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Making Sense of Symbols and Synchronicity in Tasseography

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Abstract: Approaching from Jung's perspective this paper aims to understand how the unconscious communicates through symbolism that may be the basis for synchronicity arising from mantic procedures. A particular ritual of divination called tasseography will be studied whereby the seer interprets patterns in coffee grounds intuitively and by following a standard system of symbolism to foretell the seeker's future life events or provide answers to seeker's pressing life questions. The paper will examine various processes involved in the experience of tasseography and its ritual that enable the reader to predict the seeker's future or bring light to the present or past situation with powerful insight. Ultimately, this paper aims to understand the symbolic connection in mantic procedures between the seer's precognition of events—grounded in the seer's interpretation of the images arising during the divination ritual—and the seeker's actual life events.

Keywords: Consciousness, meditation, nonduality, nondual consciousness



Tasseography Cup

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Tasseography is an ancient [divination](#) method to predict future by reading [patterns](#) in the [coffee grounds](#) (as well as tea leaves or wine sediments). The images are interpreted by a reader (seer or diviner) intuitively guided by a standard system of symbolism which also includes visual clues associated with the pattern's appearance in the cup, such as placement (near the brim, left/right of the handle, on the bottom, etc.), color (light vs dark), density (thick or thin), and pattern grouping (what patterns appear near the image). Tasseography is an imaginative instrument that provides random images at the time of the inquiry for a particular seeker, placing the diviner as a mediator to connect the seeker's inner and outer worlds (Karcher, 1998). Querents (seekers) often report having had their cups read and future predicted with astonishing accuracy. How do the images speak to the diviner and interpreted in such a way that is meaningful to the seeker? How do the reader-intuitions connect with the querent's inner and outer world as they interpret the seemingly random patterns of coffee sediments imprinted in the cup that may catalyze unforeseen events in the seeker's life?

Parapsychological processes like divination that involve precognition, telepathy, and intuition are viewed in the mechanistic paradigm in light of their probabilities rather than their meaningfulness, Combs and Holland (2001) suggested in their book *Synchronicity*. These events challenge the conventional notions of time and causality, according to which connection between cause and effect within the linear time is necessary (Combs & Holland, 2001; Jung, 2010). Thus, such events are *acausal* and therefore, are considered coincidences. Yet Jung (2010) believed that besides the connection between cause and effect

there is another factor in nature which presents itself through the arrangement of events as *meaning*. The phenomenon in which coinciding events have the same meaning to the experiencer he called *synchronicity*. As seekers often report to the seers that the predictions materialized or confirm that the interpretations were meaningful and accurate, such synchronous events may be possible to study in the tasseography system to gain greater insights into the inner workings of synchronicity that lie at the heart of precognition.

Divination System

Divination is a structured inquiry through a practice of established ritual, traditionally in conjunction with a symbolic system such as astrology, Tarot cards, or gazing into a crystal ball, to obtain knowledge about past, present, or future, either from sources within oneself, or from a diviner, usually to some practical end such as to make decisions, address anxieties, doubts, and concerns, and have assurance over the unknown (Guo, 2012; Kripal, 2014; Metzner, 2017). All divination methods involve a process that includes a specific inquiry or questions about a life situation by the seeker (intention), use of techniques or tools to obtain sign(s), and a mediator to connect the sign(s) to the particular inquiry or questions through an interpretation (Guo, 2012). While many ancient and shamanic divination ceremonies involved rhythmic drumming, chanting, or use of entheogenic plants to induce expanded states of consciousness (Metzner, 2017), in psychospiritual divinations such as tasseography the source of wisdom or insight is accessed directly through a structured, intuitive inquiry process. The seeker's intention or personal question guides the di-

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diviner's attention and perception through an intuitive symbol system in the context of the ritual whereby enactment of centering meditation (or focusing) facilitates the transcending of space-time boundaries (Metzner, 2017), leading to greater insight otherwise unavailable outside the divination system. Any type of ritual, according to Kripal (2014), involving what he called *correspondence* between an internal or subjective state (psychic) and an external or objective event (physical) with an intention of influencing or controlling the latter does not work through conventional causation and therefore is considered *magic*. In magic physical events have psychic causes, defying the causal thinking which tries to understand how physical events have a causal effect upon psychological events but not the other way around (see Von Franz, 1980). Every magic involves symbolism, visualization, and concentration, as well as a ritual according to the certified Tarot Grandmaster Donald Michael Kraig (2003).

Ancient religious cultures considered fate and future as something that can be intuited and thereby influenced or avoided, therefore such "repeated symbolic behavior" (pg. 116) was central to their existence (Kripal, 2014). Maul (2007) wrote that in ancient Babylonian theistic cosmology everything was an expression of the divine, creative will manifesting itself in the material world, and nothing happened by chance, which led to the conclusions about the divine plans for the future on the basis of exact observations of the changes in the material world. Thus, divination was viewed as a *warning* of what was to come rather than an attempt to predict the future, in order to further or prevent it by specific action before it could materialize. Maul explained that divine guidance was sought by the rulers to find ominous signs of the future in the present, as well as in the past that may have been overlooked,

to guide important political and social decisions, rendering oracles highly important and effective tools. He noted that although cuneiform texts from ancient Mesopotamian cultures show that the diviners spent many years learning the highly sophisticated art of divination and took up oaths, and that their achievements and skills were highly regarded, they also document diviners' inability "to deal with all contingences of life within their hermeneutic framework" (pg. 364), as well as express doubts about individual diviners' competence and reliability. Yet, according to Maul's research, no literary sources challenge the fundamental efficacy of divination. Moreover, they show that different divination procedures yielded the same conclusions or complementary insights, enabling the seekers to refine the answers obtained through one procedure with another, or have signs obtained from one source examined together with another for more comprehensive insight (Maul, 2007).

