

A Philosophical Critique of Personality-Type Theory in Psychology:

Esyenck, Myers-Briggs, and Jung

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I. Introduction

Today, any credible philosophical attempt to discuss personhood must take some position on the proper relation between the philosophical analysis of topics like action, intention, emotion, normative and evaluate judgment, desire and mood—which are grouped together under the heading of ‘moral psychology’— and the usually quite different approaches to ostensibly the same phenomena in contemporary theoretical psychology and psychoanalytic practice. The gulf between these two domains is so deep that influential work in each takes no direct account of developments in the other.¹ I believe that there is much to be learned about dominant and often hidden assumptions in contemporary approaches to personhood by comparisons between these fields, but at the outset I want to distinguish this intuition from another one in vogue among philosophers working to bridge the gap between philosophical and psychological disciplines today. This is the somewhat positivist sense that philosophical investigation must take its starting-points and limits from well-established psychological findings, and that philosophical accounts at odds with these are for that reason ‘unrealistic,’ or obviously trading on outmoded and scientifically discredited ‘folk metaphysics.’ For example, this sense that philosophy must acknowledge its secondary position relative to empirical psychology is implicit throughout Bernard Williams's work on motivation and morality, and it is the explicit basis of Owen Flanagan's recent attempt to limit ethical theory by ‘*psychological realism*’ and to argue for a form of ethical relativism by “[a]ttention to psychological facts.”² Because all modern conceptions of morality are committed to making “our motivational structure, our personal possibilities, relevant in setting their moral sights,” they cannot be developed without attention to discoveries in psychology.³ This leads to a constraint which Flanagan calls the “Principle of Minimal Psychological Realism: Make sure when constructing a moral theory or projecting a

¹See the opening passage of Owen Flanagan's recent study, *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism* (Harvard University Press, 1991): “philosophy of mind and psychology, on the one hand, and ethical theory, on the other [...] have had little to do with one another...The two literatures almost never join the same debates, or if they do, they do so in complete ignorance of one another” (p.vii).

²Flanagan, *Varieties*, p.19.

³Ibid, p.31.

moral ideal that the character, decision processing, and behavior prescribed are possible, or are perceived to be possible, for creatures like us."⁴ This principle reflects the general primacy of psychology and cognitive science before philosophical ethics in Flanagan's approach. Though Flanagan acknowledges that the work of personality psychologists may also be philosophically criticizable,⁵ his main emphasis is on the idea that "scientific psychology has the potential for destabilizing, as well as for developing and refining, certain assumptions underlying traditional moral theory..."⁶ And like Williams, his main targets are Kantian, utilitarian, and perfectionist virtue theories of morality: it is these that will supposedly be undermined by "A cold, hard look at what is known about human nature" from current psychological research and knowledge.⁷

With Flanagan, I would also maintain that ethics has much to learn from the scientific study of mind and discoveries in psychology, and that no credible approach can afford to ignore cases that may present counterexamples to received theories —like the brain-bisection cases, to take one prominent example. Nevertheless, Flanagan's naturalizing move remains untenable as it stands, because it forgets the crucial point that "what is known," allegedly, about personality and human nature in psychology and cognitive theory depends on *interpretation* of the data, and on preconceived hypotheses about what variables are relevant in constructing explanations, that are colored through and through by vocabulary, associations, and assumptions (often unrecognized) which have emerged in the forms in which they were first received by psychology (only to take on an independent life in that literature) through a long distillation in the history of *debates about moral psychology in philosophical literature*. This 'philosophical prehistory' of psychological concepts and capacities, their classification, division, and arrangement in relation to one another in different ways by a long line of western thinkers, has conditioned virtually all the inferences drawn about personhood from work in the branches of psychology to which Flanagan refers, such as the study of cognitive mechanisms, personality analysis and typology, self-psychology and so on. In the history of philosophy, ethics has always depended on moral psychology, including conceptions of action and freedom, and thus indirectly it has also depended on fundamental questions in metaphysics. If today it seems to many that ethical theory must be treated as secondary relative to psychology and naturalized philosophy of mind, which establish fundamental facts about the human psyche that have important implications for ethics but which cannot in turn be questioned by moral theorists, this is only because some branches of psychology have taken over part of the traditional role —and many of the themes— of philosophical moral psychology. Yet they have often done so in naive or one-sided ways, relying on controversial presuppositions in their interpretation of the relevant cases or the development of explanatory models, or preserving simplistic structures from a particular moral psychology in ascendance at an earlier time but now badly undermined by subsequent philosophical criticism.⁸

⁴Flanagan, *Varieties*, p.32.

⁵Note his suspicion of Kohlberg and his apt remarks on Maslow's Nietzscheanism, for example: *Varieties*, pp.21, 22.

⁶Flanagan, *Varieties*, p.21.

⁷Flanagan, *Varieties*, p.15.

⁸As we will see, this is particularly the case with structuralist and functionalist theories of personality, which apply to this question a general scheme of interpretation that has been heavily criticized in other contexts, such as semantics and

In this crucial respect, both the philosophical history of moral psychology and its critical resources remain indispensable, providing us with a vantage point from which we can question psychological 'findings' and cognitive theories that may often influence a wide public audience (now including those now working in ethics) who will otherwise take such results uncritically as starting points for further work.

This point can be clarified by an example from a book by Hans and Michael Eysenck, leading scholars in personality theory who defend the explanation of "individual differences" in terms of a taxonomy of discrete "types." Against Heidegger and Allport, whom they interpret as "idiographic" theorists asserting that human uniqueness precludes the placement of individuals "on any particular point of a trait or ability continuum,"⁹ the authors argue that:

...the existence of *differences* implies the existence of *similarities* and that both differences and similarities must be along certain measurable dimensions. How can we say that all individuals differ from each other unless we can quantify these differences and organize them in terms of certain traits, abilities, or other similar concepts? The idiographic psychologist is certainly right in suggesting that these concepts are artificial, but this can hardly be regarded as a drawback. All scientific concepts are artificial, created by the human mind in order to impart order to an unruly universe and to facilitate understanding and prediction....scientific concepts [are] meaningful within the context of a scientific theory but artificial and likely to be abandoned when other more inclusive and more promising concepts appear on the scene.¹⁰

In this short space, Eysenck and Eysenck illustrate several of the dangers I have alluded to. First, they misrepresent Heidegger, whose analysis of personal existence does not in fact deny the reality of features characterizing the being of persons in general—but precisely the opposite, and his theory of "existential structures" shows—but which attributes uniqueness in a different sense to persons: personal being is "in each case *mine*" and irreducibly individual because of its freedom for a range of possibilities apprehend *as individual* within the structures of being-in-the-world. But the idea that they might be excluding from the outset the possibility of a kind of freedom which would undermine their typologies does not even occur to these psychologists. Second, they commit a fallacy that no undergraduate would get away with: it does not follow from the premise that differences and similarities are correlate phenomena that they must exist *along measurable continua*. Third, even if we accept for the sake of argument the authors's antirealism about theoretical entities of scientific explanations (a sharply antirealist stance, whose highly controversial nature they fail to note), the problem which concerns existential critics of personality psychology like Heidegger is precisely that we *cannot* make the pragmatist assumption that better or more adequate interpretative concepts will simply "appear on the scene" through empirical research. Such research does not *generate* concepts, but is beholden to them, and inherits all their inadequacies and elisions, which in turn may result from quite fundamental interpretative blindnesses and errors in the philosophical discourses of moral psychology and finally even ontology, in which discourses *alone* can we hope to recognize such

philosophy of language, mythography, philosophy of history and sociology.

⁹Hans Eysenck and Michael Eysenck, *Personality and Individual Differences* (Plenum Press, 1985), p.4.

¹⁰Ibid, p.5-6.

errors and overcome them.

Philosophical weaknesses of these sorts are abundant throughout cases made for many of the alleged "psychological facts" which Flanagan and others similarly minded would use to draw prior boundaries on permissible ethical theory. Thus, it is nearer the truth to say that 'scientific' psychology depends on the historically accumulated resources philosophical moral psychology rather than the reverse: the way in which the debate has been framed in competing moral psychologies as developed in philosophical accounts remains primary, *not* because this discourse claims any *a priori* status or aloofness from concrete experience (as its critics such as Flanagan like to caricature it), but rather because the history of the philosophical discourse (a) provides the hermeneutic basis on which models and even statistical arguments in scientific psychology rely, and because (b) only philosophy provides the only critical tribunal in which we can reflectively thematize unstated presuppositions in scientific psychological theories, examine their consistency and biases, and compare them to alternatives that reach beyond the very frame of concepts which may limit debates among psychologists at any given time. Call this the dual priority thesis: philosophical moral psychology is prior both semantically and critically to scientific psychology of personality.

II. H. J. Eysenck's P-E-N Typology and the Will

Since this dual priority thesis was framed at such a high level of abstraction, I would like to illustrate its plausibility through a critical review of some representative instances of current 'psychological type theory,' which developed out of the work of several psychologists at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹¹ There are many familiar criticisms of such typologies, from the complaint that they objectify personality as if it is something we just *have* (like hair color or a handbag), to the objection by 'humanistic' psychotherapists that typologies let people make excuses (it's just the way I am!) and believe they cannot change their behavior. Advocates of typologies have replies (of varying convincingness) to such charges, but in what follows I want to pursue a critique quite different in nature from these familiar objections. I will argue that personality type theories suffer from several inadequacies that result from their being insufficiently informed by philosophical moral psychology and its history.

At first blush, the idea at the root of modern personality type theories apparently stands in close proximity to the premises of philosophical virtue theories: "There is a certain degree of consistency about human conduct that extends over many types of situations and which must be taken into account in experimental psychology, social psychology...[and] all other variants of psychology."¹² This basic sense that human beings have what are loosely called 'dispositions' that are relatively resilient over time and characterize their tendencies to act in certain ways rather than others is seemingly shared by many philosophical accounts of moral psychology in our history. Although at such a level of generality, this thesis is fairly innocuous, however, this premise has been challenged by behaviorist and situational theories,¹³ and so relative to *these extreme views*, at least,

¹¹See the Eysenck & Eysenck, pp. 42-60, where they provide a fascinating review this history, tracing the idea of type from the division of the "four humors" in ancient medicine through Kant's *Anthropology*, Wundt's *Groundwork of Physiological Psychology*, Jung's *Psychological Types*, and the work of Otto Gross, Heymans and Wiersma, Spearman and others.

¹²Eysenck and Eysenck, p.40.

¹³See Eysenck & Eysenck, pp 9-11, pp.33-41. As Eysenck and Eysenck describe the behaviorist view, quoting

psychological research arguing for enduring attitude-traits and their correlation in overarching personality "types" tends to support classical moral psychology. The tripartite form of Hans Eysenck's original definition of personality highlights this connection:

personality [is] a more or less stable and enduring organization of a person's character, temperament, intellect, and physique, which determines his unique adjustment to the environment. *Character* denotes a person's more or less stable and enduring system of conative behavior (*will*); temperament his more or less stable and enduring system of affective behavior (*emotion*); *intellect*, his more or less stable and enduring system of cognitive behavior (*intelligence*)...¹⁴

Despite its classical appearance, however, psychological personality theories like Eysenck's depart from moral psychology both by linking items across historically important category divisions without philosophical argument, and by building into their understanding of key concepts the idiosyncratic interpretation of particular moral psychologies. Hans Eysenck, for example, interprets temperament and character in terms of three dimensions of personality *type*, each of which is constituted by a nexus of *traits* that are statistically correlated with each other in his findings, but not correlated with those of the other basic types:¹⁵

P scale:	Psychoticism ----- High Impulse Control
	Aggressive, cold, egocentric, [Nonaggressive, warm, concerned for others
	impersonal, impulsive, antisocial, personally involved, considerate, social, unemphathetic, creative, tough-minded empathetic, uncreative, persuadable]
E scale:	Extraversion ----- Introversion
	Sociable, lively, active, assertive, [Hermetic, taciturn, passive, unassertive, sensation-seeking, carefree, stoical, reserved, dependent, dominant, surgent, venturesome even-tempered, risk-averse]
N scale:	Neuroticism ----- Emotional Stability (p.)
	Anxious, depressed, guilt-feelings, Unconcerned, happy, without regret, low self-esteem, tense, irrational, high self-esteem, relaxed, rational, shy, moody, emotional confident, content, controlled

Thorndike, all behavior is explicable by "independent and specific stimulus-response bonds or habits" (p.9); situationalists such as Mischel insist that behavior depends predominately on subtle discriminations people make relative to the specifics of their situation (p.37-38). The Eysencks seem to associate the existentialist view with such situationalism, but it should be remembered that an existentialist locates individual uniqueness in the exercise of free will, not in the specificity of situations, which she believes radically underdetermine action. So the existentialist cannot be dismissed with the situationalist, and whether liberty may also interact with dispositions that affect but underdetermine action is a question that remains to be faced by trait-type theorists.

