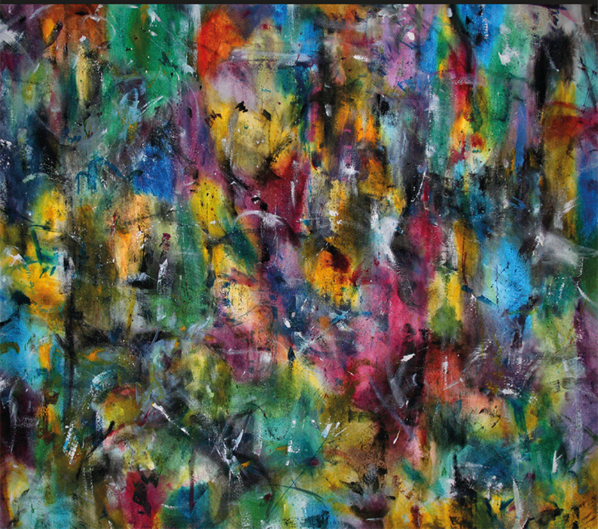
ROUTLEDGE

Archetype, Culture, and the Individual in Education

The Three Pedagogical Narratives

Clifford Mayes



Archetype, Culture, and the Individual in Education

In *Archetype, Culture, and the Individual in Education: The Three Pedagogical Narratives*, Clifford Mayes presents a unique approach to understanding how Jungian principles can inform pedagogical theory and practice. In a time when what the educational historian Lawrence Cremin called the 'military-industrial-*educational* complex' and its standardized education are running roughshod over the psyche and spirit of students, Mayes deploys depth psychology, especially the work of Jung, to advance an archetypal approach to teaching and learning.

Mayes demonstrates how catastrophic it is to students when the classroom is governed by forces that objectify the individual in a paralysing stranglehold. He argues that one's life-narrative is significantly impacted by one's narrative as a learner; thus, schooling that commodifies learning and turns the student into an object has neuroticizing effects that will spread throughout that student's entire life. In Part I, Mayes explores the interaction between archetypes and various types of time—ultimately focusing on the individual but always mediated by 'the cultural unconscious'. In Parts II and III, he brings together education with (post-)Jungian and (post-)Freudian psychology, examining transference/countertransference in the classroom; the Jungian idea of 'the shadow' applied to educational processes; Jung's unique vision of 'the symbol' and its importance for educational theory; and Jung's 'transcendent function' as a prime educational modality. Mayes concludes by looking to the future of archetypal pedagogy.

This groundbreaking work in the emerging field of Jungian pedagogy is invaluable reading in Jungian Studies, depth psychological theory, educational theory, and for teachers and psychotherapists.

Clifford Mayes, now an independent scholar, was, until his recent retirement, a professor of educational psychology at Brigham Young University. He holds two doctorates: The Cultural Foundations of Education (University of Utah) and Clinical Psychology (Southern California University for Professional Studies). As the founder of archetypal pedagogy, Professor Mayes continues working to expand that field.

'In this sparkling and erudite book that illuminates narrative and so much else, Mayes brings together philosophy, Shakespeare, the Gospels, educational theory, cultural history and above all, Jungian psychology in the service of what education needs to be. Here is a brilliantly persuasive way forward for a humane and rejuvenating teaching and learning to show us the way in the crises of our times. *Archetype, Culture, and the Individual in Education* is a blessed book and a spiritual-intellectual support for every teacher and learner.'

Susan Rowland, PhD, Chair, Engaged Humanities and the Creative Life, Pacifica Graduate Institute, and author of *Jung as a Writer*

'Mayes presents a beautifully articulated psychospiritual theory of teaching and learning. It has the power to animate the design of lessons, classroom teaching, and even to show how schools and other educational systems could ideally operate to promote the emotional and intellectual well-being of all students. And though deeply theoretical, this work provides a robust argument and a practical basis for accomplishing this goal. Mayes' theory of teaching melds narrative theory and archetypal theory into a pedagogy that, if embraced in teacher education, would lead to the development of a new generation of amazing and influential teachers.'

