

Title Page

How Jung's Theories of The Self May Be Classified as Gnostic and are Grounded in Gnostic  
Cosmology.

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment  
of a Master of Arts in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology  
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**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation**

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## Abstract

This text-based paper examines how Carl Jung's theories of the self may be classified as Gnostic and are grounded in Gnostic cosmology. Murray Stein described Jung's ideas about Gnosticism in relation to the self as hard to follow, and other Jungian analysts have interpreted ancient Gnostic texts but have not paid close attention to Jung's sources and comments on Gnosticism. This analysis compares Jung's Gnosticism to a classical typology depicted by many ancient theologians and still widely accepted by scholars. Gnostic scholars tend to underemphasise the role of Gnostic cosmology when considering the redemptive aspects of Gnosticism and Jungian analysts have similarly overlooked Jung's incorporation of astrological cosmology and how he may be classified as gnostic. This paper addresses these gaps by comparing Jung's comments on Gnosticism to more recently recovered Gnostic texts belonging to a mythical framework linked to the typology. Robert Segal disagreed that the aims of Jung's psychology and Gnosticism were aligned, but he adopted the prevailing view of Gnosticism as world-negating and inherently dualistic and whilst these motifs were present in Gnostic doctrines, other themes which revealed inclusivity, the potential for reconciliation and holism appear to be overlooked. All the key concepts Jung utilised for his theories could be clarified and elaborated on by more recently available material, which illustrates that Jung's psychological theories of the self are deeply aligned with, if not, directly inspired by classical Gnosticism especially those with a Platonizing/Neoplatonic emphasis and where Jung's perceptions differed from the typology they could often be supported by Gnostic texts, suggesting that the typology may need to be enhanced where applicable. Jung's focus on Gnostic cosmology highlights why his theories incorporated, but did not rest with Gnostic dualism, instead perceiving an underlying unity and correspondence between humanity and divinity that was capable of conscious reunification.

## Introduction

This paper will examine how Carl Jung's theories of the self may be classified as Gnostic and are grounded in Gnostic Cosmology. Jung's notion of the self differs from the ordinary conception of the conscious personality because it emphasises a 'supraordinate personality' which includes the personal unconscious – those things which belong to the personality but may be projected or repressed - and the collective unconscious, which is a deeper layer often referred to as 'an impersonal psyche common to all' whose contents are 'collective'.<sup>1</sup> Jung's theories of the self are central to his entire theoretical framework, especially as found in *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, in which he devotes a chapter to Gnostic symbols of the self while stressing his lack of the material to substantiate his ideas fully. Jung relied heavily on the accounts of the Church Fathers whilst acknowledging that they were written from the perspective of opponents of Gnosticism. Jungian psychology is often perceived as Gnostic, but Robert Segal critiques Jung's understanding of it, highlighting areas where he thinks ancient Gnosticism deviates from Jungian psychology. Analysts have interpreted ancient Gnostic myths from a Jungian perspective, but there is a lack of scholarly analysis paid to Jung's comments on Gnosticism, especially its cosmological aspects. For instance, Singer and Chalquist only briefly note the cosmic archons link to human vices, passions and powers. Like Stein and Pennachio the psychological significance is not emphasised, nor how Jung may be classified as gnostic.<sup>2</sup> Greene notes the difficulty in confining Gnosticism to a distinct category and states that 'even in today's scholarly world the astrological nature of Gnostic cosmology is not explored in any depth' and Pleše similarly notes how the astrology is often overshadowed by mythological and numerological

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<sup>1</sup> C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 186.; and C. G. Jung and R. F. C. Hull, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> See June Singer, 'The Evolution of the Soul', in *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Robert Alan Segal (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), pp. 54-69 (p. 67).; Craig Chalquist, 'Hidden in What Is Visible: Deliteralizing the Gnostic Worldview', *Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche*, 4 (2010), 51-59.

speculations.<sup>3</sup> This paper considers these gaps by comparing Jung's comments on Gnosticism to the more recently available *Secret Book of John* or more commonly known as *The Apocryphon of John (ApJohn)* and other Valentinian texts which align with a standard typology, paying particular attention to Segal's critiques of Jung's understanding of ancient Gnosticism.

### Jung's Sources

In *Aion*, Jung references Sethian, Valentinian, Barbelognostics, Basilidian *Gnosis*, the Peratics and the Naassenes, whose knowledge he mostly gathered from accounts of the Church Fathers. Jung relied heavily upon the polemics of Irenaeus (C.115 – c.202), Hippolytus (c. 170–235) and Epiphanius (c. 315 – 403) but according to Kurt Rudolf these accounts cannot be understood as 'historical and critical presentations'; similarly, Birger Pearson outlines how some accounts such as Basilides have been presented inconsistently.<sup>4</sup> Irenaeus' refutation, whom Jung cites, is said by Pearson to describe the Gnostic system which Valentinus adapted and which is understood as Classical or Sethian stating that 'Valentinus' version of the Gnostic myth undoubtedly followed the basic outline of the myth found in *Apocryphon of John*'.<sup>5</sup> Greene notes how Jung would have encountered this text and how he drew upon researchers such as Wilhelm Bousset and was indebted to G.R.S Mead for his translation of the *Pistis Sophia*, published in 1921, as he visited him personally to thank him.<sup>6</sup> Earlier versions of this were available from 1905 and Mead indicates that

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<sup>3</sup> See Liz Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), p. 129.; Zlatko Pleše, 'Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism (1): The Apocryphon of John', *MNHN*, 7 (2007), 238;.

<sup>4</sup> Kurt Rudolph and R. McL Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 10.; Birger A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), pp. 134-35.

<sup>5</sup> ---, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 149.

<sup>6</sup> Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, pp. 132, 36; and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke and Clare Goodrick-Clarke, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2005), pp. 1-2.; See also G. R. S. Mead, *Pistis Sophia; a Gnostic Miscellany: Being for the Most Part Extracts from the Books of the Saviour, to Which Are Added Excerpts from a Cognate Literature; Englished (with an Introduction and Annotated Bibliography)*, New and completely revised edn (London: J. M. Watkins, 1921).



pre-publication reports on the contents of the Berlin codex which included the *Apocryphon of John* were available by 1906.<sup>7</sup> Scholars also mention Jung's own visionary myth, *The Seven Sermons to the Dead*, published in 1916 under the pseudonym of 'Basilides of Alexandria', initiated during a paranormal experience, as another source of his Gnosticism.<sup>8</sup>

### Previous Scholarship

According to Richard Smith, Stephan Hoeller claims that modern Gnosticism is Jungian psychology; however, he 'does not claim to be practising or teaching ancient Gnosticism.'<sup>9</sup> Segal critiques Jung for misinterpreting the goals of Gnosticism and how they align with Jung's individuation process and Gilles Quispel has also critiqued Jung's understanding of Gnosticism regarding the created world.<sup>10</sup> June Singer believes that Jung's explorations of Gnostic literature strongly influenced his depth psychology and self-archetype, but besides quoting Jung's reading of Clement, who equates self-knowledge with knowledge of God, there is no exploration of Jung's personal Gnosticism.<sup>11</sup> Craig Chalquist provides the most comprehensive analysis of a range of Gnostic texts; he interprets many Gnostic analogies from a Jungian perspective but concludes that the key to understanding the Gnostics is not to take them too literally. He cites from various texts which are possible to classify, but he also does not emphasise Jung's comments on Gnosticism nor his cosmological focus. Similarly, Murray Stein overlooks this aspect in his analysis of the centrality of Jung's concept of the self and although both Stein and Singer have interpreted texts from the Nag Hammadi documents, as noted by Segal, interpreting Gnostic myths from a Jungian

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<sup>7</sup> See F. C. Burkitt, 'Pistis Sophia', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 23 (1922), 271.; and G. R. S. Mead, *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1906), p. 231.

<sup>8</sup> Christoph Marksches, *Gnosis : An Introduction*, (London ; NY: T & T Clark, 2003), p. 121.

<sup>9</sup> Murray Stein, 'The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present', in *The Allure of Gnosticism: The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Robert Alan Segal (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), pp. 39-53 (p. 207).

<sup>10</sup> See C. G. Jung and Robert Alan Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 25-28.; and Gilles Quispel, 'Jung and Gnosis', in *The Gnostic Jung*, ed. by Robert Alan Segal (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), (p. 226).

<sup>11</sup> June Singer, *Seeing through the Visible World : Jung, Gnosis, and Chaos*, 1st edn (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1990), p. 98.

perspective does not necessarily mean that they are the same. Despite Jung's repeated assertions that he was an empiricist not a Gnostic, Stein suggests that Jung's investigations were moving from psychology towards 'cosmology and metaphysics'.<sup>12</sup>

### Defining Gnosticism

Due to Jung's interest in Gnosticism, Jungian psychology itself is often perceived as Gnostic, but there are very different ways that Gnosticism is understood.<sup>13</sup> Greene suggests that defining Gnosticism is a maddening task generating much confusion and Michael Williams describes the variety of perceptions of Gnosticism, Gnostic and *Gnosis* as a 'bewildering array of possible connotations'.<sup>14</sup> Karen King and Williams have documented the complexities of the term, so if Jung's psychology is understood to be Gnostic, it is necessary to evaluate how it is Gnostic and in accordance with which classification.<sup>15</sup> Rudolph relates the term *Gnosis* to the second-century polemic by Irenaeus '*Exposé and Refutation of the falsely so called Gnosis*' but like Gaye Strathearn he dates usage of 'Gnosticism' to the eighteenth century when scholars used it to refer to Christian sects prominent within the second to fourth centuries AD.<sup>16</sup> In the twentieth century, a wealth of ancient literature, such as the Nag Hammadi Scriptures, found accidentally in 1945, became available, enabling the Gnostics to be understood from their own perspective for the first time. Jung was particularly interested in Christian dogma due to its perceived importance for the Western psyche, but he favoured Gnostic perspectives as he viewed this as a living reality, capturing the essence of inner experience and psychological processes within the self. Segal critiques

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<sup>12</sup> Murray Stein, *Jung's Map of the Soul : An Introduction*, (Chicago: Open Court, 1998), p. 157.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Alan Segal, June Singer, and Murray Stein, *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Michael A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Karen L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> See Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 9-10; and Gaye Strathearn, 'The Gnostic Context of the Gospel of Judas', *Brigham Young University Studies*, 45 (2006), 27.; See Also King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, p. 7.

Jung's Gnosticism from the perspective of ancient Gnosticism, which, similar to the Church Fathers, he views as dualistic with a negative evaluation of the material world. Markschiefs puts forward a similar typology that views Gnosticism as a form of philosophy of religion which had its foundation in Judaism and is consistent with the views expressed by Christian theologians which Jung was utilising.<sup>17</sup> Eight specific points in the typology will provide a lens through which to view the extent that Jung's theories can be considered as classically Gnostic, these are:

- 1 The existence of an other-worldly Supreme God.
- 2 The supreme God is split into more distant divinities or remote aspects which are closer to human beings.
- 3 The world and matter are regarded as an evil creation.
- 4 The world is created by an evil or an ignorant demiurge.
- 5 The divine aspect is expressed mythologically as a fall where the divine spark is trapped within matter in a certain class of people.
- 6 A divine redeemer figure who descends to help humankind and then ascends again is featured.
- 7 Human redemption is through Gnosis, which is expressed as knowledge of the divine spark within.
- 8 Dualism is often evident for instance, between man and god and spirit and matter.<sup>18</sup>

In chapter introductions where these are specifically referred to hereafter, this will be indicated by [1], [2] etc.

## Methodology

This library-based project considers the key concepts in Jung's theories of the self and how these are related to Gnostic concepts by reviewing Jung's interpretation of Gnosticism based on the sources he used and examining how the concepts he mentions are comparable to classical Gnostics texts (Sethian and Valentinian), which conform to the typology put

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<sup>17</sup> Markschiefs, *Gnosis : An Introduction*, pp. 19-25.

<sup>18</sup> ---, *Gnosis : An Introduction*, pp. 16-17.

forward by Marksches. The sources will include Jung's own Gnostic myth as this is reflective of his understanding of Gnosticism and it will analyse how Jung's comments compare to the texts, the typology and Segal's evaluation of Jung the Gnostic. It will consider *The Secret Book of John* (hereafter *ApJohn*), which is an extremely important comprehensive text, representative of classical Gnosticism, and was featured in the Christian polemics. This text is 'the most widely known of all the Sethian treatises'; it survives in four separate manuscripts and is reflective of how Gnosticism initially came to be defined.<sup>19</sup> It will be the first source used here to compare Jung's statements about Gnosticism; but other texts will be utilized where they reflect themes mentioned by Jung.<sup>20</sup>

### Jung's Self and Segal's Model

Murray Stein describes the self as 'the most fundamental feature of Jung's entire vision'; highlighting Jung's primary work on the structure of the self but cautioning that 'Jung's arguments, [are] often difficult to follow as he threads his way through astrology, Gnosticism, alchemy, theology and various traditional symbol systems' in his attempt to illustrate how the self as 'the transcendent factor of the psyche' has been experienced and studied by people throughout history.<sup>21</sup> Central to Jung's theory of the collective unconscious is the concept of an archetype, something similar to an instinct which transcends an individual's life and often finds parallels in mythological and religious themes.<sup>22</sup> Jung posits a hierarchy which governs the different components of the self—namely the ego, the *anima/animus*, the shadow and the self - and his psychology is often expressed as images in a drama of opposites, whose ultimate goal is union.<sup>23</sup> Jung explains

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<sup>19</sup> Marvin W. Meyer and James M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, International edn (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2007F), p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 149.

