

# Archetype and Eternal Object

*Jung, Whitehead, and the Return of Formal Causation*

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At first glance, C. G. Jung and Alfred North Whitehead might seem to have little in common. On the one hand, Jung spent the formative years of his early career working as a psychiatrist in a mental institution, during which time he began his eight-year association with Freud, which resulted in Jung playing a large, and often unacknowledged, role in the early promulgation of psychoanalysis. Over the half-century following his break with Freud, Jung built his own approach to depth psychology that engaged primarily with the psychological reality of fantasy images, myths, and dreams. On the other hand, Whitehead had a full career as an influential mathematician, writing the seminal book on modern mathematics, *Principia Mathematica*, near the beginning of the twentieth century with his student Bertrand Russell. In his sixties, Whitehead made the shift to philosophy, specifically metaphysical cosmology, though he always retained the rigorous and abstract approach characteristic of mathematics, a level of precision that philosophers have often sought to emulate. Thus, on the surface, it would seem that Jung's engagement with psyche and Whitehead's engagement with cosmos have virtually nothing in common. However, as this implicit reference to Richard Tarnas's *Cosmos and Psyche* indicates, the deepest intimations of their psychology and cosmology, respectively, seem to suggest a convergence of these two thinkers' projects. Indeed, as I have read their work over the years, I have increasingly come to see profound connections between their ideas, particularly between Jung's concept of *archetypes*,

Whitehead's concept of *eternal objects*, and what I perceive as their mutual association with formal causation.

### David Ray Griffin's Synthesis of Jung and Whitehead

I was already familiar with David Ray Griffin as an editor of Whitehead's *Process and Reality*, and when I came across *Archetypal Process*, a collection of essays edited and introduced by Griffin, the connection between Jung and Whitehead that I had suspected seemed to be confirmed. This book, published in 1989, emerged out of a conference at the Center for Process Studies at Claremont University Center and Graduate School in 1983 at which Griffin, James Hillman, and other notable Jung and Whitehead scholars met and presented papers.<sup>1</sup> Reading Griffin's long introductory essay, I was generally in agreement with his inaugural attempt to integrate the ideas of Jung and Whitehead, though there were a number of points where I disagreed with Griffin's interpretation, particularly in his portrayal of some of Jung's concepts. As Griffin notes:

This introduction does not pretend to be written from a neutral or transcendent perspective. Although I have been greatly informed and enlarged by my encounter with archetypal psychology, I approach the question of the relation between the two movements with the sensibilities, interests, and biases of an advocate of process theology.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, while Griffin should be commended for initiating the synthesis of Jung's and Whitehead's work, as well as for recognizing the limitations of his own subject position, his preliminary synthesis does seem to require some significant modifications. Nevertheless, any further attempt to integrate the ideas of these two thinkers must take the considerable accomplishments of *Archetypal Process* into account. Therefore, using Griffin's introduction as my basis, I will endeavor to clarify some of the points where Griffin is unclear and, in the process, begin to show Whitehead's relevance to the discipline of archetypal cosmology, which, as the name implies, has tended to rely more explicitly on Jung's thought than on Whitehead's.

Griffin's contrasting of Jung's and Whitehead's approaches is clear and says much of what needs to be said by way of articulating Whitehead's relevance to archetypal cosmology:

Whitehead's approach is avowedly philosophical, even metaphysical; Jung contrasts his empirical approach with philosophy, and disdains metaphysics. Whitehead sought to return to pre-Kantian modes of thought, circumventing the Kantian critique by correcting some errors in pre-Kantian philosophy; Jung's primary philosophical sources are Kant himself and post-Kantian philosophers, especially Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Whitehead deals primarily with concepts, Jung with images. Whitehead is concerned primarily with cosmology, only secondarily with the human soul as a completion of the cosmology; Jung is concerned primarily with the soul, only incidentally with cosmology as the context of the soul. Whitehead employs the impersonal criteria of self-consistency and adequacy to the widest possible range of evidence, seeking to overcome personal bias and limitations of experience; Jung bases his thought largely on his own inner experiences.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, the two thinkers' approaches can partially be summed up by mere reference to their initial chosen professions: mathematician and psychiatrist. Whitehead's approach was primarily through the logical relations of abstract symbolic language while Jung's approach was based on his extensive practical experience exploring the images produced in the psyche. It should be acknowledged at the outset that these are both entirely valid ways of understanding the complexity of experience and, as I will attempt to show, they are highly complementary to the point of being necessary to one another for the sake of completeness.

