[I Walk the Lines](#)

• March 22, 2016 • [Leave a Comment](#)

IN A SIMILAR VEIN

Because You're Mine, I "Walk the Lines"



But if you have nothing at all to create, then perhaps you create yourself.

–Carl Jung, CW 11, Page 556, Para 906.

“I feel very strongly that I am under the influence of things or questions which were left incomplete and unanswered by my parents and grandparents and more distant ancestors. It often seems as if there were an impersonal karma within a family which is passed on from parents to children. It has always seemed to me

that I had to answer questions which fate had posed to my forefathers, and which had not yet been answered, or as if I had to complete, or perhaps continue, things which previous ages had left unfinished.” — Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections

“The whole life of the individual is nothing but the process of giving birth to himself; indeed, we should be fully born when we die.” -Erich Fromm

Because You're Mine, I Walk the Lineage

Genealogy uses historical, phenomenological, and psychological methods. By “walking the lines” backward in each of the tangled branches of our Family Tree, we can engage layers of multidimensional imagery.

Our family tree emerges from each couple and their own respective networked lines of ancestors and their interpersonal relational interaction. Metaphorically, we walk in their footsteps in a ‘magical’ circumambulation of our ancestral field. The principle involves making a clear and conscious connection with the ancestors and the idea of oneness. ‘Walking the Way’ is a form of deep veneration.

Ensouled Body

Genealogy clears a walkway through the ancestral landscape. It is a comparative phenomenology of the imagination with an openness to Being. This is a hermeneutic phenomenology (description and interpretation of meaning), an empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology of lived experiences and themes. **Here, “transcendental” implies everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time, without assumptions.**

We immerse ourselves in the cosmic wisdom of matter, in the immanence of indeterminate, enigmatic, mysterious phenomena and its own language – open, visionary, poetic, aesthetic, erotic, sensuous, spiritual, transformative, vocational. We can't decide if it's the right or only path until we travel along it but it informs our genealogical search at every point. One key to achieving that understand is establishing context.

Hermeneutics refers to the liminal nature of Hermes as an interpreter and soul guide (psychopomp) who connects heaven and earth, the realm of the living and the dead. He guides the soul into dreams and the dead to the underworld. The alchemists' defined the *prima materia* as the “land of the dead.”

Jung describes Hermes as, “the arch-authority of Greek alchemy. He is “*Hermes Trismegistos*” (*thrice-greatest Hermes*), and is identical with the Egyptian *Thoth*, the god of learning. *Hermes* was a leader of souls, a god of revelation and understanding, connected with the human mind, and also the source of dreams.

He was actually the god of the unconscious, and the being who determined the human intellect.” (ETH, Alchemy, Lecture XI 11th July, 1941, 224-231)

Jung said he wasn't well-versed in philosophy, but “had to make use of philosophical concepts to formulate my findings.” Phenomenology brings to light what would otherwise remain hidden and helps us interpret what it means to exist in the world. Phenomenology becomes hermeneutical when its method is taken to be interpretive, rather than purely descriptive as in transcendental phenomenology.

Hermeneutic phenomenology enables access to subconscious phenomena and provides a means of interpreting our experiences of personal learning journeys. We acknowledge the complexity of a lived experience and subjective validation of it as an integration of our thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and experiences.

Meaning is encoded in cultural symbolism deposited and mediated through myth, religion, art, and language. In a prolonged engagement with a topic, such as genealogy, language itself is an appearance of being — a means of being manifest and ‘seeing’ meaning.

With deep questioning of the phenomena, we become attentive to how things appear and speak for themselves, including the ancestors, connecting with the visceral world of attunement, resonance, and sensation. Sympathetic resonance includes physical, emotional, aesthetic, and intuitive responses, not just the verification of cognition.

The moment of vision embodies authentic temporality, illuminating the full meaning of the present in terms of our fate, our mortal future, with a simultaneous retrieval of our past heritage. Language and storytelling have a narrative function that ultimately return to the question of the meaning of being, the self and self-identity.

“...[T]here is a thinking in primordial images, in symbols which are older than the historical man, which are inborn in him from the earliest times, and, eternally living, outlasting all generations, still make up the groundwork of the human psyche. It is only possible to live the fullest life when we are

in harmony with these symbols; wisdom is a return to them.” (Jung, CW 8, Pages 399-403.)

Evocations of remembrance embody the essential nature of the sensuous radiance of absence. The far greater and darker regions of the unknown give way to becoming, transforming emotional experience. **The archetype is not “in” a person but “between” them, within the imaginal space that opens, for example, in evocative moments between ourselves and our ancestors with a sense of presence and place.**

At all events wisdom cannot be taught by words. It is only possible by personal contact and by immediate experience. (Jung, Letters Vol. 1, Pages 559-560.)

Condensing Meaning

A narrative reports the life of a single individual, while a phenomenology describes the collective meaning of lived experiences, of a concept, or a phenomenon. Life themes are divided into subthemes describing different dimensions of the process of understanding connected by the guiding theme “narrative.”

Our approach is phenomenal or qualitative rather than analytic. When phenomenology informs narrative analysis, the image is allowed to speak through form, stories and intuition. There is no predetermined framework of meaning. The comparative approach usefully challenges taken-for-granted understandings. **Rooted in philosophy, it studies conscious awareness of the world as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view.**

Emotion As Epiphany

Phenomenology is an experiential approach to subjective experience. “Experience” (being or existence) is a complex concept – an “in-relation-to” phenomenon. We can approach our ancestors with phenomenology, and also reflexively consider what we bring to the process from our own perspective and worldview.

As in the case of dreams we must stick as closely to the image as given as possible. Image is the primary phenomenon of psychic life, mytho-poetic imagination, and the prima materia of the phenomenology of the soul.

The phenomenal field focuses on perceptions, feelings, and “how one feels right now.” The intergenerational field is a phenomenal field. Hillman referred to soul’s self-expression as, “what we are really, and the reality we live, is our psychic reality, which is nothing but ...the poetic imagination going on day and night.” (We’ve Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World Is Getting Worse, p. 62)

He sees death as a permanent resident of the psyche, and Thanatos as a mode of soul-making: “loss of soul, not loss of life, should be [the analyst’s] main dread.” Hillman advocates the development of a conscious philosophy of death. He argues that death and life are not psychological opposites and that “...any act which holds off death prevents life” (Suicide and the Soul, p. 61).

“We cannot slay death, as we have already taken all life from it. If we still want to overcome death, then we must enliven it. Therefore on your journey be sure to take golden cups full of the sweet drink of life, red wine, and give it to dead matter, so that it can win life back.” (Jung; The Red Book; Liber Primus; Page 244.)

With the phenomenal approach, Mircea Eliade identified “the sacred” as a kind of independent variable—unchanging and timeless even though manifest in completely different times and cultures. “Pure” phenomenology describes the intentional objects of consciousness.

Human experiences are phenomena — what they experienced and how they experienced it, in holistic and embedded or qualitative perspectives. Hermeneutics renders the object accessible to interpretation, opening new possibilities. Naturally, we have to take account of our own bias, conceptions, and assumed truths into the interpretative activity involved.

We must distinguished interpretation from explanation and causes, focusing on a description of reasons. There is no firm boundary between the dimensions of description and interpretation. Deeper

understanding demands more complexity-sensitive ways of thinking and a method that allows interpretation, exploration of dynamics and processes, and involvement of the context.

Presence & Absence

We synthesize the lived-experience from comparative transformations. General psychological structure is deduced from the psychological constituents of the experience. Constituents are context dependent and are necessarily part of the whole structure.

The purpose of this procedure is grounded in the phenomenological concept of parts and wholes. The meaning units are transformed using imaginative variation within the phenomenological attitude and psychological perspective to elucidate their essential psychological meanings.

The eidetic nature of the data or mental image, not necessarily derived from an actual external event or memory, is brought forth through the imaginative variation. We can create and explore eidetic images as a way of coming to terms with transgenerational and traumatic life events.

The phenomenological concept of presences and absences is an important one to use with imaginative variation. Explicit data can reveal implicit meanings [subtext] without them being concretely expressed. During the transformations, we can “see” the explicit meanings, and also uncover the implicit meanings.

Imaginative variation gives us a “sense of the whole.” In this way, the descriptive phenomenological approach is more comprehensive than mere empirical approaches in the natural attitude. This is justified through understanding that what is “present” often implies or indicates an “absent” quality.

In the phenomenological approach, each transformation describes what the meaning unit expresses psychologically without any interpretation or assumptions about its “truth.” The phenomenological approach represents different approaches, from focus on rich description to those more informed by interpretation.

We describe how it was experienced and understood from the subject’s point of view without explanation of “why” it was experienced in the way it was. The phenomenological attitude of the researcher in the psychological analysis of the data is what makes the results both phenomenological and psychological.

We can reduce the information to significant statements or quotes and combine the statements into themes. Then we develop a textural description of the experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a structural description of their experiences (how they experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context), and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the experience.

We can describe what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence, to “grasp of the very nature of the thing.”

Contextualization

There is only one method: the comparative method. There are five core approaches to qualitative research: narrative study, a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and a case study. At the fundamental level, the five differ in what they are trying to accomplish with their foci or the primary objectives of the studies.

Exploring a life is different from generating a theory or describing the behavior of a cultural group. Narrative is both a method and phenomenon of study. Individuals are enabled and constrained by social resources, socially situated in interactive performances, and how narrators develop interpretations of the multileveled context of a life. A first-person psychological perspective is sought so that an empathetic position can be adopted.

In genealogy we are gathering data through the collection of their stories (biographical study), reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering (or using life course stages) the timeline and meaning of those experiences. Restoring them means re-storying them, reframing them with sensitive descriptions and imaginative variation.

We need to collect extensive information about each ancestor, and to have a clear understanding of the context of the individual's life. It takes a keen eye to identify in the source material gathered the particular stories that capture the individual's experiences. Narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and historical context, and includes the important themes in those lived experiences.

Narrative inquiry concerns stories lived and told. A phenomenological perspective of the mind acknowledges consciousness as the most fundamental life-quality that coexists with the body. A person is regarded as an embodied consciousness. People know one another's consciousness through their physical bodies. This means that we know our own consciousness by reflection but cannot know the consciousness of the other except through the body.

Three-dimensional narrative inquiry space includes the personal and social (the interaction); the past, present, and future (continuity); and the place (situation). This story line may include information about the setting or context of the participants' experiences. Beyond the chronology, we might detail themes that arise from the story to provide a more detailed discussion of the meaning of the story.

Tracing the Path

'Walking the lines' is a ritual situated in the imaginal landscape suggested by our genealogical ascent which leads into our collective *ancestral* past. Along the path, or circuits of ancestral nodes, the secret meaning of life is discovered. Our ancient path of pilgrimage is rich with meaning and is a powerful tool for seeking soul and spirit in a movement toward transcendence. Perhaps facing our mortality inspires us to live more fully.

The main quest in the oldest myths is for immortality. We search for immortality. We cannot know anything final about that and all the possible means of 'living', but many strive for germline immortality, an ersatz-immortality in their offspring. The immortality of the soul is concerned with personal identity, not just in conscious and unconscious states, but in mutable conditions and alternating states of being.

Embodied & Disembodied Soul

In the *Phaedo*, Plato describes an immortal soul. Thus, while the natural body and the experiential mind are merely

phenomenal clothing of the ontological soul, the latter is immortal as a living entity. Aristotle distinguishes between ontological and experiential soul.

As Danish physicist Niels Bohr quipped, “A Great Truth is a Truth the opposite of which is also a Great Truth.” In the paradoxical nature of reality, immortality remains largely a concept and source of ontological argument. For example, Buddhism does not conceive of the soul as ultimately real.

Perhaps the latest version of the soul describes a field *ontology* and a functional dualism (mind/matter). Our form emerges from a primordial field of consciousness/energy (groundstate) in which we remain embedded, and to which we return.

Ancestral Field

This zero-point field has many names. That field is the energetic “void”, or “vacuum”, the space of the “ether”, the subtle but ultra-powerful energy potential. The Heart Sutra tells us that, “Form is not other than Void, Void is not other than Form.” This implies that our human form is not other than void, and biophysics shows this to be true. This notion differs from survival of personal identity (self-movement) or soul, but is a conservation of primordial information.

Jung contends the archetype of rebirth and resurrection is a metaphorical experiences of [ego] death as a metaphorical precursor to five forms of rebirth:

1. Metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls.

2. Reincarnation, human personality is regarded as continuous and accessible to memory; re-birth in a human body.

3. Resurrection means a reestablishment of human existence in an incorruptible carnal or subtle body after death.

4. Rebirth within the span of individual life. Renovation, renewal or total rebirth of the essential nature (transmutation).

5. Indirect rebirth via participation in death-rebirth, the rite of transformation. (Jung, CW 9I, para 200-205)

Experiential psychology is not pure ontology, and relies mostly on the rebirth experience and the truth and beauty of intuition for transformation. We have to be content with its psychic reality. Natural transformation processes announce themselves mainly in dreams. There is a contrast between phenomenal and noumenal, experiential and eternal, relative and absolute, biological and ontological.

Psychologically, immortality is the attempt to grant distinct *ontological* status to the symbolic self, to deny the finality of organic death. In other words, it is a denial of death. Soul beliefs, discreetly or indiscreetly, transform the ontology of creativity into an immortality ideology.

James Hillman shifted Jung's conversation from individuation to "soul-making," a way of seeing and reflection that makes meaning possible. "By soul I mean, first of all, a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself." He describes five things about the nature of soul as the imaginative possibilities of nature: the soul (1) makes all *meaning* possible, (2) turns events into *experiences*, (3) involves a *deepening* of experience, (4) is communicated in *love*, and (5) has a special relation with *death* (Hillman, 1977, p. xvi; Hillman, 1976, pp. 44-47).

Hillman's *anima mundi* is at home in the 'real' world – the imaginal realm where real world spirit regains its zest and vision, addressing our sufferings after transformation. In the everyday, the best of the "unfathomable, multiple, prior, generative highly intentional and necessary" archetypal world of both the "noumenal" and the "phenomenal" manifests itself in the everyday tribal and familial context. Family history is transformed into myth.

Facts & Artifacts

In terms of ontological wholeness, immortality of one's being expressed in the continuance of one's proper name or even dynasty falls short of the unconscious belief in life after death. Immortality is an organic philosophical desire for life that should always be lived. It is a religious desire for another life, affirming an act of faith in a transcendent existence, or renewal without end of what is here in this world. This is the difference between cosmic pantheism and theistic (theosophic or transcendental) ontology.

Von Franz notes, "*The analysis of older people provides a wealth of dream symbols that psychically prepare the dreams for impending death. It is in fact true, as Jung has emphasized, that the unconscious psyche pays very little attention to the abrupt end of bodily life and behaves as if the psychic life of the individual, that is, the individuation process, will simply continue. ...The unconscious "believes" quite obviously in a life after death.*" (von Franz (1987), ix.)

Like the shamans of old who ascended and descended the archetypal World Tree, genealogists can “walk the tree” — “The Big Tree” or the “World Family Tree” — from one end to the other, or “up” toward the past and then back “down” to the present on another line.

Timelines help us arrange the numerous names and events that take place simultaneously and sequentially.

Some family trees will look like stumpy, dead sticks with a few twigs, while others will shared vast underground connections and vigorous thick growth, like as a yew tree. Within the Family Tree and World Tree, people are either connected by “bloodlines” or through marriage. Bloodlines can include adoptions and illegitimacy, either acknowledged or unacknowledged. Ancestors are only those from whom you directly descend, though cousin lines may share blood.

Spirit People

Family is the midwife of the soul. Jung reminds us that the source of unifying images which animated our ancestors and linked them to Mystery are generated by the symbol-making function we all possess. The same mysterious dream place gives birth to those mediating images which arise when we encounter the mysterious Other, the animated presence in our lives.

The family is the primordial psychophysical initiatory vessel or vehicle of our destiny — the archetypal family and biological self. Family births us, develops us, procreates us, and buries us. Regardless of the pain and travail it may create for us, family is the grail within which the sacred nectar of our physical and psychic DNA is carried from the lips and organs of one generation to the next.

Long lines, about 13 generations back lead into medieval times. “Walking the path” means you MUST visit every profile in both paths, no shortcuts. We find ourselves *walking the lines* and paths around and up to legendary figures, and further back, purely mythic characters — liminal entities.

Three modalities — resonance, depth and numinosity — describe the presence of that autonomous Other which we call soul and an experiential psychic connection to the Other, and a sense of self grounded in a transcendent order.

Those images are conduits into the natural world, with its specific tribal mythos, and assist in later moving the community members into a world beyond mortality.

Genealogy is a sort of psychic archaeology where we dig up the dead with their own information and 'advice' — hidden historical crumbs and clues, synchronicities, and intuitions. Genealogy reveals complex behaviors of distributed systems. Naturally they lead backwards to origins vastly different from the kinds of practices present in different time frames.

Genealogy is an archaeology of the individual and a therapeutic art — optimally coordinated interpersonal synchronicity and optimized subsequent interactions. Similar personality traits align in rapport and return with greater simultaneous coordination. The interaction of pairs displays complementary simultaneous coordination. Coherent emotional charge states converge under effective conditions after an interval of time.

Archaeology of Knowledge

The archaeological level is what made an event or a situation possible. Archaeology and genealogy alternate and support each other. Archaeology is structuralist. It tries to take an objective neutral position and it avoids causal theories of change.

Foucault calls it, "the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today." (Genealogy and Social Criticism, p.42)

The genealogical side of analysis tries to grasp the power of constituting a domain of objects. Genealogy uncovers the creation of tangible objects • A society institutes the role of medicine man and gives him special privileges. Then we establish and institutionalize this practice, the psychosocial role of a "medicine man."

Treading the Path

Walking a path is symbolically a spiritual practice, a pilgrimage, like walking or tracing a labyrinth — a contemplative spiritual exercise of circumnavigating a sacred path. We turn back to our center, to our origin, by a devotional path.

A walk through the World Tree or a walk in the labyrinth is a cosmic journey through the heavens.

There is no right or wrong way; we have to enter and follow a path with presence. Our attitudes, focus, experience, consolation, and reflection may shift each time, or as we follow path. Traversing the labyrinth brings us into wholeness with all parts of our being. When we walk the labyrinth it recreates a very ancient expression of thanks and remembrance of the divine in all things. So does the family tree, expressing our completeness outwardly.

Like labyrinth, your genealogy has one way in and one way out — you. Such an initiation, shifting perspectives, awakens the knowledge encoded within. Walking the labyrinth and walking our lines share a spirit. The circuits of the labyrinth pattern and genealogy share the same meaning — a maze of ancestors, and a way to meander through them — spiritual umbilical cords.

We walk a labyrinth by stepping into the entrance and putting one foot in front of the other. After traveling through all the paths and windings, the walker comes into the center - the six - petal rosette - the rose line, a symbol of the Holy Grail. Like walking the labyrinth, genealogy can be an exercise in self-healing. Both are journeys to the center and back out again to the ordinary world.

Seeking the Ancestors

Our genealogy is a sensorium of multisensory informational content. Relationship paths connect you to closest blood relationships via a given ancestor through several families, via either parent, male or female, or combinations thereof. There can be many relationship paths to the same ancestors.

Intergenerational Encounter

Collapsing the space between us, each ancestor, or avatar of our descent, touches us with an imaginal poem that is a product of their embedding in our ancestral history - layer after emerging layer of our augmented reality. They begin to talk to us in many ways: **ambiance, serendipity, synchronicity, personal, contextual, instructively and artistically.**

The image of the World Tree invites us to explore the vertical or depth dimension, while **Family is the most prominent landmark on the horizontal plane of relational otherness. Family mediates this world and its essential, phenomenal reality and can enhance or dampen, devastatingly, our interaction with this dimension of psyche. The family seeds imagination.**

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[NEXT OF KIN, by Iona Miller](#)

• March 22, 2016 • [Leave a comment](#)

A LONG
WAY
HOME



NEXT OF KIN

Last Twig On the Branch

The ‘Spirit’ or Ruach of the Tree of Life which corresponds to the Intellect and Yetzirah (the Formative World) also corresponds with the Psyche. The Formative World) also corresponds with the Psyche. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines of ‘Psyche’ as soul, mind, and “The specialized cognitive, conative, and affective aspects of a psychosomatic unity

: mind; specifically : the totality of the id, ego, and superego including both conscious and unconscious components.”

Death also is in Paradise

Therefore, the Ruach/Breath of life (vital breath) and the Psyche are essentially one and the same. In psychology, the psyche is the totality of the mind (conscious and unconscious) and states stemming from the six types of senses, vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch and mind; the breath of life; the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing; life, a living being: ψυχή ζωσα, a living soul, the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions. a moral being designed for everlasting life; an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death.

ψυχή (Psyche) is Psyxé (from psychō, “to breathe, blow” which is the root of the English words “psyche,” “psychology”) – soul (psyche); a person’s distinct identity (unique personhood), i.e. individual personality. And that identity, that psyche comes to us through manifestation of our essence in our family tree.

Genealogy allows us to engrave our lines in history. As we journey up through our lines of descent we are always asking Who, Where, and When — the questions that define the next of kin in our search pattern as we flesh out our family tree as its genealogical midwives.

Who from the family tree am I looking for at the moment?

- Where were they when a particular event occurred?
- When was it that the event likely took place?

That's the foundation for everything we do in genealogy.

The particular form the genealogical tree takes depends on who is identified as genealogical father and who is identified as genealogical mother to whom.

That identification is the basis upon which a conceptual system expressed in terms of symbols and relationships among symbols. When invaders become ancestors it reconfigures ethnicities, embodying systematic changes.

“The tree has a cosmic significance—it is the worldtree, the world-pillar, the world-axis.

Only think of Yggdrasill, the world-ash of Nordic mythology, a majestic, evergreen tree growing at the center of the world.

The tree, particularly its crown, is the abode of the gods. the world-tree.

But, as the alchemical symbolism clearly shows, it is also a transformation symbol, a symbol of the process of self-realization.

According to certain alchemical sources, the adept climbs the tree—a very ancient shamanistic motif.