¹⁴H. J. Eysenck, *The Structure of Human Personality*, 3rd Ed. (London: Methuen, 1970), p.2; quoted in Eysenck and Eysenck, p.9.

¹⁵Summary of graphs from Eysenck & Eysenck, pp. 14-15. The descriptors for trait-poles on the right-hand side of the list are my own, since the authors name the traits by their left-hand poles only. This should be noted in case I have not chosen the antonym adjectives they would prefer.

Technically, of course, each of these terms is applied to a test subject on the basis of yes-or-no answers to questions that are supposed to elicit one's position on the continuum of each trait scale, and as a result one's position on each of the three overarching type continua. The separation of these three 'dimensions' of personality reflects the statistical independence of answers to questions defined by the test as expressing the traits connected under each basic type: thus each subject will come out as having a quantified position on each of these three scales, and her position on any one scale supposedly should not affect her position on the other two. However, since the questions used to assess the relative presence or absence of traits are couched in adjectival terms as imprecise as each of these trait-words, at this fundamental level the breadth and imagery conjured up by such psychological adjectives—all of which are very vague and have *ambivalent* connotations (and which may give variant impressions to test-takers with different backgrounds)—must enter in an essential way into the assessment. For example, the questions "Are you rather lively?" and "Are you often troubled about feelings of guilt?," which are two out of thirty that Hans Eysenck used in a questionnaire measuring for the three second-order factors *P*, *E*, and *N*¹⁶ could be taken in many different ways. For example, the first might be answered with an unequivocal 'yes' by a person given to clowning around to get attention from others, but who sits inactive in front of the television when at home alone. Imagine that this person has few serious aims or ambitions, and little concern for his moral character, beyond being popular. Alternatively, someone who never makes jokes or plays pranks might answer 'yes' to the question, because she is always out campaigning for some cause to which she has devoted herself. To her, let us imagine, it is important to maintain a character of interestedness in bettering the world, and this character grounds long-term aims and goals. All this she interprets as 'liveliness' when the question is put. Thus enormous differences of character (and probably moral worth) are belied by a hopelessly vague question, suggesting that 'liveliness' is not a very *relevant* variable in personality difference, however well it might correlate with others, since it covers a host of different attitudes, some of which are categorically different in *kind*.

In other cases, it will be the opposite: people similar in moral character, types of commitment, desires, hopes, and even general outlook on the world will give opposite answers to the same question, because it asks about a more specific but *relatively superficial* feature of outward performance or preference. Thus someone who grew up in a crowded household may like a lot of "bustle and excitement" around them,¹⁷ while someone who prizes music may prefer the opposite, yet they may be almost equally reflective about important questions of life, self-conscious about their performance and success in living up to ideals, and even given to long meandering inward conversations with themselves (one while sitting at the table while the children are playing loudly around him, the other while listening to Brahms alone in the seclusion of her insulated apartment). What of any relevance does it tell us to say that the former is more 'extroverted,' the latter more 'introverted,' because he likes excitement in this sense and she does not? This brings out an important concern about typological theories such as Eysenck's: since most of the questions that form the basis of the factorial analyses yielding the traits and types focus so much on differences in styles of *behavior* and *subjective preference* (i.e. judgments that do not imply any evaluative or objective

¹⁶Eysenck & Eysenck, p.84.

¹⁷This refers to another one of Eysenck's questions, one measuring extroversion-introversion.

claim on the agreement of others), do these resulting typologies really measure the *personality* which ethicists care about much at all? If we think of personality, as moral philosophers often have, as constituted largely by a sense of what is good, life-unifying goals, intrinsic values, and lasting commitments —dispositions that occur on the level of inward volition and thus have to do only indirectly with immediate behavior style— then type-dimensions such as extraversion-vs-intraversion may seem to have little to do with what sort of *person* someone is. Instead, they seem to be fundamentally *behavioral* categories. Since personality does not coincide with behavior patterns but with their structure of reasons and deeper motivational sources, classifying people on the **E** scale seems analogous the classifying cars by their paint job rather than by their chassis or engine design. One may find correlations, but they are either accidental or of little importance.

The problem is somewhat different with the other two scales. Since the neurotic and psychotic poles take their senses from concepts that do not originate in moral psychology at all, but in medical diagnosis of radical disturbances in behavior and perception (e.g. obsessive-compulsive ritual, chemical depression, hearing voices, and so on), they seem to be mainly about neurological conditions and patterns of performances that might in some cases not even count as *actions* in the personal sense at all. At the extreme end of the **N** and **P** continua, at least, some of the conditions their traits connote seem (rightly) like *diseases* that afflict a person, almost like antagonists rather than any essential part of *who he or she is*. Of course, given the confusion in the history of the concept of psychosis in particular, some of its traits (such as "antisocial" attitudes) may cover what (some) philosophers would regard as malicious or evil will, while other traits (such as "impulsiveness") might largely be measures of vulnerability to violent and debilitating psychotic outbursts, while yet others (such as "coldness") may cobble together under one heading both the mean and miserly vices of a Scrogge personality with the dangerous illness of a necrophile.¹⁸ Thus the **P** and (to a lesser extent) the **N** type scales risk confusing everything by mixing together (apparently without recognizing it) concepts whose meanings and functions derive from the very different discourses of clinical diagnosis of mental disturbance on the one hand, and moral psychology on the other.¹⁹ In the former discourse, which is regulated by the text of a key manual (the DSM-IV) the goal is to facilitate treatment and prevention, and in the latter discourse, which is regulated only by our cultural inheritance of character concepts, the goal is to provide a basis for ethical evaluation of the person. By classifying us according to traits and types that *amalgamate* elements from these disparate discourses, contemporary typological approaches teach their popular audience to forget the crucial distinctions between mere behavior, action, and inner character—a suggestion only reinforced by the implication that normal attitudes, dispositions of concern, and

¹⁸As evidence of this blending, note that Frankfurt School psychologists such as Erich Fromm, in pursuit of a diagnosis of the 'Nazi personality type' (or an explanation of the psychosis that makes people coordinators of genocide), fascinatingly expands the clinical concept of necrophilia to include moral and even mythological dimensions, until it becomes equivalent in effect to the archetype of the *chthonic*: see Fromm, *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (original © 1973; Henry Holt and Company/Owl Book reprint, 1992), chapters 12-13.

¹⁹This is not to deny that there may be an inherently normative dimension of clinical psychological judgment, but it is 'normative' in the sense of *normal*, or *typical* of properly functioning paradigm cases of the species, and thus is at least arguably quite different than the normative sense of ethical evaluations. In my view at least, judgments of virtue and vice are distinct from judgment of a healthy psychological state of absence of debilitating psychological impairment or disease. Although psychological health may be a condition for virtue, it cannot (except in an overextended sense) be sufficient for it, because some minimum of psychological health is also a condition for vice, since the lack of it defeats responsibility for one's character.

patterns of choices that we regard as express inner personality are on the same psychological continua with—and thus on a metaphysical par with— states consisting in unwilled or even unconscious forms of deviant behavior. Given their amphibious nature, then, what is measured on the **P** and **N** scales may not actually be part of what we should call *personality* at all. As with the **E** scale, it is not clear that these tell us much of anything about the inner agent with whom moral psychology and philosophy has up until now been largely concerned.²⁰

Given these difficulties, it is unsurprising that the classical anticipations in Eysenck's definition of 'personality' in terms of "conative," "affective," and "cognitive" sides is not realized in practice. In particular, as we have already begun to see, much of what comes under the "will" or conative aspect in the classical sense as something that moves 'between' dispassionate evaluative judgment and subjective desire is virtually elided in Eysenck's typology, because of its concentration on outward features (behavioral tendencies and habitual preferences) that are only indirectly related to personality in the volitional sense. Instead, Eysenck seems to follow Spearman's notion of "will" as an undifferentiated factor *w* producing "persistence of motives," a power of perseverance or capacity to produce consistency through sheer determination (or even monomania?):

...[Spearman] goes on to say, "This conception may be understood to mean *consistency of action resulting from deliberate volition or will...*The traits which characterize a person with a high degree of *w* are: tendency not to abandon tasks from mere changeability, tendency not to abandon task[s] in fac[e]²¹ of obstacles, kindness on principle, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, and perseverance..."²²

Yet despite the poverty of this conception, Spearman and Eysenck are atypical in the field of contemporary personality psychology for even mentioning the volitional as a separate category at all.

In this respect personality type theory is still decisively influenced by Freud's virtual elimination of the concept of will in favor of a 'hydraulics' of psychic energies.

These criticisms question the *relevance* of traits and types for which personality inventories such as Eysenck's are designed to test. The problem is that even if the tests questions get at really existent traits, it is not clear that all these traits are main features of *human personality*, or that there are not other traits that are more central to personality. Factor analysis cannot exclude the possibility that the results would be very different if *other* potentially more relevant factors were tested for instead, or that the correlations it does detect are a result of hidden variables, or that they are *purely coincidental* despite consistency across persons, because the trait-concepts used in designing the questions are unduly amorphous.

This *relevance problem* must be distinguished from a different problem which psychologists call *validity*, namely whether the tests measure what they are intended to measure. Here the issue is

²⁰Though under the influence of psychology, this may be changing, thus illustrating the way Heidegger fears that errors of the first order may tend both to perpetuate themselves and in time even cover their own tracks.

²¹*Sic*: the text has "tendency not to abandon task in fact of obstacles."

²²Eysenck & Eysenck, p.59. Typically, the authors interpret factor *w* as an anticipation of part of the P-E-N scheme, seeing it as "the opposite of Heymans and Wiersma's *emotionality*" (p.59), which they relate in turn to neuroticism, thus implying that *w* is similar in sense to emotional stability. Whatever residual sense of the classical meaning of will was still left in this Spearman definition, which seems similar in some respects to Kantian *wille*, is thus levelled off when absorbed into the Eysenck scheme.

whether the tests questions pick out real traits in the first place (and whether a given feature measured is similar in structure to the concept implied by the trait name). In their work, Eysenck and Eysenck look mainly towards what they call "consensual validity" to confirm the objectivity of results like the P-E-N typology. The idea here is that "we validate questionnaire responses by correlating them with ratings made by external assessors who know the ratee well."²³ In other words, another person answers the same questions about the test subject which the test subject himself has answered, and the closeness of the results are compared: "As Wiggins (1973) has argued, well-replicated agreement across a two-measurement tradition would thus constitute compelling evidence for agreement on the real dispositions and provide consensual validation of personality traits."²⁴ Yet as they admit, correlations between self-reports and reports by third parties have not been particularly impressive, unless the third party is restricted to a spouse or live-in partner.²⁵ However, as Eysenck and Eysenck fail to see, agreement between a test subject and someone as closely associated as her spouse on how to answer questions ostensibly about her personality may not prove that their answers are responding to objectively discernable (or 'real') features of her character, but may instead reflect the fact that over time, each partner knows how the other sees her, and adjusts her self-image accordingly, while the other knows how the subject sees herself, and also adjusts his image of her accordingly as well. There is thus a dialectical convergence between mutual self-understandings among close partners, who each discuss with the other their perception of themselves and the other partner. In my view, this is likely to be all that consensual validity is detecting.

