SPONTANEOUS SYNCHRONISTIC EVENTS AS SEEN THROUGH A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION MODEL

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Many people experience very striking coincidences in their lives and attribute considerable meaning to them. The study of such coincidences is important for depth psychology, as it may have profound implications for our understanding of the psyche and its relationship with the universe, as well as for the usage of such material in therapy. Parapsychology is interested because, by definition, it deals at least with a subclass of coincidences, those involving unexpected correspondences between events in an organism and events in the environment. But there are other coincidences as well, often seeming to be removed from the domain of parapsychology, not interpretable in terms of ESP and PK. Attempts to theorize about the full range of coincidences reported have generally gone beyond the scope of parapsychology, involving various descriptions of the universe as having a tendency toward the production of pattern, of which meaningful coincidences are but one manifestation. Jung's concept of synchronicity as coincidences fueled by the power of archetypes is one especially well-known example and one that has been important in shaping the course of Jungian analysis techniques. The present paper is an attempt to synthesize synchronicity and related concepts with the subject matter of parapsychology as viewed from a communication perspective.

A major commonality between the two is the meaningful coincidence. Both deal basically with situations in which an observer notices a similarity between two events, not apparently causally related, and attributes meaning to that similarity. Parapsychology tends to focus on correspondences between events in an organism and events in its environment which, when noticed by the observer, imply to that observer that the organism either was influencing the environment (as in PK) or was being influenced by it (as in ESP) without access to known causal processes (i.e., anomalously). Elsewhere (Morris, 1986) I have developed a simple model describing this relationship between observer and observed coincident events, largely so as to organize our knowledge of

how we may be misled by ourselves and others into thinking a psychic interaction took place, whereas in fact it had not. The model can also be used to describe some possible modes of genuine psychic functioning and, as we will explore later, may even be expandable to cover a wide range of apparently synchronistic events as well. It may even be able to generate some testable predictions.

An Observer-centered Model of the Inference of Psi

Parapsychology, for present purposes, will be defined as the study of apparent new means of communication or transfer of influence, between organism and environment. Such new means are referred to as psi. Psi includes ESP, or anomalous input, in which an organism appears to receive information or influence of some sort, from some event in the environment, without the use of known causal processes. This can be expressed in simple communication terms. The environmental event (or target, as it is often called), seems to be serving as a source or sender, the organism as a receiver, and the message is the information they appear to share. It is impossible to specify what channel or medium conveyed the message, because it looks as though there are barriers up to prevent presently understood channels from operating. For example, suppose that at 9pm one evening one of my daughters announces suddenly that she is feeling very anxious and fears that something terrible has happened to her boyfriend. Much later that evening, we get a call informing us that at approximately 9pm he was in a car crash. It thus appears to us, as observers, that my daughter's experience was influenced by the tragedy befalling her boyfriend. The tragic event was the source, information about it (harm to her boyfriend) was the message and she was the receiver. Since the accident occurred several miles away, it appears to us that all known channels were blocked from operating, and we may infer that my daughter had a psychic experience.

In addition to ESP, psi covers psychokinesis (PK) or anomalous output, in which the direction of influence is reversed. The organism appears to serve as source, the environmental event or target as receiver and the message is the informational content of the apparent influence upon the receiver. We can reverse the example given above to illustrate. Suppose at the time of the car crash my daughter's boyfriend had consciously thought of her and "sent" her a strong message, "I need help," and had told this to a companion while they were both still pinned in the car wreck. Upon learning later of my daughter's simultaneous impression, he and his companion may conclude that he was

psychic and influenced my daughter's thoughts. Source, receiver and message stay the same, but a different set of observers may attribute psychic functioning to the source organism rather than the receiver organism. When two people are involved, as in crisis telepathy cases, observers often are inclined to attribute psychic functioning to whomever seemed to be actively involved. Had the boyfriend lost consciousness immediately, others would be unlikely to attribute psychic functioning to him.

Some other examples: If you go to psychics and ask them where your lost wallet is, and get a correct answer, observers would be inclined to say that the psychics showed ESP, that they seemed to receive information from the wallet and its surroundings. If someone strokes a piece of metal in front of an observer and it bends, the observer is inclined to say that that person showed PK, and seemed to exert influence upon a target aspect of the environment. In the latter case the concept of a message may seem less appropriate; it here would refer to the informational content of the similarity between the psychic's intentions and the behavior of the target, as perceived by the observer. In both sets of cases, it looks to the observer as though there is a cause-effect relationship, with source affecting receiver, although there does not appear to be any known physical cause involved. This is especially true of intentional psi, as in a formal or informal study, where someone deliberately attempts to interact with a target and is then seen to be successful. In any such study, one varies the message at the source, makes sure the barriers are in place and then monitors the receiver to see if changes in the source appear to have influenced the behavior of the receiver. To say that S has influenced R is tantamount to saying that S has served as a contributory cause for R. In more spontaneous, unplanned circumstances, however, observers may simply note an apparent correlation between two sets of events and not have any *a priori* reason for assuming one is S and the other R. They may assume that there is an S and R, or that the two events are interacting in some mutually causal way, or they may assume some third set of factors as responsible for coordinating (or synchronizing) the two sets of similar events.

Before pursuing some of these options in detail, let us flesh out the observer-centered model a bit more. The basic model states that observers become persuaded that a psychic event has taken place when they observe a strong correspondence between an organism event and an environmental event, such that it looks as though the two are connected meaningfully, yet there are barriers up which appear to preclude causal interaction between the two. There is more to it, of course. The

