Distinguishing Synchronicity from Parapsychological Phenomena: An Essay in Honor of Marie-Louise von Franz

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Abstract
For more than four decades, writers have followed Jung’s original formulation of synchronicity, which considered parapsychological phenomena as a class of synchronicity. In this essay, I distinguish parapsychological phenomena from synchronicity, attempting thereby to aid our understanding of both. My argument for the distinction has three sources. First, I appeal to a careful analysis of Jung’s formulation of synchronicity and the writings of Marie-Louise von Franz, whose work on the subject is second only to Jung’s [see her book *Psyche and Matter* (von Franz, 1992)]. Second, to sharpen the distinction between parapsychological phenomena and synchronicity, I briefly review the impressive modern successors to the Rhine experiments in telepathy and psychokinesis that so deeply influenced Jung. Third, I clarify some misconceptions that Jung had about causality and apply this clarification to distinguishing parapsychological phenomena from synchronicity. In this way, my distinction is more a clarification than a revision of Jung’s original formulation of synchronicity.

I. Introduction

Nearly ten years ago, when I started writing interdisciplinary articles I had the following dream:

I am escorting Dr. Marie-Louise von Franz around the excavations for new buildings being built on the most beautiful site at Cornell University (where I obtained a Ph.D. in theoretical astrophysics). The new buildings will have a commanding view of the entire Cayuga Lake valley. As I help her negotiate the construction site, we discuss our future collaborations.

I don’t view this memorable dream objectively nor offer a subjective interpretation here. Instead, I merely cite it to show that Marie-Louise von Franz has effected me deeply, both intellectually and emotionally. Perhaps this article represents a small excavation preparing for a better understanding of synchronicity, a focus of von Franz’s effort for many years. Perhaps it is also appropriate for a synchronicity paper that I unknowingly wrote the above dream description on the sad day of her death.

Along with the continuing interest in synchronicity, the meticulous laboratory work in parapsychology now makes it more important than ever to understand the relationship between the two. Of course, any clarification of synchronicity illuminates how the transcendent manifests in the material world, how the self’s radiance can blaze through the most mundane outer events. Such experiences of the transcendent can generate states of consciousness that remind us of the spiritual pilgrim’s emergence from the sublunar realm depicted in the woodcut. Beside such incursions of the numinous, I also discuss how distinguishing between synchronicity and parapsychological phenomena aids their laboratory study and encourages a reexamination of teleology within science—a idea banished since the acceptance of Darwinian evolution.

II: Synchronicity as Acausal Connection through Meaning

According to Jung (1978c), synchronicity is an acausal connection through meaning of inner psychological states such as dreams, fantasies, or feelings, with events in the outer or material world. The keys to understanding this definition are the notions of acausality and meaning.

1. Causality/Acausality

For Jung, causality involves energy exchanges and our conventional notions of space and time. For example, in discussing synchronicity he writes, “We must give up at the outset all explanations in terms of energy, which amounts to saying that events of this kind cannot be considered from the point of view of causality, for causality presupposes the existence of space and time in so far as all observations are ultimately based upon bodies in motion” (Jung 1978c, para. 836). Alternatively, as Marie-Louise von Franz wrote, “Jung just presumed the same thing that nearly all physicists do today: that causality implies a provable interaction within the space-time continuum. All other formulations, represent for Jung, an overstretching of the concept of causality . . .” (von Franz 1992, p. 234).

In classical physics, any interaction can serve as an example for causality. For instance, gravity caused the apple to fall on Newton’s head. Or, psychologically, anxiety caused me to forget her name. In synchronicity, there are no causal connections between the inner psychological states and the outer material events. Neither the inner states causes the outer events nor vice versa. I call this horizontal
acausality, since here the inner states and outer events are on the same epistemic level—both are consciously known.

There is also vertical acausality, where the purported agent is transcendent and unknowable in itself. von Franz addresses this when she writes:

> According to the Jungian view, the collective unconscious is not at all an expression of personal wishes and goals, but is a neutral entity, psychic in nature, that exists in an absolutely transpersonal way. Ascribing the arrangement of synchronistic events to the observer’s unconscious would thus be nothing other than a regression to primitive-magical thinking, in accordance with which it was earlier supposed that, for example, an eclipse could be “caused” by the malevolence of a sorcerer. Jung even explicitly warned against taking the archetypes (of the collective unconscious) or psi-powers to be the causal agency of synchronistic events (von Franz 1992, p. 231).

Thus Jung also eliminates any transcendent principle, whether archetypes or angels, as the cause for synchronicity (Jung 1978c, para. 965). We cannot attribute what happens “down here” in the empirical realm to what goes on “up there” in the transcendent realm. Despite synchronicity’s thoroughgoing horizontal and vertical acausality, Jung did not seek to abolish causality, but to supplement it with synchronicity (Jung 1978c, para. 968).

2. Meaning

Although the inner and outer elements of a synchronicity are acausally related, they connect through meaning. “Meaning” is a deceptively simple term, whose familiarity may mask its critical role in both Jung’s thought in general and synchronicity in particular.

Let’s start with Jung’s most exalted view of meaning. Section 3 of his synchronicity essay, entitled “Forerunners of the Idea of Synchronicity,” begins with a discussion of Taoism, by far the most extensive treatment of any of the “Forerunners.” To prepare us for the discussion, Jung writes: “Although meaning is an anthropomorphic interpretation it nevertheless forms the indispensable criterion of synchronicity. What that factor which appears to us as “meaning” may be in itself we have no possibility of knowing. As an hypothesis, however, it is not quite so impossible as may appear at first sight” (Jung 1978c, para. 916). After this warning about the difficulty of grasping meaning in itself, he then goes on to tell us that there are many translations of Tao, but he says, “Richard Wilhelm brilliantly interprets it as ‘meaning’” (Jung 1978c, para. 917). Jung extensively quotes Lao-tzu’s Tao Teh Ching from Arthur Waley’s The Tao and Its Power, (Waley 1934) “with occasional slight changes to fit Wilhelm’s reading,” as the translator, R.F.C. Hull, tells us (Jung 1978c, p. 486, fn. 3). For example,

> There is something formless yet complete
> That existed before heaven and earth.
> How still! How empty!
> Dependent on nothing, unchanging,
> All pervading, unfailing
> One may think of it as the mother of all things under heaven.
> I do not know its name,
> But I call it "Meaning."
> If I had to give it a name, I should call it "The Great" (Jung 1978c, para. 918).