Furthermore, historical records from premodern China, according to Guo (2012), indicate existence of official professional diviners and regulations related to their profession. Such regulations, she explained, described the proper ritual of divinatory practice and stated who could practice divination, how they should be trained, and the degree of the mastery of performing divination as measured by the percentage of accurate performances among the total number done. In Tibetan culture, Combs and Holland (2001) wrote, "the career of a professional diviner was a somewhat insecure way of supporting one's self and one's family. Anyone whose prophecies were not confirmed by events would quickly lose his reputation, and his trade would suffer accordingly" (pg. 151). These findings show that divination techniques were learned, and accuracy was objectively measured. Approaching divination

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with integrity and an attitude of respect, reverence, and trust was a critical factor in obtaining meaningful results, so was the cultivation of a spiritual attitude in the enactment of the ritual (Combs & Holland, 2001; Metzner, n.d.; Skafte, 2000). Additionally, the following three-tiered belief in the efficacy of magic in societies supported the functioning of the divination system: 1) the diviner's belief in his or her own techniques, 2) the seeker's belief in the diviner's "power," and 3) the belief system of the social environment in which the relationship between the seeker and the seer was expressed (Guo, 2012).

Divination Technique

At the heart of all divination methods is the process of asking a question and obtaining an answer, much like in a scientific experiment, in fact, the more specific the divinatory question, the more specific the answer is likely to be received (Metzner, 2017). In that respect Metzner proposed that divination is an empirical procedure in which intuitive knowledge is tested and confirmed by experience, and much like scientific knowledge obtained through direct observations and ordinary sense perception can be unreliable or incorrect, so can be knowledge gathered through intuitive perception. Divination uses different and complementary approach to modern scientific experiment in that if the latter eliminates chance event based on its low probability and unrepeatability, considering it a *boundary condition*, divination is based on that very unique objective chance event, taking its existence as self-evident, and making it its source of information and center of reflection (Jung, 2010; Von Franz, 1980). Von Franz (1980) explained that scientific experiment acquires accuracy and precision by repetition to eliminate chance—and perhaps in doing so eliminating

a fragment of reality—while divination is sought once to obtain psychological probability on “the whole outer, inner, present, and future psychological situation” (pg. 52) or the “psycho-physical reality” which sporadically manifests in the coinciding event (pg. 98).

Kripal (2014) stated that independent of the divination technique, the images are read as signs of the divine guiding the person toward particular actions or potential future. The divination process, he suggested, lies not in the particular image seen or sensed by the diviner but in the relationship between the image and the diviner in the context of the divination ritual, so the random or chaotic images become meaningful symbols once they are engaged in as such by the diviner and interpreted. From this standpoint, tasseography can be defined as a method of divination that involves reading or interpreting patterns in a coffee cup by the seer who engages with random images to intuit or interpret their meanings with respect to the seeker's life situation. Thus, tasseography is a type of intuitive divination based on an immediate context interpreted intuitively by the diviner (Guo, 2012), not unlike other active methods of divination, such as I Ching or Tarot, in which the random tosses of the yarrow stalks or the random layout of cards, respectively, “provide an opportunity for a pattern to emerge that reflects a much vaster pattern of events” (Combs & Holland, 2001, pg. 153). Such divination systems viewed each pattern of events emerging at the moment of observation as holographic, rising from a larger matrix and simultaneously containing the whole within it, therefore the divination message was believed to contain all the answers needed (Skafte, 2000). These pattern of events “express a common form and meaning in both human consciousness and in the physical

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world” (Combs & Holland, 2001, pg. 69) and reflect the coincidences that mirror deep psychological processes. Hence divination, from Jung’s perspective, rests on coincidences of outward manifestation of a physical process and an inner psychological process that have shared meaning (Combs & Holland, 2001; Von Franz, 1980). Jung (2010) called such meaningful coincidence of a psychic state and a physical state that have no causal relationship to one another “acausal orderedness” (pg. 100). In tasseography it manifests in the coincidence of the psychic state in the seer with an external future event corresponding to that psychic content that can be verified by the seeker once it has taken place. Jung (2010) called such events not available to the seer’s field of perception yet predicted or anticipated by the seer such that they can be verified afterwards, *synchronistic*. Viewed from the acausal perspective, the past, present, and future events coexist in each moment of reading and can only be perceived through signs or within the semiotic framework (Semetski, 2006; Skafta, 2000).

Archetypes as Basis for Synchronicity

Jung believed that human connection with the spiritual realm occurs at the level of the deeper psyche, and therefore he hypothesized that synchronicities are rooted in the unconscious activity (Combs & Holland, 2001). The unconscious mind is the realm of creative insights and intuitions (Metzner, 2017). Compared to the conscious mind, it is imperceptible, or what Jung (2010) called *psychoid*, and communicates with the conscious mind through dreams and imagination symbolically or with symbolic imagery (Johnson, 1989; Semetsky, 2013). Jung (1993) posited that inactivity of the conscious mind generally produces activity of the unconscious. When the unconscious mind is stimulated, psychic

energy flows in its direction creating a corresponding lowering of mental energy elsewhere, and this condition enables the psychoid level of the mind to make connections with the external world which manifest in synchronistic events (Combs & Holland, 2001). Basing her inquiries on Jung’s theory, Von Franz (1980), a Jungian psychologist and a colleague of Jung, postulated that divination methods catalyze one’s own unconscious knowledge and bring it to one’s consciousness. She likened divination techniques based on chaotic patterns, such as tasseography, to the famous Rorschach inkblot test (Rorschach, 1948) in which staring at disordered chaotic images confuses one’s conscious mind lowering its psychic energy, thereby enabling the unconscious imagination to unfold itself. The conscious mind gets obscured trying to make sense of the chaotic patterns—whether one looks into coffee grounds, tea leaves, a crystal, a bowl of water, or any such random images—and this moment of bewilderment invokes one’s intuition from the unconscious (Von Franz, 1980). Intuition, Combs and Holland (2001) explained, is a type of knowledge that imparts “an exquisite feeling for certain situations” (pg. 139) and “can involve a sense of contact with a more surefooted but ironically ineffable reality from which one perceives and acts with a precision and confidence completely unwarranted by the explicit facts of the situation” (pg. 46). Jung (1993) described intuition as a perception by way of the unconscious through which any content is presented as a whole without the implicit knowledge of how that content has been conceived, hence intuitive cognition has “an intrinsic character of certainty and conviction” (pg. 329).