observers generally are not dealing with the two events directly; rather they are dealing with descriptions of them, the product of acts of measurement and recording, at varying levels of sophistication. This is especially true of organism events, when the observer is someone other than the organism. Such events must be inferred on the basis of verbal descriptions, consequent behaviors, assigned instructions (as in PK) and so on. These two sets of descriptions, be they subjective impressions and memories or more objective formal accounts, are what the observers actually compare. If the descriptions resemble each other strongly, we infer that they are connected in some way. We may attribute a general meaningfulness to the very fact of their resemblance, or we may find additional meaning, perhaps regarding one as symbolic of the other, or the two as sharing a kind of meaningful symbolism. The more meaning we find, the more impressed we are with the apparent connectedness of the two sets of events. In the case of my daughter and her boyfriend, I as observer would be comparing her own description of her experience and my memory of her consequent behavior with the contents of the later telephone call and, eventually, additional corroborating evidence about the particulars of the accident. My daughter could also serve as an observer, comparing her memories of her experience with whatever I told her about the telephone call. Each of us would be relying on information from other observers in part or completely. Any time an observer draws an inference about psychic functioning, he or she may be relying upon other observers for crucial details and may in fact be using third and fourth hand descriptions. In comparing the two descriptions, my daughter and I are using similar, but not identical descriptions. As we assess the similarity between them, we may attend primarily to various surface similarities—boyfriend, accident, 9pm, and any other particulars that may be recalled, such as associated imagery, any pains felt by my daughter in particular parts of her body that corresponded to his pains and so on. We may also seek and find deeper meaning, however. My daughter may have been feeling that their relationship was becoming tenuous, that she was uncertain about how much she really cared for him, such that the intensity of her response on this occasion represented to her symbolically a reaffirmation that she did care for him and would be responsive in his times of need. She may even feel that the accident came at a very timely moment in their relationship and this added meaningfulness could well add to her assessment that the two sets of events were causally related in some way and that they had shared a psychic experience.

The sophisticated observers go a step further as well. In their attempts

to decide whether the connectedness has an ordinary, causal explanation, they naturally pay attention to the barriers that appear to be in place, to ensure that there is no ordinary way for S to contribute causally to R or *vice versa*. But they also attend to the separate sets of known factors likely to have contributed causally to the organism events and environmental events. Ideally, there should be no overlap between them. The barriers should extend back far enough to eliminate any crosstalk or shared commonality between them. This can be illustrated by expanding on the example of my daughter and her boyfriend in two separate versions. In Version 1, the boyfriend is several hundred miles away and has been out of touch for weeks. The accident was sudden and unexpected, the result of an animal darting into the road in front of him. My daughter had little knowledge of his whereabouts and circumstances and, although in general concerned about his welfare, she had not previously expressed any specific concern for his safety. In Version 2, my daughter and her boyfriend spent the early part of the evening together and got into a big fight. He left the house in anger, stating that he was going to have a few drinks with some real friends and then make the long, dangerous drive home in the snow. In the first version, there appears to be good separation between the two sets of contributory causes. The factors affecting the accident have essentially nothing in common with the factors affecting my daughter's sudden anxiety. In the second version there is extensive overlap, such that she would quite reasonably expect him to be accident prone on that occasion. I, as an observer, would be quite impressed by the first version, but not by the second.

Having seen the various basic elements in the observer-centered model, we can now summarize some of the main ways that we can be misled by ourselves and others into overestimating the likelihood that a particular coincidence involves a psi component.

1) Barriers can be skirted in advance. The antecedent factors contributing to the organism event can overlap with the factors contributing to the environmental event. This can include: the presence of a third set of factors, common to the two, which coordinates or synchronizes them both; factors naturally affecting the target become known to the organism; the organism influences factors affecting the target and other crosstalk between the two sets of factors.

2) Organisms can take in and put out much more information than we ordinarily realize, in the diversity and sensitivity of their sensors and in the complexity of their biophysical outputs in addition to psychomotor output. They also can process and store information in more complex and more effective ways than we ordinarily realize.

3) There can be problems with the barriers themselves. Strong barriers can be weakened temporarily, allowing a brief "glimpse" or opportunity to exert influence. Barriers may be weaker in general than they appear and sometimes there is no barrier at all, but we are led to think there is.

4) There can be problems in the measurement and recording stage. Ideally, each should be done independently of the other. If one is done by someone who knows the outcome of the other, then that later description may be biased by knowledge of the former. Also, any factor that the descriptive processes share in common may lead the two resultant descriptions to resemble each other.

5) There can be problems in comparing the two descriptions, if in fact those doing the comparing are strongly oriented toward perceiving similarity or in avoiding perceiving it. We have a natural tendency as observers to look for pattern, since most of what is important to us as we perceive involves extracting pattern from noise, and thus we may be inclined to impose pattern upon ambiguous situations where such pattern does not really exist.

6) There may be problems in drawing inferences from the actual similarity between source and receiver, organism and environment. Just as we are good at attending to pattern and noting similarities, we likewise are inclined to ignore and forget all the opportunities for similarities and coincidences to arise when, in fact, none did. Thus, when we do notice coincidences, we may over-attribute meaning to them.

7) There are many ways that any given observer may not get good information about the other components in the model. They may be shielded from the information they need. They may be given inaccurate information or led to misperceive the accurate information they are given. Their attention may be diverted. They may be led to misinterpret or misremember the information they receive.

An expanded version of these problems, illustrated by strategies of mentalists, can be found in Morris (1986). They must be borne in mind any time an observer or set of observers is drawing inferences about the degree of correlation between two or more sets of events, including even two or more sets of purely physical events that may appear more purely synchronistic in nature.

Apparent Psi-mediated Correspondence between Organism and Environment

Using the above model, let us extend it now to look at coincidences involving organisms that appear to be interacting psychically with target aspects of their environments.

Real-time influence of source upon receiver. One main way of using the model is to hypothesize that when such apparent interactions take place, through some new means of influence, that is exactly what happens. Most of us act as though we think that happens. For ESP, suppose a psychic upon demand describes where a lost wallet is with accuracy. We would say that the factors determining how, when and where the wallet got lost were all ordinary factors, with no psi component. The factors determining the psychic impressions, however, would have included a strong psi component, having their influence during and after the time that the psychic became oriented toward this particular task. Thus the psi influences are in real time and closely tied in to the actual experience of the psychic, perhaps tied in as well to some sort of effort on the psychic's part, such as handling a token object, entering an altered state or going through a preparatory ritual.