Stefinee Pinnegar, PhD, Acting Dean of The Invisible College, author of *Learning from Research on Teaching*, and the editor of *Advances in Research on Teaching*

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Clifford Mayes

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2020
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-1-138-38968-7 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-138-38969-4 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-429-42375-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Newgen Publishing UK

To Evelyn, my wife, and Elizabeth, my daughter

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Acknowledgements

My discussions with my students at Pacifica Graduate Institute in 'Jung in Context' and 'Introduction to Depth Psychology' around sections from the manuscript, which I invited them to critique, were enlightening and impactful. Daniel Culbertson, Ben Edwards, Kyle Jankowski, Vanessa Jankowski, Kevin Kell, Dr Donald Marks, and Susan Persing were extremely helpful.

I have been reading Jung for almost 50 years. Dr Pamela Blackwell, a sister and mentor, has read him longer. Although a clinician of the rarest abilities, her intuitive understanding of Jung's work rivals any scholar's theoretical formulations of it, and I have been blessed for 27 years to benefit from that. For this, and for so much else, thank you, Pam.

Dr Lance Owens, physician, a leading figure in the Jungian study of the Kabbalah, and Gnostic Christian priest, was very generous to me during a difficult transition in my life for no other reason than that he is so kind, and he has influenced my thinking greatly for the simple reason that he is so brilliant.

Fr David Mayer (*Societas Verbi Divini*) has been a spiritual advisor since I met him 37 years ago at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan, where we both taught. As a literary scholar, Fr Mayer's comments and criticisms regarding my work have made me a better researcher and writer. As a physician of souls, Fr Mayer has made a better man even out of one so refractory and rebellious as I.

I am grateful for the opportunity I had for several years to deepen my meditative practice under the watchful eye ('that never sleeps') of Denis Genpo Merzel, of both the Soto and Rinzai Zen traditions, at the Kanzeon Zen Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. His wisdom, humour, and kindness are themselves worthy foci of meditation. A master teacher, he taught me by example and thus not only enhanced my meditative practices but my teaching practices as well.

I have had the rare opportunity of working with Dr Susan Rowland. In her humility, she constantly resists what I cannot help but say after half a century of reading Jung and Jungians—namely, that she is the most innovative and insightful Jungian scholar on the scene today—one who has singlehandedly changed how we read Jung in her analysis of him in literary terms: 'Jung as a

writer'. She has changed my understanding of Jung in many salutary ways, a few of which I discuss in this book. These people have been key in my work in one of my two areas of research—depth psychology.

In educational studies, my other focus, the following people have been key in ways that are imprinted in invisible ink on every page of this study. Dr Robert Bullough, one of the premier scholars of the history of the 20th-century U.S. curriculum, showed me how to parse a curriculum as essentially a world-historical text that encodes the whole spectrum of a culture's psychosocial problems and prospects. Dr Stefinee Pinnegar's work in narrative theory, especially her prodigious labours of love with teachers about their sense of calling and the existential roots of their *praxis* has helped transform teacher education in the U.S., and would do so even more if policymakers and university and college administrators had the good sense to listen to her more, and more carefully. Her dazzling mind is matched only by her simple goodness. Dr Robert Carson, author of the *Ourstory* approach to the curriculum, offers in it a vision of the curriculum that is more capacious, daring, and simply more intellectually winning than any other theory of the curriculum I have ever encountered in my 30 years of studying it. Dr Joseph Matthews, veteran principal and noted scholar of the principalship, taught me, both by example and in his work, that in school leadership, as in everything, humour and balance are all. Dr Vance Randall, who was my chairman at Brigham Young University during my two decades there, and an important scholar of private education in the U.S., is the Chairman of chairmen, and everyone who has ever been in a position of academic leadership might well look to him as an example of enlightened and enlightening leadership. My admiration for these five colleagues is rivalled only by my love for them.

My Jewish mother and Italian Catholic father, fleeing their families' wrath because their marriage transgressed faith and ethnic boundaries in New York City in 1950, moved far away, landing finally in the unpopulated scrub-and-saguaro desert of Tucson, Arizona. There, between the Papago Reservation just south of our rough adobe home and the Mexican American barrios just north of it, I grew up, taught by my parents about the beauty of the Native and Latino cultures that bracketed our lives. They gifted me with a peerless education!