My point is not to argue the merits of Jung’s equation between Tao and meaning, but instead to indicate how Jung understands meaning. This exalted and transcendent level of meaning, “formless yet complete, that existed before heaven and earth,” is indistinguishable from what is normally referred to as the absolute. Given Jung’s view, I regret that he did not substitute a more technical term for meaning such as “transcendent meaning.” It might have prevented many of the misconceptions about synchronicity and its dependence upon meaning.

Lao-tzu characterizes the Tao as “Nothing” and Jung writes: “‘Nothing’ is evidently ‘meaning’ or ‘purpose,’ and it is only called Nothing because it does not appear in the world of the senses, but is only its organizer” (Jung 1978c, para. 920). Meaning, or synonymously, purpose, is somehow an “organizer” of the world yet, “Tao never does; Yet through it all things are done” (Jung 1978c, para. 922).

How does this lofty meaning or purpose enter the realm of the opposites and mundane life? Jung does not address that in the synchronicity essay; however, it is clear from his other writing that meaning or purpose primarily enters our life through his notion of unconscious compensation.

For Jung, unconscious compensation is the chief form of interaction between the unconscious and consciousness. This is the psyche’s way of correcting the ego’s blindness or inappropriate views and guiding us in the process of individuation. This dynamic principle expresses the purposiveness or guidance of the unconscious. Rather than stressing the efficient causes of psychological phenomena, Jung was more concerned with their final causes. (Recall that efficient causes may involve physical energy exchange, while final causes never do.) The question shifts from “What past experiences brought me here?” to “Where is this experience trying to lead me? What does it demand of me? What purpose or meaning does it have for my evolution?” The emphasis is less on reduction—tracing present symptoms to past events—although this is also employed in Jungian analysis (Mansfield and Spiegelman 1996). As Jung said, “By finality I mean merely the imminent psychological striving for a goal. Instead of striving for a goal one could also say sense of purpose. All psychological phenomena have some such sense of purpose inherent in them…” (Jung 1978a, para. 456).

The meaning or purpose in a synchronicity experience, the Tao revealing itself, incarnates through an unconscious compensation, which simultaneously expresses itself in the inner and outer worlds. Synchronicity is thus a dramatic episode in the process of individuation. Just as in a dream, this meaning is not a creation of the ego. Instead, the meaning carries the transformative power of the self, seeking actualization through both the person and events in the world. Although the meaning has a personal aspect, in that it is finely tuned to the needs of our individuation, it also has an archetypal and therefore universal aspect. von Franz writes:

> For Jung, individuation and realization of the meaning of life are identical—since individuation means to find one’s own meaning, which is
names and minor editing

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Numinous

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Whether we like it or not, we find ourselves in this embarrassing position as soon as we begin seriously to reflect on the teleological processes in biology or to investigate the compensatory function of the unconscious, not to speak of trying to explain the phenomenon of synchronicity. Final causes, twist them how we will, postulate a foreknowledge of some kind. It is certainly not a knowledge that could be connected with the ego, and hence not a conscious knowledge as we know it, but rather a self-subsistent "unconscious" knowledge which I would prefer to call "absolute knowledge" (Jung 1978c, para. 931).

The emphasis is on final causes, life's purpose, how the psyche guides our unfolding of that foreknowledge of what we are meant to be through unconscious compensation. The meaning embedded in experience draws us onward along our particular path, our individuation. In a sense, the future is pulling us in a particular direction. Of course, such "drawing" or "pulling" is not causal, but the numinous meaning embedded in a synchronicity has the power to lead us toward a fuller expression of that unique wholeness, the self.

Here enters the difficulty for modern persons, especially those of us heavily influenced by science. It is not merely that teleology or final purpose is out of fashion in modern science. More fundamentally, the scientific view firmly holds that the past determines the present. For example, a central task of theoretical physics is, given the initial conditions, to predict the outcome of future experiments. This is as true in quantum mechanics, the wellspring of acausality, as in classical physics. The most comprehensive expression of this approach is in modern cosmology, where the present state of the universe is an expression of earlier conditions. Events that may occur in the future have no effect on the present. This view contrasts sharply with the idea of a foreknowledge of what we are meant to be, playing itself out in our experience, eliciting a fuller expression of our unique wholeness.

The following synchronicity experience, sent to me by a stranger, puts some flesh on these theoretical bones. Except for changing all names and minor editing (subsequently approved by the anonymous author), I present the letter in its original form:

May 19, 1996

Dear Victor,

Several weeks ago, I was looking for a book at our public library. Since it was already checked out I wandered around, perusing the shelves, and came across the book, *Motherless Daughters*, (Edelman 1994) about women who lost their mothers as children or adolescents. My mother died when I was 11, and I had seen this book before, but had not wanted to read it. This time I checked it out.

Parts of the book struck me very deeply. As an adult, I have always wished I knew my mother as a woman, and not just as a mother. As I finished the book on a Saturday evening, I felt that deep desire again. I wished I could talk to some people who could tell me about her as a woman and in gaps of information about her life. But I realized that there were very few people living who could do that—my father is dead, as are all my grandparents. I realized that the only people who could help me would be my mother's brother and his wife—if they were still alive. After my mother's death, we gradually lost contact with her family for several reasons, the main one being that her family never really approved of my father, although they were always very nice to me. I have had no contact with my Uncle Lee in over 20 years, but I heard around 15 years ago that he and my aunt had moved to Florida (from upstate NY). So that Saturday night I was fantasizing that someday I should try to see if they are still alive, and if so, try to contact them and see if they would help me by telling me about my mother.

The next day I went back to the library to return the book and try again to get the book I had originally wanted, but it was still not available. I was leaving the library, when from a shelf of new books right next to the door, your book *Synchronicity, Science, and Soul-Making* caught my eye. Several years ago, I read all the books about quantum physics that I could get my hands on, as well as many on related topics. I was raised in the Christian Science religion, and although I haven't practiced it as an adult, it has made my view of reality and the nature of matter very different from the prevailing societal one. I began reading your book immediately, and continued all that evening, as I found it very meaningful. I continued reading it during the following week, before and after work.

The day after I began reading your book (Monday), when I got home from work, there was a phone message on my answering machine. It was my Uncle Lee! How he got my number is another tale of strange and timely coincidence, as I had divorced and remarried, and changed my name since I was last in touch with him! He was calling because he had been contacted about a previously unknown estate that he was potentially a partial heir to, as were my brother and I, since we would be entitled to my deceased mother's portion. As possible heirs, we all needed to be in contact for the process to advance.

I was pleasantly shocked by this contact! I believed the inheritance to be a scam, but I was amazed to be reconnectted to my aunt and uncle. With a little more background, you will see there is more to this story.
During the early winter, I joined the Institute of Noetic Sciences. I had seen their literature before and always wanted to join, but never had. Finally, I responded to one of their membership mailings. A short while later, I received information about their annual conference in Boca Raton, Florida, in July, entitled “Spirit in Healing.” But since I live so far away and it would be such a big expense, I didn’t consider going.