For PK, suppose a psychic upon demand successfully attempted to start a stopped watch. The real-time version of this would posit that the factors determining the psychic's decision to start the watch and the volitional experiences of the psychic during the attempts were all ordinary, non-psi factors, having to do just with the social and physical factors leading to and including the request to start up the watch. On the other hand, the factors affecting the starting of the stopped watch would include a psi component, contributed in real time during the time the psychic became aware of the task and took steps to become volitionally involved. The watch was not working before, but now, after volitional effort by the psychic, it is. In each case, the factors affecting the source do not include a psi component, whereas the factors affecting the receiver do. This version of the model appears most obviously causal, with the source always influencing, or contributing causally, to the receiver.

What about precognition under the real-time version? Suppose I dream of receiving money and the next day I do receive money from a friend, repaying a long forgotten loan. Precognition is complex and admits to several versions. The true precognition version would say that I was actually psychic during my dream and was influenced by the future, shortly before and, perhaps, during the precognitive dream. The influence has impact in real time, although the source existed in the future and had to extend retroactively in order to exert its influence. There are a couple of other versions as well, which do not call for retroactive influence. One would posit that at the time of my dream I was serving as a receiver for one or more sources in the environment, sending me information that would lead me to realize that I would get money tomorrow. Perhaps as I dreamed I started to "tune in" on the fact that my indebted friend had now acquired enough money to pay

me off and was making plans to look me up to do so, next day. A second version would posit that I had an ordinary dream, but the next day I took steps to ensure that the dream would come true, perhaps through a combination of my own ESP and PK efforts, acting to bring us closer together, more likely to meet and so on. Perhaps he as well has now served as receiver, being influenced by my dream and subsequent thoughts about it, such that he as well now makes decisions leading him to be more likely to pay me off. This last variant is the most complex of the two and, although it is in many respects a realtime model, it introduces the notion that we will turn to more in the next section, the idea that there may be times when two individuals are simultaneously serving as source and receiver for each other, in such a way as to become synchronized in their activities and bring about one or more strong coincidences. It also introduces the idea that some psi functioning can take place at times other than the moment in time when the psychic influence appeared to be being felt by the receiver.

Psi-mediated interactions among contributory components of the model. In this section, we will consider possible psi effects in some of the components of the model besides the apparent source and receiver. A major opportunity for psi effects concerns the two sets of contributory factors, one for the organism and one for the environment. The complex of factors leading up to each one may include a matrix of physical, biological, psychological and social events, contributing in varying degrees to the final event of interest. Any time that an organism behaves in some way such as to influence part of that determining system, it could be serving as a receiver for a source related to the other determining system. Any time a physical or biological event takes place in one of the systems, it could be serving as a receiver for a volitional source from the other system. If we allow for unconscious psi effects, as most of us presently do, then there is ample opportunity, especially in spontaneous cases, for psychic communication to flow freely from one determinant system to the other, bringing ostensible source and receiver into closer and closer potential similarity, building gradually toward one very powerful and meaningful coincidence. Such coincidences could seem very synchronistic at the time, as though they had been coordinated by very deep structure indeed. Such coordination may involve additional determinant systems as well. Since the universe is not tending to become more and more alike all the time, it would seem important to note that under this variant of the main model, there would need to be some sort of connection linking or orienting a source in one determinant system to a receiver in the other. One becomes salient or important or meaningful for the other, perhaps because of

a basic thematic similarity, or because one is relevant to the needs of another, or because some elements in each determining system have been made aware of the other's existence. Crisis telepathy cases, for instance, involve two people who are well-known to each other and whose lives and experiences are mutually important. What appears as a striking coincidence at a time of crisis may in fact represent a single, powerful moment among a set of other less powerful, but also synchronized moments, to which each pays insufficient attention to notice any correspondences that are there.

Psi-mediated interactions involving observers. Another version of the communication model includes psychic functioning on the parts of observers, as they choose what to observe and when and how to observe it. Each step of the model involves observations on the part of observers, especially events surrounding source, receiver, barriers, their descriptions and the comparison of those descriptions. Observers decide if something involves a psi component. Psi, like beauty, rests in the eye of the beholder. If an observer or group of observers wants to witness a strong coincidence, they may increase the likelihood of doing so by selecting what they wish to observe and how and when to observe it. Obviously, a biased observer can sometimes produce spurious evidence for psi by forcing observation of events with a high *a priori* likelihood of coinciding. Comparably, a psychic observer could serve as a receiver for information from relevant sources directing him towards the right time, place and manner of observing. A psychic observer could engage in volitional acts, wanting to observe coincidence, thus serving as a source for receivers that are then modified such as to bring about the coincidence. In addition, there could be psi-mediated errors of observation, such that the descriptions of source and receiver are brought closer together than they should be. If I go to the psychic to find out where my wallet is, I may unconsciously know where it is and select to visit him at a time when he is likely to be thinking about the kind of location that actually contains the wallet. Or I may have two or three items missing, but only select to ask him about the item lost in a place that he is likely to describe. And, finally, I may mishear or misinterpret the psychic's description of his impressions, such as to create a stronger correspondence with the wallet's actual hiding place. Such observational effects are similar to the kind of psi-mediated experimenter effects frequently discussed in the research literature. In spontaneous cases, where observers are reacting naturally rather than in artificial, preassigned experimental roles, there is ample opportunity for a host of people to interact such as to bring about the observation of a powerful, meaningful coincidence. And the coincidence as seen by one set of

observers may be far stronger than that seen by another set of less involved or psychically active observers. It should also be noted that the above effect can apply to individual observers or to hierarchies of observers as well, as one secondary observer selects which of several possible primary observers to listen to or decides where, when and how to ask others to take observations.

In summary, there are many ways that a communication-based model can be used to link various sources and receivers together to produce the observation of a strong coincidence between organism and environment, of the sort usually labeled as psychic. Some of these can involve quite a few people, each contributing in relatively minor ways to a powerful final observation. Such complexity can upon occasion make it hard for any given observer to identify an obvious psi source and receiver, thus leading the observer to conclude that he has just seen a very strong coincidence, but it is hard to reduce it to terms of ESP and PK.

Coincidences Emphasizing Physical Events

We now move to a set of coincidences less likely to be attributed to psychic communication, namely coincidences between two physical events or between one physical event and a relatively disinterested individual, or an observer who regards himself as a passive onlooker. In each case, the observers regard the physical event or events as the true anomalies, such that it would not ordinarily occur to observers to attribute any psychic functioning to those involved.