Above all, I stand all amazed at God having blessed me with my wife, Evelyn, and my daughter, Elizabeth. It is both a joy and a puzzlement to me that I have them (although it would be more accurate to say that they have me, eternally and totally). For, no man could possibly claim that he merits either one of them, let alone both of them. Each of them highly accomplished in her own right, they love and support me with a purity and consistency that I will spend this life working to be worthy of so that I may be with them forever, after this brief, mortal day has passed and the day that knows no end begins—that Time beyond time, when there is no one who does not consciously live, move, and have their being in the tender, universal embrace of the Divine.

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Part I

The archetype and time

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Chapter 1

Narrative, archetype, and the individual

Gaining perspective(s): the necessity of narrative

Our narratives are the stories that we are always authoring, adding to, erasing from, and sometimes radically rewriting in our minds for the 'creation of coherence' in our lives (Linde, 1993).[1] Otherwise, we would merely have a log of events, a list of whatever 'happened to happen'. Let that log be as complete as possible in minutest detail. Exhaustive and exhausting, it would also be meaningless. For if all we have is just a log of events, then there is really no story at all. A log's mere events do not just automatically form into patterns to provide a perspective on themselves. They do not interpret themselves.

That is what human beings do. We provide the perspectives. We are the 'meaning-making' agents. We create coherence in our lives—or not. If one is unable to make any deeper connections in events, then one is in danger of being caught up in what Gebser (1985) called 'a-perspectival madness'. Such a person is fragmented, unable to make connections. He is inchoate. This epistemological crisis is a feature of certain neuroses and psychoses, and it may, in the final analysis, be at the root of some of them, perhaps even all of them (Wilber, 2000). In any case, without any life-giving organizing narratives, life is devoid of meaning.

Our narratives are our meanings. Without them, a person may all too easily fall into either a lethargic depression—a 'depressive position'—or into the terror of being fragmented, of shattering, of being persecuted, of 'falling apart'—a 'schizoid position'—as defined early in the history of psychoanalytic theory by Melanie Klein (Klein, 1932/1975). Meaning makes connections between parts to establish a pattern. Thus, meaning, essential to the health of the human being, is narratival patternicity.

Not even the hard sciences using their universal language of maths are immune to the need to create narratives.

Take, for example, the idea of 'goodness of fit' from the field of statistics. This refers to when the formula describing an anticipated pattern of events is compared against the sequence of the events as they actually turned out. If the discrepancy between what was predicted and what was observed is

sufficiently low and there is only a very small mathematical remainder that falls below what random variation would have caused in any case, then there is a significant 'goodness of fit', and you can conclude with a certain degree of confidence that the sequence of events is meaningful according to what your formula anticipated. Your formula is meaningful.

Analogously, if the unfolding of sequences of events as we live our lives is close enough to how either our patterns of meaning predicted they would go or, *post hoc*, if we can find a pattern that does explain how they went, then we have a narratival 'goodness of fit' that engenders and reinforces our sense of meaning. I highlight 'sense' to imply that a person's entire grasping of and being grasped by life, a subjective and intuitive inner process, is much more relevant to us as human beings than any objective, mathematical set of formulas could ever be.

Yet even a mathematical procedure like establishing goodness-of-fit has a narratival aspect. And the most subjectively nuanced narrative makes meaning by comparing intuitive impressions and against actual outcomes. Bridging the gap between the subjective and objective domains, our narrativizing in both of our major epistemological modes, subjective and objective, poetic or scientific, evidences our ability, indeed our inner imperative to dwell in various 'realms of meaning' (Phenix, 1964).

Even so, there is no maths to describe the love that flows between a mother and her child as they lie in bed together after a day in the park and then, after eating their favourite ice-cream from the same bowl sharing a spoon, they both, finally, gazing into each other's eyes and stroking each other's hair, drift off at the same moment to sleep. In what matters most to us in our lives, it is our 'subjectivity' that we consult. And rightly so. For meaning is most human when it is most humane, and when it is most humane, it is most ethical. It is the fostering of humane, and therefore, ethical narratives in educational processes that is the purpose of this book.

None of our narratives, however wide-ranging and ethical, accounts for absolutely everything. As for those things that don't quite fit, we reconcile ourselves to the fact that all our meaning-systems come with a mysterious 'surplus'. We are not gods. We are limited human beings who are always adjusting our meaning-systems to be more meaningful under the stern tutelage of experience. Either that, or we fall into a pathology that is opposite to the 'a-perspectival madness' ('Nothing is true …'). We then suffer from (and make others suffer from) what we could call 'dogmatic delusionality' ('Only what I believe is true!').