Expert as opposed to peer confirmation might have the advantage of greater objective distance in this respect, but this method of validation falls prey to the fact that the 'expert' is a psychologist likely to be accustomed to using these and only these trait and type concepts to 'carve up' the subject's personality as she or he perceives it. In short, the expert eye perceives from the same framework of questionable concepts as the type inventory employs, and so although expert validation may seem to show whether the items on the test measure these features accurately, it cannot reinforce the very relevance of using these features to pick out differences and similarities among personalities.

This second difficulty hampers peer validation as well. For even if a third-party rating did provide an objective standard against which the validity of the test questions could really be measured, we would still be left with the *relevance* problem, which such consensual validation can do nothing to alleviate. For who can say that the testee and her husband are not agreeing on existent *but largely irrelevant* aspects of her demeanour that the test makes salient, or that they would not agree as well or more strongly on *other* potentially more important features of her personality if they were considered by the testmaker and elicited by well-designed questions. Even a second-order agreement between persons on the importance or relevance of specific traits to personality as a whole cannot overcome the basic problem here, because even this sort of confirmation could result simply from the fact that our culture, with its confused inheritance of fragments from various opposing moral psychologies and its many other social and economic pressures, tends to make some features

²³Eysenck & Eysenck, p.77.

²⁴Eysenck & Eysenck, p.78.

²⁵Eysenck & Eysenck, p.78: "...only the ratings of a *significant other* should be expected to correspond to self-ratings..."

of behavior and demeanour more *salient* (both to test-designers and test-takers), while obscuring other potentially crucial features. Psychological personality typologies emerge out of and play back into such cultural conditions of salience.

III. The Myers-Briggs Typology and False Neutrality

Thus whatever the admonishments given by today's personality psychologists against reifying their type-concepts or believing that a person's entire 'individual essence' is exhausted by their classification on a type inventory, philosophers must be concerned about the implicit lessons about the *nature of personhood in general* which the public tacitly draws from the increasingly widespread application of this typological approach. Personality type tests are now so admired among counselors and practicing psychologists that they have started to assume a powerful role in American popular culture. In particular, a test called the "Myers-Briggs Type Indicator" (MTBI), which uses a code like Eysenck's to indicate a person's interests, problem-solving strategies, and interactive style, is very widely used from Fortune 500 Human Resources departments to marriage counseling centers.

There is an entire foundation devoted to research on MTBI and its clones, and a journal that concentrates purely on this kind of typological theory. It is becoming a norm. Before long, we may be expected by professionals interested in hiring us or working with us, by potential friends or partners, and perhaps even by college admissions departments and government officials, to know both our "personality type" (in the field of possibilities allowed by the Myers-Brigg instrument), and the implications of this categorization. Just as we are supposed to carry a card indicating our blood-type (such as AB-), maybe we'll carry a card indicating our personality type (such as ENFJ).

Anyone inclined to dismiss this as an exaggeration of a passing fad should consider the historical parallels with the development of IQ and aptitude tests and their use in facilitating educational streaming, they should also reflect on the long historical evidence of our deep social need to find a convenient way of reducing the impenetrable mysteries of character. In the middle ages, for example, this need was satisfied by a dramatic cast of 'stock characters,' archetypal figures (usually depicted with a mask bearing a codified facial expression) representing joy, hate, happiness, sorrow, courage, humility, patience, purity, temperance, courage, and so on.²⁶ These figures each represented single traits that were to be used in interpreting the characters of living persons, and explicitly cast this interpretation in terms of dispositions with understood ethical significance linked to a sense of the importance of cultivating virtue. By contrast, the "types" of personality in the Myers-Briggs array each represent combinations of traits that would characterize a complete personality, and pretend to be ethically neutral (both in diagnosis of personality type and resulting pragmatic advice). But setting these differences aside for the moment, the Myers-Briggs typology plays virtually the same role as the medieval cast of stock characters in answering to the fundamental need for a set of terms and tendencies through which narratives of character and self-interpretation can be constructed and made intelligible. On this hypothesis, we should suspect that the current popularity of this kind of typology is due in large measure to its filling a void that was once filled by

²⁶The dominant characters of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* provide good examples of the functions of such stock figures in allegorical narratives aimed at exploring personality and its encounter with familiar issues in human existence, from beauty and the environment to divinity and the challenges of adversity, temptation, and mortality, and of course, romantic and charitable love.

the discourse of moral psychology in philosophical (and religious) literature, but which for complex reasons this discourse now fails to supply.

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IV. Individuation and Anima-Animus: Bipartitism, Sexism, and the Moral Psychology Behind Jung's Personality Typology

The Self: Subconscious Teleology

In Carl Jung's typology, we can see how roots of the Myers-Briggs classifications come from Jungian interpretations earlier philosophical sources, whose controversial nature is generally of no concern to contemporary practitioners of the MBTI. In his early work, *Psychological Types*,²⁷ Jung is concerned with the problem of *individuation*, which is similar to the classical notion of *bildung* or development of mature character; in mythological terms, Jung thinks of it as the *initiation* through which one 'finds one's place' and achieves the unique balance of characteristics that produce a harmonious or unified personality. As Jung says, "I use the term 'individuation' to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'in-dividual,' that is, a separate, indivisible whole."²⁸ And as we will see, given his structuralist background, Jung inevitably conceives this process as a quasi-Hegelian mediation of opposites. Since the theory of types is supposed to help therapists understand and guide this process (rather than to facilitate and empirical measurement for individual classification), it also inevitably takes on the form of bipolar pairs of concepts. To understand how Jung's special conception of this problem shapes the structure of his type theory, we must go back to the foundations of his psychological system in the famous theory of the collective unconscious.

Jung first made his name by claiming that in addition to the "personal" unconscious described by Freud, whose traumatic contents allegedly explain individual neuroses, verbal slips, sublimations, and so on, there is also a deeper "phylogenetic" unconscious whose archetypal tensions and the images expressing them are common to everyone. Since they form the most primitive level of the psyche, these archetypal contents show up not only in religious symbolism, mythological narrative and fairy tales, alchemy and art, but also in individual dreams and imagining—whose astonishing consistency in virtually every culture across the globe and at different historical moments can only be explained by this hypothesis of an innate (or genetically 'hardwired') collective unconscious. As Jung explains in his essay on "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," "At first the concept of

²⁷Carl Jung, *Psychological Types: the Psychology of Individuation*, tr. H. Godwin Baynes (Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1926). I refer throughout to this first translation of Jung's classic.

²⁸Carl Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," originally published as "The Meaning of Individuation" in *The Integration of Personality* (1940), reprinted in Jung, *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, Second Ed., tr. R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX, Vol. 9.1 (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, 1969, pb. 1980), p.275.

the unconscious was limited to denoting the state of repressed or forgotten contents"²⁹ —in other words, contents originally derived from consciousness and its ego. The "deeper layer," by contrast, "does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition, but is inborn. This deeper layer I call the collective unconscious."³⁰ This primordial level of unconsciousness is thus *farthest* removed from the *ego*, which Jung conceives (in Kantian and Husserlian fashion) as the center of consciousness to which all conscious contents are "directly related."³¹ However, since "There is plenty of evidence to show that consciousness is very far from covering the psyche in its totality," the ego cannot be equated with the *self* or unity of the psychic whole.³² Still, as Jung notes, if the unconscious was exhausted by the personal level involved in neurosis, then all conscious and unconscious phenomena could be linked essentially to the ego:

If it were true that the unconscious consists of nothing but contents accidentally deprived of consciousness but otherwise indistinguishable from conscious material, then one could identify the ego more or less with the totality of the psyche.³³

But theories like Janet's and Freud's which explain the unconscious this way are "based mainly on observations in the field of neurosis," and cannot account for the "flood of thoughts" that inundate psychotic patients, which are "utterly different from conscious ones" and not apparently derived from conscious experience, since they are not intelligible in these terms.³⁴ Thus it is because of the deeper unconscious (of which images from psychosis supposedly provide evidence) that the ego must be displaced in favor of the "self." Jung sometimes gives the impression that the self *unites* the conscious and unconscious sides of the person,³⁵ but he really conceives the "self" as the *antipole* to the ego, the ultimate archetype at the deepest level of the collective unconscious, symbolized by such motifs as the divine child, the mandala, fourfold or quaternity figures, symbols of the center and so on: "As for the self, it is completely outside of the personal sphere and appears,

²⁹Jung, *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.3.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," p.275.

³²Ibid, p.276.

³³Ibid, p.277.

³⁴Ibid, p.277. To this argument, Jung adds the point that "Neurotic contents can be integrated without appreciable injury to the ego, but psychotic ideas cannot. They remain inaccessible, and ego-consciousness is more or less swamped by them" (p.278). Contemporary philosophers of mind will doubtless be tempted to dismiss Jung's argument on the grounds that psychosis is now explained by neurochemical imbalances without need of his peculiar hypothesis; but we should remember that the biochemical explanation of the *cause* of psychosis does nothing to explain the *phenomenologies* it generates, or why the images produced may adhere to a logic psychologists can describe and find repeated in other contexts. Jung himself anticipated this point: "Psychiatric theory can always take refuge behind real or alleged organic disorders of the brain and thus detract from the importance of the unconscious. But such a view is no longer applicable when it comes to normal humanity" (p.280), whose experiences and products also testify to the archetypal.

³⁵Ibid, p.276: "the whole must necessarily include not only consciousness but the illimitable field of unconscious occurrences as well."

if at all, only as a religious mythologem..."³⁶ Indeed, insofar as "God" is merely a projection of the psychic wholeness anticipated in the unconscious self, "all statements about the God-image also apply to the empirical symbols of totality."³⁷

This division gives rise to the first and most fundamental of Jung's bipolar contrasts, which the self mediates. For since "mental disorder" is only an acute expression of the "general condition" of the unconscious in everyone, states of "violent affect" also reveal it. Thus Jung associates the archetypal unconscious and its "autonomy" from the ego with uncontrolled *impulse* or *emotion* (in the lowest sense of this multivalent term):

Emotions are instinctive, involuntary reactions which upset the rational order of consciousness by their elemental outbursts. Affects are not "made" or wilfully produced; they simply happen.³⁸

On the other extreme, however, the conscious ego is characterized by rationality, and so in the opposition of ego and collective subconscious we have the global polarization of reasoning against emotional drive that is the governs Jung's entire typology. Thus formation of a self involves mediating these rational and affective poles, since it requires "the harmonizing of conscious and unconscious data,"³⁹ and is thus "a process or course of development arising out of the conflict between two fundamental psychic facts."⁴⁰

This generic 'emotional vs. rational' distinction is not only the source of the fundamental contrast on which the Myers-Briggs typology was later constructed, as we saw. But even more generally, the familiar structure of opposed 'poles' on different scales of measurement for psychic features that is the absolute basis for *every* system of typology in psychological personality theory is inherited from the same Hegelianism we see in Jung's idea of the self as a 'reconciliation of

³⁶See Carl Jung, "The Self," in *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, p.30.

³⁷Ibid, p.31.