The shaman, in an ecstasy, climbs the magical tree in order to reach the upper world where he will find his true self.

By climbing the magical tree, which is at the same time a tree of knowledge, he gains possession of his spiritual personality.

To the eye of the psychologist, the shamanistic and alchemical symbolism is a projected representation of the process of individuation. (Jung, C.G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters, Pages 353-358.)

– Plato (428-348 BC) in the Timaeus says: ” Therefore, according to a probable thesis , it must be said that this world was born as a human being really has a soul and intelligence in accordance with the divine will .”

This vision is refined later in the Alexandrian and Neo-Platonic thought and finds wide success in the Hellenized Egyptian thinker , Plotinus of Lycopolis (204-270) .

– Plotinus in the Enneads (IV , 4, 45) writes:

” .. It is clear that every being that is in the universe, according to its nature and constitution, contributes to the formation of the universe with his action and his suffering, in the same manner in which each part of the individual animal , in reason of his natural constitution , cooperate with the body as a whole , making the service that competes with its role and its function. Each part also gives and receives from its other , as his receptive nature allows. ”

He also states that the simple is what is the basis of life . This is because the soul of an organism and is worth much more than all the parts put together : every body is a unit , an indivisible whole , something extraordinarily simple at first glance while being composed . This “simple” that is the basis of the compound can not be a material entity , because no matter what material may be designed or divided in half , even only conceptually . The multitude of souls in the world is itself intelligible only on the assumption that they all have a common origin. This unit is what

explains the meaning of the Anima Mundi . The One remained transcendent itself and the individual deities were conceived as immanent forces of creation , as we would say today energies , and were , therefore , partakers of the same Spirit of the World that becomes a summation and archetypal energy .

Plotinus says , in fact, that (Enneads , II, 3:16) : ” ... the opposites are reconciled , and without them the universe is not such, and so is the other living beings .”

For Dionysius the Areopagite (fifth-sixth century) , the Anima Mundi , just like the One of Plotinus and the Holy Spirit Christian, it is life-giving and ” distributing itself is not divided .” As, indeed , the idea that the Trinity is not affected indeed strengthened in comparison with the previous and the widespread propensity to triad recovered from Pythagoreanism , Neoplatonism and by Proclus.

William of Conches (1080-1145 AC) , one of the greatest exponents of the Platonism of the famous school of Chartres, in his : Glosses on Timaeus of Plato, says, ” The Soul of the World is a natural energy beings for which some have only the ability to move , the other to grow , others to perceive through the senses , others to judge . The question is ... what is that energy. But, as it seems to me natural that energy is the Holy Spirit , which is a benign and divine harmony that is that from which all realities have to be, to move, to grow , the feeling, the experience , the judge.

Marsilio Ficino argued , in his Platonic Theology, that the soul ” is the greatest of all miracles of nature. All other things are under God always be a single soul on the other hand is all things together “...” the nature center , the middle term of all things , the chain of the world , the bond and the seam of the universe, the face of everything.”

Always Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)

– In his *Platonic Theology*, Book III, Chapter I, states that the *Anima Mundi* is the mirror of divine realities, the life of those mortals and the nexus of both.

– And in the *De vita* says: "The Soul mundi ... according to the Platonic oldest, by means of his reasons, he has built in the sky, beyond the stars, the astral figures and parts of figures, such that they themselves become figures, and impressed in all these figures certain properties ... And specifically, it has no place in heaven forty-eight figures universal, twelve in the Zodiac, thirty-six out of the Zodiac. »

The scholar, philosopher and priest Marsilio Ficino made his Neoplatonic reading of the *Anima Mundi* syntonically with the Christian vision. He understood the sacred junction between the upper and the lower world. Ficino departed from the field and gradually climbed up the form, then the Soul, and then the Angel of God. The Soul stood in the center, and it was the junction point between the physical and the spiritual.

For this Ficino called the *Anima mundi et copula* and that is the Soul as a node between the physical reality and the intelligible and therefore "copula" or union of the world with another dimension.

In its *Platonic Theology of immortalitate animarum*, Marsilio Ficino defines the soul as "Centrum naturae, universorum medium mundi series Voltes nodusque et omnium copula mundi."

Therefore raises the Soul in the middle of nature. He sees it as what mediates nature and the universe, understood in its plurality of planetary epiphanies, but also as a node of all things, in the sense of what holds together the infinite parts of the world. Defines it as the face of all things and "copula," i.e. union, the world itself with the divine. (*La Primavera di Botticelli, cosmic mystery of the Anima Mundi*, Vincenzo Guzzo and Gaspare Licandro).

In the sixteenth century , the notion that the most vital vitalistic Soul of the world emerged especially in Giordano Bruno , who conceived the presence of the divine in nature in a vision closer to pan-enteismo than pantheism to which he was burned alive , and then Tommaso Campanella , according to which all the elements of reality are sentient beings and therefore have a kind of consciousness.

In the following centuries the idea of Anima Mundi was almost forgotten, and severely hampered by the spread of the mechanistic conceptions. Descartes with the distinction between res cogitans and res extensa deprived the Nature of the Soul and the Soul of its vital relationship with the Whole.

With Goethe's concept of Anima Mundi Schelling made a mental note and then shooting the Neoplatonic conception that sees the intelligent principle already present in embryonic form in nature or potential . The nature , for Schelling , is a ' " dormant intelligence ," a "spirit of power" and could not evolve to produce the man if he had not already within themselves the divine spirit . The organizations below are only minor aspects or limitations of the only universal in the human body is fully realized . The soul of the world in fact become fully self-conscious only in man, that is so over the top, the point of transition from nature to God, which is reflected in it . In nature there is therefore purposive intentionality , which is specified in organisms gradually more complex starting from a principle , however, simple and absolutely unified.

Schopenhauer , then , stated that the individual souls of individuals are an expression of the will of a single life , however, operates in an unconscious manner , and only humans can become self-conscious.

The idea of Anima Mundi emerges so cogent in Carl Jung, the concept of the collective unconscious. James Hillman (1926 – 2011) re-evaluates the validity of the idea of Psyche Member of the mind , not as merely rational , but as Anima (original meaning of the word Psyche) and enhances well the ideas and

the valuable role of the philosophers of the Renaissance as they represented the Anima Mundi.

We are souls who choose life ... who have chosen to exist. And in my opinion, to exist is to choose to love and to be loved in spite of and, above all, open to our relationship with the world ... We are in a sense just the relationships we have with the world, because they are made of our own imaginal substance. We share the same Unus Mundus.

Things ‘ transparent ‘

who allow themselves to go through the light of the world acquire a cosmic depth.

The thing that shines the power of the world has become a symbol. So every finite thing can become a symbol, ‘ representative ‘ of the universe, where everything appears and shines in it, as a consequence, the world can not become a symbol just as in things finite meets its own image and reflected in the symbol itself. * So symbol , image, origin , but also ritual, form, light, and what in the language and practice of art means the art. The soul of the world as a mediating force , life-giving and life refers to the life-world of art.”

The soul of the world, life and death.

In the dense network in which everything and everyone we connect (Anima Mundi?), sharing the idea that nothing is created and nothing is destroyed, everything is transformed, and knowing that the immensity of the Mystery embraces everything that we intended to Soul and understand it, we have no reason to feel far away or lost the stars disappeared on our horizon. We ourselves are neither close nor distant than everything disappears but these, like all of our deceased loved ones are to us. Atoms and galaxies are One and the transition from the phenomenon of becoming the idea of

being constantly and occurs with simultaneous reciprocity, constancy and love in the heart of the mystery in which everything is where everything becomes. – Vincenzo Guzzo.

STAY WITH THE LIVING

We Are Alive; It's All
We Know

*Life is a luminous pause between two great mysteries,
which themselves are one. —C.G. Jung*

Over the course of the millennia, all these ancestors in your tree, generation upon generation, have come down to this moment in time—to give birth to you. There has never been, nor will ever be, another like you. You have been given a tremendous responsibility. You carry the hopes and dreams of all those who have gone before. Hopes and dreams for a better world. What will you do with your time on this Earth? How will you contribute to the ongoing story of humankind? History remembers only the celebrated, genealogy remembers them all. —Laurence Overmire

“The neurosis is as a rule a pathological, one-sided development of the personality, the imperceptible beginnings of which can be traced back almost indefinitely into the earliest years of childhood. Only a very arbitrary judgment can say where the neurosis actually begins. If we were to relegate the determining cause as far back as the patient’s prenatal life, thus involving the physical and psychic disposition of the parents at

the time of conception and pregnancy—a view that seems not at all improbable in certain cases—such an attitude would be more justifiable than the arbitrary selection of a definite point of neurotic origin in the individual life of the patient” (Jung, CW 16, 257-258).

“It isn’t primarily a practice of thinking of one’s last hour, or of death as a physical phenomenon; it is a seeing of every moment of life against the horizon of death, and a challenge to incorporate that awareness of dying into every moment so as to become more fully alive.”

—Brother David Steindl-Rast Parabola, 1977.

Assemblage theory

“Deleuze’s theory (metaphor?) of assemblage as a way of thinking about the social world is an intriguing one. Fundamentally the idea is that there does not exist a fixed and stable ontology for the social world that proceeds from “atoms” to “molecules” to “materials”. Rather, social formations are assemblages of other complex configurations, and they in turn play roles in other, more extended configurations.

What is appealing to me about this way of talking about the social world is that it takes us away from the presuppositions we often bring about the social world as consisting of a range of discrete social objects or things. According to this static way of thinking, the state is a thing composed of other things; likewise Islam is an extended social thing; likewise Chicago; and so on. The assemblage approach suggests a

different set of metaphors for the social world: mosaic, patchwork, heterogeneity, fluidity, transitory configuration. And this seems like a more realistic way of characterizing large extended social formation like states or regulatory agencies.

The downside of this way of talking and thinking about the social world is precisely the indefiniteness and indeterminacy it suggests for the composition relation. This poses a very hard problem for explanation. How are we to explain the properties and behavior of the composite entity if there is so much contingency in its parts and the ways in which they interact? The strategy of aggregative explanation seems to be a non-starter, since it is stipulated that composition is not a strongly rule-governed process. But so do the comparative and generalizing strategies. If the composites are indeed sui generis and unique configurations we can't generalize across instances and can't usefully compare them.”

<http://understandingsociety.blogspot.nl/.../assemblage-theory...>

INVISIBLE LOYALTIES

Legacies of invisible loyalties and obligations from the past that are passed on through generations, including unconscious limitations. The invisible fibers of loyalty consist of consanguinity, maintenance of biological life

and family lineage on the one hand and earned merit among members on the other. (1973, p. 52) Loyalty is a mark of belonging to a group and therefore manifests itself both as a group characteristic and as an individual attitude. Loyalty, as an individual attitude, goes beyond mere identification with the group.

To be a loyal member of the group implies internalizing the spirit of its expectations and complying with its internalized injunctions. Failure to live up to the demands of loyalty leads to feelings of existential guilt which constitute a system of secondary regulative forces which play a part in maintaining the homeostasis of the family system. The development of loyalty is determined by the history of the family group, the type of justice in force within it and its myths. The nature of each of the group members' obligations depends on his/her emotional disposition and his/ her position in respect of the family ledger , which recapitulates what each member of the family owes.

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by Iona Miller, 2016

ANCIENT LIVES & LIVING LINES

Alone, Yet Not Alone

Living With the Time You Have Given Me

‘Chronesthesia’



“The core of the individual is a mystery of life, which dies when it is ‘grasped.’ That is also why symbols want to keep their secrets; they are mysterious not only because we are unable to clearly see what is at their bottom.” (C. G. Jung, Hans Schmid-Guisan, *The Question of Psychological Types*)

Mental Time Travel

In nature, we look up and see the past, stars and galaxies millions of years old; then we look down and see the past in the earth, in the bones of dinosaurs and the dust of ancestors, and fossils. Time is the raw material of creation.

Ancient mythology has much to teach us about grief and mortality. The Mesopotamian myth, the *Descent of Inanna* is the earliest

written goddess tale. It begins with listening: *“From the Great Above she opened her ear to the Great Below.”*

In Sumerian, the word for ear also means wisdom. Because she seeks wisdom, Inanna is called to listen to the Great Below, the realm of dream, death, depression, and the unconscious. Without knowledge of loss and mortality, engaged individuation, and compassionate mirroring, she is not whole.

Deep within the unconscious darkness something new is being born, and Inanna cries out from this pain of giving birth. She returns to life — lost, humbled, and displaced. We descend into the redeeming darkness, making that walk, not because we want to, but because we must.

“All descents provide entry into different levels of consciousness and can enhance life creatively. All of them imply suffering. All of them can serve as initiations. Meditation and dreaming and active imaginations are modes of descent. So too are depressions, anxiety attacks, and experiences with hallucinogenic drugs.” (Perera, 1981)

In many ancient myths, descent is an integral part of the Great Feminine Round of Life and Death. We are mortal and vulnerable. We live in a world of catastrophe and chaos, personal loss and social threat. We are thrown down by chaotic defensive furies, such as rage and greed. We are helped up by the dynamics of rebirth. Miraculously, we find our way to life again.

Self-Referential Memory

Our ancestors are our past and our transcendental future. Auto-noetic consciousness is the human ability to mentally place ourselves in the past, in the future, or in counterfactual situations, and to analyze our own thoughts.

Semiotics & Symptomatics

Our sense of self affects our behavior, in the present, past and future, and our sense of ancestral metamemory, including memory, physiological (unconscious) memories (spinal cord and ganglia) and embedded tissue memories, unconscious motivation, unconscious conceptualization, and aesthetic unconscious (art, myth, and dream).

Jung said, “The unconscious has no chance of coming into the conscious unless the conscious makes a hole for it to come through.” And that hole or portal is our genealogy — our family tree, a site of potential transformation.

We are each the sentinel who guards and keeps watch on our end of the lines that are anchored by the genealogies of gods and goddesses which have passed into the ‘collective unconscious.’ First and foremost our genealogical quest is informed by multidimensional, autonomous psyche.

Mute Signs & Voiceless Speech

We should be confidantes of our own mysteries and ancestors. We must cross our own Acheron, or river of woe and pain to reach that psychological underworld. We plunge from raw life into the encounter with the powers of darkness. We follow our chthonic serpentine lines back through primal generativity and

fertility.

Jung claims, “*The serpent shows the way to hidden things and expresses the introverting libido, which leads man to go beyond the point of safety, and beyond the limits of consciousness, as expressed by the deep crater.*” (1925 Seminar, Page 102)

Our ancestors guide us on our journey, handing us along, one by one to their forebears. We ritualize the science and art of parting. We step into the mythological plot through the world of the afterlife immersed in our hordes of ancestors, without being fictionalized ourselves.

We retrieve the treasure, ‘hard to attain,’ whose presence we suspected in the dark *prima materia* — self-knowledge. The treasure is variously symbolized in myth and fairy tale as a ring or golden egg, white feather, coat of many colors, fountain of youth, elixir of Life. We gain experiential knowledge of all known realms by confronting, or identifying with subterrestrial, terrestrial and cosmic energies.

Jung suggested that the assimilation of the objective and subjective collective unconscious is achieved by realizing both the outer and inner meaning: 1. concrete actions and 2. subjective thinking and feeling as purely inner experience, or experience via the subject (inwardly lived). “Undeveloped, therefore archaic, symbolic, ambiguous, phenomenal, irrational, *actus purus naturae*, can only

imperfectly be formulated and grasped intellectually, projected.”

The symbolic unconscious content is “not exclusively valid either (1) for the outer or (2) for the inner realm, but for both together, that is, for their operating together.” “The core of the individual is a mystery of life, which dies when it is ‘grasped.’ That is also why symbols want to keep their secrets; they are mysterious not only because we are unable to clearly see what is at their bottom.”

Paraphrasing Jung, genealogy helps us “to come to those hidden and unopenable symbols, in which the seed of life lies securely hidden like the tender seed in the hard shell.” (Jung, Han Guisan Schmid, Page 9)

Autonoetic Consciousness

Episodic memory is identified with autonoetic consciousness, which gives rise to remembering in the sense of self-recollection in the mental re-enactment of previous events at which one was present. While Jung’s approach was largely scientific, he also spoke of “living” knowledge as opposed to “scientific” knowledge.

Autonoetic consciousness is distinguished from noetic consciousness, which gives rise to awareness of the past that is limited to feelings of familiarity or knowing. Noetic consciousness is identified not with episodic but with semantic memory, which involves general knowledge.

We all divide our experience into time categories; the difference is simply how. The transcendental future time perspective affects philosophical problems of personality, the process of self-knowledge, the

formation of value orientations and life course of constructing identity.

Inroads in Mental Time;

Feeling & Conscious Awareness of Subjective Time

Mental time travel, or *chronesthesia*, is the brain's use of memory to think about the past, present, and future... a form of consciousness that allows individuals to think about the subjective time in which they live and that makes it possible for them to "mentally travel" in such time. But is memory distorted, constructed, or confabulated? How can we know who we are if we don't know where we've been?

Remembering and knowing do not correspond with degrees of confidence in memory. Nor does remembering always control the memory response. The transcendental future is 'subjective time' that can be called a belief in some future Utopia.

The latest dream of immortality is paradoxically couched under Transhumanism, an overcoming of limited organic nature with technology and designer bodies. The outer universe becomes subjective, from the outer reality the person emerges in what the scientists call reality. The outer universe become the subjective controllable reality.

People often have firm ideas related to a transcendental future but notions of 'new time after death' [or its absence] remain

controversial, being rooted in faith. It is an aspect of worldview with behavioral imperatives, prohibitions, values, and consequences. The transcendental future encompasses different events that include divine judgment, reunion with loved ones, eternal life, achieving oneness with nature or cosmos.

Transcendence is existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level. It encompasses the time from the imaginal death of the physical body to infinity. It may include goals, such as reunion with deceased loved ones, reincarnation, eternal life, avoidance of damnation, and elimination of poverty, suffering, pain, and shame. It signifies belief in something larger than life, including immanent or transcendent beings beyond the self.

Out of Time

Transcendental future is a time perspective – a personality trait that describes how often a person imagines one's afterlife with positive or negative attitude, intrusions, retrieval, shuffling, fluency, distinctiveness, and false recognition. Transcendental Future Time is one of the dimensions of subjective time and is related to individual beliefs about the time period after physical death. It partitions the psychological future into pre- and post-death time frames, transcending life and living.

An `extraordinary' time perspective, one that partitions the future into pre- and post-death time frames. The `transcendental-future' extends from the point of imagined death of the

physical body to infinity, yet may influence present behavior.

Related to numerous psychological variables, the transcendental-future is a component of, but not synonymous with, many religious beliefs. From the perspective of the transcendental-future, behaviors often seen as irrational, such as suicide, extreme heroism, and excessive tithing, are transformed into rational behaviors expected to lead to fulfillment of transcendental-future goals.

People think or imagine themselves in a transcendental future context with positive or negative thoughts. The importance of transcendental future to well-being has yet to be studied, but many issues have already been assessed in clinical hypnotherapy with its timeline excursions, spontaneous and suggested, past and future, and with ancestors.

Making Your Time Matter

At a certain point in anthropological time the human brain had developed to the level that people became aware of time and of their own existence. Together with the ability to imagine one's future a new kind of mental stress also appeared – awareness of the inevitability of death. To allay this stressor, our early ancestors came up with a myth – a belief that death must be survivable. Today the bigger part of people's beliefs has been passed on to them by their ancestors through religion or philosophy.

Chronesthesia, or mental time travel, is a mental ability to be aware of one's past or future. Studies have been conducted to map out areas of the brain that may be responsible for mental time travel, which include the left hippocampus and posterior visuospatial regions which are

involved in past and future event construction, neural differentiation. The right hippocampus, right frontopolar cortex, and the left ventrolateral prefrontal cortex are involved in future event construction.

The elaboration phase, unlike the construction phase, has overlap in the cortical areas comprising the autobiographical memory retrieval network. The left hippocampus and the right middle occipital gyrus were significantly activated during past and future event construction, while the right hippocampus was significantly deactivated during past event construction. It was only activated during the creation of future events.

Episodic future thinking involves multiple component processes: retrieval and integration of relevant information from memory, processing of subjective time, and self-referential processing. The ventral medial prefrontal cortex and posterior cingulate cortex are the most activated areas when imagining future events that are relevant to one's personal goals than to unrelated ones. This shows that these brain regions play a role in personal goal processing, which is a critical feature of episodic future thinking.

We can't technically travel through time (yet), when we think of the past or the future we engage in a sort of mental time travel. This uniquely human ability to psychologically travel through time arguably sets us apart from other species. Researchers have recently looked at how mental time travel is represented in the sensorimotor systems that regulate human movement. It turns out our perceptions of space and time are tightly coupled.

Engaging in mental time travel (a.k.a. chronesthesia) resulted in physical movements corresponding to the metaphorical

direction of time. Those who thought of the past swayed backward while those who thought of the future moved forward. Chronesthesia may be grounded in processes that link spatial and temporal metaphors (e.g., future= forward, past= backward) to our systems of perception and action. “The embodiment of time and space yields an overt behavioral marker of an otherwise invisible mental operation,” explains Miles and colleagues.

The ability to remember the past and imagine the future can significantly affect our life decisions and scripts. Scientists refer to the brain’s ability to think about the past, present, and future as “chronesthesia,” or mental time travel...the neural correlates of mental time travel and metaphorical “travel.”

“Mental time travel consists of two independent sets of processes: (1) those that determine the contents of any act of such ‘travel’: what happens, who are the ‘actors,’ where does the action occur; it is similar to the contents of watching a movie – everything that you see on the screen; and (2) those that determine the subjective moment of time in which the action takes place – past, present, or future,” Tulving told PhysOrg.com.

‘Supernatural’ is a word that conjures spine-tingling feelings of mystical awe, fear, and joy. Does it exist as a concept, or as a phenomenon, however, among all peoples? What does it mean as a cultural construction and as a response to reality? What is its relationship to religion and spirituality, to experiences of ghosts and ideas about gods? What part of the ineffable world that informs cosmologies is captured by the term ‘supernatural’, and what is distorted or left out when we use it? Why is it such a contentious term in anthropology, vigorously condemned by some, championed by others, and blithely used by the rest?

