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JINGCHAO ZENG

From both theoretical and historical perspectives, this paper will address how Jung and Ferenczi—as well as their respective successors—have understood paranormal phenomena. Jung and Ferenczi acknowledged the possibility that the unconscious might intervene directly in physical reality, yet they arrived at two fundamentally different conclusions. Meanwhile, the recent dialogue from Roderick Main (2022) on Jung's metaphysics and the possibility of re-enchantment facilitates a more fruitful discussion of Jung's metaphysics and further opens the space to compare it with other psychoanalytic authors. Therefore, this paper will further explore this dialogue.

C. G. Jung and Sandor Ferenczi were once loyal allies of Freud during the psychoanalytic movement. In 1909, Jung and Freud visited Clark University in the United States, accompanied by Ferenczi, at Freud's invitation (Haynal and Falzeder 2003, 476–477). Later, however, both Jung and Ferenczi would experience a break with Freud (Shamdasani 2003, 52–53, 58; Chan 2015, 29, 258). In fact, Freud's acceptance of Ferenczi to be his analysand in 1914 can be regarded as the replacement of his "heroic son," a role previously occupied by Jung (Cambray 2003, 454). Although their final ruptures with Freud were separated by twenty years, their professional beginnings were strikingly similar. In 1902, Jung completed his medical dissertation titled "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena" (CW 1). Three years earlier, the young Budapest doctor Ferenczi had published his first paper in a Hungarian journal called *Gyogyaszat* (*Healing Arts*), on the topic of spiritism (Ferenczi 1899/1963). It is therefore unsurprising that both would go on, in the following decades of their psychoanalytic theorizing, to explore and develop their own understandings of paranormal phenomena. Yet, their metaphysical positions were in fact radically different. Jung regarded such phenomena as expressions of an underlying psychophysical unity, explicable

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through his concept of synchronicity (1952/1969 CW 8, ¶¶863–866; 1970, CW 14, ¶¶662, 766–769), whereas Ferenczi held that the "so-called paranormal phenomena" contained nothing supernatural, but were instead manifestations of the unconscious (1993, 430).

Synchronicity: Jung's Perspective

Jung's theory of synchronicity encompasses three definitions, each considering both the psychic state and an externally occurring corresponding event (1951/1969, CW 8, ¶984). These correlations are viewed as acausal, yet they are connected through the shared meaning of the internal and external events (1952/1969, CW 8, ¶849). Jung's theoretical exploration of synchronicity transcends traditional frameworks that interpret paranormal events solely through psychic abilities (such as Mesmer's sixth sense) and the Hegelian-Bionian thread of interpsychic communication. Jung shifts the dialogue to a psychophysical level that is arguably panentheistic.[1] According to Jung's Eranos presentation on synchronicity in 1951, there are three types of synchronistic events:

(1) The coincidence of a psychic state in the observer with a simultaneous, objective, external event that corresponds to the psychic state or content. …
(2) The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding (more or less simultaneous) external event taking place outside the observer's field of perception, i.e., at a distance, and only verifiable afterward. …
(3) The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding, not yet existent future event that is distant in time and can likewise only be verified afterward. (1952/1969, CW 8, ¶984)

Chronologically, Jung's formulation of his synchronicity idea can be traced back to his very early lifetime in the Swiss countryside, where he frequently encountered accounts of extraordinary occurrences (Main 1997, 2). For Jung, paranormal events were "taken for granted in the world of my childhood" (Jung 1963/1989, 100; Main 1997, 2). They were a central part of his early family life:

> His maternal grandfather, Samuel Preiswerk, had believed himself to be continually surrounded by ghosts and would devote one day every week to conversing with the spirit of his deceased first wife, for whom he kept a special chair in his study (Jaffé 1984, 40). Jung's grandmother Augusta, Preiswerk's second wife, was believed to be clairvoyant (Jaffé 1984, 40). And the couple's daughter, Jung's mother, experienced "strange occurrences" with sufficient regularity to write a diary exclusively dedicated to them (Jaffé 1971, 2). … Jung's own experiences of the paranormal began at the age of seven or eight. During a period when his parents were sleeping apart and there was considerable tension in the house, he would sometimes see nocturnal apparitions. (Main 1997, 2)