## **Relevance to Archetypal Cosmology**

Our first concern here is Jung's and Whitehead's mutual relevance to the discipline of archetypal cosmology and the astrological perspective on which it draws. Based on the above passage from Griffin, the correlation could not be more direct. As implied earlier, the "archetypal" part of the very name of the discipline is predominantly Jungian. However, as Griffin

aptly notes, Jung was only tangentially interested in the second part of the discipline's name, "cosmology," whereas this subject was one of Whitehead's primary philosophical concerns. As Keiron Le Grice writes in *The Archetypal Cosmos*, "what has become clear is that we cannot use Jungian psychology to formulate an explanation of astrology without considering the wider philosophical framework within which Jung's ideas are situated," a project to which Whitehead's philosophy is particularly well suited.<sup>4</sup> Thus, as Griffin articulates it, "archetypal psychologists could acquire from process theology a philosophical-theological framework that is compatible with scientific evidence and the facts of ordinary experience as well as with the somewhat extraordinary dimensions of experience presupposed and focused on by archetypal psychology."<sup>5</sup> While this is not quite how I would articulate the relationship (as Griffin's rhetorical formulation, both here and elsewhere, seems to perhaps subtly diminish Jung and exalt Whitehead), the implication appears fundamentally sound: Whitehead's systematic metaphysical cosmology can provide a philosophical grounding and justification for Jung's psychology of archetypes. Whitehead's work is one of the best candidates to account for the philosophical issues at the root of Jung's ideas, an area where Jung was admittedly hesitant to go. Similarly, Jung's work can address the psychological, imaginal, and mythic domains of experience, which Whitehead was less inclined to explore.

This complementary relationship is likewise given sanction by Tarnas in *Cosmos and Psyche*, which, like Darwin's *The Origin of Species* for evolutionary biology or Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* for psychoanalysis, is the foundational text of archetypal cosmology, providing a body of historical evidence and a philosophical framework for the field. It is significant, therefore, that the two epigraphs at the beginning of the first chapter of Tarnas's book are from Jung and Whitehead, implicitly positioning these thinkers as two of the primary antecedents to the archetypal cosmological perspective:

In each age of the world distinguished by high activity, there will be found at its culmination, and among the agencies leading to that culmination, some profound cosmological outlook, implicitly accepted, impressing its own type on the current springs of action.

—Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*

Our psyche is set up in accord with the structure of the universe, and what happens in the macrocosm likewise happens in the infinitesimal and most subjective reaches of the psyche.

—C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*<sup>6</sup>

These epigraphs, like the quote from Virgil that Freud uses as the epigraph for *The Interpretation of Dreams*, set the tone for the entire work and, thus the discipline that it largely initiated. Through the juxtaposition of these two passages, Tarnas implies that our psychological insight, the way we view the cosmos, and our “cosmological outlook,” the cosmos that we view, are profoundly imbricated. As Tarnas writes later in the same book, “world views create worlds”<sup>7</sup> just as much as worlds create world views, for not only does the human mind emerge from the cosmos, but the implicit world view on which the mind bases its relation to experience also conditions the type of meaning that can be “projectively elicited” from the world.<sup>8</sup> Still later, Tarnas writes: “archetypes thus can be understood and described . . . in Whiteheadian terms as eternal objects and pure potentialities whose ingression informs the unfolding process of reality,” which is one of the primary points that this essay will elucidate.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to these textual sanctions for the synthesis of the Jungian archetypal perspective and the Whiteheadian cosmological perspective, Tarnas co-taught a seminar with cosmologist Brian Swimme as part of the Philosophy, Cosmology, and Consciousness (PCC) program at the California Institute of Integral Studies in 2007 entitled “Archetypal Process: Whitehead, Jung, and the Meeting of Psychology and Cosmology,” which directly prefigures the synthetic project of this essay.<sup>10</sup>