LABYRINTHINE LINES



THE QUICK & THE DEAD

**The Last Branch
Supports Me
Lost Histories from the
Book of Life**

Individuation is a natural process. It is what makes a tree turn into a tree; if it is interfered with, then it becomes sick and cannot function as a tree, but left to itself it develops into a tree. That is individuation.

–Jung, C.G. *Jung Speaking; Interviews and Encounters*, Pages 205-218

Take pains to waken the dead. Dig deep mines and throw in sacrificial gifts, so that they reach the dead. Reflect in good heart upon evil, this is the way to the ascent. But before the ascent, everything is night and Hell. ~Carl Jung, The Red Book, Page 244.

“Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind”
The family is a symbol, as well as a history, and social category. Primeval kinship and bonding gave birth to human society.

Because of the way genetics and family trees work, every single human alive on the planet today can trace their family lines back to one common ancestor, one who lived from 8,000-2,000 years ago. As observed in a 2004 paper on the Most Recent Common Ancestor:

“No matter the languages we speak or the color of our skin, we share ancestors who planted rice on the banks of the Yangtze, who first domesticated horses on the steppes of the Ukraine, who hunted giant sloths in the forests of North and South America, and who labored to build the Great Pyramid

THE HOUSE OF LIFE



When Air Becomes Breath

Breathing Life Into Your Ancestors

The ancient Egyptian mystery school, the Per Ankh is the inspiration for a hermeneutic and healing approach to genealogy. Every hermeneutical perspective constructs and reconstructs more or less coherent and meaningful pictures of the past, based on the particular spiritual needs and expectations of their real or imagined audiences. It is a soulful approach to psyche and our forebears and the mysteries of death, transformation, and spiritual rebirth, honoring soul and body.

The psychophysical approach is rooted in our being, land, water, and air, from our very first to our final breath — the fire of the breath of life. Psyche is that divine spark. Along the way, we are learning to live and learning to die with wisdom and meaning. Wisdom is not as concerned with a particular kind of thought, as a wisdom about thinking, and an analysis of what it means to think, and an inquiry into the nature of the ultimate reference of thought.

Our family tree is rooted in narrative and history which traces back to ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Biblical traditions, and spans continents and conflicts. We study the psychological and metaphysical meanings of the mythologies that anchor our longest lines of lineage. It includes mental activities, spiritual dimensions, methods, attitudes, practices, or even behavioral and ritual patterns that give us image and form.

The Transgenerational Effect

Our psychological approach is Transgenerational Integration. Trans- is a prefix meaning: across, beyond, through, on the other side of, to go beyond, while state is a condition or way of being that exists at a particular time. It functions as a feedback loop acting across multiple generations, including transgenerational conflict. Transgenerational trauma is transferred from the first generation of trauma survivors to the second and further generations

of offspring. Some transgenerational consequences are epigenetic.

The hallmark of the transgenerational models of family therapy is their emphasis on the powerful influences that past generations have on the present. Unresolved conflicts, beliefs, and roles in an individual impact an individual's relationships and interactions in his/her family of origin. They unconsciously continue to influence our current relationships and level of functioning. Healing across lifetimes is possible without any metaphysical model or belief in past lives or reincarnation, but within the genealogical model of direct descent and multigenerational influence.

So, the trans- state is, among other things, a *coincidentia oppositorum*. An alchemical wedding defines the fixed place, where boundaries are actively transgressed. In many ways, this very undertaking is where the role of the magician, mystic, artist, and healer collide. Down at the crossroads, where possibilities are collapsed into actualities, by the wondrous act of a conscious decision lies the place of suffering and surrender — of realization and redemption.

We seek, not only ancestors, but signs, symbols, and symbolic meaning — our origin in the foundation of being — with an eye to restoring sacred harmony and transformative connection to Cosmos, an indissoluble unity of potentiality and act, darkness and light. Systems of archetypal symbolism come from the mysteries of death, transformation, and spiritual rebirth, and

related cosmogonical theories.

Many of these ideas had their roots in Egyptian philosophy. Philosophy is a rite of rebirth, the very essence of which is participation in divine reality and, therefore, its activities are primarily those of inner vision rather than mere logic. The Tree of Life is a logically coherent meta-structure of metaphysical knowledge — its own body of wisdom. And it lives within us.

Per Ankh

Ankh is the Egyptian term meaning “life.” The hieroglyph ankh, originally perhaps representing a knot or a bow, is a symbol for divine life, for the “breath of life,” provided by Shu and other gods, and for regenerating the power of water.

Ankh also designates a floral bouquet (offered to the gods) and a mirror, itself an important metaphysical symbol., also seen in the sistrum and later the crux ansata.

Per ankh means the House of Life — a temple scriptorium and advanced school for esoteric training whose priests maintained an oral tradition of initiation and also produced writings in different branches of knowledge. This included theology, mathematics, ritual expertise, hieratic liturgy, hermeneutics, genealogy, astrology, sacred geography, mineralogy, medicine, mythography, architecture, the science of theurgic talismans and image-making.

The staff of every per ankh were lector-priests (heri heb) whose role was associated with sacred books and the heka-power, as well as with preservation of *maat*, the cosmic order, and

maintaining the theurgic tradition of mystical ascent and assimilation to the gods.

Only through esoteric knowledge and initiation into the invisible realm, that is, through symbolic death and rebirth, accomplished in the House of Life, was one able to reveal one sakh-identity and be united with immortal divine principles. In the diagram of the per ankh (Pap. Salt 825) it is depicted as a symbolic mandala with Osiris at the center.

Isis and Nephthys occupy the corners at the side of his feet, Horus and Thoth are at the corners at the side of the head, Geb represents the ground, Nut—the sky. The priests of the House of Life follow “the secret way of Thoth.” One of the chief lector-priests (heri tep) said regarding the formula imbued with the heka-power: “Do not reveal it to the common man—it is a mystery of the House of Life.” (Pap. Leiden344r)

The House of Life was the center of cultural endeavor to preserve and ensure progress of cosmic, political, and social life. A holy place and scriptorium, The House of Life contained secret, magical writings the Egyptians believed had the power to renew and sustain life and further the rebirth of Osiris at his annual festival.

The significance of the House of Life and the rituals performed there was universal. Like the temples it stood for the whole creation, just as the reborn Osiris symbolized eternal life in general. According to tradition, time and again people went to the House of Life to consult ancient writings when they needed answers to problems of their day.

In ancient Egyptian writings and architecture, the House of Life was an institution aligned with kingship, preserving and creating knowledge in written and pictorial form. The overseer of the private rooms of the king, bore the title of ‘overseer of writing in the House of Life, a man

to whom all sacred matters are revealed’, and ‘keeper of secrets of the House of Life.’

The ancient Egyptian civilization was strongly connected with nature and the Universe that surrounded them. The school of Abydos House of Life, attracted many healers in the course of time and was an important base of knowledge about healing and medicines. They knew mind and body were strongly connected. Therefore they created various ways to maintain a sound physical body. They analyzed the plants in their neighborhood and built various schools.

The Per Ankh, House of Life, is a solar temple of sacred science (mystery school) and an institution of learning, healing and training. The House of Life, (Per Ankh), is an organization of Egyptian Magicians, founded by the God of Learning, Thoth.

The Per-Ankh texts were transcribed and kept by scribes, including the “books of the dead”. The House of Life was also a restricted access center of esoteric training where students may have undertaken a course of spiritual development, resulting in initiations into “various degrees of symbolic death and rebirth.”

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LIFEWAYS



Phenomenology indicates a way to research where we can be open to the phenomenon and to allow it to show itself in its fullness and complexity through our own direct involvement and understanding. Understanding arises directly from our personal sensibility and awareness. Direct contact creates an intimacy with the phenomenon through prolonged, firsthand exposure and immersion.

We meet the phenomenon in as free and as unprejudiced a way as possible so that it can present itself and be accurately described and understood. The hopeful result is moments of

deeper clarity in which we see the phenomenon in a radically fresh and fuller way.

Phenomenological intuiting requires discipline, patience, effort and care. It requires utter concentration on the object intuited without being absorbed in it to the point of no longer looking critically or falling into blind spots.

Through intuiting, we hope to experience a moment of insight in which we see the phenomenon in a clearer light. Phenomenological disclosure is “the aha! experience,” “revelatory seeing,” or “pristine encounter.” Through phenomenological disclosure, we hope to see the thing in its own terms and to feel confident that this seeing is reasonably correct.

Consciousness, Behavior & Experience

Our personal efforts, experiences, and insights are the central means for examining the phenomenon and arriving at moments of disclosure so the phenomenon reveals something about itself in a new or fuller way. Generally, phenomenological intuiting involves a series of smaller and larger disclosures that slowly coalesce into a fuller apprehension of the phenomenon.

In this sense, intuiting is rarely a single moment of revelation in which understanding comes in one full swoop. Instead, intuiting is gradual and unpredictable. Through our wish, effort, and practice, we see the phenomenon in smaller and larger ways. Patterns, relationships, and

subtleties gradually arise that we never noticed before. Phenomenological intuiting is a flow and spiral, with unpredictability and serendipity.

We must begin somewhere and intends to end somewhere. Thus there is a movement, a progression, and eventually, an arrival. But, this movement isn't a straight, sequential process. We see it more in terms of a flow, or of a cycling and spiraling motion. We can't say where this flow begins. The first idea of trying to makes sense of something may evolve over the course of our genealogical research activity.

Uncharted Territory

The phenomenon is an uncharted territory that we attempt to explore, flexibly adapting to the nature and circumstances of the phenomenon. We must assume that we do not know the phenomenon but wish to, so we approach it as a beginner. We may *know* what we do not know, but need to consider that we may *not* know what we don't know. We have no clear sense of what we will find or how discoveries will arise fluidly and unfold in a rich, unstructured, multidimensional way. A certain uncertainty and spontaneity must be accepted and creatively transformed into possibility and pattern.

We can use an existential and hermeneutic, as well as first-person approach, drawing on our realm of experience -- our own lived situation, setting aside preconceptions and biases. We examine specific characteristics and qualities

and may become immersed in the process, its revelations and clarity. We become more perceptive, thus better able to articulate our experience. Emergent meaning arises from description and interpretation.

In genealogy the nature of ancestors is much more important for establishing the specific research procedure and descriptions, in a thoughtful, articulate way. Our specific methods and procedures fit the nature and needs of our own individual research style and the internal necessity that impels our impulses.

Our genealogy is a text imbued in some way with human meaning and therefore a subject for hermeneutic interpretation. We immerse ourselves in the process, get involved, and begin to discern configurations of meaning, of parts and wholes and their interrelationships.

We receive certain messages and glimpses of an unfolding development that beckons to be articulated and related to the total fabric of meaning. The hermeneutic allows the ancestors to be revealed to our eyes, ears, and intuition just by being what they are — to speak their own story into our understanding in the universal language of imagery and symbolism. We are the lived fabric of inescapable fleshly connectedness. A whole lifetime is imprisoned in each ancestral image, a whole lifetime of fears, doubts, hopes, and joys.

Interpretive Relativity

The issue of trustworthiness raises the question, what criteria can be used to establish the reliability of phenomenological descriptions and interpretations? Reliability first of all involves interpretive appropriateness.

How is it that we can say what we experience and yet always live more than we can say, so that we could always say more than we in fact do? How can we evaluate the adequacy or inadequacy of our expression in terms of doing justice to the full lived quality of the experience described?

How are thought and life interrelated so that they can be characterized as interdependent, as in need of each other, as complementing and interpenetrating each other? Living informs expression (language and thinking) and, in turn, thinking-language-expression reciprocally informs and gives a recognizable shaped awareness to living.

Reliability can only be had through intersubjective corroboration. Do other interested parties find in their own life and experience, either directly or vicariously, what we find in our own work? In this sense, our interpretations are no more and no less than interpretive possibilities or potentials.

The aim is an openness and empathy whereby we begin to sense the other's situation and meaning. We can judge the trustworthiness of phenomenological interpretation from vividness, accuracy, richness, and elegance.

Genealogical work is elegant because there is a clear interrelationship between real-world experiences and conceptual interpretation.

The Essence of Human Experience

In the end, this approach to genealogy is a highly personal, interpretive venture. In trying to see the phenomenon, it is very easy to see too much or too little. Looking and trying to see are very much an intuitive, spontaneous affair that involves feeling as much as thinking. In this sense, phenomenology might be described as a method to cultivate a mode of seeing with both intellectual and emotional sensibilities, for more whole and comprehensive understanding.

The genealogical work is born in a mysterious and secret way. It gains life and being. Its existence isn't casual and inconsequential. It has a definite and purposeful strength, in its material and spiritual life. It exists and has power to create a spiritual atmosphere suitable for ancestral devotion. We adapt the form to its inner meaning. When it comes to the ancestors we can investigate general essences and watch modes of appearing.

http://www.arch.ksu.edu/seamon/seamon_revieweap.htm

When Lao-tzu says: "All are clear, I alone am clouded," he is expressing what I now feel in advanced old age.

Lao-tzu is the example of a man with superior insight who has seen and experienced worth and worthlessness, and who at the end of his life desires to return into his own being, into the eternal unknowable meaning.

The archetype of the old man who has seen enough is eternally true. At every level of intelligence this type appears, and its lineaments are always the same, whether it be an old peasant or a great philosopher like Lao-tzu.

This is old age, and a limitation. Yet there is so much that fills me: plants, animals, clouds, day and night, and the eternal in man.

The more uncertain I have felt about myself, the more there has grown up in me a feeling of kinship with all things. In fact it seems to me as if that alienation which so long separated me from the world has become transferred into my own inner world, and has revealed to me an unexpected unfamiliarity with myself. ~Carl Jung;

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WE LIVE NOW

Breath & Blood

by Iona Miller, 2016

<http://ancestorsandarchetypes.weebly.com/>



Genealogy is a recorded history of a person or family's descent from an ancestor or ancestors. Soul is spiritual or emotional warmth, force or evidence. These combine so that knowing your roots and connecting with family are good for the soul. Our ancestors are also symbols. Jung noted, "If one accepts the symbol, it is as if a door opens leading into a new room whose existence one previously did not know."(Liber Novus, Page 311)

"I Am. Lo, I Am Alive"

Genealogy is a written testament to the endurance of the archaic — a historical epic of the flesh made word. Healing of the mind and body was practiced in prehistoric times and a vital part of it involved maintaining a living connection with the ancestors.

“Psyche” is Greek for soul, life, and breath; so psyche is Nature itself. Jung reminds us “nature is not matter only, she is also spirit,” — the Great Mother. If we repress nature, animals, creative fantasy, and the “inferior” or primitive side of humans, we depreciate the earth and lose our connection with nature and divinity.

Jung told Ira Progoff that, “individuation is the natural process by which a tree becomes a tree and a human a human.” He said that consciousness can just as well interfere with the natural growth process as aid it. We do not have a sense of living history.

Incorporating wisdom from the depths of the psyche, spans the archaic, natural, primordial, or original. Dissociation from our ancestors is unconscious dissociation from nature, our nature and the world soul. Rituals, such as genealogy, can help us reconnect, to awaken both spirit and nature to a new life — spanning modern and archaic.

This quest for self is the yearning for soul and the healing power of nature. Jung believed when we touch nature we get clean, that natural life is the “nourishing soil of the soul.” When we search for our ancestors we search for soul. The collective unconscious is the well of souls.

When our soul is touched, we know what we are here for. Our whole purpose and destiny is just to be. We do not need to lose the mystery by pretending to a knowledge that we do not

have. If we just stay with the process, living the soul, our genealogy unfolds with our life's journey and meaning. The streaming continuity of life becomes clear in our lineage. Our ancestral legacy is the ancestral continuum or ancestral field.

We can listen to the voices, feelings, sights and experiences of our ancestors. The land of the dead is the country of our ancestors. The images who walk in on us are our ancestors, ordinary and extraordinary. Genealogy is a tangible path to the soul and the sacred. In genealogy we have to go through the personal to get to the transcendent. Genealogy is a living mythology organically relevant to living the organic form and participating in myth.

Return of the Feminine

Unlike paternal line genealogy of inheritance, social norms and the Father Archetype, contemporary genealogy fully embraces the feminine, and the infusion of maternal lines and qualities into the family tree that speak on behalf of life.

The life value of the facts are related both to everyday and eternal images. The return to the Feminine is not focused on transcendence, but on the embodiment of the sacred, in life and in relationships. The grandmothers of our family tree embody the Mother Archetype.

The unification of the body, sexuality and emotions with the spirit heralds a return from

striving to being. Myth is the transcendent in living relationship with the present — the life wisdom that lives within us and is bound in our body. Myth points the way beyond the phenomenal field, and this role is demonstrated in the roots of our genealogical lines, where we find families of gods and goddesses.

Joseph Campbell explored three major themes of the sacred Feminine:

- 1) Initiation into the cosmos and nature; immanence and eternity, and thus existing outside the bounds of ordinary, lived experience.
- 2) Transformation; guiding the life cycle from birth to death.
- 3) Inspiration; the deep, felt sense of the aliveness and energy of all life.

”On the simplest level, the Goddess is the Earth. On the next, archaic level, She is the surrounding sky. On the philosophic level, She is Maya, the forms of sensibility, the limitations of the senses that enclose us so that all of our thinking takes place within her bounds—She is IT. The Goddess is the ultimate boundary of consciousness in the world of time and space.”
(Joseph Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*)

The Incredible Lightness of Breathing
Breath is life — the life-giving presence. In Latin, Hebrew and Greek, ‘breath’ means ‘soul.’ When we breath we derive sustenance from the world

around us. The breath of life is the symbol and medium of vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing and inspiration. On a cosmic level, breath symbolizes the spirit and the vital breath of the universe. In this way, to breathe is to assimilate spiritual power.

Breath is a symbol of freedom, quest, direction, and delivery. Inhalation and exhalation symbolize the alternating rhythm of life and death, of manifestation and reabsorption into the universe. In *L'Air et les Songes*, Bachelard notes that breathing is connected with circulation of the blood and with the important symbolic paths of involution and evolution.

There Will Be Blood

Blood and bloodline is of central significance in genealogy. Where Breath is flight, Blood is the ties that bind — relativity, heredity, bloodlines, and self-realization — life, sex, and death. Blood is the fiery 'water' of our body's rivers, always in motion, ceaseless in its circulation.

When we feel most alive, when we experience passion, jealousy, or other overpowering emotions, blood rushes through our veins, we breathe faster, our cheeks redden. Blood impresses the imagination, stimulating all sorts of beliefs beyond the rational — for example, drinking blood for regeneration. Globally it represents not only heritage, but life force itself, as the element of divine life that functions within the human body.

Blood has carried extraordinary symbolic power since Neolithic times with the cyclic mysteries of the goddess and menstrual taboos, reflecting the magical meaning of women as sources of life, symbols of Eros and fertility, and the magical meaning of blood as vital fluid.. The “knot of Isis” funerary amulet placed at the neck of the deceased symbolized “the blood of Isis.”

In ancient Greek medicine, each of the four humors became associated with an element. Blood was the humor identified with air, since both were hot and wet. And blood means kin from common ancestry. Eliphas Levi called blood “the great arcanum of life” and, “the first incarnation of the universal fluid; it is the materialized vital light. Its birth is the most marvelous of all nature’s marvels; it lives only by perpetually transforming itself, for it is the universal Proteus.”

Archetypal beliefs, fantasies and notions concerning the significance of blood are among the oldest surviving concepts from the earliest days of human existence. Symbolically, blood is bonds, promises, responsibility, sacrifice, collective will and has many religious connotations. Childbirth and death often involve blood. Wars have been fought in the name of bloodlines. Blood rituals symbolize death and rebirth. Body piercing is also a blood ritual.

The notion that “life is in the blood” gave rise to its presumed divine nature, a gift of the gods. Dream meanings of blood include life, fluidity,

passion and that which sustains us, but also emotional pain and hurtful things. Blood is said to have magic powers and it is also associated with a variety of irrational notions, including blood brotherhood, “royal blood,” blood vengeance, “pure blood,” blood baptism, “bad blood,” bloodshed, and blood guilt.

Depth Approach

A Jungian approach to genealogy is not a requirement for practice, but it is a valid approach with its own coherence. Archetypal psychology is a legitimate ‘ground’ for an aesthetic, phenomenological approach to genealogy.

Depth Psychology can help us explore the hidden parts of human experience with a deeper rather than reductive view. Looking beyond the surface level we find currents that run throughout our lives and those of our ancestors, connecting us and communicating greater meaning through imagery, dreams, and archetypal patterns.

The depth orientation brings a new lens to our transgenerational issues we may have overlooked. The ancestral field connects us with something larger than our everyday selves, raising what was unconscious into conscious awareness. Symbolism is the practice of representing peoples, places, objects, and ideas by means of symbols or of attributing symbolic

meanings or significance to objects, events, or relationships.

A psychological approach is a trustworthy framework for understanding a more holistic genealogical process, with a clear sense of humanness or personhood, and unreal and quasi-real experience — intangibles produced by psyche itself.

Intangibles

Our genealogical lines are ours alone, although we share some of them with others. When we begin our genealogical adventure, we enter our own exclusive path. As Jung suggests, “You can enter only into your own mysteries.” How do we explore the depths of our reality and experience, seeing underneath that which appears on the surface?

Campbell noted, *“Whenever a knight of the Grail tried to follow a path made by someone else, he went altogether astray. Where there is a way or path, it is someone else’s footsteps. Each of us has to find his own way, and this is what gives our Occidental world its initiative and creative quality. Nobody can give you a mythology. The images that mean something to you, you’ll find in your dreams, in your visions, in your actions — and you’ll find out what they are after you’ve passed them.”* (Joseph Campbell, interview by Joan Marler, *Yoga Journal*, Joseph Campbell Foundation)

Our ancestors are like intangible assets that lack

physical substance and usually are very hard to evaluate. They are not constituted or represented by a physical object and their value is not measurable. But we can feel and even assess it despite lack of physical presence.

