

SHARED
REALITIES

PARTICIPATION
MYSTIQUE
AND
BEYOND

EDITED BY
MARK WINBORN

Advance Praise for Shared Realities: Participation Mystique and Beyond

“Jung’s use of the concept participation mystique has always struck me as among his most original ideas and I could vaguely intuit its relevance to many contemporary developments in psychoanalysis, from projective identification to intersubjectivity to the mysteries of transitional space. Now, thanks to the extraordinary essays in this book, one no longer has to “intuit” this relevance. It is spelled out in beautiful detail by writers with expertise in many facets of our field. The breadth of these essays is truly extraordinary. Reading them has enriched both my personal and professional life. I highly recommend this book.”

—Donald Kalsched, Ph.D. author of *The Inner World of Trauma: Archetypal Defenses of the Personal Spirit* and *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-spiritual Approach to Human Development and its Interruption*.

The concept of “participation mystique” is one that is often considered a somewhat arcane notion disparagingly equated with an unconscious, undifferentiated or “primitive” dynamic. This collection of outstanding articles from Jungian analysts of different theoretical perspectives and analysts from different schools of depth psychology redeems this concept and locates it as central to depth work, regardless of one’s theoretical orientation. What may seem like an ethereal notion becomes grounded when explored from the perspective of the clinical, the experiential and the theoretical. Linking participation mystique to the more clinical concepts of projective identification, unitary reality, empathy, the intersubjective field and the neurosciences and locating this dynamic in the field of the transference and counter-transference, brings this concept to life in a refreshingly clear and related manner. In addition, each author does so in a very personal manner.

Shared Realities provides the reader with a wonderful example of amplification of participation mystique, linking many diverse threads and fibers to form an image, which, while it reveals its depth and usefulness, nevertheless maintains its sense of mystery. This book is a true delight for anyone intrigued by those “moments of meeting”, moments of awe, when the ineffable becomes manifest, when we feel the shiver down our spine, be it in our work or in a moment of grace as we sit quietly in nature. *Shared Realities* offers nourishment for the clinician, for the intellect and, most importantly, for the soul. I highly recommend it!

—Tom Kelly, President, International Association for Analytical Psychology and Past-President, Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts

Shared Realities

Participation Mystique and Beyond

Mark Winborn, Editor



Shared Realities Participation Mystique and Beyond

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INTRODUCTION

An Overview of Participation Mystique

Mark Winborn

One of my most vivid experiences of *participation mystique* occurred while running one cool spring morning. The sun was low – still making its slow ascent into the dawn sky. About a mile into the run I was beginning to settle into my stride; my body awakening to the pulse of its internal rhythm. As I entered a familiar stretch of road, completely covered by its dense canopy of rich green trees, I noticed in the distance a single leaf had discharged itself from the verdant awning. The leaf seemed completely singular: vibrant green on the top and a bold yellow on the underside. I watched as it descended; spiraling like a slowly revolving helicopter rotor. Time and space seemed to collapse inward – ceasing to have meaning or weight in the moment. It was as if I'd entered a visual/cognitive tunnel in which time was arrested and only the leaf and I existed in some unseen communion. After a few moments, which seemed to exist as an eternity, the leaf found purchase with the earth and the enchantment slowly dissolved. The leaf once again became just another leaf. However, the feeling of communion I shared with that singular leaf has now persisted over a number of years and I continue to experience the sensation that the leaf 'spoke' to me in that moment and invited me to participate in its journey.

This volume began with a previous project which explored, in part, the relationship between the musical genre known as 'the blues' and *participation mystique*.¹ The concept kept emerging in discussions with close colleagues and during reflections on the analytic activity of reverie. My colleagues and I often took note of the way the term had taken on a negative valance within Jungian circles, which struck us as odd because each of us have had powerful, deep experiences which we attribute to *participation mystique* dynamics.

When the publisher of Fisher King Press, Mel Mathews, extended an invitation to create an edited volume exploring a major construct of analytical psychology it seemed like a natural progression to focus on *participation mystique*. A survey of the available literature confirmed the absence of an in-depth overview of the concept. There is, however, a series of interrelated

1 Mark Winborn, *Deep Blues* (Carmel, CA: Fisher King Press, 2011).

articles by Segal,^{2,3} Rowland,⁴ and Bishop⁵ that, as a group, comprise an intellectual-historical-literary-theoretical survey of the Jung's views on 'primitive man' and his utilization of the concept of *participation mystique*. These three articles provide an excellent background to the selections in this volume.

Participation mystique has an interesting position in analytical psychology. It is a term rather ubiquitous within the Jungian world but rarely adopted by analytic writers outside the Jungian orientation. It is frequently mentioned in the Jungian analytic literature as well as during presentations, supervisory sessions, and the training of analytic candidates. However, the definition of the term is somewhat opaque and *participation mystique* is often referenced as something to be cautious of and avoided when possible.

Jung's Concept of *Participation Mystique*

C.G. Jung adopted the term *participation mystique* from anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl who utilized the term in a series of books published from 1910⁶ onward. Jung was taken with the idea that the 'primitives' think differently than 'modern' people and adopted Lévy-Bruhl's ideas about the 'primitive psyche' as well as his concepts of *participation mystique* and *representations collectives*⁷. Segal's initial article⁸ provides an overview of the general criticisms and limitations of Lévy-Bruhl's work as well as Jung's use of and misreading of Lévy-Bruhl, therefore I won't go into those points here. I will focus instead on providing a brief overview of Jung's use of the concept, which will serve as a foundation for later contrasts with contemporary utilizations.

2 Robert Segal, "Jung and Lévy-Bruhl," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 52 (2007a): 635-658.

3 Robert Segal, "Response to Susan Rowland," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 52 (2007b): 667-771.

4 Susan Rowland, "Response to Segal's 'Jung and Lévy-Bruhl'," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 52 (2007): 659-666.

5 Bishop, Paul. "The Timeliness and Timelessness of the 'Archaic': Analytical Psychology 'Primordial' Thought, Synchronicity," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 53 (2008):501-523.

6 Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, translated (1926) from French as *How Natives Think*, London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1910.

7 Jung's development of the concept of archetypes of the collective unconscious was significantly influenced by Lévy-Bruhl's concept of *representations collectives*.

8 Segal, "Jung and Lévy-Bruhl," 2007a.

Jung's most extensive discussion of the concept of *participation mystique* is found in his essay *Archaic Man*.⁹ This essay outlines his ideas about the mental activity of "primitive" peoples, i.e. that they function in a "prelogical state of mind", that they "were simpler and more childlike", and "unpsychological" by which he means that psychological experiences are perceived as occurring outside of the "primitive" in an objective way. These inferences about primitive thinking underlie Jung's central notion of *participation mystique* – namely that in *participation mystique* experiences there is a blurring of psychological boundaries between individuals, between individuals and their environment, and in some instances between individuals and objects.