## Archetypes and Eternal Objects

In his introduction to *Archetypal Process*, Griffin suggests that both Jung’s concept of archetypes and Whitehead’s concept of eternal objects “reassert something like the Platonic view of the importance of formal causes in the nature of things.”<sup>11</sup> I wholeheartedly endorse this view and

commend Griffin for making the connection between these two seminal thinkers explicit. However, I would like to dispute Griffin's assertion that synchronicity "is probably the weakest element in Jung's speculations" and argue that, in fact, Griffin's dismissal of synchronicity in favor of what he terms Whiteheadian "panexperientialism" betrays a fundamental misconception by Griffin of what synchronicity constitutes.<sup>12</sup> In all fairness, this confusion is understandable since Jung himself often seemed ambiguous about the ontological status of the archetypes and their relationship to synchronicity. Moreover, the subtitle of Jung's *Synchronicity*, "an acausal connecting principle," is rather misleading since synchronicity is perhaps better conceived, I will suggest, as a modern psychological inflection and renomination of formal causality as a reaction to the privileging of material and efficient causality in modernity. Nevertheless, I will argue that Tarnas's explication of the nature of synchronicity and the archetypes in *The Passion of the Western Mind* and *Cosmos and Psyche*, informed particularly by the work of James Hillman, sheds light on the conceptual error at the root of Griffin's misreading. Furthermore, I will suggest that synchronicity and panexperientialism, far from being competing explanations of the "parapsychological phenomena" that Griffin discusses, are, in fact, complementary concepts, both expressing different aspects of formal causality. Indeed, though Griffin does not specifically discuss astrology, he does show how both Jung's and Whitehead's work can provide justification for other kinds of "nonlocal" "action at a distance" (the property of certain entities in quantum mechanics by which these entities "communicate" information to one another instantaneously without any apparent exchange of energy), which, as Le Grice suggests in his discussion of quantum entanglement in the previous article, are applicable to the archetypal astrological perspective.<sup>13</sup>

To give some background, near the beginning of the philosophical enterprise, Aristotle, according to the *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, "distinguished four senses of 'cause': the material out of which things come; the form which things eventually have when they are perfected; that which brings about this completion, the moving [or efficient] cause; and finally the purpose or function of such things, the final cause."<sup>14</sup> Although material causality, which implies efficient causality, has been privileged in modernity, both Jung and Whitehead have argued, in

different valences, for the reinstatement of formal causality, which implies final causality. This reinstatement of the repressed modes of causality alongside material and efficient causality seems to be the only way to render the multivalent complexity of experience intelligible.<sup>15</sup> As Griffin articulates it, both Jung and Whitehead rejected

the modern view of causation. Of the Aristotelian four causes, I have already mentioned both men's rejection of modernity's limitation of efficient causation to contiguous events, and its limitation of material causation to the energy embodied in the entities studied by physics (as each affirms a greatly expanded notion of energy or 'creativity'). But modernity also had a very limited notion of formal causation: the forms embodied in things were limited to mathematical forms. And final causation, or teleology, was eliminated altogether.<sup>16</sup>

Griffin continues:

Jung and Whitehead both reassert something like the Platonic view of the importance of formal causes in the nature of things. Jung does this, of course, by making archetypes central. The technical term for formal causes in Whitehead's thought is 'eternal objects,' and he explicitly affirms that, besides eternal objects of the objective species (the mathematical Platonic forms), there are also eternal objects of the subjective species (PR 291), which include anything that can qualify the subjective form of a feeling, such as emotions. But also the whole panoply of metaphysical principles, which Whitehead calls the 'categorical scheme' (PR 18-29), must be regarded as eternal formal causes of everything that occurs.<sup>17</sup>

Thus far, I agree with Griffin's assessment that the Jungian archetypes, in their most mature formulation, seem to be intrinsically related to the Whiteheadian eternal objects by their mutual association with formal causation, though approached from the somewhat different perspectives of psychology and metaphysics. As Jung writes in *Synchronicity*, "the archetypes are formal factors responsible for the organization of unconscious psychic processes," which seems to indicate a direct relation between

archetypes and the Platonic forms from which formal causation derives its name.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, I am in agreement with Griffin's assertion that

Finalism or teleology is equally affirmed by both. One of Jung's major divergences from Freud was due to the latter's attempt to explain all human experience in terms of efficient causes, whereas Jung became convinced that our aim toward the future—our aim to individuate, or realize our Self—was equally important. Whitehead equates 'mentality' with final causation, meaning self-determination in terms of a momentary goal, so his ascription of a 'mental pole' to each actual entity is an ascription of final causation to all actual entities. He in fact says that each actual entity embodies a 'subjective aim.'<sup>19</sup>