Jung later developed an academic interest in these events as early as his college years. Specifically, by the time of his second Zofingia Lecture, he had already begun contemplating the paranormal (Jung 1983, ¶¶112–134; Pilard 2015, 62; 2018, 68). The primary concentration of this second lecture, delivered in May 1897, was to encourage scholarly investigation of

supernatural phenomena (Jung 1983, ¶¶67–142; Pilard 2018, 68). Midway through the lecture, Jung discussed various types of paranormal phenomena, including telekinesis, mediumship, clairvoyance, telepathy, and prophetic dreams (¶¶112–134). This academic interest soon became the central theme of his doctoral thesis, published in 1902, in which he chose to study his mediumistic cousin Hélène Preiswerk (1881–1911) as a case study (1902/1970, CW 1, ¶¶1–150). By 1905, Jung reported that he had investigated eight mediums (Main 1997, 4). Paranormal events also occurred during one of Jung's visits to Freud in 1909, where Jung even predicted an event before it happened. This occurrence appeared to have been triggered by Jung's emotional reaction to Freud's materialist stance toward precognition and paranormal phenomena:

> It was some years before he recognized the seriousness of parapsychology and acknowledged the factuality of "occult" phenomena. While Freud was going on this way, I had a curious sensation. It was as if my diaphragm were made of iron and were becoming red-hot—a glowing vault. And at that moment there was such a loud report in the bookcase, which stood right next to us, that we both started up in alarm, fearing the thing was going to topple over on us. I said to Freud: "There, that is an example of a so-called catalytic exteriorization phenomenon." "Oh come," he exclaimed. "That is sheer bosh." "It is not," I replied. "You are mistaken, Herr Professor. And to prove my point I now predict that in a moment there will be another such loud report!" Sure enough, no sooner had I said the words than the same detonation went off in the bookcase. (Jung 1963/1989, 155)

Another precognitive experience later appeared in Jung's visions in October 1913, as recorded in his *Liber Novus*: "A terrible flood covered all the northern and low-lying lands between the North Sea and the Alps. It reached from England up to Russia, and from the coast of the North Sea right up to the Alps" (Jung 2009, 231). Two weeks later, the same vision recurred, accompanied by an inner voice asserting that this was completely real (231). In July 1914 when World War I broke out, Jung came to realize that it was not potential schizophrenia that threatened him, but rather that his visions arising from the collective unconscious foretold the imminent war (Jung 1977/1993, 234). This event held profound significance for him. First, the fear that he might be suffering from a psychosis dissipated as the First World War provided confirmation of his earlier visions (Cambray 2014, 47). As Jung noted: "I had the feeling that I was an over-compensated psychosis, and from this feeling I was not released until August 1st, 1914" (2012, 48). Later, in an interview with Mircea Eliade at the Eranos conference near Ascona in 1952, Jung mentioned his 1913 visions after discussing his concept of synchronicity, stating that what "remained for me to do now was to deepen and validate this discovery. And this is what I have been trying to do for forty years"—which ultimately led to the crystallization of synchronicity (Jung 1977/1993, 234).

Consequently, Jung's theory of synchronicity was rooted in a context of supernatural experiences from the outset of his conceptualization. This experiential dimension encompassed numerous elements that hint at a larger acausal order behind the coincidental connections between psychic states and physical events (1952/1969, CW 8, ¶965). His ongoing interest in parapsychology further illustrates this aspect. In 1919, Jung delivered a lecture titled "The Psychological Foundations of Belief in Spirits" at the Society for Psychical Research in London, England (Main

1997, 6; Jung 1948/1969, CW 8, ¶¶570–600). He engaged in various séances and became familiar with psychokinetic experiments from the 1920s onward (Fodor 1971, 195; Main 1997, 6). Upon receiving a copy of the Daoist text *The Secret of the Golden Flower* from Richard Wilhelm in 1928, Jung noted a striking correspondence with his two mandala paintings of 1927–1928, subsequently classifying this discovery as a synchronistic event (Jung 1963/1989, 197). The first one came from *The Red Book* and was later named the "Window on Eternity" (Jung 2009, 159). The second painting was the golden castle mandala or "Vajra mandala," which was Jung's last mandala in *The Red Book* (163). Experiences such as near-death encounters, states of mystical union, and the attendant coincidences following his heart attack in 1944 may have profoundly influenced and motivated him to contemplate a range of controversial issues, including synchronicity (Fodor 1971, 195; Main 1997, 6–7). Moreover, his correspondence and frequent references to parapsychologist J. B. Rhine's[2] telepathy experiments in his 1952 essay on synchronicity further highlight his engagement with these themes (Main 1997, 15–16; Jung 1952/1969, CW 8, ¶¶833–840, 846–848, 855–857, 911–914).