Modes of Apprehension

A depth approach addresses the feelings, significant dreams, and imagery that are naturally aroused in the self-discovery process, and describes the nature of synchronous events. Grounded theory has a particular conceptual and methodological foundation that doesn't reduce what it means to be human, embodied or incorporeal.

We need to separate our constructions from a delusory interpretation of the facts of reality, as available to experience. How can we integrate different theories relating to the basis of reality? No shortage of comparisons and correlations between spiritual notions, metaphysical ideas, and scientific theories has been made.

The normally unconscious functional layer of perceptual and emotional variants are only psychologically transcendent but by no means "transcendental," i.e., metaphysical. Perfectly normal people can have visions in certain moments. The heart of the labyrinth is the heart of all life; it is the womb of creation, rebirth, regeneration and metamorphosis. A labyrinth is a scrambled mandala.

In an idealist worldview, we act on the world through consciousness and, therefore, actively know and shape our world. In contrast, in a realist view, the world acts us and we react. Both perspectives tend to assume a dualist subject/object separation and directional relationship between person and world that does not exist in the world of actual lived experience.

We can describe at least three functional aspects of consciousness and focus of attention that relate to personal and collective conscious-unconscious phenomenology and models of reality — the way we perceive it, the way we imagine or interpret it, and the unified ground underlying existence.

- 1) Personal self-awareness fused with direct sensory experience and emotion (awake and aware of surroundings).**
- 2) a fusion of imaginal memories, myths, dreams and conceptual interpretations of experience.**
- 3) Non-dual unity and totality; the universal, suprapersonal or global aspect of dimensionless abstraction, we call “Consciousness,” or God in potentia.**

A descriptive phenomenological method helps us grasp previously unrecognized assumptions regarding meaning — the means to understand subjective matters. The psychological approach is neither idealist nor realist, but intimate. Like ourselves, most of our ancestors had a lifeworld,

place and home that hold people and world together.

Place is a ontological structure of being-in-the world because of our existence as embodied beings. We are “bound by body to be in place.” And the same holds true in the inner life. As with lifeworld and place, home as experience presupposes and sustains a taken-for-granted involvement between person and world. This bond is largely unself-conscious, and the phenomenological aim is to make that tacitness explicit and thereby understand it.

There many challenges in life, from catastrophes (war, famine, plague, disasters), to loss of autonomy, major illness and disabilities, to involuntary displacement--the families' experience of forced relocation and resettlement, metaphorically a forced journey and starting over or rebuilding. Our ancestors faced them all, mostly without modern conveniences.

The grand plan on which the unconscious life of the psyche is constructed is so inaccessible to our understanding that we can never know what evil may not be necessary in order to produce good by enantiodromia, and what good may very possibly lead to evil. ~Carl Jung, CW 9i, Para 397.

The lifeworld includes both the routine and the unusual, the mundane and the surprising. Whether an experience is ordinary or

extraordinary, however, the lifeworld in which the experience happens is normally out of sight. Each of our ancestors had their space in their landscape and in our genealogical descent. That place serves as the condition of all existing things – “To be is to be in place.”

Typically, we do not make our experiences in the lifeworld an object of conscious awareness. Rather, these experiences just happen, and we do not consider how they happen in context. The natural attitude is to take the everyday world unquestioningly for granted. Inner and outer dimensions normally unfold automatically.

Phenomenology is the interpretive study of human experience. The aim is to examine and clarify spontaneous human situations, events, meanings, and experiences, including personal impact, urgency, and ambiguity. We bring our own style to the process. It is an innovative way for looking at the person-environment relationship and for identifying and understanding its complex, multi-dimensional structure.

Consciousness was not separate from the world and human existence. A primarily aesthetic, poetic enterprise need not attempt to achieve a degree of rigor and epistemological clarity like natural scientists. We have no need to “objectify” the human being, but to adopt a qualitative, interpretive approach and to explore environmental and inherited issues. Phenomenology is one style of qualitative

inquiry that involves symbolic interaction as its conceptual and methodological foundation.

As in conventional genealogy, we should apply trustworthy and reliable protocols to our practice. Humanity and the environment are an indivisible whole we can describe phenomenologically. Three phenomenological methods include: (1) first-person phenomenological research; (2) existential-phenomenological research; and (3) hermeneutical-phenomenological research.

Once we ourselves are rooted in this fertile earth of the deep unconscious, we can plant our contemporary and traditional Family Tree with its potentially vital forms and structures and listen to souls being born in the future. The Tree grounds us in imaginal space. We learn to “stand our ground” in the deep interiority of the psychological field with new vigor.

Dreaming the Earth, and Earthing the Dream
We can activate the deep knowing of the psyche as it is nourished and animated by intimacy with the natural world. Research suggests that interconnectivity manifests in our deep psychic bond with the earth, its creatures and plants, and the cosmos as a whole. Evidence of this interrelationship arises in our personal lives in dream images and synchronicities, and in the powerful and visceral sense of engagement we feel with the natural world.

In the beginning, the 'earth' was void and without form: "You have got to accept what the unconscious produces, and you have to understand its language. It is Nature, and it has to be translated into human forms." (Jung, C.G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters, Pages 359-364)

Joseph Campbell described four functions of myth:

(1) to help us through life passages, with ritual (baptism, marriage, initiation, job entry, funerals);

(2) to make connections with mysteries of the universe (spirituality, religion, arts);

(3) to explain the workings of nature (lightning, seasons, floods, birth, death); and

(4) to provide a way we find a place in the social community (family, clan, caste, ethnicity, social class, subculture).

Ovum Mundi

The longing for our origins is a metaphorical longing for paradise.

The primary myth, the seminal idea, is of our origins. The egg is the universal symbol of the archetypal phenomenology of the child's birth. This embryo of the universe has been called the world egg, formed by light itself. The Primordial Being is hatched from the serpent-entwined Cosmic Egg. This proverbial 'Orphic Egg' was the source of the generative power of the entire universe.

In mythology, eggs stand for the earth, the life, or the seat of the soul. They indicate the presence of the Goddess, “whose World Egg contains the universe in embryo.” In India, Egypt, Greece and Phoenicia the creator and mankind emerge from the Cosmic Egg. The egg is commonly considered as a symbol of fertility, the rebirth of nature and wholeness. In Sufism the central goal is the rediscovery of the root of one’s being through reintegration with the entirety.

Eliade insists that the egg never loses its primary meaning, but “*ensures the repetition of the act of creation which gave birth in illo tempore to living forms. ...the egg guarantees the possibility of repeating the primeval act, the act of creation...In as much as it is linked with the scenarios for the New Year or the return of spring, the egg represents a manifestation of creation.*” This golden egg is the most Divine being on the whole earth and from this primeval Immortal golden embryo springs the fountain of Immortality.

The world egg or golden embryo born of cosmic being or the cosmic womb is a global theme. Egyptian language implies “egg” is naturally related to “goddess.” The words “*userit,*” “*netrit,*” “*hen-t,*” and “*shepsit,*” all mean “goddess” and use the egg hieroglyph as a determinative.

The cosmic egg of the Egyptians was also identified as Osiris, symbolizing life, death, renewal, rejuvenation, rebirth, or immortality. As unconscious, Osiris is the paradoxical life/death ground where integrative impulses arise. His epic ordeals mirror our own.

We cannot speak of Osiris (Wasir) apart from the rejuvenating processes of Isis (Aset), who complements and completes him. He was called “the Great Egg” — “the only egg” — and was lauded as “thou egg who becometh as one renewed.”

From the viewpoint of the ground we are refreshed each and every nanosecond of our existence. Human beings weave imaginal tales about the nature of nature, their experience and dreams. We still stave off our fears of death with hopes of eternal life when the existential fact remains that it is impossible for us to leave the sacred source field that undergirds both our corporeal existence and our potential immortalization in the virtual field, the groundstate of continuous creation.

The sarcophagus of Seti I depicts Osiris as “bent round in a circle with his toes touching his head...” Phoenician cosmogenesis says, “From the union of [Desire and Darkness] were born Aer (air) and Aura (breath)...This couple then produced the cosmic Egg, in conformity with the intelligible spirit.”

Life comes from life. The egg, the universal germ of creation, with all its potency for

transformation and its circular containment, is a mandala, a magic circle, a microverse.

Greek philosopher Epicurus described the cosmic egg as a circular band. “The All,” he stated, “was from the beginning like an egg,” and the *pneuma* as serpent winds around the egg in a tight band as a wreath or belt around the universe. This circle without beginning or end is a symbol of the parents of the world, portrayed in their equal stature as the original unity.

This ancient symbol of the Orphic Mysteries – the serpent-entwined egg – signified Cosmos encircled by the fiery Creative Spirit. The egg also represents the soul of the philosopher; the serpent, the Mysteries. At the time of initiation the shell is broken and one emerges from the embryonic state of physical existence which is the fetal period of philosophic regeneration.

This germinal point is something great. Before our body is born of our parents, at the time of conception, this seed is first created where human nature and life dwell. The two intermingle forming a unity. Myth suggests: “In the state before the appearance there is an inexhaustible breath.” Before the parents beget the child, the breath of life is complete and the embryo perfect.

Jung’s incantation cries, “*Oh light of the middle way, enclosed in the egg, embryonic, full of ardor, oppressed. Fully expectant, dreamlike, awaiting lost memories. As heavy as stone,*

hardened. Molten, transparent. Streaming bright, coiled on itself.” (The Red Book; 53).

Alchemy describes the “Philosophers’ Child,” “Child of Wisdom,” “Child of the Egg” or *homunculus*, born symbolically in a retort which represents the human Heart. Chinese Taoist alchemy calls it the “immortal foetus,” “embryo of the Tao,” “seed pearl” or “starseed embryo.”

In *The Book of the Dead*, Wallis Budge describes the primitive credo concerning the cosmic egg of the ancient Egyptians in these words:

“[In the beginning] nothing existed except a boundless primeval mass of water which was shrouded in darkness and which contained within itself the germs or beginnings, male and female, of everything which was to be in the future world. The divine primeval spirit which formed an essential part of the primeval matter felt within itself the desire to begin the work of creation, and its word woke to life the world, the form and shape of which it had already depicted to itself. The first act of creation began with the formation of an egg out of the primeval water...”

Paradise Myth

The search for our origins expressing a “longing for paradise.”

The spirit of God moves upon the Face of the waters — the embryo. Jung noted that Simon Magus considered the Garden of Eden a symbol

or metaphor for corporeal uterine life. The fetus is surrounded by waters.

If paradise is the womb, then Eden is the placenta and the river branching into four is the umbilical with two arteries of breath and two veins of blood. Magus claims Moses allegorically referred to the cave/womb as The Garden from which in time we are expelled, as the Fruit of the Tree of Life.

“[P]aradise is the uterus, and the Garden of Eden the navel. Four flows emanate from the navel, two air- and two blood-vessels, so to speak, through which the growing child receives its food, the blood, and the pneuma.”
(Children’s Dreams Seminar, Pages 365-367.)

The world navel is a symbol for Paradise, as Eliade (1991) tells us. “Paradise, where Adam was created from clay, is, of course, situated at the center of the cosmos. Paradise was the navel of the earth and according to a Syrian tradition, was established on a mountain higher than all other” (p. 16).

In biological terms, this mountain is the pregnant body of the mother and her navel as the center of the world, the connection between Heaven and Earth. The umbilical cord is the container for the river (water of life) that flows *into* Paradise or the womb, thereby nourishing it. Biologically, we can also compare the act of physical love and female orgasm (water of life) to the river flowing *out* of

Paradise, leaving behind the egg that generates new life at conception.

The serpent in our archetypal tree is the unconscious with its painful, dangerous interventions and frightening effects. Though totally unconscious, it has a wisdom of its own that is foundational to our origins. But the path of knowledge is painful and bitter. The unconscious is not a separate sphere, but found in all things at all times. The soul has its own internal sources of knowledge.

Elemental Earth

The physical and chemical constituents of our bodies are the elemental earth in us. Here our acorn can grow into the oak it was meant to be. The future is affected by what we imagine. The challenge today is to sustain the vivacity of our culture and carry it into the future, maintaining a reciprocal relationship with nature, and connection to the ancestral past.

Consciously practiced, genealogy is a way to get in touch with the ground of being. It forms a great feedback loop between our present and our origins from the middle ground of imagery states that is our birthright. Interacting with one's genealogy becomes a rite of passage with three phases: severance (deciding to participate), threshold (entering uncharted territory), and incorporation, (literally, "to take on the body," having gained new insights).

Our search is for our origins. Our lines take serpentine twists and turns mirroring the genetics of our DNA. Genealogy dignifies our existence as numinous, not merely derivative or reactive, nor is it prescriptive in any one-approach-fits-all manner.

“When the unconscious intrudes into spaces of consciousness, it is automatically split into its pairs of opposites.” (Jung, Children’s Dreams Seminar, Page 408.) Symbols mirror the nuclear family union of gender opposites and reconciliation in new birth. Images, like the union of opposites, cannot be willed.

“What takes place between light and darkness, what unites the opposites, always has a share in both sides and can be judged just as well from the left as from the right... the only thing that helps us here is the symbol...with its paradoxical nature it represents the ‘third thing.’” (Jung, CW 13, pp. 134)

“The Kingdom of Heaven is within ourselves. It is our innermost nature and something between ourselves. The Kingdom of Heaven is between people like cement.” (Jung, Visions Seminar, Page 444.)

Recognition of soul images and incorporation into awareness is an ongoing process. In *The Red Book*, Jung notes, “Because I sink into my symbol to such an extent, the symbol changes me from my one into my other ...I have

interpreted these images, as best I can, with poor words.” (Pg. 250.)

Jung cautions, “The dead who besiege us are souls who have not fulfilled the *principium individuationis*, or else they would have become distant stars. Insofar as we do not fulfill it, the dead have a claim on us and besiege us and we cannot escape them.” (*The Red Book*; Appendix C; Page 370)

Jung advised the incorporation of death into one’s lived experience. In *The Red Book*, he says, “*The knowledge of death came to me that night, from the dying that engulfs the world. I saw how we live towards death, how the swaying golden wheat sinks together under the scythe of the reaper like a smooth wave on a sea beach.*”

Our ancestors are permanent living residents in our own psychological life that continue to enrich, animate, and inspire us in their enduring significance and embodied meaning. Bringing them back through remembrance is also a recollection — a recollection and differentiation. Tacitly welcoming us across the years, they have aesthetic and psychological qualities — subtle bodies clothed with the presence of our deep memories.

Our thought is constrained and impaired if we think in terms of partial derivatives (time- and space-bound effects) instead of full function. The capacity for objective inner experience remains latent. We gradually develop “an eye to

see and an ear to hear.” We dialogue with figures of the soul. Their radical otherness, activities, and words affect us as they move with their own intentions.

Aesthetic Genealogy

Genealogy reconnects us with nature and our own nature. It is an aesthetic interaction in which both the Greek chorus of ancestors and ourselves are the medium that makes art of life’s remnants. It is a tool we can use to change ourselves by turning into more of ourselves.

The evolutionary function of the aesthetic sense drew us toward conditions that made for survival and reproductive success and repelled us from conditions that impacted longevity and fertility negatively. Existence and the world are eternally joined as an aesthetic phenomena.

What we think and feel and the intensity of aesthetic engagement, is proportional to the depth of its unconscious content. Its imaginative texture cannot be fixed in meaning. Yet it is capable of moving us psychologically away from the temporal (human) present and towards the universal (divine) or archetypal constant. So, aesthetics is a form of transformation.

Genealogy forms both the aesthetic space or context as well as the figurative content in an authentic expression of the human condition through the ages. Genealogy is the basis for a configuration, re-configuration, and aesthetic appreciation of our life story. Genealogy is a

‘mirror’ of aesthetic engagement in the materially based image.

Addressing the needs of unconscious life is fundamental to aesthetic appreciation. Implied inner needs drive the initial intention to physically create our genealogical image and to act this out imaginatively. We raise the ancestors who carry meaning and value to consciousness from the labyrinth of unconscious form production and creative instinct.

The aesthetic paradigm is admittedly not the only approach, and it may be philosophically romantic, but it embodies a certain *eros* — felt-experience or love toward the family — known, unknown, and unknowable. Eros connects body and soul with vitality and passion born in the blood. Vivid libidinal participation connects our heart to the heart of the universe. It binds the ordinary and nonordinary worlds together by creating symbols of transcendence.

Genealogy becomes a homage to the power of love in our very creation. We heed the ancestors when we receive, listen, and contain. In that sense, genealogy becomes a *temenos*, or sacred space, the sanctuary of our holy grove — the magic circle of extended family. The self-realizing motion performs the transformation. Our ancestors are a revelation. We need to reveal, not just know ourselves. Self-realization is self-revelation.

We have to accept that our genealogical ‘dead ends’ will remain unknown, will remain the ‘road not taken.’ We can relate to the blunt facts of our genesis and stop there as the genealogical ‘realists’ do, cutting off the fictional, legendary and mythic elements, but we may do so at our own psychological peril. A myth is not a dream; its archaic images and memories constitute a world.

Aesthetic appeal is certainly a big part of the lure of genealogy that supersedes dry ancestral recording, analysis, and interpretation. The aesthetic approach does not rule out other perspectives on genealogy, which can be pursued as we are moved to do so.

But the archetypal approach probably makes the most ‘sense’ of the roots of our mythologically-based lines, and permits depth exploration without literalism, concretization, or symptomatic concretization. For example, when Native American cultures say they get their ancestral wisdom, ceremonies, guidance, and direction from the ‘womb at the center of the universe,’ they refer to the sacred Feminine.

Jung echoes such ancient sentiments: “For him who looks backwards the whole world, even the starry sky, becomes the mother who bends over him and enfolds him on all sides, and from the renunciation of this image, and of the longing for it arises the picture of the world as we know it today.” (The Sacrifice; CW 5; Par 643.)

The archetypes are an aesthetic stimulus with their own properties and appeal, among other things. So is our aesthetic response to their symbolism and experience. The mythic is an expression of the larger whole. We often fail to realize that other fascinating possibilities exist.

Heuristic Method

Creative outpouring is the entrance to self-actualization. It is heuristic, preparing us for deeper understanding. In psychology, heuristics are simple, efficient rules, learned or hard-coded by evolutionary processes. Like archetypes, they help us function without constantly stopping to think about the next course of action.

We find or discover things by experience and experiment. It stimulates interest in further investigation. As a problem-solving strategy, the heuristic method allows us to discover something for ourselves, to discover answers on our own and learn more about ourselves on our own.

A psychophysical approach is the secret behind the aesthetic experience. The ancestors feed the aesthetic formation of our living form. Aesthetic knowledge enables the psychological phenomena to link the body to the world.

Creativity points the way to the numinous, a high-voltage elemental force. Incubation brings new insights into ourselves and the ancestors. In our initial attempts to encounter the numinous

with the emotions instead of with the body, we must expect indirect, rather than direct knowledge, and therefore be satisfied with intimations, allegory, implications, and transformations.

Psychic tensions accumulate and stimulate our imaginations to form images embodying their emotional essence. This process is the dynamic agency behind both individual fantasies and forms of cultural expression.

Aesthetic Intuition

Genealogy offers direct traditional testimony that archetypes as aesthetic universals lie at the roots of the collective unconscious which Jung insisted was not a mystical idea. Our invisible connections go down deep, and to go deep is to go backward.

Our aesthetic response, a psychic sensuality and sensitivity, to phenomena is the source of the immediate apprehension that Hillman describes as 'soul-making,' subjective interrelation. Reflection makes consciousness, but only love makes soul.

It means leaving our solid footing and carrying every question into deeper waters, rather than dragging 'the invisibles' out of the underworld and back into the daylight world. They may 'come up' spontaneously if we have no desire to control the outcome.

Poiesis, as creative act, is the death and re-birth of the soul. We constantly re-form ourselves with 'soul-making.' Poiesis is integrative affirmation always emerging into form. The naturally therapeutic process evokes the emotions and experiences that give life a deeper meaning. It evokes the ancestors.

*“Psychological faith begins in the love of images, and it flows mainly through the shapes of persons in reveries, fantasies, reflections, and imaginations. Their increasing vivification gives one an increasing conviction of having, and then of being, and interior reality of deep significance transcending one’s personal life.” (Hillman, James, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, p. 50)*

The symbol is a means of guiding thought out into the Unseen and Incomprehensible. Ancestral images remain largely ambiguous and are never precisely defined nor fully explained. They appear and are created in dreams, ritual, and art.

We know now there are neural correlates to aesthetic experience, including contemporary genealogical practice. Its effects include spontaneous appearance of intuitive forms and symbolic visualizations of what cannot be directly known. An aesthetic response to perception fosters notions of reverence, symbolism, and role relationships — aspects of ancestor devotion.

We open to the aesthetic depths of the world, in addition to the physical, social, linguistic, and spiritual modes. Spiritual here is a concept with a voice independent of formal religious structures with essential mystery underscoring its meaning, It has a deep resonance with key elements of religious practice.

The image now exists as an external presence, outside the maker and, at the same time, is temporarily inhabited by a part of the maker. Images are actively imagined internal feeling states now embodied within this external image. The image is both a statement about and a depiction of what was formerly an invisible and largely unconscious inner state. It can be understood in several ways at many levels of meaning.

At root, traditional genealogy is an archetypal activity, recapitulating and extending humanity's oldest activities. The aesthetic response is an ethical response — a response of the heart — that values the ancestors and the genealogical history. Genealogy is thus an archetypal order, an aesthetic construction, and a virtual map of the personal and collective unconscious, reflecting a principle of totality and primordial origins.

A Forest of Family Trees

Cosmic process provides the potential for life. The life-world is always there as the background of all human experiences. All the living world is aesthetic. Deeply felt aesthetic experiences are

very likely to also be numinous. The aesthetic is a way to receive, process, and deal with coherent information.

Pattern is the ultimate “stuff” of reality. Without intent to do so, the patterns of our genealogical structures endure and then disintegrate. This occurs at all levels of explanation. The key is the integrity of the pattern, not the “substrate.”