³⁸Ibid, p.278-9. As many passages in Jung's writings reveal, this analysis rooting violent emotion in the archetypal subconscious was first motivated in part by a desire to explain how the kind of 'mass insanity' produced by Hitler's charisma could occur. He says here, when the "ego and the unconscious change places," then "Groups, communities, and even whole nations can be seized in this way by psychic epidemics" (p.278). Indeed, Jung's emphasis on the idea of *collective* subconsciousness seems to genealogically related to the widespread consensus at his time (which is questioned now) that the Nazis's success in Germany was attributable to a *loss of individuation* or return to an (allegedly) 'primitive' state without awareness of individuality or personal responsibility. The danger of such an analysis, of course, is precisely that it tends to excuse willing collaborators in genocide as victims of an uncontrollable ecstasy that anyone could suffer. On this point, see Carl Jung, *Essays on Contemporary Events: The Psychology of Nazism*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, extracted from Bollingen Series XX, Vols.10 & 16 (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, pb. 1989) "We who stand outside judge the Germans far too much as if they were responsible agents, but perhaps it would be nearer the truth to regard them also as victims" (p.23). This disturbing denial of blame for the German masses runs throughout this book (pp. 4, 16, 20, 39, 63, 65, 68), and it is all-too-closely related, I fear, to the motives behind the more general psychological determinism in Jung's theory. It may be that for Jung, reconciling ourselves with our unconscious side ultimately requires a Nietzschean *amor fati*.

³⁹Ibid, p.289.

⁴⁰Ibid, p.288.

opposites.' Although it is simplistic to a dubious degree, this idea of mediation is the *central core* of Jung's entire psychology, including his explanation of mythology as well. Jung holds that the good or well-being of the mind consists in its *psychic harmony*, or balanced *wholeness*, in which opposite tendencies are moderated and fit to one another. And the proper function of the psyche is to seek this harmony as its natural *telos*: all mythological gods, symbols, and narrative paradigms, for example are ultimately to be explained as projections by which the mind facilitates this achievement of an inner harmony within itself. As Anthony Storr summarizes, Jung believes that "mental illness is characterized by disunity of the personality, while mental health is manifested by unity."⁴¹ Thus what are today called 'dissociative disorders,' which are currently recognized to be only one type of psychosis (while psychoses are only one category of mental abnormality), became for Jung the very paradigm of psychic illness. But as Storr points out, Jung's model was developed at a time when psychiatrists such as Janet, with whom Jung studied in Paris for a semester, "were fascinated by cases of so-called multiple personality..."⁴² Jung himself focused on schizophrenia, in which he thought "the personality was fragmented into many parts, rather than into two or three, as in hysteria."⁴³ Moreover, during the First World War, Jung went through a personal crises which he experienced as an inner tension that could be overcome only by incorporating elements of his own archetypal subconscious.⁴⁴ Yet contingent as they are, these historical circumstances (combined with Jung's Hegelian wholism) has had a decisive effect on the form of all later personality typologies.

Anima and Animus

The governing rational/affective division *between* the conscious and unconscious in Jung's system is also reflected *within* his archetypal subconscious itself, in the form of the "Syzygy" or "male-female pairs of deities,"⁴⁵ which Jung calls 'Animus' and 'Anima' respectively. In themselves, considering them for the moment apart from their suggested functions in Jung's psychology, the Anima and Animus each include a remarkably broad series of motifs and paradigmatic associations. The Anima is the "Spinning Woman" of fate, the negative female dragon which is "enveloping, embracing, and devouring,"⁴⁶ and yet also the imago of beloved beauty, both "the heavenly goddess and the chthonic Baubo."⁴⁷ Likewise, the Animus encompasses both male figures of terrifying violence (what Eliade calls the 'God who Binds') and also the beneficent father.

⁴¹Anthony Storr, "Jung's Concept of Personality," in *Persons and Personality*, Arthur Peacocke and Grant Gillet, eds. (Basil Blackwell, 1987): 150-163, p.151.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid, p.152.

⁴⁴Ibid, p.156.

⁴⁵Jung, "Concerning the Archetypes and the Anima Concept," *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.59.

⁴⁶Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, Second Edition, tr. R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series No. XX, Vol. 9 Part II (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, 1968, 1978 pb.), p.11.

⁴⁷Ibid, p.13. Thus Jung includes in the Anima both what have elsewhere been called the 'Venusberg' figures (or destructive female monsters, from Tiamat to Medusa) and sacred 'Earthmother' figures of fertility (e.g. Isis).

The analysis of such pairs is a continuous theme in Jung's work, and along with Eliade he has undoubtedly done more than any other mythographer to make us realize the frequency and depth of this archetypal opposition, which is associated throughout world mythology and religious iconography with the fundamental sacred-profane contrast. As Jung shows in other works, this contrast is most primordially expressed in the archetype of the dragon as a unity of these opposites. However, Jung always includes in this analysis another association, in accordance with his Feuerbachian model of religious and mythic content as projections of our own internal forces: the dark turbulence and chthonic significance of the 'feminine' symbol in the dyad he reads as projection of the *emotional* and unconscious aspect of the self, while the masculine symbol in the dyad represents *rationality*, order, and the light of conscious clarity⁴⁸:

Together they form a divine pair, one of whom, in accordance with his Logos nature, is characterized by *pneuma* and *nous*, rather like Hermes with his ever-shifting hues, while the other, in accordance with her Eros nature, wears the features of Aphrodite, Helen (Selene), Persephone, and Hecate. Both of them are unconscious powers, "gods," in fact, as the ancients conceived them to be.⁴⁹

In this way, the fundamental *rational vs. emotional* bipartism Jung has picked up from Aristotelian moral psychology (and from the philosophical interpretation of the sacred-profane symbols in NeoPlatonic, Gnostic, and alchemical literature) is *read back into* the archetypal opposition of the sacred and profane as expressed in dyad of sun/sky/father deities vs. the earth/underworld/mother deities. Although it is not clear that the meaning of the sacred vs. the profane is in fact analogous to the rational vs. the emotional,⁵⁰ Jung takes these associations almost for granted, and thus the fundamental theme of mythology and its archetypes is made to support the governing bipartite orientation of Jung's psychology.

Psychologically, these archetypes lie beyond the dimension of the *shadow*—a personal unconscious figure representing the dark or unsavory aspects of our personality which we repress—at a level that is very difficult for the individual to integrate. They show up primarily in projections, in which the individual's 'irrational' or inappropriate emotions are blamed on others.⁵¹ As such, expressions of the Anima and Animus in a healthy person "filter the contents of the collective unconscious through to the conscious mind." This helps in the integration of the self, because the unconscious always operates as a "complementary and compensating function," helping to restore

⁴⁸Also see *Aion*, p.31, where Jung correlates the Anima and Animus with the "feeling" and "thinking" functions of his typology.

⁴⁹Jung, *Aion*, p.21.

⁵⁰As I have made clear in other writings, I think that in the process of the 'axial revolution' in western culture, the original sacred/profane axis of mythology get is reinterpreted in light of new philosophical contrasts from which it is actually distinct, and these philosophical concepts in turn are forced to 'reoccupy' a role for which they are not inherently suited, namely that of conferring cosmogonic intelligibility on Being, which is the main function of the sacred and profane. See Davenport, "The Essence of Eschatology: A Modal Interpretation," *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 19.3 (Sept., 1996): 206-239, esp. §§ IV-V.

⁵¹Jung, *Aion*, p.9.

into one's personality whatever the conscious side of the person leaves undeveloped.⁵² In particular, the Anima or female earth goddess archetype dominates the male unconscious, while the male warrior god or Animus dominates the female unconscious: "in the unconscious of the male there is hidden a feminine personality, and in that of every woman a masculine personality."⁵³

In Jung's view, this distribution is natural because each gender needs from the unconscious what its ego naturally lacks: for female consciousness is naturally emotional, nurturing and passive, while the male consciousness is rational, discriminating and spiritually active. Thus the unconscious archetype dominant in each is a compensation for the natural orientation gender gives to their conscious personality:

...I have called the projection-making factor in women the animus, which means mind or spirit. The animus corresponds to the paternal Logos just as the anima corresponds to the maternal Eros....I use Eros and Logos merely as conceptual aids to describe the fact that woman's consciousness is characterized more by the connective quality of Eros than by the discrimination and cognition associated with Logos. In men, Eros, the function of relationship, is usually less developed than Logos. In women, on the other hand, Eros is an expression of their true nature, while their Logos is *often only a regrettable accident*.⁵⁴

Thus Jung's reading of the archetypes composing the 'Syzygy' and his emphasis on the generic rational/emotional contrast thus reflects a fairly banal sexual stereotyping. In this, Jung believes he is only articulating what tradition has learned from unconscious reality:

But if we conceive of nature in the higher sense as the totality of all phenomena, then the physical is only one of her aspects, the other is the pneumatic or spiritual. The first has always been regarded as feminine, the second as masculine. The goal of the one is union, the goal of the other is discrimination.⁵⁵

Of course, it is impossible not to treat these associations in mythography, for they indeed *have been* a major force, but the problem is that Jung takes them as signs of a *real* difference in the unconscious mentality (and hence 'personality' orientation) of men and women.

Anyone whose impression of Jung is formed by contemporary pop culture might expect him to say at just this point that what each needs is to 'get in touch' with their other side to become a more balanced person. But unfortunately, this is badly to misunderstand how Jung conceives the harmony of the self. On the contrary, it is a disaster if the ego becomes dominated by its unconscious opposite.⁵⁶ In *moderation*, each type can benefit from its natural opposite: "in the same

⁵²Jung, *Aion*, p.20.

⁵³Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," p.284.

⁵⁴Jung, *Aion*, p.14 (my italics).

⁵⁵For example, see Carl Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Opposites in Alchemy*, Second Edition, tr. R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series Vol. XX.19 (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, 1970), p.89.

⁵⁶Jung, *Aion*, p.24.

way that the anima gives relationship and relatedness to a man's consciousness, the animus gives to woman's consciousness a capacity for reflection, deliberation, and self-knowledge."⁵⁷ But these must remain secondary or 'inferior' functions, because psychic harmony does not come from a merging of the ego with its opposite, but from a particular development that fits one's *personality type*—which is itself greatly affected by gender differences. Thus men and women need to keep the element that does not fit with their nature under control. Specifically, men who try to be too emotional and women who try to be too rational are likely to become unstable. Thus the anima-dominated man is a 'mommy's boy,'⁵⁸ possibly a homosexual, who remains too effeminate to rise to the manly "ardour" of going out into the world, meeting challenges, and conquering them, or "throwing his whole being into the scales" (with Nietzschean glory?).⁵⁹ By contrast, the animus-dominated woman is captivated by the image of her father as a perfect ideal, and becomes an obstinate, opinionated harpy who gets out of 'her place:'

No matter how friendly and obliging a woman's Eros may be, no logic on earth can shake her if she is ridden by the animus. Often the man has the feeling—*and he is not altogether wrong*—that only seduction or a beating or rape would have the necessary power of persuasion.⁶⁰

It is shocking to think that a scholar of Jung's brilliance could write something this despicable, but the rigid bipartite logic of his analysis of the Anima and Animus helps rationalize and legitimate angers and attitudes that an even partly self-critical reflection would otherwise surely have to question. Thus Jung finds it easily to say that when men are disturbed, they become brooding and express 'female' emotions—but in a distorted form, since these affects do not fit with their personality type, whereas when women are disturbed, they express 'male' logical calculation—but distorted into excess willfulness and meanspirited 'cattiness,' again because it does not fit with their type:

Whereas the cloud of "animosity" surrounding the man is composed chiefly of sentimentality and resentment, in woman it expresses itself in the form of opinionated views, interpretations, insinuations, and misconstructions, which all have the purpose (sometimes attained) of severing the relation between two human beings.⁶¹

⁵⁷Jung, *Aion*, p.16.