In the meantime, Jung's divinatory experiences are also a significant aspect of his synchronistic experiences, even though they seemingly contain fewer paranormal qualities. As Jung states regarding Chinese *Yijing* (《易经》 or the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes*) divination, synchronistic phenomena that correlate the psychic and the physical (represented by the resulting hexagram) occur: "The *I Ching* presupposes that there is a synchronistic correspondence between the psychic state of the questioner and the answering hexagram" (1951/1969, CW 8, ¶986). The fundamental connection between divination and synchronicity was established earlier in a seminar given in 1928, where Jung first used the term *synchronism* to present his later understanding of synchronicity as meaningful coincidence in the context of discussing the Chinese oracle book implicitly as "the oldest Chinese scientific book" (Jung 1984, 44–45; Zeng 2024, 183). Subsequently, the concept of synchronicity was officially promoted in his memorial speech for the German sinologist Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930) in 1930, again in relation to *Yijing* divination (1930/1966, CW 15, 81–84).

The rich synchronistic experiences, including divinatory experiences in Jung's life, provided a solid foundation for him to confront and eventually formulate the concept of synchronicity systematically in 1949, with a focus on a group of divinatory methods around 1950 (Jung and Pauli 1992, 36; Bair 2003, 549; Gerber and Gerber, 2021, 19). From the 1930s onward, astrology, Yijing divination, Tarot, and geomancy are frequently referenced in relation to synchronicity or equivalent expressions (as intuitive methods), even if not explicitly stated in Jung's personal and academic writings (Jung 1952/1969, CW 8, ¶¶866, 900; 1951/1969, CW 8 ¶¶976, 987; 1930/1966, CW 15 ¶¶81–84; 1976/1990, 428–429; 1997, 923; 2019, 288–289; Zeng 2024). Ultimately, the practice of divination had been integrated into his synchronicity concept under the idea of "methods for grasping a situation as a whole," which Jung believed originated from the Chinese Yijing (1952/1969, CW 8, ¶863). As Jung asserted, "Unlike the Greek-trained Western mind, the Chinese mind does not aim at grasping details for their own sake, but at a view which sees the detail as part of a whole" (¶863). He suggested that this

Chinese irrational way of thinking was a fundamental aspect of both divination and synchronicity:

> The method [presupposing that of an inner state could be represented as an outer one and vice versa in the *Yijing*], like all divinatory or intuitive techniques, is based on an acausal or synchronistic connective principle. In practice, as any unprejudiced person will admit, many obvious cases of synchronicity occur during the experiment, which could be rationally and somewhat arbitrarily explained away as mere projections. (¶866)

In summary, synchronicity is not merely a theory that encompasses paranormal phenomena. It also includes divinatory experiences that potentially reveal varying degrees of panentheistic and psychophysical correlations. The wide range of experiences captured in Jung's notion of synchronicity distinctly illustrates that the psychic realm is not simply correlated unconsciously in a transcorporeal manner. Instead, as demonstrated in Jung's conceptualization of synchronicity through the example of Yijing divination, a meaningful correlation occurs in the result of the hexagram, serving as a physical correspondence that transcends the limitations of interpsychic phenomena (1951/1969, CW 8, ¶986), while the archetypal factors behind divination illustrate the panentheistic aspect of the concept (Jung 1976/1990, 584; 1952/1969, CW 8, 900).

Synchronicity in a Clinical Context

In the clinical context, synchronistic events occur within therapeutic dynamics, particularly in the transference-countertransference framework. Jungian analyst Rosemary Gordon (1983) was one of the first to discover that synchronicity may play various roles in the transference-countertransference relationship, sometimes leading to critical insights for either the patient or the analyst (138–144). Notably, Gordon (1993) references Michael Balint, a disciple of Ferenczi, and his work on parapsychology and transference (391). In Gordon's dialogue (1993), she states that ESP phenomena (which refer to synchronicity) would "occur in analysis when the patient is in a state of intense, positive, and dependent transference" (391). This idea draws inspiration from Balint's (1955) notion of ESP phenomena as a desperate attempt to gain the analyst's attention. As a result, the transference-countertransference dynamics serve as a vital trigger for ESP phenomena, wherein synchronistic events may emerge as challenges (Gordon 1993, 391). This also hints at the potential theoretical synthesis of synchronicity and psychoanalytic parapsychology.

Swiss-trained American Jungian analyst Nathan Schwartz-Salant also explores synchronicity within the clinical interpsychic context from several perspectives (Schwartz-Salant 1982, 153; 1984, 10–24; 1989, 141). In *Narcissism and Character Transformation*, Schwartz-Salant (1982) compares love developed from authentic relationships to a "synchronistic occurrence" (153). In a subsequent book chapter in 1984, he thoroughly elaborates on the Jungian alchemical concept of *coniunctio*[3]—which literally means conjunction and relates to the union of opposites. Although in Schwartz-Salant's view, this *coniunctio* (between the analyst

and the patient) in psychotherapy may trigger synchronistic events related to sexual acting out (10). Such occurrences are regarded as ethical blunders within his framework:

> The experience of coniunctio between two people is an act of "grace," and yet the imaginal product of this experience, the image of a conjoined, hermaphroditic Self perceived in the space between them, can be returned to from time to time. It appears we can increase the probability of its recurrence through correct technique, and yet we are always still dealing with synchronistic phenomena, not with ego-determined events. It is a poor variant on sexual magic in a setting that can least tolerate it. (Schwartz-Salant 1984, 10)

In a later book on borderline personality, Schwartz-Salant (1989) illustrates a synchronistic event related to his own sexual acting out during a session with his borderline patient, Kate (141). However, since the purpose of this work is not clinical, I acknowledge only that the relational context is significant for generating synchronistic events.