Even largely unconscious flowing information elicits physical responses. The “pattern which connects” is beauty, and the beauty of our connectedness is revealed graphically in the full flowering of our genealogy with its incorporation of the collective tree — the archetypal World Tree. At its root is the archetypal drama of our origins, externally validated by sources of recognition and resonance.

Like the sea or the sky, the tree or forest is a kind of archetype of the foundations of the world. Because it reflects our inner and outer reality, genealogy becomes a means of access to insights about the deep nature of both personal and collective reality. The ancestors are transcendent in their value if not their appearance.

Our genealogical chart is a shorthand of minimal graphics — we are born; we mate; we die. It is a vast treasure of subconscious symbolism, wisdom, collective and self-knowledge that is the enabling of life. We are

products of the aesthetic process of evolution, embryology, and life experience. Our bodies exhibit aesthetic proportion and so does a balanced mind.

Our family tree focuses and expands the field of our attention. Genealogy is a metaphor of primary process with the full intensity of literal truth. We can be inspired by lived relations with those energies on an ongoing basis...not just as a paper trail. Where lines meet dead ends or brick walls, the charts also represent emptiness.

Presence of Absence

The figures of absence inform us with their paradoxical presence — the dead or missing parent, the grandparent never met, the unborn and miscarried. Absence of something is the negation of a presence as ‘non-presence.’

Many figurative strategies confront the notion of absence, and address the aesthetics of absence. For example, a spectre, phantom or absent figure is an archetypal representation of the presence of an absence, distorted shape (anamorphosis, a form of perspective) as uncertain presence.

Our untraceable lines remain profoundly unconscious in the silent margins from which the last known member of a lost line speaks. Such lines of descent do not enclose us but disclose our essential nature. They reflect and map out our embedding in the natural world, intricate in its elegance — our very aliveness.

Seeing with the eye of the heart gives us a very personal sense of the vastness and beauty of nature, our inherent place in it, and how we are sustained by it.

Autopoiesis

The genealogical aesthetic emerges somewhere between imagination and rigor as an ecology of souls, a self-organizing biophenomenon, the dynamics and functionality of interrelationships. We can apply ecological hermeneutics to explore our interpretations of disclosure and concealment — in an imaginal sort of ecological intercorporeality.

Genealogy arouses and enlivens real psychological phenomena, with attention to bodily responses and emotional awareness enhanced by imagination.

Archetypal symbolism is an aesthetic experience, as is symbolic interaction with our ancestors, the archetypal background, and primal states of consciousness of the life-world. We interact through the meaning of symbols, by interpreting and reacting. We each have symbolic meaning to be revealed. Symbols bridge the gap between perceptual reality and and what we understand.

James Hillman's aesthetic approach to dream images translate directly to genealogical imagery as scene, as context, as mood. Certain ancestors spontaneously suggest a place that we dream into, we enter into and in turn are

embraced by it. Hillman noted the image doesn't lead somewhere else like a story.

We can find nowhere to go but more deeply into the image. The images do not become pinned down by any particular interpretation, are never literalized into any single fixed concept or "meaning. Instead we return, drawn again and again to an experiential "living in the image," with new meanings potentially emerging over time as we go "more deeply into the image." Hillman suggests that images acquire autonomy and operate according to their own will, similar to gods.

Hillman's approach to image is deeply rooted in the work of the French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard. The image is a free expression created not from pressure but from play, not from necessity but from inventiveness — the way we engage and embrace the world. Imagination is more than the stuff-sack of trauma; it is the cradle of renewal, a genesis, rather than effect. Imagination mobilizes the potencies of transformation.

In his *Poetics of Space*, Bachelard says, "By the swiftness of its actions, the imagination separates us from the past as well as from reality; it faces the future. To the function of reality, wise in the experience of the past, should be added a function of irreality, which is equally positive. Any weakness in the function of

irreality will hamper the productive psyche. If we cannot imagine, we cannot foresee.”

Our self-reference rests on a perceptual dimension of presence-openness not ‘closed’ within any conceptual system. As long as the images are not trapped in a single meaning, they continue as an animating, enlivening presence. You will quickly discover the ancestors various aesthetic preferences. These are forms, styles and archetypes that are inherent in their makeup. Aesthetic satisfaction validates the process.

Joseph Campbell said, “The object becomes aesthetically significant when it becomes metaphysically significant.” Clarity is the “aha” quality — privileged ‘moments of grace.’ Transient moments of grace and transformation put meaning into aesthetic arrest and creativity that is an intuitive awareness of the required action. The innocent viewer is stopped dead in their tracks and has no choice but to stare in awe at their relationship with the living world.

Aesthetic engagement is active engagement with the (genealogical) process — engagement with the element of beauty and systemic wisdom. Aesthetic arrangement and metaphorical thought squeeze out the real meaning and value of our experience and the comprehensive properties of our relationships through ‘wise relating.’

Like art, genealogy is significant life activity and a way to access systemic wisdom and connectiveness. We cultivate inner beauty in the life-changing play of our own natural history. Information is the stuff of relationship and the living world of context, relevance and integration. The conjunction of the spiritual and aesthetic is a Royal Marriage — a grand synthesis of wholeness, our frail and mortal selves, revealed in their beauty over the epic panoply of history and myth.

“If your life has not three dimensions, if you don’t live in the body, if you live on the two-dimensional plane in the paper world that is flat and printed, as if you were only living your biography, then you are nowhere.”

~Carl Jung, Zarathustra Seminar, Page 972.

“dziadzia” English translation

dziadzia {noun}

dziadzia {m} [child.l.] (also: dziadek, dziadzio, dziadunio, dziadzius)

grandpa {noun} [child.l.] dziad {noun}

dziad {m} (also: starzec, stary, staruszek, starszy człowiek) old man {noun} dziad {m} (also: przodek, antenat)

ancestor {noun} dziad {m} [pej.] (also: żebrak)

beggar {noun} dziad {m} [arch.] (also: dziadek)

grandfather {noun}

Dziadzia is the Americanized Polish word for grandpa, which in Polish is dziadek or dziadziu.

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DEPTH GENEALOGY

• March 22, 2016 • [Leave a comment](#)

by Iona Miller,

<http://ancestorsandarchetypes.weebly.com/>



“From a barren list of names we learn who were the fathers or mothers, or more distant progenitors, of the select few, who are able to trace what is called their descent from antiquity.” (Smollett, Tobias (1798).)

“Hypothesis: in a sharp crisis, that bears in some way on species survival, an individual may spontaneously merge with his ancestors AND descendants and become, for a time, a single amplified entity.” —Ken Thomas

“Go to bed. Think of your problem. See what you dream. Perhaps the Great Man, the 2,000,000-year-old man, will speak...

If you are not interested in your own fate, the unconscious is.

There is a mountain of symbolism. ...

The Great Man is something that reacts.

Analysis is a long discussion with the Great Man—

an unintelligent attempt to understand him.

It, the Great Man, can at one stroke put an entirely different face

on the thing — or anything can happen.

In that way you learn about the peculiar intelligence of the background;

you learn the nature of the Great Man.

You learn about yourself against the Great Man—against his postulates.

This is the way through things, things that look desperate and unanswerable.

The unconscious gives you that peculiar twist that makes the way possible.

The way is ineffable.

One needs faith, courage, and no end of honesty and patience.

You have added things you didn't dream of— a new aspect of yourself and of the world.

If you are dishonest, you are nothing for your unconscious.

This you cannot regulate, or it would be misused.

It is not a conviction, not an assumption.

It is a Presence. It is a fact. It is there. ...

You have got to accept what the unconscious

*produces,
and you have to understand its language.
It is Nature, and it has to be translated into
human forms.”*

*(Jung, C.G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and
Encounters, Pages 359-364)*

Depth Perception

A genealogy is a record of the descent of a person or group from an ancestor. Death fascinates us, and probably always has. The oldest extant epic, Gilgamesh, directly addresses the question of why death exists.

In our family tree our ‘depth perception’ refers to how many generations are known to us, and how keenly we perceive the essence of each of their lives (face recognition) in our family history.

Living in touch with what our ancestors symbolize in the emotional language of the unconscious roots us in a far greater whole. Our hunger is for connection, not more food, money, or status. When we know our ancestors we live in unbroken continuity with the past. This is grounding down to the molecular level.

Ideally, depth connections throughout deep time might help us to overcome stumbling blocks, move through loss, find deeper meaning and interpersonal connection, and function at our optimal potential. We break through ancient walls, listening to the archaic hum of the ancestors, what their souls are saying, that reminds us of the collective buzzing of bees.

Joseph Cambrey, Provost of Pacifica, said, “So much of human suffering is very intimately tied up with non-conscious levels that it’s hard to imagine we could ameliorate symptoms without a depth perspective.”

Jung's "Great Man" can also appear as the Great woman — *Anima Mundi*, the ancient worldview. It is the hermaphroditic fusion of all our ancestry into an omnipotent archetypal figure of soul and spirit.

Throughout much of human history, ancestors were revered and frequently visited in caves and barrows. People sat in these natural resonant echo chambers, chanting and drumming hypnotically and opening their altered psyches to the possibility of communication with the Beyond — voices of eternity.

People died so young, this youthful population needed shamanic guidance, needed primal wisdom. We are learning to understand that our immature culture can benefit by rooting ourselves in deep time and the wisdom of eternity. We still dream at night of connecting somehow with our departed loved ones. We are unconsciously entangled with our ancestral soul, but psychically dissociated.

Chopping Wood & Carrying Cosmic Water
Water is the great symbol of the primordial unconscious. And we are its water-bearers. We carry the ancestral psyche much like the bloodline. The dragon or serpent is another symbol of the universal unconscious, the psychic field, and renewal. It impregnates itself by biting its own tail. The depths conceive.

A feminine symbol, water also signifies emotions or psychic energy, fertility, growth, creative potential, new life, or healing. An integrative approach includes memory reconsolidation to maintain, strengthen, modify and stabilize memories of the unconscious and long-term memory. Our ancestors remain

amnesiac agents as long as we are unconscious of them as a kinship system.

Psychologically, water means spirit that has become unconscious. The way of the soul leads to the water, to the dark mirror, the world of invisible perception, that reposes at its bottom. This water is no figure of speech, but a living symbol of the dark psyche. We descend into our depths, into that well of souls and perhaps return with a bit of its healing bounty.

The Tree, watered by the unconscious roots, is the great symbol of humanity. In the tree metaphor, these root systems that lie far beneath the surface of the Earth, which are just as extensive as the trunks and branches we have growing in plain view. We don't just look at the tree superficially, but examine its entire structure — perhaps, a metaphorical “chopping wood” — including belief systems and subconscious patterns of thinking formed from birth.

We all “carry water” for the divine in our manifest embodiment — not only in the fluids of our bodies, but the fluidity of the psyche and our epigenetic memories. But how many of us incorporate the numinous realms of the psyche—meaning the unconscious, spiritual beliefs, dream life, the imagination, our connection to mystery, myth, archetype and the natural world?

How do we function in society, what bonds us to one another, what causes our psychoses and neuroses, and what helps us to individuate and become the people we were meant to be? The Depth Approach includes **Dual Process Theory and The Frame Problem**, and some consequences for our research.

Dual Process Theory recognizes that the human mind has two disparate modes of thinking – Subconscious Intuitive Understanding on one hand and Conscious Logical Reasoning on the other. The depth perspective “frame” in this case is provided by genealogy.

We bring our own sense of aesthetics to ancestral relationships, knowing that each of our living cells carries the experience of billions of years of experimentation by its ancestors. Bioevolutionary aesthetics include the cognitive spectrum of sensation, perception, conceptualization, and thought as well as the basic emotions, pain, and sexuality.

About $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ of each of the psychological types seem to enjoy genealogy. The ‘analysts’ (Intuitive and Thinking) enjoy a rigorous, fact-based treasure hunt through their ancestry. The visionary ‘diplomats’ (intuitive and feeling) are curious, imaginative, on the lookout for secrets, hidden meanings and new possibilities.

Conservative ‘sentinels’ (observant and judging) like to preserve order and security, are often focus on the bonds of family and the importance of history. Goal-oriented ‘explorers’ (observing and prospecting) tend to stick to the facts and have practical applications in the future – the past and the present are prologue.

Genealogical Heritage

An ancestor or forebear is a parent or (recursively) the parent of an ancestor (i.e., a grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, and so forth). Ancestor is “any person from whom one is descended. In law the person from whom an estate has been inherited.”

Direct-line research refers to genealogy research focused on one’s direct-line ancestors. We follow both surnames at each generation (i.e. paternal and maternal lines), back as far as records allow. Family history, rather than just genealogy, includes extended families (biological marital, sociological) that often interact significantly with our own lines.

When our genealogy expresses more than one line of descent from a given ancestor, then it exhibits segmentation or branching. This is a “segmented genealogy.” A segmented genealogy starts with a single parent and shows the relationship of children to each other. This kind of genealogy will have both a horizontal and vertical element to it.

If we go back 300 years, we have roughly 3,000 ancestors. Going back a thousand years results theoretically in billions of ancestors, more people than ever lived on the face of the earth! In reality, the same ancestors will show up in multiple places in your family tree as you have multiple lines of descent from many of these people.

“Linear genealogy” expresses only one line of descent, linking the genealogy to an older ancestor or group. Both segmented and linear genealogies exhibit depth (number of generations) and a

sort of “cartography” of the unconscious. That map may lead us toward our greatest possible treasure—our inner gold — the knowledge in our bones.

Maybe we also find a bit of fool’s gold along the way. Family stories provide wonderful insights into the lives of our ancestors. However, not all family stories are true. Many such stories are fictional. Yet, even the stories that are either entirely or part fiction may contain clues to facts. Good genealogical practice requires that we admit the fiction to mine for its nuggets of truth.

In the domestic sphere, linear genealogy relates individuals to other individuals and kinship groups. They also function in the political and legal sphere to legitimate rulers, express progress, and support claims to recognition, status or power.

Some lines pass through or end (or begin) in legends or mythic figures. Already in the fifth century, the Macedonian kings claimed descent from Perdiccas, who descended from Temenos, a king of Argos; and he was great-grandchild of Hyllus, the son of Heracles.

Woden is consistently placed at nine removes from the founder of a dynasty. But is that the god, or Odin the man? In the 13th century, the Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson wrote that Odin came to be worshiped as a god, but he was originally a famous warrior who led his people out of Troy and into Scandinavia. Or was he?

In the 13th century, the Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus wrote that Odin was a sorcerer from Byzantium. The other gods there stripped Odin of his rank and power, then banished him. He fooled the people of Scandinavia into

worshiping him as a god. The old kings of Wessex and Mercia claimed him as ancestor.

Paul Henri Mallet (1730-1807) might have been the first to formulate explicitly the idea that the historical Odin was a man named Sigge Fridulfsson. He says, "His true name was Sigge, son of Fridulph; but he assumed that of Odin, who was the Supreme God among the Scythians." Mallet's version claims, Sigge (also known as Odin) was an ally of Mithradates, a Persian king defeated by the Romans. (Mallet, *Northern Antiquities*, 1770, 1809).

On the other hand, as many as 3 million men worldwide may be descendants of the Irish warlord, Niall of the Nine Hostages, who was who was the Irish "High King" at Tara, the ancient center of Ireland from A.D. 379 to A.D. 405. A 2003 study found that 8 percent of all Mongolian males are the descendants of Genghis Khan, sharing his Y chromosome. The Khan family may have as many as 16 million descendants in Asia today.

Even metaphorically, the most prestigious of all possible ancestry is descent from divinity itself. Descent from antiquity (DFA) is the project of establishing a well-researched, generation-by-generation descent of living persons from people living in antiquity. It is an ultimate challenge in genealogy. No prospective DFA is accepted at this time.

Irish legends and subsequently Scottish lines, claim royal descent from Milesius, King of Spain, husband of Scota, Princess of Egypt. The Welsh also have legends, which claim descent from Noah, while Charlemagne, the father of all European nobility, claims descent from Adam. Sometimes totems represent descent from Dragons, Lions, Eagles, or Serpents.

Hellenistic dynasties, such as the Ptolemies, claimed descent from gods and legendary heroes. In the Middle Ages, major royal dynasties of Europe sponsored compilations claiming their descent from Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, in particular the rulers of Troy. As propaganda, these claims glorified a royal patron by trumpeting the antiquity and nobility of his ancestry.

These descent lines included both mythical figures and outright fiction, much of which is still widely perpetuated today. The odds of royal ancestry are overwhelming. Virtually all people with European ancestry are descended from the usual royal suspects of 1000+ years ago.

Seeing ourselves in our archetypal nature helps us recognize our timeless parts and own our gifts. Having a mythic sensibility about ourselves offers a clue to how we might be unconsciously acting out archetypal patterns.

Apparently conflicting genealogies with different functions (and often without kinship terms) emerge from the religious or cultic sphere. That is, genealogies become fluid in accuracy according

to their function. No generalizations are possible for a historiographic value of such genealogies with fragmentations and gaps.

For example, Sumerian and Akkadian elements were fused into Hellenistic and biblical narrative with questionable linkages, significant differences, and background stories. Of the nine descendants of Adam, only Enoch is described with particulars from traditions now lost to us (*Genesis Apocryphon*) though we know they are related to Mesopotamian “fish-shaped sages” and kings lists.

The exact form of such ancient determinative lines in royal or religious genealogies is not known, but historically conflated, confabulated, and altered by compilers at various times for various reasons. Jung suggested we “think diligently” about the images the ancients have left us, as they also intimate what is to come.

Depth is the most important feature of linear genealogy. That depth expresses the memories of the people who preserve it in practice, relating us to deep time, distance, and transcendence.

But, true nobility springs from the soul and spirit, rather than any genetic tr

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[The Genius of Genealogy](#)

• January 12, 2016 • [Leave a comment](#)

<http://ancestorsandarchetypes.weebly.com>

Genealogy is only one of many ways to satisfy a deep-seated yearning for truth and mystery. However, the Family Tree is perhaps the most primordial way to connect with our roots — not a choice but a biological

given of our existence — the living mystery of life.

The Tree of Souls is a fundamental mytheme. It is arguably among the oldest shamanic practices and tropes, and therefore the foundation of magic. The conjoint heartbeats of the ancestors is the core rhythm, the drumbeat of time on the stretched canvas of flesh. That song is our prayer.

Rumi tells us, “Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.” To be satisfied in life we must combine inner and outer, the deep inner wisdom with focused activity in the world. Tracing our own genealogy, climbing up and down our Tree of Life, gives us potential for both.

“The Middle Plane, between the Upper & Lower World , that the Celts call the “Thin Place” is where the center of gravity shifts away from the Ego and its functions into an interim position...to attending to the hints of the self.” (M.-L. von Franz, Psychotherapy)

Grasp Your Legacy

But we must seek out our family tree to learn its hidden secrets, find its dead ends, and recast the contents of our personal and collective unconscious. Jung noted in

his own process that, **“The mystery showed me in images what I should afterward live. I did not possess any of those boons that the mystery showed me, for I still had to earn all of them.”** (Liber Novus, Page 254).

Your genealogy project can bring the past to life in ways you could not have imagined. Can a family tree give meaning to your life? Only if you infuse it with intention, value, and love. We invest in the message and are very involved and left with powerful residual impact. We may take the divine steps back for our own souls with corresponding results for our own well-being. But we may find in the process we become family stewards, bards, genwriters, or storytellers.

Well of Souls

Genealogy is a means of achieving empathy, of digging our own well of souls. Our undifferentiated ‘well of souls’ in the secret chambers of our hearts becomes more

and more specific. We detect the current below, realizing the presence of something.

The content is a resonance between the stimuli and the stored and storied material in our psychobiology.

Voices of the Transcendent

'The many voices of the psyche' is a transcendent ordering principle and aspirational or integrative position that may have a healing, unified or pluralistic agenda — different ways to understand one's life. Both the regressive and progressive perspective have their own type of wholeness, even if the mytheme differs.

Joseph Campbell said, "What is it we are questing for? It is the fulfillment of that which is potential in each of us. Questing for it is not an ego trip; it is an adventure to bring into fulfillment your gift to the world, which is

yourself. There is nothing you can do that's more important than being fulfilled. You become a sign, you become a signal, transparent to transcendence; in this way you will find, live, become a realization of your own personal myth."

Genealogy as a mythic image functions to connect the ego and the transcendent Other. **Subjective images are powerful because they can be experienced symbolically.**

Binary Ancestor Designation System
The logic of Nature is a natural discrete binary system of consistent generativity — bifurcating arborescence. Relations identified by the terminology may form a *system of relationships. ... of symbols (the generating elements).*

Without pedigree collapse, a person's ancestor tree is a binary tree, formed by the person, the parents (2), the grandparents (4), great-grandparents (8), and so on. However, the number of individuals in such a tree grows exponentially and will eventually become impossibly high. For example, a single individual alive today would, over 30 generations going back to the High Middle Ages, have or roughly a billion ancestors, more than the total world population at the time.

This apparent paradox is explained by shared ancestors, referred to as pedigree collapse. Instead of consisting of all unique individuals, a tree may have multiple

places occupied by a single individual. This typically happens when the parents of an ancestor are related to each other (sometimes unbeknownst to themselves). For example, the offspring of two first cousins has at most only six great-grandparents instead of the normal eight. In some cultures, cousins and other relations were permitted, encouraged or required to marry. This may have been to keep kin bonds, wealth and property within a family (endogamy) or simply because there was a limited number of potential marriage partners available. Among royalty, the frequent requirement to only marry other royals resulted in a reduced gene pool in which most individuals were the result of extensive pedigree collapse.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogical_numbering_systems

<http://web.stanford.edu/~andrsn/ahnenbin.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binary_tree

We enter the cave below the rock of reality to the reality of psychic manifestations.

“We are standing in between two worlds, a visible tangible world, and the other invisible world, which somehow has a peculiar quality of substantiality; but very subtle, a sort of matter that is not obvious and is not visible, that penetrates bodies and apparently exists outside of time and space.