Leaving aside Griffin's slightly misleading attribution of the pronoun "our" to the Jungian concept of Self, as the Self is the transpersonal formal source and final goal of the psyche's individuation process, he seems to be fundamentally correct that both Jung and Whitehead affirmed teleology. In fact, because formal causality directly implies final causality (the formal potentiality, impelling from the transtemporal origin, implies its teleological end, pulling towards its final satisfaction), it logically follows from their mutual positions on formal causality that both Jung and Whitehead would be in favor of the reinstatement of final causality. That is, the fact that there are archetypal potentialities of being implies that these formal eternal objects are teleologically pushing towards an actualization of those potentialities, though the specific forms in which they manifest are not determined, like the Aristotelian-Hegelian acorn that teleologically calls forth the oak in all its unforeseeable particularity, or the embryo that bodies forth two genetically identical, though developmentally differentiated twins. In light of Whitehead's thought, and particularly of what Griffin refers to as "panexperientialism" (see below), this developmental impetus constitutes what might be described as a lower octave or fractal reiteration of the emergent quality of mind, which seeks what Whitehead calls "final satisfaction" for its "subjective aims."<sup>20</sup>

One point on which I differ from Griffin is in what seems to be his direct, one-to-one correlation of the eternal objects and the archetypes.<sup>21</sup> Rather, the archetypes seem to be a subset of the eternal objects at their most complex level. For instance, Whitehead writes that "qualities . . .

such as colours, sounds, bodily feelings, tastes, smells, together with the perspectives introduced by extensive relationships, are the relational eternal objects whereby the contemporary actual entities are elements in our constitution.”<sup>22</sup> While the qualities named by Whitehead are generally associated with particular archetypes, it does not seem to be the case that archetypes as described by Jung and refined by Hillman, Tarnas, and others, correlate on a one-to-one basis with these fundamental qualities of experience. Rather, archetypes seem to correlate more closely with “the perspectives introduced by extensive relationships” that organize the more basic, fundamental eternal objects that Whitehead mentions. As Whitehead defines the general scope of his concept, “any entity whose conceptual recognition does not involve a necessary reference to any definite actual entities of the temporal world is called an ‘eternal object.’”<sup>23</sup> Thus, on the one hand, any potentiality, such as an archetype, that is not related to a particular temporal occasion is necessarily an eternal object, for occasions can only change in their particular temporal manifestations, not in their eternal, a priori form. On the other hand, as Hillman explains in *Re-Visioning Psychology*, “the archetypal perspective offers the advantage of organizing into clusters or constellations a host of events from different areas of life,” which seems to suggest that archetypes are more complex agglomerations of qualities than the simple qualities enumerated by Whitehead.<sup>24</sup> Later in the same book, Hillman writes:

As Jung refined his insight into these complex persons, the persons of our complexes, he discovered that their autonomy and intentionality derives from deeper figures of far wider significance. These are the archetypes, the persons to whom we ultimately owe our personality. In speaking of them, he says that “we are obliged to reverse our rationalistic causal sequence, and instead of deriving these figures from our psychic conditions, must derive our psychic conditions from these figures. . . . It is not we who personify them; they have a personal nature from the very beginning.” . . . *We are always talking about persons even at the most abstract level of discussion*, for these foundations, too, are archetypal persons.”<sup>25</sup>

Archetypes are modes of consciousness, “best comparable with a God,” that orient our relation to the world and our perception of it in particular domains of discourse, for “all ways of speaking of archetypes are translations from one metaphor to another.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, while metaphor constitutes the meaningful connection of elements on different levels of experience, the basic eternal objects that Whitehead mentions—“colours, sounds, bodily feelings, tastes, smells”—are not intrinsically metaphorical, though they are susceptible to metaphorization, to coin a term, when they are subsumed into emergent archetypal fields of meaning. For instance, in addition to the classification of archetypes as eternal objects by both Tarnas and Griffin, Le Grice notes that the archetypal “Plutonic dimension of experience encompasses . . . those universal qualities or ‘eternal objects,’ to use Whitehead’s term, that are associated with the underworld theme: repugnant smells, foul tastes, the colour black, extremes of heat and cold, and so on,”<sup>27</sup> which seem coextensive with the singular qualities mentioned by Whitehead, as opposed to the more complex “extensive relationships.” Furthermore, according to Whitehead, “there is not, however, one entity which is merely the *class* of all eternal objects. For if we conceive any class of eternal objects, there are additional eternal objects which presuppose that class but do not belong to it.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, the archetypes seem to be one “class” of eternal objects that are presupposed by, but not reducible to additional, more fundamental eternal objects. Where the eternal objects constitute anything whatsoever that is pure potentiality unmanifest in temporality, the archetypes, for Hillman, are more specifically personified modes of potential meaning, applicable, like metaphor, on many levels of experience. As Hillman asserts, even when the archetypes manifest in abstract elemental processes, they are always already associated with archetypal persons. Thus, Saturn, for instance, is associated with dryness, but also with slowness, distance, old age, conservatism, focus, rigor, and so on. Each of these individual characteristics of the Saturn archetype is an eternal object that, combined, synthesize to form the emergent Saturn archetype, which can itself be described as an archetypal person who is also a more complex eternal object than the simple eternal objects delineated above.