This past winter was truly difficult for me. I became depressed and couldn’t break out of it. This was very unusual, since I am not at all a depressed person. In the past when I felt vaguely depressed, it never lasted days, let alone months as was happening now. Through understanding what was not causing the depression, I realized that my soul was longing, and that the spiritual side of me had been neglected and sorely needed attention. I was psychically unbalanced. So, I got out the conference material and decided to attend—I’d use my credit card and whatever else was needed, but I was going to Boca Raton, despite the July weather. I registered a few weeks ago.

In my conversation with Uncle Lee, we spent a short time catching up on each other’s lives. Then he said we needed to get together sometime to really talk, but we’d have to arrange how, since they now live in . . . Boca Raton, Florida! I said, “I can’t believe it. It just so happens, . . .” and we arranged to meet this July. This particular event happened while I was reading and being fascinated by your book on synchronicity!

I am so grateful for this sense of fulfillment manifesting in my life—reconnecting with missing family and the potential of reconnecting with, or becoming closer to, Mother. This is a very deeply meaningful event for me at this time in my life. So much of it just seems to be laid out before me. Since the possible inheritance is legitimate, although of an insignificant amount, really unexpected things are coming together in a positive way.

There are at least three levels of meaning for me in this experience and no doubt after seeing my uncle there will be more. First, is my desire to learn more about my mother from the only living person who can help me and who is now in his 70’s. This is my opportunity to connect to my mother’s history, and possibly to learn something of value for my own life.

Second, all my life I have been an independent, strong, and private person. More recently, I have been understanding the importance of connection with others, especially family. I have always had a few close friends, and I’ve valued those connections immensely. But I haven’t been closely connected to family. I’ve recently been seeing the value, necessity, and reality of this very basic primary connection, and I’ve begun to desire it more in my life, since it opens up a whole new aspect of me and my development.

Third, I wonder what is so necessary about mother-love? I was very close with my mother when she was alive, and I missed that closeness and connection terribly when she died. However, I have had as normal and healthy an adjustment to that trauma as is humanly possible—thanks in large part to my dad. So why do I strive for that primary connection? The book Motherless Daughters begins with an excerpt from a letter written to the author by one of the women interviewed for the book. She was writing the letter on Mothers’ Day and said how there’s no love as strong and unconditional as mother’s love, and that she realized she’d never been loved that way again. That immediately grabbed my gut. I then started thinking about what the elements of mother-love are that make it so necessary and irreplaceable. I came up with its unconditionality, the feeling of total safety and security that it fosters, the ability to be totally vulnerable and intimate that it enables. I realized that these are all conditions of a fully emotionally developed human being. I then saw that quest as parallel to or the same as the quest for total Unity—for connection and Unity with the Infinite, the Eternal, the Universe.

Here the meaning—finding both the individual woman "behind" the personal mother and a deep sense of the archetypal feminine—expresses itself inwardly (“I have always wished I knew my mother as a woman, and not just as a mother”) and outwardly (the stunning contact from the only person in the world who could help). Here is an acausal exemplification of meaning, of the archetype of maternal inheritance (both material and spiritual) in the inner and outer worlds. Her desire did not cause the uncle to call nor did her uncle’s inheritance concerns cause her to rekindle the long held desire to know her mother.

As in every synchronicity experience, the unconscious was activated, as indicated by her prolonged depression. However, this example contains no parapsychological phenomena, no space-time transcendent expressions of “absolute knowledge.” Nevertheless, it involves an acausal connection of inner and outer through a meaning critical for her individuation. Because synchronicity is both horizontally and vertically acausal, the meaning is essential while the events incarnating it are accidental, contingent. Although a synchronicity experience may seem like it is all exquisitely planned to the last detail and could have happened in no other way, acausality implies that the meaning could have incarnated in different circumstances. In the above example, the necessity and importance of reconnecting to the mother as both individual and archetypal are critical, exactly how this plays out, how the unconscious compensation takes place is accidental. In fact, the unconscious compensation, the inner guidance, could have occurred without any synchronicity. Perhaps several dreams could have had the same transformative effect.

Although the present example does not involve any transcendance of conventional space-time, many synchronicity experiences clearly do. (See the examples in Mansfield, 1995.) What is always striking in any significant synchronicity experience is the implied unity of psyche and matter, which may account for its numinosity. For example, von Franz tells us:

> The most essential and certainly the most impressive thing about synchronicity occurrences . . . is the fact that in them the duality of soul and matter seems to be eliminated. They are therefore an empirical indication of an ultimate unity of all existence, which Jung, using the terminology of medieval natural philosophy, called the Unus Mundus (von Franz 1975, p. 247).

Whatever the theoretical understanding, phenomenally a major synchronicity is always a powerful experience, a theophany, a bestowal of grace. Whether this is an expression of the numinosity associated with the Unus Mundi or the incarnating archetype, it feels “out of this world,” very different from ordinary experience, as illustrated by the pilgrim poking his head out of the solar system in the woodcut above. As von Franz says, “Synchronic events constitute moments in which a ‘cosmic’ or ‘greater’ meaning becomes gradually conscious in an individual; generally it is a shaking experience” (von Franz 1975, p. 272).

In summary, synchronicity is an acausal connection of inner psychological states with outer events through meaning. The acausality is
both horizontal and vertical while the meaning is an incarnation of the Tao, an essential aspect of our unfolding wholeness, our individuation, and as such is understood symbolically as any other unconscious compensation. These unique and unpredictable expressions of the Unus Mundus, the unitary ground of psyche and matter, are always a visitation of the gods, an archetypal expression of numinous meaning. Because, as both Jung and von Franz stress, the expression of transcendental meaning is the essential element in synchronicity, it is understood within the process of individuation. Although my understanding of synchronicity differs from that of the Jungian Analyst, Robert Aziz (Aziz, 1990), we both agree that individuation is central to synchronicity. Therefore, synchronicity appeals to teleology or ultimate purpose without compromising its acausal nature. By appreciating its acausal connection of inner with outer—that the connecting meaning is not a product of the ego, nor willed by the ego, but the transcendent power of individuation—synchronicity encourages us to seek harmony between subjectivity and objectivity, psyche and matter, and acausality and teleology.

