

BRAIN AND PSYCHE

C.G.Jung's 1946 *On the Nature of the Psyche*

compared with

A.R.Damasio's 1994 *Descartes' Error: emotion, reason and the human brain*

NOTES FOR SEMINARS GIVEN BY DAVID HOLT AT IGAP, JUNE 1998

history of subject-object distinction
is psychology necessarily a subjective science?
Jung's 'psychoid'
'the' unconscious as either contradiction or nonsense
getting behind 'formulation' to 'observation'
archetypes or patterns of behaviour
Jung's 'Komplexe Psychologie' lost in translation
the eventfulness of process
feelings as *qualifiers*
body-minded brain as *act*
neural 'firing patterns' and Jung's Komplexe Psychologie
question of timing: 'synchronicity' and the *insistence* of the present
'co-evolution' (of nature and culture, brain and language)

Figures in brackets are for paragraphs from Jung's Collected Works, Volume 8.

Translation of Jung's essay is in question throughout. For instance, in the title. A close translation of the German reads "Theoretical Reflections on the Nature of the Psychic". In the text, where the English has "the psyche", the German often has "the psychic". Also, the German Seele is sometimes translated as soul and sometimes as psyche. In general, as has been said many times, Jung in English reads perhaps deceptively clearer than in German. For further discussion, and reference to an alternative translation, see pages 3 and 4.

1. The Unconscious in Historical Perspective (343-355)

Emergence of psychology as a separate discipline since the 17th century.

Revolutionary recognition that our psychic conditioning is not something we can climb out of and then look at from outside.

Change in the balance between the subjective and the objective.

Can psychology become independent of philosophy?

The special position of psychopathology.

Difficulty in accepting reality of unconscious states, also of double consciousness.

My comment.

I think we should extend Jung's remarks on the change between subjective and objective to make the point that the two words seem in a sense to have *exchanged* meanings as between say the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the end of the medieval period, the Latin word *subject* tended to mean something like what we today call *object*, as it still does when we speak of "the subject matter of the book is...", while Latin *object* carried something of the sense we now give to *subject*, a bit like today when in emphasising that "we must be objective" we are speaking of our state of mind rather than of the world out there.

I was introduced to this historical fact by Owen Barfield's book *History in English Words* (first published in 1926), about which I will say something. I think it serves to deepen and emphasise the importance of this historical background which Jung always insisted on as necessary to an appreciation of what he was trying to do.

2. The Significance of the Unconscious in Psychology (356-364)

The hypothesis of the unconscious against the background of earlier understanding of the soul.

Watch translation here. For discussion: how do we distinguish soul and psyche?

[I think the footnote quotation from William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* is very important. This book should be obligatory reading for anyone trying to place Jung historically.]

German philosophical background. The "victory of Hegel over Kant".

Nietzsche and the unbridled bacchantic god.

Spirit: human spirit and the Spirit of God - how are they related, and historical change in that relationship. [Translation again an issue here. The German *Geist* differs from the English (Latin) *Spirit*. To get some sense of the difference, it can help to think how in English church language the term Holy Ghost has given way to Holy Spirit over the last decades. These translation points are not quibbles. They are important for the *feel* of what Jung is saying.]

Gradual appreciation of the importance of the idea of *threshold*: a "mere" threshold, nothing "there", yet it effectively separates conscious and unconscious.

Comparing this with earlier views (Wundt, Lipps). The research minded should note the reference to G.H.Lewes' *The Physical Basis of Mind*.

One translation mistake which caught my attention when I first noticed it some years ago: towards the beginning of para 362 there is reference to “an order which reflects the behaviour of a *metapsychic* reality”. The German has *metaphysischen* - metaphysical. For those who think, as I do, that Jung’s psychology is a lot about metaphysics and also recognise Jung’s dislike of metaphysical systems, the question of the right reading here is important.

3. The Dissociability of the Psyche (365-370)

This is where Jung introduces the term “psychoïd”. The importance, and the difficulty, of what is being said here cannot be exaggerated. If we immerse ourselves in this section we can see Jung as *observer*, as *reflecting* on what he has observed, and as struggling to *formulate* those reflections. Throughout our reading of this paper I suggest that we bear in mind those three levels - observation, reflection, formulation.

Note how the argument develops from the problem of an observing subject in relation to what is *unconscious*, and then, once again, into the idea of threshold. In para 366 the word “subliminal” occurs three times (only twice in the German). Jung does not often use this word (see the General Index to the Collected Works), and I find its use here suggestive of the longer term historical context of the difficulty he is grappling with.

