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From Nowhere: Artists, Writers, and the Precognitive Imagination

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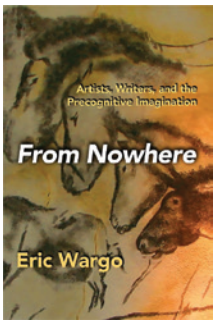

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Whatever their impact on mainstream psychology, Carl Jung's ideas have exerted an incalculable influence on the culture at large. Jungian concepts such as extraversion/introversion, the shadow, archetypes, and the collective unconscious have long been part of the common lexicon. Yet perhaps no Jungian concept has gained as much cultural currency as his strangest: synchronicity. As Eric Wargo notes in *From Nowhere: Artists, Writers, and the Precognitive Imagination*:

> Synchronicity today is more popular, and arguably, more culturally relevant, than ever before. It is the subject of countless books and blogs, not at all confined to Jungian psychology and metaphysics. The past decade has seen a flood of self-help books with titles like *Connecting with Coincidence* and *Super-Synchronicity* and *The Synchronicity Key*. "Synchromystics" actively draw connections, however improbable, among historical events, popular culture, archeology, and occult writings as a means of accessing the collective unconscious or divining the archetypal logic of history. UFO experiencers sometimes consider synchronicities to be messages or interventions from the nonhuman intelligence(s) behind the phenomenon. Synchronicity is now, arguably, a worldview, one that goes well beyond Jung and depth psychology (Wargo, 2024, p. 190).

As the notion of synchronicity has spread, it has grown diffuse, applying to a widening array of phenomena, sometimes with little regard for its original (at times baffling) formulation. In some cases, such as with the UFO experiencers and synchromystics Wargo mentions, synchronicity has come to signify its very opposite—not an "acausal connecting principle" so much as a higher form of causation.

For Jung, synchronicity did not, strictly speaking, serve an explanatory function—if it did, it would not be "acausal." "[S]ynchronistic phenomena," he wrote, "cannot in principle be associated with *any* conceptions of causality" (Jung, 1969, p. 30; my emphasis). What he sought were qualitative grounds for distinguishing meaningful coincidences from meaningless ones (Jung, 1969). The need for this arose from the role such coincidences play in people's lives, a role of such importance that astounding examples can be drawn from the life of just about anyone. When I was an aspiring filmmaker in my youth, a relative arranged for me to meet a local artist named Olivier Asselin, then chair of the visual arts department at the University of Ottawa. I was nervous about this meeting, and as I walked toward the entrance of the visual arts building on the appointed day, I was seized by an urge to turn back. Just as I did, a delivery truck passed in front of me, momentarily blocking my path. The name ASSELIN was written in bold blue lettering on

the semi-trailer. Naturally, I took this as a sign and went to the meeting.

For a practicing analyst like Jung, a concept was needed for uncanny coincidences which, though aleatory, have an irreducible, objective significance.[1] The concept of synchronicity establishes a difference *in kind* between meaningful coincidences like the example above and their less significant counterparts. This difference does not boil down to whether "chance" is involved. Synchronistic events are fully the result of "chance;" Jung posited no causal force, no "energy" of any kind, behind them (Jung, 1969, p. 18). The difference in kind comes from the meaning-bearing element that makes the event coincidental to begin with. Only when a coincidence is wholly defined by its meaning can we speak of synchronicity.

There is no denying that such events are part of human experience. To give them even the slightest *ontological* weight, however, is to threaten the edifice of secular materialism. From a metaphysical standpoint, Jung saw in synchronicity a means to rethink not just life-altering coincidences, but also, by extension, certain "brute facts" that obtain in our universe without any possible explanation—the natural numbers, the mind-body connection, even perhaps the laws of physics (Jung, 1969, pp. 84-85; Hillman, 1972, pp. 74-77; Von Franz, 1992, pp. 215-18). Synchronicity does not *explain* these facts in the sense of telling us why and how they arose. Rather, it asserts as a matter of principle their inherence in a "a causeless order" (Jung, 1969, p. 90) characterized by "self-subsistent meaning" (Jung, 1969, p. 86). Insofar as the idea of a causal universe seems to presuppose a non-causal "ground" without which no such universe could get underway, synchronicity gives this ground the structuring principle it calls for. Whether this ground amounts to a transcendental "mind," as maintained in classical idealism, is a separate question which, though it elicits much speculation on Jung's part, is never settled.[2] Nevertheless, the concept of synchronicity expands the dimension of sense or meaning beyond human consciousness. I suspect this explains both the popular acceptance and the institutional resistance that Jung's idea has encountered.