⁵⁸Despite all its sexist baggage, however, Jung's analysis at least differs from Freud's in that the anima is not derived from love of the actual mother; it is more nearly the other way around, since the actual object of the man's affection is the vessel which receives his projection of the anima archetype, which has its own transcendent origin: "Every mother and every beloved is forced to become the carrier and embodiment of this omnipresent and ageless image, which corresponds to the deepest reality in a man. It belongs to him, this perilous image of Woman; she stands for the loyalty which in the interests of life he must forgo..." (*Aion*, p.13).

⁵⁹Jung, *Aion*, p.12.

⁶⁰Jung, *Aion*, p.15 (my italics).

⁶¹Jung, *Aion*, p.16.

In this analysis, Jung believes he has the force of tradition firmly on his side: "Indeed it seems a very natural state of affairs for men to have irrational moods and women irrational opinions."⁶² Moreover, once the bipartite hermeneutic that underpins this analysis is in place, there is virtually no evidence from literature and psychiatric practice that cannot easily be interpreted to fit its mold. Thus one of Jung's paradigms for the animus-dominated woman is the character 'She who must be obeyed' in H. Rider Haggard's *She*.⁶³ Similarly, in his famous study of a young American woman in the process of individuation, Jung reads her as troubled by too close an attachment to her inward animus, a "characteristic liaison so often met with in women with an academic education."⁶⁴ The basic problem she must overcome in reaching maturity is to recover her dormant 'feminine' or affective and fruitful side, which remained undeveloped because of her attachment to her father rather than to her mother: "Miss X had to turn to her 'motherland' in order to find her earth again—*vestigia retro!*"⁶⁵ Disturbing as it is, however, for our present purposes Jung's blatant sexism is not that interesting by itself, since it reflects factors such as (a) Freud's influence, (b) too much reading of Nietzsche, (c) the attitude of conservative Swiss families in the first half of this century, etc. But it is important for what it reveals about the dangers of typology, and especially of typologies that employ a simplistic rational/emotional bipartism as their baseline distinction in the interpretation of personalities.

The Jungian Typology and the Will

Jung's account of the components of personality in his early work *Psychological Types*⁶⁶ anticipates these later developments with their bipartite emphasis. In this book, Jung proposes what are in Eysenck's sense three independent scales or factors of personality, as follows:

Attitude in Relation to World: Extravert ----- Introvert
Reasoning Style: Thinking ----- Feeling
Perceiving Style: Sensation ----- Intuition

The initial famous distinction between *extraverted* and *introverted* personalities refers to what he calls "mechanisms," overall "attitudes,"⁶⁷ or orientations of the subject in relation to objects.

⁶²Jung, *Aion*, p.17.

⁶³Ibid, p.285.

⁶⁴Jung, "A Study in the Process of Individuation," in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.291.

⁶⁵Ibid, p.349.

⁶⁶C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types: or the Psychology of Individuation*, tr. H. Godwin Baynes (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1926). This is the original English edition copublished by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.

⁶⁷Which he defines in behaviorist fashion as "a readiness of the psyche to act or react in a certain direction" (Ibid, p.526). This is not surprising, since Jung ultimately thinks of extraversion and introversion in Freudian fashion as "preferential movements of the *libido*" outwardly or inwardly (Ibid, p.613). Thus these are *instinctive* orientations, not

The extravert focuses his attention and energy outwards towards objects and society, and thus relates to himself only indirectly through the mediation of *things* in his world. The introvert is focused inwardly, lives in her own dreams, and regards her own subject and subjective processes as more important than objective facts and processes in the world. We could also think of the former as an epistemological realist and the latter as an epistemological idealist: "the one sees everything from the angle of his conception, the other from the viewpoint of the objective occurrence."⁶⁸ Although every person possesses both functions, "Outer circumstances and inner disposition frequently favor the one mechanism," until one becomes more habitual than the other.⁶⁹ It is this "relative predominance of the one or the other determines the type."⁷⁰

It is important to see that this notion of the "extravert" has overtones of Heidegger's *Das Man* ('losing' ourselves in an anonymous public world of things, gossip, and conventions) and earlier roots in Hegel's theory of work or labor.⁷¹ This is clear in Jung's reference to the idea that the extravert is so fascinated and drawn into his object that it "to a large extent determines the subject" and even "alienates him from himself."⁷² Thus an extreme extravert would be a self-alienated man. This idea in moral psychology derives originally from Aristotle's insight that "integrity of self" or authenticity is needed for true friendship: "Such a self contrasts with alien self defined by power, money, or prestige."⁷³ Similarly, and just because Jung's account of the self retains a vestige of connection to Aristotelian moral psychology, the person likely to achieve integration and individuation through Jung's recommended methods must necessarily become something of an introvert. I bring out these connections precisely to show that in the long-running and multifaceted philosophical tradition from which it arises, the extravert/introvert distinction is a *morally charged* one, in which extraversion is regarded as immature and disposing to vice, whereas a kind of introversion is necessary for virtue. Yet, even though his own account unwittingly connects with this sentiment to a degree, Jung *portrays the distinction as morally neutral*, and thus pretends to strip it of the ethical connotations and connections which gave it its significance in earlier moral psychology. This levelled-off version of the distinction is then passed on to later personality theory, where it is disconnected from its roots to such an extent that (as we saw with Myers-Briggs) personality questionnaires at least tacitly seem to condone contemporary biases (especially prevalent in our largely anti-intellectual culture) that quite a bit of extraversion is *healthy* and essential for happiness, whereas introversion always puts one's personality in danger of becoming 'geeky' and cold (overly abstract, logical, etc...), or of succumbing to neurotic anxiety. Some aspects of Jung's

consciously directed ones.

⁶⁸Jung, *Psychological Types*, p.12.

⁶⁹Ibid, p.13.

⁷⁰Ibid, p.10.

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⁷²Jung, *Psychological Types*, p.11.

⁷³Alan Gilbert, "The Aristotelian Lineage of Marx's Eudaemonism," in *Democratic Individuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.273. This Aristotelian theme had a decisive influence on both Hegel and Heidegger, who appear to be (at least indirectly) among Jung's sources.

analysis already point in this direction, since he tends to associate introversion with a suppression of emotion and affective problems.⁷⁴

As Jung's extensive remarks on "The Problem of Types in the History of Classical and Medieval Thought" shows, it is clear that Jung derives the categories of extravert and introvert largely from metaphysical controversies, whose antagonists he interprets as presenting different views because of their differences in *attitude*. For example, in the difference of views between Scotus Erigena and Radbertus on the meaning of the transubstantiation and sacrament,

...one can easily recognize those basic elements which we have already met with in the disputes commented upon earlier, namely the abstract standpoint that is averse from any intercourse with the concrete object and the concretistic, that is, turned to the object.⁷⁵

This illustrates another danger to which personality type theory all too easily lends itself: *psychologism*. This is the fallacy of assuming that differences of opinion are not the result of *objective reasons* which interlocutors consider on their merits, but instead stem from purely subjective differences in style. Taken to its extreme, this subjectivism implies that real argumentative interaction from different points of view is all but impossible: since *meanings are matters of subjective attitude and emotion* alone on this kind of account, they cannot be exchanged by interlocutors of different temperaments. Hence, "the thought of the introvert is incommensurable with the thought of the extravert, since the two thought forms, as regards their determinants, are wholly and fundamentally different."⁷⁶ These errors are the result not only of the ascendance of psychologism in semantics and philosophy of mind at the time, but also of the more general climate of antimetaphysical positivism and emotivist misreading of value claims, which were all especially championed by Nietzsche. And now all these reductivist philosophical positions lie behind today's typologies, influencing in subtle ways the interpretation and implication of alleged 'extravert/introvert' traits. More broadly, from Jung these typology inventories inherit and popularize a spirit that fits only too well with the vague sophomoric relativism of our age, allowing us to dismiss anyone's assertion as a mere expression of the biases inherent in their personality type.⁷⁷

Jung initially describes "thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition" as "basic psychological functions," any *one* of which may be predominant in a given individual.⁷⁸ But I have rendered the

⁷⁴Ibid, p.194: "The emotional life of the introvert is generally his weak side; it is not absolutely trustworthy. He deceives himself about it; others also are deceived and disappointed in him, when they rely too exclusively on his affectivity." It is noteworthy, however, that Jung's description of the introverted (and hence intellect-dominant) woman here (pp.193-4) is much more positive than in the later portraits we have examined, though there are hints of the Animus theory to come: "Her affectivity...is perseverant, hence also her self-will and her occasional unreasonable inflexibility in things that touch her emotions" (p.194).

⁷⁵Ibid, p.35.

⁷⁶Ibid, p.36.

⁷⁷Compare this to Jung's statement: "Schiller himself belongs to a definite type, and is therefore constrained, even in spite of himself, to deliver a one-sided characterization" (*Psychological Types*, p.88).

⁷⁸Ibid, p.14.

former and latter pairs as opposite poles of different scales because, as Jung makes clear much later in the book, feeling is also a mode of cognition to Jung, and intuition is also a mode of perception. Thus in his definition of 'function,' Jung can say, "I distinguish four basic functions in all, two rational and two irrational."⁷⁹ The underlying distinction here is a Kantian one: the "irrational" functions apprehend raw material in different ways, and the "rational" functions apply judgments of different sorts to the material substrate. So Jung says that like sensation, intuition is "the maternal soil from which thinking and feeling are developed in the form of rational functions."⁸⁰ Of course, Kant uses the concepts of feeling and intuition quite differently than Jung, but that is the difference made by Jung's focus on the unconscious.

Whereas sensation is conscious perception, intuition for Jung "transmits perceptions *in an unconscious way*," and thus functions as "a kind of instinctive apprehension, irrespective of its contents"—which may be either subjective or objective, concrete, abstract, etc.⁸¹ Thus intuition is the 'mythopoetic' source of ideation for archetypal imagery through the ages, and it is through intuition that "the collective unconscious declares itself."⁸² It is easy to see that this closely parallels the notion in the Myers-Briggs inventory that "intuition" is a source of *creativity*, either introvertedly in inspiration for new ideas, or extravertedly in unorthodox new approaches to action. As we see, however, this 'creativity' is not due to the passionate choice of free will, but rather to the spontaneous eruption of the unconscious. By contrast, as we saw, the 'sensing type' comes out caricatured as someone requiring immediate physical evidence, a methodical empiricist not given to mental leaps.⁸³ Since Jung regards "sensation as conscious, and intuition as unconscious, perception"⁸⁴ their distinction maps back onto the basic bipartite structure of the Jungian psyche. Matters are slightly more complex with the "thinking" and "feeling" functions, precisely because while the former is conscious and logical, the latter is not regarded as mere irrational emotion or affectivity springing from the unconscious.

Jung defines "thinking" in overtly Kantian fashion as "that psychological function which, in accordance with its own laws, brings given presentations into conceptual connection." Thinking is intuitive when it passively lets connections form by themselves, and directed when it involves active deliberation, but requires "the linking up of representations by means of a concept" or "an act of judgment."⁸⁵ Rationality or "intellect" in the classical sense it directed thinking, and is thus the farthest in nature from affect and the unconscious. Rational thought proceeds "in accordance with

⁷⁹Ibid, p.547.

⁸⁰Ibid, p.569.

⁸¹Ibid, p.568.

⁸²Ibid, p.569.

⁸³Jung describes sensation as a faculty of outward *representation*, i.e. as transmitting an "*image* of the outer object" (Ibid, p.386). This copy-model derive from Hobbes and Locke, but was already transcended in Jung's time by the findings of gestalt psychology. Like Locke, Jung also allows an abstracting sensation, and links this (when it is directed by the will) to aesthetic sensation (Ibid, p.586-7).

⁸⁴Ibid, p.587.

⁸⁵Ibid, p.611.

the presuppositions of my conscious rational norm," and is thus the psychological seat of logical structure and ideals of scientific validity —everything the Myers-Briggs inventory associates with orderly planning.