On this, see footnote 47, to para 382, with the reference of F.W.H.Myers. A recent paper which I have found helpful in filling out the historical influences here is Sonu Shamdasani’s 1994 Introduction to the Princeton edition of Flournoy’s *From India to the Planet Mars*. It was Flournoy who published the Miller fantasies which Jung used in his 1912 *Psychology of the Unconscious*, now retitled as *Symbols of Transformation*.

Jung’s comparison of his use of the word psychoïd with those of Driesch and Bleuler is worth dwelling on. It makes clear that we are here caught up in the same difficulties of definition as we get in the new evolutionary neurosciences, about which I shall try and say something.

I find myself returning again and again to the first sentence of para 370: just how radical Jung’s view is, coupled with his insistence that it is *therefore* only provisional. Think about this.

On translation, I pick out the many references to conscious and unconscious “process”, “processes”. The German, Vorgänge, has a sense of “event” in it. Perhaps “procedure” or “proceedings” (as in “Parliamentary procedure”) might be a better translation. I think it makes a difference when we are trying to apply Jung’s observations to our own experience and practice. For me, process seems to suggest an uninterrupted continuity, while Vorgänge, proceedings, is more suggestive of a coherent number of discrete events.

4. Instinct and Will (371-380).

Questions of translation are particularly important here, and I present an alternative version, made by Louise Adey Huish, for purposes of comparison. In particular of course the notoriously difficult word “instinct”, which in the German varies between Trieb, with a strong sense of “drive”, and Instinkt. (*Copies of this translation are available from David Holt.*)

We need also to pause on the word Will, one of those obvious and everyday words we have to use, and in doing so to assume we know what we mean by, and yet simultaneously to admit that it is impossible to pin down what we do mean.

For instance, look at para 380:

“Volition presupposes a choosing subject who envisages different possibilities. Looked at from this angle, psyche is essentially conflict between blind instinct and will (freedom of choice)”. Here Jung appears to be saying that what he means by will is freedom of choice. But surely it can mean more than that. There is also a translation “window” into further meaning. The German word used is often “Willkür”, which has a strong sense of “arbitrary” as well as “voluntary”. When we talk of will, are we putting the emphasis on its voluntariness or its arbitrariness?

Once again, we have to keep moving between formulation, reflection, and observation. Try and relate Jung’s argument to our experience of “psychosomatic” illness, to a sufferer from what is now called Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: where is the line between “what we can get at psychologically”, and what is irretrievably stuck in the body. In this context, I shall bring a medical comment on para 380 which I have noted from seminars during my training in 1965.

5. Conscious and Unconscious (381-387)

“Extraordinary intellectual difficulties”. Indeed!

I suggest two ways into the argument/problem here.

1. Ask ourselves what happens if we drop the “the” before unconscious, and talk instead of consciousness and unconsciousness.

2. Think about Jung’s use of the English language phrase “patterns of behaviour”.

Research into precisely which text books, authorities, he had in mind when he used the phrase would be very helpful. I’ve been through all the references in the Collected Works, and it is surprising how often it appears in quotation marks, but never with a source given. He must have felt the English said something better than a German version.

I seem to remember von Franz once commenting on this, and I think she gave the English language author on whose usage Jung was drawing. But as I say, further research would be helpful. Because it relates so much of what Jung is here trying to tease out and spell out to contemporary evolutionary argument.

For example, from a 1951 paper (CW 16, para 254): “The concept of the archetype is a specifically psychological instance of the ‘pattern of behaviour’ in biology. Hence it has nothing to do with inherited ideas, but with modes of behaviour [vererbte Vorstellungen, sondern um Verhaltensweisen]”. The distinction Jung is drawing here seems to be about how genetic inheritance and learned behaviour relate, an argument which is still very much with us, perhaps more so than in Jung’s day?, in the question of how to act responsibly in relation to our new powers to alter genetic structure.

6. The Unconscious as a Multiple Consciousness (388-396)

"The unconscious with its disseminated luminosities". Here Jung gives us alchemical examples of the conscious-like-ness of unconsciousness: first, the idea of sparks, second, the idea of fishes' eyes, and of multiple eyes more generally.

This I find evocative, exciting and disturbing, touching as it does on my own personal myth. Reading it through for this occasion what jumped out at me as altogether "new" was the footnote 83, to para 391, with its reference to a saying of Jesus (Luke 12:49) which I don't remember having come across before. Something new has lodged itself in me as if it had at last come home - such can be the effect of Jung's books!