Aside from Schwartz-Salant, John Beebe (1988) discusses how the analyst's role as the patient's selfobject can trigger synchronistic events with positive transference at the beginning of the therapeutic relationship and addresses its potential clinical issues comprehensively:

> Indeed, the relationship often starts so well the therapist may not realize that what the patient sees is not exactly the therapist. For often there is an element of synchronicity in the process by which the patient arrives in just this therapist's office; and the analyst feels in some coincidental way related to the patient's history or life situation. With patients for whom this sort of transference unfolds, the relationship has at its outset a numinous quality, a sanctified sense of special rightness. To the analyst, as the person employed to stabilize and enhance development of the patient's incomplete sense of personal self, will quickly be attributed qualities of the transpersonal Self; and one may well believe, given the felt connection to the patient, that this is in a way deserved. One feels, as therapist, that one was meant or destined to help this patient, a sort of divine-right countertransference from the start … Yet reverence for the analyst is sometimes accompanied by a strangely discrepant feeling, also imbibed from the patient, of awe or terror—the patient's reaction to being in the presence of the Self incarnate. And with failures of empathy this terror is replaced by an even more intense rage, which the analyst will experience viscerally as a physical attack, a feeling that turns out to be not dissimilar from that of the patient in response to empathic failure. The two partners to this selfobject transference are in an increasingly uncomfortable, emotionally continuous field that envelops them both. (102–103)

American Jungian analyst and scholar Joseph Cambray also contributes to the interpsychic aspect of synchronicity. As early as in his 2002 paper on synchronicity and its clinical application, Cambray discusses the post-Bionian concept of the "analytic third," first introduced by the Freudian psychoanalyst André Green and later developed primarily by Thomas Ogden (278). The concept refers to "a product of a unique dialectic generated by/between the separate subjectivities of analyst and analysand within the analytic setting" (Odgen, as cited in Cambray 2002, 278). In Cambray's theorization, there are deeper layers of the interpsychic analytic third where social, historical, cultural, and ultimately archetypal dimensions can be included (278). Although the archetypal dimension only implicitly points to synchronicity, it is confirmed in his more recent work:

> Combining this with Jung's structural vision of the unconscious described in layers of increasingly broader inclusiveness of others (family, tribe, community, culture, humanity) which also is layered historically, we arrive at a dynamic psyche distributed in the field of interactions according to archetypal patterns. By including the psychoid aspects of the archetypes which when activated can correlate with synchronistic experiences, the non-local dimension of the psyche (not constrained to single locations in space or time) is more fully revealed. (Cambray 2021, 177)

Cambray (2009) further promotes the idea of synchronicity in the analytic field, particularly in relation to empathy (68–87). From his perspective, synchronistic experiences share a common ground with neuroscience, which believes that "our evolved capacity for empathic understanding of ourselves and our world is what makes us most fully human" (87). Empathetic experiences hold an underlying synchronistic core that can be integrated with the idea of a resonant field (87). The further elaboration on the interpsychic aspect of synchronicity later resulted in Cambray's (2011) subsequent paper on the intersubjective model of Jung with a close reference to Bionian field theory (296–298). In this paper, he further attempts to reexamine the synchronicity concept with complexity and emergence without identifying the two but still creates a potential space for further understanding the interpsychic aspect of synchronicity (300–301).

Intersubjective psychoanalysis is also integrated into the clinical discussion in Helen Marlo and Jeffrey Kline's insightful paper on synchronicity in an interpsychic context (1998, 15ff). Drawing closely from the work of intersubjective psychoanalysts Robert Stolorow, Bernard Brandchaft, and George Atwood (1987/2014), Marlo and Kline (1998) present the perspective that synchronicities can be embedded within the intersubjective system, as transference-countertransference can be recognized as "organizing activities" in intersubjective psychoanalysis, where "each member of the analytic dyad connects with the other by assimilating him or her into the thematic structures of his or her personal subjective world resulting in the formation of an 'intersubjective system of reciprocal mutual influence'" (Stolorow et al. 1987, 16; included in Marlo and Kline 1998, 18).