Single physical events with observers. Here we have situations in which someone observes a very unusual physical event (or perhaps a quasi-physical event such as seeing an apparition) and attributes meaning to it. This can involve the feeling that the event has considerable importance for oneself, relating either directly or symbolically to one's (the observer's) personal circumstance or the general circumstance of the moment. Examples often cited from Jung's writings would include the scarab-like beetle that suddenly appeared at the window following a conversation about scarabs, or the sharp noises from the bookshelf during the debate by Jung and Freud over psychic phenomena, including the prediction by Jung that the second noise would occur. Both the beetle's arrival at the window and the loud noises seemed anomalous, unlikely, unexplained and special. Both were interpreted by observers as extremely relevant symbolically to the ongoing intense conversations. In both cases therefore there was a coincidence between organism events (the intensity involved in the issues being discussed

and their content) and an event in the environment, with meaning attributed to the coincidence. But the essence of what impressed observers and what led to the wide citation of these occurrences as examples of synchronicity, was the extraordinary characteristics of the physical events and the meaning attached to them by observers.

Given that there were observers who were intimately involved, a psi-communication based interpretation of such events would closely parallel the points raised in the preceding major section. Real-time source-receiver interactions with the environment could be responsible. Both Jung's client and Jung himself could have been real-time receivers of information about an unusual event in the vicinity, a beetle that had blundered its way into strange territory, such that this affected the turn of their conversation and maintained its focus and intensity. Analogously, Jung and perhaps even Freud may have received information in real-time (or perhaps precognitively, bearing in mind the problems alluded to earlier) of the likelihood of such a noise occurring due to some combination of structural weaknesses and environmental changes of some sort. This may have affected the content and intensity of the discussion, decisions about when and where to hold the discussion and even subtle actions in the vicinity of the bookcase which might have put the structural weaknesses over the threshold level. Or, if we take the concept of PK seriously, especially the possibility of macro-PK, we must consider that Jung (and perhaps Freud as well) may have served as a psi source with bookshelf as receiver, either providing a small "push" to an already somewhat structurally disposed bookshelf, or a sizeable effect upon a bookshelf not at all about to produce such a noise if left alone. Following the arguments developed earlier, it is also possible that source-receiver interactions took place earlier in the sets of factors determining the conversations and the events leading to the anomalous physical event, throughout the time period preceding the events and their observation. It is also possible, for such events in general, that there are frequent opportunities throughout daily life for apparent anomalies to be observed, and that potential observers periodically serve as psi receivers for information about how, when and where to conduct acts of observation such as to increase the likelihood of meaningful anomalies being observed. Once again, granted the concept of PK, it is conceivable that various potential observers, including secondary observers, contributed in some measure as psi sources to the events they observed.

Coupled physical events. Here we consider circumstances that seem even less removed from interpretation as psi communication, namely coincidences between two physical events or sets of events that are

noticed by observers and to which those observers attribute meaning. Examples of this would include the kinds of serial coincidences of such interest to Kammerer and Koestler (e.g., Koestler, 1972), such as the repetition of specific numbers in a series of events or an unusual name cropping up several times in a short period of time. Here, of course, one must be especially wary of the fact that we tend to underestimate the likelihood of such coincidences occurring in accordance with the laws of chance, largely because we conveniently ignore the many opportunities for coincidence to occur and yet none in fact does. Once a short series has been noticed by an observer, that observer may well now be on the lookout for further instances and be very selectively attentive. This also provides motivation for the observer to participate in source-receiver interactions with the environment, such as to increase the likelihood of continuing to observe events that will continue the series. The notion of observers interacting with their environments unconsciously, but using psychic functioning to address basic needs (such as a need to observe meaningful coincidences) has been very well developed elsewhere by Stanford (Stanford, 1974a, b). An initial strong coincidence, either at the start of a series or of sufficient impact to stand alone, may be produced in part by such observer effects and in part by source-receiver exchanges in the two sets of factors serving as contributory causes for the two separate events, especially if there is a prior linkage between those two sets of factors.

Thus the communication model, positing one or more source-receiver exchanges involving the organisms among the various real-time components of a coincidence, or their contributory causal antecedents, or the observers that contribute to the final decisions, can be applied to all circumstances in which one or more observers conclude that a meaningful coincidence has taken place. But there are alternative interpretations as well, that appeal to something much deeper than a series of individual psychic exchanges.

Third Factor Coordination of Coincident Events

Various attempts to account for coincidences have rejected the notion of cause-effect linkages between the two coinciding elements and have talked instead about third factor coordination of the coinciding events, holding neither event nor its antecedents in any sense responsible for the other.

Intelligent, volitionally active third factors. Such third factors might include: (a) an individual human, or group of humans, interested in the induction of pattern, including coincidence in their environments,

whose physical and mental activities contribute to the production of sufficient coincidence that it will be noticed by others and the pattern detected; (b) another discrete entity or group of entities doing the same, for their own reasons, as is frequently noted in mystic accounts of gods and lesser spirits as they interact among themselves and occasionally interfere with the course of human events for their own purposes and (c) an intelligent, coordinating principle at work throughout the universe, perhaps tied to various monotheistic traditions or even to variants of the gaia or strong anthropic principle interpretations of the universe as an organized, living entity in itself, capable of planning and implementing a plan. All three of the above can be viewed as extensions of the communication model, except that the concept of the organism is no longer confined exclusively to biological organisms and there are few if any limits placed upon the capacity of the entities posited to communicate.

Non-intelligent, passive third factors. An alternative set of views pulls back somewhat from the preceding and talks about the universe having characteristics that are conducive to the production of pattern. Some of these may be bound into currently understood physical, biological and psychological principles. The universe as a whole may have a tendency toward pattern as a result of aspects of its deep structure that may remain unknown to us, except perhaps crudely when we experience mystical states. Such deep structure may be reflected on the surface in part in terms of our current scientific understanding of how the universe works, as well as in terms of other factors only partly understood, but which impel us occasionally to experience pattern that is not obviously consistent with current views of science. Such factors could then serve as the "third factors" responsible for coordinating anomalous coincidences of the sort that have served as the theme in this paper. One of the most extensively explored of these, at least qualitatively, is the concept of the archetype, along with its associated idea of synchronicity. For the remainder of the paper I will focus on this concept and how it may relate to the communication model developed above.