III. Recent Laboratory Advances in Parapsychology

Although J.B. Rhine’s work that so influenced Jung was very careful, even higher laboratory standards and more refined procedures characterize a variety of recent experiments. Because of them and sophisticated statistical treatments of data from several different laboratories in so called meta-analyses, we now have strong experimental evidence for several different parapsychological phenomena. I’ll not attempt a systematic review of the literature nor evaluate the scientific merit of the data, since that is done well elsewhere. (See Dean Radin’s Conscious Universe (1997).) Instead, I sketch the results from the two most impressive research programs that are also the direct descendants of J.B. Rhine’s card guessing and dice throwing experiments, which sought to demonstrate telepathy and psychokinesis respectively. Jung mentions both Rhine experiments repeatedly in his synchronicity essay, so it is especially pertinent to understand the modern form of these experiments as the ganzfeld (telepathy) and random number biasing experiments (psychokinesis).

Ganzfeld: Prior to the review article of the ganzfeld experiments by Bem and Honorton (1994), no mainstream academic psychology journal had ever published a major article about parapsychology. This is an interesting phenomena itself, but I merely wish to draw attention to how unwelcome a guest parapsychology is and what a significant achievement it is that Bem and Honorton published their review article in the prestigious Psychological Bulletin.

The term ganzfeld, or "total field," describes the conditions under which experiments test for the ability of subjects to receive images from a distant sender—telepathy. The receiver wears headphones playing white noise and on her eyes half Ping-Pong balls illuminated by red light. The resulting uniform sound and visual experience gives a total undifferentiated perceptual field or ganzfeld, believed to lower resistance to alien imagery. The working hypothesis is that ESP is a "weak signal" easily unnoticed in normal consciousness. After the receiver undergoes a series of relaxation exercises, the isolated sender views a randomly chosen video clip from a randomly chosen group of four clips. In recent experiments, a computer does the random selecting and they are known as autoganzfeld. The receiver’s verbal reports are recorded and then the best match between these reports and the actual video clip shown is determined after the showing. In modern versions of the experiment, the receiver judges which of the four video clips matches their internal imagery, while in others the experimenter decides which clip best fits the verbal reports of the receiver. The success rate according to blind chance is ¼ while a variety of labs consistently find ⅓ for unselected subjects. For gifted subjects the success rate can be over ½. The experiments, such as those done at Cornell University, Bem’s school, are done with great care. Bem and Honorton report:

The receiver's and sender's rooms were sound-isolated, electrically shielded chambers with single-door access that could be continuously monitored by the experimenter. There was two-way intercom communications between the experimenter and the receiver but only one-way communication into the sender's room; thus neither the experimenter nor the receiver could monitor events inside the sender's room. The archival record for each session includes an audiotape containing the receiver's mention during the ganzfeld period and all verbal exchanges between the experimenter and the receiver throughout the experiment.

The automated ganzfeld protocol has been examined by several dozen parapsychologists and behavioral researchers from other fields, including well-known critics of parapsychology. Many have participated as subjects or observers. All have expressed satisfaction with the handling of security issues and controls (Bem and Honorton 1994).

Although much more could be said about these experiments, the essential points are the careful data collection and the statistically significant evidence for anomalous perception.

Psychokinesis: Although many labs are performing psychokinesis experiments, I’ll focus on the best known work at the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Lab (PEARL) (Jahn and Dunne 1987).

The Princeton experiments involve subjects willfully biasing the behavior of a variety of mechanical and electronic devices to conform to pre-stated intentions. In calibration runs these machines all produce strictly random outputs of zeroes and ones so that on average there are equal numbers of both. In a typical run the operator sits in a comfortable setting in front of a random number generator and tries to make the machine generate more ones than zeros. This might be followed by a run with no intended bias, followed by another to generate more zeroes than ones, and so on. No instructions are given as to how to effect the random number generator, but after stating each intention a computer collects data. Thousands of such experiments, involving many millions of trials, have been performed by over a hundred operators.

The observed effects are small, of the order of a few parts in ten thousand, but they are statistically significant and operator specific in their details. The results of given operators on widely different machines tend to be similar in character and scale. They can be demonstrated with the operators located thousands of miles from the laboratory or exerting their efforts hours before or after the actual operation of the devices. These experiments and the handling of the data are subject to the same level of scrutiny by outside observers as the ganzfeld experiments. As in the ganzfeld experiments, sophisticated meta-analytic techniques accounting for methodological quality and overall effect size from a variety of studies at different labs show unequivocal non-chance effects. In short, under exacting laboratory conditions there is strong, repeatable evidence for psychokinesis (Radin 1997).
IV. Distinguishing Synchronicity from Parapsychological Phenomena: Causality

It is not reasonable to expect Jung to understand the philosophic foundations of modern science and especially the subtleties surrounding causality. Since the days when Jung discussed these ideas with Wolfgang Pauli, much careful theoretical and experimental effort has been expended to clarify these issues. Because these ideas play such pivotal roles in the discussion at hand, I must clarify some misconceptions that Jung had about causality.

Early in Jung’s synchronicity essay he writes, “The philosophical principle that underlies our conception of natural law is causality” (Jung, 1978c, p. 421). Despite Jung’s reference to the “discoveries of modern physics” in the paragraph preceding this quotation, he did not understand causality in physics since the advent of quantum mechanics in the 1920’s. To explicate these issues, I briefly discuss causality and probability in modern physics.

Start with classical or Newtonian physics. Here causality is determinism in the physical realm. In determinism every event, act, and decision is the inevitable consequence of antecedents independent of the human will. In a deterministic world, the same antecedent conditions must always generate the same events. Every time pure water cools to less than 0 Centigrade, it must freeze. A freely falling body in the gravitational field of the earth always accelerates at 9.8 meters/second/second. Determinism is what Jung means by causality. With this substitution, he is correct that prior to quantum mechanics, “The philosophical principle that underlies our conception of natural law is [deterministic] causality.”

However, quantum mechanics lacks any causal mechanism for a vast range of phenomena, yet we would hardly say that these phenomena are not bound by “natural law.” Consider, for example, the well-understood decay of radioactive nuclei. It is impossible in principle and in practice to identify any causal mechanism for a decay. The most we can do is make probability statements about the likelihood of decay. Nevertheless, this allows for detailed and verifiable statements about such things as the rate of radioactive decay and the element’s half-life. Despite their being no causal factors for an individual decay, many precise and experimentally verifiable statements can be made that certainly qualify as natural law in any reasonable use of the term.

Contemporary working scientists usually avoid strong philosophic positions like determinism. They prefer more pragmatic approaches. Roger Newton gives an excellent statement of this position and refers to Jung’s use of causality (determinism) as “historical causality” when he writes:

The most practical and the only foolproof method of scientifically testing a causal connection between A and B is “wiggling” one of them and watching the response of the other. We are not interested here in what might be called “historical causality” (establishing a causal connection in a single chain of events) but in “scientific causality” (establishing a connection in repeatable events). It is the ex-ternal control of A together with the correlation with B that establishes, in good Humean sense, the causal connection between them, as well as the fact that A is the cause and B, the effect (Newton 1970, p. 1570).