"Feeling" (Fühlen), however, not simply a state of affect, because in itself it involves no physiological disturbance; rather, it is an *evaluative* function that confers some value either on objects or (in moods) on "the whole conscious situation." An affect may *result* from a feeling if its intensity is strong enough, but the feeling consists in the positive or negative valuation itself.⁸⁶ This makes feeling similar in certain respects to the classical idea of *the will as rational sentiment*, or as a 'middle part of the soul' that motivates through rational consideration of the good and the respective values of different options. At first, Jung seems to turn his analysis of feeling emotivist by characterizing these values as purely subjective preferences or states of "'like' or 'dislike'" for something:⁸⁷

Hence feeling is also a kind of *judging*, differing, however, from an intellectual judgment in that it does not aim at establishing an intellectual connection but is solely concerned with the setting up of a subjective criterion of acceptance or rejection.⁸⁸

By contrast, the distinctive idea of volition requires the notion that motivating feelings and their evaluative contents can be *objective*, and hence criticizable and rational in the discursive sense. Later, though, Jung seems closer to conceiving feeling as *practical reasoning* in this genuinely 'middle' sense. Because "*abstract feeling*" rises above "differences of the individual feeling-values," it is really analogous to intellectual judgment: "Thus, just as thinking marshals the conscious contents under concepts, feeling arranges them according to their [objective?] value."⁸⁹ This links Jung's analysis to Kant's conception of "moral feeling" as a product of impartial reasoning: "values in general are bestowed according to the laws of reason, just as concepts in general are framed after the laws of reason."⁹⁰ As with thinking, Jung also distinguishes passive and active feeling: the former is "feeling-intuition," an unconscious value-reaction to an object (such as attraction or aversion), while the latter includes conscious deliberation and positive value-conferring:

The active feeling-act, on the contrary, confers value from the subject—it is a deliberate evaluation of contents in accordance with feeling and not in accordance with intellectual intention [i.e. not theoretically].⁹¹

Thus, as Jung adds, only active feeling is really rational and "voluntary."

If we combine these in the idea of *active, abstract feeling*, we have the concept in Jung's

⁸⁶Ibid, p.544.

⁸⁷Ibid, p.543.

⁸⁸Ibid, p.544.

⁸⁹Ibid, p.545.

⁹⁰Ibid, p.545.

⁹¹Ibid, p.546.

typology closest to the idea of *free will* in both medieval Catholic and Kantian moral psychologies. As a result, what a Jungian would analyze as *habitual patterns* or dispositions of active abstract feeling would be recognized by any historically trained philosopher as related to virtues and vices of volition. And it precisely because the Myers-Briggs inventory inherits a concept of 'feeling' from Jung which has these connections in its background that its different type descriptions inevitably carry tacit implications about the person's will and moral worth. Nevertheless, no factor distinctively recognized as volitional is separately acknowledged. This deficiency in contemporary typologies beholden to Jung occurs for three primary reasons: (a) as we have just seen, Jung lumps those aspects of feeling that actually constitute states of *will* together with many other sorts of 'feeling' in one generic function; (b) Jung fails to emphasize the distinction between objective and subjective in evaluation, thus allowing his contemporary followers to give 'feeling' the entirely subjective and emotivist gloss it has in their inventories; (c) the Hegelian opposition structure and bipartism of Jung's typology prevents him from making any real place for a *middle part* of the soul. What I mean by this last point (c) is the following. In classical moral psychologies (especially tripartite ones), affects and appetites, will and volitional character, and intellect and abstract thought are three different (though not simply 'independent') 'factors.' A person will have traits at all three of these levels, and there is no tradeoff between them. By contrast, because Jung recognizes that thinking and feeling both involve reasoning (though of different kinds), he makes them into *opposite poles of a single continuum*. Thus, although no person is wholly one or the other, feeling and thinking are mutually exclusive in this sense: no one can have very keen abilities to evaluate through feeling and very well-developed thinking capacities, since to Jung, it follows from their empirical definition that the more a person uses one of these modes of 'reasoning, the less he uses the other. In the classical framework, however, intellect and will are certainly *not* mutually exclusive in this sense: it is possible to become a fully intellectual and yet fully 'feeling' person (i.e. one with virtuous volitional dispositions and practical reasoning). Since Jung's Hegelian architectonic requires that every significant feature of personality be thought of as a pole on some scale which is balanced out or 'compensated' by an opposite pole on this same scale—the structure of analysis he imparts to all future personality type theories—the ideal possibility of classical moral psychologies is ruled out *eo ipso*. Add to this the fact that Jung analyzes "will" uselessly as a kind of vague substance, "that sum of psychic energy which is disposable to consciousness,"⁹² and makes no connection at all between the concept of volition and what he hints at in abstract feeling, and it is not surprising that hardly any explicit consideration is given to the will in the typological theories of personality which Jung has inspired today.

V. Jung's Psychic Determinism: its Kantian, Leibnizian, and Nietzschean Sources

A watered-down form of Kantianism runs throughout Jung's work on the archetypal unconscious. In discussing psychological methodology, Jung frequently invokes this idealist notion that the world appears the way it does because that is how our psyche (with its innate structures) makes it appear. For example, he says that as in the natural philosophy of the ancients, the "world of external appearances" is still conditioned by the projections of "soul" to such an extent that

⁹²Ibid, p.616-7.

we are incapable of saying how the world is constituted in itself—and always shall be, since we are obliged to convert physical events into psychic processes as soon as we want to say anything about knowledge.⁹³

Because of the influence of unconscious structures, the scientist is bound by the 'manifest image.' Whether a psychological concept reflects mind-independent reality cannot be known, because "the author of the concept can produce only such a concept as corresponds with the psychic process he is endeavouring to explain." Similarly, in explaining any vision, "at best my explanation proceeds from the way the process of a vision is presented to myself."⁹⁴

The place of the noumenal in Kant's system is filled by the collective unconscious in Jung's system. He claims that the archetypal symbols and forms found in myths and fairytales "have already received a specific stamp and have been handed down through long periods of time."⁹⁵ In other words, these paradigmatic figures studied by comparative mythography are artistically modified *expressions* of the true unconscious archetypes, "those psychic contents which have not yet been submitted to conscious elaboration..." The real archetypes remain *noumenal* in Kant's sense, and the archetypal patterns found in myth, ritual, legend, and folktales and religious art are merely their phenomenal manifestations: "In this sense there is a considerable difference between the archetype and the historical formula that has evolved."⁹⁶ The unconscious archetypes may also be thought of as psychological versions of Kantian "Ideas," which must naturally occur to the mind, but cannot be taken as revelations of noumenal reality. Just as for Kant "Ideas" such as unity, totality, and personality, are sources of inevitable metaphysical confusion, Jung thinks that the metaphysical cosmologies of monotheistic religions tend to become meaningless because they lose the "root connection with natural experience, to living psychic processes."⁹⁷ All metaphysical concepts draw their original meaning from the *positive empirical* experience of archetypes such as "the self," the unconscious contents of which gods, angels, beautitudes, trinities, god-men (and so on) are merely symbols or expressions.⁹⁸ Indeed, despite the *obvious* dependence of all his arguments on a hermeneutics—a program of interpreting data through a set of distinctions and concepts already preconceived at least in outline—Jung always portrays his method as purely empirical and not at all hypothetical.⁹⁹

Thus while the "subjective psychic" or "contents of consciousness" vary individually and and

⁹³Jung, "Concerning the Archetypes and the Anima Concept," p.57.

⁹⁴Jung, *Psychological Types*, Conclusion, p.623. It is interesting in this regard that whenever he was pressed by any question about the scientific merit of personality type theory, Hans Eysenck *also* recurred unhesitatingly to an extreme antirealism. Jung's neoKantianism seems to have set the tone here.

⁹⁵Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," in *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.5.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Jung, *Aion*, p.34.

⁹⁸Ibid, p.35.

⁹⁹See, for example, Carl Jung, "Religion and Psychology: A Reply to Martin Buber," in *The Symbolic Life*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series No. XX.18 (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, 1950-1976), p.664.

influenced by experience and tradition, the collective layer of the unconscious or the "objective psychic" functions for Jung both as the noumenal reality underlying our phenomenal experience and as the seat of the factors that structure the phenomenal world for us. Thus each person "contains unconsciously, as an *a priori* datum, the entire psychic structure developed both upwards and downwards by his ancestors."¹⁰⁰ Indeed, Jung even describes this "objective psychic" in Kantian terminology as "an *a priori* conditioning factor of consciousness and its contents....which, independently of tradition, guarantee in every single individual a similarity and even a sameness of experience..." in the realm of primordial images.¹⁰¹ As reading James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* helped convince him, there is for Jung what we might call a general schematism of the symbolic or sublime.¹⁰² This Kantian streak is particularly apparent in Jung's view of the very young child's world (before age 5), which he thinks is like a dream dominated by the archetypes, which "direct all fantasy activity into its appointed paths" and thus represent not specific idea-contents but "inherited *possibilities* of ideas." "Sensory stimuli" are thus received and moulded "into conformity with a *pre-existing psychic image*"¹⁰³ —somewhat as in Kant's conception, if we replace his table of judgments and the resulting transcendental categories with series of archetypal contrasts instead.

Within this sustained analogy to Kant's critical idealism, there is however another level of 'schematism' more specific than the universally human: the individual's personality type functions in Jung's theory as the *a priori* condition through which that individual's world is constructed. In other words, where Kant has one 'transcendental aesthetic' (the unity of the manifold imposed by the temporality and spatiality of consciousness) and one set of synthetic/apriori categories (imposed by the application of the logical structure of concepts to the manifold of experience), Jung has *two* 'aesthetics' or orientations of experience (extroverted or introverted) and *four* different categorical structures (depending on whether the individual emphasizes thinking or feeling, intuition or sensing). The resulting eight different types of person may be understood as the *first stage* of differentiation beyond the uniformity in everyone of the collective unconscious. Personality type is the fundamental structure of the *conscious* realm, determining in which of the eight basic possible 'directions' the collective unconscious wells up into consciousness and is expressed by a given ego. Hence in our innate personality type, we are already given the first crucial step towards our individuation, which explains why recognizing what type we are is the *sine qua non* for any further possible self-development. Only within the parameters set by our type can we realize our 'selves' in Jung's sense, i.e. develop our own unique perspective that will allow harmony with the world and our inner elements. For our personality type is the center of selfhood, the mediation, the bridge between the sameness of the collective unconscious and the particularity of a unique individual self (see diagram below).