<sup>21</sup> Stein, *Jung's Map of the Soul: An Introduction*, pp. 151, 57.

<sup>22</sup> Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 4-5, 44.

<sup>23</sup> ---, *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*, 2 nd edn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 3.

that opposites such as heaven and earth or spirit and soul –initially form a dualism confronting one another in love or animosity before coming together in union- to express how the pairs of opposites constitute a paradoxical self whose transcendent character can be expressed as the elevation of a human being to a divinity.<sup>24</sup> At the highest level the self is represented by symbols of wholeness and totality which are the equivalent of his God concept; he elaborates on this, explaining that ‘The God-Image is not something *invented*, it is an *experience* that comes upon man spontaneously’ providing the recipient with a numinous experience of the unconscious akin to an encounter with a deity.<sup>25</sup> Next in line to wholeness in the hierarchy of the self is the *anima* (Soul) and the *animus* (Spirit), which represent the contra-sexual aspects of an individual; these become conscious through being projected onto others in love affairs. After this comes the shadow which Jung primarily relates to aspects of the personal unconscious generally associated with negativity or inferior parts of the personality, which the ego tends to repress. Stein describes the ego as an integrating aspect of consciousness; the ego has an individual identity, it can say “I” and although the ego is needed to integrate aspects of the self into conscious awareness, Stein echoes Jung’s view that ‘The self’s task seems to be to hold the psychic system together. Its goal is unity.’<sup>26</sup>

Segal compares Jungian psychology’s dynamic between the ego’s drive for differentiation and the self’s urge for unification to a simplified three-stage model to highlight how he believes the Gnostic creation scenario deviates from Jung’s psychological model in its central aims:

- Stage one for Jungian psychology is unconsciousness; for Gnosticism, it is only divinity or otherwise divinity isolated from matter.

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<sup>24</sup> ---, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 194.

<sup>26</sup> Stein, *Jung’s Map of the Soul : An Introduction*, pp. 61, 159.

- ‘Stage two for both marks the beginning of creation and thereby of division—for Jungian psychology, into ego consciousness and unconsciousness; for Gnosticism, into matter and divinity.’<sup>27</sup>
- Stage three for both resolves the opposition. Gnosticism reverts to the time before the emergence of matter and ideally, for Jungian psychology, there is the ‘establishment of a new state, one that completes rather than undoes the realisation of consciousness begun in stage two’.<sup>28</sup>

Segal questions why Jung portrayed the Gnostics as psychologists and critiqued Jung’s understanding of Gnosticism in terms of his conception of the Demiurge, evil, metaphysical reality and projection, the potential for transformation through *Gnosis* and the ultimate aim of reunification with divinity. This paper will pay particular attention to Jung’s comments on Gnosticism in relation to the self, especially regarding the classical typology and Segal’s and Quispel’s critiques by elaborating on similar ideas found in recovered Gnostic texts to evaluate how Jung’s theories may be classified as Gnostic and are grounded in Gnostic Cosmology.

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<sup>27</sup> ---, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>28</sup> ---, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, pp. 25-26.

## Literature Review:

### Jung's Gnosticism

By presenting a psychological explanation of Gnostic doctrines, Jung believed he was preserving valuable information that was 'in danger of being swallowed up in the abyss of incomprehension and oblivion.'<sup>29</sup> Several scholars have addressed Jung's interest in Gnosticism and its alignment with his theories: In *The Gnostic Jung*, Segal collated Jung's key chapters on Gnosticism and in *The Allure of Gnosticism* he compiled and edited a series of essays depicting the varieties of Gnosticism highlighting the sharp divide between ancient and modern conceptions, where the latter does not necessarily reflect 'a true world of immateriality' or even involvement with the cosmos.<sup>30</sup> This compilation included contributions on Jungian perspectives by June Singer, Murray Stein and Schuyler Brown and in *Gnostic Inner Illumination and Carl Jung's Individuation*, John Pennachio specifically addresses the links between the revelatory aspects of Gnosticism and the integration of Jung's unconscious self. Despite Jung's claims that he was not a Gnostic, Pennachio considers that Jung's 'conceptions of the individuation process place him quite close to much of Gnostic philosophy.'<sup>31</sup> Stein commends Jung for noticing links to the collective unconscious and for rendering texts accessible to the modern mind; however, Segal sharply contrasts these views suggesting that Gnosticism is a form of psychological disorder which 'violates rather than supports the Jungian ideal'.<sup>32</sup> He also questions Jung's perception of the Gnostics as psychologists, but Quispel in contrast praises Jung's interpretive framework and makes the important observation that God is not the key feature of Gnostic religion, as

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<sup>29</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. x.

<sup>30</sup> Segal, Singer, and Stein, *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> John Pennachio, 'Gnostic Inner Illumination and Carl Jung's Individuation', *Journal of Religion and Health*, 31 (1992), 238.

<sup>32</sup> Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, p. 44.; and Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, pp. 32, 34-35.

mankind is at the centre of every Gnostic myth.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Zlatko Pleše who provides a detailed analysis on the Gnostic perceptions of evil, perceives them to be consciously engaged with the epistemological theories of their time and highlights their role in assigning human psychology to God. Pleše also examines astrological cosmology in *The Apocryphon of John*.<sup>34</sup> In *What is Gnosticism*, King critiques the wide variety of perceptions of Gnosticism in the field, including the typological constructs of early *Gnosis*. DeConick provides a synopsis of Sethian texts in *the Thirteenth Apostle* and in *Ancient Gnosticism*, Pearson broadly classifies most varieties of ancient texts. Pearson considers 'Sethian or Classic Gnosticism', to be among the most important forms of ancient Gnosticism which can be matched to some of the heresiologist accounts, which makes it suitable for assessing if Jung's psychology conforms to classical Gnosticism.<sup>35</sup> The Jungian analysts reviewed including Chalquist base their understanding of it from various texts within the Jung Codex and the Nag Hammadi Scriptures, and their comments surrounding key motifs suggest that they are familiar with the traditional understanding, but they go beyond this narrow boundary to support Jungian concepts from a variety of texts. Although generally unsupported by citations from Gnosticism, Segal provides several critiques of Jungian Gnosticism, and he places ancient traditions at the radical side of cosmic dualism within the typology. He states, 'Ancient Gnosticism was the belief in a radical, irreconcilable dualism of immateriality and matter. Immateriality was divine and wholly good. Matter was irredeemably evil.'<sup>36</sup> Brown similarly questions what Jung saw in the Gnostics, who had 'nothing good to say about the material world, the body, and human sexuality' but he

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<sup>33</sup> Gilles Quispel, 'Gnosis and Psychology', in *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Robert Alan Segal, June Singer, and Murray Stein (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), (p. 15).

<sup>34</sup> Zlatko Pleše, 'Evil and Its Sources in the Gnostic Tradition', in *Ratio Religionis Studien Die Wurzel Allen Übels : Vorstellungen Über Die Herkunft Des Bösen Und Schlechten in Der Philosophie Und Religion Des 1.-4. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Fabienne Jourdan and Rainer Hirsch-Luipold (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), pp. 101-32 (p. 110).; ---, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism.*; ---, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism.*

<sup>35</sup> See April D. DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, (London, New York: Continuum, 2007), pp. 167-73.; and Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*.p. ix - viii .

<sup>36</sup> Segal, Singer, and Stein, *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, p. 1.



concludes that everything should not be 'taken at face value'.<sup>37</sup> Although the classical perception of Gnosticism, as summarised by Marksches is still widely accepted by scholars, including Pearson and Rudolph, King argues that the Church Fathers 'accusations of heresy seriously distorted their opponents' views'.<sup>38</sup> Thus, when analysing Jung's Gnosticism, and those who have considered its alignment with his psychological theories, it will be important to critically examine both adherence to the typology and the texts.

### Analysts on Typology

Jungian analysts are aware of the ancient Gnostic framework, which postulates an other-worldly supreme God and a preexisting spiritual realm, but they tend to assume Gnosticism is aligned with Jung's psychology, interpreting myths metaphorically, but not always supporting their interpretations with citations from Jung or the texts. Stein views the Pleroma as consistent with Jung's theory of the union of all opposites which unites Judeo-Christian religious positions, but it is unclear how he arrived at this conclusion, although June Singer recounts a mythic framework from *On the Origin of the World*; similar to *Ap John* where she perceives the archons as the Gnostics' projection of human evil and ignorance.<sup>39</sup> Chalquist highlights how the creator god was not the ultimate God for the Gnostics and notes the contrast between the higher realms and the lower world that seeks to enslave the soul and he explains the emanation of the supreme God, which splits itself into more distant divinities to Jung's notion of archetypes which embody some aspect of the Self. Goodrick-Clarke, who writes on Mead and Gnosticism, suggests that Jung drew upon Mead's work, utilising the Gnostic emanationist cosmology to provide

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<sup>37</sup>Schuyler Brown, 'Begotten, Not Created', in *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Robert Alan Segal (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), pp. 71-81 (p. 79).

<sup>38</sup> King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, p. 27.

<sup>39</sup> See Singer, *Seeing through the Visible World : Jung, Gnosis, and Chaos*, p. 90.; and Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, p. 48.

correspondences between 'states of divine being and inner states of consciousness'; however, he observes that Mead tended to overlook the 'strong dualism and world-rejecting overtones of most Gnostic systems.'<sup>40</sup> Jungian scholars similarly tend to overlook dualism and do not criticise the negative portrayals of the world, as they equate it with the reality of evil. For example, Stein describes anti-materialism as a commonly experienced human characteristic and interprets the evil portrayal of the demiurge as an attitude of ego control and subjugation, and he aligns with Singer, who cited the holocaust as an example of humanity's 'capacity for unleashing horror'.<sup>41</sup> However, neither judge the entire world as evil, and although Stein equates the ego with the demiurge, as Jung often does, he acknowledges that Jungian psychology does not demonise the ego. He looks to the image of the perfect man in *ApJohn* when he outlines his understanding of the Gnostic divine realm as the unconscious, which is latent within the ego representing its relationship with the broader self, or in Gnostic terms, the divine spark.<sup>42</sup> Chalquist suggests that when the Gnostics talked of 'enslavement in a world ruled by dark powers', it could equally apply to current-day regimes like mega powers, but he goes against the standard view that the fall, which creates the material world, was a mistake, viewing it as a necessary development which is not classically gnostic.<sup>43</sup> On the topic of evil, Pennachio captures Jung's understanding directly when Jung asserts that 'evil in its ultimate effects does not come from man's wickedness but from his stupidity and unconsciousness'.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Singer is aware of the 'characteristic dualism' and the creator as being 'unequivocally negative', but she interprets gnostic dualism and separation as 'the One that becomes two, yet is still one in a higher sense' and she takes 'otherworldliness' to mean 'a comprehension beyond the ego'.<sup>45</sup> So her view is ultimately holistic, perceiving the universe as an indivisible whole like Jung describes individuation, but she does not provide supporting evidence from

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<sup>40</sup> Goodrick-Clarke and Goodrick-Clarke, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>41</sup> Singer, *The Evolution of the Soul*, p. 55.

<sup>42</sup> Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, p. 50.

<sup>43</sup> Chalquist, *Hidden in What Is Visible*, pp. 54, 58.

<sup>44</sup> Pennachio, *Gnostic Inner Illumination and Carl Jung's Individuation*, p. 243.

<sup>45</sup> Singer, *Seeing through the Visible World : Jung, Gnosis, and Chaos*, pp. 96-97.

Gnosticism; alternatively, Segal proposes that when the spark is reunited with the Divine, there is a severance of the link between divinity and matter not a unity.<sup>46</sup> In analysing the *Exegesis on the Soul*, a text that has Valentinian influences but which some argue is not Gnostic, Singer understands the descent in terms of the human soul, the experience of going astray in the world, repenting and subsequently ascending.<sup>47</sup> Singer does not focus exclusively on the spirit but refers to a tripartite division of body, soul and spirit. The breath that was breathed into Adam is the divine spark which she believes 'partakes of two realms, the human and the divine' but soul lies between body and spirit and 'is a very personal aspect of the human being identified with psyche'; unfortunately, she does not provide a reference but mentions that the triplicity is linked to the Neoplatonic tradition.<sup>48</sup> Stein perceives the Gnostic Redeemer as the inner messenger or symbol of the totality which breaks through the illusory nature of ego autonomy and control and forges a connection between them, and salvation from Pennachio's perspective is 'being freed from ignorance: One can be "delivered" from ignorance through knowledge of the truth, ultimate knowledge.'<sup>49</sup> In general, the Jungian analysts are familiar with the main motifs of the Gnostic typology, and in considering the evilness of the creator and the world they may be accused of following Mead by overlooking the world rejecting dualistic tendencies of the Gnostics; or alternatively, their inherent psychological approach which interprets things symbolically and seeks to resolve oppositions may have been what the Gnostics intended.

### Gnostic Cosmology

A noticeable difference in the survey of common depictions of the Gnostic myth, against the standard typology of Markschies, is the presence of cosmological motifs, which link the

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<sup>46</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>47</sup> Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 227.