At any rate, it is our patterning of what happens, in time and over time, that invests life with meaning. And since a pattern of events in one's life is what constitutes a narrative, then the question of whether or not life is meaningful really boils down to the question of whether a life is a workably coherent narrative. No narrative, no meaning. Hamlet's 'to be or not to be' can thus be translated into the question: 'Is there or is there not some narrative that

can explain all this wild, wicked and, maddeningly confusing stuff going on in Castle Elsinore?' And of course, that finally translates into the bigger question that is always hovering over us: 'Can I discover or fashion a narrative that makes sense out of all the pain and disappointment, so much apparently random suffering in my life and everyone else's, or can I not?' To be or not to be. To have a narrative or not to have one. That is the question!

Neurosis, seen in this light, is a 'narratival rupture', a temporal disconnection between point A in time and point B in time and from both of them to similarly disconnected points W and X (Hamlet laments: 'The time is out of joint!'). By this view, recovery in therapy is a 'narratival repair' with the client 'rewriting' an even better narrative than the one before the rupture/breakdown. When that happens, then the patient has learned (Mayes, Grandstaff, and Fidyk, 2019, 2017a). This makes of therapy an educational process. Conversely, educational processes have a therapeutic dimension as I hope to show throughout this book, especially when what goes on at school is enriching the student's life-narrative (Mayes, Grandstaff, and Fidyk, 2019).[2]

As for Carl Gustav Jung, he was insistent upon the point that therapy is about crises of meaning. It is not just about happiness. It is not even primarily about happiness. For, the stoical Swiss Jung believed that the goal of psychotherapy 'is not to transport the patient to an impossible state of happiness, but to help him acquire steadfastness and philosophic patience in the face of suffering' (1966b, p. 81). Therapy should be about finding meaning and growing in and through difficulty. Neurosis was, in the last analysis, 'the suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning' (1984, p. 198). And this meaning need not reveal itself in dramatic breakthroughs or result in great achievements in the eyes of the world. Meaning can be a humble thing, and usually is, Jung believed, discovered in the ordinary give and take of daily life (Jung, 1954, p. 45).

Jung's quiet, stoic tones are reassuring. But Gebser is also right in forcefully characterizing the lack of narrative as 'madness'; for, the root of neurosis and psychosis may well be a fundamental 'derangement' (de-arrangement—i.e., in-cohere-ence) of one's capacity to narrativize. Human beings need this meaning in order 'to go on being' (Winnicott, 1992). At least, they need meaning to go on being in creativity and courage (Frankl, 1967; Tillich, 1952).

Archetypes and meaning in life-narratives

In Jungian psychology, the major way of finding meaning in our life-narratives is through archetypes, which are the central concept in Jungian psychology. The main purpose of this study is to draw these two approaches to meaning together in Part I—namely, the idea of narrative together with the idea of archetypes—as a means in Part II of extending the reach and

expanding the scope of my previous work in archetypal pedagogy (2017a, 2017b, 2017d, 2015, 2012, 2005a, 2005b, 2002, 2001, 1998), which heretofore has not incorporated narrative theory in any systematic way.

This synergistic joining of narrative theory with archetypal theory—two fields of study that are intimately involved with the question of meaning—will hopefully result in ever more meaningful ways of shaping, assessing, and improving educational processes so that they are the most deeply and broadly applicable to all the domains of the teacher's and student's lives: emotional, cognitive, cultural, ethical, and spiritual. In general, what we will find in Part I, and will then apply to educational issues in Part II is that the more archetypal the narrative, the more meaningful it is; and the more meaningful the narrative, the more archetypal it tends to be. This is why 'the greatest and best thoughts of man shape themselves upon [the archetypes] as upon a blueprint' (Jung, 1967b, p. 69). It also accounts for the fact that

> whoever speaks in [archetypal terms] speaks with a thousand voices; he enthralls and overpowers, whilst at the same time he lifts the idea he is seeking to express out of the occasional and transitory into the realm of the ever-enduring. He transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind.
>
> (Jung, 1966a, p. 82)

An overview of archetypes[3]

The first thing to note about archetypes is that they are paradoxical. An archetype is like a coin whose two sides are always each other's opposite. Archetypes contain all that is light in the human experience and all that is dark. They lie at the core of all that is angelic in us and all that is demonic. They are the psychological and ontological source from which 'mankind ever and anon has drawn, and from which it has raised its gods and its demons, all those potent and mighty thoughts without which man ceases to be man' (Jung, 1967b, p. 67). At the same time as they are 'in us' and 'at our core', they are also cosmic realities so distant from anything we can know that they are impenetrable even by our most advanced cognitive faculties and subtlest lines of analysis.