Thus tasseography, like Tarot and I Ching, is a divination method of structuring intuitive knowledge (Metzner, 2017). Following Jun-

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gian logic, the chaotic patterns formed by coffee granules in the cup confuse the conscious mind upon focusing, thereby enabling the seer to project her unconscious knowledge into the images by way of imagination and interpret the seeker's psychic situation with powerful insight. The unconscious then takes over and expresses itself through the imagination using the symbolic language of the signs or *semiotic communication* (Semetsky, 2013; Von Franz, 1980). The process of imagination is similar to dreaming in which the conscious takes a break momentarily, and the doorway to the unconscious opens, revealing knowledge about one's inner and outer situation often not available in the conscious mind (Von Franz, 1980), including "the future things that are taking shape and will sometime come to consciousness" (Jung, 1993, pg. 70). This *absolute knowledge* or *fore-knowledge*, as Jung (2010) called it, of the unconscious is not a cognition but a "perceiving" and consists of "subjectless" images (pg. 78) contained in the deeper structure of the unconscious which Jung called the *collective unconscious* or *objective* psyche since its content is not specific to the individual psyche. The contents of the collective psyche, called the *archetypes*, are universal images or themes reflecting inherited patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors common to all humans which exert force upon the personal conscious. Jung believed that "the archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear" (pg. 361). Jung (1993) wrote: "The archetype is spirit or pseudo spirit: what it ultimately proves to be depends on the attitude of the human mind" (pg. 97). Thus, how one interprets a symbol or a sign, according to Jung (1993), depends upon one's attitude of the consciousness or what Jung termed "symbolical attitude" (pg. 345).

This would suggest that the intuitive interpretations in tasseography arise by way of extracting information from the objective psyche beneath the layer of the personal unconscious and are filtered through the diviners' own psyche. For example, Von Franz (1980) had observed when she had palm or horoscope readings that, while imparting accurate information, each diviner or medium was only getting the aspects of her personality that were similar to those of the diviner. She suggested that the diviners "get within the area of another's psychic constellation that is akin to theirs. All are true, but all are only partial...We can only answer to those facets of another personality when we have a certain amount ourselves" (pg. 42). Likewise, when the diviner is not in the clear state of mind and body she is generally not able to read accurately. Von Franz (1980) explained that this "failure" is generally a projection of the diviner's personal problem which obscures the other's problem. This could explain why the tasseographers, as well as Tarot readers, often cannot read or have been traditionally discouraged to perform their own readings, because the energy of this projection blocks their imagination or intuition, as well as could affect their objectivity (Combs & Holland, 2001; Von Franz, 1980). It is easier to provide reading for another person, because one can stay more neutral when one's thoughts about one's own life or anxiety about personal outcomes do not intercept the reading process, thereby enabling the person to read with more clarity and less bias (Metzner, 2017; Von Franz, 1980). During group divinations in primitive societies where everything was shared in what Von Franz (1980) called the "fate community" of collective problems and concerns, the diviners naturally tapped into the group unconscious. This condition, she proposed, created enormous psychic energy and tension, enabling the diviner to pull out information from the group

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unconscious related to the group situation rather than relating to her own personal issues. Strong emotions are believed to “electrify,” “zap,” or “magnetize” imagination (Kripal, 2014, pg. 251), enabling what is seen or imagined to be experienced as more real and true. Such “empowered imagination” (pg. 245) can catalyze synchronistic events.

Oracles in general, according to Von Franz (1980), were consulted when one had a pressing question, was in impasse or in an emotionally difficult situation and was concerned with a particular problem—in other words when a person was in a state of psychological tension, which Jung believed occurs when archetypes are constellated in the unconscious psyche. According to Jung (2010) “affectivity rests to a large extent on the instincts whose formal aspect is the archetype” (pg. 24). Jung (1993) explained that archetypes have specific energetic charge, and their activation produces numinous effects which he described as “spiritual,” even “magical” (pg. 95). This “mystical aura” (Jung, 1993, pg. 96) of numinosity, according to Jung (2010), expresses itself in the form of emotions, the intensity of which, while illuminating a particular content in the consciousness, withdraws energy from the rest, restricting consciousness and enabling the unconscious to manifest itself. Combs and Holland (2001) likewise noted that paranormal phenomena such as telepathy, precognition, and synchronicity tend to manifest when rational consciousness is reduced to a minimum as in dream state, trance states, and during intense emotional states. For example, during serious situations marked by high dynamic tension significant or archetypal dreams suggesting possible solutions or advance path one would never have conceived are likely to occur (Jung, 2010; Von Franz, 1980). Thus, the archetype is believed to be “a factor of psychological probability” (Von Franz, 1980, pg.

54), hence divination is likely to provide meaningful answers when archetypes have been awakened.

In the similar vein, Jung (2010) believed that emotionality is a key factor in the effectiveness of mantic procedures as “by touching an unconscious aptitude they stimulate interest, curiosity, expectation, hope, and fear, and consequently evoke a corresponding preponderance of the unconscious” (pg. 65). For example, Jung noticed that emotional factor played in J. B. Rhine’s parapsychological experiments conducted at the Duke University in 1930s as the first experiments that created excitement and interest produced the best results and quickly fell out as they got boring. When a new interest for the subject was aroused, the results improved again, hence the intensity of interest is a “psychological catalyst” for the synchronistic coincidences (Combs & Holland, 2001, pg. 77). Moreover, Jung (2010) suggested that “enthusiasm, positive expectation, hope, and belief in the possibility of ESP...seem to be the real conditions which determine whether there are going to be any results at all” (pg. 18). Thus, the energy of positive attitude and interest both the diviner and the seeker bring to the divination ritual are crucial to productive outcome. Yet coinciding phenomena, while related experimentally and meaningfully, cannot be explained scientifically as a phenomenon of energy, so from Jung’s (2010) perspective, synchronicity itself becomes a hypothetical factor of causality understood as “a psychically conditioned relativity of space and time” (pg. 19). This factor becomes possible when the psyche observes itself, that is when it is engaged in imaginative activity. Thus, in Rhine’s card-guessing ESP experiments Jung had observed that the subject’s answer was not the result of the subject’s observing the physical cards but was a product of pure imagination which reveals the

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structure of the unconscious that produces them, and more specifically, the formal factors in the unconscious psyche, the archetypes (Jung, 2010). Numerous meaningful coincidences in his own and his patients' life over the course of years that he could not explain as chance concurrence lead Jung (2010) to the conviction that synchronicities have archetypal foundations, at the root of which is affectivity or emotionality. Elaborating Jung's theory of synchronicity Combs and Holland (2001) explained that the activation of an archetype releases huge power creating a buildup of energy in the unconscious psyche. The energy overflows, triggering a coinciding event linked to the unconscious process which activated the archetype. They wrote: "The activation of an archetype releases patterning forces that can restructure events both in the psyche and in the external world. This restructuring proceeds in an acausal fashion, operating outside the laws of causality" (pg. 74).