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Synchronicity also meets with resistance in *From Nowhere*, an erudite, ingenious, and perplexing study of art's capacity to anticipate future events. This capacity likely explains the concept's enduring appeal among artists in recent decades. For Wargo, however, synchronicity is at best a placeholder, a contemporary equivalent of the phlogiston theory (Wargo, 2024, p. 189). Building on ideas originally developed in *Time Loops* (Wargo, 2018), *From Nowhere* seeks to replace synchronicity with a "physical principle" which, "as it is recruited and 'scaled up' in the 4-D tesseract brain," explains art's precognitive power, allowing us to discard Jung's idea, much as the discovery of oxygen obsolesced phlogiston (Wargo, 2024, p. 299).

We have all heard of works of art that predicted the future. Those of us who take this phenomenon seriously tend to attribute it to the conscious or unconscious insight of the artists involved. In my own writings, I follow Jung, Henri Bergson, and other thinkers by claiming that, in the right hands, art offers a conduit to potentialities that would otherwise remain unknowable (Martel, 2015). From this perspective, art serves a speculative function, as "hard" as any science, though it operates primarily through what Bergson called intuition rather than intellect.

Anticipating the future is just one of the ways art fulfills this function; just as often, it brings to light occulted dimensions of the present and the past. So far as the future is concerned, however, the divinatory power of art is perhaps most obvious in science fiction. As Wargo puts it in his introduction, it is the "[science] fiction writers' job to extrapolate from existing science and predict future technological and social trends" (Wargo, 2024, p. 7). This deliberate commitment to prognostication makes even astounding cases of science fictional prophecy inadmissible in an analysis seeking to isolate the "paranormal or preternatural" (rather than merely prescient) dimension of art (Wargo, 2024, p. 7). In *From Nowhere*, Wargo therefore focuses on cases where artists could never have known that the content of their work prefigured events in the future, specifically their own future, their "long selves." His goal is not to comment on the nature of art, but to use it as a field of inquiry for finding evidence of precognition, art being especially suited to occasioning the phenomenon by virtue of its reliance on "inspiration."

Wargo opens his book by cataloging the various ways Western culture has explained the mystery of artistic inspiration—from shamanic spirits and Romantic genius to the Freudian unconscious, and from the workaday doctrine of "practice, practice, practice" to the brain's astounding computational power. Although the latter two explanations seem more compelling to Wargo than their more fanciful antecedents, even they cannot account for the "unsettling anomalies in the arts and literature and popular culture that look very much as though a creator was somehow

reaching into their future, not the past—and what's more, doing it *effortlessly*" (Wargo, 2024, p. 4). I have italicized that last word to highlight Wargo's denial that art's power has anything to do with authorial intent. In his view, precognition is not the artist's prerogative. Artists are merely people who, opening themselves to novel inputs as they seek inspiration, make themselves more prone to precognition. Moreover, their work provides a paper trail that makes for compelling evidence.

As in *Time Loops*, Wargo argues that we misunderstand synchronistic events because we have fundamentally misjudged the nature of causation. Causes do not just flow forward from the past to the present; they also flow backward, from the future toward the past. Despite ongoing debates about the nature of time in contemporary physics, Wargo assumes a particular cosmological model—the deterministic "block universe" inferred from Einstein's theory of relativity—and uses it as the framework for what is essentially a metaphysical project. After all, there is no *a priori* reason from a purely physical standpoint to believe our intuitive sense of time's directionality is correct. It could be that we are merely riding along a predetermined chain of causation, the future as unchangeable as the past. In a passage rejecting the existence of free will, Wargo writes that "any point in the future, even to the end of the universe, is just as fixed as the past is, all part of the block" (Wargo, 2024, p. 125). In this model, the present has no privileged position in time: it is merely the point at which we happen to find ourselves in the already-completed life of the universe, just as this sentence is the one you happen to be reading in a preexisting text. As the mysterious Master of Ceremonies puts it in David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, "It is all a tape."

For Wargo, forward-flowing causation holds only phenomenological primacy over backward-flowing "retrocausation"—in reality, the two are "inextricable" (Wargo, 2024, p. 82). And what is true of causality is also true of memory. Consciously, we remember only the past, but unconsciously, we can also "remember" the predetermined future, however indirectly. Recognition and precognition are two aspects of one phenomenon. Humanity has evolved the capacity to recall not just past experiences but also future ones, with traumatic eventualities being the most likely to be "recollected" to consciousness.