The archetypes are paradoxical as well because they are both so primordial yet also so transcendent that their concentrated energy would simply explode consciousness to smouldering rubble to be in the immediate presence of their overwhelming power, an experience that leads almost inevitably to psychosis (Jung, 1967a). Therefore, they present themselves to us in the secondary, mediated form of archetypal symbols. These symbols, one remove away, as it were, from the core of the archetype, are formations that specially encode the meaning of the archetype as symbols. They are therefore called 'archetypal symbols' that convey a manageable portion of the energy of the overwhelming

power of the archetype-in-itself so that we can begin to engage with the otherwise entirely inaccessible. Ordinary ways of communicating ideas will never do in bringing us to the zone of the archetypal, where meaning resides in its most concentrated form—and those forms are always symbols.

Only the special power of the symbolic can bring us into the proximity of the sacred. This is because of the primordial and transcendent nature of the archetypes: Being both pre-rational and transrational, they exist primally before speech and cognition in the realm of sheer instinct while at the same time they exist transcendentally beyond the reach of speech and the possibility of any typical forms of cognition in the realm of sheer spirit. Jung thus said that, on one hand, archetypes are 'organs of the pre-rational psyche' while, on the other hand, they are 'categories of the soul' (Jung, 1978, pp. 67f). Archetypes cover the spectrum of all the major issues and impulses that always have and always will make up the human experience. They are perennial and universal although they dress up in different ceremonial vestments and dance to different rhythms from culture to culture.

In both their light and dark aspects, the archetypes are inherent in every human being. They are therefore 'collective'. They are also beyond the reach of consciousness—so much so that it is not enough to call them merely 'subconscious'—as in Freud's much shallower layer of psyche, the subconscious, where material is personal and therefore recoverable. We must instead call them 'unconscious'—a stronger term than 'subconscious', since we can of necessity never know them directly in their ancient and unreachable depths and heights. Therefore, Jung said that the archetypes reside in the 'collective unconscious'.

Every statement about the collective unconscious and its archetypes is at best a very rough approximation. We can neither primordially remember nor transcendentally intuit the true scope and full impact of the archetype. Archetypes bracket the possibilities of our consciousness from just before that misty prehistoric threshold where the first truly and uniquely human thought arose, and they go to just beyond that indescribable height where the most sublime reaches of mystical communion with the Divine breaks free of the orbit of human thought and language and disappears into the inexpressible rapture of the saint. This is the other reason we can never experience an archetype directly—namely, that it is also the very organ for knowing upon which all knowledge develops within us. Because we see through it, we cannot see it any more than the unaided eye can see itself or than teeth can bite themselves. One cannot see what enables seeing in the first place or know what enables knowing, for they exist by definition before all seeing and knowing.

Archetypes thus precede and transcend cognition. They are unknowable to us in our present epistemological limitations, yet they are simultaneously that upon which all knowledge was originally built at the unconscious level and towards which all knowledge ultimately strives at a supra-conscious

level—neither of which is accessible to us in our present limited condition. The one possible exception to this might be the person who has attained very high levels of yogic awareness so that all conscious thought processes reduce to 'zero' and the yogi is left with pure awareness as such. Even then, it is not clear if this pure awareness as such is finally another (although infinitely more refined) state of epistemological self-awareness or if it is actually being in and with the archetypal realm of being-as-such.

Nevertheless, as just noted, we are able to process and interact with the archetype through archetypal symbols. There is no other way for us to even begin to grasp the archetype than by the suggestive, multivalent, intuitive power of symbols. 'The symbol is the primitive exponent of the unconscious' while it simultaneously is 'an idea that corresponds to the highest intuition of the conscious mind' (Jung, 1978, p. 30). Covering the entire spectrum of human experience, archetypal symbols encode major issues and themes in our life-narratives in such a way that those narratives are infused with the indirect power of the archetype but not overwhelmed by it. The same is true of archetypal narrative-structures, which reflect overarching patterns and unfolding processes over the course of our lives.