Symbols at the Heart of the Divination System

Jung (1993) believed that humans have the innate need to map the outer sense experiences to their inner psychic world, thereby creating myths which are the symbolic expressions of the outer events and as such, are psychic phenomena which reveal the nature of the human soul. Jung posited that "[unconscious] psyche contains all the images that have ever given rise to myths" (pg. 363) and "these images have become embedded in a comprehensive system of thought that ascribes an order to the world" (pg. 365). He suggested that all the mythologized processes of nature such as the seasons, trees, the sun, the stars, phases of the moon, animals, rivers, and their interactions do not arise from the conscious psyche that captures these objective experiences, rather

they are symbolic expressions of the unconscious psyche projected on to the conscious mind by mirroring the processes of nature. Thus, all the motifs humans use to assign meaning to their experiences, all important ideas or views have historical antecedents and are all founded on primordial archetypal forms. Archetypes are imperceptible until they appear as active personalities in dreams and fantasies during significant life experiences (Jung, 1993) and express themselves by means of symbolic communication. In addition to the primordial personalities such as the archetype of the Mother, Wise Man, Hero, Trickster, and the Self, Jung has also identified archetypes of transformation which are typical situations, places, or ways that symbolize transformations. Like personalities, archetypes of transformation are also genuine symbols, and like all symbols not only can have multiple meanings and references, but also can be paradoxical in nature, representing both good and bad, light and dark, positive and negative, which makes their unilateral interpretation nearly impossible (Jung, 1993). Karcher (1998) wrote that a symbol "is both a psychic image and an attitude towards images" (pg. 230); it is an active entity that represents something, revealing greater meaning than the image itself, therefore in divination different meanings are invoked when the symbol is presented as an answer to a question posed. Likewise, Semetski (2013) explained that "a sign, by definition, is essentially a relational entity that indicates something other than itself which is not immediately apparent. It needs mediation between itself and its own other in the interpretive process" (pg. 4). Jung (1993) noted that a symbol "signifies something different and still greater, something therefore which is withheld from present knowledge" (pg. 354).

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All divination methods therefore are based on interpretation and rely on the irrational functions of consciousness, sensation and intuition, to formulate the inner unconscious knowledge corresponding to the current state of the conscious mind (Kripal, 2014; Metzner, 2017), thereby imbuing symbols with meaning. Symbol has the power to link the visible and the invisible when one interacts with it, changing one's awareness (Karcher, 1998). What emerges from this interaction depends on each seer's imagination and the semiotic relationship with the images that lead to meaningful interpretations of those specific patterns for a particular seeker in that moment in time, shaping the psychological probability Von Franz (1980) spoke of. Reading and interpreting, Semetski (2013) wrote, enables the seer to "empathically relate to something essentially other but nevertheless potentially understandable, knowable and, ultimately, known" (pg. 4), charging the symbols with energy. Thus, images no longer remain mere patterns; they become enriched when they relate to an object within the context in which they materialized and perform a specific function by "[pointing] to some real event in the present, past, or potential future that may have left its traces in the collective unconscious" (Semetski, 2013, pg. 51).

In Tarot reading, for example, a form of divination based upon the interpretation of the pictorial text expressed in the layout of cards, the archetypal images in Tarot pictures symbolize typical human experiences and events embedded in the collective unconscious (Semetski, 2013). Tarot layout, interpreted according to the purpose of a reading, represents a particular situation embodied in the specific pattern of pictures that gives it its meaning, "[mediating] between one's conscious mind and the collective unconscious, thus serving as a logical interpretant of the

latter, as well as a dynamical interpretant for the subject of a reading" (pg. 57). Thus, a synchronistic connection between the collective unconscious and an individual mind through semiotic relation enable the reader's insight into the meaning of a current problematic situation reflected in the layout (Semetski, 2013). Tasseography works with the same principle, except that unlike Tarot, in which the archetypal images delineate the potential field of meanings for the underlying symbolic processes represented in the pictorial layout (Semetski, 2013), tasseography is an imaginative instrument that provides entirely random images at the time of the inquiry for a particular seeker (Karcher, 1998), leaving it entirely to the diviner's creative imagination to "[bring] pattern and process to chaos" (Hollis, 2008, pg. 7) and thereby delineate the seeker's current crisis using the language of the images (Karcher, 1998). The diviner must disseminate from random, chaotic patterns the images that speak to her imagination at the time of the reading, the formative motifs of which she recognizes instinctively and intuitively from her own experiences, as well as from the familiar themes from dreams, fantasies, fairy tales, and cultural myths. In other words, the diviner relates to the archetypal symbols which Jung (1993) was convinced represented "the essential content of all mythologies and all religions" (pg. 97), and she does so by actively engaging the images in her imagination to create meaning. Jung (1993) called this formative process of turning the raw image into a living entity of the symbol the *transcendent function*. It involves active imagination to reconcile the tensions between the unconscious and the conscious thereby empowering the symbol with the union of the two psyches. Through the symbolic powers such archetypal imagination "links us to superordinate reality" (Hollis, 2008, pg. 15).

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Active Imagination in Divination

Karcher (1998) wrote that divination connects people with the divine through irrational means of symbols to reveal what is hidden. This connection between the spirit and human worlds in divination, he posited, is made by engaging with the symbols in complex imaginative ways which empowers the symbols and facilitates communication with the spirit through the language of the symbol. Symbols are images and pictures that represent highly complex human issues and usually have different meanings for each person, such as in dreams, for example, where the same image could have different meaning for different dreamers (Krippner, Bogzaran, & De Carvalho, 2002). To interpret or make sense of their dream and its symbolism in the context of their inner and outer life, dreamers are encouraged to consciously interact with each dream image in their imagination and develop a theme through associations and creative fantasy (Johnson, 1989; Jung, 1993). Johnson (1989) elaborated it this way: “It consists of going to the images that rise up in one’s imagination and making a dialogue with them. It involves an encounter with the images” (pg. 24). He explained that this process of what Jung termed *active imagination* is a dialogue that one enters into with the different parts of oneself that exist in one’s unconscious to reveal information and insights that are radically different from those in the conscious mind. It is not *passive fantasy* which is simply “energy appearing in consciousness in the form of images or contents” (pg. 314), rather it involves “active participation in consciousness” (pg. 312) to bring conscious attitude to the unconscious associations, thereby associating them with parallel elements (Jung, 1993). In that sense active imagination is an organic synthesis of conscious material