To understand more clearly Jung's use of the *participation mystique* concept we can examine a few definitions provided by Jung in his volume *Psychological Types*¹⁰:

And if we go right back to primitive psychology, we find absolutely no trace of the concept of an individual. Instead of individuality we find only collective relationship or what Lévy-Bruhl calls *participation mystique*. The collective attitude hinders the recognition and evaluation of a psychology different from the subject's, because the mind that is collectively oriented is quite incapable of thinking and feeling in any other way than by projection.¹¹

Participation mystique is a term derived from Lévy-Bruhl. It denotes a peculiar kind of psychological connection with objects, and consists in the fact that the subject cannot clearly distinguish himself from the object but is bound to it by a direct relationship which amounts to partial *identity* (q.v.). This identity results from an *a priori* oneness of subject and object. *Participation mystique* is a vestige of this primitive connection. It does not apply to the whole subject-object relationship but only to certain cases where this peculiar tie occurs. It is a phenomenon that is best observed among primitives though it is found very frequently among civilized peoples, if not with the same incidence and intensity. Among civilized peoples it usually occurs between persons, seldom between a person and a thing. In the first case it is a transference relationship, in which the object (as a rule) obtains a sort of magical - i. e. absolute - influence over the subject. In the second case there is a similar influence on the part of the thing, or else an *identification* (q.v.) with a thing or the idea of a thing.¹²

9 C.G. Jung, "Archaic Man," in *The Collected Works*, Vol.10 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931a).

10 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, *The Collected Works*, Vol. 6 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1921/1971).

11 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶12.

12 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶781.

I use the term *identity* to denote a psychological conformity...Psychological identity presupposes that it is unconscious. It is a characteristic of the primitive mentality and the real foundation of *participation mystique* (q.v.), which is nothing but a relic of the original non-differentiation of subject and object, and hence of the primordial unconscious state. It is also a characteristic of the mental state of early infancy, and, finally, of the unconscious of the civilized adult, which in so far as it has not become a content of consciousness, remains in a permanent state of identity with objects. Identity with parents provides the basis for subsequent *identification* (q.v.) with them; on it also depends the possibility of *projection* (q.v.) and *introjection* (q.v.).¹³

In these passages Jung identifies several areas he wishes to address with the term *participation mystique*. We can see that he highlights the blurring of subject-object boundaries resulting in an experience of *a priori* oneness, that *participation mystique* is regularly observed in people from cultures which Jung labels as ‘primitive’, and that it occurs in the mental states of early infancy. Jung also calls attention to the presence of *participation mystique* in analytic transferences and lastly as an unconscious component of the ‘civilized adult’. Elsewhere, Jung¹⁴ also includes under the umbrella of *participation mystique* the relationship between children and their parents in general. In the same work¹⁵ he goes on to say that the *participation mystique* which exists between children and their parents is gradually replaced by ties with the tribe, society, church, or nation as well as during the emergence of romantic involvement associated with sexual maturity. Jung also associates *participation mystique* with sensuous feeling,¹⁶ and indicates that: it is the source of inspiration for the naïve poet,¹⁷ it is fueled by libidinal investment,¹⁸ and it forms the basis for empathy.¹⁹

In addition to the characteristics and situations that Jung associates with *participation mystique*, Jung also indicates that projection and identification are the two primary psychological processes by which *participation mystique* is activated. Some of his observations regarding this relationship are included below:

These identifications, brought about by projection, create a world in which man is completely contained psychically as well as physically...in the projection of unconscious psychic contents through *participation mystique*. For archaic man this distinc-

13 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶741.

14 C.G. Jung, “Mind and Earth,” in *The Collected Works*, Vol. 10 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931c), ¶70.

15 C.G. Jung, “Mind and Earth,” CW10, ¶71.

16 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶146.

17 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶216.

18 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶495.

19 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶496.

tion does not exist, because psychic happenings are projected so completely that they cannot be distinguished from objective, physical events.²⁰

Our whole mental life, our consciousness, began with projections...Now, inasmuch as our world is still animated to a certain extent, or inasmuch as we are still in *participation mystique*, our contents are still projected; we have not yet gathered them in.²¹

Whenever an autonomous component of the psyche is projected, an invisible person comes into being.²²

The importance of Jung's association of *participation mystique* with the psychological processes of projection and identification will become apparent as we move into the discussion of contemporary views of, and parallels with, *participation mystique*.

Although Jung discusses the psychology of primitive man in a way that strikes the contemporary reader as an ethnocentric perspective, he is also using this contrast to draw attention to particular characteristics of the modern psychological state which he considered problematic. Specifically, Jung believes that modern persons have become so overly reliant on rational thought that we are split off from vestigial or phylogenetic layers of psychic experience:

The man who has attained consciousness of the present is solitary. The "modern" man has at all times been so, for every step towards fuller consciousness removes him further from his original, purely animal *participation mystique* with the heard, from submersion to common unconsciousness.²³

While Jung seems to view the diminishment of *participation mystique* experiences as a loss for modern man, at the same time he also appears to have significant ambivalence about the possibility of blurred subject-object distinctions and unconscious participation. In his *Commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower*,²⁴ he clearly seems to indicate that the goal of consciousness and of the analytic process is to reduce or rid oneself of tendencies towards *participation mystique* states. In a section titled *The Detachment of Consciousness from the Object*, Jung writes:

20 C.G. Jung, "Archaic Man," in *The Collected Works, Vol.10* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931a), ¶¶134-135.

21 C.G. Jung, *Zarathustra Seminars, Vol. 2* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 1496-1497.

22 C.G. Jung, "Archaic Man," CW10, ¶137.

23 C.G. Jung, "The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man", in *The Collected Works, Vol. 10* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931b), ¶150.

24 C.G. Jung, "Commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower'," in *The Collected Works, Vol. 13* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1929b).

By understanding the unconscious we free ourselves from its domination... The magical claim of things has ceased because the interweaving of consciousness with the world has come to an end. The unconscious is not projected any more, and so the primordial *participation mystique* with things is abolished... I know this effect very well from my practice; it is the therapeutic effect *par excellence*, for which I labour with my students and patients, and it consists in the dissolution of *participation mystique*.²⁵

A similar view can also be found in the writing of a number of Jungian authors. For example, Harding²⁶ writes: "We do not realize that we are not free from *participation mystique* and that many of our basic life assumptions depend on it and condition our *Umwelt*." Other examples include: Bunster²⁷ who, in a case illustration, equates the "illusion or delusion" of a patient with *participation mystique*; Whitmont²⁸ who focuses on group dynamics which, "can assume magical power in the form of mass psychoses, sweeping away individual responsibility in enchantment with *participation mystique*."; and Maduro²⁹ who indicates, "Although a positive transference is essential to analysis, a prolonged positive transference to a mother-analyst can be a sign, not of progress, but of fusion (massive projective identification, *participation mystique*), a stalemate which may ultimately lead to a negative therapeutic reaction." Dreifuss³⁰ provides a final example during a discussion of supervisory situations, "If the supervisee has a natural gift of empathy I shall, in the course of supervision, point to the problem of too much empathy whenever it occurs and bring the supervisee to the realisation of the shadow of empathy, namely the danger of *participation mystique* and lack of conscious evaluation of the analytical situation." This same negative view of *participation mystique* can also frequently be heard during theoretical papers, case presentations, and informal conversations around analytic issues.

While these characterizations can all be accurate in certain instances, I believe the prevalence of such opinions underscores the frequent suspicion of participation mystique experiences. A comparable pejorative attitude towards 'primitive' psychological states, similar in description to participation mystique, can also be found in the psychoanalytic literature, especially around the concept of 'regression in analysis.' However, some psychoanalytic theorists, such as Balint³¹ have highlighted the therapeutic necessity and beneficial aspects of entering

25 C.G. Jung, "Commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower'," CW13, ¶¶64-65.

26 Esther Harding, *The I and the Not I*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 40.

27 Jane Bunster, "The Patient Difficult to Reach," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 38 (1993): 39.

28 Edward Whitmont, "Group Therapy and Analytical Psychology," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 9 (1964): 13.