Do think again of my suggestion to drop the "the" in "the unconscious". It seems to me that these alchemical examples do just that.

And following from that, try out a general, and perhaps very important question:

"Would we feel that something essential of Jung's teaching is lost if we drop that 'the'? If so, what?"

Small point, but it reminds us of the importance of Janet's influence on Jung.

Para 396: "double consciousness" in quotation marks is given in the German as plain double conscience, no italics nor quotes: the French words as integral to the run of Jung's sentence.

7. Patterns of Behaviour and Archetypes (397-420)

1. The longest, most intricate, section of the paper. We could have a seminar on this alone!

2. For a start, think of what I've already written about the phrase "patterns of behaviour".

3. Then read the opening para 397. Doesn't Jung here ask us to do away with the definite article in front of "unconscious"? There is a translation question here. In English we have Jung saying that we must accustom ourselves to the thought "that conscious and unconscious have no clear demarcations, the one beginning where the other leaves off". The German has him saying: "dass das Bewusstsein kein Hier und das Unbewusste kein Dort ist" - that the conscious isn't a Here and the unconscious a There. I will try to show the value of the German version for getting behind *formulation* to *observation* with a dream of my own from 1963.

4. Further on Jung's method, and how to approach what he puts into words, I have marked three passages which we could look at together: the last sentences of para 400; the opening of para 409; and end para 416 and opening of 417: analogy and simile, Jung appears to see no difference between.

5. There is much talk of what Jung means by archetype. Look at the sentence in 406:

"The archetype is spirit or pseudo-spirit: what it ultimately proves to be depends on the attitude of the human mind". In German: "Der Archetypus ist Geist oder Ungeist, und es hängt meist von der Einstellung des menschlichen Bewusstseins ab, als was er sich endgültig herausstellen wird".

Then ask some such question as: is Jung's psychology an attitude of mind rather than a science in its own right? If so, how is it to be taught?

6. Para 416 to end of section. I want to suggest that it helps us to get behind what Jung is talking about in these very difficult pages if we are willing to think of language as "breaking down": when for instance the unconscious is described as not merely unconscious (417)? Surely what Jung is saying here is either non-sense or evidence of some break down in language, a failure of language to match with observation.

7. Translation. All through, once again, the word instinct. The German continues to be both *Trieb* and *Instinkt*, apparently indiscriminately. For instance, "instinctual psyche" for "*Triebseele*" in para 420

I want to read you what Laplanche and Pontalis say about this notorious translation problem in Freud's work.

Also, para 405: "There is a mystical effect about its numinosity, and it has a compelling effect upon the emotions". The German here translated 'emotions' is '*das Gemüt*', a word for which there is no one English equivalent. My wife suggests 'humour', 'sympathy', 'benevolent understanding', the opposite of 'being driven'. If you look it up in a dictionary you find that it refers both to the life of feeling, with nature, disposition, offered as translation, and also to the faculties of sensation, with heart and soul offered as translation.

The point I am trying to make in picking on details of translation like this, is that either in English or German what we are trying to talk about in psychology requires the use of everyday words with meanings that are mixed, many layered, variable. In trying to use them exactly, so that they convey to others something like the meaning they have for us, we need poetry as well as science.

8. General Considerations and Prospects (421-433)

With this section, and continuing to the end of the essay, Jung is increasingly concerned to identify similarities between (his) psychology and physics (the physics of his day).

Note that three references to his/our psychology are to "*komplexe Psychologie*" (paras 421, 423, 432).

This was the term which Toni Wolff and C A Meier were advocating in the 1930's and 1940's (see footnote 132, para 440 for reference), as a more accurate name for Jung's work than "analytical psychology" (which, as I have been given to understand, was successfully insisted on by the English speaking Jungians).

Over the years, I have been struck by various texts in which the German was *Komplexe*, and the English analytical.

I recommend the thought: what would the teaching and practice of Jung's psychology be like today if we had stuck, as I think we should have, with the German term?

Good quote on his method (para 421):

“it is, at bottom, a purely experiential process (Erlebnisprozess) in which hit and miss, interpretation and error, theory and speculation, doctor and patient, form a symptomosis or a symptoma - a coming together - and at the same time are symptoms (Anzeichen) of a certain process or run of events” (the last four words added in the English, see my earlier comments on the ‘eventfulness’ of ‘process’!).