and unconscious influences resulting in a “spontaneous *amplification* of the archetypes” (pg. 95) vs a reduction of conscious material to the archetypal images which are unimaginable until amplified (Jung, 1993). Human imagination, Kripal (2014) wrote, has the “apparent capacity to inform, influence, or even ‘project’ (like a film projector) material or quasimaterial events” (pg. 245), thus what comes from the *empowered imagination* is the *imaginal* (Kripal, 2014). Semetski (2013) concluded that “synthetic method thus reflects the future-oriented path to knowledge, the memory of the future, or what Jung called a prospective function of the unconscious” (pg. 52). Thus, active imagination amplifies the tasseography images much like it does the Tarot pictures, turning the image into something other than itself and giving it a new meaning (Semetski, 2013).

As Jung (1993) had his patients engage in active imagination with their dream images over the course of time he observed that “these chaotic assortment of images” (pg. 92) represented well-defined themes, elements, and qualities that repeated themselves in analogous forms with different individuals, their various configurations reflecting known mythological motifs. While the abstract features of the images were conscious (good/bad, light/dark, quaternity, circle, etc.), their psychological meaning was not conscious and was a product of “spontaneous manifestation of an unconscious process” (Jung, 1993, pg. 91) resulting from the process of active imagination. These experiences lead Jung to the conviction that “there are certain collective unconscious conditions which act as regulators and stimulators of creative fantasy activity and call forth corresponding formulations by availing themselves of the existing conscious material” (pg. 94). Thus, while con-

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sciously interacting with the image, the person simultaneously experiences the inner psychic entity or the archetype the image symbolizes which arises spontaneously out of the unconscious to appear in the person's imagination (Johnson, 1989). And this spontaneous effect empowers the symbol by taking it beyond the symbolical attitude of the observing consciousness to ascribe it deeper value (Jung, 1993). Such "archetypal imagination which, through the agencies of symbol and metaphor and in its constitutive power of imaging, not only creates the world and renders it meaningful but may also be a paradigm of the work of divinity" (Hollis, 2008, pg. 7). Active imagination enables the diviner to convert the invisible content of the unconscious into dynamic images that are perceptible to the conscious mind, thereby bridging the physical and the spiritual worlds (Hollis, 2008; Johnson, 1989) to bring transformative insight into the seeker's inner and outer situation.

Ritual in the Divination System

Active imagination is initiated through consciously performed symbolic acts of a ritual which activates the archetypal energy in the image by enabling flow of communication between the unconscious and the conscious structures of the mind, thereby opening access to the inner world of the individual (Johnson, 1989). Ritual is a repeated symbolic behavior that has order and meaning (Kripal, 2014), more specifically, "*ritual is the purposive, conscious arrangement of time, space, and action, according to specific intentions*" (italics in the original, Metzner, n.d./n.p.). In other words, ritual is a conscious arrangement of set (question) and setting (context) that determines the contents (thoughts, images, feelings, sensations) of one's experience, where set represents all the internal factors such as expectation, intention, mood, and attitude; and

the setting represents the external environment, which includes the physical and social context of the experience, including the attitudes and intentions of those who provide, initiate, or support the experience (Metzner, 2017). From his extensive psychedelic research at the Harvard University Ralph Metzner has deduced that the content of the psychedelic experience is largely a function of set and setting—the ritual that is—than of actual drug effects. The drug itself simply triggers the altered state of consciousness (ASC) in which certain qualities of sense perceptions are amplified. Based on his heuristic model of ASC a trigger propels the individual from normal state of consciousness to ASC in which set (internal environment) and setting (external environment) bring about alterations in thinking, attitude, emotions, sensations, and/or perceptions of space/time and self/other, resulting in interpretation (what), evaluation (good/bad), and behavior changes (Metzner, 2017). Metzner explained that besides the normal cyclical variations of brain chemistry that catalyze ASC between wakefulness and sleeping, there could be a whole spectrum of altered states from mild and more familiar to extreme and anomalous, triggered by various agents from psychedelics, hypnosis, and meditative practices, to music, nature, sex, and other ordinary activities, each such state creating perception of different ranges and levels of reality (Metzner, 2017). Kripal (2014) wrote that ritual techniques that lead consciousness into deeper states of concentration through the action of focusing could create altered state of mind and energy which can lead to the manifestation of genuine paranormal powers such as precognition and even materialization of physical events. Active imagination requires a meditative state to gain access to the vast inner world of living symbols (Hollis, 2008). This suggests that actively focusing on the random images during the tasseography ritual

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guided by specific intention likely leads the diviner to a temporary mild meditative state. Noting again Metzner's (2017) assertion, independent of the type of method used in divination system set and setting determine the experience, while the ritual tools or technique catalyze a mild altered state in which specific inquiry obtained prior to entering any such trancelike state guides access to inner guidance. With this understanding, the chaotic images emerging in the tasseography ritual could be viewed as the divination tools that catalyze a mild altered state of consciousness in the diviner, enabling her to relate the absolute knowledge of her unconscious to the seeker's inquiry.

In his dream work with clients, Johnson (1989) encouraged people to engage in a conscious, focused activity in honor of a particularly meaningful dream, because this conscious activity with intention, in his view, is a ritual that registers with the unconscious and generates connection between the inner world of the dream and the outer physical world, thereby facilitating synchronous future events that link both worlds together (Johnson, 1989). In his book *Inner Work* Johnson explained that when the symbols are felt with the body and mind, the understanding of the inner world deepens, thus engaging in rituals can reveal "where the inner world and the physical world meet and where they reflect each other as they move in parallel fields of energy" (pg. 107). In group divination ceremonies awareness is amplified through the synergy among the participants (Metzner, 2017). When the seer actively interacts with the images during the symbolic ritual with concentration and specific intention, in the presence of the seeker who carries the energy of that intention, his or her awareness is naturally amplified, and

this transpersonal space/state could reveal greater insight to both participants.