However, it should not be inferred that more basic eternal objects like the simple qualities Whitehead mentions above are ontologically

prior to archetypal eternal objects like Saturn. Rather, because it is transtemporal, the formal realm of archetypes and eternal objects seems to paradoxically allow for the simultaneous validity of explanations that describe the archetypes as emergent from the simpler eternal objects, that describe the simpler eternal objects as qualities that emerge from complex archetypal persons, and that describe both the simpler eternal objects and the more complex archetypes as a priori. All three modes of explanation, though contradictory in the temporal realm, are not mutually exclusive because causation implies time. Understanding the relations of different classes of eternal objects to one another requires the employment of temporality as a metaphor because our language is inherently causal

However, as with all metaphor when pushed to an extreme, this one breaks down into paradox because, while there is no past, present, or future within the eternal archetypal realm, the quality of temporality is a manifestation of archetypes that do exist in that realm. Thus, like our mathematical descriptions of physical reality at orders of magnitude smaller than the Planck constant, our verbal tools, developed within temporality, are necessarily inadequate for describing the eternal realm. Similarly, as Le Grice notes, “Joseph Campbell recognized that the specific forms of the gods are expressions of more fundamental underlying principles.”<sup>29</sup> This assertion by Campbell seems fundamentally to contradict Hillman’s personified conception of the archetypes, which he describes as having “autonomy,” “intentionality,” and “a personal nature from the very beginning.”<sup>30</sup> However, it seems likely that archetypes can be conceived fruitfully as both persons and impersonal forces, what Sri Aurobindo calls “Personalities and Powers of the dynamic Divine,” for the transtemporal domain seems coextensive with the concept of nonduality found in many religious and spiritual traditions in which both poles of contradictory dualities can be seen as partial truths.<sup>31</sup> As Le Grice notes, by the time Jung wrote *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, he “had come to believe that behind the apparent multiplicity of the phenomenal world, psyche and cosmos form part of a unitary reality and rest upon a common ‘transcendental background.’ The archetypes, Jung proposes, are rooted in this underlying unity of the *unus mundus*.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, it seems that, for the archetypal eternal objects, the distinctions between personal and impersonal, subjective and objective, and psyche and cosmos do not manifest until these pure

potentialities are actualized in time, for the nondual, transcendental realm of archetypal eternal objects is prior to differentiation.

## Synchronicity

However, more than this subtle, though important, classification of archetypes and eternal objects, the primary area where I differ from Griffin is in his characterization of synchronicity as “probably the weakest element in Jung’s speculations,” which I believe exhibits a fundamental misunderstanding of that concept.<sup>33</sup> According to Griffin, “by ‘synchronicity’ Jung means a meaningful but noncausal relation between two events,” which is an understandable reading of Jung, but one that I would argue is fundamentally flawed since synchronicity seems to be a modern renomination of formal causality.<sup>34</sup> Griffin disputes what he perceives as Jung’s

exaggerated claim that the parapsychological experiments of J. B. Rhine “prove that the psyche at times functions outside of the spatio-temporal law of causality.” Jung adds that, to make sense of these experiments, “we must face the fact that our world with its time, space, and causality, relates to another order of things lying behind or beneath it, in which neither ‘here and there’ nor ‘earlier and later’ are of importance.”<sup>35</sup>