Translation: again, various occasions when the German has Seele (soul) and the English psyche. And at end of para 425 there’s an example of how translation can contribute to both raising and avoiding important philosophical stumbling points in Jung’s thought.

The English has a contrast between knowledge and belief. But in the German the word rendered belief is Überzeugung, which usually means something more like conviction, a mind made up. This may well be how Jung saw belief, as the fixedness of a closed mind. But for some of us belief is something more like the ground and horizon of knowing. A lot can hang on a distinction like this.

Can our minds be both open and made up, ready and able to act? If so, how is such combination energised?

[In my practice I speak of the need to “entertain the possibility that...”]

There’s a reference to “the child” omitted in the English a third of the way through para 426: “...he was at least biologically nearer to that unconscious wholeness which *the child* and primitive man enjoys...”

para 429. How Jung sees psychology: “it must cancel itself out as science” (no ‘doomed’ in the German). The implications of this are surely huge!

Shall we discuss, perhaps in respect of the institutional organisation of Jungian psychology?

And note that the German for “cancel out” is “aufheben”, a word with huge resonance in the German metaphysical tradition, describing the emergence of Hegel’s “synthesis” from the prior thesis and antithesis (see para 358 where Jung describes Hegel as “a psychologist in disguise who projected great truths out of the subjective sphere into a cosmos he himself had created”).

para 432, on the distinction between becoming conscious and individuation, is perhaps also worth a seminar to itself!

But here again the translation is I think worth looking at. In the final two sentences the German is more colloquial, more like: “It [the Self] is as much this or the other as I. Individuation does not shut the world out; it includes the world”.

[In my practice, I say that the difference that really matters is whether our problems, symptoms, cut us off *from* the world or relate us *to* the world.]

Supplement (434-442)

This reads like a reply to criticisms of his archetypal theory. It draws extensively on the physicist Pauli, who cooperated with Jung on the original Synchronicity book.

Note that it touches on problems that have since been transformed by the genetic sciences, for example, all the present arguments round the *co*-evolution of nature and culture, brain and language.

It leads him (para 439) to what Aniela Jaffé calls “the at first sight astonishing assertion that the “archetypes...have a nature that cannot with certainty be designated as psychic”.

I note in para 441, that Jung says we must enlist the feeling function.

I suggest it can help enter into the feeling of his “astonishing assertion” if we bear in mind the problem of translating the German word “unvorstellbar”.

In para 439 what we have in English is:

“Hence the reality underlying the unconscious effects includes the observing subject and is therefore constituted in a way that we cannot conceive”.

In German:

“Die den Wirkungen des Unbewussten zugrunde liegende Realität schliesst also ebenfalls das beobachtende Subjekt ein und ist daher von unvorstellbarer Beschaffenheit”.

Unvorstellbarer Beschaffenheit: the meaning is somewhere between *inconceivable*, as given in our present translation, and *unimaginable*.

Now though we can use these words interchangeably in English, they do evoke different feeling. Imagining and conceiving are not the same. How do they differ? What does the difference feel like?

In trying to get behind Jung’s formulations (in which it seems to me language fails him) to his observations (which I suspect were more exact, and more exacting, than most of us can work with) nuances of feeling of this kind matter.

And as a feeling type myself, that is what I have to offer the seminar.

How Jung saw his method: three selections from "On the Nature of the Psyche"

from para 400

The more I suspected these configurations of harbouring a certain purposefulness, the less inclined I was to risk any theories about them. This reticence was not made easy for me, since in many cases I was dealing with patients who needed an intellectual *point d'appui* (Auffassungen) if they were not to get totally lost in the darkness. I had to try to give provisional interpretations at least, so far as I was able, interspersing them with innumerable 'perhapses' and 'ifs' and 'buts' and never stepping beyond the bounds of the picture (Gestaltung) lying before me. I always took good care to let the interpretation of each image tail off into a question whose answer was left to the free fantasy-activity of the patient.

from para 409

This 'sliding' consciousness is thoroughly characteristic of modern man. But the one-sidedness it causes can be removed by what I have called the 'realisation of the shadow'. A less 'poetic' and more scientific Greco-Latin neologism could easily have been coined for this operation. In psychology, however, one is to be dissuaded from ventures of this sort, at least when dealing with eminently practical problems. Among these is the 'realisation of the shadow', the growing awareness of the inferior part of the personality, which should not be twisted (umgefälscht) into an intellectual activity (Phänomen), for it has far more the meaning of a suffering and a passion that implicate the whole man.