Together, archetypal symbols and archetypal narrative structures—basically available to us as they inform dreams, creative processes and products, fantasies, and psychological symptomatology—offer potent yet subtle symbolic and narratival means of examining one's present life-narrative to make it more complete and creative, clearer and more powerful. One may then live one's life in ever-widening circles of passion and compassion that include all of life's dualities as one learns through hard-won experience to reconcile them. In this, one becomes wiser and, being more wise, more spiritual. The realm of the merely personal and mundane, the rigidly and simply temporal, is transported to the realm of the universal and salvific. When the present moment is infused with the Presence of that which transcends time, that which is Timeless Time, then, along with Lord Whitehead (1964, p. 14), we discover to our supreme delight that 'the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time, which is eternity'.

It is at this point that many misinterpret Jung as advocating for an escape from the socially normative, ego-oriented time of consensual reality in order to live in a never-never land of complete identification with the archetypes. But Jung never said any such thing. To the contrary, he understood the necessity of living a productive, sane, and reasonably safe life within the boundaries of social realities. Jung's conservatism will be a running theme throughout this study.

What he objected to was when those constraints become so overbearing or unreasonable as to alienate a person from her own soul, which he called the Self, and which one might equate with one's core ethical and perhaps even eternal identity. The great project in Jungian psychology is to establish an

'axis' between one's social identity and one's essential identity so that ego, under the aegis of the Self, is infused with and directed by a higher vision while, at the same time, one's visionary Self learns to manifest itself in ways that are emotionally grounded and socially useful, not run off into irresponsible and possibly even dangerous flights of archetypal fantasy. The establishment and maintenance of an ego-Self axis, fructifying in an ego alive with idealism and coupled with a soul pragmatically dedicated to the betterment of the world —this is the *desideratum* of Jungian therapy and one aspect of what Jung meant by the term 'individuation'.

Jung on archetypes

Jung wrote literally volume upon volume on the nature of the archetype. Let us begin by looking at a few particularly useful depictions of them.

One of the simplest and most poetic of Jung's definitions of the nature of an archetype is that it is 'the inherited possibility of human imagination' (1967b, p. 65). Already, we sense that an archetype goes well beyond merely academic, discursive categories of description and analysis. It has to do with more fundamental poetic capacities to 'imagine' realities that transcend the observable and measurable. And it is open-ended, dynamic, and creative because it is about 'possibilities'. Still, as the archetypes are also 'typical modes of apprehension' (1967b, p. 137) that we were born with, they also have something of the inherent and instinctual about them (1967b, p. 138). Thus, although involved in transcendence, they are rooted in our basic, even primal nature. They are 'typical' of us—even *arche*-typical.

We are then warranted in forming a composite portrait of the archetype as both transcendental and primordial. We might, therefore, speak of archetypes as the spiritual correlates of our instincts—or, as Jung puts it, our 'spiritual instincts'. They are the rarefied 'image of instinct in man' (1968b, p. 179). In a sense, therefore, archetypes are both the source and object of our inclinations towards and intimations of the enormity of Spirit within us.

Although there is, too, as we shall see throughout this study, great individual variation in how archetypes are experienced and enacted from person to person, there is also constancy from person to person, even culture to culture, and epoch to epoch. They are the ways that human beings respond to their situation as creatures *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Thus it should not be surprising that archetypes manifest themselves throughout history as a sort of ethical constant across time and space, being 'the functional disposition [of people] throughout different times, places and cultures, to produce the same, or very similar, ideas' (Jung, 1954, p. 102). Note here that the archetypes are not those historically recurring ideas themselves; for, those we do experience directly. Instead, it is the inborn disposition to produce such recurring ideas. Those we do not experience directly. Indeed, how could we? We only *have* an idea because of the 'functional disposition'

to produce that idea. We can no more turn our consciousness upon its source than a telescope can turn its lens upon itself to scrutinize itself.

An example of this is the ancient motif of the God who visits his people since they are in need of saving and he alone is mighty to save. Yet he must undergo a sacrificial death to atone for their sins and restore their land to a place of felicity and fertility. In ancient Egypt, that god was Osiris. For many people today, that god is Christ. The archetype is the same. It is the archetype of the dying and resurrected god who saves his people. But that archetype has been filled by different archetypal characters/symbols/events in the two different sacred narratives. The archetype is similar. The archetypal *images* differ.

