

Wider Suggested Reading Taster:

Is Jung's Theory of Archetypes Compatible with Neo-Darwinism and Sociobiology? R S. PerchI Illtrduetion Carl Gustav Jung claimed to have proven that all humans carry within their subconscious minds the propensity to produce and appreciate behavior, symbols, and images biologically inherited from our distant ancestors. All of our most powerful emotions and their associated behaviors, from romantic love to nationalism, are said to derive their intensity and form from these unconscious propensities. Jung called these propensities "archetypes they formed the "collective tmconscious." The propensities are actualixed in the development of the personality, in the presence of certain triggering circumstances, in such a way that the complex of attitudes and behavior formed are in a life-enhancing equilibrium. Jung called this process 'Wividuation." He emphasixed that complete individuation, in which the archetypes are fully developed and integrated into a balanced, wise personality that is both profoundly happy with a sense of a deeply meaningful existence, is a rare phenomenon. More frequently, the archetypes are either stunted or lopsided in their growth and expression because of inadequate experiences. Nevertheless, archetypes, if properly cultivated, contain wisdom, balance, and meaning because they represent millions of ancestral experiences. Jung regarded the archetypes as additions to the then recognixed instincts. The intektual background to Jung's theory spans thousands of years, so I will only give a brief sketch. FVompted by the problem of how knowledge is possible, others before Jung had argued that the human organism is born with propensities to learn and interpret the world of experience in artain ways. Socrates in the Meno argued that the teacher does not imprint knowledge but is rather a midwife of knowledge that the pupil's soul already hasevenbdorebirth,butsimplycannotrecalLKant(1787)arguedthatthe~~ very possibility of experience depended on our possessing a priori categories of space, time, and causality. Schopenhauer (1819) continued Kant's theme and, initially through Hartmann (1867) and later direct&, seems to have been the most important influence on both Freud and Jung in their development of the theory of the unconscious mind (Magee, 1973). Jound o/sod Old LLdvtlonary sysmu 1q9.5m-487 Cqmight ~1993byJAIPrm,hc. ISSN: 0161-7361 Aurightsoflcpmdtlaioainmyfolmrrravtd.