29 Renaldo Maduro, "Correspondence," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 25 (1980): 103.

30 Gusta Dreifuss, "G. Dreifuss, Haifa," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 27 (1982): 108.

31 Michael Balint, *The Basic Fault* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1979).

into regression as a means of accessing into the patient's area of experience, which he termed 'the basic fault.' Similarly, a case study by Bright³² provides a wonderful illustration of the necessary and communicative function associated with the analyst's capacity to participate in regressive constellations in the transference/countertransference matrix (a form of *participation mystique*) and the unconscious identity, which often accompanies such regressive experiences

Rolfe and Goodheart³³ adopt a balanced attitude towards the clinical manifestations of *participation mystique* - proposing that only certain constellations of a *participation mystique* field are likely to interfere with an analysis, and that a "conscious approach to these behaviours often reveals a stalemating *participation mystique* in the form of an unconscious collusion between the therapist and patient to circumvent or displace some extremely painful or difficult experiences, such as separation anxiety, primitive terrors of being entrapped or engulfed by one another, and powerful attractions of eros, or aggressive impulses against one another." But Rolfe and Goodheart also emphasize the communicative function of such experiences and suggest that these *participation mystique* constellations permit the displaced experiences "to emerge, and they become available for analysis in the microcosm of therapy." In like fashion, West³⁴ highlights some of the potentially positive and powerful affective experiences associated with *participation mystique* dynamics:

At these times, he [Jung] said, there could be powerful experiences of affect, *numinous* feelings, the boundaries between one person and another become dissolved and the phenomenon of *participation mystique* predominates—the individual has experiences of union and oneness with others (or the universe). There can be experiences of timelessness, eternity (feelings go on forever as there is no I to mark time), 'living in the now', universality and what Freud called oceanic feelings. Feelings experienced on this level have a sense of certainty, trueness and rightness that appears to follow from the immediacy, power and the 'fullness' of the experience.

32 George Bright, "Regression in the Countertransference: Working with the Archetype of the Abandoned Child," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 54 (2009): 379-394.

33 Eugene Rolfe and William Goodheart, "Correspondence," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 28 (1983): 70.

34 Marcus West, "Identity, Narcissism and the Emotional Core," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 49 (2004): 538.

Developments Related to *Participation Mystique*

Having outlined how Jung came to utilize the term and the different ways he applied it, we can now turn to developments and applications of the *participation mystique* concept since Jung adopted it for inclusion in analytical psychology.

Projective Identification and *Participation Mystique*

A number of analytical psychologists, e. g. Gordon,³⁵ Davidson,³⁶ Samuels,³⁷ Schwartz-Salant,³⁸ Field,³⁹ and Wiener⁴⁰ have highlighted the similarity between Jung's utilization of the *participation mystique* concept and the concept of projective identification. This concept was first proposed by Melanie Klein.⁴¹ In her description of the process, parts of the self and internal objects of the infant are split off and projected onto an external object. In Klein's model, the object becomes identified with the projected split-off parts and interacted with as though the object has become one with the split-off objects, often evoking a feeling in the recipient of the projected element that is affectively congruent with the split-off part.

To illustrate this conceptual link, analytical psychologists who identify a close relationship between *participation mystique* and projective identification highlight passages from Jung where he refers to processes of projection, empathy, and 'feeling-into' in ways which sound astonishingly close to Klein's description of projective identification. For example:

Empathy...is therefore a kind of perceptive process, characterized by the fact that, through feeling, some essential psychic content is projected into the object, so that the object is assimilated to the subject and coalesces with him to such an extent that

35 Ruth Gordon, "Symbols: Content and Process," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 12 (1967): 23-34.

36 Dorothy Davidson, "Invasion and Separation," (in *Analytical Psychology: A Modern Science*, ed. Michael Fordham, 162-172. London: Karnac, 1974).

37 Andrew Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians* (London: Routledge, 1985).

38 Nathan Schwartz-Salant, "Archetypal Foundations of Projective Identification," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 33 (1988): 39-64.

39 Nathan Field, "Projective Identification: Mechanism or Mystery?" *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 36 (1991): 93-109.

40 Jan Wiener, *The Therapeutic Relationship* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2009).

41 Melanie Klein, "Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 27 (1946): 99-110.

he feels himself, as it were, in the object. This happens when the projected content is associated to a higher degree with the subject than with the object. He does not, however, feel himself projected into the object; rather the “empathized” object appears animated to him.⁴²

This animation does not come from empathy, but from an unconscious projection that actually exists *a priori*. The term “projection” hardly conveys the real meaning of this phenomenon. Projection is really an act that happens, and not a condition existing *a priori*, which is what we are obviously dealing with here. It seems to me that Lévy-Bruhl’s *participation mystique* is more descriptive of this condition, since it aptly formulates the primordial relation of the primitive to the object. His objects have a dynamic animation, they are charged with soul-stuff or soul-force (and not always possessed of souls, as the animist theory supposes), so that they have a direct psychic effect upon him, producing what is practically a dynamic identification with the object... With the abstracting attitude it is much the same, for here too the object is alive and autonomous from the beginning and in no need of empathy; on the contrary, it has such a powerful effect that the subject is forced into introversion. Its strong libido investment comes from its *participation mystique* with the subject’s own unconscious.⁴³

Projection means the expulsion of a subjective content into an object; it is the opposite of *introjection*... Accordingly it is a process of *dissimilation*... by which a subjective content becomes alienated from the subject and is, so to speak, embodied in the object. The subject gets rid of painful, incompatible contents by projecting them, as also of positive values which, for one reason or another - self-depreciation, for instance - are inaccessible to him. Projection results from the archaic *identity*... of subject and object.⁴⁴

Sensuous feeling, or rather the feeling that is present in the sensuous state, is collective. It produces a relatedness or proneness to affect which always puts the individual in a state of *participation mystique*, a condition of partial identity with the sensed object. This identity expresses itself in a compulsive dependence on that object, and in turn, after the manner of a vicious circle, causes in the introvert an intensification of abstraction for the purpose of abolishing the burdensome dependence and the compulsion it evokes.⁴⁵

42 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶486.

43 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶495.

44 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶783.

45 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶146.

It seems clear that Jung and Klein both conceptualize the analytic interaction as a situation in which the analyst will impact the patient and the patient will impact the analyst in nuanced but powerful ways. As Knox points out, empathy requires the psychotherapist, “to allow emotional contagion, to share, through the countertransference, the shame and humiliation of the patient as a victim.”⁴⁶

Jung distinguishes between active and passive forms of projection. He indicates that the passive form is associated with all pathological manifestations of projection and in many forms of normal projection. In his view the passive form of projection is completely automatic and unintentional. However, he conceptualizes the active form of projection in terms of empathy:

The active form [of projection] is an essential component of the act of *empathy*... Taken as a whole, empathy is a process of introjection, since it brings the object into intimate relation with the subject. In order to establish this relationship, the subject detaches a content - a feeling, for instance - from himself, lodges it in the object, thereby animating it, and in this way draws the object into the sphere of the subject.⁴⁷

Ogden,⁴⁸ Grotstein,⁴⁹ and Stark⁵⁰ indicate that projective identification potentially serves a number of different psychological functions depending upon the particular constellation of the analytic dyad and the contribution of the participating individuals. From their perspective projective identification is a psychological process which functions as: a type of defense, a mode of communication, the basis of empathy, a primitive form of object relationship, and a vehicle for structural changes in personality. Some contemporary Jungians have arrived at similar conclusions in regards to *participation mystique*. For example, Thomson highlights the teleological or prospective element potentially inherent in *participation mystique*, “Projective identification as a process of emergence from *participation mystique* reveals itself as a means of sharing understanding through non-verbal experience, where the verbalizations are at best approximations of the content of the analytic relationship. Technically, it is a psychotic involvement but it has within the confusions the possibility for understanding in a new way.”⁵¹

46 Jean Knox, “‘Feeling For’ and ‘Feeling With’: Developmental and Neuroscientific Perspectives on Intersubjectivity and Empathy,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 58 (2013): 504.