“It is here and everywhere at the same time, and yet nowhere because it has no extension; it is a complete annihilation of space and time, which makes it a very different thing from our conception of an obvious world.” (Jung, Visions Seminars, Vol. 1 Page 206)

As Meister Eckhart said, **“When the soul wishes to experience something she throws an image of the experience out before**

her and enters into her own Image.” We go internal but come out with new information based on our experience. Personality widens with unconscious supplementation. Resilience builds throughout life, and close relationships are key.

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We can reclaim this most ancient genealogical practice and non-visible environment that allows us to gaze at a thing without seeing it. With each generation we enter a new level of interaction. Some branches of our tree clearly announce themselves as living forces of myth, which shows the nature of our life journey. Figures of the gods carry the idea of immortality, the image of immortality.

Enhancing our self-awareness, genealogy makes alienation obsolete by retrieving lost unconscious energy. What has haunted us now informs

us, **activated both by initiating and responding to joint attention** The mythic impulse is contained in

allegory and symbolism that are clearly not literal.

The subtle but persistent feeling of being out of place diminishes. Instead of a single answer there are many tacit replies. As a structured metaphor and technology, genealogy amplifies or intensifies our faculties increasing the value and quality of our inner life. Are you willing to enter the Tree?

Passing Through

Genealogy opens an inner space, and can be an immersive experience, a virtual reality where we suspend certain disbeliefs and entertain other hypotheses. Jung implies that what is not material now is 'spiritual,' and we find those explicit spiritual roots in our family tree. “**Experience of the**

inner world has for its object the phenomena of the psychic background, which in itself is so indefinite or so multifaceted that it can be expressed in an infinite variety of forms.”

At the dawn of mankind the Dragon constellation Draco was at the northern center of the heavens, overhanging the stellar system of the zodiac and its vast Precession drama. Jung tells us how family images spontaneously come back to

us: “***[The] dragon comes into the category of the great animals in the background who seem to regulate the world. Hence the mainly theriomorphic symbols for the signs of the zodiac as dominants of the psychic process.***

“Naturally the phenomena observed in the background are not always archetypes; they can also be personal complexes which have acquired excessive importance. Father and mother are not only personal entities but also have a suprapersonal meaning and are frequently used as symbols for the deity.

In this way the religious view of the world, thrown out at the front door, creeps in again by the back, albeit in strangely altered form—so altered that nobody has yet noticed it.” (Letters Vol. II, Pages 604-605)

As we enliven our tree it enlivens our depths. **Here the lands of the dead and the living intersect. Here, in a dimension of existential and psychological truths that underlie mythic process, we come to grips with perennial questions and mystery. Perhaps the most important way of connecting with the ancestors is the act of tracing the genesis oneself so that each part of the discovery process has a chance to work in us and on us imaginably over time.**

Time means a past and a future, and so the individual is only complete when we add his actual structure as the result of past events, and at the same time the

actual structure taken as the starting point of new tendencies. (Jung, 1925 Seminar, Page 137)

Jung links “the discontent of civilization” with distancing ourselves from our historical roots, and loss of connection with our past. He felt that crucial connection fostered individuality which counteracts mass-mindedness. Knowing the historical family via the collective unconscious [and genealogy] is crucial to psychological health and self-knowledge, in Jung’s theory.

“The less we understand of what our fathers and forefathers sought,” he comments, “the less we understand ourselves, and thus we help with all our might to rob the individual of his roots and his guiding instincts, so that he

becomes a particle in the mass [...]”
(Jung, MDR).

It is in humanity’s best interest, then, to reconnect to this past, as the “ancestral psyches” within each of us can shed light on contemporary circumstances and situations (Jung, MDR, p.237). It is equally important, however, not to become lost in these past images, not to be “imprisoned in these memories” (MDR, p.320). <http://jungiansociety.org/images/e-journal/Volume-8/Lu-2012.pdf>

Representational Demands

The family tree is a nexus of historical and underlying mythological narratives which give birth to additional interconnecting narratives. Science offers some alternatives to supernatural appearances in dialogic inner speech. The brain’s conversations with itself can now be mapped, but may be more than that.

Just because some people experience pathological auditory hallucinations doesn’t mean all audialization is pathological.

We naturally can form a mental concept of a sound impression without ‘external’ agency. Some people can imagine whole symphonies. Information is made more comprehensible by

perspective switching and rendering it as sound.

Findings show that forms of inner speech exist which can be both phenomenologically and neurologically distinguished from the silent commentary of a single inner voice. Contributions of inner speech and forms of mental imagery create vivid inner dialogues. Even Genesis describes a creation of spoken words rather than acts. <http://scan.oxfordjournals.org/content/11/1/110.full>

“Inner speech has been implicated in important aspects of normal and atypical cognition, including the development of auditory hallucinations. neural activation for inner speech involves conversations (‘dialogic inner speech’) with single-speaker scenarios (‘monologic inner speech’). Generation of dialogic (compared with monologic)

scenarios was associated with a widespread bilateral network including left and right superior temporal gyri, precuneus, posterior cingulate and left inferior and medial frontal gyri. Activation associated with cognitive and dialogic scenarios overlapped in areas of right posterior temporal cortex previously linked to mental state representation.”

“Inner speech is a complex and varied phenomenon. In behavioral studies, everyday inner speech is often reported to be involved in self-awareness, past and future thinking and emotional reflection, while in cognitive research, inner speech appears to fulfill a variety of mnemonic and regulatory functions. Inner speech may reflect the endpoint of a developmental process in which social dialogues, mediated by language, are internalized as verbal thought. Following from this view, the subjective experience of inner speech will mirror the external experience of communication and often have a dialogic structure, involving the co-articulation of differing perspectives on reality and, in some cases, representation of others’ voices.“

Time alters us and our perceptions. **Many experience the bittersweet feeling of arriving in the future without being able to tell our past self how things turned out among the hypothetical conversations that play out in our**

heads. Perhaps all our ancestors are ‘talking’ but nobody is listening. And even if we do, we may be frustrated others are unable to relate to the experience.

On the other hand, the plot of our life, flaws, and anxieties may begin to make more sense. Awareness of our perspective enlarges, personally and historically. We realize each ancestor has a life as vivid and complex as our own, and that it takes a long time to forge a deep relationship.

Family Battlecry

Genealogy is a feeling and a challenge, a lost art of ancestors returning with a vengeance. The mottoes on heraldic arms are actually battlecries. Just as the Scots shouted their clan genealogies before battle, our family tree is a declaration of our intention to ‘continue to be’ and to continue in our traditional ways venerating our forebears. **They recited their clan genealogies in Gaelic, shouted their war cries, then attacked.**

Clans are family groups and their sept branches are all blood relatives. **Highland families had a traditional *seannachaidh*, who could recite the descent of that particular family and state its relationship to other families in the larger clan.**

Consanguinity

For 2000 years in Alba, the *Senchai*, *Seannachaidh*, or *Sennachie* [**sen-uh-kee**] have woven the clan’s

present members with the history, honor, deeds and lineage of those who have gone before them. These loyal and respected clansmen are appointed by the clan chief as professional storytellers of family genealogy, history, and legend.

Both a Pict and Gael tradition, this ancient position is a Genealogist, Historian, Bard, Orator, and tribal Herald.

The office of *Ri-seannachie* had supreme jurisdiction in matters of genealogy, and the duty of preserving the Royal pedigree. Each clan had its own Druid priests and judges under the chief Druid of the Pictish High King.

Disembodied Information

In the 'Cult of the Severed Head' in Provance, a head carved in stone was the repository of the soul and could live on and continue to speak to the living and make prophecies. Such heads represented a medium for communication with the Other World, hinting at an older Celtic

mythos and tradition — cult of relics, cult of the head.

Bran's severed head continued to speak to his followers who returned it to Britain. **King Arthur dug up the head, declaring the country would be protected only by his great strength. Brân the Blessed was like the Arthurian Fisher King, the keeper of the Holy Grail. He has a mortal wound in the leg (Brân's wound was in his foot) but stays alive in his mystical castle due to the effects of the Grail, waiting to be healed by Percival. In the Welsh version of Perceval, Peredur son of Efwarg visits a mysterious castle, but finds only a severed human head, not the Grail. Some said the Grail had the power to restore the fallen, like Brân's cauldron.**

In Norse myth, Mímir (Old Norse, "The rememberer, the wise one") is renowned for his knowledge and wisdom but is beheaded during the

Æsir-Vanir War. Odin embalms the head of Mímir with herbs so that it would not rot, and spoke charms over it, which gave it the power to speak to him and reveal secrets to him. He keeps Mímir's head with him because it divulges information from other worlds. It recites secret knowledge and counsel to him.

But cults of Southern France may not correlate with those of Britain or the Neolithic era and elsewhere as a coherent practice. Skull relics are still worshiped there with candles. The medieval town Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume has a basilica and crypt dedicated to Mary Magdalene said to contain the blackened relic of her skull.

Neolithic Jericho practiced burial of loved ones under their houses. Sometimes the severed head was removed and the skull buried after defleshing. **FACES were reconstructed with plaster to retain the identity of the family member. Individual facial features**

were made with red and black paint. Some eye orbits were inlaid with shells and the skulls were decorated with hair and mustaches.

The notion of a ‘cult of the head’ remains controversial, but it is a fact we imagine it was so. This powerful trope brings to mind cults of martyred saints who carry their immortalized heads. The Templars allegedly worshiped of the severed head of John the Baptist they called Baphomet, who talked to them and possessed “divine wisdom.” Personifications of disembodied metaphysical entities are an ancient equivalent of media ‘talking heads’ as culture leaders.

Soul-Talk

What we can take from this practice is the primacy of the psyche for personification of the unconscious – the multiple personifications or perspectives of psyche. We spontaneously personify psyche all the time, without effort

since it is a psychological necessity. Personifying allows the image to work on us — a potential way of knowing what is hidden in the heart. A grounded ego uses personification for growth.

To personify something from the unconscious is to treat it like a person with a sort of inherent autonomy motivated by purposes and intentions. We even lend it a voice and bond with it. **Personifying in archetypal psychology is “the spontaneous experiencing, envisioning and speaking of the configurations of existence as psychic presences.”** (Re-Visioning, 12)

Personifying is a way of making subjective experience, passionate identification, and indwelling images more tangible through conversation and relationship in symbolic form. Hillman (1975) called it “an epistemology of the heart, a thought-mode of feeling.” It imagines what’s inside, outside, and

makes this content alive, personal, and even divine.

We personify that which we love. This is the natural expression of mythic consciousness to mythic consciousness. Illustrious ancestors aren't just statues of greatness. Through this spontaneous activity of psyche we enter myth "as if" it were real.

Such non-directive thinking or "soul-talk" is the key to understanding archetypes as both guides and different parts of ourselves. "Loving is a way of knowing, and for loving to know, it must personify. Personifying is thus a way of knowing, especially knowing what is invisible, hidden in the heart," Hillman says in **Re-Visioning.**

"Personifying is a way of being in the world and experiencing the world as a psychological field, where persons are given with events, so that events are experiences that touch us, move us, appeal to us." "...all the figures and feelings of the psyche are wholly 'mine,' while at the same time recognizing that these figures and feelings are free of my control and

identity, not 'mine' at all.” (Hillman)

“By means of personifications my sense of person becomes more vivid for I carry with me at all times the protection of my daimones: the images of dead people who mattered to me, of ancestral figures of my stock, cultural and historical persons of renown and people of fable who provide exemplary images—a wealth of guardians. They guard my fate, guide it, probably are it. “Perhaps—who knows,” writes Jung, “these eternal images are what men mean by fate.” We need this help, for who can carry his fate alone?” (Hillman)

Hillman notes that personifying is a creative function. Whether it is done pathologically or intentionally, it functions to “save the diversity and autonomy of the psyche from

domination by any single power, whether this domination be by a figure of archetypal awe in one's surroundings or by one's own egomania. ' (Re-Visioning, 32)

In the family tree we don't require the physical relic to honor the deceased, including the heads of the household. "To keep the light alive in the darkness, that's the point, and only there your candle makes sense." (Jung, Letters Vol. II, Pp. 133-138)

Jung stated, "It was as if my tools were activated by my libido. But there must be tools there to be activated, that is, animated images, images with libido in them; then the additional libido that one supplies brings them up to the surface.

*If I had not given this additional libido with which to bring them to the surface, the activity would have gone on just the same, but would have sucked my energy down into the unconscious. **By putting libido into it, one can increase the speaking power of the unconscious.**" (Jung, 1925 Seminar, Lecture 5, Pages 37-45).*

The Big Tree

Doing one's own genealogy, even if it has been done before, is the best way to integrate and digest it. The

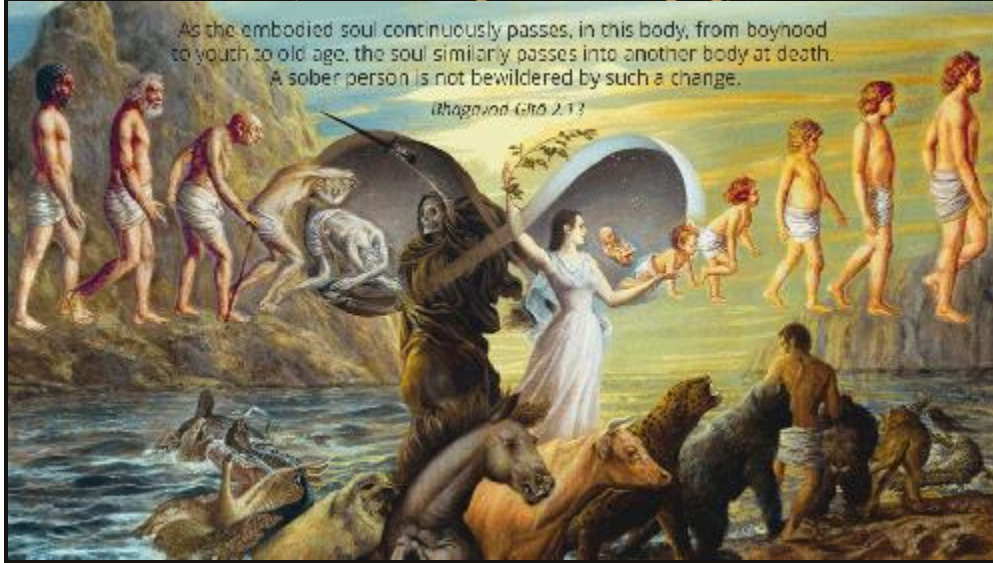
ancestors do not really live today but are not fully dead either as living images. We can ensoul our growing branches best in the context in which they arise.

Relying on the work of others removes us a step from the core of the process; it might stimulate imagery, but it's more like reading about a journey than making it oneself. Much of the nuance and functional relations are lost — the chaos, the struggle, the blind alleys. The healing work requires direct engagement for familiarity with the holistic image as well as the details of each family encountered.

Arguably, the family tree is the necessary foundation to psychological integration. **We begin a long, slow circulation among the many branches of our tree. Jung says, “The circulation is not merely movement in a circle, but means on the one hand the marking off of the sacred precinct, and on the other, the fixation and concentration.” (CW 13, Alchemical Studies, Pg 25).**

The circulation of blood in the arteries mirrors the circulation of sap in the tree, and the circularity of cosmological or metaphysical thought — analogical thinking that links the macrocosm and microcosm, above and below. The ancestral field has

an immediate effect, both healing and challenging, on our whole lives.



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Approaches to Genealogy

Your own *BOOK OF THE DEAD* is written in your DNA. Deciphering its inherent meaning is a Quest for the Grail and the journey of psychological transformation. We instinctively engage in semi-conscious conversations with these ephemeral figures from our past and find, perhaps to our surprise, that they inform us with a hitherto unknown wisdom or perplex us with unsolvable riddles.

A pedigree is a symbolic hologram of our intertwined histories and structure — interacting waves upon waves of generations in the ocean of humanity. Because the ancestors number literally in the thousands, we come to understand the transformation is within the unfolding therapeutic practice, rather than contained only in each of the historical or fictional figures.

Genealogical research is a complex process that uses historical records and sometimes genetic analysis to demonstrate kinship. Reliable conclusions are based on the quality of sources, ideally original records, the information within those sources. Ideally evidence is drawn, directly or indirectly from primary or firsthand information.

In many instances, genealogists must skillfully assemble indirect or circumstantial evidence to build a case for identity and kinship. All evidence and conclusions, together with the documentation that supports them, is then assembled to create a cohesive genealogy or family history.

Genealogists begin their research by collecting family documents and stories. This creates a foundation for documentary research, which involves examining and evaluating historical records for evidence about ancestors and other relatives, their kinship ties, and the events that occurred in their lives. As a rule, genealogists begin with the present and work backward in time.

- Rational
- Spiritual
- Psychological
- Psychic
- Legendary
- Mythological
- Irrational
- Delusional

Some approaches are overtly Christian, or they may have religious overtones even for a non-religious person. Others will come to the subject with a pagan background or an affinity for the ancient ways. Paradoxically, we find ancestors listed from other ethnicities and religions.

The Prophet Mohammad often appears in Western royal lines, as do the emperors of the Han Dynasty, Attila the Hun, Turks, Khazars, and Xiongnu shamans of Siberia. We share roots with the Basque, Moors, Turks, Pashtun, and sub-Saharan Africa. A balanced approach to the heritage will not obsess on particular areas of the lineage to the exclusion of others, nor veer off into cos-play like fantasies of legendary beings. Genealogy shows your multi-ethnic heritage as well as a range of spiritual beliefs.

'Messianic complex' describes the phenomenon where individuals claim self-awareness of their proclaimed role as a 'savior'. Like those who claim to be Jesus, non-religious "Magdalene addicts" are prone to channeling her, or even claiming to be her. But most of these channelings are highly idealized and full of truisms.

The phenomenon is a complicated psychological problematic developed within a cultural group. In Jungian psychology a complex is a cluster of psychological energy that centers around a particular element that has developed partly through the disposition of a personality and partly through life experience (Jacobi). These energy clusters act as partial personalities within the psyche and are often unconscious and somewhat autonomous.

They don't reflect the deeply Gnostic belief in the evil of matter, the drive to perfection, or the demonic dominion of the Archons. Or, if they do embrace such ideas, they likely heard it on some internet show from a highly idiosyncratic speaker, invariably trying to sell his or her book. Somehow they all have a theory. But no one has made good on such claims yet.

They may be the victims of misguided inner authority. We can pick up misconceptions and self-delusions in the search for the soul. The faddish appearance of such identifications (a lived trance-state) is a social trend, and the meme-like nature of the Feminine proclamations reveal that this is a collective phenomena, not true individuation. It shows the collective influence of pop culture and the archetype on the psyche, no matter what you call "Her".

A relationship with the archetype can be primitive or sophisticated. James Hillman expands the concept of complex by adding a concept called personification to individual complexes, treating complexes as characters or entities within the psyche, with the proviso that it is not meant to be literal.

Jung's complexes and James Hillman's concept of personification permit the unconscious images to converse with the individual psyche in 'imaginal dialogue'. They manage to incorporate feelings, imagination, and metaphor, which other sciences reject.

Sociological identification, including intense physical reactions, and relationships between the body and the psyche, can be independent of linear historical inheritance in a culture that is a product of ideas rather than location or blood inheritance and also experimental. Emergent imaginal content is metaphor for thinking about experience, including experiences tied to intense belief structures.

When you don't know what a symbol is, it appears split-off, as 'other'. It attempts to enter consciousness in the expressive arts. Collectively, spiritual conflict is worldview warfare – irreconcilable differences in belief, including the structure of the Cosmos. But only creative emotional and cognitive comprehension of the inherent meaning of experience leads to individuation and self-realization – the Grail.

Jung spoke of such creativity:

"The creative process has feminine quality, and the creative work arises from unconscious depths—we might say, from the realm of the mothers. Whenever the creative force predominates, human life is ruled and molded by the unconscious as against the active will, and the conscious ego is swept along on a subterranean current, being nothing more than a helpless observer of events.

The work in process becomes the poet's fate and determines his psychic development. It is not Goethe who creates Faust, but Faust which creates Goethe....The archetypal image of the wise man, the saviour or

redeemer, lies buried and dormant in man's unconscious since the dawn of culture; it is awakened whenever the times are out of joint and a human society is committed to a serious error.

When people go astray they feel the need of a guide or teacher or even of the physician. These primordial images are numerous, but do not appear in the dreams of individuals or in works of art until they are called into being by the waywardness of the general outlook.

When conscious life is characterized by one-sidedness and by a false attitude, then they are activated-one might say, 'instinctively'-and come to light in the dreams of individuals and the visions of artists and seers, thus restoring the psychic equilibrium of the epoch." (Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul).

"Every creative person is a duality or a synthesis of contradictory aptitudes. On the one side he is a human being with a personal life, while on the other side he is an impersonal, creative process...The artist is not a person endowed with free will who seeks his own ends, but one who allows art to realize its purposes through him. As a human being he may have moods and a will and personal aims, but as an artist he is 'man' in a higher sense-he is 'collective man'-one who carries and shapes the unconscious, psychic life of mankind. To perform this difficult office it is sometimes necessary for him to sacrifice happiness and everything that makes life worth living for the ordinary human being."

Worldview

Emotionally appealing truths are sandwiched into idiosyncratic notions ranging from the speculative to the fantastical, and trap many individuals like flypaper, because our minds love a good story. The brain feeds on stories, but the wrong stories just lead us down the garden path into ancient worlds that never happened, and mythic scenarios that were never meant to be taken literally. Accepting such beliefs uncritically is precisely the opposite of what Jung recommended as individuation.

Such false beliefs tend to cluster around an individual's personal issues and complexes, but are mistaken for and confounded with historical, philosophical and scientific 'reality'. Much of the "self-delusion" can be linked to exposure to memes functioning as emotional strange attractors or cultural artifacts or fallout,, as well as pre- and pseudo-scientific notions of by-gone centuries, and lack of understanding of standards and discernment.

The self-narrative may not match the reality. It's a truism that mediocrity (gaps and gaffs in awareness) boasts the loudest. Through hysteria, lack of critical judgment, and naive enthusiasm, a false idea can be hyped by the mainstream media to the point of not only looking entirely plausible, but even certain.