<sup>48</sup> Singer, *The Evolution of the Soul*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>49</sup> Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, pp. 46-47.; Pennachio, *Gnostic Inner Illumination and Carl Jung's Individuation*, p. 240.

theme of redemptive descent/ascent journeys to cosmic fate and Gnostic salvation. For instance, Rudolph notes how matter includes the planets, zodiac and negative psychological states such as ignorance and within this realm the divine spark is perceived to be trapped in an oppressive world of fate.<sup>50</sup> Such themes are similarly not raised by Jungian scholars although Pennachio gets close when he cites Jung directly on 'the psychological rule' which says 'that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside as fate.'<sup>51</sup> In contrast to other Jungian analysts, Liz Greene emphasises Jung's cosmology as she examines *Jung's Studies in Astrology* and the astrological motifs in Jung's *Liber Novus*; his personal diaries, both of which touch upon Gnostic themes in his psychology.<sup>52</sup> Greene describes Jung's Gnosticism as a highly individual interpretation based on the limited sources available to him and filtered through the lens of his psychological understanding. According to Greene, the *Pistis Sophia*, with its astrological cosmology, was especially important to Jung and as noted by Jacques-van der Vliet that whilst the *ApJohn* has occupied a central place for many years, the 'neglect of the *Pistis Sophia* is one of the riddles of modern Gnostic Studies.'<sup>53</sup> According to Goodrick-Clarke, Mead's translation of the *Pistis Sophia* 'offers a typical example of the complex cosmology and soteriology peculiar to Gnosticism', and van der Vliet emphasises its magical and astrological components.<sup>54</sup> Rudolf in *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, similarly describes the Gnostic myth as a unity of the origins of the man, the cosmos, and salvation, which he notes is often only hinted at in descriptions of Gnosticism and Kocku Von Stuckrad describes how the Gnostic ascent of the soul is linked to the philosophical discussions regarding *heimarmene*

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<sup>50</sup> Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 67-71.

<sup>51</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 71.; cited in Pennachio, *Gnostic Inner Illumination and Carl Jung's Individuation*, p. 244.

<sup>52</sup> Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*; ---, *The Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus': Daimons, Gods, and the Planetary Journey*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

<sup>53</sup> See ---, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, p. 132; Jacques van der Vliet, 'Fate, Magic and Astrology in *Pistis Sophia*, Chapters 15-21.', in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian, and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuisen*, ed. by Anthony Hilhorst and George H. van Kooten (Brill, 2007), pp. 325-26 (p. 519).

<sup>54</sup> Goodrick-Clarke and Goodrick-Clarke, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, p. 15.

(necessity or fate).<sup>55</sup> Similarly, Horace Jeffery Hodges recounts how the descending-ascending motif is prominent in Gnosticism because of the saviour's distance from the cosmos where he puts himself at the same risk as humans when descending to loosen the bonds of fate.<sup>56</sup> Astrological cosmology is also included in 'On The Origin of The World' (3<sup>rd</sup> CE.) and Rudolph outlines a cosmic map, known from the Church Father Origen, in which, similar to the tripartite division of the person mentioned by Singer, there is a tripartite division of the cosmos. The earthly world of the spheres and the stars are enclosed by the tail-eating serpent. Beyond this there is an intermediate kingdom and, subsequently, a kingdom of light. The light realm is the place of pure spirit *pneuma*; the intermediate sphere is ruled by spirit and soul, but both light and dark spheres are distinguished on the map and the earthly sphere comprises body, soul and spirit; however, there is a malevolent aspect within the cosmos, and only through *Gnosis* can the soul escape.<sup>57</sup>

The review of the literature has indicated that whilst Jungian analysts are aware of the typology of Gnosticism they draw upon a wider range of texts to support Jung's ideas and often do not often provide references, so it is unclear which classification of Gnosticism they adhere to. Jung's interest in Gnostic astrological cosmology has been ignored by analysts except for Greene who is also a historian and it similarly has been overlooked in many cases in classical Gnosticism, as it is only hinted at in the typology. However, several scholars have highlighted these aspects of Gnosticism which will serve to elaborate on some of Jung's citations and its psychological significance in his theories of the self.

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<sup>55</sup> See Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, p. 71; Kocku Von Stuckrad, *Western Esoterism : A Brief History of Secret Knowledge*, (London ; Oakville, CT: Equinox Pub., 2005), pp. 25-26.

<sup>56</sup> Horace Jeffery Hodges, 'Gnostic Liberation from Astrological Determinism: Hipparchan "Trepidation" and the Breaking of Fate', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 51 (1997), 362.

<sup>57</sup> Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 68-69.

## Chapter One: Gnostic Other-Worldly Divinity and Jung's Self

Jung understood Gnosticism's secret knowledge of the origin of all things to be an important representation of his theory of the collective unconscious, which is central to his psychological theories of the self.<sup>58</sup> The initial stage of the Gnostic Creation myth posits the pre-existence of an other-worldly distant supreme god [1] and the subsequent generation of divine beings who are or inhabit the aeons of the eternal realm [2].<sup>59</sup> In psychological terms, Jung relates the divine realm to the unconscious before the emergence of the ego. This chapter will examine the Gnostic other-worldly realm, its alignment with Jung's comments on Gnosticism in relation to his psychological theories of the self and how this compares with concepts found in *ApJohn* and other classical Gnostic texts. This relates to the first stage of Segal's comparative model, where the unconscious is represented as divinity isolated from matter.

### Self, Collective Unconscious, Archetype

Jung's self, which includes personal and collective aspects, relates to an individual's innate desire for completeness. Jung refers to the self as an archetype as it represents a universal pattern of wholeness and self-realisation, but the self also contains a number of components, such as the anima/animus and shadow, which can similarly be classed as archetypal elements of the psyche which links to his idea of preexisting forms.<sup>60</sup> As noted by Segal, the unconscious is the Gnostic equivalent to the realm of divinity, sometimes called the Gnostic Pleroma: that is the other-worldly divine beings who are of the Father and the aeons or eternities that they simultaneously are, govern or inhabit. This stage of

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<sup>58</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 199.

<sup>59</sup> The bracketed numbers refer to the eight points of Markschie's typology.

<sup>60</sup> Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 42-43.

the creation scenario reflects the unity of divinity, but not divinity with matter.<sup>61</sup> Jung directly links the unconscious to the divine by acknowledging Quispel for his translations of two Coptic terms in the accounts of Epiphanius and Hippolytus which relate 'the initial state of things, to the potentiality of unconscious contents, aptly formulated by Basilides as...the non-existent, many-formed, and all empowering seed of the world'; however, Jung also draws an analogy with this and the medieval concept of 'the world-soul slumbering in matter' which lacks the remote and ineffable aspects of the Gnostic Pleroma.<sup>62</sup> Elsewhere he includes citations that describe it in classically gnostic other-worldly ways; it is a 'world of light', a higher realm where 'the unknown Father and the Heavenly Mother' dwell; similarly its association with Jung's description of archetypes suggests the attributes of eternity, pre-existence and unknowability.<sup>63</sup> Similar to Jung's analogy to the world-soul, Quispel suggests that Jung misinterpreted Basilides in failing to differentiate the emergence of matter from nothingness rather than from pre-existence, which he notes is apparent in the *ApJohn* and Valentinus. The pre-existence of the eternal realm in the *ApJohn* is described as 'at peace, dwelling in silence, at rest, before everything' and in *Zostrianos* the aeons have 'an origin superior to existence and pre-exist all [things].'<sup>64</sup> Similar to Quispel's critique, Segal highlights how Jung sometimes fails to differentiate between the Cosmic Anthropos who begets and is the world and the Gnostic higher god, but although it is not typical of Gnosticism to assign the creation of the world to the supreme God, in Jung's Gnostic myth he only includes it as a potential. Similar to Jung, the *ApJohn* posits a paradoxical quality as a property of the 'God and Parent, Father of the All'; it states, 'The One is not corporeal and it is not incorporeal. The One is not large and it is not small' and nothingness is also a quality associated with the supreme God as 'His thought became a

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<sup>61</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, pp. 26 - 27.

<sup>62</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 66.

<sup>63</sup> See Wilhelm Bousset, *Hauptprobleme Der Gnosis*, Neudr. d. 1. Aufl. von 1907. edn (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1907); Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 219 n139. ; and Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 4-5, 58.

<sup>64</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 109.; ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 546.

reality', it is also reflected in the descriptions of the divine realm.<sup>65</sup> For example, 'it is unfathomable, since there is nothing before it to fathom it...unutterable, since nothing could comprehend it to utter it. It is also illimitable, immeasurable, invisible, eternal and unnamable.'<sup>66</sup> Thus, Jung found direct links with his notion of the unconscious and the terminology for the Gnostic divine world, which was expressed in terms of its nothingness which precedes everything and its paradoxical, pre-existent and unknowable qualities.

Despite Quispel's critique of linking the world creator to nothingness, Jung emphasised pre-existence in world creation as this was incorporated into his theory of archetypes, which he may have borrowed from Irenaeus as Jung cited Irenaeus precisely when he declared that 'The creator of the world did not fashion these things directly from himself but copied them from archetypes outside himself'.<sup>67</sup> Similar to the Pleroma, Jung describes an archetype as an eternal presence or universal image and as 'a precondition of the psyche *that antedates all conscious experience*'; its origin is not the superficial layer of the personal psyche as it has 'contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and, in all individuals'.<sup>68</sup> The archetype equates to the eternal aeons of Gnosticism that are established prior to the creation of the world, but Jung described an archetype as combining opposites and only positive qualities are apparent at the highest levels of the divine realm; aside from the original error at the lowest level which leads to the created world, their paradoxical qualities must mostly be a property of their manifest form.<sup>69</sup> In the *ApJohn*, Barbelo, the divine mother, generates the four Luminaries Harmozel, Oroiael, Daveithai and Eleleth to govern different levels of the eternal realms and they abide there with other aeons, expressed as positive attributes associated with the divine realm. For example, Harmozel, dwells in the first eternal realm alongside grace, truth and form and Eleleth,

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<sup>65</sup> See Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 197-98. Cited in Segal Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 28.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 109.

<sup>66</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 108-09.

<sup>67</sup> *Adversus Haereses* II,7,5. ; cited in Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, p. 4.

<sup>68</sup> ---, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 101, 3-4.

<sup>69</sup> ---, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 4-5, 58, 226.



dwells in the fourth realm with three other aeons: perfection, peace and Sophia.<sup>70</sup> All these divine qualities make up the twelve eternal aeons: 'these are the twelve aeons that stand before the Child of the Great One, the Self-Generated, the anointed, by the will and grace of the Invisible Spirit.'<sup>71</sup> Thus, Jung found direct links with Gnostic origins and his ideas on archetypes as psychological attributes and although he was critiqued for associating world creation with the concept of nothingness, through the archetype, he still aligned with the Gnostic emphasis on the preexisting forms of the created world.

### Symbols, God-Image, Corruption of First man

DeConick describes how Gnosticism adapted platonic concepts, such as ideal forms, which echoed Jung's theories regarding the unknowability of archetypes. She states, 'we can learn the effects of the Forms, but we cannot have direct knowledge of them'; similarly Neuman distinguishes various effects of an archetype, including its emotional factors, which act upon levels of feeling and its symbolic components.<sup>72</sup> Symbols and images are central to Jung's psychology, as mythology, religious dogma, dream and alchemical images represent important unconscious manifestations. As noted by Greene, Jung believed that archetypal symbols were 'pregnant with an intrinsic ontological meaning' and could 'serve as imaginal intermediaries between consciousness and the unconscious as effectively today as they did in antiquity.'<sup>73</sup> Jung also refers to Plato's concept of ideal forms to support his view that archetypes manifest as universal images or primordial types and both of these functions of the symbol are paralleled in the Valentinian text *The Gospel of Philip* which states that 'Truth did not come into the world naked, but in symbols and images.'<sup>74</sup> Jung's hierarchy of the

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<sup>70</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 111-13.

<sup>71</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 113.

<sup>72</sup> See DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, p. 25.; and Erich Neumann and Bollingen Foundation Collection (Library of Congress), *The Great Mother; an Analysis of the Archetype*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), p. 3.

<sup>73</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 173.

self places symbols of unity and wholeness in the highest position because he viewed them as equivalent to the 'God-Image' or '*Imago-Dei*' or any symbol of order such as a mandala, which he says enters consciousness as a point.<sup>75</sup> He does not necessarily understand this as a philosophical concept or the reality of God within but, nonetheless, it has the nature of a meaningful experience accompanied by a psychological feeling tone and affect.<sup>76</sup> Stein notes how such images appear spontaneously in dreams or other fantasies, and according to Jung, their existence is confirmed by psychology and history.<sup>77</sup> Psychologically, he viewed this as enormously important because it identified the unconscious with the numinosity of Deity.<sup>78</sup> Jung adopted his concept of the *Imago-Dei* from Origen (185 - 254), who stated that 'my soul is not directly the image of God, but is made after the likeness of a former image.'<sup>79</sup> The concept is present in the *ApJohn*, and *The Letter of Peter to Philip* where the world's creation from an image of an image became 'a misrepresentation of the appearance that had come forth.'<sup>80</sup> DeConick uses the analogy of a copy machine to express how generated being as a copy of a copy becomes degraded, which relates to Jung's comments on how Tertullian, described the first Adam as an image of God, which was corrupted by the fall and needed restoration.<sup>81</sup> This is consistent with *ApJohn*, where 'the first human' is 'one of the five aeons of the Father' and as his emanation is an image of god.<sup>82</sup> It states 'These are the five androgynous aeons, which are the ten aeons, which is the Father.'<sup>83</sup> This is significant psychologically as Jung recounts how the first Adam and Christ as representative of the God-Image, is the inner man that can rise above his animal nature and identify with his inner spiritual nature, which is 'invisible, incorporeal, incorrupt, and

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<sup>75</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>77</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 194, 31.