Just as ordinary memory is, according to Wargo, fully explainable through the "physical—and mortal—body and brain," so too is precognition (Wargo, 2024, p. 306). In his view, "it is our physical body, with its quadrillions of material … particles, that connects us to the future and is thus the locus of our supernature" (Wargo, 2024, p. 307). In other words, explaining precognition requires no recourse to the supernatural. By using the term "supernature," Wargo seems to be drawing on the work of the scholar of religion Jeffrey Kripal, where the term does not denote a reality beyond nature so much as nature in "superhero" mode, nature expanded to include unexplained phenomena that our ancestors mistakenly attributed to a supernatural (i.e., divine) reality (Kripal, 2016).

Speculative though his book may be, Wargo intends it as a scientific hypothesis for the experts to consider. "As they say in science," he writes near the end, "more research is needed" (Wargo, 2024, p. 306). It is the hard sciences—not philosophy, religion, depth psychology, or the occult—that will explain precognition, and, in doing so, render obsolete all theories that fail to reduce the phenomenon to the interactions of information-bearing particles in spacetime. Wargo is interested in the paranormal only insofar as it can be normalized within a (revised) materialist paradigm.

From Nowhere's greatest strength lies in the bounty of evidence it offers. It spills over with fascinating histories and analyses of the precognitive works of writers, visual artists, and filmmakers. Readers interested in the intersections of art and the paranormal will recognize old favorites such as H.R. Giger, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Philip K. Dick, but Wargo also ranges farther afield, discussing the paranormal element in Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*, the paintings of Cy Twombly, the life of Mark Twain, and the meeting of Octavia Butler's novel *Kindred* with James Cameron's film *The Terminator*. The precognitive "hits" that Wargo locates in this material vary in plausibility from the highly compelling to the dubious. At times, it appears that precognition may share with synchronicity a propensity to make its proponents see it everywhere.

The book opens with the case of the Jamaican-American sculptor Michael Richards, who died in his studio on the 92nd floor of the World Trade Centre's North Tower on September 11th, 2001. In the years leading up to his death, Richards had created an impressive body of work frequently juxtaposing death and aviation. *Tar Baby vs. St. Sebastian*, a sculpture made just two years before 9/11, depicted a Tuskegee Airman pierced by multiple airplanes, symbolizing the martyrdom and contradictions of Black military heroes in American history. Richards' repeated use of aviation imagery and themes of flight, sacrifice, and destruction appears to prefigure the circumstances of his

demise. The resonance is strong enough to raise questions about whether artists can unconsciously foresee their futures through their creative work.

Although Richards' story, viewed in isolation, could easily be put down to chance, considering it alongside the examples that follow, it is difficult to imagine a good-faith reader concluding that nothing unusual is at play. The question is what this "something" is. From a Jungian standpoint, the creation of *Tar Baby vs. St. Sebastian* (or several other works by Richards) certainly qualifies as a synchronistic event—a coincidence of real symbolic heft, whose significance comes precisely from its acausal origin. From this perspective, what makes the event so impactful is that it transcends causality altogether. The Jungian interpretation has the advantage of preserving the *sui generis* status of the sculpture, which remains interpretable on its own terms as the signed creation of an artist freely expressing a singular vision out of his own experience. At the same time, it also allows for the work to be synchronistically tied to the event of its creator's death. The event may deepen the artwork, but it does not explain it.

Wargo, however, seeks a causal explanation. He interprets Richards' aviation-themed art as the unconscious effect of its creator's future death at the hands of airplane hijackers. This event is the true cause of the sculpture, and it becomes unclear what relation remains between it and its symbolic affordances. What do we make of *Tar Baby vs. St. Sebastian*'s connection to aviation, war, and the Black American experience—themes the artist himself ostensibly saw as central? Wargo might argue that a retrocausal explanation does not diminish the work's thematic relevance; but given that Richards' death literally *determined* the sculpture's form, it is difficult to see how he could do so without attributing its relevance to chance—in other words, without inadvertently reviving the principle of synchronicity he seeks to supplant. While Jung privileged the spontaneous emergence of sense in life and art, grounding causality in a preexisting stratum of self-subsistent meaning, Wargo appears to subordinate meaning to a mechanistic schema. His theory explains Richards' work, but only at the cost of reducing it to a hidden cause that has little to do with his creative agency.[3]