With this terminology, parapsychological experiments are acausal in the Jungian (deterministic or historical causality) sense, but exhibit “scientific causality,” since repeatable connections between mental and physical events are regularly found. Since synchronicity is a unique and a nonrepeatable expression of the Unus Mundus, the unitary ground underlying both matter and psyche, it is both deterministically acausal and “scientifically acausal.”

Since Jung frequently refers to probability or statistics in discussing causality, I briefly discuss their role in common speech and Newtonian mechanics and then contrast that with quantum mechanics. Imagine telephoning the editorial offices of Quadrant. We estimate that there is a probability of ½ that the editor will be free to receive our call, ¼ that he will be talking on the telephone, and ¼ that he will be in a meeting. Before our telephone call, we believe there is an objective matter of fact—he is either free, on the telephone, or in a meeting. We simply assign probabilities based upon incomplete knowledge of the objective matter of fact. This is the use of probability in common speech and in Newtonian mechanics.

For an example closer to physics, consider a classical or Newtonian description of the gas particles in a room. We can make probability statements about the average velocities and how likely it is to find deviations from that average. However, each classical particle has a well-defined velocity and position. Probability statements merely express incomplete knowledge of it. Measurements yield a statistical distribution of velocities because of the inherent distribution of velocities in the gas and the inevitable errors of measurement.

In contrast, when quantum mechanics tells us there is a probability of ½ that a nucleus will decay within the next hour that is not an expression of incomplete knowledge or measurement error. Here probability statements express the intrinsic indeterminacy of nature at its most fundamental level. No more definite statements are possible because before measurement the system is ontologically (not epistemologically) ill defined or indeterminate. Probability statements are the maximum information possible, not an expression of incomplete knowledge of objective matters of fact, such as the editor’s state before our telephone call. With this review, let us examine the full paragraph containing the above quotation from Jung where he argues for a synchronicity principle to complement causality.

The philosophical principle that underlies our conception of natural law is causality. But if the connection between cause and effect turns out to be only statistically valid and only relatively true, then the causal principle is only of relative use for explaining natural processes and therefore presupposes the existence of one or more other factors which would be necessary for an explanation. This is as much as to say that the connection of events may in certain circumstances be other than causal, and requires another principle of explanation [synchronicity] (Jung 1978c, p. 421).

Within the quantum mechanical view there is no "connection between cause and effect." It is not that causality is only statistically valid. There is simply no connection between well-defined causes and well-defined effects. Rather, statistics in quantum mechanics express the profound indeterminacy of nature. Yet, the predictive power, wide scope of application, and accuracy of quantum theory are far superior to anything from classical physics. Jung is wrong in claiming that "if the connection between cause and effect turns out to be
only statistically valid and only relatively true, then the causal principle is only of relative use for explaining natural processes and therefore presupposes the existence of one or more other factors which would be necessary for an explanation.” Simply put, statistics in quantum physics express acausality—not a break down of causality arguing for synchronicity, but a more fundamental expression of nature’s indeterminacy.

Jung’s confusion repeatedly surfaces in his letters. For example, "Physicists are even unable to accept the fact that the term statistics presupposes the existence of exceptions to the rule, as really existent as their averages. Causality as a statistical truth presupposes the existence of acausality, otherwise it cannot be a statistical truth" (Jung 1975, p. 318). Since a great thinker like Jung had trouble with this point, I will risk repetition with another example.

When we flip normal coins, we assign a probability of one-half that heads will come up. It would be an extraordinary event if we flip the same coin without any trickery one hundred times and get heads every time. The probability of that is ½^{100} = 7.9x10^{-31}. In classical physics, we don’t consider this evidence for "causality as a statistical truth." Here causality is continuously effective, even in this rare event. While in quantum mechanics acausality is intrinsic and its expression through statistics is not a foundation for "causality as a statistical truth." These misunderstandings contribute to confusing synchronicity with parapsychological phenomena.

From the point of view of modern physics, parapsychological phenomena are acausal expressions of natural laws. Although they are clearly acausal (in the Jungian deterministic sense), they exhibit "scientific causality," in being repeatable and controllable phenomena. "It is the external control of A together with the correlation with B that establishes, in good Humean sense, the causal connection between them, as well as the fact that A is the cause and B, the effect." In this sense, parapsychological phenomena are acausal expressions of natural laws—but not, as in the case of true synchronicity experiences, expressions of the archetype of meaning, the self, acausally guiding the process of individuation.

I will apply this classification scheme to a particular problem. Jung wrote to Rhine, "The main difficulty with synchronicity (and also with ESP) is that one thinks of it as being produced by the subject, while I think it is rather in the nature of objective events" (Jung 1975, p. 180). Synchronicity is a creative, spontaneous, and acausal expression of meaning by the unitary ground underlying matter and psyche and not "produced by the subject." Such a meaning, whether in a dream, fantasy, or a synchronicity, cannot be something willed by the ego nor under its control, otherwise it could not compensate the ego. This implies that any parapsychological effect depending upon volition, upon the subject’s intent, differs from synchronicity. However, this raises a difficulty, because Jung also writes in his synchronicity essay:

> Among Rhine’s experiments we must also mention the experiments with dice. The subject has the task of throwing the dice (which is done by an apparatus), and at the same time he has to wish that one number (say 3) will turn up as many times as possible. The results of this so-called PK (psycho-kinetic) experiment were positive, the more so the more dice were used at one time (Jung 1978c, para. 837).

So, on one hand. Jung tells us synchronicity (including ESP which for Jung also includes psychokinesis) cannot be produced by the subject, while on the other hand he draws support from experiments in which “bodies, too, can be influenced psychically” (Jung 1978c, para. 978) or the subject wills or causes the result. We eliminate this confusion if we clearly distinguish synchronicity from parapsychological phenomena. Then, parapsychological phenomena such as psychokinesis can be "scientifically causal" in the sense above (establishing a connection in repeatable events) and this makes them statistically susceptible to human volition—but not in a strictly causal or deterministic sense. Of course, how human mentation can influence material events is still a mystery.

V. Distinguishing Synchronicity from Parapsychological Phenomena: Meaning

Consider the parapsychological work sketched above. They are not usually meaningful connections or correlations as Jung and von Franz define meaning as an expression of the self—as unconscious compensation propelling individuation. It’s true that parapsychological phenomena may often be arresting and alert us to the possibility of acausal connections between psyche and matter —no mean realization. For some rare persons, such an acausal occurrence might be a numinous experience providing an important unconscious compensation, one deeply meaningful for that individual. This would be a genuine synchronicity experience, but then its parapsychological component would be incidental rather than necessary. Nevertheless, I suggest that for most persons parapsychological phenomena have little to do with their individuation, the self guiding them toward wholeness, or their unique path to a meaningful life.