<sup>78</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 194,.

<sup>79</sup> J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graeca*, (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1857), p. 304. ; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 37.

<sup>80</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 591.

<sup>81</sup> Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graeca*, p. 304.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 37.

<sup>82</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 111.

<sup>83</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 111.

immortal'.<sup>84</sup> Thus restoration or unity is envisioned as resolving issues caused by the instincts through identification with the transcendent spiritual nature and as noted by Greene, Jung considered the 'undivided self' on a psychological level to reflect the soul's 'faculty of relationship with God'.<sup>85</sup> Thus, for Jung the highest manifestation of the Self was restoration of the inner God-Image which incorporated a Gnostic and Neoplatonic emphasis on the ontological value of symbols and images.

## Individuation

Jung also used the term individuation 'to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological "in-dividual", that is, a separate, indivisible unity or "whole".<sup>86</sup> According to the Naassenes in the accounts by Hippolytus, Jung mentions that the Perfect Man and the Cosmic Anthropos is described as the undivided point but this Anthropos begets 'the matrix of the aeons' suggesting eternity, as well as time, as reflected in 'Years, Months, Days, Hours'.<sup>87</sup> Similar to the non-existent God the Anthropos of the aeons is associated with nothingness becoming an incomprehensible magnitude. These concepts have parallels with other gnostic texts: The 'undivided Triple-[Powered] One' is found in *The Three Steles Of Seth*, which John Turner says represents Barbelo - the divine Mother of the *ApJohn*, 'before, during and after her emergence from source, the supreme, preexistent spirit.'<sup>88</sup> Similar to Jung's account, in *Zostrianos*, it is the source from which the aeons derive where *Zostrianos* questions, 'how can beings—since they are from the aeon of those who derive from an

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<sup>84</sup> Sourced from Genesis Homilies I, 13 in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1857-66), p. Vol 12 col 155.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 37-39.

<sup>85</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 494.; cited in Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 184.

<sup>86</sup> Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, p. 275.

<sup>87</sup> Hippolytus, Francis Legge, and Origen, *Philosophumena; or, the Refutation of All Heresies*, (London, New York: The Macmillan company, 1921), pp. 140f,07ff. ; cited in: Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 199, 218. ; See also C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, 2d edn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 107.

<sup>88</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 524,46.; For text classification and synopsis see Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 85.; and DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, p. 171.

invisible and undivided self-generated spirit ...have an origin superior to existence and preexist all [these] and yet have come to be in the [world]?’<sup>89</sup> Thus, Jung linked the concept of the undivided point as the Gnostic Supreme God to his God-Image as a symbol of the self and his process of individuation as an undivided unity. However, similar to the integration of the self, Jung also describes the individuation process as separate and differentiated, which he associates with ego consciousness. Jung sometimes uses the term *principium individuationis* from the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, as he believed it was an expression of this principle in psychological terms.<sup>90</sup> As noted by Quispel this makes dissimilarity the essence of created being.<sup>91</sup> Jung uses this term in his own Gnostic myth, which relates to the urge towards distinctiveness, distinguished from the indistinctiveness of the Pleroma. He states, ‘The pairs of opposites are qualities of the pleroma which are not, because each balanceth each’; he then describes pairs of opposites such as ‘Fullness and Emptiness’ and others, such as ‘Time and Space’, which are associated with the world of matter and limitation.<sup>92</sup> In psychological terms, the Gnostic divine realm is equivalent to the archetypal layer of the unconscious; as Segal states, the unity is only of divinity at the pristine stage, thus, traditional Gnosticism does not include matter here.<sup>93</sup> In the *ApJohn*, the eternal realm is only associated with the divine so Jung’s portrayal does not match but he states that the qualities are not qualities because they balance each other out. Jung was likely referring to a passage emphasised by Quispel from Hippolytus’s account ‘Le Pere... qui est depourvu de conscience et de substance, celui qui est ni masculine, ni feminine’ and Jung concludes that this means that ‘the “Father” is not only unconscious and without the quality of being, but also *nirdvandava*, without opposites, lacking all qualities and therefore

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<sup>89</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 546.

<sup>90</sup> C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious; a Study of the Transformation and Symbolisms of the Libido*, (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1957), p. 289.

<sup>91</sup> Quispel, *Jung and Gnosis*, p. 226.

<sup>92</sup> ---, *Jung and Gnosis*, p. 184.

<sup>93</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 25.

unknowable.’<sup>94</sup> Jung seems to be influenced by his psychological theories, which emphasises the resolution of conflicting opposites at a transcendent level. However, the phrase specifically mentions the androgyne, not necessarily the union of all opposites.

Quispel also notes that Jung misinterprets Basilides in assigning created being as a characteristic of the Pleroma. He states, ‘One supposes he means that the pleroma as unconscious will bring forth dissimilarity, which is no doubt an emanation of the unconscious will’; though Quispel notes that this is consistent with sects such as Sethian or Valentinian, he states that Jung misinterpreted Basilides, making him more classically Gnostic than he was.<sup>95</sup> Here, Quispel refers to the Gnostic generative process which occurs through an emanation of the will of the supreme god. As noted by Segal, in Gnosticism, differentiation represents the emergence of divinity into matter and in Jungian psychology, differentiation is expressed as the process by which ego consciousness emerges from the unconscious.<sup>96</sup> However, in the *ApJohn* the differentiation process is initiated in the divine realm by the Father becoming enamoured of his own image in the luminous waters: Then ‘His thought became a reality’, and Barbelo was conceived.<sup>97</sup> ‘She is described as the ‘first power who preceded everything and came forth from his mind as the Forethought... She became the universal womb, for she precedes everything.’<sup>98</sup> Pleše notes that the projection of personified aeons from their divine source ‘delivers a system of rational mythology in which individual hypostases act as fully autonomous agents guided by their specific purposes’.<sup>99</sup> Jung’s process of differentiation is expressed in this way, except that in Gnosticism this process is initiated prior to the created world.

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<sup>94</sup> English Translation: ‘The Father... who is devoid of consciousness and substance, he who is neither masculine nor feminine’; Elenchos, VI, 42,4, Giles Quispel, *Note Sur Basilide*, (Amsterdam: Vigiliae Christianae, 1948), p. 115. cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 191.

<sup>95</sup> Quispel, *Jung and Gnosis*, p. 225.

<sup>96</sup> ---, *Jung and Gnosis*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>97</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 110.

<sup>98</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 110.

<sup>99</sup> Pleše, *Evil and Its Sources in the Gnostic Tradition*, p. 112.

The way divine beings emanate themselves is similar to the autonomous nature of archetypes which can take possession of the ego, and as Stein says have a voice and an identity, and it also mirrors the psychological concept of projection whereby positive and negative contents, whose origins lie within the self, are perceived in an outer object. In the Pleroma the movement is a projection outward resembling an individual's autonomous psychic process, but the aim of Jung's psychology is to bring projections back within the self. Jung stressed that the image cannot remain externalised but needs God to be experienced; if God remains completely externalised then the God-Image remains unconscious and the individual remains unchanged in his soul or psyche.<sup>100</sup> Segal draws attention to projection as a point of difference between Gnosticism and Jung's psychology as he understands the former to be concerned with metaphysical reality; however, Jung highlights Quispel's critique that projection does not deny the possibility of the reality of psychic contents but he stressed that his concern was psychological.<sup>101</sup> The first divine pair Jung viewed as a projection of an individual's wholeness which he incorporated into his *anima/animus* theory. In Jung's hierarchy of the self the *syzygy* is next in line to the God-Image, described as the Eros and Logos of consciousness, with the soul as *anima*, and spirit or *pneuma* as *animus*. Stein describes them as psychic structures that 'links the ego to the deepest layer of the psyche' and Jung describes the autonomous function of the *syzygy* as similar to the Gnostic God who manifests in personified form like 'systems split off from the personality, or like part souls.'<sup>102</sup> Jung stated, 'The primordial androgyny has been, from the very beginning, a projection of his [or her] unconscious wholeness. All I have done in my *anima* [/animus] theory is to rediscover and reformulate this fact.'<sup>103</sup> Jung attributed this point to Clement when he stated, 'For the Scripture says, God made man male and female'.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 10.

<sup>101</sup> See Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 51.; and Quispel, *Gnosis and Psychology*, p. 19.

<sup>102</sup> Stein, *Jung's Map of the Soul: An Introduction*, p. 128.; Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 20.

<sup>103</sup> C. G Jung and others, *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious, Cw9i*, (Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 175.

<sup>104</sup> Kirsopp Lake and others, *The Apostolic Fathers*, (London, New York,: Heinemann; Macmillan, 1912), pp. I,151. Cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 21 n6.

Androgyny is a common feature of Gnosticism; in the *ApJohn*, all the first aeons are androgynous, which, similar to the opposites in Jung's myth, highlights the importance of balance within the divine realm.<sup>105</sup> As observed by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, this concept is a key feature of Valentinian *Gnosis*, where polarity is 'a mode of being of the Pleroma' and 'the law of syzygy is affirmed.'<sup>106</sup> Therefore, the notion of differentiation relates to Jung's concept of projection and the self and is also expressed in the Gnostic androgynous God-Image.

This chapter has explored how Jung's concept of the Self as a psychic structure that strives towards wholeness is reflected in Gnostic concepts, such as the layer of the collective unconscious, which links directly to the Coptic term for the initial state of things. Jung's idea of an archetype as a preexisting form is reflected in the aeons and the image of the first perfect human as an image of god, with the implication being that man's image was corrupt and needed restoration. This could be aided by identification with one's inner spiritual nature, and this related to Jung's concept of the God-Image, which needed to be experienced inwardly to manifest the self. The autonomous and purposeful nature of the unconscious was expressed as the emanations of the part souls corresponding to Jung's concept of projection and his reformulation of the divine androgyne as masculine and feminine principles in the psyche. His theory of individuation as ego differentiation and individualisation, but simultaneously, an undivided unity, was similarly related to the Gnostic concept of the indivisible point. Although Jung differed from Gnosticism in his assignment of all opposites and created being to the Pleroma, Jung only inferred potentiality and as they balanced out in a manner of lacking all qualities which related to Hippolytus' description of the supreme God. The supreme God as Father of all may infer ultimate responsibility for all existence even if he does not directly create the world; also,

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<sup>105</sup> ---, *Aion*, p. 21.

<sup>106</sup> Goodrick-Clarke and Goodrick-Clarke, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, p. 91.

Zostrianos hints at divine participation in the world, so Jung's views are not a striking contrast, but his tendency to confuse the supreme God and with the lower Deities is not classically Gnostic. Overall, however, it can be argued that Jung's psychology of the self had significant roots in Gnostic concepts of God and divinity, as he understood them and many of his comments correspond to the initial stages of the classical typology and to motifs which could be elaborated on through recovered Sethian and Valentinian texts.



## Chapter Two: Gnostic Dualism and the Dynamic of Opposites

The portrayal of the material cosmos and its Creator as evil or ignorant is characteristic of classical Gnosticism, which posits a dualism between the divine eternal realm of the aeons and the limited world of matter and its deficiency. This chapter considers the links between Gnostic cosmology and Jung's concept of the shadow in relation to the next stages of the Gnostic creation scenario. This reflects the mythic fall of a divine being which results in the generation of the Demiurge who creates the material world (both of whom are portrayed as evil) [3,4] and where duality is a central theme [8]. This relates to stage two of Segal's model, where the division between matter and divinity symbolises the ego emerging from the unconscious, resulting in a conflict with or opposing it.

### Gnostic Dualism and The Shadow

According to the standard typology, dualism is a key feature of Gnosticism, which manifests as a division between man and God and spirit and matter. Various scholars have supported an understanding of Gnosticism as dualistic, and as King notes an ignorant demiurge, or a corrupted cause of the world, is still key to classifying texts as Gnostic.<sup>107</sup> Rudolf noted that a key feature of Gnostic dualism is anti-cosmism which relates to early research by Hans Jonas.<sup>108</sup> Jonas views anti-cosmism as a devaluation of the material cosmos resulting in a 'pneumatic morality [that] is determined by hostility toward the world and contempt for all mundane ties.'<sup>109</sup> However, according to Pearson the degree of radical dualism in Gnosticism diminishes in later texts and can vary among different systems and Pleše agrees that anti-cosmism is 'a misleading typological label for what is, in fact, a set of divergent

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<sup>107</sup> King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, p. 123.

<sup>108</sup> Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, p. 65.

