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Loneragan and Jung: A Dialectic

~~The Dimensions of Elemental Symbols~~

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Implicit in the foregoing analysis is the position that

Dream symbols ~~are~~ ^{can be} properly understood ~~only~~ from the

standpoint of what Lonergan calls a principle of correspondence
operators of the

between the three dynamic systems of organism, psyche, and

intentionality, ³⁷~~38~~ coupled with ~~Freud's~~ a development in Jung's

notion of the transformation of psychic energy. ~~Let us~~

~~begin with the latter.~~

In contrast with Freud, Jung does not reduce psychic energy to a mere biological quantum. In Lonergan's terms,

he understands psychic energy as a coincidental manifold

of occurrences from the standpoint of biological laws. Its

manifestations, then, are not adequately understood by

referring them backwards and explaining them in terms of

a displacement of irreducibly sexual object relations.

Rather, psychic energy can be directed to a host of different,

autonomous objects. Moreover, the story of its ^{compositions and distributions} ~~contents~~ is not adequately understood in terms of displacement, but is a drama of transformation. Transformation is not, ^{understood by Jung as} a repressive process but, ^{as} a natural phenomenon. The direction it will take is, however, determined by the attitude of consciousness toward the process of energetic compositions and distributions that Jung calls complex formation. Loneragan gives us some indication of the importance of the attitude when he speaks of the dramatic pattern of experience operative in a preconscious collaboration of imagination and intelligence selecting images for discrimination by conscious insight, reflection, and deliberation. These images provide the materials for the work of dramatic art that is one's project of living.³⁸ The preconscious collaboration

is easily distorted, ~~however~~ by the complexities of bias, ~~that~~ of a flight from understanding, truth, and responsible change.

I like to refer to the appropriate attitude as one of compassionate and attentive listening, ^{as} ~~of~~ a therapeutically tutored attentiveness to the easily neglected dimensions of one's subterranean existence. The therapy ^{in question} is a movement from

above downwards in one's intentional consciousness,

beginning with the complex mediation of transformative

love with the existential quest for value and moving to

a healing of the dimensions of consciousness concerned with

truth, meaning, and the richness of experience. The

healing development in one's being that issues from this

conversion process eventually brings one's intentional orientation

into contact with the psychic variant of the upwardly

but indeterminately directed dynamism that Lonergan calls

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finality and that at the psychic level is psychic energy.

The contact, finally, becomes a correspondence when the complex influences of bias are so effectively rendered at most coincidental that the symbolic operators of psychic development and the intentional questions for meaning, truth, and value that are the operators of intentional development function together in the promotion of a single creative vector of subjective development from below upwards. Thus the healing of attentiveness not only complements the creativity of the psyche and of intentionality, ^{even} but ~~also~~ releases the creative process itself in the form of psychic images and symbols that become signs when the deliverances of psychic energy are sublated by the levels of conscious intentionality. ⁴⁰

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The deliverance of psychic energy assume symbolic form in ~~dreams~~ ^{dreams}. The Jungian theory of symbols provides the most direct access to his notion of the transformation of psychic energy.

Dreams are not distortions of thinking or illusory relations to reality, as in the Freudian system of dream interpretation, but spontaneous productions of the psychic-sensitive layer of one's being that has its own distinct finality: the increasingly specific participation of the organism and the psyche in the increasingly specific differentiation of the form as an individuated totality. Through dream materials are provided to consciousness for intelligent, reasonable, responsible discrimination in the interests of dramatic artistry. Dreams are not so much symptoms of neurotic difficulty as they are symbols of the course of occurrences

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at the ~~psychic~~ level of psychic energy. They reflect the harmony of or lack of correspondences among the operators of the three systems of organisms, psyche, and intentionality. As such they are integrators and operators of total personal development: as integrators they systematize underlying neural manifolds, and as operators they promote the higher integration of human living that occurs when intentional consciousness deals with the dream intelligently, reasonably, responsibly. As operators they are not just symbols of the transformation of psychic energy, but they are transforming symbols. The direction in which energy is transformed depends on the attitude of intentional consciousness, its authenticity or inauthenticity. The dream corresponds to this attitude, by reason of the principle of correspond-

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ence among the operators of development in each of the three dynamic systems of organism, psyche, and intentionality.

Jung discovered that what occurs in the transformation of energetic compositions and distributions involves a movement from object-relations to imago-relations. What was once an object of one's energetic reachings -- e.g., the personal mother -- becomes, if dealt with properly -- a symbol of the life that lies ahead, a symbol that gives one the nourishing energy to move on in the creation of one's ^{work of} dramatic art. Thus the energy once invested in an object is now concentrated in a symbol which transforms the original investment in such a way as to promote one's movement into an adult future. This movement from object-relations to imago-relations is strictly synchronized with the real status of the object

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in one's life. If one has not successfully negotiated an object-relation, the imago corresponding to that relation will not be helpful but ^{hostile or even} destructive. But the important point is that in the development of the concentrations and distributions of psychic energy, the cathexis of energy is transformed from an object to the relatively unknown fact of one's development mirrored in the dream symbol. It is this transformation from object-relations to imago-relations that accounts for what Jung calls the archetype. A symbol is archetypal when psychic energy has been channeled into a symbolic analogue of its natural object, an analogue that imitates the object and thereby gains for a new purpose the energy once invested in the object.

Archetypal symbols are twofold. As reflective of a

a distortion of intentionality's orientation into the known unknown, and thus as corresponding to an inauthentic consciousness, they are mythical. As reflective of either a first- or second-naïveté relation of openness to the known unknown, they are what Jung calls ~~myth~~ mystery. Symbols as mystery ~~promote~~ correspond to intentional openness to the ever further questions for meaning, truth, and value that are the operators of one's intentional development. Not only do they correspond to this development, however. They also promote it, for they effect the participation sensitive consciousness and of the organism itself in one's development as an intelligent, reasonable, and existential subject.

Beyond the archetypal dimension of the symbol, however, there is an anagogic dimension. It can be

be properly understood only from a theological point of view, for which the finality of one's personal development is transcendent and involves one's participation in the divinely originated solution to the problem of evil. It is at this point especially that Jung's lack of an adequate appropriation of intentionality kept him from moving to a thoroughly adequate theory of symbols. The unrestricted spontaneity of our desire for intelligibility, the unconditioned, and value is a transcendent exigence, a natural desire to see God.