47 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW6, ¶784.

48 Thomas Ogden, *Projective Identification and Psychotherapeutic Technique* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1982).

49 James Grotstein, *Splitting and Projective Identification* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1985).

50 Martha Stark, *Modes of Therapeutic Action* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1999).

51 Jean Thomson, “Review of Roger Brooke (ed.) Pathways into the Jungian World: Phenomenology and Analytical Psychology,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 46 (2001): 385.

Thomson goes on to suggest that projective identification is the specific mechanism of movement from the less differentiated state of *participation mystique* to consciousness.

As a last word on projective identification, we might briefly visit the concept of ‘enactment,’ which has been defined by Plakun,⁵² “...as a pattern of nonverbal interactional behavior between the two parties in a therapeutic situation, with unconscious meaning for both. It involves mutual projective identification between therapist and patient.” Here we see a description of the behavioral extension of *participation mystique* whereby the shared psychological field results in a modification of the typical or agreed upon behavioral patterns of the analytic relationship. These behavioral modifications can be seen as occurring ‘publically’, i.e. observable by person in the analytic dyad, or ‘privately’, i.e. acted on in internally in phantasy and therefore not visible to the other person but still impacting the analytic field.

Transference and *Participation Mystique*

As previously discussed, Jung saw the process of *participation mystique* as being intimately tied with the process of projection but also with the transference dynamics of the analytic setting. Illustrative of this point, Jung indicates that, “The psychological process of transference is a specific form of the more general process of projection . . . that carries over subjective contents of any kind into the object,”⁵³ and elsewhere Jung states, “The very word ‘transference’ is closely akin to ‘projection’.”⁵⁴ Fordham is in agreement with Jung on this point. In a passage exploring and ultimately advocating for a broader understanding of transference-countertransference, Fordham indicates that, “...our understanding of transference as a whole is better reflected by the wider usage, for *participation mystique*, projection and introjection can play valuable, even essential parts in analytic procedures.”⁵⁵ Developing this point further, Wiener ties together the overlapping concepts of *participation mystique*, transference, projective identification, and intersubjectivity as well as highlighting the danger for the analytic process if these connections are not recognized. She indicates that, “The research findings

52 Eric Plakun, “Enactment and the Treatment of Abuse Survivors,” *Harvard Review of Psychiatry* 5 (1998): 318.

53 C.G. Jung, “The Tavistock Lectures,” in *The Collected Works, Vol. 18*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1935), ¶¶312-313.

54 C.G. Jung, “The Psychology of the Transference,” in *The Collected Works, Vol. 16* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946), ¶359.

55 Michael Fordham, “Notes on the Transference,” in *Technique in Jungian Analysis*, ed. Michael Fordham, (London: Karnac, 1989), 137.

also support a central role for projective identification (in Jung's language, *participation mystique*) at the core of intersubjective relating. We cannot help but be affected by our patients, and, consequently, we ignore transference phenomena at our peril."⁵⁶

Jung clearly understood the mutually influencing aspects of the transference relationship and he saw those influences as being based, in large part, on the presence of *participation mystique* in the analytic relationship. He recognized early on that, "It is not only the sufferer but the doctor as well, not only the object but also the subject"⁵⁷ who is affected during analysis. His perspective on this, which goes beyond the unresolved or unexamined issues of the patient and the analyst, is captured most fully in *The Psychology of the Transference* which returns frequently to the image of the alchemical bath as a metaphor for the mutual unconscious influences of the analytic relationship. This reciprocal unconscious influence is also readily seen in Jung's diagram⁵⁸ of the analytic relationship:

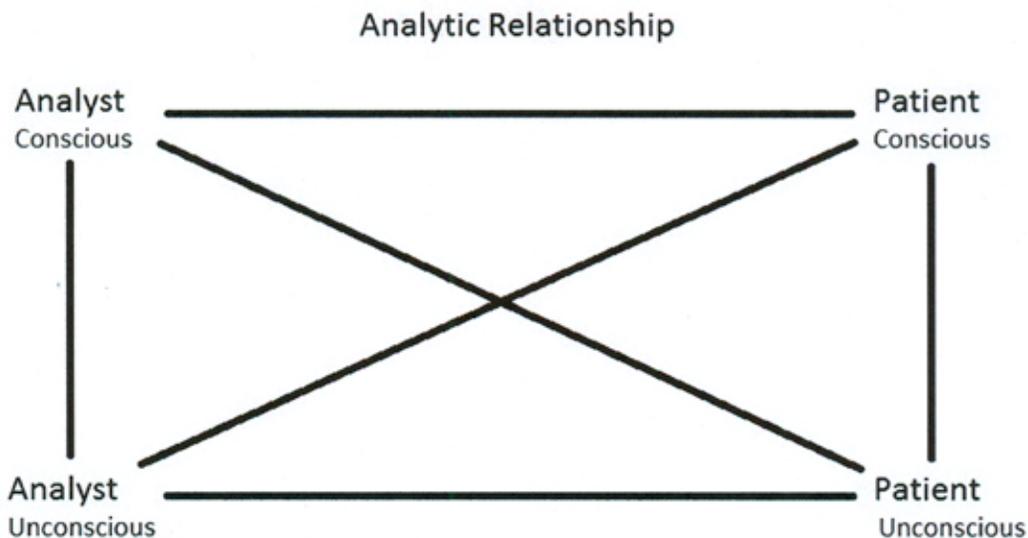


Fig. 1

Jacoby indicates that it is the lower line in Jung's diagram, i.e. the analyst's unconscious is in mutual communication and influence with the patient's unconscious, which depicts the

56 Jan Wiener, *The Therapeutic Relationship*, 54.

57 C.G. Jung, "Problems of Modern Psychotherapy," in *The Collected Works, Vol. 16* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1929a), ¶173.

58 C.G. Jung, "The Psychology of the Transference," *CW16*, ¶422.

state of participation mystique or identity in the transference matrix - “the area of common unconsciousness between the two partners.”⁵⁹ He goes on to say, “...the unconscious connection indicates a state of identity or fusion, a oneness of the two. In analysis this connection is called transference-countertransference, but any strong emotional tie involves this same state of what Jung calls *participation mystique*. The other person is a part of myself and the other way around.”⁶⁰ Dieckmann⁶¹ also makes similar observations about the unconscious to unconscious communication in Jung’s transference diagram. He indicates that this certainly plays a role in interaction between patient and analyst, but also in every encounter between persons. In other words, Dieckmann sees *participation mystique*, not as an aberration from normal psychological processes, but as a ubiquitous aspect of human experience.