<sup>109</sup> Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion; the Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity*, (Boston,: Beacon Press, 1958), p. 46.; cited in King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, p. 123.

positions about the cosmos and the heavenly bodies.’<sup>110</sup> For instance, in Valentinian cosmologies although the craftsman is ignorant of the pre-existing forms, he is still conceived as a mediator ‘following the rational principles of world-creation conceived by a higher power’.<sup>111</sup> Jung rejected accusations of dualism by Christian theologians as his concern was psychological rather than metaphysical but he still argued that ‘since Christ, as a man, corresponds to the ego, and as God, to the self, he is at once both ego and self, part and whole’, which reflected a dualism inherent in mankind, corresponding to his psychology.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, ‘Human beings should not overlook the danger of evil lurking within them’, but while acknowledging the need to address it, Jung believed his psychology which united opposites at a higher level, emphasised ‘the unity of the self’, and leaned towards ‘the reverse of dualism.’<sup>113</sup>

Gnostic creation myths describe the creation of the world and human beings, but from a Jungian point of view, both the world and humans are symbolic of processes in the human psyche. In this stage of the gnostic creation myth, there is a division between divinity and matter, which according to Segal, represents psychologically the ego’s emergence from the unconscious. In Gnosticism this emerges slowly through emanations, which is similar to how a child moves slowly from an undifferentiated unity with the parent to establishing its separate identity.<sup>114</sup> However, since Jung assigns created being to the Pleroma, he does not mention the standard Gnostic mythology of the fall of a divine being and an erroneous cause of the material realm. In the *ApJohn*, Sophia, who inhabited the lowest of the eternal realms, acting in ignorance produced a being that was ugly and imperfect, calling him Yaldabaoth and casting him outside the pleroma where no immortal beings would see him. The Gnostics equated him with both the god of biblical tradition and the Platonic Demiurge,

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<sup>110</sup> See Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 13.; and Pleše, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism*, p. 237.

<sup>111</sup> ---, *Evil and Its Sources in the Gnostic Tradition*, p. 118.

<sup>112</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 110.

<sup>113</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 53-54, 61n.

<sup>114</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 23.

despite the Gnostic world being conceived as much less than perfect.<sup>115</sup> Jung was aware of Yaldabaoth's association with the Devil, whom he viewed as a fourth deity opposing the Trinity and similar to the Gnostics he attributed the contrast between the ignorant Demiurge and the Gnostic supreme God to differences between Yahwistic and Christian theology, where Yahweh was seen as harsh and unjust, while the Christian God was known for his goodness.<sup>116</sup> However, Jung thought that Christ was so 'one-sidedly spotless and perfect' that he demanded 'a psychic complement to restore balance.'<sup>117</sup> The malevolence of the Demiurge is apparent in *ApJohn* where Yaldabaoth lorded his power over others, 'called himself God and defied the place from which he came' which reflects Segal's psychological perspective that 'Once the ego becomes independent, it inevitably forgets, if not repudiates, its origins.'<sup>118</sup> This sets up an opposition between the ego and unconscious like the duality of matter and divinity in the Gnostic myth where the ego is still dependent upon the unconscious, in the same way that Yaldabaoth's creative power relies upon his mother's stolen light.<sup>119</sup> Jung viewed the opposition between good and evil as similarly connected despite the need to be initially recognised as separate, citing the Ebonite Gnostics who saw these principles as two inseparable brothers, Jung believed that when they are incorporated as part of a God-Image, they serve a higher principle that transcends them both.<sup>120</sup>

Despite Jung's praise that the Gnostics addressed the issue of evil, Segal criticises Jung's view that they included it in the godhead, because the Gnostic divine realm is immaterial and wholly good, but matter is considered evil, as 'Far from conceding the evilness of divinity, Gnosticism emphatically denies it and thereby faces the problem of accounting for

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<sup>115</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 115.

<sup>116</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 58.

<sup>117</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>118</sup> See Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 116.; and Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 22.

<sup>119</sup> ---, *The Gnostic Jung*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>120</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 44.

evil.<sup>121</sup> Despite Segal's critique, the Gnostics' mythological narratives appear designed to address the issue of evil. For example, in the *ApJohn*, Gnosticism shifted the responsibility for the world's flaws away from the supreme God to the Demiurge - a lower deity; Pleše suggests that 'the error of miscarried calculation is blamed on the rational agent in the spiritual realm who is set at the farthest distance from God.'<sup>122</sup> Jung also references the Clementine Homilies, where creation is described as a *syzygy*; good is associated with the right hand of God, while evil is linked to the left, which Jung viewed as proof that the reality of evil 'does not endanger the unity of the God-Image.'<sup>123</sup> Similar associations of left and right can be found in other texts such as the *Tripartite Tractate* where those on the right will be saved, but those on the left will be damned and Irenaeus also claimed that Sophia produced a left hand ruler, which Pearson equates with the Devil.<sup>124</sup> Thus, Jung also aligned with the classical conception of Gnostic dualism as representing the Judaeo-Christian conceptions of God (good and evil) while viewing them as part of a dynamic of wholeness, similar to Christ's duality as both human and divine.

Jung felt strongly that the God-Image should not 'omit the shadow that belongs to the light figure', for without it the figure lacked humanity.<sup>125</sup> Jung's holism combined the Demiurge or Devil with the Christian Trinity (Father, Son and Holy spirit) to make a symbol of totality in the God-Image, a motif which could equally apply to the *ApJohn* and Greene confirms this understanding stating that Jung believed Yaldabaoth secretly contained the 'unknown, unconscious Self.'<sup>126</sup> Jung's concept of the shadow may have been inspired by Gnosticism as he refers to Irenaeus' claim that Valentinus taught that Christ was not produced from the

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<sup>121</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 107.

<sup>122</sup> See Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, p. 129.; and Pleše, *Evil and Its Sources in the Gnostic Tradition*, p. 113.

<sup>123</sup> Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch Der Dogmengeschichte*, 5., photomechanisch gedruckte Aufl. edn (Tübingen: Mohr, 1931), p. 332. ; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 54 - 55.

<sup>124</sup> See Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 94-95. ; and Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, p. 146.

<sup>125</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 42.

<sup>126</sup> Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, p. 131.

divine realm but 'having severed the shadow from himself, returned to the Pleroma' and a similar parallel exists in *On The Origin Of The World*, where the son of the Demiurge, after receiving Sophia's redemptive light, renounces his father and ascends 'so that he might dwell above the twelve gods of chaos'.<sup>127</sup> Jung was familiar with this version as he compared the son who had *Gnosis* to the ego being usurped by the greater self; in this way, he compared an encounter with the collective unconscious to an inner representation of the redeemer, which makes it possible for the self to emerge, and inform the ego as symbolised by the demiurge 'that he is not the highest God.'<sup>128</sup> Jung remarks that when the ego is supplemented with unconscious content, the result is a shift of gravity to the self, which may even 'thwart ego-tendencies' as it attracts to itself 'everything that pertains to the original and unalterable character of the individual ground-plan', which may refer to a person's cosmic destiny, or potentially that salvation is pre-ordained.<sup>129</sup> For instance, Pleše notes that the Gnostics mostly 'relate salvation to the unsolicited event of divine revelation'.<sup>130</sup> Jung describes the manifestation of the self's symbols in a similar spontaneous way; they arise 'principally during times of psychic disorientation or re-orientation', they evoke feeling tones, whereby the person is affected, but it also requires painstaking therapeutic work on integrating shadow and other projections as intellectual concepts fall short 'unless one has experienced it in reality.'<sup>131</sup>

## Gnostic Creation Mythology

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<sup>127</sup> See Saint Irenaeus, *Against Heresies Complete*, New Advent, (Book 1, Chapter 11, <<https://archive.org/details/SaintIrenaeusAgainstHeresiesComplete/page/n31/mode/2up>> [Accessed 14th August 2023].; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 41-42.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 207.

<sup>128</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 190.

<sup>129</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 190.

<sup>130</sup> Pleše, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism*, p. 241.

<sup>131</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 8, 32-33.

Jung appears to have misinterpreted Irenaeus' comments about the material world when Irenaeus remarked on how absurd a thought it was that the Pleroma could contain a dark and formless void, Irenaeus' comment being 'For if they hold that the light of their Father is such that it fills all things which are inside of Him, and illuminates them all, how can any vacuum or shadow possibly exist within that territory which is contained by the Pleroma.'<sup>132</sup> Jung drew analogies with the '*Ascension of Isaiah*' to support his view that the light from the highest heaven shone down to the lowest regions where 'The devil, like the Gnostic archons dwell in the firmament'; however, *On the Origin of the World* clarifies the Gnostic view that 'The aeon of truth has no shadow <within> it because infinite light shines everywhere within it. There is a shadow, however, outside it, and the shadow has been called darkness', the implication being that the light from the Pleroma does not reach the shadow.<sup>133</sup> Although this seems inconsistent, in the same passage where Irenaeus discusses the void he refers to how the Gnostics 'speak of what is without and what is within in reference to knowledge and ignorance, and not with respect to local distance', which similar to Jung, describes the cosmos from a psychological perspective.<sup>134</sup> This also has similarities to *The Gospel of Philip*, where the Saviour proclaims, 'It would be better for them to speak of the inner, the outer, and the outermost. For the master called corruption "the outermost darkness," and there is nothing outside it' and in the *ApJohn*, Yaldabaoth was described as 'ignorant darkness' because, unbeknown to him, his creative power came from his mother's light.<sup>135</sup> Yaldabaoth is said to mate with mindlessness to create his assistants, the archons and the twelve material spheres.<sup>136</sup> Like Jung's concept of the archetype as an expression of the collective unconscious, which was there from the beginning, the world and humans were modelled upon the divine forms and as stated in the *ApJohn*, 'Yaldabaoth organised everything after the pattern of the first aeons that had come into being so that he might

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<sup>132</sup> Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies Complete', Book II, Chapter 4,3.

<sup>133</sup> See Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 57.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 203.

<sup>134</sup> See Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies Complete', Book 4, Chapter 2.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 174.

<sup>135</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 166, 203.

<sup>136</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 116.

create everything in an incorruptible form; however, since the Demiurge does not access the spiritual realm directly, but copies images, his creation only imitates the higher realm.<sup>137</sup> Here, Jung has directly understood the Gnostic perspective on the cosmos as psychological and although the Demiurge is ignorant, like Jung's view of the ego he is nevertheless connected to the light realm in an indirect unconscious way.

The Gnostics adopted Ptolemaic cosmology and corresponding rulerships which were reflected in the positioning of the Archons and Angels within each sphere; as stated by Pleše, there was 'no gap to escape the tyranny of fate'.<sup>138</sup> However, similar to the balance of opposites described by Jung, the *ApJohn* has a concept of dual naming of the rulers: 'They were named after the glory above for the destruction of the powers and although the names given them by their maker were powerful, the names given them after the glory above would bring about their destruction and loss of power.'<sup>139</sup> In a similar way Jung describes the Peratic interpretation of the Red Sea, where the gods of destruction and salvation are one, implying that the destructive and constructive forces of the unconscious both serve liberation through the transcendent function which facilitates the integration and assimilation of dualities. Such a process could rise above the one sidedness of the ego and, since the self was beyond the ego, Jung believed this transcendent aspect found appropriate expression in cosmic symbols:<sup>140</sup>

By "unconscious" are meant those who have no *Gnosis*, i.e. are not enlightened as to the nature and destiny of man in the cosmos. In modern language, it would be those who have no knowledge of the contents of the personal and collective unconscious. The personal unconscious is the shadow and the inferior function, in Gnostic terms the sinfulness and impurity that must be washed away by baptism.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 8. -, 'The Nag Hammadi Scriptures', p. 117.

<sup>138</sup> Pleše, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism*, p. 237.

<sup>139</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 117.

<sup>140</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, pp. 200, 03.

<sup>141</sup> ---, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 199.

Jung adds that the Red Sea is interpreted as death for those who are unconscious, but rebirth and transcendence for those that are conscious and in citing the above he also highlights his perception of the links between Gnostic cosmology, the shadow, the opposites and liberation through Gnostic baptism.

## Demons and Daemons

Segal understands the Gnostic perspective on matter as 'irredeemably evil' and 'irreconcilable' with divinity and criticises the Gnostics for creating a world they sought to undo.<sup>142</sup> Still the duality in the names of rulers suggests a psychological perspective where, like Jung, it can represent the destruction of ego's authority upon the revelation of the self. However, Segal correctly points out that Jung mistakenly identifies the demiurge as the Gnostic Anthropos, and this is similarly true of his depictions of the *anima mundi* or platonic world soul, which Jung also depicts as a symbol of psychic wholeness and equivalent to the self.<sup>143</sup> However, such confusions highlight Jung's distinction between the Gnostics striving for perfection and his concept of wholeness as a model that more appropriately matches human psychology and his view that archetypes cannot be objectively known.<sup>144</sup> Jung observes that Origen, in his amplifications, had much in common with Gnostic views and mentions how the cosmic correspondence of the spiritual part of man was familiar to him and his contemporaries; however, DeConick points out that despite similarities, Greek Philosophical ideas did not postulate a transcendent god, which was higher than the celestial spheres.<sup>145</sup> The Gnostic god was envisioned as superior to the biblical god and

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<sup>142</sup> See Segal, Singer, and Stein, *The Allure of Gnosticism : The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture*, p. 1. And Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 21.

<sup>143</sup> ---, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 28.

<sup>144</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 68 - 69.