Synchronicity and the archetype. Jung referred to synchronicity as an "acausal connecting principle," by which he meant acausal in the sense of not due to presently understood physical mechanisms. He did not mean it to stand outside the idea that one factor can influence another in ways other than those understood by the physics of his time. Rather, he used synchronicity to describe the coordinating or synchronizing of two or more sets of events as the result of the activation of an archetype from the collective unconscious. Such coincidences would be strongly tied to the theme of the archetype, albeit perhaps symbolically,

such that an observer of the coincidence could recognize the consequent meaningfulness of that coincidence, either directly or as a result of proper reflection. One component of Jungian analysis involves helping clients understand and utilize the meanings inherent in the coincidences they observe (see Bolen, 1979, for a recent discussion of this process, including its relationship with parapsychology). It is important to note that Jung did not use the term synchronicity to refer to all meaningful coincidences, only to those for which an archetype could be identified (cited in Bender, 1977). No archetype, no synchronicity.

What then is an archetype? Crudely put, it is itself a potentially active component of the collective unconscious, the apparent product, at least in part, of repeated universal experiences of humankind, which have occurred so often and with such consistency that the underlying theme has come to take on a life of its own, so to speak, not necessarily with intelligence, but with the capacity to exert influence when activated in an individual in some way, such as by thematically related ordinary events having impact upon that person. It shows up repeatedly in myth and symbol throughout different cultures and can emerge in human consciousness at many different levels, taking on a "habitus" specifically adapted to the idiosyncratic experiential history of the individual person, yet unchanged in terms of its fundamental structure and meaning (Jacobi, 1962). Archetypes can be very broad, such as shadow, animus and anima; or more specific, such as death, the sun, the trickster, the wise old man, mother, father and so on. The archetype can be actively involved in the production of coincidence since, when an individual starts to become involved in an archetypally related theme, this serves to increase the likelihood that the archetype from the collective unconscious will become activated and have influence upon the further experiences of that person as well as in the events that happen to that person, without recourse to physical cause in the usual sense of the term. The specific details of such an activation process and its consequents, as viewed by Jung, are not regarded as well understood today and I have probably done them enough disservice already (see Jacobi, 1962, for a clearer discussion and for reference to appropriate works of Jung). Rather I will now try to blend my understanding of some basic characteristics of the archetype-synchronicity system with the communication model developed earlier, to see if it can relate the two in a way productive for parapsychology.

Synchronicity and the Communication Model

Let us start with a tentative notion of the archetype as representing a deep theme that pervades much of human culture, shows up repeat-

edly in myth, is capable of producing strong emotional experience in us and may serve in some sense as a third factor in coordinating synchronistic coincidences. Synchronistic coincidences are ones which have (or can have) strong meaning for observers that is related to the central theme of the archetype involved as third factor.

How might such archetypes develop and hold their strength? Jung felt that the basic themes of archetypes were linked to repeated, intense experiences shared by people in a variety of different societies. The abundance of crisis telepathy and related anecdotes suggests that intense experiences can function as effective psi sources, that they tend to produce information that is more readily available to relevant receivers. If such experiences occur simultaneously, in real time, they may reinforce each other, having an additive effect and, perhaps, creating an even more powerful message. Once experienced, such information is stored in the experiencer's memory, perhaps retrieved and embellished now and then, perhaps augmented by similar, later experiences. Such information may, therefore, increase its strength as source. The core of the message, the most powerful message, would be the common denominator, the shared, consensus nonidiosyncratic elements of the experience. Such a source could be received from time to time, or work its way into awareness, without necessarily seeming to be anomalous or special, or as part of a coincidence. If the core theme is received, it may then appear fairly directly and intensely, or it may undergo idiosyncratic processing and emerge embedded metaphorically or symbolically. If certain associations to the theme are also shared by many individuals, this could lead to common processing modes and thus to common metaphors or symbols. If those symbols repeatedly get incorporated into the central theme of the archetype, they too may become part of the core message, becoming near-universal symbols.

As it develops, an archetype might gain strength as a source by dint of natural reinforcement, coming to take on an identity of its own, perhaps related to aspects of the nature of psychic exchange that we have yet to learn about. If something tangible in some sense is exchanged during psychic communication, that something may enable additive effects in the development of a stronger source, more readily accessible to receivers. Or, it could simply be that the mere frequency and intensity of a particular kind of experience constantly provides more alternative sources for the same message, thereby increasing the availability of that message to a wide range of receivers. Any receiver accessing the same message from more than one source may receive that message a little more strongly, may extract the core of the several available messages, may be more likely to have that message survive various levels of processing and filtering and emerge into consciousness.

Such filtering appears to be part of any psychic functioning, in that somehow we have filters that screen out far more information than they admit. If various archetypes do develop and acquire properties as a powerful source, then there may be special filters associated with them that buffer us from being overwhelmed by the collective intensities of the past. Such filters may have evolved and have common as well as idiosyncratic aspects. Their presence and occasional breakdown, partial or complete, would be involved in the only occasional emergence of archetypal material into consciousness. Perhaps when Jung talked about activation of the archetype, he was talking about the kinds of factors (such as powerful ordinary experiences associated with the archetypal themes) that would temporarily circumvent the filters and allow more direct access to archetypal sources. If a workable model involving the archetype concept is to be developed and tested, one opportunity to do so will be to specify the nature of the filters and the conditions that will facilitate their bypassing.

How might an archetype strengthen itself over many generations? Information from the past might become available to us in different ways.

1) If transtemporal influence of the sort involved in true precognition or retroactive PK is possible, then retrocognition may also be possible. This would mean that earlier experiences would be available as original source at any time in the future, for later receivers. Retrocognition is very difficult to test directly.

2) There is some evidence for the concept of psychometry, that physical objects such as personal items (watches, keys, wedding rings and so on) may serve as repositories for information at a later time, by someone in the vicinity. This notion could be tested, as it would predict increased archival activation in the presence of objects physically associated with archetypally relevant original experiences.