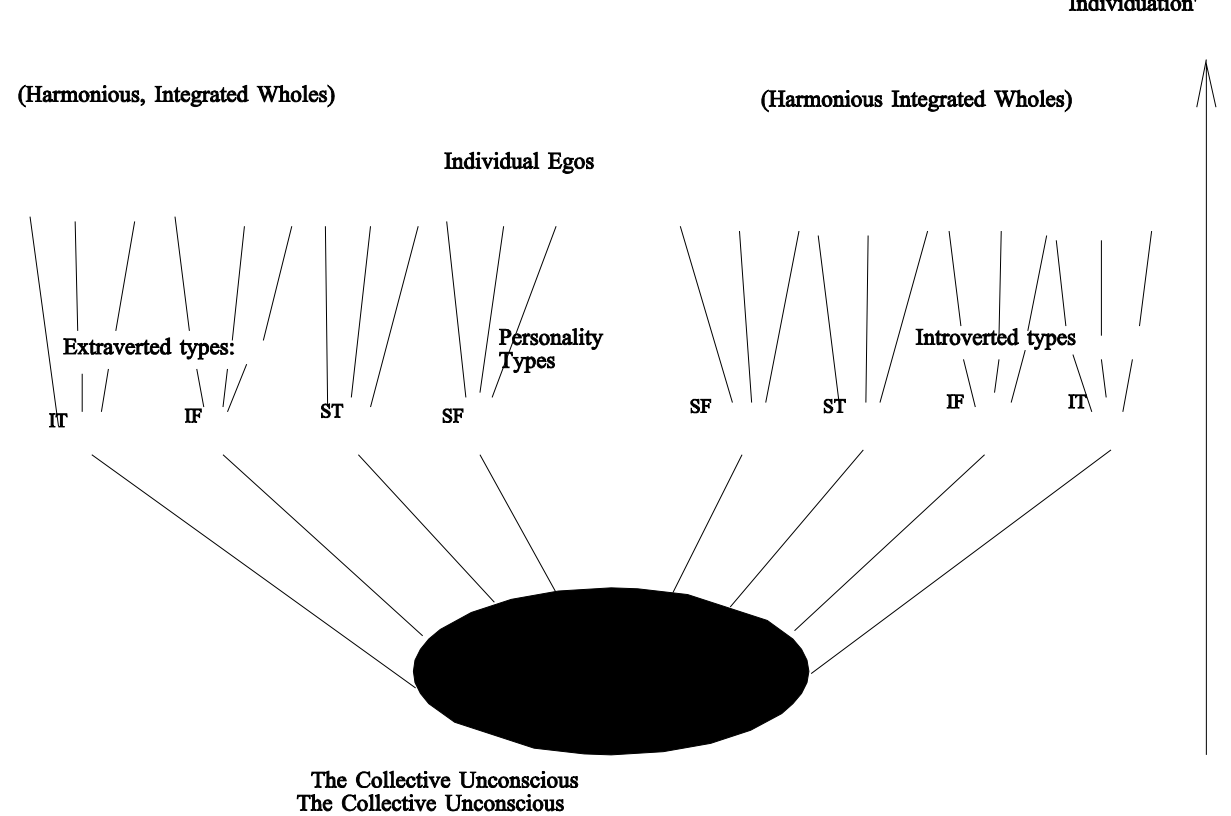
¹⁰⁰Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.279-280.

¹⁰¹Jung, "Concerning the Archetypes and the Anima Concept," in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.58.

¹⁰²Something that Kant had actually considered but denied in his analysis of aesthetic experience and judgment in the *Critique of Judgment*.

¹⁰³Jung, "Concerning the Archetypes and the Anima Concept," p.66.

How Personality Types Figure in the Development of the 'Self' in Jung's Psychology



Because the attitudes and cognitive style in our personality type thus conditions our entire world of appearances, and especially our significant symbols and recurrent motifs, "every man is so imprisoned in his type that he is simply incapable of a complete understanding of another standpoint."¹⁰⁴ As Storr explains, Jung's contact with the quantum mechanist Pauli only strengthened this conviction that "the physical and mental, as well as spatial and temporal, were human categories, imposed upon reality which did not accurately reflect it."¹⁰⁵ This is like the usual schoolboy version of 'Kantian' idealism—the world looks red because we see it through rose-colored glasses—only for Jung, the real world (the unconscious) is not 'seen' at all, and there is more than one set of 'glasses,' since each personality type is in effect a different 'lens pattern and tint.'

For Jung, then, personality type is destiny in a very real sense. Moreover, Jung is completely explicit about his conviction that not only a person's type but also *all his further* steps towards individuation and even his entire history of actions is prefigured in his unconscious:

We call the unconscious "nothing," yet it is a reality *in potentia*. The thought we shall

¹⁰⁴Ibid, p.621. Jung thinks that most conflicts in worldview are a result of these differences in type or basic psychic attitude.

¹⁰⁵Storr, p.163.

think, the deed we shall do, even the fate we shall lament tomorrow, all lie unconscious in our today. The unknown in us which the affect uncovers was always there and sooner or later would have presented itself to consciousness....If we had complete knowledge of the ground plan lying dormant in an individual from the beginning, his fate would be in large measure predictable.¹⁰⁶

Although on the surface such overt psychic determinism may seem shocking and inexplicable, it becomes intelligible when compared to the philosophical background from which Jung drew his ideas. As we have seen, he was enamoured of the Kantian notion of a noumenal reality, and interpreted the unconscious by analogy to this philosophical construct; similarly, the function of personality type in conditioning the psyche's 'world of appearances' is constructed on a rather strained analogy with Kantian idealism as well. One step further back in the philosophical heritage of neoKantianism, we find Leibniz's idea that 'noumenal' reality consists of *monads*, individual irreducible 'substances' without spatial extension or duration, which contain in their essence the every property or state that the corresponding phenomenal appearance will ever display or produce. The contents of these monads are accessible only to God, while we only see the world of phenomena (including apparent interactions) which result from the coexistence of the monads. This includes what is apparently our life and our entire history of everyday actions and apparent choices: all of this is a projection of what is contained 'in miniature' in the plan or program (or 'complete individual concept,' as Leibniz scholars call it) which *we really are*, i.e. our *monad*. Just as every monad for Leibniz also contained in itself a perspectival reflection of the whole world, our unconscious "self" contains in itself the seeds of our ego's individuality: "just as consciousness arises from the unconscious, the ego-centre, too, crystallizes out of a dark depth in which it was somehow contained *in potentia*."¹⁰⁷

The complete unconscious is thus not only noumenal but 'monadic:' the deep unconscious includes not only archetypes shared by all others, but also the rudiments of a personality type we share with some others, and even the outlines of the individual ego we should become within that type. As Jung says, the conscious mind normally overlooks this, and thinks it can act "without taking into account the influence this *a priori* factor has on the individual fate."¹⁰⁸ Thus the collective unconscious is not *purely* collective after all: it includes the collective archetypes primitively shared by all—including the archetype of the self—but also a *particular perspective* which determines the personality type that will characterize our attitudes and cognitive style, and the impetus for everything we can do to develop into an harmonized individual. Thus the idea of a noumenal realm and monadic individuality are linked by the theory of individuation out of the unconscious:

Jung also believed in a realm [the archetypal subconscious] outside space and time from which individuals became differentiated. Borrowing the Gnostic term, he referred to this spiritual realm as the *pleroma*. In the *pleroma*, all is one, and there is no differentiation

¹⁰⁶Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.279.

¹⁰⁷Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," p.281.

¹⁰⁸Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," p.280.

between opposites.¹⁰⁹

As this explanation shows, besides Kant and Leibniz, Jung's theory of the self had even older roots in the NeoPlatonic archieve of `complicatio' (the undifferentiation of the One) and its `explicatio' (or overflowing into lesser and more articulated emanations). As Storr also points out, another one of Jung's philosophical sources for these ideas is Schopenhauer's notion "that individuals were the embodiment of an underlying Will which was outside space and time."¹¹⁰ These crucial philosophical influences explain the determinist cast which Jung's psychology lends to all later personality type theory —whether its advocates acknowledge it or not.

We are now in a position to understand how this idea of the unconscious as a `noumenal' dimension (in Kant's sense) which contains the seeds of every action or the components of complete plan of life (the `complete individual concept' in a Leibnizian monad) links to Jung's conception of the self. The self as we have seen is that state of wholeness appropriate to the individual within his type, in which alone he can find inward harmony: since the unconscious naturally directs him towards this "goal," it is the ultimate telos of the psyche, around which the developing ego spirals, and through which personality "crystalizes" into its final form.¹¹¹ Stable individuation or the attainment of one's own unique psychic harmony is achieved by discovering and following the *individual destiny* contained in this monadic-noumenal unconsciousness:

If the motif of the mandala [symbol of inner self] is an archetype it ought to be a collective phenomenon, i.e. theoretically it should appear in everyone. In practice, however, it is to be met with in distinct form in relatively few cases, though this does not prevent it from functioning as a concealed pole around which everything ultimately revolves. In the last analysis every life is the realization of a whole, that is, of a self, for which reason this realization can also be called "individuation." All life is bound to carriers who realize it, and it is simply inconceivable without them. But every carrier is charged with an individual destiny and destination, and the realization of these alone makes sense of life.¹¹²

The person we feel ourselves to be in our ego-consciousness and self-awareness is not the *real person*, but merely a carrier, a vessel in which the real noumenal person realizes itself in the phenomenal order —whether we like it or not.

Freedom of the will is therefore an illusion. When we make a choice between alternatives `autonomously' instead of merely accepting the dictates of a "higher authority," the rationalizing ego

¹⁰⁹Storr, p.163.

¹¹⁰Storr, p.162. I have stressed the comparison to Leibniz, however, because I have not seen this link noted in literature on Jung before. Storr also points out that the term "individuation" is borrowed from Schopenhauer (p.163). It seems likely, however, that Jung came to these Schopenhauerian ideas mainly through Nietzsche, whom he studied in detail. For as Storr notes (p.163), Jung embraces individuation, whereas Schopenhauer seeks a nirvana in which it will be overcome: in this respect, Jung is clearly following Nietzsche.

¹¹¹See Carl Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy," *Dreams*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, consisting of papers extracted from the *Collected Works of C.J. Jung*, Bollingen Series XX, vols. 4, 8, 12, and 16 (Princeton University Press/Bollingen Foundation, 1974), pp. 291-295.

¹¹²Ibid, p.296.

persuades itself "that the matter has been decided solely by rational motions of the will,"¹¹³ but it in fact springs from "an unconscious authority which puts an end to doubt by creating a *fait accompli*."¹¹⁴ Some people conceive this inner feeling of authority as the will of God, but that is simply a name for whatever the noumenal reality is that displays itself in archetypes.¹¹⁵ Hence, even when the individual hardly feels like a spectator in the struggle, "it remains a matter of doubt how much of his seemingly free decision has a causal, and possibly unconscious, motivation."¹¹⁶ The only way to balance intellect and feeling, "to come to grips with the anima/animus problem," and thus find "wholeness" is to let the way already laid out for us "objectively" or independently of our will show itself from within.¹¹⁷ Resistance to this individual destiny, adumbrated in signs we receive from the unconscious, is the source of most of our problems:

Men became neurotic when they were in some sense false to themselves; when they strayed from the path which Nature (or God) intended them to follow. By listening to the inner voice, which manifested itself in dreams, fantasies, and other spontaneous derivatives of the unconscious, the lost soul could recover its proper path.¹¹⁸

The unconscious holds the key both to understanding our personality type and thereby the route we must take towards full self-integration. As Storr recognizes, this determinism has a quasi-religious significance for Jung: he believed that "individuals could neither be happy nor healthy unless they acknowledged their dependence upon some higher power than the ego."¹¹⁹ In a similar fashion, but without the religious overtones, practitioners using personality tests today want you to 'get in touch with yourself.' By this, they do not mean that you should reflect *critically* on your character, its moral faults, and its possible means of improvement, but rather than you should make *instrumental* use of the newfound insight into your typical ways and habits in order to redesign your life in a way more likely to produce psychic harmony. Like Jung's model, contemporary personality typologies (like the Myers-Briggs inventory) carry the unstated but unavoidable implication that in your personality type you have a kind of built-in recipe for how to become happy or function best in life—a *person like you* achieves psychic harmony more easily in certain jobs than others, or certain kinds of interaction with others, or with certain sorts of partners, living

¹¹³Jung, *Aion*, p.26.

¹¹⁴Ibid, p.25.

¹¹⁵See *Aion*, p.32.

¹¹⁶Ibid, p.26. Since Jung directs this account particularly against Kantian autonomy—a frequent target of Nietzsche's disdain—it seems likely that Jung's inspiration for this theory is Nietzschean. The collective Schopenhauerian 'will,' more accurately understood by Nietzsche as a 'will to power' or vitality (or 'noble' harmony), is expressing itself, as Nietzsche thought, through the hydraulics of instinctive energy-flows, impulsive promptings, and ideas from the unconscious. In this regard, Jung's interpretation of the 'divine child' archetype as a symbol of the self (*Aion*, p.31) also connects with themes in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*.

¹¹⁷Ibid, p.31.