<sup>145</sup> See Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, pp. Vol. 12, col 147. Cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 215.; and April D. De Conick, *The Gnostic New Age : How a Countercultural Spirituality Revolutionized Religion from Antiquity to Today*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2016), p. 12. See also Pearson, Markschie's.



biblical stories and platonic philosophies were reinterpreted to reflect this. An example is the creation of the first human beings from the image of the first perfect human whose shape was reflected in the primal waters and Yaldabaoth and the archons copied the image, hoping it would give them 'the power of light'.<sup>146</sup> All aspects of the body, both left and right, were assigned rulership according to the book of the astrological sage Zoroaster; the cosmic demons that were assigned to rule over Adam's material body were associated with negative emotional states such as pleasure, desire, grief and fear, each of which engendered additional passions, and the assignment of these conditions contrasts with the self-generated aeons of the light realm, which are associated with eternal qualities such as perfection, peace and grace. After this, the Archons modelled the psychic features which governed senses such as perception and imagination; however, as Pleše notes, the cosmic rulers were 'capable of producing only the external effects of resemblance –the simulacrum, a third-rank copy'.<sup>147</sup> Although Jung's adopts many Gnostic ideas regarding the supreme god and humanity's deficiency, his Gnosticism also aligns with many of the platonic concepts, such as cosmic correspondences, that the classical Gnostics adopted but adapted in a non-traditional way.

Similar to the *ApJohn*, but without the radical overtones of the Gnostic demons, Jung links psychological states to cosmic forces; however, he prefers the less derogatory concept of Greek '*daemon*' to express the archetypal 'determining power which comes upon man from outside, like providence or fate', whilst acknowledging that the ethical decision is left to the individual.<sup>148</sup> He elaborates on the *daimon*: 'But they possess and contain you; for they are powerful daemons, manifestations of the gods...Ye shall look upon them as daemons, and as a common task and danger, a common burden which life hath laid upon you.'<sup>149</sup> Jung

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<sup>146</sup> See Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 118.; and --, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 119.

<sup>147</sup> Pleše, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism*, p. 262.

<sup>148</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 27.

<sup>149</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 190.

also details the astrological principles of the configurations represented in the Wheel of Birth and in exactly the same way he claims that 'it gives a picture first of the psychic and then of the physical constitution of the individual' and he cites a similar Gnostic creation story known from the Hermetica which stated that 'that when the highest God, saw what miserable, unconscious creatures these human beings were whom the demiurge had created, who were not even able to walk upright, he immediately got the work of redemption underway.'<sup>150</sup> This is reflective of the *ApJohn*, where initially, the human bodies were immobile so the divine parents intervened to guide Yaldabaoth to breathe his spirit into Adam's psychical body that had been made to be like the first perfect human, whereby the Spirit transferred from Yaldabaoth to Adam, who became powerful, enlightened, and stripped of evil.<sup>151</sup> Thus, Jung's remarks regarding Gnosis as purification from sin through casting off the shadow, its links to cosmic powers and the ultimate goals of restoration of primal man are similarly reflected.

Jung's comments on Gnosticism relating to the typology where the creation of the Demiurge and the material world are perceived as evil or ignorant, and the Gnostic concept of duality, which is expressed as a division of divinity and matter, has a comparable stage to Jung's psychology where the ego emerges and opposes the unconscious as self. Although Segal critiques Jung for assigning evil to the divine, the initial error originated from the lowest divine region, and although there is a perceived separation, Yaldabaoth still follows the pre-existing models and is dependent upon the light he received from his mother, which is similar to how the ego is often unaware of its reliance upon the unconscious. Jung understood Gnostic dualism as representing a conflict between Christian and Jewish conceptions of God but stressed that his psychology was holistic as the opposites of good/evil, like conscious/unconscious, and the gods of creation and destruction, when

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<sup>150</sup> See Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 136. ; and Hermes, Walter Scott, and A. S. Ferguson, *Hermetica, the Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophic Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus*, (Oxford: The Clarendon press, 1924), pp. I, 150f.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 191.

<sup>151</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 125.

viewed from a transcendental level could be united. Jung's cosmological focus is apparent in the Gnostic assignment of the physical and psychic aspects of the self as equated with the birth horoscope and the compelling effect of the daemons, which relates the shadow to the sinfulness which is to be redeemed through gnosis. This highlights the importance of Gnostic dualism for Jung's theories which required acknowledging inner negativity to redeem the self; thus Jung did not align with Segal's interpretation that matter is irredeemably evil. Despite the typology and Segal's critiques which do not include Jung's holistic conception of the Godhead, and his aims of wholeness rather than perfection, Jung's examples are grounded in Gnostic concepts of deficiency and restoration and a psychological understanding of the cosmos. The *ApJohn* similarly hints at a potential for unification through the model of the first perfect human, Adam's capacity for enlightenment through spirit, the dual naming of powers of the cosmos and different concepts or rulerships associated with the symbolism of left and right.

## Chapter Three: Gnostic Salvation and Jung's Realised Self

Jung believed that the Gnostics' secret knowledge concerning the way to salvation was an expression of what he called the collective unconscious.<sup>152</sup> Salvation in the Gnostic typology relates to liberation of the divine spark, which is perceived as trapped within a certain class of person [5], and features a divine redeemer figure who descends to help humankind and then ascends again [6]. Human redemption through *Gnosis* is expressed as knowledge of the divine spark within [7]. This marks stage three of the creation scenario, which in Jung's psychology, resolves the opposition of the previous stage and is expressed in a reconciliation of divinity/matter or good/evil. This is the stage where Segal suggests a severance, not a union, occurs in Gnosticism and where the ultimate aims of Gnosticism and Jung's psychology diverge.

### Divine Spark

The typology suggests that the Gnostic divine spark relates only to a certain class of person – that is, spiritual or *pneumatic*, and according to Pleše, the exclusivity of the spark to certain races is a feature of some Sethian texts. However, Jung related the spark to the undivided point from Hippolytus' account, which 'is "present in the body" but known only to "spiritual" men'; similarly, the *ApJohn* suggests that the spark is latent in everyone: 'Power will descend upon every person, for without it no one could stand. After birth, if the spirit of life grows and power comes and strengthens that soul, no one will be able to lead

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<sup>152</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 199.

it astray with evil actions.’<sup>153</sup> Similar to the model noted by Singer, Pleše, mentioned how the demiurge organised matter in accordance with a ‘tripartite division of reality’ such as the ‘three classes of human beings (spiritual, animate, fleshly)’ or ‘three distinct substances (spirit, soul, matter); equally, in Basilides’ account of three sonships, Jung describes what he perceived as a triplicity of spirit, soul and body.<sup>154</sup> The Spirit is the first son, the finest and the highest, the soul is the second – it is grosser but can still fly close to the region of light - and the third is the body which fell deepest into formlessness, but still contained the divine seed that could be awakened through Christ. Blending Coptic terms which refer to “formlessness”, Jung judged the spark to be ‘practically the equivalent of “Unconsciousness”’.<sup>155</sup> He subsequently drew parallels between Gnostic myths with Christ as the redeemer and encountering symbols of totality in the psyche.<sup>156</sup> Greene notes how Jung also relates the spark to a ‘central spiritual sun’ suggesting the psychological relevance of an ‘interior spiritual life’ through the immaterial essence of a cosmic symbol.<sup>157</sup> He also understood humans and gods to be sparks of a divine flame and his spiritual guide, Philemon, is similarly referred to as ‘the eternal fire of light’.<sup>158</sup> However, in Gnosticism, *Yaldabaoth* is associated with fire, for in the *ApJohn*, when stationing the rulers of the material cosmos, ‘he shared his fire with them, but he did not give away any of the power of the light he had taken from his mother’, and in the *Pistis Sophia* the eyes of the demiurge emit flame.<sup>159</sup> In the Valentinian *Tripartite Tractate*, which shares a similar mythic framework to the *ApJohn*, different approaches to salvation are distinguished by a person’s class. The spiritual is associated with light from light, those who receive revelation straight away and are destined to achieve salvation, but the psychical is linked with light from fire,

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<sup>153</sup> Hippolytus, Legge, and Origen, *Refutation*, pp. V9, 5f 140f.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 198.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 25.

<sup>154</sup> Pleše, *Evil and Its Sources in the Gnostic Tradition*, pp. 119, 239.

<sup>155</sup> See Hippolytus, Legge, and Origen, *Refutation*, pp. 69-79; Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 64-66.

<sup>156</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 68-69.; For case studies see Jung and others *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, *Cw9j*, pp. 290-354.

<sup>157</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 30.

<sup>158</sup> ---, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>159</sup> See Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 116. ; and Chalquist, *Hidden in What Is Visible*, p. 54.

those who can still receive instruction and are assured of things to come, but since they are disposed to both good and evil, this is uncertain and the form that salvation takes for the psychic is also not clear.<sup>160</sup> Thus, although Gnosticism is noted for its concern with the spirit which was restricted to a certain class of person, the soul still has a role to play as well as the Gnostics capacity for moral choice.

DeConick distinguishes between the gnostic concepts of spirit and soul; while the soul could survive death and be reincarnated it would not be expected to live permanently, it was only the spirit which could attain immortality if it achieved a connection with the transcendent God. Such distinctions parallels the intermediate realm in the Cosmic map known through Origen where spirit and soul reside and where both light and darkness are represented as separate spheres.<sup>161</sup> Jung notes differences between soul and spirit regarding their finer or denser substance and their identification with the *anima* and *animus*, respectively, but he also sometimes uses them interchangeably, so his psychology appears less rooted in the idea of a spiritual class who are automatically saved by nature, which even the Gnostics state is extremely rare.<sup>162</sup> In general, his psychology seems closer to the psychical aspect, where Jung cites Basilides in saying that the soul can fly close to the light and the *Tripartite Tractate* proposes a form of (unguaranteed) salvation; Jung stresses the considerable inner effort that is required to transform the self through the integration of projections and he also emphasises personal responsibility in the face of inner impulses, stressing that the ethical decision must reside with the individual.<sup>163</sup> Segal understands the Jungian goal of 'the integration of the unconscious with ego consciousness'; however he judges Gnosticism to pursue a 'reversion to the incipient state of both humanity and the cosmos, not the transformation of either.'<sup>164</sup> Yet, in the *ApJohn* the spirit enables a person to stand and be

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<sup>160</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 60, 116.

<sup>161</sup> Rudolph and Wilson, *Gnosis : The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>162</sup> See Meyer Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 143.

<sup>163</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 27.

<sup>164</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 24.

merged with Adam's psychical body enabling him to be free from evil impulses and achieve enlightenment and, therefore, transformation. The routes to salvation similarly stress a capacity to receive divine instruction and an inclination to choose between both good and evil, so Segal's interpretation of *Gnosis* as 'the abandonment of ego consciousness and a reversion to sheer unconsciousness' is not supported by these Gnostic texts.<sup>165</sup>

## Gnosis and Fate

Segal also questioned Jung's justification for framing the Gnostics as psychologists suggesting that his view contained many ambiguities, but Jung's adoption of Gnostic cosmology makes his perceptions more apparent, as Jung's association of *Gnosis* with an unalterable ground-plan may also be suggestive of the transcendent aspect of astrological fate, whereby the psychic and physical attributes, distinguished in the *ApJohn* as emotional and mental states, seek resolution. Here the Gnostics adopted a concept of fate as compelling emotions, and Jung, from his case studies, was similarly persuaded that astrological correspondences contained 'the core of psychological truth.'<sup>166</sup> Although Jung did not incorporate religious speculation into his psychology, it could be argued that some of these are implicitly embedded. For example Greene notes how in concepts such as the soul's rebirth 'he found parallels for his ideas about the nature and teleology of the human psyche', meaning that unconscious processes moved towards a future goal, which may be represented in Jung's alignment of *Gnosis* with cosmic destiny and the idea of archetypes as autonomous pre-existing *daemonic* forces.<sup>167</sup> As Greene notes, Jung studied a broad range of material including Gnostic, Hermetic, Platonic and Neoplatonic and each had a

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<sup>165</sup> See Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 129.; and Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 29.

<sup>166</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 33.; and C. G Jung, 'Letter to Sigmund Freud (12 June 1911), Letters, Vol 1 P.24', in *Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal*, ed. by Roderick Main (Hove: Routledge, 1997), (p. 79).

<sup>167</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 183.

concept of astral compulsions, constituting fate as expressed in the ancient term *Heimarmene*.<sup>168</sup> Jung also references the *Pistis Sophia*, where Christ's redemptive mission destroys *heimarmene* by proclaiming to have partly reversed the direction of the spheres. Jesus declared, 'I took a third of their power, in order that they should not be able to accomplish their evil deeds.'<sup>169</sup> As noted by van der Vliet, Jesus' victory over the archons of fate through the power of his light opened up the pathway of salvation for humankind.<sup>170</sup> Notably the theme of left and right attributes of the divine is related to Jesus' redemptive action; if the spheres were turned to the left fate would come to pass, but when turned to the right, Jesus had changed their influences.<sup>171</sup> Jung's interest in a cosmological approach to psychological conflicts and an underlying holism is, therefore, similarly mirrored in Gnostic themes of Gnosis as liberation from fate.