It seems that the conceptual issue at the root of Griffin’s misinterpretation of synchronicity is a simple semantic error that is easily resolved in light of more recent developments in archetypal thought. In particular, it has become clear from the work of Tarnas and others that Jung generally uses the word “causality” to refer only to material and efficient causality, a conflation that is comprehensible in the context of the dominant scientific discourse of Jung’s time, when this limiting of causality to only one half of Aristotle’s causal quaternity was almost exclusively privileged.<sup>36</sup> Jung vaguely prefigures this insight when he writes in *Synchronicity* that “certain phenomena of simultaneity or synchronicity seem to be bound up with the archetypes,” though these “certain phenomena” are never quite explicated in Jung’s pioneering book.<sup>37</sup> Tarnas, with the perspective afforded by decades of collective

work on these issues by archetypally-oriented thinkers, makes the connection more explicit:

The occurrence of synchronicities is seen as permitting a continuing dialogue with the unconscious and with the larger whole of life while also calling forth an aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of life's powers of symbolically resonant complex patterning. . . . Although Jung himself did not explicitly describe this later stage in his principal monograph on synchronicity, it is evident from many scattered passages in his writings and from the recollections and memoirs of others that he both lived his life and conducted his clinical practice in a manner that entailed a constant attention to potentially meaningful synchronistic events that would then shape his understanding and actions. Jung saw nature and one's surrounding environment as a living matrix of potential synchronistic meaning that could illuminate the human sphere. He attended to sudden or unusual movements or appearances of animals, flocks of birds, the wind, storms, the suddenly louder lapping of the lake outside the window of his consulting room, and similar phenomena as possessing possible symbolic relevance for the parallel unfolding of interior psychic realities. . . . Central to Jung's understanding of such phenomena was his observation that the underlying meaning or formal factor that linked the synchronistic inner and outer events—the formal cause, in Aristotelian terms—was archetypal in nature.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, the “connecting principle” of synchronicity, which seems essentially to be a recasting of formal causality, results from the ingression into actuality of the archetypal class of eternal objects that exist outside, but are implicit in, the realm of temporality, spatial extension, and material-efficient causality. Based on Tarnas's insights, the Weberian “disenchantment of the world” was essentially constituted in the gradual repression of formal causation as a valid explanatory mode.<sup>39</sup> Thus, the reemergence of formal causation constitutes a gradual “re-enchantment of the world,” which accounts for the numinosity that accompanies “synchronicities,” moments in which formal causation seems to assert itself in one's psyche in the context of a disenchanted cosmological and

metaphysical world view.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, in a world view that implicitly accepts formal causation, everything is potentially “enchanted.”

Griffin seems to be correct when he writes:

the only adjustment necessary is to broaden ‘causality’ so that it includes every degree of causal influence, not just deterministic forms, and nonlocal (noncontiguous) causal influence as well as local. And this is hardly revolutionary: thanks largely to quantum physics, this broadening of the scientific and philosophical notion of causality has already occurred.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, Griffin aptly recognizes that the way to clear up many of the seemingly insoluble problems of modern philosophy is to re-expand our definition of causality to encompass something approximating Aristotelian formal and final causation in a postmodern context. However, Griffin’s dismissal of synchronicity is unnecessary and counterproductive to this project. Admittedly, Jung’s articulation of synchronicity was somewhat inconsistent, a situation that Griffin recognizes when he writes that “the question of exactly how archetypes are to be understood is surrounded by controversy.”<sup>42</sup> However, one might excuse Jung on this account because of what Jung himself refers to, in his foreword to Erich Neumann’s *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, as his “pioneer” status. It was necessary for Jung to create a novel vocabulary in order to express his ideas, a task made all the more difficult by the subtle and complex nature of the archetypes. Furthermore, I agree with Tarnas’s view that it was not so much that Jung was confused, but that his thought developed significantly over the course of his career:

Jung’s thought was extremely complex and in the course of his very long intellectually active life his conception of the archetypes went through a significant evolution. The conventional and still most widely known view of Jungian archetypes . . . was based on Jung’s middle-period writings when his thought was still largely governed by Cartesian-Kantian philosophical assumptions concerning the nature of the psyche and its separation from the external world. In his later work, however, and particularly in relation to his study of synchronicities, Jung began to move toward a conception of

archetypes as autonomous patterns of meaning that appear to structure and inhere in both psyche and matter, thereby in effect dissolving the modern subject-object dichotomy.<sup>43</sup>

