

SECTION D

Marie-Louise von Franz, *Number and Time*

SELECTIONS

"In the final analysis the idea of an *unus mundus* [one world] is founded, as he [Jung] says:

"on the assumption that the multiplicity of the empirical world rests on an underlying unity [E]verything divided and different belongs to one and the same world [Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, pars. 767-770]

"... Jung stresses, however, that there is little or no hope of illuminating this undivided existence except through antinomies. But we do know for certain *that the empirical world of appearances is in some way based on a transcendental background*. [Footnote: In the sense of 'transcending consciousness.' I will always use the word 'transcendental' in this sense.] It is *this* background which, suddenly as it were, falls into our conscious world through synchronistic happenings." p. 9

"Although the nonperceptual potential continuum or *unus mundus* appears to exist outside time, certain dynamic manifestations of it break through into our ordinary temporal sphere in the form of synchronistic occurrences." p. 11.

"It is not by chance that these models frequently take the form of *double* mandalas. They all represent attempts to throw light on the transcendental unity of existence in both a timeless and a time-bound aspect. The fact that more differentiated models of the *unus mundus* are double mandalas and that they are especially liable to appear when the problem of time and synchronicity becomes constellated, is presumably related to the function of number two as a threshold phenomenon." p. 95

"It is as if we are more inclined to ask the unknown 'What shall I *do?*,' while the East prefers the question: 'To what total order does my conduct belong?'" p. 120

"Jung used the expression *unus mundus* to designate the transcendental unitary reality underlying the dualism of psyche and matter. The idea of such a unity behind all existence is based on an archetypal foundation. The expression *unus mundus* originated in medieval natural philosophy, where it denoted the timeless, preexistent, cosmic plan or antecedent world model, potential in God's mind, according to which he realized actual creation. Joannes Scotus Erigena, for instance, describes the process of creation (in imitation of Dionysius the Areopagite) as a transition of the excellence of God's seminal power from a 'nothingness which lies beyond all being and nonbeing, into forms innumerable.' **This God accomplishes by means of his Wisdom** (through the Son 'through whom he knows himself'). These 'causae primordiales' **know themselves**, for they were created in Wisdom and remain eternally in her. The Sapientia Dei [wisdom of God] or Sophia is a kind of primal unity, a uni-form image which reproduces herself, yielding a multitude of primal forms, which abide simultaneously in the unity. These 'primal forms' possess self-consciousness; Joannes Scotus Erigena also calls them the 'rationes rerum,' 'ideae,' or 'prototypa' of all existent things. Hugo de St. Victor likewise termed the Sapientia Dei the 'exemplar' of the universe, or the 'archetypus mundus' in God's mind, in whose pattern the visible world was created. ...

"A notion similar to that of medieval theologians is also to be found in the works of certain alchemists. But they did not only conceive of the *unus mundus* as the initial plan of the universe existing in God's mind; for them it was also identical with the goal they were seeking, the *lapis*. It, like the *res simplex* or the philosophers' stone, was the *one* world. According to Paracelsus' pupil, Gerhard Dorn, the highest grade of the alchemical *coniunctio* consisted in the union of the total man with the *unus mundus*.

"The medieval philosophers merely ascribed potential reality to the 'one world' ... ; Jung also stresses the fact that he views the unitary reality underlying synchronistic phenomena as a 'potential' reality 'in so far as all those conditions which determine the form of empirical phenomena are inherent to it.' [CW 14, par. 769] The phenomena of synchronicity, however, represent sporadic actualizations of this unitary world. In contradistinction to the medieval speculations, synchronistic phenomena provide us, as Jung emphasizes, with *empirical* evidence of the existence of such a *unus mundus*." [CW 14, pars. 767f.] pp. 171-174

"[S]ynchronistic events appear to be linked up with an individual's inner development and in some way dependent on it." p. 190

"In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, [CW 14, par. 662] Jung made the important statement that the mandala is the inner psychic counterpart, and synchronistic phenomena the parapsychological equivalent, of the *unus mundus*." p. 195

"[T]he unconscious actually appears to contain a kind of 'knowledge' which is not identical with ego consciousness. In his paper 'On the Nature of the Psyche,' [CW 8] Jung took great pains to demonstrate that the archetypes of the unconscious possess a kind of 'quasi intelligence' which is not the same as our ego consciousness. Jung applied the term '**luminosity**' to this quasi consciousness of the archetypes, in order to differentiate it from the 'light' of ego consciousness. The same phenomenon can be observed from another angle when a synchronistic occurrence takes place. **Inner and outer facts then behave as if their meaningful relation were in some way known, but not to our personal consciousness. Differently expressed, a 'meaning' manifests itself in synchronistic phenomena which appears to be independent of consciousness and to be completely transcendental.** [CW 8, par. 948] It consists of representational images ... , and its appearances seems to be connected with the momentary activation of an archetype manifesting itself simultaneously in physical and psychic realms in the form of acausal orderedness. [CW 8, pa. 965] The meaning that unites these inner and outer happenings consists of knowledge unmediated by the sense organs. This quality of knowledge is what Jung calls 'absolute knowledge,' since it seems to be detached from our consciousness. [CW 8, par. 148] In other words, although the initial significance of a synchronistic event can only be experienced subjectively, the fact of a meaningful coincidence on psychic and physical levels suggests that **the meaning may also have been originally present in the objective event itself; something rational or similar to meaning may inhere in the event itself.** [CW 8, pars. 921-923]

"The idea that **meaning lies concealed in events themselves** was, as Richard Wilhelm has shown, predominant in earliest Chinese culture. We also come across it in the West, in Heraclitus'

conception of logos, to mention one example. Another version of this view is to be found in the Aristotelian idea of the *nous poietikos*, **an active intelligence inherent in the physical universe which is secondarily manifest in the human soul as the 'natural light'** and is capable of influencing man's thinking.