Relating the spark to Gnostic cosmology, Jung cites Wilhelm Bousset, who remarks that at least some humans from birth carry 'a higher element deriving from the world of light, which enables them to rise above the world of the Seven into the upper world of light'.<sup>172</sup> Although Gnosticism took up the concept of freedom from an oppressive fate, it is often portrayed as being more world-negating than other traditions, but Jung followed Mead in focusing on the correspondence between consciousness and divinity.<sup>173</sup> Equally, Gnosticism equates the bonds of fate to the fetters of forgetfulness, but Jung saw it as a necessary conflict where the individual is not irrevocably under the sway of evil demons. This is apparent in his use of terms such as 'daemon', 'providence' and the "will of God" to express the difficulty in controlling archetypal forces or altering their nature completely.<sup>174</sup> Greene suggests how this can be achieved through embracing a dimension of fate which reflects

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<sup>168</sup> ---, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 2.

<sup>169</sup> Mead, *Pistis Sophia; a Gnostic Miscellany*, p. 20.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 136.

<sup>170</sup> van der Vliet, *Fate, Magic and Astrology in Pistis Sophia, Chapters 15-21*.

<sup>171</sup> Mead, *Pistis Sophia; a Gnostic Miscellany*, pp. 17, 23.

<sup>172</sup> Bousset, *Hauptprobleme Der Gnosis*, p. 321.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 219n.

<sup>173</sup> Goodrick-Clarke and Goodrick-Clarke, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, p. 16.

<sup>174</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 27.



divine teleology, as 'Freedom from fate, in late antique approaches, involved a form of *gnosis* or inner realisation that could break the compulsion of the planetary *daimons*'.<sup>175</sup> The *ApJohn* could potentially support such a concept through the modelling of the spheres on the twelve eternal immaterial aeons and gnostic notions of the divine realm as separated, not spatially, but through knowledge and ignorance; it may also be present in the different concepts of left and right, the dual names of the planetary spheres which, similar to Jung's interpretation of the Peratic red sea, may not as Segal suggests mean the end of the world but the destruction of the forces that prevent the soul's liberation. In Jung's terms, this reflects the perceived autonomy of the ego which did not know its origins in the unconscious or its destiny in the cosmos.

### Divine Redeemers and Planetary Journeys

Segal also suggests that while psychological growth encompasses a raised ego consciousness/unconscious, 'few if any Gnostic myths' reveal 'any permanent change in divinity.'<sup>176</sup> However, in the *ApJohn* when the archons planned further attacks to trap Adam and he started to succumb to the passions, the divine parents sent a helper called enlightened insight to restore the mother's light through teaching 'the way of ascent, which is the way of descent.'<sup>177</sup> Segal's understanding may relate to Jung's disguised incorporation of Neoplatonic techniques into his therapeutic processes where, as Greene describes it, there is 'mutuality and consubstantiality of human and divine'.<sup>178</sup> In contrast to Segal's critique, in the *ApJohn* the divine restored its light and wholeness through unification while raising Adam to perfect knowledge; so both were transformed.<sup>179</sup> The themes of ascent

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<sup>175</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 142.

<sup>176</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 20.; Stein, *The Gnostic Critique, Past and Present*, p. 26.

<sup>177</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 125.

<sup>178</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 22.

<sup>179</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 127.; and Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 22.

and descent mentioned in *ApJohn* are associated with the typology of the divine redeemer who descends to aid humanity and then ascends again, and although it only appears to be hinted at, it is closely tied to the theme of planetary journeys through the heavenly spheres as a means of salvation. Such journeys feature in the Orphic and Patristic accounts by Irenaeus and Hippolytus, and heavenly journeys into the Gnostic higher aeons are similarly featured in Sethian *Zostrianos* and *The Three Steels of Seth*, which also link with Jung's comparison of the divine spark with the undivided point and his concept of individuation as a differentiated but undivided unity.<sup>180</sup> In *Zostrianos* after the higher ascent he returns to earth: "Then I came down to the perceptible world and put on my image [the body]. Because it was uninstructed, I empowered it"; as emphasised by Chalquist, 'material creation and flesh are necessary and valuable [to the Gnostics] after all.'<sup>181</sup> These Platonizing and Neoplatonic Sethian texts also have similarities to ritual practices found in Patristic accounts and like Jung, DeConick mentions the Peratics, but she focuses on the Gnostic soul journey, which would prepare the initiate for the path they would take at death. Through these initiations they could be enlightened about the 'charms and invocations to secure safe passage through the threatening realms of the dead and the demons who ruled the skies.'<sup>182</sup> Thus, although the doctrinal aspects of Gnostic belief are often emphasised, ritual practices concerning cosmic journeys, which were prominent in other ancient traditions were adopted by Gnostics.

Greene notes that the theme of heavenly journeys is reflected in Jung's personal diaries from 1913, a period which he described as 'a time when everything essential to my later

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<sup>180</sup> See *Zostrianos* and *The Three Steles of Seth* for a Gnostic heavenly journey; and see Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 523f, 37f.

<sup>181</sup> For Classification See DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, pp. 167-73.; Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 582. ; and Chalquist, *Hidden in What Is Visible*, p. 57.

<sup>182</sup> April DeConick, 'From the Bowels of Hell to Draco: The Mysteries of the Peratics', in *In Mystery and Secrecy in the Nag Hammadi Collection and Other Ancient Literature: Ideas and Practices; Studies for Einar Thomassen at Sixty*, ed. by Christian H. Bull, Liv Ingeborg Lied, and John D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 3-38 pp. 5-7).

theories was decided.’<sup>183</sup> Jung incorporated similar practices into his methods, which sought to bridge the gap between conscious/unconscious aspects of the psyche, naming them ‘active imagination’ and he also equated the soul’s journey with his individuation process. Greene points out that active imagination was based upon Neoplatonic techniques used in theurgy (God-work), where images and symbols were employed to receive knowledge from the Gods and similar to the Gnostic redeemer, the gods were perceived as the ones to initiate the encounter.<sup>184</sup> Greene describes Jung’s images and dialogues as a soul journey strongly reflective of the planetary configurations in his birth chart.<sup>185</sup> Jung’s fantasies illustrate how a mythical journey through the heavens can be experienced inwardly and he recounts the magical effect that this had on patients who similarly worked on transforming their inner images. Thus, the link between Gnostic accounts of heavenly journeys and the inner psychological process of elucidating the unconscious, or summoning the gods to invoke cosmic correspondence, was incorporated by Jung into his therapeutic practices which sought to effect a change in the ego/unconscious, similar to both human/divine being transformed in the *ApJohn*.

## Gnostic Liberation

Linking the practice of astrological journeys with the mythology of Christ as a divine redeemer, Jung quotes Priscillian’s (d. 385) claim that Christ destroyed ‘the wheel of generation’ overcoming ‘the day of our birth by the renewal of baptism’.<sup>186</sup> He also discusses the theme of a descent of a divine redeemer in Basilides’ three incarnations or sonships: The first sonship is Christ of the Ogdoad, next is Christ of the Hebdomad and the

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<sup>183</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 2.; and C. G. Jung and Aniela Jaffé, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Rev. edn (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 225.

<sup>184</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 27.; and Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, pp. 92-94, 99.

<sup>185</sup> ---, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 4.

<sup>186</sup> Priscillian, *Opera Quae Supersunt*, (Vienna and Leipzig: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, 1889).; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 137.

third sonship is Jesus as the son of Mary.<sup>187</sup> Jung appears again to misinterpret the Anthropos figure, placing the Demiurge as the highest archon associated with the nature of spirit, and although Basilides' accounts have not been recovered, Jung's comments regarding baptism, descent and ascent are noted by John Turner to be linked in several Sethian texts where salvation is depicted as 'a series of three descents of a heavenly being to earth', and culminates in a ritual of baptismal ascent known as the Five Seals.<sup>188</sup> In the *ApJohn* it is Barbelo who transforms herself into her offspring and descends three times, on the third cautioning the people to guard themselves against 'the demons of chaos which seek to entrap the soul': In the redemptive act, she proclaims, 'I raised and sealed the person in luminous water with Five Seals, that death might not prevail over the person from that moment on.'<sup>189</sup> Similarly, in the *Pistis Sophia*, there are parallels to all the key Gnostic themes mentioned by Jung, such as heavenly journeys, redemptive missions to release the bonds of fate and Neoplatonic techniques of high magic, where salvation was similarly understood to depend upon transcendent beings.<sup>190</sup>

Greene reveals how Jung was interested in the idea of a subtle body and noted parallels to the incorruptible body of the Gnostics, which he believed carried the divine spark as symbolic of the self.<sup>191</sup> This idea sometimes overlaps with the 'counterfeit spirit' which Jung would likely have known from the *Poimandres*, the most famous hermetic doctrine, where it was linked to the celestial bodies and understood as evil. It is also mentioned in the *ApJohn*.<sup>192</sup> The *Pistis Sophia* describes how, when the soul is reborn, the counterfeiting spirit binds it to the world; 'the rulers bind it to the soul with their seals and their bonds and seal

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<sup>187</sup> Hippolytus, Legge, and Origen, *Refutation*, pp. 75-78; Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 66.

<sup>188</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 247.; For the trilogy of descents, see *Revelation of Adam, the Secret Book of John (ApJohn), the Three Forms of First Thought* and the *Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit*, pp. 347, 103, 715, 247.

<sup>189</sup> ---, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 131.

<sup>190</sup> Burkitt, *Pistis Sophia*, p. xLvi.

<sup>191</sup> Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, p. 137.

<sup>192</sup> See Quispel Gilles, 'Hermes Trismegistus and the Origins of Gnosticism', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 46 (1992), 9. ; and Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, p. 281.

it to it, that it may compel it always'.<sup>193</sup> However, in salvation the seals are undone, and it is transformed into light so that it may re-join the kingdom. Jesus declares:

I in this manner brought the mysteries into this world which undo all the bonds of the counterfeiting spirit and all the seals which are bound to the soul--those which make the soul free and free it from its parents and rulers, and make it into refined light and lead it up into the kingdom of its father, the first Issue, the First Mystery, forever.<sup>194</sup>

This is similar to the final stage of salvation in other Sethian texts, where 'the bodily and psychical garment of the spirit is replaced with light and immortal incorruptibility', and this relates to Segal's view that the sparks once liberated return to the 'immaterial godhead' wherein he perceived that a severance but not a fusion with matter occurs.<sup>195</sup> However, if, as Jung believed, the light or subtle body carried the spark, in the redemptive act when the subtle body was exchanged, it may simultaneously infuse the physical and psychical aspects of the individual. This was true for Adam when the spirit fused with his psychic body he became enlightened and when Zostrianos returned from his higher ascent he was able to instruct his physical body.

This chapter examined Gnostic salvation through the lens of a Gnostic redeemer who descends to retrieve a divine spark hidden within humanity and which the typology viewed as only present in a certain class of person, but which Jung equated with delving deep within the unconscious to discover the self. The *ApJohn* and the *Tripartite Tractate* similarly provided approaches to salvation that were inclusive through emphasising the sparks latency, the soul's receptivity to inner instruction and personal responsibility for choices, which similarly aligned with Jung's perspective of psychological wholeness, rather than

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<sup>193</sup> Mead, *Pistis Sophia; a Gnostic Miscellany*, p. 281.

<sup>194</sup> Burkitt, *Pistis Sophia*, pp. 281-82.

<sup>195</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 31, 247.

solely Gnostic perfection. Jung and Gnostic texts strongly emphasised salvation as liberation from fate, especially freedom from evil – a key theme in the Gnostic redeemer myths, which Jung understood as the ego being usurped through knowledge of the self. The typology emphasised the theme of descent and ascent, which parallels Gnostic heavenly journeys that linked with Jung's emphasis on astrological cosmology, which highlighted the role of symbols as expressions of archetypes and methods of elucidating the unconscious that had parallels to Neoplatonic techniques of God-work. In the *ApJohn*, the descent of a divine being liberated humanity and restored the divine, which addressed Segal's criticism that there was rarely a transformation of either. Jung's emphasis on cosmological aspects of Gnosticism similarly clarifies the psychological relevance of Gnosticism through the concept of *heimarmene* and transforming inner compulsions. Although the Gnostics sought restoration of an original unity, this did not necessarily involve a severance with the individual, as it appeared that the divine spark, as spirit (subtle body) could fuse with the psychic and material body of the initiate whilst remaining in the world. Jung's comments on Gnosticism emphasised the key themes of the typology and although astrological cosmology is underemphasised in Gnosticism, rather only hinted at in the typology, several classical texts indicated that in alignment with Jung's understanding of Gnosticism, it may still have been a very important theme in Gnostic salvation.

## Conclusion

### The Structure of the Self

When considering whether Carl Jung's psychology may be classed as Gnostic, addressing the critiques on Jung's understanding of ancient Gnosticism, it appears that in many respects, Jung's ideas align with the motifs of Gnosticism and conform to the general typology depicted by many ancient theologians and adopted by scholars. Although Gnostic cosmology appears only to be hinted at in the typology and is often overlooked by Gnostic scholars, Jung's focus on this aspect of Gnosticism extends or amends the typological motifs and adds greater clarity on why Jung perceived the Gnostics as forerunners to his psychological theories. Jung had access to the documents of the Church Fathers, particularly Irenaeus' refutation, which rested upon a similar mythic framework to that found in the *ApJohn* and aside from Irenaeus' account, Jung cited from a similar version in the *Hermetica*. Due to its importance and comprehensiveness in addressing the key motifs of the Classical Gnostic typology, the *ApJohn* has been a key text for comparison of Jung's ideas, but other related texts were also consulted where they mirrored key themes outlined by Jung or the sources he used, which has enabled further analysis of the Gnostic concepts employed in Jung's theories of the self. Although the Patristic refutations could not be assumed to be critical accounts, all the key concepts Jung utilised for his theories could be clarified and elaborated on by texts recovered in the Nag Hammadi Scriptures. Although Stein observes that Jung's arguments were hard to follow and his prose and style also made comprehension less straightforward, this paper has argued that classical Gnostic concepts are deeply embedded within his psychological theories of the self.