In light of Tarnas's work, the ultimate philosophical implication of Jungian synchronicity (as opposed to the psychological implications, which are not my primary concern) is that formal causality must be reinstated as a valid form of causation if our experience is to be understood in all of its multivalence. This insight is particularly relevant to the discipline of archetypal cosmology, as synchronicity is precisely the principle of complex causation by which the connection between the movement of the planets and the events in human life can best be understood. Indeed, Tarnas describes astrological correlations in *Cosmos and Psyche* as "one special, highly controversial class of synchronicities."<sup>44</sup> Whereas in a disenchanted cosmology that only acknowledges material and efficient causation, the meaningful correlation of the planets with events in human life is unintelligible, in a cosmology that accepts formal and final causation as valid, the correlation of "cosmos and psyche" becomes more readily intelligible.<sup>45</sup>

## Panexperientialism

Nevertheless, based on his misunderstanding, Griffin views synchronicity and Whiteheadian panexperientialism as competitive explanations for the same phenomena. Griffin's explication of panexperientialism is illuminating:

"Memory" is the name we give to that peculiar relation we have to our own past. Although these past experiences now exist only as objects, we remember what they were in themselves, as subjects. A chimpanzee, most of us believe, has a similar relation to its past. The Whiteheadian suggestion is that this relationship applies analogously all the way down. A cell would therefore have some slight memory of what it experienced a few seconds earlier, and an electron an even slighter memory, perhaps going back no longer than a millionth of a second. The difference between subjects and objects, and therefore between psychic and physical

energy, in other words, is the difference between present and past, and being known from within and being known from without. The difference is not ontological, but merely temporal and epistemological.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, panexperientialism is the recognition that all occasions, all matter and energy, have both exteriority and interiority and that these two realms are intimately connected. This recognition does not mean that rocks or electrons are conscious, but rather that inanimate matter always already contains within it the potentiality for consciousness, engaging in the subjective relationality, the *meaningfulness* that is the precondition for the emergence of consciousness. In Whitehead's view, all things contain within them the potential to communicate meaning to all other things, which, put in these terms, sounds suspiciously like a justification for formal causality and, thus, synchronicity. To use Whitehead's language, if all actual occasions participate in the concrescent (which roughly translates to "exhibiting increasing interconnection issuing into the emergence of novel entities") meaning of the world, and if all things contain within them the potentiality for consciousness and meaning that reaches its current known apex of development in the human mind, then the world can communicate its meaning through the human mind or, as Tarnas articulates it: "the human mind is ultimately the organ of the world's own process of self-revelation."<sup>47</sup>

Thus, when Griffin writes that, "although Jung himself sought to interpret . . . [parapsychological] phenomena as further examples of synchronicity, they can be interpreted better in terms of process theology's panexperientialism," he is unintelligibly privileging one concept over another concept when the two concepts are actually mutually necessary and reinforcing, like two distinct mathematical formulae that can be shown to be exactly equivalent through a series of transformations.<sup>48</sup> Panexperientialism and synchronicity, understood in its most mature formulation, are complementary concepts that imply one another beneath the umbrella of formal causality. That is, Whitehead's idea that all matter and energy have interiority is a precondition for the interior connectivity implied by Jung's idea that inanimate objects and human consciousness can meaningfully participate in the same archetypes. These concepts have clear application in archetypal cosmology, which posits a significant interior correlation between planets

and human experience for, as Jung writes in *Synchronicity*: “the meaningful coincidence we are looking for is immediately apparent in astrology.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, by synthesizing the work of Jung and Whitehead, it can be said that the archetypal eternal objects are potentialities of meaning that exist prior to spatio-temporality, informing the meaning of the world that we find ourselves in through both synchronicity and panexperientialism, both of which posit an intimate connection between interiority and exteriority, subject and object, psyche and cosmos through their mutual participation in formal causation.

In fact, there appears to be a fractal structure embedded in this formulation, like a multi-layered pun communicated to us by the structure of being or the dynamics of process: synchronicity is the operation whereby two seemingly unconnected events, such as an external occurrence and an internal state, two simultaneous external events, or two events separated in time, are seen to be manifestations of the same archetypal complex. Analogously, or perhaps fractally, synchronicity and panexperientialism—two seemingly unconnected concepts—are both inflections of formal causality because they both deal with the interiority of things. Thus, the same structure of meaning is operative on different levels of significance, which seems to demonstrate the fractal property of self-similarity across scale: on the one hand, the level of specific individual occasions of synchronicity that connect two seemingly unconnected events and, on the other hand, the more abstract conceptual level where the two seemingly unconnected concepts of synchronicity and panexperientialism are shown to be related by their mutual participation in formal causation. Perhaps this fractal pattern can be extended to a third level to encompass the mutual participation by Whitehead and Jung in the conception of a new world view.