A world view is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world. Everyone has a world view, whether he can explain it or not. It can be likened to a pair of glasses through which one views the world. It is important to have the right prescription, or reality will be distorted. Modern man is faced with a supermarket of world views; all of them claim to represent reality,

but they are points of view about reality – mental constructs, beliefs.

To construct our own worldview we are still confronted with the old formula - the cosmological creative and destructive cycles of time. Cosmology is the study of the origin and nature of the universe. Ontology studies the nature of being as being and existence. We have to fit the pieces together from epistemologies and psychodynamics into some sort of cumulative understanding. Some basic epistemological agreement about the phenomena under examination is needed. Metaphysics abstracts universal conceptions. Some of these grand narratives are more fanciful than others.

We can be sincerely convinced of the utterly wrong. Why do we continue to accommodate the irrelevant and easily falsifiable? Are we conscientious about our own self-delusions or simply unconsciously immersed in them due to a delusional perspective on our own misguided “gnosis” and obsessions with misguided theoretical perspectives? Even conscience is no ineffable guide to inner authority. There is no shortage of new myths to capture our attention. Dreams tell us who we are, collectively and individually.

If Inner Authority is linked to authentic power and wisdom, we need to examine our personal interaction with inner wisdom figures (archetypes) and values in order to create lives of positive action that arise from deep inner wisdom. Most of us shirk such important inner work, substituting a fantasy of transformation and mindfulness. Delusional self-improvement projects are aimed at adorning the ego.

People claim to hear messages that ring in their hearts as truth, or ‘resonate’ with material that confirms their own tacit or recognized beliefs, but most it originates in cultural conditioning and memetic patterning. All we hold is a piece of the Mystery. Buzzwords such as True Nature, intentionality, and mis-identified integrity compound the situation. Premature spiritual fixation can just as readily be a form of transcendental escapism.

Both the strategies of “transcendence” and “reduction” are expressions of bad faith – i.e., forms of self-deception and escapism that seek to deny the realities of the human existential situation. Self-delusion may be self-evident but few give themselves a reality check on it and doing so is compounded by our own psychological blindspots. This is a form of escapism or neo-mythology.

The depth psychological approach is about psyche, which brings with it a sense of the sacred. It is a way of incorporation that assimilates what has been considered the “Not-I” into the core of being. It is informed by the Hero’s Journey and many of the iconic tropes of the royal genealogical lines. Archetypal psychology has experience dealing with parental images and ego development, as well as life passages that might intertwine with genealogical interest and the predictable crises such as childbearing, mid-life, aging and confronting mortality.

Jungians claim that, “A psychologically-oriented approach to spirituality and a new God-image are emerging alongside the Judeo-Christian tradition. This form of spirituality expresses itself from the depths of the psyche,

and stresses personal experience rather than belief or sacred texts. Depth psychology gives us a contemporary way to express this evolving step in the history of religious consciousness. Sometimes a new language enables things to be said that have yet to be articulated, and depth psychology is providing this voice.”

Traditional ideas about God and religion do not always express the individual’s personal spirituality, because one may experience the sacred in ways that are not fully articulated in the traditional teachings. For people who are committed to a traditional religious practice, depth psychology can deepen their relationship to the tradition and their understanding of its archetypal underpinning. (Corbett)

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Preface

Facing Your Ancestors

Descent From Antiquity

Families are bound together eternally. The power of genealogy is the power of story. This is the story of the family and the diverse characters that populate the many branches of our family tree. These are stories that matter, that preceded your corporeal existence. This story reveals how things came to be as they are — as you are.

Genealogy is a story we tell ourselves about ourselves. The stories of our ancestors open us to deeper experience. Our personal story is embedded in our larger inherited story and culture. Genealogy helps us connect more deeply with our unique story and meaning in life beyond a personal story. It is a mythic archaeology that connects us with that which has given us shape, opening a path to transformation.

Genealogy is the narrative of a pre-modern world. It has its roots in the ancient theogony of gods and goddesses, divine-king lists and *The Bible*. Ancestral gods and ancestral religions developed over eons and are as old as particular branches of mankind – gods of the blood. Astrologically determined gods and goddesses can often be found at the roots of dynastic houses. Royal houses claimed power through descent from ancestral gods.

Gods are difficult to destroy or conceal. Fictitious lines of descent blend indistinguishably with medieval forgeries. Some divinities may originally have been historical persons or war-chiefs, now lost to the mists of pre-history. Seedlines codify ancient ethnic identity and empires. Later, royals added them to their lines to bolster their claims to divine rule and the founding of thrones. Genealogy was a geographical and spiritual compass.

When Rome Christianized in the fourth century, it cut off the mythic corpus, and demoted gods to human status and allegories. The medieval period filled the gap with tales of the Holy Grail. The pagan content of mythology was codified in the mid-fourteenth century in Boccaccio's *Genealogy*. Later, the Carolingians used such works to justify their right to rule, also citing the spurious Donation of Constantine, which the Church used to justify the appointment of rulers.

Traditional genealogy considered these mythological inclusions best-practice, yet it may be more of a psychic than historical "fact" – the product of a collision between pagan and Christian societies and their reconciliation. Historical time required a linear descent, even if it masked pagan roots at the theological fringe. Even if medieval genealogies connecting ancient kings to Adam are pure invention, they retain certain psychic values that are part of the archaeology of the collective unconscious.

The Tree of Life

Our personal genealogy is a process of self-discovery and self-knowledge with its own procedures and measures of 'truth.' It seems ironic that technology is allowing us to retrieve such essential aspects of our own humanity. Curiously, genealogy is the second most popular online subject, second only to sex, much like sex precedes procreation.

Your family tree is an encyclopedia of human nature. Genealogy doesn't give our lives context; it *is* the context and material ground of our existence. The Tree of Life carries the evolution of the world, gives life to the universe, and understanding or consciousness. Life originates from and disappears back into the Tree. The Kabbalistic Tree of Life is a symbol of the process of creation and inner wholeness.

Jung said (CW5, para321) that, "The tree of life may have been, in the first instance, a fruit-bearing genealogical tree, and hence a kind of tribal other." It was a central symbol of spiritual unity, wisdom, beauty, love, strength, and the power of the Universe rooted in the divine. Nietzsche pointed out that as with both people and trees, "The more one seeks to rise into height and light, the more vigorously do one's roots struggle earthward, downward into the dark, the the deep – into evil."

The tree is an early symbol of spiritual development and our own immortal character, the living structure of our inner self – transcendence to lofty heights. Below the surface, the subtext remains, “Who *is* this person having these experiences?” We are literally and symbolically the “fruit” of the Tree of Life. We need a powerful new story for our relationship with the Earth: we are, indeed, part of nature and not separate from it in any way. Genealogy helps ground us in this paradigm and helps develop our sense of deep time and rootedness in contemporary life with a global perspective.

The World Tree

Within 5-7 generations our family tree meets up and merges with the World Tree. This is especially true for American Colonial descent, where the progenitors and their droplines are well-known. Once you research back to your Gateway Ancestors who immigrated, you can easily find the lines that connect back as far as professional genealogists have determined and merge even further with fictional, legendary and mythological characters.

Outside of genealogy, the World Tree is often related to shamanism. As a link to ancestral spirits, it is an integral part of the shamanic cosmology. The World Tree is a bridge that connects heaven, earth and underworld. When a shaman “climbs the tree,” he or she ascends into the Upper World and the creative sources of power – to the gods, to the zenith of heaven. The philosophical tree represents a sublimation of our spirit. The shaman receives intercessory messages.

In some ways the World Tree is identical with the shaman. Creatures can appear in the Tree, including snakes, birds, goats, and other totems and signs. The World Tree is a tree of initiation, ordeals, astral or mystic flight, vision quest, and fate or destiny. The shaman mediates between humanity and the spirit world, and in a simpler way, the genealogist performs a similar symbolic service, especially when interpreting a pedigree. To be cut off from the sacred tree is to be cut off from the spirit world, a condition which is likened to ‘illness’ and requires healing for loss of soul.

The serpents in our Tree are the individual lines of descent from various common ancestors. They lead us to question who and what we are, what we know, and what we thought we knew about our roots. They offer us Knowledge. They are part of the larger truth – that we are born and we die – and we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Yet, Jung said we fear our serpent as we fear the numinosum. He concludes, “All we have to give the world and God is ourselves as we are.”

Good and evil unite in the growth of the Tree. It combines masculine phallic representations with feminine nurture and growth. We are the serpent of wisdom, the union of good and evil, in our own Tree. Genealogy is a ritual in which we climb up and down through the branches of our tree in deep remembrance, an exercise in ‘time travel’ that expands our consciousness.

Mircea Eliade and Joseph Campbell wrote exhaustively on this Tree as the center of the world, a vertical World Axis or dimension that symbolizes the capacity for non-ordinary experience, including shamanic trance that

reinforces community links with cosmic consciousness. The Sacred Tree as such a center is potentially everywhere. The drum, like the heartbeat of the community is a means of climbing the tree and contacting the spirits. Campbell called the cosmic tree a wish-fulfilling, fruitful symbol of fertility, regeneration, and immortality.

Continuity

We need to know that we have a history of continuity that is profound. Our bloodline is our connection to Creation. We follow the steps created by the bodies and minds of the past. Our artform goes back to antiquity and is the measure of man. In this way we penetrate our own unknown origins and the culture of our ancestors. We think, feel, remember, and imagine. Memory is a form of imagination.

As existentially powerful as science or religion, genealogy can expand our worldview and help us weave our own coherent narrative. It helps us unravel our emotional inheritance. Sometimes what the forebearers did somehow becomes our story. We can re-imagine the whole planet as our ancestral lands. It helps us grasp how we are holistically embedded in a vast seamless web of life, a world alive with cosmic spirit, as counterpoint to death, tragedy, destruction, and despair.

Interpretation

Reading our genealogical lines is ultimately a heuristic process – one requiring deep research and circumspect interpretation. But, connecting with the vitality of our lineage – the living sap of the Tree – elevates the mind and sublimates the thought. It is less about a “me generation” story than a grand “story of us” that ranges beyond illusions of time, space, and ego. We can cultivate the Elysian Fields of our ancestors to good effect. Thus, genealogy can be a transformative art. The Grail is a Mystery and the search for it a Quest for self-actualization, a way of initiation.

If we are too literal about it, we see only a string of corpses. But if we truly assimilate our heritage, we alter it creatively and give life to it through our individual understanding. We can bring our genealogy into meaningful dialogue with artistic and cultural disciplines. Genealogy is arguably one of the most “grounding” activities in which we can participate. From this fertile ground springs the acorn of the soul. It’s an old Platonic and Jungian idea that the soul picks the father and mother of the child...and thereby the direct ancestors.

Deliteralization

The ancestors are the symbolic and material ground of our being. Psyche is not in us; we are in it which is everywhere. Jung pointed out in *Letters Vol. II* that without psyche we can neither know nor believe. We learn to center, reflect, and listen to voices within. The Great Work of genealogy is a small price to pay for turning the unconscious lead of uprootedness into the psychological gold of knowing one’s true origins.

We live in relative autonomy but remain enmeshed in the epigenetic memories of our particular family. Our rich descent is about NOW, as much or more than it is about what has gone before. Our personal mythology is shaped

in our formative years. The ancient myths live on in the stories we tell about our own lives. The old gods are there in spirit in our triumphs and struggles. Myths pertain to the primordial gods and goddesses, while legend is about historical human heroes.

Our life stories are personal myths that emulate the characters and themes found in old myths. We act on mythic archetypes without knowing we are doing it. We choose our identity as well as the shape and direction of our lives through such such scripts. When we resonate with our ancestors, it helps us make sense of our own lives.

We are cast in the natural form and and semblance of those who came before us. We must each answer the call of the Ancestors to the adventure of self-discovery in our own way. Group approaches generally devolve into the lowest common denominator, as Jung describes. We can approach our lineage in the spirit of individuation. In the genealogical matrix of personalities, each ancestor has a potential effect on our consciousness. Naturally, that potential will not be realized in full because many of our ancestral lines will stub out sooner or later in the dead ends of unknown individuals and lost family lines.

The Royal We

Because they were recorded better for historical and other reasons, noble and royal lines are more available. Anyone tracing to royal roots will meet and share the same medieval pool of progenitors – the “usual suspects.” It is only natural to identify with some more than others, depending on how we resonate with their stories, for good or evil. In *Letters Vol. II*, Jung said, “We think it is enough to discover new things, but we don’t realize that knowing more demands a corresponding development of morality.”

We may find ourselves in a *participation mystique*, or project our feelings onto them, or even become ‘possessed’ or fascinated by certain individuals and their qualities or deeds. For example, *The Da Vinci Code* fad has produced a group of fantasists riveted to alternative stories of Mary Magdalene and Jesus, while ignoring even their most recent ancestors, who are probably as, or more influential psychologically-speaking. In the worst cases such unconscious identification can lead to dissociation, ‘possession,’ and dysfunctionality. In an ideal world, genealogy supports maintaining our basic integrity, giving new meaning to “knowing who we are,” and how deeply we are tied to self, world, and others.

Some people even develop compensatory personas based solely on such spurious connections. Our interpretations of our genealogy may lead to a lowering (*abaissment*) of consciousness, while others expand awareness. But we cannot retrieve the worldviews of pre-literate, agrarian or feudal societies to solve today’s problems of the information age and global society. The problem compounds when we try to grasp the functional realities of ancient civilizations and cultures. What we do experience is our fantasy images of what those individuals and times might have been like. Images are the basic experience of psyche. These images are our *prima materia*.

Personal Mythology

In *The Interior Dialogue* (2009), Stanley Krippner describes personal mythology as "... an approach to personal transformation using the development of participants' personal stories about existential human issues for self healing and personal growth. There are also cultural, institutional, ethnic, and familial myths which influence our personal myths.

We use our stories as personal myths. Often they can be found through our dreams, where we are often informed long before we know intellectually. There are four factors that influence personal myths: biology, culture, interpersonal experiences, and transpersonal experiences and how to work with them. By identifying, evaluating, and transforming dysfunctional myths, beliefs, and worldviews, and working with them you can transform them."

We live in a time of many competing mythologies. Genealogy can help us clarify personal, characterological, and familial issues. Our genealogy becomes a psychologically constructed reality. We have no real experience of ancestral habits of thought and expression nor by-gone eras of strife, order and disorder. Sentimentality, nostalgia, and confabulation are poor substitutes. Others spout idiosyncratic doctrines or cliché prophecies based on their so-called supernatural connections. Such raw mythologizing is a far cry from the aesthetic pursuit of personal mythology, as described by Krippner, and others.

Your Genealogical exploration is an archetypal Journey during which you travel back into the worlds inhabited by your ancestors. Some people are rationally motivated to find and preserve their lineage for the family. Others are emotionally driven by conscious and unconscious needs. Those who take a religious approach will emphasize legendary 'holy blood' aspects. Those who are fascinated with myths and tales may embrace them as 'real.'

We can often not put a face to our ancestors, but we can give them back their names, and thus FACE our ancestors in the most direct way possible, with honor and respect.

We create our own ultimate narrative of our genealogical story based on our self-image, beliefs and worldview. Because the 'spiritual' romantics embrace connections others consider 'false' or non-historical, the rationalist genealogists have moved toward removing or cutting off lines they consider 'fictional'. But they cannot cut off the deep root of the collective unconscious for which these ancient ideas are 'real.' For example, immortality may not be 'real', but our unconscious behaves as if it is so. The unconscious believes in immortality, even if we don't.

There is a simple solution to this polarization. Taking a psychological approach to the family and world tree de-literalizes the legendary and mythic lines. We can simply retain their fructifying and life-giving potential without making them into unsupportable 'facts.' Jung said, "mythological motifs are 'facts;' they never change; only theories change," (Letters II, p. 191). We can't deny their existence by pruning them from the World Tree.

Archetypal psychology has worked with such material to provide a viable model for approaching the integration of these ancient figures into our conscious lives. If we apply the methods, we cannot fail to discover archetypal motifs. It isn't a system as much as a way of "seeing through."

If we apply depth psychology methods conscientiously, we can avoid most of the literalization, projection, and ego inflation that affects many amateur genealogists who fail to comprehend the material in a way that reflects best-practice. Instead our approach to the "as if" real portions of the pedigree is poetic and deliteralized, and doesn't seek to retrieve the past as much as live more fully with it. We can "evoke" and "constellate" such material within the hermetically sealed process of Jungian Genealogy.

In one sense, all these lives are yours, but not in the individual new age sense of past lives. You will meet characters of all psychological types, and perhaps re-member your passed lives: villains and heroes, the famous and infamous, saints and sinners, priests and warriors, fair maidens, bastards and bold knights, kings and queens, genius and psychopaths, and a host of supporting ancestors. And they will all be your gr-grandparents.

We may judge, deny, or reject some ancestors while having an instinctive rapport with others. They help us reveal our shadow traits as well as self-actualizing capacities. In most cases they lived in a far more challenging world in which to survive, much less thrive. Their lives can inform and inspire us. The trail back through history can be followed in our lines of descent. History becomes personal. Your sense of time, depth, and intimacy expands. Our whole being, our whole body is an intergenerational as well as personal memory down to the cellular, genetic, and epigenetic level.

If to 'worship' is to show honor or give devotional attention or adoring regard, then in genealogy we can 'worship' our ancestors, without taking that too literally. We can respect, honor, and attend without being consumed in the labyrinthine matrix of the dead or in their many conflicts, infidelities, and vile deeds. We can view the sketchier, legendary parts of our pedigree with an imaginal eye.

Deities and Demigods

This is not concretized personal genealogy, over burdened by the literalized personal conflicts and traumas of the family system. Neither a lie nor a fantasy, it is our underlying archetypal genealogy, without the suffocating pressures of personal genealogy. This allows psychic movement within the archetypal possibilities and situations behind their images. Are Uranus, Aphrodite, Hercules, Isis, and Odin really our "ancestors"? Such deities and demigods represent our transpersonal potential. Are they really in our blood, or the roots of the psyche?

This is the traditional way of showing forth the ancient shared connection with our common roots — with the collective unconscious, including the gods and goddesses that appear at the foundation of our genealogies. We learn the family trees of godforms in school, but not their specific relationships to our drop lines. Many of the deities are related in more than one way. Stories of gods and creation are not just about the past. They are about us now.

Ancestral Braiding

Our ancestral lines braid together through marriages and migration. Our histories are woven together in cross-cousin and foreign marriage bridges. Long royal genealogies include nearly every war and clash of cultures throughout history. You will have progenitors on both sides of many battles. There will be persecutors and victims, even genocides. While bordering on factual our historical gleanings may or may not be accurate.

We may find it hard to absorb that whole timeline of human turmoil at such a personal level. It takes time to digest and integrate as the actual stories of your ancestors, especially when they fade into myth and legend. They may not be historical facts, but psyche has its own facts and effects on our beliefs and behaviors. Genealogy reflects the psychic facts of our protracted existence. Psychic realities are expressions of soul cultivated by imagination.

Tracing one's lines becomes a meditational activity. Finding the homes and stories of ancestors helps us flesh them out and imaginally travel back to their times and places. Many of these simple tasks have the ritualistic effect of helping us grow closer to the ancestors – to those whose names we can now readily recite and place.

One's entire pedigree symbolizes the totality of the Self and its transcendent nature. But no one can integrate the wholeness of the entire self because that would limit it. Jung said, "in reality its experience is unlimited and endless." Biologically, we do not contain or express the genes of all of our ancestors, and our specific combination that does manifest is what makes us unique individuals.

Ritual, Dreams, and Imagination

We can expand our awareness further with 'dream genealogy.' Jung said, "In the deepest sense, we all dream not of ourselves, but out of what lies between us and the other." We can gather information about our ancestors in our reveries, dreams and shamanic journeys. 'Big dreams' can reveal elusive family history. By entering the world of the ancestors, we tap our deep unconscious, collective memories, intuition, vision, and wisdom. Lucid Dreaming and Dream Walking have been used by some to open ancestral connections.

Rituals, such as a simple ancestral altar, to more elaborate enactments or recitals are an option. More than faith, habit or even magic, Jung saw rites as psychologically effective symbolic acts, "giving expression to the archetypal expectation of the unconscious." "Rites give satisfaction to the collective and numinous aspects of the moment, beyond their purely personal significance." (Letters II, p.208-210) Acts of imagination can also be seen as rituals that enrich our perceptions.

We can edit or amend our family story as we gain a more accurate understanding our lines and the past. We are a ripple on the ocean of this past experience. We can move systematically back in time or take quantum leaps into other realities. Other optional methods include hypnosis or even word association. Those with "Second Sight" will draw from those experiences while others try to foster that ability. Perhaps one of the most

productive techniques we can use is the dialogical method, such as that outlined by Ira Progoff in his works on journaling.

Some seek answers to questions, while others seek only the Mystery in the darkness. We connect with something greater than ourselves, finding more than we know. Art integrates the material and spiritual. Artistic expression in all forms is another way to let the ancestors in, to give them a voice or presence – to receive a blessing or healing. Genealogy is an evolving construction of our inner reality.

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[Whole Person Transformation](#)

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“Individual consciousness is only the flower and the fruit of a season, sprung from the perennial rhizome beneath the earth; and it would find itself in better accord with the truth if it took the existence of the rhizome into its calculations. For the root matter is the mother of all things.” – C.G. Jung, Symbols of Transformation

Whole Person Transformation

A perennial theme of humankind, transformation as a basic change in character, cognition, and direction has been explored in religion, psychology and art. Rites of passage, as a summons to wisdom, can include a psychological and sacred dimension. It addresses the

question of how a person finds a personal path worthy of the soul. We're taught to strive for this mythic "thing" at the physical, mental, and spiritual level. Transformation is thorough, radical and dramatic — a power that can be deployed for good or ill.

Classically, 'transformation' describes the path from initiation to liberation from social conformity, helping us let go of the worn out to find deep dialogue with psyche, adventure and renewed life. The process is mediated by symbols and imagery. If they arise organically ego is transformed; if they are imposed ego is hijacked. Solitude is the furnace of authentic transformation. Personal growth is an individual process of self-determination. In this sense, it is incompatible with group programming. But the real self as divergent perceptions and dynamic understanding of interrelationships is dangerous to tradition, the church, the state, and the crowd.