The Imaginal Realm of Liminality

Engaging images in this embodied, transpersonal state/time opens the gateway to the space between the conscious mind and the unconscious (Herman, 2015), enabling intuitive knowledge to pass through the now permeable border of the conscious mind (Combs & Holland, 2001). This threshold, or so called *liminal space*, is the common ground of the imaginal realm where the barrier separating ego from the unconscious is dissolved, distancing the diviner from external associations, and a genuine communication between the two psychological structures is initiated (Herman, 2015; Johnson, 1989; Stein, 1983; Thomassen, 2009).

Liminality is the term used by the Belgian ethnographer Arnold van Gennep to name the second stage of a rite of passage ritual marked by transition from one sociocultural state or status to another, such as childhood to maturity or virginity to marriage, in which the subjects of ritual fall into a state of ambiguity between their past and present modes of daily existence (Turner, 1979). This threshold is crossed and recrossed between sleep and awakening, and in the in-between state such as during deep meditations (Stein, 1983). According to Stein, midlife transitions are also marked by psychological liminality which awakens the deep unconscious. Stein, who described archetypal aspects of the midlife transition and of the experience of liminality within it in his book *In Midlife*, noted that transitional periods in life are characterized by the presence and the role of the archetypal unconscious. Cultural anthropologist Victor Turner (1979) who spent a considerable part

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of his career studying rituals wrote: “Liminality is full of potency and potentiality. It may also be full of experiment and play. There may be a play of ideas, a play of words, a play of symbols, a play of metaphors” (pg. 466). Thomassen (2009), discussing the intellectual history of the concept of liminality in his paper, stated that liminal experiences have a temporal dimension from a) single moments triggered by sudden events, b) periods related to critical life changes, or c) epochs that could last a life span. He noted that liminality can also be experienced at different degrees depending on the intensiveness of the liminal moments or “on the extent to which the liminal experience can be weighed against persisting structures” (pg. 18), from subtle, to obvious, to profound spiritual. Based on this classification and the general understanding of the tasseography system it could be deduced that a state of liminality of a momentary temporal dimension and a subtle scale of intensity is “artificially” produced in a diviner or is triggered by the ritual technique as the diviner engages with the chaotic images with her imagination. Thomassen (2009) described liminal moments as a state of being in which there is no certainty concerning the outcome, rather it is a realm of contingency where events and ideas, and “reality” itself, can be carried in different directions (pg. 5) based on the “dramatic tying together of thought and experience” (pg. 14). Turner explicated liminality as “a realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise” (quoted in Thomassen, 2009, pg. 23). Thus, liminality is the in-between period (Thomassen, 2009) or the “betwixt-and-between, a neither-this-nor-that domain” (Turner, 1974, pg. 71) where “inner ground shifts, and because the base is not firm a person can be easily influenced” (Stein, 1983, pg. 9). In such state of *fluidity* imagination charges the symbol’s creative or innova-

tive potential which can channel human action in the direction of specific goals and desires (Turner, 1974). Liminality is a transpersonal space/state in which the “visceral sense of the whole situation” felt in the body implicitly beneath consciousness, which Gendlin called a *felt sense* or “a sense of meaning that is felt in the body,” becomes explicit (Gendlin & Hendricks-Gendlin, 2015, pg. 248-249). Jung (2010) too concurred that intuitive techniques are methods “for grasping a situation as a whole and thus placing the details against the cosmic background” (pg. 35).

State of Mindfulness in the Divination

Metzner (2017) asserted that the insights obtained through the divination ritual are not simply visions of the future but guidance for an individual’s behavior in probable future situations much like business forecasts seek to anticipate future trends and economic conditions, except divination ritual involves leaving the limited every-day time-space framework of perception and entering an *expanded state of consciousness* in which one disconnects from the time-space dimensions of consensus waking-state reality. Expanded not in the sense of seeing what’s not present, Metzner explained, but having heightened perception of what is there through multiple mental, imaginal, or emotional associations that are being evoked, dependent on the perceiver’s intentions and personality. Mindfulness and concentration practices and visionary experiences, according to him, expand consciousness into the “higher” realms, enabling people to consciously perceive the subtler dimensions of reality. Metzner explained that in normal waking state, perception is focused on the sense objects of the external world, and the inner sensations, feelings, and thoughts are held mostly in the background. In the relaxed, meditative state, on the other hand, the inner

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world becomes the foreground of attention, and external sense objects become background. In dream state, for example, when the outer world is nearly closed out, the figural focus is on visual imagery, and emotions, and other aspects of the inner sensory system are in the background (Metzner, 2017). To illustrate this point Metzner quoted novelist and philosopher Aldous Huxley in his book *Ecology of Consciousness*: “There is a kind of ‘reducing valve’...that functions to keep our awareness focused on the ordinary realities we need to survive, but when this reducing valve is deactivated, so to speak, we can have access to a vastly greater mind-at-large” (Chapter 9). In hypnotic states, for example, the gradual withdrawal of perception from the details of the current time-space environment and the increasing focus or concentration of the subject results in the increasing degrees of disconnect from the ordinary perception of time-space reality (Metzner, 2017).

The thoughts and feelings of the ordinary personality are still there, but not presently in the foreground of awareness. You are still in the functional state of time-space reality awareness, but there is an effortless, natural flowing of thoughts, images, feelings, and movements—for example, with a paint brush or with a musical instrument. (Metzner, 2017, n.p.)

The Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi refers to such absorptive yet active states as *flow* in which one is fully immersed in the task at hand and is in complete control of one’s actions without any distracting thoughts or perceptions (Metzner, 2017; Turner, 1974). It is characterized by effortless concentration without distractions, clear intention and commitment to goals, centering of attention and awareness, and distortion of

sense of time (Metzner, 2017). In Csikszentmihalyi’s own words, “We experience it as a unified flowing from one moment to the next, in which we feel in control of our actions, and in which there is little distinction between self and environment; between stimulus and response; or between past, present, and future (quoted in Turner, 1974).

In Summary, tasseography enables the diviner to interact with the images it provides, or the way German philosopher Martin Heidegger would describe, *encounter* the images with totality of involvement that requires no thinking such that the diviner gains, in Heidegger’s terms, *circumspective knowledge* or inner awareness of how the symbols fit within the outer world they appear (Horrigan-Kelly, Millar, & Dowling, 2016; Johnson, 2000), thereby illuminating the seeker’s past, present, and future situation with unprecedented insight. This knowledge stems from the diviner’s intuition or *instinctive apprehension* rooted in the depths of the unconscious awaiting to be discharged by the intensity of the psychic energy oriented toward it (Jung, 1993) and has the capacity to potentiate synchronistic events. Jung believed that consciousness cannot exist by its own energies alone but needs to be in what he called *compensatory* relation with the unconscious which supports the conscious situations with unconscious subliminal material through imagination and synchronicity, thereby bridging the world of the mind with the world of matter (Combs & Holland, 2001; Jung, 1993).