3) For major archetypal themes, the past always overlaps with the present. We are all experiencing wise old men, or parents, or death at various times, and the cumulative effect may roll on not unlike a wave. At any given moment, thousands of people are having thoughts and experiences connected with death, the trickster, the life-giving properties of the sun, and so on. Hundreds of thousands of others store very vivid memories of such experiences, including (if the model has validity) archetypally induced experiences. All represent real-time sources available to relevant receivers.

4) As mentioned earlier, experiences and their communication may have properties which allow the build-up of information on its own, not just specifically linked to a particular experiencer. Jung talked about a collective unconscious, which served in part as an archetypal repo-

sitory, as though there were a tangible, independent reality attached to it. Any such repository would serve as an available psi source; if one considers the possibility that such a repository could have an intelligent, volitional aspect, then it could serve as an active as well as passive psi source.

Within the communication model, then, any concept related to the notion of an archetype or a repository of intense, repeated experiences clustering around a theme, or any other way that such experiences can have a long-term existence, would posit that such experiences directly or indirectly contribute to a source of some sort, thereby providing access to present and future receivers.

How might such archetypes bring about synchronistic events? By being a widely available source, they could contribute causally to a variety of event-determining systems, thereby increasing the likelihood that co-incidences will occur which relate to the theme involved.

1) Once activated, perhaps by a vivid experience occurring in the ordinary course of events, a particular archetype would then become increasingly accessible to the experiencing individual and those associated with him or her in various relevant ways. They may become aware of the archetypal theme in direct or only indirect ways. Once they had been influenced by the archetype, they would then become more likely to serve as psi sources and receivers for thematically relevant aspects of their environments, thus contributing to a slight reshaping of the environment and increasing the likelihood that observable second events will emerge in the environment (in ways already discussed much earlier) that will produce synchronicities for them. It may often be that the person whose initial experiences were most responsible for activating the archetype might not figure in any final observed synchronicity at all—it may happen instead to an associate.

2) A strong event, such as an unwitnessed death, may serve as a strong enough source in the environment that it could in itself serve to activate an archetype, thus having influence upon associated individuals and producing synchronicities without anyone ever directly experiencing the event initially responsible.

3) Once activated, an archetype would become a more salient, attractive source in the environment in general, and might reinforce the salience of other events and experiences naturally occurring in an environment, such that these related events and experiences would in turn be more likely to serve as sources, or, if organisms, as receivers themselves for thematically relevant information.

4) Once activated, an archetype could contribute to the ways people observe what goes on around them, thus leading them to seek out

random, but interesting coincidences. The coincidences themselves would not be synchronicities; the linked, coincident observations of them would be, however.

5) Once activated, an archetype could influence the interpretations people place on events that they notice, such that they might be inclined to impose an archetypal theme on events that really were unconnected in any sense and would not seem synchronistic to the observers under other circumstances.

Implications for our research. Can such notions be applicable to our research in particular and our general efforts at theory construction? One problem involves refining the concept of the archetypal theme. Various lists exist, which include concepts that can be intact as theme and yet can have considerable overlap. If your wise old father dies, that event relates to three archetypes, albeit perhaps in varying degrees, depending on the circumstances. Archetypes as construed by Jung were major and universal. But if we relate archetypes to frequent thematically cohesive intense experiences, we may find a continuum, including culture-specific ones, universal but minor ones, thematically diffuse clusters, ones declining in strength, and perhaps nascent ones (the cathode ray tube or computer screen archetype, perhaps, the soft square as its associated mandala). It may be possible to take various criteria for archetype generation and derive archetypal themes freshly, based on a knowledge of intense human experience, and see how they map onto those derived more extensively from cross-cultural explorations of myth.

Some good descriptive work by a set of experienced (and naive) observers deliberately assigned to keep coincidence diaries would help. Such diaries would include both material on what strikes one as a perceptibly impressive coincidence as well as what strikes one as a perceptible and meaningful coincidence. Of especial interest would be a detailed attempt to describe the apparent crucial causative events, to see if there is evidence of commonality, even psychically mediated commonality. In the Jung-Freud case, for instance, what decisions were made to hold the conversation on that theme at that time and place, what was the immediate history of the bookcase, and so on. One would look for evidence of coordinating efforts organised along an archetypally relevant theme. Additionally, such diaries would enable one to look for clustering around identifiable themes and, when read by others, could assess the ease by which coincidences can consistently be assigned the same archetype by different observers.

A more active approach would explore attempts to activate an archetype deliberately within a semi-closed system of friends and ac-

quaintances, to see if appropriate coincidences seemed to emerge. If so, then one (with some trouble) might even be able to move toward a procedure analogous to free response blind judging, wherein after a week, the group (or individual) would rate whether an archetype induction had been attempted for them, and if so, which one. There are ethical issues here and such work would have to be planned carefully with full approval from all concerned.

Regarding research endeavors themselves, what can we say about controlled experimental studies? It has been argued elsewhere (e.g., Bender, 1977) that experiments, because of their cause-effect nature (manipulate the source deliberately and monitor the receiver) do not provide opportunity for archetypal coordination and thus fall outside the domain of synchronicity. Yet Jung included such experiments as part of his evidence for synchronicity. Perhaps, given the sporadic nature of experimental results in parapsychology, such experiments are themselves examples of synchronistic successes and failures, succeeding only when the psychic endeavors of all those concerned are sufficiently coordinated. Experimenter effects could be included here, mediated in part by decisions such as when to schedule a session, selection of target, selection of routine by the subject earlier in the day and so on. It is easiest to apply this to free response studies, given the rich descriptive information to be compared in evaluating the result. Are researchers and experimental participants, then, passive participants in synchronistic processes at best, when they succeed, and insufficiently involved with an archetype when they fail? Can one decide effectively to study synchronicity? Could one sufficiently step outside the synchronistic process such as to observe it, or would any such set of decisions about when, how and where to study such a process only succeed under conditions under which an archetype had been adequately invoked, thereby including the researcher inevitably in the system being researched?