Infant Development and *Participation Mystique*

In a critique of Neumann’s⁶² theories of infant development, Fordham⁶³ draws on child analyses and infant-mother observation studies to call into question Neumann’s exposition of Jung’s model of psychic development in childhood. Specifically, Fordham criticizes Neumann’s conception of a paradisaical, fusional state of *participation mystique* in which there is no psychological differentiation between mother and infant and in which the mother serves as the infant’s Self. He also argues against the idea that of a phylogenetic view of the psyche in which Neumann, following Jung, proposes that the mental state of ‘early man’ can be observed in the mental life of the infants.

Fordham argues that the self is primary in infants and that they are individuals from the beginning, but need primary caregivers to facilitate the ‘deintegration’ and ‘reintegration,’ or building up, of the infant personality structure. Elsewhere, Fordham writes:

The notion that an infant lived at first in a state of primitive identity or ‘participation mystique’ was almost useless; that had been modified to talk of a ‘state of fusion’ between mother and her baby owing to the notion that babies had no boundaries, but this was contradicted inasmuch as so many of the complex actions of an infant showed that he was reacting to an object ‘out there’.⁶⁴

59 Mario Jacoby, *The Analytic Encounter* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), 28.

60 Mario Jacoby, *The Analytic Encounter*, 34.

61 Hans Dieckmann, *Methods in Analytical Psychology* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron, 1991).

62 Erich Neumann, *The Child* (Boston: Shambhala, 1990).

63 Michael Fordham, “Neumann and Childhood,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 26 (1981): 99-122.

64 Michael Fordham, *Freud, Jung, Klein: The Fenceless Field* (London: Routledge, 1995), 60.

This is consistent with the conclusions Stern⁶⁵ drew from his research on infant developmental processes, “The self-experience [of the infant] is indeed dependent upon the presence and action of the other, but it still belongs entirely to the self. There is no distortion. ” Drawing upon further infant observation studies and empirical infant research, Urban⁶⁶ supports and extends Fordham’s critique of *participation mystique* as characteristic of early mother-infant relationships. She underscores the primary existence of the infant as a discrete psychological entity which interacts in a reciprocally influencing manner with the mother to elicit responses from the mother in order to build up a sense of core self and core other.

Based on his clinical experiences, Feldman⁶⁷ adopts a somewhat intermediate stance between the positions of Jung and Fordham: “While I would agree with Fordham that the infant experiences a sense of separateness from the mother at birth, I have also observed that there are states of fusion and identity during the first year of life which are important for the infant’s developing self and which help to facilitate individuation in infancy and early childhood.” Feldman’s position has similarities to Balint’s⁶⁸ notion of the “harmonious interpenetrating mix-up”, which, in turn, has implications for both infant development and the analytic setting, and in which the ‘other’ is experienced as neither self or as a distinct object.

Physics and *Participation Mystique*

Mansfield and Spiegelman^{69,70,71} highlight the parallels between *participation mystique* experiences and quantum physics. They indicate that the phenomena experienced in analytic sessions often parallels the non-local, acausal activity of quantum fields rather than the local, causal activity of classical physics in which the actions between objects in the field are predictable. They also point to the principle of complementarity and the underlying inter-dependent

65 Stern, Daniel. *The Interpersonal World of the Infant: A View from Psychoanalysis and Developmental Psychology* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 105.

66 Elizabeth Urban, “States of Identity,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 43 (1998): 261-275.

67 Brian Feldman, “Identity, Sexuality and the Self in Late Adolescence,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 41 (1996): 492.

68 Michael Balint, *The Basic Fault*, 66.

69 Victor Mansfield and J.M. Spiegelman, “Quantum Mechanics and Jungian Psychology,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 34 (1989): 3-31.

70 Victor Mansfield, “The Opposites in Quantum Physics and Jungian Psychology,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 36 (1991): 267-287.

71 Victor Mansfield and J.M. Spiegelman, “On the Physics and Psychology of the Transference as an Interactive Field,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 41 (1996): 179-202.

unity of the field; a field which is greater than the sum of the components present in the field and which generates entirely new properties. Mansfield and Spiegelman⁷² highlight the implications of these parallels for the perception and understanding of transference experience, particularly as it is described by Spiegelman in his theory of psychotherapy as ‘mutual process.’⁷³

Neuroscience and *Participation Mystique*

Knox⁷⁴ discusses the neuroscientific and developmental influences on empathy and intersubjectivity, both of which are concepts/experiences that are closely linked to *participation mystique*. She reviews the research on mirror neuronal activation and empathy (which we’ve identified as an essential component of *participation mystique*). Knox also presents findings which indicate that strongly ‘feeling with’ someone who is in pain can have the effect of forcefully activating one’s own neurological pain matrix. This tendency is more pronounced in adolescents diagnosed as conduct disorder suggesting a greater difficulty for that group in differentiating someone else’s distress from their own. Finally, Knox highlights research which indicates that an empathic response from a therapist or significant other is essential to core affective regulation in individuals with early relational trauma.

Mizen, referencing Schore,⁷⁵ highlights the likely physiological correlates of interpersonal *participation mystique* experiences: “...neurological systems operate in a synchronous fashion between individuals in a way that can communicate aspects of subjective (mostly unconsciously perceived sensory and affective) experience. Between carers and infants this includes the capacity to evoke unconscious, affective, biopsychological states in each other, for example, as a means of communication; upon this depends a carer’s capacity to attune to, manage, mediate and regulate an infant’s body states, including affects.”⁷⁶ It seems clear that the research reviewed by Mizen and Knox points towards mutual identificatory and regulatory

72 Victor Mansfield and J.M. Spiegelman, “On the Physics and Psychology of the Transference as an Interactive Field,” 1996.

73 J.M. Spiegelman, *Psychotherapy as a Mutual Process* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Press, 1996).

74 Jean Knox, “‘Feeling For’ and ‘Feeling With’: Developmental and Neuroscientific Perspectives on Intersubjectivity and Empathy,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 58 (2013): 491–509.

75 Allan Schore, “Clinical Implications of a Psychoneurobiological Model of Projective Identification,” in *Primitive Mental States*, Vol. II, ed. Shelley Alhanati, London: Karnac, 2002.

76 Richard Mizen, “The Embodied Mind,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 54 (2009): 257.

processes that are occurring constantly on a neurological level whenever there is interpersonal interaction.

Experimental Research and *Participation Mystique*

Reed^{77,78} has presented the results and discussion from a novel set of experimental designs to examine whether *participation mystique* phenomenon, which he equates associates with a broader category of liminal experience, can be constellated and evaluated in a research setting. Reed describes the experiment and his conclusions in this way:

The phenomenology of the experience of being in psychic contact with another person was explored in a series of observations using a novel dyadic interaction in imaginal space. Research participants working in pairs with eyes closed received instructions to imagine being in mental contact with one another for three minutes while they observed their internal experiences. Their reports indicated that the imagined contact was experienced as real, as intimate, and aroused the ambivalences usually associated with intimacy as well as phenomena suggestive of projective identification effects. This first part demonstrated that the liminal zone, or the transitional space between individuals, can be experimentally observed through the imagination.⁷⁹

Unitary Reality and *Participation Mystique*

I'd like to close this section with an examination of Neumann's concept of 'unitary reality'⁸⁰ which I believe is one of the most unappreciated conceptual developments to emerge from Jung's incorporation of *participation mystique* into the system of analytical psychology. Neumann indicates that a primary feeling experience of unitary reality is the sense that something is being unified, something previously split is coming together again and redeemed, or that

77 Henry Reed, "Close Encounters in the Liminal Zone: Experiments in Imaginal Communication Part I," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 41 (1996a): 81-116.