In psychology, transformation has been curiously defined as "the procedure used when unconscious desires or urges are costumed in order to emerge in consciousness." Psychobiological transformation is a key theme in depth psychologies. It begins at the point where there is no hope and lead through overwhelming challenges, fraught with depression, fragmentation, resistance, symptoms, pain and anxiety. We are at our most vulnerable at the threshold of transformation.

The key to personal transformation is story transformation. It is symbolic, life-changing — a massive reorganization of attitudes, behaviors, and meaning. Metamorphosis is the classic metaphor of major life passages and restructuring. Latent potentials emerge and outworn characteristics decline. Some qualities are hidden until our true nature is revealed as a new form of life and self-identity.

Imaginal psychology urges us to move beyond the monotheistic myth of self-domination by the abstract concepts of a rational heroic ego, self, or god. James Hillman noted the ego too is an image. It makes problems to solve them with will and intentionality, but that is an illusory perspective. Consciousness is not based on concepts of ego or self, though it has been identified as such. Archetypes generate the transformational images and the universal material of myth and

drama, but they bear the mark of personal and cultural conditioning. They provide archaic and timeless meaning.

Hillman dubs ego a “myth of inflation”, not the secret key to the development of consciousness, but a source of fallacies, defining its literal fantasies as reality. In *A Blue Fire* (pg. 34), he suggests, “placing in abeyance such metaphors as: choice and light, problem solving and reality testing, strengthening, developing, controlling, progressing.” He condemns new age insistence on transformation - sloughing off the old self and interpretive schemes for an idealization that is essentially another self-delusion.

Jung (CW 12, par. 32) cautioned that we must be alone to find out what it is that supports us when we can no longer support ourselves. Only this experience, he said, gives us an indestructible foundation. “Individuation and collectivity are a pair of opposites, two divergent destinies. They are related to one another by guilt.” He concludes, “we must be able to stand alone *vis a vis* the unconscious for better or worse.” (*Letters*, Vol 1, p. 458-459) Jung also notes, “Individuation is just ordinary life and what you are made conscious of.” (*Letters*, Vol. 1, pg. 442) It isn't rare, but it is a move toward self-actualization or self-realization.

The path from the oblivious to self-aware life is beset with obstacles. How do we know what a genuine transformative experience is? We transform ourselves by every act of self-knowing. Jung felt that self-realization was a natural process of transformation, orchestrated by the unconscious. The infinite depth of dynamic reality informs our worldview and personal sovereignty. Such is the journey of meaningful solitude into silence, ratified by the perennial wisdom.

Krishnamurti said, “To stand alone is to be uncorrupted, innocent, free of all tradition, of dogma, of opinion, of what another says, and so on. . . .What matters is to understand for oneself, not through the direction of others, the total content of consciousness, which is not conditioned, which is the result of society, of religion, of various impacts, impressions, memories – to understand all of that conditioning and be free of it. But there is no “how” to be free. If you ask ‘how’ to be free, you are not listening.”

Kahlil Gibran claimed, “Knowledge of the self is the mother of all knowledge. So it is incumbent on me to know my self, to know it completely, to know its minutiae, its characteristics, its subtleties, and its very atoms.” Yogananda suggests that self-realization is “to know truth through yourself, and not through others.” Ramana Maharshi says, “your own Self-Realization is the greatest service you can render the world.”

The Dalai Lama says, “With realization of one’s own potential and self-confidence in one’s ability, one can build a better world.” Rumi was poetic: “I have been a seeker and I still am, but I stopped asking the books and the stars. I started listening to the teaching of my Soul.” Hermann Hesse and others, such as Thoreau, Emerson and Whitman, echo this approach in their own writings.

Hesse felt that, “We must become so alone, so absolutely alone, that we withdraw into our innermost self. It is a way of bitter suffering. But then our solitude is overcome, we are no longer alone, for we find that our innermost self is the spirit, that it is God, the indivisible. And suddenly we find ourselves in the midst of the world, yet undisturbed by its multiplicity, for in our innermost soul, we know ourselves to be one with all beings.”

“Transformation connotes a more-or-less dramatic shift in the context of an individual’s meaning system, beyond any attempts to re-brand or commercialize the field. Real transformation takes place in the furnace of the heart. However, institutional transformation can mean an imposed or enforced social change. In McLuhan’s vernacular, the “invisible” environment of new technologies creates an “erosion”, not enhancement, of the conscious and unconscious – by means of “audience as workforce.” We unconsciously conform to such environments. The subconscious works on emotion. Business strategy is transformed into emotion.

Transformation is a model of a process. In this theory, personal and social transformation promotes self-actualization and compassionate service. Radical change involves new habits, range of emotions, and worldview – concerns, interests, goals, ambitions, and behaviors. A reordering of values can change the basis of self-identity. Significant

transformation can mean a radical reorganization of one's identity, meaning, and purpose in life — a turning point — transformations of earlier worldviews. Embodied transformation sustains over time. Wisdom to know the difference between one's ego and one's Self is embodied in your individuality.

Or, does holistic repatterning just mean structural transformation of old elements into a new configuration in the internal landscape — a restructuring of psychic space? Only a profound change in structure creates something new. Infiltrated consciousness is such a result, changing how we perceive the world and act on those perceptions.

Organizational strategies and state or corporate coercive transformation don't serve the individual. For them, imposed transformation means collaborative, consultative, directive and coercive manipulations. Ultimately, it means international competition and state formation. The state exerts coercion for control.

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On the Quantum Aspects of Brain-Mind Problem

Iona Miller 2014

Abstract

The brain-mind problem is also known as the mind-body problem and by extension mind-matter. How the mind relates to the brain has classically been discussed in terms of monism and dualism-that the mind and brain are one or

that the mind and brain are separate. It has long been suggested that the brain functions as a sort of transducer from the universal to the particular. Quantum and sub-quantal phenomena may play an important part in the brain's transducer function

.Further, our physical theories and narratives , rooted in philosophical notions about the interface of psyche and matter , also serve a symbolic function If the unconscious is a magical powerhouse that speaks in symbols, our notion of the unconscious is also a symbol of the power of the primal field.

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Finding Deeper Meaning in Genealogy

Ancestors, Legends, & Myths

Iona Miller, 2014

The ancestors are, of course, the archetypes – they are the psychological ancestors. In a really dangerous situation they may be quite real. -Jung

Today we have great difficulty with ancestors. We do not know what they are or how to enable them. Yet establishing a harmonious relation with these ancestors is crucial to our symbolic life.

These figures came long before us and will outlive us. Giving the ancestors that people our psyche the recognition they need is the only way their blessings can flow.

We can participate with the same living unconscious that was revered by our ancestors. Genealogy offers a way to connect with the deep, imaginal spirituality of our ancestors without appropriating from other cultures or crafting a new spirituality. We can reconnect to ancestors that trace their roots through

our bloodlines.

The co-creative process of soul-making takes us out of our “only personal” ancestry and empowers the Ancestors. We break through the boundaries that separate our inner and outer lives. They create synchronistic fields around us that continually generate and store symbolic awareness. The seed of life conceals the geometry of creation. Imagination has its own way of knowing.

Experience of Ancestors as opposed to ancestry is central to the symbolic life and the transformation of cultural images, ideals and institutions.

Genealogy helps us free ourselves from our primitive ancestors’ psychological enmeshment by giving form to their countless typical experiences. Our world is ‘haunted’ by the absence-presence of the ancestors. Rituals of our ancestors paid homage to the afterlife. Our ancestors also rest in the sacred landscapes of the psyche, not only in specific geographies. Psyche is not of today, but extends back many millions of years.

My Generation

In psychology, an archetype is the innate knowledge, images, or ways of thinking that are inherited from ancestors. During significant events (birth, death, disaster) human behavior takes on a typical form. In the archetype concept we mirror the emotions of our remote ancestors in how we act and react in these significant situations. These architects of dreams and symptom speak through divination, myth and ritual enactment, offering a hidden language suffused with a sort of pre-rational verbal

therapy that produces real and effective changes within us.

Descent From Antiquity

Our ancient Pagan *ancestors* had their pantheons of Gods & Goddesses. The gods are transpersonal or spiritual ancestors, as our traditional lines of descent show. Many claimed ancestries are considered by modern scholars to be fabrications, especially the claims of kings and emperors who trace their ancestry to gods or the founders of their civilization. Some genealogists now cut off what are labeled as fictitious or legendary roots. Genealogy, legend and political prophecies played a crucial role in constructing the past in the service of royal power. Many royals traced their lineage not only to the pagan gods but also to the priest-kings of the Old Testament.

Genealogy has an evolutionary history of its own. What scholars term a “defect” in such lines may not be so psychologically. There is no harm and maybe psychological benefit to maintaining such ties, so long as they are not taken literally. They are part of our personal origin myth. Royal descents from mythical heroes include, Odin, Titans, Aphrodite, Zeus, Hercules, Isis, Adam and Eve, Mary Magdalene and Jesus, Muhammad, Tamar Tephi, Scots, Beli Mawr. King Arthur, and more.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Descent_from_antiquity

Archetypes, ancestors and allies form our mythic self. The knowledge, but also the sins and wounds of our ancestors live within us. **There is a deep longing inside each of us for something our ancestors received, but that is missing now – the information that connects us to the whole – a creative relation to the figures of the deep psyche that people our imagination. Genealogy helps us enter that symbolic life.**

We forget that the soul has its own ancestors. Archetypes are directly knowable as a product of the shared experiences of our *ancestors*. We relive the soul of the ancestors as primordial psyche, inherited from common *ancestors* in the distant human past. We can receive guidance in the dreamtime from archetypal ancestors. We do not only carry the genes of our ancestors; we also carry their memories. Jung said, *underneath the modern surface of the mind lurks the original primitive mentality of our ancestors, complete with vivid stories and symbols that have a natural appeal to us and seem to appear unbidden in our dreams and fantasies.*

To conduct our own personal research and to find out for ourselves, maybe all we need to do is listen to our inner DNA. The unconscious comprises in itself the psychic life of our *ancestors* right back to the earliest beginnings. We can listen to the voices, feelings, sights and experiences of our ancestors. The land of the dead is the country of our ancestors and the images who walk in on us are our ancestors. They can be associated with the elements of nature. They exert their claim on us, and power over us — a sense of our internal fate — as psychic representations of our geographical, historical and cultural contexts.

We are under the influence of ancestors, archetypes, family and collective consequences. The achievement of consciousness by our distant ancestors is reflected in the hero or heroine's

journey. Active imagination isn't new; our ancestors staring into the fire were exercising just this. The hero's journey represents the primitive struggle of our ancestors in entering an unknown world of danger, but overcoming the danger and bringing back to the tribe or group some discovery or treasure that will benefit everyone.

Legacy of the Ancestors

Ancestors brings together genealogy, common mythological roots and psychology.

Our ancestors often use metaphors in order to make the issue clear. The "living serpents" of our descent lines can be used to invoke the ancestors. Genealogy is a form of veneration. The study of our ancestors is the study of the Tree of Life. An altar, for example, can honor your biological ancestors, the universal archetypal ancestors, or both.

The purpose of the totem meal, grail, or eucharist is to reunite the participants with the life of their ancestors. Their lives, joys and fears are within us. In this way, they are with us always. Our ancestors revered nature, but were also irrational and superstitious about it. We can still turn to nature for insight as our ancestors did for millennia. Most of us have lost touch with religious traditions of our ancestors; we no longer connect with their sacred myths and metaphors. Genealogy is more direct, more personal.

Healing shifts occur through the conscious Feminine, Sophia, Wisdom, the divine feminine embodied in the world. The exploits and mode of

being of the great ancestors resonate, to a lesser degree, with our experience of dreaming. The concealed and mysterious are as important as the revealed and understood. The ancestors are jealous; they want to be remembered. Remembering them is not just an empty custom, but imbued with meaning. The deeper meaning of much traditional healing centers on ancestor reverence.

Working your lines can be meditative, in and of itself. Concentration is an art. When performing an ancestor meditation, people experience different things. You may find yourself meeting a specific person that you are aware of in your family history. Some people, however, meet their ancestors as archetypes. In other words, it may not be a specific individual you meet, but rather a symbol. Either way, understand that meeting these individuals is a gift. Pay attention to what they say and do – it may be that they're trying to give you a message.

When properly respected, they are benevolent guardians. Our search is answered by initiation: the blessing of the elders. We need our specific stories heard, in the context of the universal, by someone who speaks both linear and symbolic languages. Great assistance comes from the lineage of elders who have passed it on, and from the “hard wiring” of archetypal patterns inside us all. The ancestors are eagerly waiting to help us, if we ask.

Many old stories talk about how the teachings are lost, again and again, and must be rediscovered by each generation, and reshaped into the words that can be heard in the world that generation inhabits. In

honoring them, we honor the principles and values they represent. Thus we find the heavenly city inhabited by the mythic forefathers, the ancestors who constitute a genealogy of current names. These “genealogies” are not strictly historical, but mythic and symbolic. There is no reason, however, why they should be seen as standing in opposition to history. These “genealogical” names are steeped in a numerical, linguistic, astronomical, rhythmical, cyclic, and magical meaning.

The tomb is a symbol of the unconscious as well as an alchemical vessel in which transformation occurs. Jung related it to the womb, suggesting the tomb is a place of the past that connects us with our deceased ancestors, a place from which the psyche is born, a connector to our psychic background. The tomb also represents the completion of circle as a place where we will ultimately rejoin the ancestors once more.

An exploration of the ways in which the ancestors, from the archetypal to the personal, influence us in the present and implicate us in lives of subsequent generations.

Mending the Ancestral Web

The known and unknown stories of our ancestors are present in our personal symptoms, disposition, split loyalties, aspirations, and the questions which inform our lives. Our ancestral and cultural legacies continue living in our bodies, through our relationships, in both matter and the timelessness of psyche. These legacies root us in the past and implicate us in the lives of the generations that will follow.

The ancestors, from the archetypal to the personal, influence us today. If our ancestors managed to overcome a multitude of problems, such as severe illnesses, wars, loss of loved ones or severe economic declines, we who are genetically similar can successfully be reminded we can overcome a multitude of problems.

Many spiritual practices and religions - particularly in native cultures and Asia - revolve around both the acceptance and, in many cases, the worship of ancestors. Even in western cultures there is an increased tendency to include ancestor and archetypal relationship methods into various therapies and self-help programs.

The exploration and eventual acceptance of your family and ancestors is important for emotional and spiritual grounding. Depending on your memories and/or your family history, your ancestors can be a gateway to bliss . . . or a reminder of failure and limitation. Either way, and whether you like it or not, however, these folks are still your family.

On a biological level we are our ancestors. We have their DNA, their predispositions for certain illnesses, and so on. The ancestors companion us and bequeath to us their unfinished business. Likewise on a spiritual level, we have their “stuff” - their stories, memories, emotions, energy, and even behavioral tendencies. We are their continuation . . . and also their current expression in the physical world.

You and your ancestors are one and the same. We are psychologically pre-conditioned by our ancestors in history, who shaped our complexes, fears and obsessions. You possess the wisdom and intelligence to become a full human being because you inherited an eternity of wisdom, not only from your blood ancestors but also from the wholeness of life itself.

Even if you do not believe in the spiritual aspect of ancestry, you have probably witnessed the handing down of traditions, upbringing, and temperament from parent to child within your family tree. Some of these things are wonderfully empowering, wise, and nourishing. Some of these things are also painful, ignorant, and destructive.

Simply by accepting the power of family and ancestors, you can break the harmful cycles that have been handed down. You can begin to heal old wounds and free yourself from behaviors and emotions that no longer serve you. You can even discover the most liberating emotion of all - forgiveness. Developing a strong relationship with your ancestors is profoundly important, second only to your relationship with yourself.

Jung felt very strongly that he was “under the influence of things or questions which were left incomplete and unanswered by [his] parents and grandparents and more distant ancestors.” His differentiation of the collective unconscious into its various levels and his description of the nature of psyche provide a working model which allows us to see how our biography is part of a continuing story, part of a dynamic web of relations, which has its roots and *telos* in the stories of our ancestors and descendants.

“Everything psychic is pregnant with the future.” ~Carl Jung

For, in the last resort, we are conditioned not only by the past, but by the future, which is sketched out in us long beforehand and gradually evolves out of us. ~Jung, Analytical Psychology and Education, Page 110.

My soul – are you there? I have returned, I am here again. I have shaken the dust of all the lands from my feet, and I have come to you, I am with you. After long years of long wandering, I have come to you again. Should I tell you everything I have seen, experienced, and drunk in? Or do you not want to hear about all the noise of life and the world? But one thing you must know: the one thing I have learned is that one must live this life. This life is the way, the long sought-after way to the unfathomable, which we call divine.

-Carl Jung; Red Book

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For those who can trace their ancestral lines back through centuries, the Grail Trail is a golden path back to medieval times, ancient times, & into the mists of myth and pre-history. Follow your Grail-Trail and see where it leads.

Ancestral Life Continues Within Us

“Then turn to the dead, listen to their lament and accept them with love.” -C.G. Jung, The Red Book, Chapter XV

One of the key themes in ‘*The Lament for the Dead*’ is the denial of death by contemporary, secular Western culture. Our ancestors are not properly recognized and given their due weight - there is no real place for the dead in our culture. Shamdassani says on p.176:

“The first task that Jung finds himself confronted with [as I think anyone engaged in this descent is] is reanimating the dead, acknowledging that the dead are, and they have presences, they have effects. We turn our eyes away from future-oriented living and to what has gone before, in the shape of animated history, history that is not simply a record but history that is active.”

Therefore, by denying the dead we are denying ourselves.

Jung believed that the foundations of personality are ancestral and universal. Because much of genealogical best-practice includes mythic and fictional characters, the process is best approached with a Jungian orientation, rather than as hard historical fact, except where lines are clearly curated. In terms of collective unconscious, genealogy has “*as if*” psychic reality.

Jungian and post-Jungian practices allow us to interact with such material in a deeply meaningful way that helps us integrate such knowledge and self-knowledge, that enhances integration and individuation. Post-Jungians are committed to an approach that does not focus exclusively on psychic reality but also takes into account the realities of the outer world. Genealogy helps us adapt to **both external or**

internal *realities*. This practice raises into conscious awareness what was formerly subconscious or unconscious – the lives of our direct ancestors.

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When I worked in my family tree, I understood the strange communion of the destiny that unites me to my ancestors.

-Jung

...who are the dead and what does it mean to answer them?

What matters is not what you say, but what they say back.

“The key to the Grail is compassion, ‘suffering with,’ feeling another’s sorrow as if it were your

own. The one who finds the dynamo of compassion is the one who's found the Grail.” -Joseph Campbell

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Finding Deeper Meaning in Genealogy

Ancestors, Legends, & Myths

by Iona Miller, 2014

The ancestors are, of course, the archetypes – they are the psychological ancestors. In a really dangerous situation they may be quite real. -Jung

In psychology, an archetype is the innate knowledge, images, or ways of thinking that are inherited from ancestors. An event that might be an archetype is birth. The gods are our spiritual ancestors, as our lines of descent show. The knowledge, but also the sins and wounds of our ancestors live within us.

We forget that the soul has its own ancestors. We relive the soul of the ancestors as primordial psyche, inherited from common *ancestors* in the distant human past. We can receive guidance in the dreamtime from archetypal ancestors. We do not only carry the genes of our ancestors; we also carry their memories. Jung said, Underneath the modern

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The ancestors, from the archetypal to the personal, influence us in the present and implicate us in the lives of the generations that will follow. If our ancestors managed to overcome a multitude of problems, such as severe illnesses, wars, loss of loved ones or severe economic declines, we who are genetically similar can successfully be reminded we can overcome a multitude of problems.

Thinking about ancestors, archetypes, mental forms and so on is simply another form of what we like to call magic.

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Welcome to the Ionosphere

Art, Science, Culture & Consciousness

“The inexplicable is always in vogue.”

2014 FACING THE COSMOS

Writer, Therapist, Artist, Noetic Nerd

Iona Miller is a nonfiction writer for the academic and popular press, clinical hypnotherapist (ACHE) and multimedia artist. Her work is an omni-sensory fusion of intelligence, science-art, new physics, symbolism, source mysticism, futuring, and emergent paradigm shift, creating a unique viewpoint. She is interested in extraordinary human potential and experience, and the EFFECTS of doctrines of religion, science, psychology, and the arts. She serves on the Advisory Boards of *Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research*, *DNA Decipher Journal*, and *Scientific God Journal*, as well as the Board of Directors of Medigrace, Inc. & Calm Birth; a Miami-based Integral Medicine institute; and the Editorial Board of *CRAFT* (Community Resilience through Action for Future Transitions).

Ms. Miller is published by Phanes Press, Destiny Books (Inner Traditions), Autonomedia, Nexus Magazine, *Paranoia Magazine*, *Alchemy Journal*, *Green Egg*, *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*, *Jungian Analysis Journal* (Moscow), *DNA Decipher Journal (DNADJ)*, *Scientific God Journal (SGJ)*, *Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research (JCER)*, *Journal of Nonlocality & Remote Mental Interactions (JNLRMI)*, *Dream Network*, *Chaosophy Journal*, OAK-Publishing, PM&E, *DNA Monthly*, *Antibothis*, *Pop Occulture*, and more.

Ms. Miller coordinates Media & Wellness in the Operations Division of The Osborne Group (TOG), a risk management organization. Over the last 10 years she also managed the ad hoc projects of Mankind Research Unlimited (MRU) alumni from 3 decades, in intelligence, spyence, new physics, paranormal, creativity, consciousness studies, DNA research, superlearning, DIY mind control, biophysics, and other frontier science and blue sky experimentation. This work continues in a variety of forms and outlets. She also oversees numerous curatorial, archival and genealogical projects. She has served in a professional capacity at Southern Oregon Hypnotherapy, Asklepia Foundation, Institute for Applied Consciousness Science, the Wisdom Center, and Life Energies Research Institute.

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