## Notes

1. David Ray Griffin, *Archetypal Process: Self and Divine in Whitehead, Jung, and Hillman*. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989), vii.
2. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 2. Griffin defines “process theology” as “the movement originating with Alfred North Whitehead” (*Archetypal Process*, vii), though I believe that “process philosophy” is more accurate as Whitehead saw himself primarily as a philosopher, not a as a theologian.
3. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 13.
4. Keiron Le Grice, *The Archetypal Cosmos: Rediscovering the Gods in Myth, Science and Astrology* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2010), 160.
5. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 16.
6. Richard Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations of a New World View* (New York: Viking, 2006), 1.
7. Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, 16.
8. Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York: Ballantine, 1991), 432.
9. Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, 84.
10. Richard Tarnas, “Archetypal Cosmology: Past and Present,” *The Mountain Astrologer* (April/May 2011). According to the syllabus for that course, the conference on which the book *Archetypal Process* is based constitutes “perhaps the fullest academic anticipation of the concerns and themes that later came to inspire the transdisciplinary focus of the PCC program,” of which Tarnas was the founding director, and which has been one of the primary incubators for archetypal cosmology.
11. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 11.
12. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 27.
13. See Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 26–39. Moreover, James Hillman, in his essay in the same volume, “Back to Beyond,” does in fact write rather extensively about astrology in the three final sections of the essay, beginning with the section entitled “Psychological Cosmology,” though, as with most of Hillman’s writing on this subject, it is difficult to pin down what he considers to be the precise relationship of the planets to the gods with which they are associated. Unfortunately, Griffin does not address this central aspect of Hillman’s essay in his response. For Le Grice’s discussion of this topic, see Keiron Le Grice, “Astrology and the Modern Western World View,” in *Beyond a Disenchanted Cosmology, Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology*, Issue 3 (San Francisco: Archai Press, 2011), 32–37.
14. Philip P. Weiner, *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York: Scribner’s, 1973), 272.
15. For an in-depth discussion of causality in relation to archetypal cosmology, see Le Grice, *Archetypal Cosmos*, 113–116.
16. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 10–11.
17. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 11.
18. Carl Gustav Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Bollingen Series, 1973), 20.

19. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 11.
20. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 87.
21. The discussion in this paragraph is based on a conversation I had with Whitehead scholar Eric Weiss
22. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 61.
23. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 44.
24. James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper, 1975), xx.
25. Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 22.
26. Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, xix.
27. Le Grice, *Archetypal Cosmos*, 68.
28. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 46.
29. Le Grice, *Archetypal Cosmos*, 69.
30. Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 22.
31. Le Grice, *Archetypal Cosmos*, 179.
32. Le Grice, *Archetypal Cosmos*, 171.
33. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 27.
34. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 27.
35. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 27–28.
36. See Sonu Shamdasani, *Jung and the Making of Modern Psychology: The Dream of a Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2004) for examples of popular theories in the late nineteenth century that presented variants on the notion of formal causality. As is almost always the case, any privileging operation, like that of material-efficient causation over formal-final causation, is always already deconstructed by the inevitable examples that contradict that privileging.
37. Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, 21.
38. Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, 56–57.
39. Tarnas, *Passion of the Western Mind*, 412.
40. See Morris Berman's *The Re-Enchantment of the World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).
41. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 31.
42. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 39.
43. Tarnas, *Passion of the Western Mind*, 425.
44. Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, 61.
45. Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, 50–60.
46. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 23.
47. Tarnas, *Passion of the Western Mind*, 434. According to Whitehead, “the process, or concrescence, of any one actual entity involves the other actual entities among its

components. In this way, the obvious solidarity of the world receives its explanation” (*Process and Reality*, 7).

48. Griffin, *Archetypal Process*, 32.

49. Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, 38. Although this statement seems fairly clear, Jung writes a mere six pages later: “One would therefore do well not to regard the results of astrological observation as synchronistic phenomena, but to take them as possibly causal in origin,” (44–45) which seems to contradict the statement made in the main text. Thus, Jung seems to have remained undecided about whether astrological correlations were instances of synchronicity or of efficient causation, whereas the consensus within archetypal astrology seems to be that synchronicity is the mode of causation whereby the movements of the planets can be meaningfully correlated with the events in human experience.

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