"In his work on synchronicity, Jung cites a number of other thinkers, both ancient and medieval, who believed in ... a *correspondentia* or sympathy of all things, **whose 'meaning' lay hidden in objective phenomena of the outer world** and could be investigated with the help of mantic procedures. These are the residue of a primitive magical thinking which has been more or less eliminated in the development of our more exact modern sciences. In the course of the development of these sciences, however, the baby has, as so often before, been thrown out with the bathwater, so that the directly observable manifestations of 'absolute knowledge' in the collective unconscious have also been thrown away." pp. 199-201

"Jung ... describes genuine synchronistic phenomena as 'parapsychological,' marginal phenomena which are only observable when our ego consciousness becomes 'dimmed.' This would mean that the **luminosity of a constellated archetype**, which shines forth in the 'meaning' of a synchronistic event, increases its energetic charge in proportion to the degree that the light concentration of ego consciousness diminished" p. 225

"[T]he use of a divinatory oracle represents an attempt to induce a spontaneous manifestation of the ... autonomous spirit by offering him 'his' speech By means of the chance throw of coins or twigs, a 'hole' is introduced into the field of consciousness through which the autonomous dynamism of the collective unconscious can break in." pp. 226f.

"[A]ccording to Jung, the manifestation of an archetype in synchronistic phenomena can appear both as an 'act of creation in time' and as the 'eternal presence of this single act.'" p. 254

"The God Shiva ... bore the title of Maha-Kāla ('great time') or Kāla Rudra ('all-consuming time'). As Heinrich Zimmer remarks, he symbolized the energy of the universe, the forms in which he revealed himself eternally creating, preserving, and destroying. The personification of Shiva as time was later incorporated into another image, the goddess Kāli (a word signifying the feminine form of *kāla*, 'time'), who represented his activating energy (*shakti*). With good reason Hermann Güntert equates the world *kāla* with the Greek *kairos* which means 'to attach the thread of a web together.' In this sense *kairos* signifies the 'right order' in time. The association of *kairos* with the goddesses weaving time alludes once again, we must mention in passing, to the idea of a 'field' in which 'meaningful connections' are interwoven like threads of a fabric." pp. 255f.

"When such a constellation exists and eternity breaks through momentarily into our temporal system, the primal unity actively manifests itself and temporarily unites the double structures into one, so to speak. This is how the *unus mundus* becomes revealed in the phenomenon of synchronicity." 263

Concerning the divinity Fa and the soul, *ye*, in the beliefs of the Fon tribe of West Africa: "*Every living person possesses an invisible soul (ye), but he does not understand its meaning; therefore*

whoever seeks the mystery of his life must for this reason approach Fa. He is called Fa and is the only principle (*ye*) which can reveal the truth about **the greater life.**" p. 267

"According to certain ideas of the alchemists, the individuated human being who has become unified must join himself to this mercurial spirit, 'not with the world of multiplicity ... but with a potential world, the eternal foundation of all empirical experience ... '" p. 270

[A] preconscous spiritual order lies at the base of all love relationships. Because there seems to exist such a spiritual 'objective' order at the base of Eros, it is expressed in the seemingly abstract, feelingless, impersonal order of numbers, as a clear, immutable factor free from illusions." p. 293

The "cosmic ordering of the Self constitutes the ultimate mystery behind all human desire and behavior, an unfathomable and fearsome mystery.

"The dead, according to many people's beliefs, concern themselves with this inexorable objective order behind all existence." p. 293

"According to ... myths the dead occupied themselves with the primal ordering of existence, in which all things lie in their natural order beyond the realm of the wishes and desires haunting our ego and its temporal earthly existence." p. 298

Behind synchronicity "lies the operation of a cosmic Eros which corresponds to an individual's urge to individuation and which, paradoxically, leads men in the end to a state of universal relatedness with existence." p. 299

"Since the concept of the *unus mundus* transcends consciousness, it is represented in mankind's historical *Weltanschauungen* by *symbols*, which most frequently consist of a double mandala portraying both the timeless and time-bound order of existence. While the timeless order seems to relate to the general concept of acausal orderedness in the physical and psychic realms, the time-bound order refers more to peripheral phenomena, such as synchronistic happenings, that are creative acts in time. The timeless acausal orderedness lies at the base of all transmittable information and cognition processes operating in man, and the time-bound synchronistic phenomena underlie those individually experienced messages of the unconscious which can only be adequately interpreted by the individual. The two systems are incommensurable, and because of this they form a fitting symbol for the ultimate unity of existence as a *coincidentia oppositorum*. In their mirrored images, as one reality reflects off the other, lies the mystery of their experienceability by the individual." pp. 304f.

bold emphases mine

CW = *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*