It is as if an archetype were an empty container but charged with a certain type and realm of spiritual potential that for some reason gets activated or activates itself, or perhaps a blend of both. When that happens, different things begin to materialize in the box. They all bespeak the archetype, but they do it differently.

Osiris and Christ. They are alike in their archetypal core but different in their cultural and temporal manifestation. Both Osiris and Christ are realizations of the archetype of the Saviour. An archetype, therefore, is a specific type of existential/ethical potential. An archetype-as-such is thus a sort of 'empty potentiality' (Jung, 1978, p. 69) that can generate countless symbolic realizations of that potential without being reducible to any or even all of them.

Hence, archetypes could also be characterized as 'the stock of inherited possibilities of representation that are born anew in every individual' (1968a, p. 156).

It bears repeating that an archetype is a potential, a matrix of possibility, a 'possibility-field' out of which these specific ideational and imagistic crystallizations emerge. Indeed, Jung compares an archetype to the invisible force and abstract principle that governs the formation of a crystal (1968a, p. 80).

Other approaches to the archetype

Frey-Rohn (1974) offers an economical definition of archetypes as 'preconscious categories which [channel] thought and action into definite shapes' (p. 92). Other Jungians have pictured archetypes as 'a kind of mold for the accumulation and discharge of psychic energy' (Odajnyk, 1976, p. 25) and speculated that they might actually *be* patterns of energy at the deepest and most formative levels of the psyche (p. 143). As such, they are 'irreducible and primary', 'the structural nature of the psyche itself' (Palmer, 1995, pp. 8, 114). Samuels has said that archetypes 'constellate experience in accordance with innate schemata and act as an imprimatur of subsequent experience' (1997, p. 27).

I have elsewhere characterized the collective unconscious and its archetypes in the following terms:

> The collective unconscious is the dynamic psychic matrix from which all our other psychic functioning—conscious and subconscious—emerges. It is composed of archetypes, which can be pictured as constantly interacting, occasionally overlapping, and subtly morphing 'patterns of energy'—although I use the idea of 'energy' metaphorically since actual physical energy is far from a category that precedes thought, is measurable, and can even under some circumstances be observed; these are the very things that are not true of archetypes.
>
> (Mayes, 2012, p. 63)

Archetypes are thus the unseen 'dominants' (1967b, p. 80) as Jung used to call them,[4] that, on one hand, *engender* ethico-spiritual intuitions, but also, on the hand, are 'discovered' by those intuitions. They are only ever approached in the most indistinct and distant ways, if at all. They simply go beyond any form of human cognition, apperception, or intuition. We do gain a secondary purchase on them, however, as they emerge into existence as archetypal images that will vary depending upon personal, cultural, and historical circumstances and other stimuli.

At any rate, archetypes set the terms and tones of those things that are most important to us. They are everywhere implicit in how we interpret and shape our subjective and objective worlds in a distinctly human manner that has, in the most essential ways, remained fairly constant throughout history and across cultures although the material circumstances have changed and technical knowledge has exploded almost beyond the power to imagine, much less master. This does not touch the archetype. The archetype abides in a cosmic untouchability.

Another example of all of this may be useful. One may watch a series on Netflix set in urban America one evening, a play by Shakespeare the next, a tragedy from the Greek drama on the weekend. Next week, one goes with one's son to the mall to play the latest high-tech sci-fi theme game. All of these different instances of theatre may be equally interesting because, despite the radical differences in the time and place of the dramas, they deal with the same basic trials and tragedies, tensions and resolutions, perils and possibilities, triumphs and catastrophes that have always quintessentially captured the human condition.

It is a beautiful thing to celebrate difference in these times, which may in historical retrospect ultimately come to be called 'the age of multiculturalism', according to the philosopher of the social sciences, Brian Fay (2000). I will invoke multicultural theory throughout this study as I have in previous books, especially in my *Understanding the Whole Student: Holistic Multicultural Education* (2016; see also Thompson and Mayes, 2020).

There is the danger, however, that if that celebration does not also recognize and honour certain timeless, archetypal truths that do not change or go away—no matter the political force exerted on them, and that are indeed