A related question concerns the idea that experiments, in and of themselves, during their planning and conducting, may activate an archetype. Elsewhere (Bolen, 1979) it has been suggested that experiments may be most likely to succeed when those involved take the time to activate a facilitating archetype, such as "the miracle." It may also be that we may occasionally activate alternative archetypes, such as "the trickster," that are not so psi-conducive. Of course, more than one may be activated, and each individual participant may have activated a helpful or not so helpful one.

These are very fuzzy ideas still, but they do take some steps toward testability, especially in the design and conducting of studies where

sources of noise are used in target selection. They also suggest certain procedures that could be tried to activate favorable archetypes. Perhaps this is related to the extensive preparation procedures of such successful researchers as Braud and Schmidt, as described by Schlitz (1986).

Summary

The present paper is still far too vague in its attempts to tie together various strategies for interpreting coincidence. Four themes have been explored: ordinary explanations, real-time psi communication, trans-temporal psi communication and third factor coordination, as exemplified by the concept of the archetype. They are not mutually exclusive, more than one may transpire at the same time, and more than one may turn out to be saying the same thing as the others, to be reinterpretable in terms of the other. If we are to progress in our understanding, it is important that we continue to evaluate such concepts and their potential relevance for the work we do, including the kind of conceptual sharpening that will allow testing and evaluation.

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DISCUSSION

HASTINGS: This is a wonderfully explicit and well thought through proposal. Thank you for detailing it. In transpersonal psychology the psychologist Stanislav Grof has discussed a concept very similar to your

discussion of archetypes, but in the individual person, which he calls systems of condensed experience in which events cluster around a particular emotional tone or event and then operate within the individual to cause events. So that might be useful to add to your panoply of resources and to connect this with my discussion on motivation. Very often in the stories of these synchronous events what one finds is that they are responsive to motivations from the deeper self. There often may be a deeper psychological purpose to these synchronicities. It may not be that the person is in the grip of the archetype, it may be only that the person is doing something which furthers his or her own growth, his or her own progress in life, and the archetype is a part of that. So one often can see that there is motivation underlying these as well as just an archetypal imagery.

MORRIS: It is very interesting, because when you get into motivation you normally think of volition. In apparent synchronistic systems, where if at all, does volition or free will enter in? Some would say that in such circumstances we are not at all volitionally affecting our own destinies and are somehow being carried on by other influences, beyond our control.

HASTINGS: I don't know that it is motivation at that free will level.

ISAACS: What I liked about your communication model is that it makes things explicit which are implicit in other models. But I think some people may not want to approach psi in that way. They may not want to see psi as communative. Nevertheless it seems to me that one of the classical attempts that we must make to frame psi must be within the communication model. You are doing a really important job there. Having said that, there are some specific comments I would like to make which I think lead me to questions which might go underneath some of the theorizing you have presented here.

MORRIS: Let me just interrupt for a response to that. I think that it is important to view this as something that is set up not because I necessarily espoused the communication model, but simply because I would like to give it a good, stiff workout so that if it is badly flawed we will gradually come to realize it.

ISAACS: I agree with the spirit of that. One very interesting study of the mood adjective check list happened by chance when a group was given that test just after the Kennedy assassination. It was found that the whole class of students had shifted massively away from the norm. What I am suggesting is maybe you get good sitter group PK when the whole group is charged up and in a very positive mood because of Australia winning the Cup. I would suggest there may be an effect on mood there rather than an archetype. In terms of the archetypal evo-

cation being psi-conducive, Stephan Schwartz has reported (I don't know his data well enough to know how formal this is or whether it is well controlled or not) that certain of his targets in remote viewings which could be seen as having archetypal connotations, things like stone circles, churches, sacred sites, are preferentially hit by displacement in remote viewing experiments. It is as if the targets have a very high numinous value and signal their occurrence to the viewers who preferentially tend to pick them up rather than targets having less archetypal value. The point I want to put to you is this. One of the problems in Jung's theorizing is that there is a great deal of ambiguity about how unconscious the archetypes are. It seems to me that at some level people are aware of the kind of emotional response or thrill which accompanies religious sights and many of the archetypal elements such as death, destruction, the miracle, the coming of the new age, etc. I am not so sure that the archetype language is useful if we are confused about what status these archetypes have. Jung's original use of it was that these were unconscious and they were within what he models as an unconscious mind. We seem to be wanting to use these in a more conscious way, where there are specifically identifiable emotional reactions which are clearly accessible to consciousness. The implication of your talk is that if the theorizing is right—and I understand that you are fairly neutral in this area—is that in order to obtain large scale psi events you have to evoke and activate the archetypes. Then the idea of normalizing psi function becomes impossible unless we also normalize procedures and practices which evoke archetypal forces. This has a direct bearing on the issues of ritual, of visualization, etc. What it means is that maybe psi will never be the kind of thing we do today sitting in front of a computer in a very normal kind of situation. Then psi will never be readily accessible because of the fact that archetypes are not activated under those conditions.

MORRIS: I think the concept of the filter becomes one of the most important ideas with regard to how conscious or aware one is of archetypically-related material, and that concept needs to be expanded quite a bit. Some of the individuals who contribute to synchronistic events may not be that much aware of the ways in which they contributed. Also my construance of the archetype was that it would be experienced in ways that could be quite idiosyncratic to the person involved. Observers might not even necessarily be able to identify the particular contributing archetype. I think here the point would be that as people do serve as receivers they may not even be conscious of what goes on. Unfortunately as far as I am concerned such awareness is a

continuum, not a yes/no notion. For instance, I cannot tell for sure at any moment whether I have totally stopped thinking about death.

With regard to the notion of the archetype as necessary for psychic functioning, note that what was being proposed above was that the archetype really was serving as a third factor source. It would then induce various circumstances which would in turn lead to other psi-mediated interactions. In the case of an intentional study, it is quite possible that you do not have to rely on this complex process. Instead you just in fact make a conscious volitional decision which sets things in motion.

ISAACS: The interesting notion arises that perhaps very practiced psychics have portable archetype activators which they can switch on when they operate psychically.

MORRIS: It is an interesting idea because we may talk about an overall activation for an experiment, but each individual participant may have his or her own particular one as of the moment.