If, as Jung and von Franz claim, some transcendental meaning is manifesting in both the inner and outer world, then we should interpret the synchronistic experience symbolically just like a numinous dream—as a specific expression of the guidance of the self. We could hardly claim this for the parapsychological experiments mentioned above.

An interpretation of a symbolically rich and numinous dream would not be complete nor satisfying if it merely reaffirmed the existence of the unconscious. Such interpretation would not show how this numinous dream specifically expresses that person’s individuation. Analogously, I suggest not considering parapsychological phenomena as synchronistic merely because they illustrate acausal connections between a subjective state and objective events. I propose reserving the word synchronicity only for those completely acausally connected events that express some specific, archetypal meaning, some particular display of unconscious compensation. I repeat, Jung’s categorizing parapsychological phenomena as synchronistic is not fully consistent with his own definition of synchronicity as acausal connection through meaning, where meaning is an expression of the self in our individuation. The figure illustrates this more
Precise boundaries rarely exist in psychology. The stippled area separating synchronicity from parapsychological phenomena is my diagrammatic attempt to recognize that the distinction between these phenomena may not always be precise or easy to make. The meaning might actually be there—if only we had the eyes to see. It’s true that even if we cannot articulate the significance of a psychological experience, it can often still be transformative. The unconscious compensation may still be effective. However, the *sine qua non* for all truly synchronistic experiences is meaning—some significant expression of unconscious compensation, some genuine guidance from the unconscious.

Strictly applying this criterion eliminates some parapsychological experiences that others might consider synchronistic. In the case of laboratory tests of parapsychological phenomena, the distinction I am suggesting is easier to make. However, in the spontaneous cases of ESP, the distinction is much more difficult. Like synchronicity experiences, these cases occur sporadically and are often emotionally compelling. My suggestion is that unless these spontaneous ESP experiences are an expression of unconscious compensation propelling individuation, a manifesting of the purposiveness of the unconscious, then they are distinct from synchronicity. Without a strict interpretation of synchronicity, we are constantly in danger of confusing it with parapsychological phenomena. This would result in a great loss in clarity, especially since our present understanding of both phenomena is so rudimentary.

I cannot understand Jung (Jung 1978c, para. 840) when he says, "Rhine’s experiments confront us with the fact that there are events which are related to one another experimentally, and in this case meaningfully, without there being any possibility of proving that this relation is a causal one, . . ." (the italics are Jung’s). How could he be using "meaningfully" here? Yes, a greater than chance correlation has meaning in the conventional sense of the word. We can analyze it mathematically, speak intelligibly to others about it, and so on. However, this conventional and trivial use of meaning is not the way Jung normally uses the term. As von Franz says, "The realization of ‘meaning’ is therefore not a simple acquisition of information or of knowledge, but rather a living experience that touches the heart just as much as the mind" (von Franz, 1992, p. 257). Can we say that laboratory studies of parapsychological phenomena "touch the heart as much as the mind?" Are these statistical correlations expressing the archetype of meaning—the self? Are they a spontaneous and creative unfolding of our unique wholeness, of what we are meant to be?

My distinction between the parapsychological phenomena and synchronicity in no way diminishes the importance of the laboratory studies of such phenomena. Yes, parapsychological may phenomena may not be intimately connected to the archetypal meaning propelling our individuation. Yet these meticulous laboratory studies with all their consistency and repeatability (their scientific causality) have more potential to revolutionize science and our entire worldview than the unique and unpredictable synchronicity phenomena. For all their numinosity, synchronicity experiences are, by their very nature, resistant to the kind of careful empirical investigation required for them to be integrated into our modern scientific understanding. While synchronicity speaks directly to the evolution of our subjective being, the exacting laboratory studies of parapsychological phenomena speak more directly to our objective understanding of nature.

**VI. The Paranormal as General Acausal Order**

If we examine Jung’s more inclusive notion of general acausal orderedness, of which synchronicity is a part, we can harmonize my strict interpretation of synchronicity with Jung’s broader use of the term. Jung describes his more inclusive acausal ordering principle when he says:

> I incline in fact to the view that synchronicity in the narrow sense is only a particular instance of general acausal orderedness—that namely, of the equivalence of psychic and physical processes where the observer is in the fortunate position of being able to recognize the tertium comparationis. But as soon as he perceives the archetypal background he is tempted to trace the mutual assimilation of independent psychic and physical processes back to a (causal) effect of the archetype, and thus to overlook the fact that they are merely contingent. This danger is avoided if one regards synchronicity as a special instance of general acausal orderedness (Jung 1978c, para. 965).

Jung considers the synchronicity I have been examining here ("synchronicity in the narrow sense") as a special case or a subset of a much broader phenomena "of general acausal orderedness." The "equivalence of psychic and physical processes" is an equivalence of their meaning that provides the tertium comparationis. As Jung explains, "the third comparison term. The phrase "they are merely contingent" refers to the psychological and physical process. As I stressed earlier, the archetypal meaning is the primary and essential aspect of a synchronicity experience while the psychological and physical correlates are contingent and accidental. According to Jung, "apriori factors such as the properties of natural numbers, the discontinuities of modern physics, etc. . . . [and] constant and reproducible phenomena . . ." fall into the category of general acausal orderedness (Jung 1978c, para. 965).

Jung did not fully explain his notion of general acausal orderedness, but Marie-Louise von Franz, who worked closely with Jung on synchronicity gives us some help when she describes it as: "a regular omnipresent just-so-ness, such as for instance, the specific speed of light, the quantization of energy, the time-rate of radioactive decay, or any other constant in nature. Because we cannot indicate a cause (for these regularities), we generally express this just-so-ness by a number, . . ." (von Franz 1992, p. 267). Here and elsewhere she emphasizes the just-so-ness, the brute fact that some fundamental things are as they are without any deeper cause.