In a later chapter, Wargo similarly attributes Sigmund Freud's ideas to the misinterpretation of an early dream which, he argues, foretold the cancer the psychoanalyst would develop after a lifetime of cigar smoking. Wargo even suggests that Freud's fascination with the Oedipus myth—the story of a man who fulfills a prophecy by trying to avert it—was a consequence of this misinterpretation, which the father of modern dream analysis could only have recognized too late. According to Wargo, there was virtually no way Freud could have correctly interpreted his dream. (As we shall soon see, it was mathematically impossible.) But in light of such a claim, how are we to assess Freud's career if not as a kind of cosmic joke? One might counter that Freud himself attributed human actions to unconscious drives that shape our fate. Nevertheless, there is a contingency, an alterability, in any psychological model that is absent from a theory rooted in physical necessity, as Wargo's is.[4] It is significant, I think, that *From Nowhere* gives the lie to Freud's quip, "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar." In its pages, that same cigar—a scintilla of spontaneity in the face of unconscious determinism—becomes the key that locks Freud into a prison of blind causation.

The sense of cosmic imprisonment increases when one considers Wargo's rejection of free will—a common enough position, but one whose sinister consequences become apparent in this book. If one considers causality to be a fundamental principle, one cannot acknowledge the precognitive power of certain artworks without inferring that we are all helpless passengers on a self-piloting ship. On that note, *From Nowhere* includes a discussion of the 1898 novel *Futility*, in which the author Morgan Robertson unwittingly predicted the Titanic disaster with uncanny accuracy, even naming his fictional vessel the Titan. If Michael Richards had read about this extraordinary case and reinterpreted his own work in light of its implications, might he have steered the course of his life toward a different end? Not according to Wargo, who holds that the future is as inalterable as the past, and free will has only a phenomenological (read: ultimately illusory) existence (Wargo, 2024, pp. 124-25). If precognition gives us access to the future, it can only do so on condition that the future actually *be*comes the future, that is, that it is impossible to change or avert. Even the clearest instance of apparent precognition can only be *actual* precognition if nothing can be done about it. Futility, indeed.

In chapter three (pp. 73-103), Wargo discusses the case of a Washington mother who dreamt of a chandelier falling on her sleeping child at exactly 4:35 a.m. Despite her husband's encouragement to stay in bed, the woman got up and brought the baby to the bedroom. As foretold by the dream, the chandelier fell at the predicted time, waking the couple as it crashed into the crib. It would be odd indeed to have such an experience and *not* conclude that the child would have been harmed or killed if one had

not freely decided to heed the dream. Wargo, however, argues against this interpretation, suggesting instead that what the woman precognized was not a possibility within the undetermined future, but "her own horrified imagining of a terrible possibility, a 'what if' … that the fall of the chandelier would provoke in her a couple of hours later" (Wargo, 2024, p. 82). The dream, in other words, was an effect of her predestined decision to remove the baby from its crib—*because of the dream.* This is what Wargo calls a "'time loop' formation in the block universe" (Wargo, 2024, p. 83). Nonsensical though it may seem, only such an interpretation is consistent with a deterministic universe that includes precognition.

When Jung was conceptualizing synchronicity, he dismissed the idea of backward causation on logical grounds. "[I]t would be absurd," Wargo quotes him as saying, "to suppose that a situation which does not yet exist and will only occur in the future could transmit itself as a phenomenon of energy to a receiver in the present" (Jung, 1969, p. 19). I will share my views on whether Jung's judgment is sound at the end of this review. For now, the point is to illustrate that Wargo categorically denies that precognition is, in any direct way, actionable.

Whether drawn from dreams or art, few of the cases discussed in *From Nowhere* are as literal and direct as the story of the Washington mother. This, Wargo argues, is by design. He cites the physicist Kip Thorne, who concluded, on the basis of the Novikov self-consistency principle, that a theoretical billiard ball sent back in time to collide with its past self would necessarily knock itself back up the same temporal trajectory, thereby preventing any alteration of the past that would result in an inconsistency. Precognition exists, but acting on it to change the future is impossible. As Wargo writes, "*You are never going to have a completely accurate and clear precognitive dream about an outcome you would and could intercede to prevent*" (Wargo, 2024, p. 82; original emphasis).