from para 421

There is no medium for psychology to reflect itself in: it can only portray itself in itself, and describe itself. That, logically, is also the principle of my own method: it is, at bottom, a purely experiential process (Erlebnisprozess) in which hit and miss, interpretation and error, theory and speculation, doctor and patient, form a *symptosis* or a *symptoma* - a coming together - and at the same time are symptoms of a certain process or run of events. What I am describing, therefore, is basically no more than an outline of psychic happenings which exhibit a certain statistical frequency.

extracts from Antonio Damasio's "Descartes' Error"
(ISBN 0 333 65656 3)

from the Introduction, pages xvi to xvii - to compare with Jung's 'psychoid'
My investigation of neurological patients in whom brain lesions impaired experience of feelings has led me to think that feelings are not as intangible as they have been presumed to be. One may be able to pin them down mentally, and perhaps find their neural substrate as well. In a departure from current neurobiological thinking, I propose that the critical networks on which feelings rely include not only the traditionally acknowledged collection of brain structures known as the limbic system but also some of the brain's prefrontal cortices, and most importantly, the brain sectors that map and integrate signals from the body.

I conceptualise the essence of feelings as something you and I can see through a window that opens directly onto a continuously updated image of the structure and state of the body. If you imagine the view from this window as a landscape, the body 'structure' is analogous to object shapes in a space, while the body 'state' resembles the light and shadow and movement and sound of the objects in that space. In the landscape of your body, the objects are the viscera (heart, lungs, gut, muscles), while the light and shadow and movement and sound represent a point in the range of operation of those organs at a certain moment. By and large, a feeling is the momentary 'view' of a part of that body landscape. It has a specific content - the state of the body; and specific neural systems that support it - the peripheral nervous system and the brain regions that integrate signals related to body structure and regulation. Because the sense of that body landscape is juxtaposed in time to the perception or recollection of something else that is not part of the body - a face, a melody, an aroma -, feelings end up being 'qualifiers' to that something else....

In this perspective, feelings are the sensors for the match or lack thereof between nature and circumstance. And by nature I mean both the nature we inherited as a pack of genetically engineered adaptations, and the nature we have acquired in individual development, through interactions with our social environment, mindfully and willfully as well as not. Feelings, along with the emotions they come from, are not a luxury. They serve as internal guides, and they help us communicate to others signals that can also guide them. And feelings are neither intangible nor elusive. Contrary to traditional scientific opinion, feelings are just as cognitive as other percepts. They are the result of a most curious physiological arrangement that has turned the brain into the body's captive audience.

Note in particular

- the idea of brain sectors that both *map* and *integrate* signals from the body. This goes with
- the idea of the *landscape* of the body, and related to that, the distinction between the *structure* and the *state* of the body: compare 'figure' and 'ground' in Gestalt psychology.
- the idea of feelings as *qualifiers*. It is a very intriguing word for him to have chosen. What does he mean by it? Could we relate it to what we were saying last week about subjective and objective, seeing feelings as qualifiers between the structure and state of the body [which is *subjective* in the modern sense of the word], and a 'something else' [which is *objective* in the modern sense of the word]? Should we compare with 'taste', with 'the aesthetic'?
- feelings as the sensors for the match or lack thereof between nature and circumstance. He doesn't explain what he means by circumstance. Is it anything to do with 'synchronicity', a coming or falling together, a happening, that has to be 'in time' if it is to 'work'?
- the brain as body's captive audience. This leads into what I have to say about theatre.

On the “body-minded brain” as act
(from page 225, Chapter 10)

Perceiving the environment, then, is not just a matter of having the brain receive direct signals from a given stimulus, let alone receiving direct pictures. The organism actively modifies itself so that the interfacing can take place as well as possible. The body proper is not passive. Perhaps no less important, the reason why most of the interactions with the environment ever take place is that the organism requires their occurrence in order to maintain homeostasis, the state of functional balance. The organism continuously *acts* on the environment (actions and explorations did come first), so that it can propitiate the interactions necessary for survival. But if it is to succeed in avoiding danger and be efficient in finding food, sex, and shelter, it must *sense* the environment (smell, taste, touch, hear, see), so that appropriate actions can be taken in response to what is sensed. Perceiving is as much about acting on the environment as it is about receiving signals from it.