Not being trained in physics, Jung and von Franz have some misunderstanding about the technical details of the physical examples of acausal orderedness but are quite right to appeal to quantum mechanics. Innumerable quantum phenomena are acausal in the strict (non deterministic) sense of having no specific cause for an individual event or even group of events. Yet these events display a rich and detailed structure, a genuine acausal orderedness, which is nevertheless "scientifically causal" as defined above. I clarify the issue of physical examples of acausal orderedness elsewhere (Mansfield 1995, pp. 30-3). Although history teaches us caution when making predictions about future developments in physics, both theory and experiment converge in making the prospect of a causal (deterministic) explanation for these phenomena seem exceedingly unlikely.
I suggest that parapsychological phenomena are an example of general acausal orderedness, but not of synchronicity, which I strictly define as an acausal exemplification of meaning in the inner and outer world. Parapsychological phenomena are acausal since no energy or information exchange seems responsible for the correlations measured, but they lack the meaning associated with synchronicity. Furthermore, parapsychological phenomena, like similar quantum phenomena, are "constant and reproducible," as the brief sketch of the experiments above shows. This reproducibility is in further contrast to the unique and unpredictable nature of the more narrowly defined synchronicity. Reclassification of parapsychological phenomena out of synchronicity and into general acausal orderedness modifies the previous diagram to the form shown here.

VII. Further Refinements of General Acausal Orderedness

Jung's understanding of numbers also needs amplification. Jung writes, "we define number psychologically as an archetype of order which has become conscious (Jung 1978c, para. 870). Because number is the archetype of order and archetypes act acausally, Jung places the properties of natural numbers in the category of acausal orderedness. Jung and von Franz were also impressed that number places such an extraordinarily important role in modern physics, where the old adage that "God is a mathematician" seems literally true. Thus, numbers are ordering structures for both the inner and outer world, and hence their critical role in synchronicity and mantic procedures, such as astrology and the I Ching. For Jung, the properties of natural numbers are as much given as defined by mathematicians. This largely Platonic view of numbers implies that no other principle causes their properties. von Franz, who was personally given the assignment by Jung to research the archetypal nature of numbers, writes, (von Franz 1974, p. ix):

In the psychic sphere, an acausal orderedness can be found in the properties of the natural integers. The natural integers are a psychic content that just simply is the way it is. Five, for example, is a prime number. That is just the way it is. We cannot ask why five is a prime number. . . . we cannot account for this causally. The question "Why?" or "Where does that come from?" or "What makes it that way?" appears to be meaningless. . . . The properties of natural integers are thus a psychic orderedness, as half-lives are a physical orderedness. Both are phenomena that Jung characterized by the concept of "acausal orderedness," by which he meant an a priori "just so" order that we cannot account for in terms of cause and effect or probability (von Franz 1992, p. 28).

Here incoherence enters the definition of acausal orderedness. As shown above, Jung uses causality in the sense of efficient cause, or some form of energy, force, or information exchange occurring in empirical space and time, just as a physicist would. But what does the a priori nature of natural numbers have to do with this type of cause? Even if we take a completely Platonic view of numbers and understand them as fully objective entities free in their essential nature from the constructs of humans, what does this have to do with acausality as Jung uses it? Yes, prime numbers are "just-so" and a priori, but that differs greatly from the acausality of synchronicity, parapsychological phenomena, or various quantum phenomena.

It seems we have two choices: First, we can just broaden the notion of acausality so that it encompasses the properties of natural numbers. That, however, would violate Jung's normal use of an essential term and make acausal orderedness so broad a category that it would lose its value. Second, we could remove the properties of natural numbers from acausal orderedness, since they appeal to a different notion of acausality than other members of the category. However, Jung clearly wanted them in this category. Yet he writes, "we define number psychologically as an archetype of order which has become conscious." We could ask, "Why aren't other archetypes placed in acausal orderedness, since they are just as a priori and 'just-so' as the properties of natural numbers?" If we demand coherence in our definitions of such fundamental categories, we must choose one of these uncomfortable alternatives. I suggest that the second choice does less violence to the notion of acausal orderedness.

In some instances, Jung draws a distinction between the sporadically occurring synchronicity and the constant and reproducible phenomena in acausal orderedness. He writes, "Consequently, we would have to include constant and experimentally reproducible phenomena within the scope of our expanded concept, though this does not seem to accord with the nature of the phenomena included in synchronicity narrowly understood." The acausal quantum and parapsychological phenomena are constant and reproducible, but synchronicity, strictly or narrowly defined, is unique and unpredictable.

III. Conclusions, Complications, and Laboratory Measurements

To summarize the theoretical structure of synchronicity, examine it in terms of Aristotle's four types of cause. To review these four causes, consider an imaginary trip to Florence, Italy where, with Aristotle at our side, we view Michaelangelo's sculpture of David. Marveling at its beauty, we ask what caused this statue to be. First, Aristotle identifies the efficient cause, Michaelangelo's chiseling and working of the stone. In this cause, we have one well-defined thing (a tool) producing an effect on another well-defined thing (the marble). This is Jung's use of cause. Second, Aristotle explains that the marble is the material cause of the statue, the actual stuff of it. Third, we see in its extraordinary grace the archetype of the hero, the giant slayer, the formal cause of the statue. Fourth, we seek the final cause, the ultimate purpose of the statue. Here we understand the statue as an expression of Michaelangelo's individuation, his soul's expression of itself through tools, stone, and archetypal form.

The hallmark of synchronicity is its acausality, its lack of efficient cause, both vertically and horizontally. However, there must be some
event in consensual reality (such as a telephone call from a long lost relative) that meaningfully corresponds to a psychological state. The outer event is the material cause or "stuff" of synchronicity. The archetype as formal cause characterizes the meaning that connects the inner and outer worlds. Finally, the ultimate cause or final purpose of the synchronicity is the protagonist's individuation. As long as we cling to synchronicity as acausal at the level of efficient cause, we can more fully appreciate it through its material, formal, and final causes.

Despite their scientific importance, laboratory parapsychological phenomena lack both a formal and final cause. They don't embody an archetypal meaning critical for our individuation, but they do exhibit, like quantum phenomena, "scientific causality."

The finding in the Princeton studies of controlled reproducibility over long periods of time for the same unselected subjects suggests that they are studying something like an acausal law of nature, like general acausal orderedness. This scientific causality contrasts with nonreproducible synchronicity incarnating archetypal meaning in our individuation. Without denying the inherent difficulties, I tried to distinguish sharply between synchronicity and parapsychological phenomena. Let me discuss in a little more detail some of the obscuring factors that forced me to draw a gray stippled area between these phenomena in the previous two figures.

Although meaning is the discriminator, both synchronicity and parapsychological phenomena are acausal and they may both involve space and time transcendent aspects. A complication arises with unconscious synchronicities, where the meaning escapes us, just as we may not understand a numinous dream. Since these psychological experiences can still transform us, this weakens my sharp distinction between the two phenomena. This also allows for the migration of an experience from classification as parapsychological phenomena to synchronicity, once we understand the embedded meaning. In principle, it also allows for the reverse migration. The dividing line between the two phenomena cannot be as sharp as we might like.