In a manner reminiscent of Descartes's malicious demon, nature prevents us from acting on our precognitive visions by making sure the information "can *only* reach us … obliquely, indirectly, symbolically." The reason, Wargo explains, is that "a kind of gravitational lensing … inevitably distorts our perception of crises, catastrophes, and traumas: We never foresee them with the clarity that would enable us to avert them entirely, since that would be a paradox" (Wargo, 2024, p. 126). Simply put, physical laws compel the premonitions of dreamers and artists to manifest inscrutably. Indeed, the symbols found in dreams and works of art are nothing more than "the obliquely aimed billiard balls shot back in time through wormholes from our own older selves" (Wargo, 2024, p. 83). Nature cloaks our premonitions to ensure that we perceive them as enigmas. Unable to decode them, we are destined to live out the events they reveal (and conceal); everything we do only safeguards their fulfilment, and only afterward may we finally learn what they meant.

Unfortunately, Wargo does not explain how quantitative physical laws could produce something as qualitative as a symbolic expression—one might as well posit a law stating that any can of alphabet soup hurled at a wall must necessarily spell out a sonnet. Wargo does claim our minds are involved in the distortion, either because they seek to lessen the trauma or because they are forced to use memories of the past to build their memories of the future. Be that as it may, one might reasonably ask why the systematic symbolization of precognitive images is needed to begin with, given that the future is fixed. In a deterministic block universe, there would be nothing we could do to prevent even a crystal-clear premonition from coming to pass.

Why, then, does nature bother? In his final chapter, Wargo writes that the evidence "points strongly toward some Darwinian solution" (Wargo, 2024, p. 306). Earlier, he suggests that "precognition prepares us for future experiences, such as perhaps preparing us for surprises and cushioning us against traumas…" (Wargo, 2024, p. 80). From this hypothesis, he extrapolates a complete theory of culture, tradition, and spirituality, reimagining them as survival engines fostering collective optimism as we move toward our evolutionary destiny. Though this makes sense on its face, I do not see how it squares with a block universe in which the future remains the same whether we know about it or not. A complex process of universally distributed—and systematically occluded—foreknowledge of the future would seem the last thing such a universe needs.

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There are theories that explain too much. In *From Nowhere*, Wargo uses retrocausation and precognition to explain not just art but also psychology and religion, leaving us in a world transformed. The problem is that the transformation is entirely subtractive; everything, and art above all, means less by the end than it did before. To return to my personal example, if I had learned that Mr. Asselin had hired a truck emblazoned with his name to ensure I kept my appointment, the numinous character of the event would have evaporated (and I would

probably have been even less inclined to make the meeting). Synchronicity only works if it is spontaneous, if it testifies that meaning transcends causal processes (Jung, 1969, p. 18). Of course, in Wargo's universe, there is no synchronicity—only systematically misinterpreted causal necessity. By giving a (retro)causal explanation for the apparently spontaneous emergence of meaning "from nowhere," he dethrones Jung's idea, but he also removes the relevance of any event we may erstwhile have deemed synchronistic.[5] This is made all the worse by his block universe, which renders time a kind of illusion, as well as his denial of free will, which raise serious questions about the utility of precognition.

Wargo has done parapsychology an incalculable service in analyzing an impressive corpus of artworks that do seem to presage the future. In fact, he does such a good job that he includes examples that threaten his explanatory model. For Wargo's theory to work, it is imperative that "premories" be limited to a person's actual life experience, just as memories are. As he stresses, we do not precognize events, but our future *experience* of events. It should therefore be impossible for an artwork to predict something that will happen after its creator's death. The most impressive case of precognitive art discussed in *From Nowhere*, however, is arguably that of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*. This story of shipwreck and cannibalism mirrored an event that took place 46 years after Poe's death, right down to the number of survivors and the name of the cannibalized sailor. Having presented the case, Wargo explains that the high frequency of shipwrecks and the prevalence of the name "Richard Parker" in the nineteenth century inclines him to put this one down to chance. Many of the cases he offers in support of his theory, however, are less convincing.

In science as in philosophy, the fact that a theory results in a meaningless world is no reason to reject it. Lest my focus on intuitive issues give the impression that I am advocating we bury our heads in the sand, I think it is important to address a deeper, ontological objection to Wargo's ideas—one that may cut to the very heart of the block universe model on which his theory relies.

Of course, there is no compelling reason to treat the block universe as a given; it remains one interpretation among many in physics, and the question is far from settled. Yet for the sake of argument, let us suppose that we do live in a block universe, and let us imagine ourselves standing outside it, such that we can see it before us like an aquarium full of stars. Here, then, is the entirety of spacetime, all the configurations of matter through which the universe must pass between the Big Bang and the Big Chill. Clearly, we transcendent observers could never derive from this vision the notion of causality. We would no doubt observe contiguity between the various components of the block, noting resemblances and differences—but causality? The concept implies a before and an after, a sequence unfolding through time as duration (Bergson, 1913). It was David Hume who demonstrated this most compellingly: contiguity and resemblance can be inferred through observation, but causality can never be directly observed; it can only be *thought* on the basis of experience (Hume, 2003). We believe in causality because we remember certain "effects" following certain "causes" in the past and predict similar outcomes in the future. This belief, however, arises from the experience of one thing happening after another, not from any ontological necessity.