From a more conservative standpoint, the therapist's response to uncanny life parallels with the patient may reflect unconscious identification processes that significantly compromise clinical perception (Marlo and Kline 1998, 19). But a contemporary intersubjective view presents an alternative perspective as "the unconscious shaping of both patient and therapist due to the intimacy and mutual influence within the relationship" (19). When perceiving these events in a synchronistic manner, the similarities become inevitable and meaningful, as both individuals need to connect along these motifs (19). The dynamics of this interpsychic and psychophysical phenomenon, considering the nature of synchronicity in relation to intersubjective psychoanalysis, have been conceptualized by Jungian analyst Deborah Bryon (2024):

> This intersubjective matrix within the edges of fractal experience between the analyst and the analysand is porous and permeable. The transpersonal energetic network that is in a constant state of flux, is simultaneously separating and reconnecting, with synchronistic, or "uncanny," shared information being exchanged between them (Bass 2001; de Peyer 2016; Eshel 2006; Farber 2017; Kantrowitz 2001; Mayer 2007; Tennes 2007) that is "transtemporal." (181)

The clinical theories that involve interpsychic interactions, along with the developments of synchronicity after Jung, highlight the greater connections between the psychic and the physical. They suggest that profound psychophysical corresponding phenomena can also occur within unconscious interpsychic communications.

Ferenczi, Fodor, and the Poltergeist

In the Budapest school, or Ferenczian school of psychoanalysis, the interest in paranormal phenomena is both continuous and profound. In this section, I will revisit the psychoanalytic Poltergeist theory articulated by the Ferenczian psychoanalyst and parapsychologist Nandor Fodor, which serves as another example of psychophysical connections within depth psychology (Ferenczi 1899/1963, 1988; Fodor 1948, 1958, 1963, 1964, 1968, 1971; Gyimesi 2012, 2016; Rabeyron, Evrard, and Massicotte 2021; Boyle 2022, 98–171; Pierri 2023b, 127–203). Before delving into Fodor's dialogue, I will provide a brief review to understand the historical context of *psychoanalytic parapsychology*, a term coined by Marie Coleman Nelson to describe this branch of psychoanalysis in the obituary of Nandor Fodor and later referenced in scholarly studies (Nelson 1964, 155; Boyle 2022, 251).

Similar to Jung, Ferenczi had an academic interest in the paranormal from the very beginning of his career. In 1898, he completed his medical degree in Vienna, returned to Budapest, and began working at Rókus Hospital (Boyle 2022, 135). He soon engaged in "a series of informal investigations into spiritualistic phenomena" (135–136). This exploration led to his first academic paper, "Spiritism," published in 1899 (Ferenczi 1899/1963). Most importantly, the foundational stance for understanding the paranormal within the Ferenczian school was shaped by the initial idea that inspired this paper:

> I decided to let the pencil "move on its own," letting it write "on its own," letting it write whatever it wished … Finally the pencil suggested the following: "Write an article on spiritualism for *Gyogyaszat* [Healing Arts],[4] the editor will be interested" … The next day I wrote my first medical paper entitled "On spiritualism." I started off from the phenomenon of automatism which I had observed in myself. My conclusion … was that *the so-called occult phenomena do not contain anything supernatural and should be viewed as manifestations of the functioning of the unconscious*. (Ferenczi 1993, 430, italics added)

Attributing the personal unconscious as a vital factor in occult phenomena was a pioneering perspective for understanding paranormal events, aligning with Ferenczi's scientific standpoint at the turn of the century (Boyle 2022, 137). However, the ambiguity of this perspective lay in the fact that the concept of the unconscious was never clearly defined, particularly as it combined Freud's materialist understanding of the unconscious with a sense of discontent, as noted in Ferenczi's *Clinical Diary* (1988, 93). Ferenczi acknowledged that Freud "sees almost nothing in the subjective, except the superstructure of the physical; the physical itself is something much more real" (93). For Ferenczi, studying the nature of the occult and thought transference "encounters strong emotional resistance in us materialists" (33). Therefore, despite Ferenczi's interest in exploring various forms of interpsychic paranormal phenomena, he never

established a systematic theory or metaphysical framework to more accurately understand these events.

Nonetheless, Ferenczi made profound contributions to psychoanalytic parapsychology. He was the first to introduce the idea of mind reading in transference (later conceptualized as *thought transference*) into psychoanalysis[5] (Pierri 2023b, 160–162). He also promoted the metaphorical hypothesis of the psychoanalyst as a soothsayer in the context of understanding transference (Boyle 2022, 139). Furthermore, he conducted a telepathic experiment with Sigmund Freud and Anna Freud in 1913 (Boyle 2022, 111; Pierri 2023, 236). Ferenczi even challenged the limits of materialism in psychoanalysis in his *Clinical Diary* (1988, 33). Although Ferenczi took significant steps toward a psychoanalytic understanding of interpsychic paranormal phenomena, the integration of psychoanalysis and psychical research would not reach its psychophysical level until the work of his successor and student, Nandor Fodor.