¹¹⁸Storr, p.156.

¹¹⁹Storr, p.160.

environments, climates, etc. etc. The only difference is that at least in Jung's case, this interpretation of one's supposedly built-in destiny (or sole possible route to individualizing maturity) could only occur through reading the signs from the unconscious and archetypal imagery of one's dreams and free-associations, and was thus a subtle hermeneutic process, without decision-procedures or statistically calculable probabilities.¹²⁰ Now, by contrast, your personality's 'recipe' for success and harmony with the world can be read almost as easily as a fortune cookie, and is to be determined like your genetic code: i.e. by careful measurements of test results and correlations with the results for others. This not only makes it far easier for psychotherapists to dispense advice¹²¹; someday it may also, for example, make it easier for the insurance company to classify you as a high risk because your personality type is correlated with a propensity to various mental disorders.¹²²

Of course Jung allows that how one's life actually goes has a great deal to do with the contingencies of the social and historical circumstances with which one is confronted. But it as if the unconscious 'monad' in us was made up of what the philosophical Molinist calls our 'subjunctive conditionals of freedom:' a plan determining what we *would* do in every possible situation we *could* ever encounter. Our actions are thus a *function* of this monad and the situation. We should not be surprised that contemporary personality type theorists such as the Eysencks say much the same, holding that behavior and states of the individual are outputs of a function for which personality traits and contingencies of the situation are the inputs. Included in their list of propositions which unite personality type theorists is the following: "The interactive influence of traits and situations produces transient internal conditions known as states."¹²³ According to their own theory, more particularly, "certain genetically controlled physiological mechanisms, which, in interaction with environmental stimuli, produce a kind of behavior the consistency of which gives rise to the personality dimensions of *P*, *E*, and *N*."¹²⁴ The stern (pseudo)scientific tone of such claims relies on

¹²⁰About the search for a individual solutions to the problem of achieving psychic harmony, Jung writes: "I know that such solutions can only come about in an individual way that cannot be foreseen. One cannot think up ways and means artificially, let alone know them in advance, for such knowledge is merely collective, based on average experience, and can therefore be completely inadequate, indeed absolutely wrong, in individual cases" —from Jung, "A Study in the Process of Individuation," in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, p.293. This and similar statements in his writings suggest to me that Jung would be very doubtful that a Myers-Briggs personality classification could help an individual to achieve the kind of self-understanding needed for the integration of the psyche.

¹²¹It is important to note than none of this is meant to imply any mockery or wholesale disparagement of psychotherapy, counseling, or psychiatry as professions in general. My wife, my mother, and one of my aunts work in different fields of counseling, and I take the purposes of all these professions and their necessity in contemporary society very seriously. But even good people and largely helpful practices can be misled by bad theoretical frameworks.

¹²²If this seems far fetched, again I ask readers to consider how much controversy has *already* erupted over the ever-recurrent fallacy that sex or ethnic identity strongly influences IQ levels and aptitudes. These are only one small part of what personality type theory now claims to encompass. And as soon as you have personality labels, there will be somebody ready to deploy them for every discriminatory purpose you can imagine. As we already saw with Jung's sexism (discussed above), the temptation to associate types with groups (and thus turn them into *stereotypes*) is virtually irresistible.

¹²³Eysenck and Eysenck, p.33.

¹²⁴Ibid, p.81.

the fact that their philosophical background remains unknown both to their authors and the research community in which they work.

In sum, Jung has transferred to contemporary personality psychology his governing bipartite interpretation of psychic phenomena, which leaves little place for volition in the classical sense, and a notion of personality 'type' based on what is ultimately a Nietzschean determinism of unconscious instinct and drive, dressed up in Kantian garb and explained in terms of a concept of "self" or germinal psychic unity conceived on the modal of Leibnizian monads. This bizarre legacy is the powerful source behind the determinism at work in personality theory today. While practitioners like Isabel Myers-Briggs try to disguise or deny the determinist assumptions implicit in their type inventories, others such as the Eysencks are as explicit and unapologetic about their psychological determinism as Jung was. For example, according to them, studies suggest "that heredity accounts for something like two-thirds of the true variance as far as personality differences in *P*, *E*, and *N* are concerned."¹²⁵ The problem, however, is not so much that they put so much weight on innate attitudes and behavioral dispositions rather than situations, but that they think these two are the *only* possible explanations of differences in character and action. This is made quite clear in their complaint that situationism

...fails entirely to account for what is the basis of all trait and type theories, namely *individual differences in behavior in identical situations*...The person variance is essential for explaining interindividual differences in identical situations.¹²⁶

The Eysenck's never consider that there could be another factor at work, which will never appear in personality type inventory: namely, *free will*, or the power individuals have to make different choices even when facing the same options *with similar impulses, attitudes, and recognized reasons for one or other alternative*. Yet even philosophers who believe that character does strongly dispose our choices may often hold open the possibility that liberty to choose among alternative courses may be involved in the formation of those very character types, attitudes, and dispositions themselves. But personality type theorists never acknowledge and attempt to rebutt this possibility—even though if it is true, it undermines their entire enterprise or at least requires radical revisions¹²⁷; rather, like Jung in his positivist moments, they just tacitly exclude it from the outset as incompatible with 'empirical scientific method.'

VI. Conclusion: A Summary of the Criticisms

In closing, I think it will be helpful to present a condensed review of the criticisms I have made against personality type theory, at least in the form it is taking in psychology today. Although several of this points are related, they constitute distinct and separately identifiable problems for the

¹²⁵Ibid, p.35.

¹²⁶Ibid, p.38.

¹²⁷If liberty is at work in the formation of character, then personality type theory would have to be turned instead into a version of virtue theory that takes this into account and focus more explicitly on the morally significant dimensions of the character that both influences and is shaped by free choice.

underpinning presuppositions of personality type inventories. And it is this relative independence of so many serious difficulties that suggests just how far from reliable the psychology presented in such personality theories really is.

--**Naivety in Measurement:** Type-trait theories work from concepts of dispositions that generally have broad meanings which have been interpreted different ways in the philosophical discourse of moral psychology, but have often inherit limited, impoverished, or otherwise idiosyncratic construals of these dispositional traits that were fixed earlier in psychoanalytic discourse. Thus, their practitioner's belief that *these* questions will elicit evidence of just *these* traits is both subjective and unsupported on its face and often highly distortive. There are several problems here: (A) the questions may be phrased in ways that carry skewed implications about the trait they are being used to measure; (B) a 'yes' or 'no' answer to the questions could in some cases be evidence not of the disposition which the term actually refers to, but of several others; (C) there may be other questions or observations that would be much better indicators of what this trait-term means; (D) the very concept of the disposition being measured for may be unclear or gerrymandered, the result of a mistaken interpretative focus in earlier moral psychology, and so this single 'trait' is actually a partial conglomerate of several other more basic dispositional features.

--**Relevance and Hidden Variable Problems for Factor-Analysis:** Type-trait theorists tend to insist that their results are not philosophically criticizable because they are at least potentially supported by rigorously scientific methodology. The methodology in which they place such faith is regression and factor-analysis to determine if correlations are relevant, if trait-continua are orthogonally independent of each other, and if the traits they have selected to measure are 'real,' or actually non-independent parts of other traits, or linkages of multiple more basic traits, etc. But this method cannot by itself assure us that other *hidden variables* would not split observed correlations, link factors formerly thought to be independent, or produce more significant correlations. In addition, it cannot assure us that the variables the analysis has identified are *relevant for personality*, since that concept has a normative dimension that may reduce the importance of factors the models include, or point to the importance of factors it has not even tried to test for.

-- **Leveling:** The type-trait approach treats what may be *intrinsically different kinds* of factors that help account for consistency of behavior indirectly in interaction with situations, but treats them all as if they were just the same kind of thing of thing —namely traits or types (complexes of traits)— and thus metaphysically on a par. In particular, these theories tend not to recognize hierarchical differences, i.e. that some 'traits' may constitute not tendencies or attitudes simpliciter, but tendencies or attitudes about other traits —a point brought out in recent moral psychology..

--**False Neutrality:** Because they mix together fundamentally different kinds of dispositions, type-trait theories inevitably include —right along with traits that describe different cognitive approaches and interaction styles with no apparent ethical implications— several other trait-contrasts that reflect *moral character*, or the 'virtues and vices' of the person. Yet because contemporary type-trait theories are at pains to proclaim that the results of their analysis are passing no judgment on the individual, they ingenuously construe every

difference in disposition as a 'gift' and suggest in practice that none is inherently 'bad' or less likely to contribute to human flourishing. This ignores basic insights of the virtue-theory tradition in moral psychology, which recognizes the ineliminably evaluate content of a distinct set of dispositions that are related to choice.

- **Omission and Bipartitism:** Because historical biases unconsciously derived from inadequate moral psychologies influence the selection of relevant traits and types for testing, and the interpretation of what kinds of questions will elicit which traits, type-trait theories of personality tend to leave out altogether, or at least dramatically underemphasize, certain relevant trait and trait-complexes, in particular those relating to *volition* in the sense distinct from both affect and detached cognition. Type-trait portraits of the 'personality palette' thus typically imply no room for a 'middle part of the soul,' and revolve around a global bipartite polarization of the rational vs. the emotional.
- Determinism:** Because of their historical origins in deterministic moral psychologies, type-trait theories of personality implicitly leave no room for alternate-possibilities freedom or 'liberty' in the determination of one's character, if not also in outward action. Like Leibniz, they assume that differences in attitude and behavior between individuals in similar situations must have 'sufficient reason,' which can only be an innate cause rather than libertarian choice.
- Psychic Alchemy:** Taken together, this inherent deterministic tendency in type-trait approaches, their reduction of all relevant dispositional attitudes to one generic level, and their faith in factor analysis yield the sense—which runs implicitly throughout this typology discourse—that what is being discovered in the analysis of personality traits and types is a kind of 'period table' of the basic *elements* of the soul: just as chemical compounds are the result of the combination of basic chemical elements, so different personalities are the result of a combination of basic dispositional elements, and the type label applying to an individual is almost analogous to a chemical formula. Not only, as we have seen, is the 'palette' of dispositional 'colors' from which the personality is painted in these theories incomplete; the deeper problem is that unlike molecules, personality *may not in fact be a combination of elements* at all. This whole paradigm, paradigm, with its associated assumption that we can 'prime factor' the soul into a set of basic components, may be fundamentally in error.

The model on which typology approaches rest is thus one of personality as a 'painting' made with an array of primary 'trait-colors,' which determines how it will look (perform) in the 'lighting' of different situations. This model derives from the empiricist era of moral psychology, and is thus philosophically controversial and cannot be taken for granted. If unity-of-character accounts such as those often found in virtue moral psychologies are more correct, it may be misleading to such an extent that the error colors all subsequent interpretation of data gathered, and cannot reveal itself empirically. Statistical analysis of answers to subjectively designed questions that may only inadequately measure an arguably incomplete and poorly conceived set of traits can hardly contribute anything interesting towards resolving the underlying philosophical disputes at stake here.

In closing, let me return to the point from which we set out. Some philosophers today believe that philosophers as a group (especially those working in ethics) should recognize and defer to existing 'knowledge' discovered in psychology (and the sciences of the mind generally), and

therefore limit their theories to those that fit with or are practicable within the frameworks set by psychology and cognitive science. The case of personality type theories, however, shows how backwards this proposed standard is. Philosophers must deal with empirical findings, but neither ethics nor the underlying metaphysics of personhood can be circumscribed in advance by supposedly scientific theories that always embed philosophically controversial assumptions. For sometimes psychologists even erect entire edifices on bits of outdated metaphysics, distorted mutations of once-clear concepts, and threads of flawed moral psychologies, sewn together hodgepodge in a tangled skein that only the philosopher can hope to untangle and follow back out of the labyrinth to their sources.