It might also be argued that parapsychological phenomena involve the unconscious and thus it is not fundamentally different from synchronicity. The well-established role of affect in both the experimenter and the subject clearly point to the unconscious. The correlations between parapsychological phenomena and the subject's belief in such phenomena, and their continued interest in the experiment, further evidence the crucial role of the unconscious. Nevertheless, the unconscious compensation expressing a transcendent meaning shared by the subject's psychological state and events in the outer world is missing in parapsychological phenomena. Although both classes of phenomena are acausal and depend upon the unconscious, the parapsychological phenomena lack the elixir of meaning, the crucial connection between the inner and outer events, and therefore must differ from synchronicity—even if the dividing line is not always clear.

The dividing line is also less clear when we consider the full spectrum of synchronicity experiences, from the life changing examples like the one given above to the less dramatic but more common occurrences. My focus has been on the dramatic cases, but in experiences where the expression of meaning is less dramatic, the distinction between synchronicity and parapsychological phenomena is admittedly more difficult to make. However, we honor our experience more by seeking the possible transcendent meaning embedded in it and thereby establishing grounds for distinguishing between synchronicity and parapsychological phenomena.

Dr. Marvin Spiegelman (1996) reminded me that there are parapsychological phenomena purportedly under the control of advanced practitioners of magic. There is a long tradition of the willful direction of telepathy, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, and related phenomena, called occult powers, or siddhis in the East. Although spiritual practitioners are always warned against cultivating these powers, since they can distract us from the goal or worse, the belief in their existence is widespread. In the first quoted quotation in section II, von Franz warns us against "a regression to primitive-magical thinking." Despite this powerful warning, I speculate that magic—primitive, black, or white—is the willful employment of acausal orderedness, the as yet obscure laws of nature. Just as psychokinesis subjects willfully but acausally effect the random number generators, genuine magicians can employ these same natural laws for good or evil. Although I have no inclination to pursue the nature of magic, this unwelcome guest may yet find a place at the broad table of psychological phenomena set by Jung and von Franz. Let me conclude by turning to laboratory measurements of synchronicity.

von Franz tells us, "The most we can say is that something might happen when an archetype is constellated; and if something does happen, then it will have the same meaning as the archetype. But we cannot predict this with certainty—it might happen, it might not" (von Franz 1992, p. 27). Since we ordinary mortals cannot compel the gods or control archetypal manifestations, this suggests it would be very difficult to do scientifically controlled experiments on synchronicity.

Yet, knowing the extraordinary ingenuity of my experimentalist colleagues, I hesitate to conclude it is impossible to study synchronicity in a laboratory. It does seem clear, however, that any synchronicity experiment could not in any way be forced, controlling, or manipulating. Instead, it must be a careful monitoring of the sporadic creativity of the Unus Mundus, one sensitive to both the correlating material events and the psychological meaning of the phenomena. Of course, this need not be so for parapsychological phenomena, as even the brief sketch above should make clear.

von Franz supports my conclusions about laboratory measurements. She says, "Since synchronistic events seem to be irregular, they cannot be grasped statistically; nevertheless acausal orderedness can be investigated experimentally, because it is something general and regular" (von Franz 1992, p. 237). In harmony with my remarks in the proceeding paragraph, she then describes a synchronicity experiment Jung proposed at the end of his life. He suggested that once it was clear that an archetype had been constellated, because of some serious psychological stress, for example—then several divinatory procedures, whose functioning depends upon synchronicity, could be employed. The results of all these procedures, from the I Ching to the Tarot, should converge to the same archetypal meaning.

Such an experiment fits my description of not being forced, controlling, or manipulating, but it presents its own difficulties. How, for example, can we convincingly show that the divinatory procedures in fact converge, that appropriate subjects were chosen when an archetype was actually constellated, that the data was taken without biasing the interpretation, and that other extraneous factors are not
distorting the outcome? These problems are not insurmountable, but if we are to do more than "preach to the converted," this experiment or any other must be done with sufficient rigor that the larger scientific community, and not just Jungians, would be satisfied with all aspects of the data taking, analysis of the data, and so forth. This is a formidable task, but learning from the recent successes in parapsychology, it would be most convincingly done if at the beginning of any synchronicity experiment a group of outside skeptics were extensively consulted to help with the design of the experimental protocols. They could also be consulted regularly to insure a high level of integrity throughout the experiment.

One of the legacies of Jung and von Franz is to appreciate that we cannot unconsciously project the shadow on our skeptical and critical colleagues. Instead, right from the beginning of our studies we can learn from them and integrate them into our efforts to understand the mysteries of synchronicity. If with their help we do this well enough, then we have a chance of experimentally establishing synchronicity and thereby moving toward reinstating repressed issues like teleology into science.

However laudable such a project, we cannot be naïve about its difficulty. Let's return to our pilgrim in the woodcut shown on the first page, but this time focus on the strange double wheel figure from the upper left hand corner, shown expanded here. von Franz describes these wheels on different planes but with the same hub as a "technical impossibility" and says:

The mysterious point of contact between the two systems appears to be the center of a sort of pivot where psyche and matter meet. When an individual enters into relation with the forces of the pivot, he find himself close to the sphere of "miracles" which seemingly could not occur without a corresponding attitude on his own part. . . . When such a constellation exists and eternity breaks through momentarily into our temporal system, the primal unity actively manifests itself and temporarily unites the double structures into one, so to speak. This is how the Unus Mundus becomes revealed in the phenomenon of synchronicity (von Franz 1974, p. 263).

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The "mandala is the psychological equivalent and synchronicity the parapsychological equivalent of the unus mundus." 41. "The above-mentioned mandalas [in the writings of Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Giordano Bruno, Ramon Lull] are attempts to combine the psychic equivalent of the unus mundus (i.e., mandala) with an attempt to tap the 'absolute knowledge' (i.e., synchronicity).Â 2 C.. the mandala is the psychic equivalent and synchronous phenomena are the parapsychological equivalent of the unus mundus. Jung.. the time-rate of radioactive decay. or any other constant in nature. As an archetype. Life, Work and Legacy of Carl Jung. Marie Louise Von Franz, On Divination and Synchronicity. On Divination and Synchronicity by Marie Louise Von Franz. Date: March 1, 2018Author: lewislafontaine.Â On Divination and Synchronicity : The Psychology of Meaningful Chance Studies in Jungian Psychology by Marie Louise Von Franz. Lecture 1. You may perhaps know of the amusing fact that originally divination was always practiced in churches.Â What is important in China, as Jung also pointed out in his essay called â€Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle,â€ is that the Chinese did not get stuck, like many other primitive civilizations do, into using divination methods only to predict the future whether for instance one should marry or not.