Nandor Fodor (1895–1964) was a Hungarian psychoanalyst, parapsychologist, and journalist dedicated to studying the occult within psychoanalysis (Boyle 2022, 162–172). Around 1920, Fodor discovered his interest in paranormal phenomena. Subsequently, in 1926, he interviewed Ferenczi, who provided him with a model to combine psychoanalysis and psychical research (164). Fodor was analyzed by Ferenczi's patient and collaborator, Elizabeth Severn, and served as the Director of Research at the International Institute for Psychical Research in London from 1934 to 1938, during which he investigated the Thornton Health Poltergeist case[6] (Fodor 1971, 92; Boyle 2022, 64).

As Fodor himself noted, the concept of "Poltergeist Psychosis" represented his most significant contribution to psychoanalytic parapsychology (Fodor 1968, 112; Boyle 2022, 169). The Poltergeist phenomenon was initially discussed by Fodor in his reports for the International Institute for Psychical Research from 1934 to 1938; those reports were later turned into his book in 1958 titled *On the Trail of the Poltergeist* (Fodor 1948, 196; 1958). As Fodor (1971) recalled, the conclusion of the paper stated: "a basic sexual trauma was the unconscious motivating factor behind the pranks of the racketing spirit [the Poltergeist]" (92). However, his report appeared to have presented an unwelcome psychoanalytic perspective for the members of the institute, leading to his resignation from his position (92). In the 1948 paper "The Poltergeist: Psychoanalyzed" he made a statement loyal to Freud's theory:

> I have investigated many instances of Poltergeist phenomena and can assure readers of the present paper that many of the manifestations are real. I consider them, however, to be manifestations of [a] major mental disorder of schizophrenic, though temporary, character, not the product of anything supernatural. (196)

Fodor's clinical perspective appeared to categorize the Poltergeist phenomenon as a clinical manifestation of the unconscious while unreasonably neglecting its significance as a form of psychophysical paranormal phenomenon. As Julia Gyimesi (2016) concludes, "If it is possible to produce physical symptoms within the body, then it might also be possible to produce them outside the body as well. In this sense, parapsychological phenomena were identified as symptoms of the sufferer" (50). However, paranormal phenomena that exhibit a correspondence between the psychic and the physical can simultaneously serve as symptoms

of mental illnesses under the lens of Fodor and Ferenczi without any transcendental subject like the Jungian archetypes that are panentheistic.

In his early reported case, Fodor (1948) discussed Miss Whalen, whose cottage was beset by mysteriously caused disturbances (196–197). This Poltergeist phenomenon was believed to be related to Miss Whalen, as her brief absences brought tranquility to the house (197). Fodor soon began to work with Miss Whalen analytically and suggested that she was troubled by her past; the Poltergeist activity in the house was activated because "her libido had side-slipped and walked out on her as a ghost, wasting her vitality in a vain attempt to convey a message in the same way—as in other cases—a symptom would" (198). The treatment progressed gradually as Miss Whalen became more aware of her inner issues, coinciding with a gradual decrease in the Poltergeist phenomena in the cottage (198–203). Fodor helped Miss Whalen recognize her unconscious suffering from the loss of her unborn child and other early experiences. Ultimately, the Poltergeist phenomenon disappeared as she gained mental strength to confront her unconscious drives (199–203). By demonstrating the psychotherapeutic resolution of this psychophysical paranormal phenomenon, Fodor provided his psychoanalytic understanding of how the psychic could manifest physically without a clear metaphysical claim.

The Poltergeist theory and its psychophysical mechanisms were later developed more comprehensively in Fodor's work during the 1960s and 1970s (Fodor 1964, 1973). In his book *Between Two Worlds*, Fodor (1964) expanded the definition of the Poltergeist phenomenon. He wrote that the Poltergeist can be a paranoid, sadomasochistic, and self-protective projection in some cases (61). When acted out sadistically, it represents an unconsciously projected, repressed aggression toward others, which may relate to vengeance (61f, 156f, 171). In a case called Ted Pauls, Fodor revealed how the Poltergeist manifested through the throwing of objects and various types of physical manifestations (166). He also explored the connection between the Poltergeist phenomenon, birth trauma, and developmental issues (163–164).