STANFORD: Bob, you describe this as a communication model. I want to point out two things. One is that I can see how you construe it that way, but I would also like to point out that it is rather different than the traditional communication models that we use, in the sense that they are usually going across the barrier. And so this is a really orthogonal kind of view that is really quite different than the traditional one. The other point arises perhaps simply because I use the same self-handicap as you did, namely that I really do not know much about Jung. But I see something in your model and you do not really claim this is Jung. You say that it is something that is inspired by it, but it seems to me it might be a little bit different than Jung's idea, in the sense that he speaks of an acausal model. You have been talking about archetypes activating these psychic elements. I think that this may be fundamentally different in Jung in that regard, but I could be wrong. I do not know that much about it.

MORRIS: My impression is that when Jung talked about acausal he meant primarily acausal with regard to physics as defining cause, that he was in favor of the notion of an active agent's influence but not in the usual physical sense.

HARARY: You mention that crisis telepathy tends to be reported more often by your students, but it also tends to be the kind of thing that you notice. There is what I think of as the Holiday Inn effect. If you are sleeping in the Holiday Inn and you have a dream about the guy upstairs and his numerous affairs, you may never know it because you may check out before he does and never meet him in the hall. On the other hand if you dream about somebody in your family dying,

that is apt to become very clear to you when it happens. To take a contrary point of view, I am not sure that it is necessary to activate archetypes in order to have psi functioning. It is possible that such psychological factors make the information more noticeable. But certainly in a typical remote viewing experiment, where somebody goes and hides and someone else finds him apparently mentally, there are not necessarily archetypes coming into play when somebody draws a picture of a building. The other thing that concerns me is this. Do token objects in psychometry contain psychometry information or simply serve as a focus of attention? That is important because when we think about psi in a receiver model with information flowing from one place to another it implies to me a possible transmission. But so far we have not found anything that could block such a transmission. I am not sure that a transmission is in fact what is going on in psi and I am not sure that is what you are implying either. So when we talk about receivers I think we should be careful to make clear whether we are talking metaphorically about receivers, about paying attention, or if we literally mean to imply a linear information flow, which I do not think is necessarily taking place. I think what is happening is that we ourselves tend to perceive things in a linear fashion and therefore we structure our impressions in that way. That is not necessarily what is actually going on, that something is being sent and received.

MORRIS: As far as crisis telepathy is concerned, the main point I was trying to make simply is that there is abundant indication that powerful experiences can be involved. Your point regarding becoming aware of events more when those involved are close to you is well taken. The second one essentially I agree with as I was mentioning in my response to Julian. The third one about the token object usage, is a very good point. Both of your interpretations are ones that should be looked at.

PALMER: There is some confusion in my mind about the active receptive kind of model that is being used. So I would simply reiterate Keith's concern about that. The other point that I wanted to make was with respect to the idea of invoking archetypes. I think a spontaneous experience like crisis telepathy or a spontaneous spiritual experience of some kind, occurs in a setting that would fit your definition of invoking some unusual emotional state or some period of numinosity or whatever you want to call it. But once that spontaneous experience occurs, replicating it, making it reliable and repeatable is a matter of very hard work. It has nothing to do with invoking archetypes. It has to do with practicing your internal attention states. So I would say that it is perhaps enough to bump it through the filters at the beginning of

the experience, but that once that experience has taken hold something else which is just plain learning has to occur.

MORRIS: If archetypical influence actually is contributing at all, I would suspect that it is something like the particular version that you just articulated. It may be helpful in serving as a guide now and then, but certainly this is not in any precise sense a description of "how it works."

HEINZE: My remarks are actually not so much directed against your model because you presented it in a very thoughtful and eloquent way. I fully respect that. I am only a little bit uneasy about something. One element is missing and this is the force which activates it and which makes it go. It is like an engine; it would not run without fuel. And I am reminded of the age-old problem; to create life in the test tube we still need genuine sperm and a genuine egg to do it. If you dissect it the life is gone. To enliven this model, which I find very helpful, we have to start from a life force that makes this energy available and then train people. When we have trained people over ten, twenty years as Charles Tart has done we can see what we have learned about this energy. We need to enliven this model.

SCHLITZ: It occurs to me that your presentation is a linear type of model. I wondered if you could conceptualize it within a cybernetic framework where there is a feedback loop that changes both the receiver and the stimulus of the information. In a sense we need to think about the energy conceptualization and what drives it. It would then be a self-perpetuating system. Chuck Honorton has done studies where he has shown that people who have had multiple psi experiences are the people who then perform best on the experiments. In a sense maybe that is the feedback loop.

MORRIS: Right, I do agree.

NEPPE: This is a very interesting model. I am wondering whether it may be useful to incorporate "defect" features as well as "positive" features. For example, is the Bergsonian Filter in some way broken down by organic brain defects, producing a greater perspective of being able to conceive of psi experience?

MORRIS: Yes, that is an interesting way to look at it.

TART: I want to point out a factor here that we have to remember. According to Jung, archetypes have incredible emotional power, numinosity and I think we'd better recognize at the start that there is not going to be a simple intellectual consideration of this model. This model is going to evoke resistance. This model is saying "We are not the designers totally in charge of manipulating our passive subjects" and similar common fantasies, but there is something else happening here

also. We may not have had a choice in certain experiments we have done. Now the degree to which that is true is partly an empirical question, but perhaps one that can not always be answered. The emotional repercussions in the background are strong ones and, of course, they are stronger yet if they are not made conscious but remain as unconscious factors. For example when do you give a particular archetype co-authorship on your paper?

MORRIS: When does it give me the co-authorship?

TART: You have presented a very nice problem. Are archetypes passive, just bundles of energy which can be tapped into in a mechanical way, like a grant given with no strings attached? Of course there is another model. Archetypes are not just passive, at least some are active, independent entities with a "mind" of their own, a grant with strings attached. That idea will bring up even more resistance. I think it is very hard to just consider this in an abstract intellectual sense. We have to consider how comfortable we are with the idea, otherwise our intellectual consideration of this excellent model is going to be biased in some way. You started a nice thing here!

MORRIS: Thank you very much, Charley. I was briefly running through some of the classes or groups of third factor clusters. The archetype in a way was just simply one subset of one of those clusters. Some of the more active versions of what you just described would feed into some of the other ones that we did not even get into in the paper.