78 Henry Reed, "Close Encounters in the Liminal Zone: Experiments in Imaginal Communication Part II," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 41 (1996b): 203-226.

79 Henry Reed, "Close Encounters in the Liminal Zone," 81.

80 Erich Neumann, *The Place of Creation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

something previously in exile or banishment is reclaimed. He also describes the experience of unitary reality as “the process whereby reality becomes transparent.”⁸¹

Neumann’s work on unitary reality was originally published in the 1952 Eranos Yearbook and he should probably be considered, along with Jung, one of the first intersubjective theorists (intersubjectivity will be discussed more fully in the next section). His theory of unitary reality anticipates similar work in the area of intersubjectivity by authors such as Atwood and Stolorow,⁸² Ogden⁸³ and Benjamin.⁸⁴ At the same time Neumann’s work is broader, more encompassing, than the authors he antedates.

Neumann proposes that there are two types of consciousness: “conscious knowledge” and “perceiving knowledge” or “extraneous knowledge.” He associates “conscious knowledge” with the ego-complex which splits experience into polarized categories, and indicates that “perceiving” or “extraneous” consciousness is knowledge that is beyond the ability of the ego-complex to process. It is through this “extraneous knowledge dimension” that Neumann hypothesizes a meaningful order and connection with our environments is discernible. Neumann’s conceptual model has strong similarities with the contemporary work of the Boston Change Process Study Group around ‘explicit’ and ‘implicit’ domains of experience.⁸⁵

Neumann argues that through the excess focus on conscious knowledge we have renounced awareness of the world’s unity and continuity, as well as its aliveness and significance, which Neumann indicates is primarily experienced through feelings and intuition. Expanding on this idea, Neumann indicates, “We have lost our sense of unitary reality, our experience of identity and of the sympathy of all things, and as a result we have fallen into solitude and isolation of a dead and empty cosmic space.”⁸⁶

Neumann goes on to argue that the term *abaissement du niveau mental*⁸⁷ is used somewhat pejoratively as though no consciousness is present in these states where extraneous knowledge dominates. In a similar fashion, he desires to resurrect the idea of *participation mystique* from being used as a label to characterize primitive forms of thinking, in which the distinction between subject and object is blurred, to one in which a specific type of knowledge is avail-

81 Erich Neumann, *The Place of Creation*, 1989, 124.

82 George Atwood and Robert Stolorow, *Structures of Subjectivity: Explorations in Psychoanalytic Phenomenology* (Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, 1984).

83 Thomas Ogden, *Subjects of Analysis* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1994).

84 Jessica Benjamin, “Beyond Doer and Done To,” *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 73 (2004): 5-46.

85 Boston Change Process Study Group, *Change in Psychotherapy: A Unifying Paradigm* (New York: Norton, 2010).

86 Erich Neumann, *The Place of Creation*, 98.

87 A term utilized by Pierre Janet (1859–1947), adopted by Jung, to denote a lowering of the threshold of consciousness and a loss of available psychological energy available for ego functioning.

able. He refers to this as ‘field knowledge’ which is exchanged between one being and another existing within the same ‘reality field.’

The concept of unitary reality builds on Jung’s work around the psychoid realm (the essentially indivisible connection between psyche and matter), *participation mystique*, synchronicity (the meaningful but non-causal relationship between events – often inner and outer events), the archetypal structure of experience, the *anima mundi* (world soul), the *unus mundus* (i.e. one world), and the *unio mentalis* (the unification of soul and spirit). Many of these terms seemed rather mystical to contemporaneous critics of Jung’s theories but his ideas are striking prescient when considered in light of the current understanding of quantum mechanics and complex field theory. Neumann indicates that inner and outer are merely categories of a conscious knowledge system, not reality. In the field of unitary reality, the distinction between inner and outer is diminished, psychical and physical are no longer opposites, and the boundaries of form defining a person or object can become blurred. In this vein he is referring to the “transgressive character” of the archetype, i.e., the capacity of the archetype to move beyond dichotomous reality, as defined by Jung.⁸⁸ Hence he is associating unitary reality with the structure of the archetypal field.

Neumann argues that when a personality is immersed in an archetypal field it means, “There is a reciprocal co-ordination between world and psyche...a co-ordination which is based on the archetypal structure which embraces both, or of which both are partial aspects...” which “leads to an emotionally toned unitary experience.”⁸⁹ He underscores the essentially inter-dependent nature of the field of unitary reality and states that unitary fields encompass interactions between human beings, between human beings and animals, between human beings and things, and between animals and their environment.

Similar Concepts from Psychoanalytic Theory

While there have been many concepts and theoretical systems that have emerged since Jung original work on *participation mystique*, particularly his understanding of the application of *participation mystique* to the transference situation, I’ll highlight only a few of these analogous developments to illustrate the similarities with Jung’s hypothesis about the reciprocally influencing qualities of *participation mystique* experiences. The ongoing emergence and evolution

88 C.G. Jung, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, *The Collected Works, Vol. 8* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), ¶964.

89 Erich Neumann, *The Place of Creation*, 27.

of similar ideas in contemporary psychoanalysis and analytical psychology underscore the prescience in Jung's model of analytical psychology.⁹⁰

Bipersonal Field

Baranger and Baranger⁹¹ introduced the term 'bipersonal field' to describe the shared unconscious phantasy that produces the structure of the bipersonal field which is characterized by its fluidity, a lack of definition, and reliance on projective and introjective identification in its structuring activities. The sum of the bipersonal field is considered greater than the sum of the internal situations of the participants and the field can oscillate between mobilization, stagnation, integration, and splitting. This concept has been further elaborated at length by Langs.⁹²

Selfobject Theory

Corbett⁹³ identifies a close parallel between *participation mystique* and Heinz Kohut's⁹⁴ concept of 'selfobjects', in which the patient unconsciously utilizes aspects of the analyst's psychic structure to facilitate the development or repair of their own self structure. Corbett indicates, "Subjectively, the selfobject experience is a kind of *participation mystique* (a shared consciousness or merger), with an unconscious diffusion of normal boundaries, in which soul-to-soul

90 On a personal note, it pains me to draw distinctions between theories of the psyche emerging from psychoanalysis and analytical psychology, however the distinction between the fields continues to exist in the literature. My personal position is that these distinctions are arbitrary and no longer reflect the rapprochement that has occurred, both theoretically and clinically, between psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. As Robert Wallerstein, a Past-President of the International Psychoanalytic Association has said, "If the Jungian viewpoint had arisen today, it would be accommodated within the body of psychoanalysis the way Kohut has been, rather than Jungians feeling they had to leave. The kind of unity that Freud tried to impose was an impossible one because it demanded a real orthodoxy." (in Virginia Hunter, *Psychoanalysts Talk*, New York: Guilford Press, 1994: 333).

91 Madeline Baranger and Willy Baranger, "The Analytic Situation as a Dynamic Field," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 89 (2008): 795-826 [originally published 1961-1962].