Discussion

Tasseography ritual incorporates the triad of a seer, a seeker, and images found in a cup which are random and meaningless until interpreted symbolically. The ritual starts with a ceremony of traditional method of brewing,

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pouring the concoction into a designated cup, slowly sipping, appropriately turning the cup, and waiting patiently for coffee granules to dry. It implicitly has a meditative quality as it invites two people to slow down to enjoy a cup of coffee together, seated side by side immersed in the ritual, while having a leisurely conversation that none the less does not include direct personal inquiries yet is meditative and relational in nature. This highly ritualized symbolic process inherently invites the seeker to contemplate his or her own life situation and pressing questions, and the seer to tune in to the seeker's inner state and as well as to his or her own, organically leading both people to a state of embodied mindfulness much like in meditative states. Combs and Holland (2001) noted that in meditative states, according to the transpersonal theorist Ken Wilber, archetypal illuminations and intuitions occur due to expanded consciousness leading to the activity of archetypes which Jung believed are at the root of synchronicity.

In his book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* Csikszentmihalyi (1990) posited that “when the information that keeps coming into awareness is congruent with goals, psychic energy flows effortlessly” (pg. 39). By psychic energy he means the energy of attention and how this energy is invested which determines what will appear in the consciousness. In a ritual the attention is centered on the limited stimulus field (Turner, 1975)—the cup with its patterns for example—and the person becomes entirely absorbed in the process of reading, being driven by a specific goal or intention. This total involvement becomes an *autotelic experience*, a self-contained activity for the sake of its own intrinsic rewards (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The diviner is immersed in the flow and is in control of the environment and her moment-to-moment actions which follow an internal logic. The following

excerpt from the personal interviews with (non-professional) seers illustrates how the seers described their own flow experience:

....First, I take the cup, then right away I focus on the cup....and all my connections from other things break totally....my ties to the world disconnect, as though automatically....It [insight] comes and I say. By coming I mean it comes into my mind....I feel it, it starts from here [center of the chest at the heart chakra]. It comes up to my mouth and on my tongue....and enables me to start speaking. I don't push my mind....When I feel from my heart what I must say, that thing comes to my mouth and on my tongue as a word and I describe what I see....

....I become quiet to see what's going on, maybe to collect myself...Then after silence, I start to see things. Maybe [silence] allows me to reconnect with myself, with my intuition? Maybe it does something that I am not aware of. I don't think I can start reading right away. I need this silence to regroup and prepare myself. Maybe that's the inner thing that happens inside me, I don't feel it, but that silence allows me to be able to read.... (Appendix)

This *flowing* state of “centering attention on a limited stimulus field” (Turner, 1974, pg. 87) is a transient moment of liminality in which the external world is suspended, the diviner's ego is relaxed (Hollis, 2008), and her conscious mind is subdued by the chaotic images, enabling her to cross the bridge to her unconscious psyche into the numinous world of the archetypes, thereby gaining “epistemic access” (Semetski, 2013, pg. 55) to the abso-

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lute knowledge of the unconscious. The diviner engages the symbols in her imagination to unearth the unconscious insight by mediation of symbolism grounded in the cup. The semiotic relation, Semetsky (2013) explained, established by means of a synchronistic connection between the collective unconscious and an individual mind, enables deeper insight into the meaning of the seeker's current problematic situation. In Turner's (1974) words:

Even when the symbolic is the inverse of the pragmatic reality, it remains intimately in touch with it, affects and is affected by it, provides the positive figure with its negative ground, thereby delimiting each, and winning for 'cosmos' a new territory. (pg. 56)

Johnson (1989) explained that active imagination to express an inner situation through a specific ritual activates the unconscious and often generates a great charge of constructive energy in the outer world, shaping external circumstances. "The unconscious connects us to other people and to our entire environment; therefore, when we focus a great deal of energy within the inner world, a parallel energy often arises in the people or situations around us," he wrote (pg. 105). Active imagination enlivens and empowers the symbols such that the symbol becomes "sedimented into bodymind; it becomes habituated, it becomes part of individual or cultural practices" (quoted in Semetski, pg. 47). Johnson (1989) posited that "if we do something to express the symbol—something that involves our bodies and our emotions—the symbol becomes a living reality for us. It etches itself indelibly on our consciousness" (pg. 103) and thereby permeates into our thoughts. These thoughts are played in both the seer's and the seeker's minds, and hence "may sink deep into the unconscious and become fixed and

rigid habits of which we are likely unaware. Nonetheless, they function as real, effective, and affective archetypal forces even if staying out of one's conscious awareness" (Semetsky, 2013, pg. 47).

Thoughts are believed to influence external realities if they are played repeatedly. Combs and Holland (2001) suggested that, while every thought does not materialize, "the effectiveness of the thought in bringing about an actuality increases...with the number of times it is thought, as well as with the number of people who think it" (pg. 33). It is conceivable that a future event, or the object of the thought, materializes because the thought is played over and over in the seeker's, as well as the seer's, mind. Not everything predicted in divination materializes after all. Perhaps only those thoughts that play repeatedly in the seeker's mind, like a mantra—thoughts charged with emotion or energy—materialize and not others that the seeker dismisses as irrelevant, unimportant, or undesirable. The emotionally charged thoughts have the capacity to activate the archetypes rooted in those thoughts, thereby creating synchronistic events that link the unconscious thoughts with the actual events which the seeker *interprets* as meaningful. Thus, precognition in tasseography may be viewed as a type of synchronicity grounded in a phenomenon "in which a thought is followed by the concrete appearance of the object of the thought" (Combs & Holland, 2001, pp. 33-34).