Jung believed that his concept of the collective unconscious was an expression of the Gnostic's 'secret knowledge concerning the origin of all things and the way to salvation',

and he found direct links to relate the unconscious to the spark and the initial state of things through Quispel's Coptic translation of terms.<sup>196</sup> The Gnostic supreme God was envisioned as superior to this world and described in terms of his unknowability and pre-existence with a capacity for autonomous self-generation: All attributes Jung assigned to his concept of an archetype. He adopted this idea from Irenaeus, who stated that the creator did not fashion the world directly but modelled it from archetypes outside himself; similarly from Origen he obtained the concept that man's soul was not an image of god, but rather the copy of a former image which related to Tertullian's view that the first perfect human was corrupted by the fall and needed restoration.<sup>197</sup> Similar concepts found in *ApJohn* reflect Jung's theories of the self and represent what he termed the 'God-Image', which reflects an inner experience of the numinosity of Deity and is placed at the highest level in the self's hierarchy.<sup>198</sup> Jung's *anima* and *animus* concepts which were initially inspired by Clement are next in line and were similarly a reformulation of the primordial androgyne, which is found in Gnosticism as the Mother-Father God and initial androgynous aeons that make up the divine realm.<sup>199</sup>

The Gnostic shadow is another term Jung adopted from Irenaeus; although it is an archetype, he mostly attributes it to the shameful aspects of the personal unconscious. Jung described his individuation process and the concept of projection regarding the ego's separation through the processes of differentiation and individualisation, which he found reflected in the Gnostic divine beings emanating from the primal source. Yet, paradoxically, Jung envisioned the self as a unity or whole, which was expressed in the Gnostic concept of the undivided point or divine spark; this was sourced from Hippolytus and found in

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<sup>196</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 200.

<sup>197</sup> *Adversus Haereses* II,7,5. Cited in ---, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, p. 4. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graeca*, p. 304. Cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 37.

<sup>197</sup> ; Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graeca*, p. 304. ; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 37.

<sup>198</sup> Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 10.

<sup>199</sup> See Jung and others *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, *Cw9i*, p. 175.; and Lake and others *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp. I,151. Cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 21 n6.



Platonizing classical texts reflecting his psychic structure of the self, which strove towards unity of the subparts at a transcendent level.<sup>200</sup> Although critiqued for assigning the created world to the Pleroma, Jung expressed this as potentialities that balanced each other out, and although not classically Gnostic he was attempting to convey Hippolytus' depiction of the Pleroma as lacking all qualities and likely his own theories which transcended all opposites.<sup>201</sup> Similar to Valentinian Gnosticism he did not view the demiurge as radically evil, nor did he view matter as irredeemably evil and he incorporated Gnostic dualism, but as representing opposing Christian and Jewish conceptions of God, which he interpreted as a unity like left and right hands of God.<sup>202</sup> Similar concepts were mirrored in other texts and Jung judged this dualism as comparable to Christ's duality, as man and God, ego and self, and part and whole, which aligned with his psychology. From Jung's perspective, the Demiurge represented the shadow side of human psychology as part of a totality of wholeness in the God-Image; whilst inconsistent with classical Gnosticism which separated him from the supreme god, this was consistent with the aims of Jung's psychology, which strove towards wholeness rather than perfection.<sup>203</sup> Overall, Jung's structuring of the self-archetype drew specifically upon concepts which were central to Gnosticism.

### Cosmology and Self Realisation

Jung's psychology is often understood as Gnostic due to his interest in their doctrines and his perception of them as forerunners to his theories.<sup>204</sup> Although Segal questions Jung's justification for this view, Jung's focus on Gnostic cosmology reveals his perception of an underlying unity and correspondence between humanity and divinity rather than the emphasis on Gnostic dualism. Cosmology's psychological significance, which most clearly

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<sup>200</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 524,46.

<sup>201</sup> Elenchos, VI, 42,4, Quispel, *Note Sur Basilide*, p. 115. cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 191.

<sup>202</sup> Harnack, *Lehrbuch Der Dogmengeschichte*, p. 332. ; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 54 - 55.

<sup>203</sup> ---, *Aion*, pp. 68 - 69.

<sup>204</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, pp. 33-34.

finds expression in the astrological rulership of the archons, is often overlooked in favour of of the mythological motifs and rarely considered in Jungian interpretations of Gnostic myths.<sup>205</sup> Matter in the Gnostic sense included the planets, zodiac and the rulership of negative psychological states such as fear, grief and envy, but this stood in strong contrast to the eternal aeons, which were associated with attributes such as grace, truth and peace.<sup>206</sup> Jung equated the material states with the shadow and the instinctual *daimonic* forces that the individual and gnostic initiate must conquer on their journey to wholeness or perfection, and Jung aligned the rulership of the material and psychical bodies with an individual's birth advancing the view adopted from the Church Fathers that an individual's animal nature could be overcome by their spiritual nature as reflected in the inner sun or God-Image.<sup>207</sup> Spiritual alternatives to cosmic rulership were present in the *Pistis Sophia* through the themes of the left and right direction of the spheres; similarly, the *ApJohn* contains the concept of dual rulership and the first perfect human form. This contradicted Segal's perception of matter as irredeemably evil and despite his view that the Gnostics did not incorporate evil in the godhead, the *ApJohn* aligned with Jung that evil and error came into the world before man even though it was not a property of the supreme God. However, Jung's holistic view of the Godhead, which combined the supreme God and Yaldabaoth, meant that the differentiation of classical Gnosticism from other traditions like Platonism was sometimes less evident, and as a result, Jung often utilized these in an inconsistent, interchangeable manner. This occurred in the correspondence of the self with the Cosmic Anthropos who begets the world, the Platonic world soul and where Jung confuses Yaldabaoth with the Gnostic supreme god and associates him with the nature of spirit. Given Jung's lack of inclination to assert or deny the truth of metaphysical realities, such

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<sup>205</sup> See Greene, *Jung's Studies in Astrology: Prophecy, Magic, and the Qualities of Time*, p. 129.; Pleše, *Fate, Providence and Astrology in Gnosticism*, p. 238; See Singer, *The Evolution of the Soul*, p. 67.; Chalquist, *Hidden in What Is Visible*, pp. 51-59.

<sup>206</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 111-13.

<sup>207</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 27, 136.; Genesis Homilies I, 13 in Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, p. Vol 12 col 155.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, pp. 37-39.

differences did not impact his psychology, which was concerned with how such concepts could be observed in psychological processes.

Like Jung, DeConick, who explored Gnosticism's ritual, cosmological and experiential components, perceived Gnosticism as holistic; such themes are hinted at in the *ApJohn* and other texts by the redeemer's engagement with the material realm and more inclusive approaches to salvation, contradicting the typology which restricted the spark to a certain class of person.<sup>208</sup> In *ApJohn* the spark was latent in all, and the *Tripartite Tractate* indicated that salvation was not exclusively reserved for the pneumatic, but the psychic could receive instruction and be assured of things to come whilst being disposed to both good and evil.<sup>209</sup> Such approaches seemed closer to Jung's psychology, as he emphasized painstaking effort through the integration of projections, personal responsibility for choices, and the aims of wholeness rather than perfection.<sup>210</sup> Jung's comments also related to the typology, depicting a redeemer who descends to help humankind and then ascends again, but no emphasis was placed on the link between such themes and journeys through the heavenly spheres, which were prominent in many traditions in antiquity. The Gnostic versions were known to Jung through the Peratics and the *Pistis Sophia* and ritual ascents and descents are clearly part of the family of texts known as Sethian or Classical. Although these were not examined in detail, common themes are noted, with *Zostrianos* and *The Three Steeles of Seth* which have Platonizing and Neoplatonic influences, which align with other systems Jung utilised to exemplify the workings of the deeper layers of the collective unconscious.<sup>211</sup> Thematically in terms of ascent, descent and the five seals baptismal ritual, there are parallels with the *ApJohn*, which similarly correspond with Jung's emphasis on the

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<sup>208</sup> De Conick, *The Gnostic New Age : How a Countercultural Spirituality Revolutionized Religion from Antiquity to Today*, p. 12.

<sup>209</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 25, 60, 116.

<sup>210</sup> Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 27.

<sup>211</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, pp. 523f, 37f.; See *Zostrianos* and *The Three Steeles of Seth* for a Gnostic heavenly journey.; For Synopsis of texts see DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, pp. 167-73.

psychological significance of visionary journeys and gnostic baptism. These journeys in Gnosticism are connected with the need to ascend through the heavens by conquering the hostile archons, the tyrannical rulers of the planetary realms, and such redemptive missions illuminated the initiate's mind.<sup>212</sup> In the *Pistis Sophia*, it is Christ who reverses the direction of the spheres taking a third of the ruler's power, and in the *ApJohn* it is Barbelo who enlightens the Gnostic to the superior realm and cautions the soul about the demons of chaos that seek to entrap them.<sup>213</sup> Jung cites similar views and similarly understood the unconscious to act in a revelatory way like the gnostic redeemer, promising things to come, but requiring much further effort to free themselves from archetypal fated conflicts.<sup>214</sup>

Jung's formative experiences captured such psychological journeys, documenting his imaginative dialogues and visions during a period that overlapped with the formation and amplification of his psychological theories.<sup>215</sup> Jung emphasised the use of dream images and visionary symbols as expressions of archetypes and methods of elucidating the unconscious, which mirrored Gnostic concepts of the ontological truth of symbols.<sup>216</sup> He also incorporated Neoplatonic techniques of summoning the gods, whereby the encounter changed both humanity and the God, as represented by the expansion of the ego/unconscious and similar ideas were in the *ApJohn*, contradicting Segal's view that Gnosticism presented no apparent change in divinity. Segal accepted stage two of his model whereby the ego repudiated the unconscious upon its initial separation whilst still acknowledging dependency, such as when Yaldabaoth modelled creation on the ideal forms. However, whilst he acknowledges that Jungian psychology establishes a new final state, he considered Gnosticism to be a reversion to the situation before the emergence of

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<sup>212</sup> DeConick, *From the Bowels of Hell to Draco: The Mysteries of the Peratics*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>213</sup> See Mead, *Pistis Sophia; a Gnostic Miscellany*, p. 20.; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 136.; and Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 131.

<sup>214</sup> For Jung's citations on Cosmic fate see Priscillian, *Opera Quae Supersunt.*; cited in Jung and Hull, *Aion*, p. 137.

<sup>215</sup> Greene, *Astrological World of Jung's 'Liber Novus*, p. 2.; Jung and Jaffé, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, p. 225.

<sup>216</sup> Meyer and Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, p. 173.

matter, one where the realisation of consciousness achieved in stage two was invalidated.<sup>217</sup> However, many references emphasise the liberation of the Gnostic from evil and negative emotional states, its receptivity to divine instruction and revelation of the spark, which is in alignment with the key goals of Jungian psychology. Jung viewed this as a form of teleology or cosmic destiny, which was purposeful and, where the initial impurities were linked to the aims of salvation; this required destroying the ego's authority but not abandoning it, as Segal suggests. Though Segal views Gnosticism as severing the connection between divinity and matter, the *ApJohn* supports the perspective of reconciliation through the divine aeons and the first perfect human form, dual names of planetary rulers and how the spirit caused an individual to walk and merge with the psychic body of Adam, suggesting a fusion with the embodied enlightened individual. This was similarly mirrored in the rituals of sealing and exchanging the subtle body of the successful initiate, which appeared to infuse the body, and although the Gnostics sought immortality and freedom from rebirth, and potentially an eventual separation from matter, during incarnated existence, they were transformed from ignorance to knowledge and freedom from evil impulses through Gnostic salvation.

Segal's views seem to represent a common view of Gnosticism as elitist, world-negating, inherently dualistic and only concerned with the spirit. Whilst many of these motifs are present in the typology and Gnostic doctrine, others which suggest the potential for reconciliation and holism and the importance of the soul appear to be overlooked, and although Jung had a few differences to Gnosticism, they relate to the filtering of concepts through a psychological lens but have little impact upon his psychological theories. The classical understanding of Gnosticism, as shaped by the Christian Fathers who fought against it, may need to be reassessed in relation to specific Gnostic texts, and there may be much further possibility for analysis of the Gnostic journeys and the ritual and experiential components of Gnosticism against other aspects of Jung's theoretical models such as

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<sup>217</sup> Jung and Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, p. 26.

spiritual alchemy to determine if similar conclusions can be supported. However, from this analysis, Jung's views largely correspond to the classical typology, and where they were different, they could often be supported by Gnostic texts suggesting that the motifs in some cases should be expanded or modified. Many of Jung's concepts reflect or were directly inspired by Gnosticism, and his focus on astrological cosmology was mirrored in several classical sources, emphasising this often-overlooked aspect of Gnosticism. Thus, the importance of Gnosticism in the elaboration of Jung's psychological theories and his emphasis on a psychological cosmology, justifies classifying Jungian psychology as a psychological variant of ancient Gnosticism.

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