Mind as the interaction of neural firing patterns (cp. Jung’s Komplexe Psychologie)
(from pages 258-259, the Postscriptum)

...the sheer complexity of the problems for which we need answers. It is obvious that what we want to understand depends largely on the operation of neurons, and we do have a substantial knowledge about the structure and function of those neurons, all the way down to the molecules constituting them and making them do what they do best: fire, or engage in patterns of excitation. We even know something about the genes that make those neurons be and operate in a certain fashion. But clearly, human minds depend on the overall firing of those neurons, as they constitute complicated assemblies ranging from local, microscopic scale circuits to macroscopic systems spanning several centimetres. There are several billion neurons in the circuits of one human brain. The number of synapses formed among those neurons is at least 10 trillion, and the length of the axon cables forming neuron circuits totals something on the order of several hundred thousand miles... The product of activity in these circuits is a pattern of firing that is transmitted to another circuit. This circuit may or may not fire, depending on a host of influences, some local, provided by other neurons terminating in the vicinity, and some global, brought by chemical compounds such as hormones, arriving in the blood. The time scale for the firing is extremely small, on the order of tens of milliseconds - which means that within one second in the life of our minds, the brain produces millions of firing patterns over a large variety of circuits distributed over various brain regions.

It should be clear, then, that the secrets of the neural basis of mind cannot be discovered by unravelling all the mysteries of one single neuron, regardless of how typical that neuron might be; or by unravelling all the intricate patterns of local activity in a typical neuron circuit. To a first approximation, the elementary secrets of mind reside with the interaction of firing patterns generated by many neuron circuits, locally and globally, moment by moment, within the brain of a living organism.

Note

on subject/object interdependence and exchangeability:

“interfacing”, and “the reason why most of the interactions with the environment ever take place is that the organism requires their occurrence in order to maintain homeostasis, the state of functional balance”.

“so that it can propitiate the interactions necessary for survival”. [I love that “propitiate”!]

“fire, or engage in patterns of excitation”: how does this compare to Jung’s understanding of *projection*?

The question of “timing”: the brain and the present as *insistent*

Here are some references from chapter 8 of Damasio’s book, which speak to me of how the present has a hold on us, and we have a hold on the present. It is this reciprocal “hold”, a kind of two way *insistence*, that I am trying to relate to Jung’s concept of synchronicity.

page 165

This begins the chapter, with a section on Reasoning and Deciding in which he argues that there can be no reasoning without deciding (compare James Jarrett’s remarks about Jung on will).

“We almost never think of the present, and when we do, it is only to see what light it throws on our plans for the future.” These are Pascal’s words, and it is easy to see how perceptive he was about the virtual nonexistence of the present, consumed as we are by using the past to plan what-comes-next, a moment away or in the distant future. That all-consuming, ceaseless process of creation is what reasoning and deciding are about, and this chapter is about a fraction of its possible neurobiological underpinnings.”

My question: is that what the present is, an “all consuming ceaseless process of creation”?

page 170

He is explaining how rationality works.

“The point I want to stress is that your mind is not a blank at the start of the reasoning process. Rather it is replete with a diverse repertoire of images, generated to the tune of the situation you are facing, entering and exiting your consciousness in a show too rich for you to encompass fully.”

My question: how do we imagine the *timing* of that “tune”?

page 175

“the enduring of sacrifices now in order to attain benefits later”. He looks at how the brain chooses between long term and short term.

My question: if our brains are constantly having to choose between the long term and the short term, what does that choosing feel like?

pages 181-182

Contingency: “your own thing, related to your own experience, relative to events that vary with the individual”.

“The entire prefrontal region [of the brain] seems dedicated to categorising contingencies in the perspective of personal relevance”.

My question: as Damasio develops this theme I find myself wondering whether there are important links between Jung’s synchronicity and the whole philosophic tradition about “the contingent” [OED: “openness to the effect of chance or free will”]. Is my time necessarily the same as your time? Does our hold on the present, and its hold on us, depend on “the perspective of personal relevance”?

page 187

Section on intuition.

He describes how “the inhibition of the tendency to act” allows for “a gain of time”.

My question: what we make of synchronistic experience of the kind Jung describes seems to depend a lot on intuition. Does Damasio’s description of how the brain works when it decides to “take a break” so as to “gain time” suggest how intuition may work in allowing what I am calling our vertical to affect our horizontal experience of time?

pages 196-197

In all he says about attention as “sustained over the necessary time intervals”.

My question: is attention our everyday experience of the present as *insistent*?

pages 199-200

The connection between the creation of order, and decision. “Where there is a need for order there is a need for decision” [compare Jarrett on will again].

My question: is the present where the two needs fall, or come, *insistently* together?