If we were to see the block universe for what it is, we would not perceive causality but only composition. Perhaps the universe would seem akin to a painting or piece of music, where elements coexist in relation without one "causing" the other. Deriving causality from this composition would make no more sense than deriving it from the contents of a painting. The concept of causation requires time—specifically, the differentiation *in kind* between past and future—or what is the same, between cause and effect.

This is where Wargo's notion of retrocausation collapses. It seems that a methodical consideration of the concept of causality reveals that "cause" is simply another way of saying the past, and "effect" another way of saying the future. To speak of a cause emerging from the future is to confuse the very terms of the equation. "Retrocausation" implies a reversal of time's arrow, but the concepts of cause and effect are intelligible only within the directional flow of actual becoming. Far from revealing a hidden dimension of time, it introduces a contradiction in terms—a paradox that unravels the coherence of Wargo's theory, and any other theory positing ontological equivalency between what has been and what is to come.

If two events—say, Michael Richards' art and his untimely death—are caught in what Wargo calls a "time loop," such that each can be said to "cause" the other, the concept of causality becomes useless for describing their relation. The seemingly contradictory nature of the time loop vanishes as soon as we examine the relation between its terms without recourse to that concept. How shall we then define that relation? It is a big question, but I think Jung's notion of synchronicity remains the appropriate

point of departure. On the one hand, it enables us to recognize that the two events simply constitute a coincidence. On the other, coincidence itself has been transfigured, because there is no longer chance without self-subsistent meaning. To borrow a term from the magical tradition, the events "sympathize" with one another, and in their sympathy, they constellate as a symbol cohering at the level of sense, much like elements in a work of art.

Despite these objections, *From Nowhere* deserves praise for its bold attempt to address a phenomenon largely dismissed by mainstream science and philosophy. Wargo invites us to think beyond the usual categories of time, causality, and creativity, offering a provocative framework that challenges traditional assumptions. His ideas on culture and tradition, only mentioned in this review, are particularly fascinating. Through many rich examples, the book makes a compelling case for the reality of precognition. That "time loops" are not explainable on causal grounds does not mean they do not exist; they may very well be real, yet inexplicable. Where one cannot explain, however, one must still interpret, and as a work of paranormal hermeneutics, *From Nowhere* is a masterful achievement by a thinker singularly attuned to the mysteries of time and consciousness.

ENDNOTES

1 The argument that synchronicity is purely "subjective" (or "phenomenological-descriptive," as Wargo puts it on p. 299) misses the point. Although synchronicity does, of course, have a subjective—that is to say, psychic—dimension, its character as *event* inheres in the interstice of subjective self and objective world. My inference that the delivery truck was "telling" me to go to the meeting was a subjective interpretation, but the fact of a student seeing the name of the person he is supposed to meet emblazoned on a truck is just that—a fact. The subjective psyche is an essential part of the equation, but the synchronistic event itself is as objective as any other empirically observable phenomenon.

2 Positing such a mind arguably sneaks causality back in, if only in the form of Aristotle's "final cause." "[F or want of a demonstrable cause, we are all too likely to fall into the temptation of positing a *transcendental* one. But a 'cause' can only be a demonstrable quantity. A 'transcendental cause' is a contradiction in terms, because anything transcendental cannot by definition be demonstrated" (Jung, 1969, p. 30).

3 Of course, Wargo knows that a "time loop" results in a causal tautology, each term having "caused" the other. In chapter 8 of *From Nowhere* (pp. 207-222), he suggests that the absurdity of this notion disappears if we think of events emerging spontaneously, *ex nihilo*—an idea Wargo associates with the Zen master Bankei's notion of the "Unborn." If that is so, however, one wonders why the need to speak of retrocausation exists, since the spontaneous arising of meaningful order is precisely what Jung meant by synchronicity.

4 This contingency is a necessary precondition for the efficacity of any therapeutic system.

5 That is, unless we factor in Wargo's evocation of the Zen notion of "the Unborn," in which case synchronicity as spontaneous "causeless order," far from supplanted, remains integral to his thought. See note 3 above.

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