

Counter Response to Alan Jones

By Steven Galipeau, M.A., M.Div.

Alan Jones ends his response to my paper by saying, "Galipeau . . . could, in my view, step farther through [the] door he has opened, furthering a more balanced blend of the archetypal and the individual." As it has been very challenging to create such a balance in this paper, I'm encouraged by his comments. In my article I have emphasized describing the phenomenon I am speaking to, but by doing so, have left out images of archetypal amplification that I have used in other settings.

Jones observes that more could be said about the figures of Greek myth that are scattered in the background of the Narcissus/Echo tale. As I was offering an introductory overview of some possible amplifications, I wholeheartedly agree. I liked the interpretation he suggested of Hera as representing an anti-incarnational dynamic within the ancient Greek psyche; it offers a good example of how more can be done here. I chose this myth as the archetypal reference point for the material because the myth has multiple dimensions, just as numerous levels exist within the psychology of perversions.

Embedded in perversions is both an incarnation and anti-incarnational archetypal pull. In my view both Narcissus and Echo reflect, not actual humans, but complexes that preclude the fully realized human existence of an individual. Like perversions themselves these figures represent a form of archetypal "stuckness" in terms of the process of individuation. In my view perversions are "defenses of the self," not because they preclude the teleolog-

ical aspects of the psyche, often quite the contrary, but because they preclude an experience of both the affect left over from the past that has yet to be assimilated and the yet-to-be-experienced affects that are a part of the forward thrust of individuation. Perversions can be a defense against affects from the past as described by "reductive-causal" theorists, but also against affects that are an important component of the ongoing individuation process like the "abhorrence" that Jones describes in his article "From Oedipus to Isaac: The Abhorrence of Transformation" (*Journal of Jungian Theory and Practice*, Fall 2000, Volume 2). In both situations the perversion reflects an inability to tolerate "a sense of a separate individuality" and a defense against the affects that come with this. One struggles with both the interpersonal and intrapsychic resources to move forward.

If, as Jones suggests, "Myths represent how identity and consciousness were structured at different times and in different cultures," then we are certainly informed in understanding ourselves and our perversions by the various mythic influences on our culture, not just those of ancient Greece. For example, alchemy offers the images of the lesser and greater coniunctio which I believe, as elucidated by Edward Edinger, offer further archetypal amplification of the psychology of perversions. Here perversions would express a form of the lesser coniunctio (see the first paragraph and note 2 of my article), a path of uniting the syzygy that is

quicker, easier, and more seductive than that of the way of individuation towards the greater coniunctio.

Another archetypal image that I think is particularly relevant for us as Jungians, or others who take a more "spiritual" and less "reductive-causal" approach to the life of the soul, is that of the messianic banquet that Edinger has also elaborated upon (see *The Aion Lectures*, pp. 97-98). This image concerns the assimilation of the primordial beasts Behemoth and Leviathan that appear in Job's vision of God. Edinger describes the dangers of trying to eat Leviathan raw, in an uncooked form. This image too can be seen as representing the powerful and potentially dangerous approach to assimilating the psyche that is activated in perversion as a way of trying to integrate the God-image. The teleology of incarnation is at work here, but in a primitive, archaic form.

These archetypal images support Jones's observation that there is more to be discovered through the door that has been opened by this paper, whether it be a blend of the archetypal and the individual or wrestling with the issues within Jungian hermeneutics that Jones describes. I personally don't relate to a reductive-causal versus teleological-perspectives dichotomy, but I do wrestle with articulating this topic in a variety of polarities such as personal/archetypal, intrapsychic/interpersonal that prove problematic within Jungian hermeneutics. When those who have struggled to understand phenomenon of perversions

use a different language than we do, it makes our task of articulation that much more difficult. It often feels to me that other theorists are more teleological in practice than they realize.

Jones is certainly correct in suggesting that there is more to be fleshed out in this material and more differentiation is called for here. For example, while I suggested that an analyst might use a patient as a "self-object," certainly the term he has used of "individuation object" might also be accurate. Ironically, this is exactly the problem that perversions--whether within an individual or within the analytical relationship--challenge us with: a psychological incarnation dilemma of great complexity. Within perversions do we witness a breakdown of the process of being a fully fleshed out human being because the powerful incarnational energies of the unconscious become too overwhelming? I have presented this material with the hope of opening more dialogue and discussion so that further understanding might emerge, both to inform our ongoing development as analysts but also that we may be better able to articulate to those we train as analysts some of the hidden dangers in the work we all embark upon.

While I don't feel that "the relationship of the teleological to the reductive-causal perspectives is the major issue of Jungian hermeneutics that [my] paper engages," I certainly agree that the subject challenges our understanding of our work and the breadth and depth of our hermeneutics.