In his last book, *Freud, Jung and Occultism*, Fodor (1971) contributed to Jung's synchronicity theory from an interpsychic perspective. In this book, Fodor recounted having listened to Jung's interview with parapsychologist Hans Bender in 1960, during which Jung discussed a case of instantaneous cure (38). In this case, a woman suffering from incurable insomnia consulted Jung. At one moment, Jung heard the voice of his mother singing a lullaby to his little sister, and he began to hum the same tune automatically (Jung 1977/1993, 417–419[7]). Following her meeting with Jung, the woman was cured (419). Jung believed that "his sympathy for the girl released an access of affect and caused his mental attention to sink below the threshold, which permitted the memory of the singing mother to rise and the magic of the lullaby to live again" (Fodor 1971, 39). Fodor further commented on the synchronistic dimension (as an affective field) of this event:

> Jung—wishing to lull the patient—sank into the role of his mother and entered into a magical state in which meaningful coincidences occur, "Nature and Psyche reveal themselves mutually determined and wishes therefore realize themselves. The affective field has new qualities which are independent of spatio-temporal dimensions. Whatever happens in this field, is no longer subject to causality."[8] (39–40)

Fodor (1971) also referred to the metaphysics of dual-aspect monism in his book, insightfully addressing it after discussing the Jung-Pauli collaboration:

> Jung's synchronicity was an implicit identification with this, and the new term was meant to remove the archetype from the area of pure psychology and bring it into closer relationship with atomic physics, which has become confronted with the same problem of noncausality of which Jung became the exponent. The suggestion in all this is that certain phenomena of the physical and psychological world are actually two different facets of the same background. Jung took pains to emphasize that the psychoid nature of the archetype does not contradict his earlier descriptions of archetypal phenomena as psychic, it only means further conceptual differentiation. (165)

Although Fodor never directly integrated his Poltergeist theory with Jung's synchronicity, he still explicitly acknowledged Jung's significance in psychoanalytic psychology (including the relevance of Jung's ideas for the Poltergeist theory in the psychoanalytic movement) (Fodor 1963; 1971, 203). Both theories encompass an interactive aspect between the psychic and the physical. As Fodor concluded, Jung's concepts of synchronicity and dual-aspect monism point to a unified ultimate background. Compared to Jung, Fodor's Poltergeist theory focuses solely on how personal psychic elements can manifest as physical expressions. To conclude this subsection, I will employ Fodor's overview (1971) of Jung's contributions to parapsychology, which serves to open the metaphysical dialogue in the next section:

> Only in time and space does the unintelligible divide itself into antithesis of the understandable and causally arranged "one" or "other." Synchronistic phenomena have indeed, so to speak, to do with the background; therefore, they seem paradoxical, embracing, in a puzzling way, both the psychical and physical; and therefore they rouse the feeling of the numinous or the Divine. Parapsychology is not the only "offbeat" area to which C. G. Jung turned his attention … The world undergoes change and development, not through what is already known, but by throwing light upon the unknown. It is in this manner that Jung has made … a significant contribution to the greater self-knowledge of our time. (203)

Conclusion: Toward An Integrated Metaphysical Model

The perspective of the Ferenczian school may differ significantly from Jung's synchronicity, considering Ferenczi's statement: "The so-called occult phenomena do not contain anything supernatural and should be viewed as manifestations of the functioning of the unconscious" (1993, 430). Although Ferenczi and Fodor are not the supporters of a reductionist type of physicalism, their theories still considerably align with a form of psychological reductionism, which posits that the origin of supernatural phenomena is psychological and caused by symptoms (Fodor 1971, 92). The metaphysics of the two parties are hence also different. Jung's synchronicity notion is deeply rooted in divinatory experiences, highlighting the significance of transcendent archetypal factors that are distinctively re-enchanted as synchronicity contains panentheistic elements, as Jung writes:

> The mantic procedures owe their effectiveness to this same connection with emotionality: by touching an unconscious aptitude they stimulate interest, curiosity, expectation, hope, and fear, and consequently evoke a corresponding preponderance of the unconscious. *The effective (numinous) agents in the unconscious are the archetypes*. (1952/1969, CW 8, ¶912, italics added)

It is noteworthy that a unified ontology between psychoanalytic parapsychology and Jungian psychology has been tentatively addressed by Thomas Rabeyron, Renaud Evrard, and Claudie Massicotte (2021). The authors of this paper attempt to connect the Jung-Pauli conjecture, discussed in the anthology edited by Harald Atmanspacher and Christopher Fuchs, with Bion's concept of O[9] (Atmanspacher and Fuchs 2014; Rabeyron et al. 2021, 561–562). The resulting idea is *ontic communication*, which refers to the ontic level of communication between the analyst and the client's psyche, with telepathy serving as a vital example of this type of communication (561). Although the co-edited book by Atmanspacher and Fuchs is quoted ambiguously in this paper, they may be referring to the potential to compare Bion's O with Jung's synchronicity in Fach's chapter on exceptional experiences[10] (Fach 2014). In this chapter, Fach elucidates the idea of "crisis telepathy" as synchronicity:

> Such cases of "crisis telepathy" seem to reflect the closeness of subjects who react as a system as a whole rather than as two individuals—even if they are spatially separate. As soon as an externally induced issue leads to an existential threat to the dyadic system, its parts are meaningfully associated in their reactions. (267)

In Fach's understanding, exceptional experiences related to dual-aspect monism, including telepathy, "appear as acausal mind-matter correlations induced by psychosocial contexts and psychodynamic processes via a domain that is neutral to the mind-matter distinction" (271). Thus, the psychophysically neutral ultimate reality within dual-aspect monism that facilitates telepathy aligns with O—if one considers O as the ultimate truth that transcends the boundaries of personality and generates telepathic phenomena (Rabeyron et al. 2021, 560–561). The primary distinction between O and synchronicity lies in the fact that Bion does not address the psychophysical level. O may operate at the interpsychic level rather than necessarily at a psychophysical level that is panentheistic. In the clinical context, O is connected with analytic intuition and transformation in [the experience of being with] O, which "requires the analyst to temporarily disappear as a knower intentionally making meaning in order to welcome it" (Eaton 2019, 55). O is situated within the intersubjective space of the analytic encounter and may therefore be distinct from the psychophysical dimensions associated with concepts like synchronicity.

The hypothetical union reveals the significant potential for revising and uniting different depth psychological theories. It emphasizes not only the theoretical consistencies and uniformity among these theories but also the inherent coherence of the associated psychic and psychophysical experiences. Validating Jung's metaphysical conjecture is an ongoing task. Jung's emphasis on transcendental archetypes further positions the panentheistic dimension of depth psychology's metaphysics within a clearly articulated framework of re-enchantment. The Hungarian counterpart will be an interesting companion to this exploratory journey with more disenchanted elements in its own metaphysics.

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ENDNOTES

1. *Panentheism* is a compound term formed from the Greek roots *pan* ("all"), *en* ("in"), and *theos* ("God"). It denotes a worldview in which God and the world are mutually interrelated—God exists within the world, while the world simultaneously exists within God (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 2023). Meanwhile, unlike pantheism, God and the world are not identical (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 2023). Within the panentheistic framework of Jungian psychology, the transcendental archetypes are not separated from their archetypal images (Main 2017, 1108; Jung 1952/1969b, CW 11, ¶¶557–558).
2. In the Jung ETH archive, there are forty-three letters between J. B. Rhine and Jung, some of which are published in the two volumes of *Letters of C. G. Jung* (Jung 1875–1961; 1973/1992, 180ff; 1976/1990, 106ff).
3. This concept originally refers to the combination of chemical substances in alchemy (1946/1966, CW 16, ¶355). Jung regarded it, in psychological terms, as symbolizing the union of opposites and the emergence of new possibilities (¶355).
4. The translation of *Gyogyaszat* was given by Boyle (2022, 136).
5. Ferenczi first discussed thought transference in 1910 in an unpublished paper titled "A Few Recent Observations (On the Theme of Thought Transference)" (Pierri 2023, 160).
6. This case concerned the haunting of an English family in Thorton Heath.
7. Here I refer to a cross reference of this case from an interview with Jung by Georges Duplain, given in *C. G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters* (Jung 1977/1993, 410–424).
8. This seems to be a quote by Fodor originally in the passage, but it is not a part of the published Jung-Bender interview recording (Schellinger, Anton, and Wittmann 2021).
9. In Bion's writings the notion of O represents the absolute truth inherent in all objects. O is considered inaccessible to humans, despite "it can be known about, its presence can be recognized and felt, but it cannot be known. It is possible to be one with it" (2018, CWB VI, 245).
10. The original authors did not cite Fach, the author of the chapter (Rabeyron et al. 2021, 561–562).

NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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ABSTRACT

This paper intends to open a dialogue between Jungian and Ferenczian ideas on the paranormal by putting the Jungian concept of synchronicity and the Ferenczian Poltergeist theory together. By comparing Jung's and Ferenczi's differing conceptualizations of psychophysical unity in the paranormal context, the author has identified their underlying metaphysical distinctions. At the same time, the tendency within post-Ferenczian and post-Bionian works to converge with Jung's view on the theme of supernatural phenomena appears to signal the emergence of a new, integrative perspective within depth psychology. By highlighting this contemporary tendency, the author aims to facilitate dialogue between the Jungian and psychoanalytic schools.

KEY WORDS

Ferenczi, Fodor, Jung, interpsychic, panentheism, paranormal phenomenon, parapsychology, Poltergeist theory, psychoanalytic parapsychology, psychophysical, synchronicity, the *Yijing*