92 Robert Langs, *The Bipersonal Field* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1976).

93 Lionel Corbett, *The Religious Function of the Psyche* (London: Routledge, 1996).

94 Heinz Kohut, *The Analysis of the Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1971).

communication occurs which is analogous to that of shamanic healing, especially when the therapist can imaginatively ‘see’ the patient’s unconscious situation.”⁹⁵

Intersubjectivity

Out of the work on the bipersonal field and Kohut’s self psychology emerged the intersubjective perspective (e.g. Atwood and Stolorow⁹⁶) in psychoanalysis which incorporated the idea of a mutually constellated and influencing field in analysis. Intersubjective analysts began to argue against the “myth of the isolated mind’ which “ascribes to man a mode of being in which the individual exists separately from the world of physical nature and also from engagement with others.”⁹⁷

Intersubjective theorists have adopted the term ‘the analytic third’⁹⁸ to refer to the mutually constructed field generated in the analytic setting. The language utilized is very similar to Jung’s articulation of the transcendent function and its by-products, “The confrontation of the two positions generates a tension charged with energy and creates a living, third thing...a living birth that leads to a new level of being, a new situation. The transcendent function manifests itself as a quality of conjoined opposites.”⁹⁹

Benjamin has suggested that we need to move further from the idea of two separate psyches contained in an intersubjective field, a movement ‘beyond doer and done to.’ She proposes a theory that “includes an early form of thirdness involving union experiences and accommodation, called the *one in the third*, as well as later moral and symbolic forms of thirdness that introduce differentiation, the *third in the one*.”¹⁰⁰ Benjamin defines intersubjectivity in terms of “a relationship of mutual recognition—a relation in which each person experiences the other as a ‘like subject,’ another mind who can be ‘felt with,’ yet has a distinct, separate center of feeling and perception.”¹⁰¹ In her model, “The third is that to which we surrender, and thirdness is the intersubjective mental space that facilitates or results from surrender. In

95 Lionel Corbett, *The Religious Function of the Psyche*, 124.

96 George Atwood and Robert Stolorow, *Structures of Subjectivity*, 1984.

97 Robert Stolorow and George Atwood, “The Myth of the Isolated Mind”, *Progress in Self Psychology* 10 (1994): 233.

98 Thomas Ogden, *Subjects of Analysis*, 1994.

99 C.G. Jung, “The Transcendent Function,” in *The Collected Works, Vol. 8* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1916), ¶189.

100 Jessica Benjamin, “Beyond Doer and Done To,” 5.

101 Jessica Benjamin, “Beyond Doer and Done To,” 6.

my thinking, the term surrender refers to a certain letting go of the self, and thus also implies the ability to take in the other's point of view or reality. Thus, surrender refers us to recognition—being able to sustain connectedness to the other's mind while accepting his separateness and difference.”¹⁰²

Interactive Field

The concept of the ‘interactive field’^{103,104} emerged out of the work of the Barangers, Langs, and the intersubjective school of psychoanalysis. The term is often used, in a more general way, to refer to the mutual, reciprocal, and often unconscious ways by which the participants in the analytic dyad influence each other. It is also used to refer to the subtle and complex ways a mutually constellated field is impacted by the interpersonal and intrapsychic influences of both parties involved.

Fusion

Finally, I'll mention the concept of fusion,^{105,106} which describes an interactive constellation wherein there is a dissolution of self boundaries, or self boundary expansion, and where aspects of an object relationship, are incorporated and perceived, to varying degrees, as aspects of the self. Fusion relationship is marked by the fact that a subject is experiencing the object (or part of it), with which fusion is occurring, as a part of his or her self. Some mental content can thus flow beyond usual self boundaries and are not perceived as separate from the analogous one existing in the object. A limited fusion experience is taking place between two people performing the same music, simultaneous movements, or between people who are wearing the same uniform. In the analytic situation, fusion can be used defensively when one of the parties is unable to tolerate separation or differentiation, in some instances because

102 Jessica Benjamin, “Beyond Doer and Done To,” 7.

103 Murray Stein, ed., *The Interactive Field in Analysis: Chiron Clinical Series*, Wilmette, IL: Chiron, 1995.

104 Nathan Schwartz-Salant, *The Mystery of the Human Relationship* (London: Routledge, 1998).

105 Peter Giovacchini, “Fusion States, Collective Countertransference, and Mutual Dependence,” *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalytic Dynamic Psychiatry* 23 (1995): 411-423.

106 Paolo Fonda, “La fusionalità e i rapporti oggettuali”, *Rivista di Psicoanalisi* 46 (2000): 429-449.

differentiation or separation is perceived as a threat to omnipotent control or potential loss of the object.

Summaries of Chapters

This collection is a response that emerged from dialogue about an idea, *participation mystique*, not a collection of previously published papers. Each writer responded in their own way to an invitation to participate in this project. Two of the authors, Michael Eigen and Robert Waska, come from psychoanalytic orientations other than the Jungian perspective but were introduced to the idea and asked to respond with experiences and concepts they felt were related. In addition to reaching across theoretical orientations, this collection also brings together authors from across the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. Two of the authors, Marcus West and François Martin-Vallas, are past recipients of the Michael Fordham prize which is awarded annually to the most creative and original paper published in the Journal of Analytical Psychology and is considered the highest recognition for analytic writing with the Jungian analytic community. The focus for the volume is to move beyond Jung's writing on *participation mystique* and to see how contemporary analysts are utilizing the concept of *participation mystique*, as well as related concepts. Hopefully, this collection challenges both the authors and readers to examine their views and experiences around the notion of 'shared realities.'

The chapters in this volume are grouped in three loose categories: (I) Clinical Applications, (II) Experiential Narratives, and (III) Theoretical Discussions. Naturally, these categories are rather broad and there will be aspects of several categories in each chapter.

Pamela Power, Jungian analyst, author and former Director of Training for the C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles initiates our exploratory journey into the world of shared realities and *participation mystique* through the alchemical motif of the *coniunctio*, in this instance, the negative *coniunctio*. In alchemy, *coniunctio* refers to a sacred marriage or sexual intercourse between two human figures. In the analytic setting it is used to refer to the joining of two psychic aspects within the unconscious. Drawing on the theories of Jung, Klein, and Bion, Pamela utilizes *coniunctio* as a specific configuration of the *participation mystique* experience and illustrates how it can be constellated in a 'negative' configuration through 'envious pairing' and sadomasochism. She utilizes both clinical case material and examples from film to explore the implications of negative *coniunctio* constellations.

In Chapter 2, Marcus West, a Jungian analyst in the United Kingdom, explores Jung's concept of *participation mystique*, comparing and contrasting it with the Kleinian concepts

of projective identification and the paranoid-schizoid position. Marcus, a Fordham prize recipient in 2004, has authored two books and a number of articles, as well as serving on the editorial board for the *Journal of Analytical Psychology*. He provides case material to illustrate the continuing usefulness of the *participation mystique* concept, particularly in elucidating the difficulties the analyst may have in working with patients for whom *participation mystique* plays a significant role. He ends by exploring ways that the analyst's own personality and experiences influence *participation mystique* states and, in some instances, limit the therapy.

Mark Winborn, editor of this volume, authors the third chapter. Mark is a Jungian analyst, author, and Training Coordinator for the Memphis-Atlanta Jung seminar. His chapter explores the concept and experience of reverie as a form of *participation mystique*, particularly as it applies to the analytic setting. He discusses the origin of the concept in Wilfred Bion's theoretical framework and examines the parallels to Jung's notion of *participation mystique* as well as the Jungian concepts of active imagination and non-directed thinking. Finally, he discusses the connection between *reverie* and the cultivation of the analytic attitude.

Robert Waska is a contemporary Kleinian analyst. He has published thirteen books and over 90 articles on Kleinian theory and technique. His chapter examines, in depth, a case of early phase psychoanalytic treatment from a Kleinian perspective. Through the case material Robert illustrates the dynamics of projective identification with a difficult patient who demands to be emotionally fed and fixed without sharing, participating, or risking involvement. Transference and countertransference issues are discussed with a particular focus on parallels to Jung's *participation mystique* concept. In particular, the Kleinian understanding of projective identification based transference profiles and the resulting pressures in the countertransference are seen as indistinguishable from Jung's theory of *participation mystique*.

Dianne Braden is a Jungian analyst and writer with a deep relation to nature. Her contribution to this volume explores the interior shifts she experienced during a writing retreat on the Hawaiian island of Kauai and how that experience continued to reverberate in her psyche, dreams, and life well after her return. In a nuanced and sensitive manner she invites us into the experience she was drawn into through her interaction with her environment on Kauai. She also shares with us the ways in which that experience of *participation mystique* then became constellated in her work with her patients.

Michael Eigen is well known to most readers of analytic literature. He is most frequently associated with relational trends in psychoanalysis and has shaped the development of that orientation with his prolific writing, which includes twenty-two books and numerous articles on a wide variety of analytic subjects. In addition he has taught and supervised at a number of universities and psychoanalytic institutes as well as his own ongoing seminar for over 40 years. Michael enters into the world of *participation mystique* by turning the phrase on end – making it into 'mystical participation.' In a unique approach, Michael weaves together

personal remembrances, interactions with acquaintances, clinical vignettes, theoretical reflection, and the wisdom of the Kabbalah to create an extended meditation on the mystery of union. Utilizing an inductive style of writing he pulls the reader into the very experience that is the subject of his chapter.

Deborah Bryon approaches the subject of *participation mystique* through the lens of Peruvian shamanism. Deborah is a Jungian analyst with a decade of study with the Andean medicine people in Peru. These experiences have been the focus of two books and several articles on the subject. Her vision involves bringing Inca shamanic traditions to the West - particularly the analytic community. She brings this same vision to her current contribution in this volume; identifying contrasts and complements between the perspectives of Andean medicine and the modern world. She weaves personal experience, reflections on industrialized society, and the principles of Peruvian shamanism, which are rooted in connection to the natural world and the spirit realm, to highlight the importance of “learning to live in a state of *participation mystique*.”

In Chapter 8, Jerome Bernstein, a Jungian analyst and clinical psychologist from Santa Fe, New Mexico examines the concept of *participation mystique*, as it has been appropriated by Jung, and explores its impact on, and pervasiveness in, Jungian thought and writing up to the present time and forward. Jerome’s perspective on the material is strongly informed by his forty year relationship with the Navajo and Hopi cultures and his close relationship to several elders from those cultures. The perceptual, cultural, and language issues which limited the observations and conclusions of both Jung and Lévy-Bruhl are discussed. However, utilizing the tools provided by Jung and his familiarity with Native traditions, Jerome outlines a potential bridge between the Western psyche and the Native psyche through the development of dynamic reciprocity and the creation of new ways of seeing which he terms ‘borderland consciousness.’

The chapter authored by François Martin-Vallas, Chapter 9, is a continuation of his ongoing theoretical-clinical work on the ‘transferential chimera’: work for which he was awarded the Michael Fordham Prize from the Journal of Analytical Psychology in 2006. François brings his extensive experience in France as a psychiatrist, researcher, Jungian analyst, and editor to the relationship between *participation mystique* and neuroscience, as viewed through the concept of the transferential chimera. For those unfamiliar with the chimera, it is a composite beast from Greek mythology with a lion’s head, a goat’s body, and a snake’s tail. François uses the metaphor of the chimera to articulate a new perspective on transference phenomenon, as a manifestation of *participation mystique*, while utilizing research from the neurosciences to support his hypothesis.

In the closing chapter, John White, a philosopher, psychotherapist, and analytic candidate, brings his knowledge of analytical psychology, philosophy, and language to bear on the

concept of *participation mystique*. John begins with a discussion of the cultural, philosophical, and linguistic difficulties in translating Jung from German to English. He continues his exploration with a review of the work of German phenomenologist Max Scheler who was a contemporary of Jung's. Utilizing the framework laid out by Scheler, John helps the reader to see how Scheler's theories can be utilized to develop a more differentiated and nuanced understanding of Jung's concept of *participation mystique* and how that richer perspective can be applied in clinical situations.

Conclusion

As we can see, as a concept, *participation mystique* has a rich background. A review of the *participation mystique* literature allows us to recognize that the projective and identificatory tendencies, which are at the heart of *participation mystique*, can sometimes be acknowledged, recognized, or reduced. However, these processes are always a part of our intersubjective interaction and communication in all facets of our lives, and particularly in analysis. *Participation mystique* does not function like a light switch – to be turned off or on depending upon the situation – regardless of whether one has been cautioned about its potential dangers. The degree of influence from *participation mystique* is distributed as a continuum of experience and is ever present in our interactions with others and our environments. These influences will likely never be eliminated, nor would it be desirable to do so if we could. In fact, to blindly attempt to restrict *participation mystique* experience is to reduce the depth to which we are able to connect with others and our surroundings, or to reduce the available 'field knowledge' in the analytic setting. At this point, given our current relationship to psyche, we might wonder about the motivation behind a desire to limit such connection rather than develop a relationship to such experiences.

The intent of this book is to provide a new look at *participation mystique* - coming at it from various points of view: from personal narratives, theory, clinical experience, cross-cultural exploration, and archetypal dynamics. Ultimately, my hope is that these chapters paint a picture of *participation mystique* as a broader umbrella term for a wide variety of intersubjective phenomena. In its traditional usage, the clinical utility of the term is limited because the term often hasn't been used in a differentiated manner. Hubback finds it, "regrettable that the anthropologist Lévy-Bruhl should have had his phrase over-used and distorted, when the perhaps rival psychological concepts of projection, introjection, identification and the transcendent function really serve us better. Identifying with those structures in the analyst which have developed as a result of her working on instinctual 'animal nature' in herself, can

and does happen within the therapeutic relationship; projections and introjections can be discerned and described. I think they are marvelous, but not mystical.”¹⁰⁷ The term becomes useful when used to describe a class of interactive experiences. When the various component constituents for the class are seen as being related, i.e. having a similar underlying process, then *participation mystique* acquires usefulness – somewhat like how the term ‘particle physics’ defines and delineates a particular area of inquiry within physics.

Participation mystique evolves, just as psyche evolves, and we are now at a point of greater receptivity to what *participation mystique* offers than we were a century ago when depth psychology was in its infancy. We are at a significant juncture in the development of psychoanalysis in general and analytical psychology specifically; a time of convergence and cross-fertilization in which we have the opportunity to re-examine established or accepted theories and concepts based on cumulative clinical experience, developments in others fields, and shifts in our culture - all of which ultimately impact how we practice as analysts and analytic therapists. Just such an exploration is undertaken in the chapters that follow.

107 Judith Hubback, “Depressed Patients and the Coniunctio,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 28 (1983): 315.

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