Examining the semiotic system in Tarot Semetski (2006) asserted that "all past, present, and future events coexist and appear to be 'frozen in their locations in space and time'" (pg. 100), and in divination systems this a-temporal time is projected in the symbolic map provided by the divination tools. Of course, Jung had posited much earlier that the collective unconscious possesses the fore-

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knowledge of past, present, and future events not yet available to the consciousness. Divination technique enables the diviner to gain access to the absolute knowledge of the unconscious, bringing this insight to his or her awareness. According to Jung (2010), “there is in the unconscious something like an a priori knowledge or an ‘immediacy’ of events which lacks any causal basis” (pg. 31). It may be possible too, similar to the quantum physicist Erwin Schrodinger's cat experiment, that at the time of the divination ritual both possibilities exist—the prediction actualizing and the prediction not actualizing—until one possibility manifests. Thus, the potential of the two futures might exist in suspended state until one is actualized by influencing the mind in the present (Combs & Holland, 2001). Future, according to Karcher (1998), represents a special metaphysical order of being and is traditionally understood as that which is in the process of manifesting itself yet is hidden at the threshold of the present. This understanding, he explained, contains one's inner world of desires, emotions, and thoughts, toward manifesting one's future. The divination symbol becomes the bridge between the present and the future by mapping one's inner world into this order, thereby enabling the actualization of the potential.

Conclusion

While the seekers often confirm post reading the accuracy of the interpretations or physically experience the presentiments revealed in readings, oracles at large use general symbolic picture that can be interpreted multiple different ways, rendering the predicting of the future events with absolute accuracy nearly impossible (Von Franz, 1980). Divination methods may be offering *expectation* in the specific area of reality and the qualitative field (good/bad luck, illness, success, etc.) of the possible

event, according to Von Franz. The memory of the actual event experienced by the seeker in the future might be “retrofitted” in the seeker's psyche with the earlier divination insight or somehow made fit with the qualitative field by way of interpretation, suggesting that synchronicity by its nature is grounded in hermeneutics. Thus, as Von Franz (1980) had postulated, the absolute knowledge of the deeper layers of the unconscious psyche can contain *only* a possible prediction or psychological probability.

As Combs and Holland (2001) elaborated, much like symbols whose meaning is subject to varied interpretations, synchronistic events are symbolic as well, hence they cannot be reduced beyond the symbolic expression they represent, therefore the symbolic meaning of a particular synchronistic event, while insightful, still remains a mystery and is numinous. “Such numinosity indicates the source of both symbols and synchronicity in the depths of the chthonic underworld” (Combs & Holland, 2001, pg. 100)—the mysterious unconscious. While the kind of material the unconscious contains has been largely determined, the unconscious content as a whole cannot be measured, thus the question Jung (1993) posed during his time: “What is the furthest limit of a subliminal sense perception?” (Jung, 1993, pg. 355) remains unanswered. How do we know exactly what is contained in the depths of our psyche at any given time to which our consciousness is oblivious? Are coincidences mere happenstance or interpretation? Combs and Holland's (2001) conclusion captures this paradox: “No amount of arguing will finally settle the question of whether all coincidences amount to nothing more than mere happenstance. The real issue is how one chooses, or has learned, to interpret the experience of a sometimes indefinite reality” (pg. 159). In the diviner's

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own words: “I remind myself that it’s just a cup...Nobody knows exactly what’s going on except for the Higher Power...But I am [reading] because it’s coming to me, maybe not 100%. Who am I to tell somebody’s future?” (Appendix). The more we zoom in to the depths of the human psyche with further research, the more we might be able to explain the precise mechanism driving precognition rooted in the divination techniques such as tasseography.

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Appendix

Summary of Personal Interviews, February, 2017

Reader 1: (female, age 59)

First, I take the cup, then right away I focus on the cup. I don't push myself; I just focus and all my connections from other things break totally. When I read somebody's cup, whether I know [the seeker] or not, I feel very close to her. I feel like she is a part of me...I feel her

existence, like there is a person here; I feel her warmth...And my ties to the world disconnect, as though automatically I focus in this direction [inside of the cup]. Then I look at the design in the cup, the patterns in the cup...The first thing that comes up is the person's current [situation], like, whether she is depressed or uncomfortable or happy, at this moment if she is feeling normal or differently...Then other things come little by little...I don't try to make up something. It comes and I say. By coming I mean it comes into my mind; I don't push myself to say something specific...I feel it, it starts from here [center of her chest at the heart chakra]. It

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comes up to my mouth and on my tongue.... That's how I can describe it. I feel that my heart is the closest to what I'm able to say. It comes from this part [the center of her chest]. I feel it... and rises to my mouth and enables me to start speaking. I don't push my mind.... When I feel from my heart what I must say, that thing comes to my mouth and on my tongue as a word and I describe what I see.... [What I say] depends on the patterns inside the cup. For example, I look at the patterns surrounding the heart [pattern in the cup]—what's above it, below it, what's on either side. In another person's cup that heart may be surrounded by different patterns. When I pick up a cup and look inside and see a heart, I don't see it as just a heart. I must say what's related to this heart, the other patterns around it. I relate [the symbol] to somebody's current situation. For example, if I see that heart in the darkness and I can feel that the person is not happy, maybe there is an unfortunate accident, or a broken heart, or something like that, and that's what I see and relate.... [or] I may feel good because I may feel something positive... relating to a love story or something that's going to happen... If I feel down, I feel like pressure coming down on my heart; I may feel that something is going to bother the person relating to the symbol, heart or anything. Maybe the person is not going to have a positive experience related to love or relationship.... For example, when I see a cross, I know right away that this particular person wants something, maybe they are in some sort of trouble and they are praying spiritually. And I feel that this person is in some kind of a need. That this person is reaching out to God, or Temple or some sort of spiritual place.... When it's positive, I feel lightness, my shoulders, my nerves and such feel much lighter. I am filled with light and joy. But when I feel heaviness, when pressure comes to me, I feel that the person is going to

have an unfortunate experience, that they are going to get angry or be heart broken—since we are talking about the heart symbol. And that's how I relate.... I feel it here [heart chakra]. If there is going to be happiness, I feel lighter; this momentary emotion makes me feel more comfortable, lighter, and joyful.... When I am in a very bad mood and my mind is clogged, then I don't have focus. The focus is on my own problem and I am not able to read a cup. So, when I feel down, when I have serious personal problems, I am unable to focus. Nothing comes to me. I must put down the cup. I will still see the symbols but I can't say anything.... It's as if I become speechless, everything shuts down and closes.... I can't say anything—nothing! I can't even try.... just like something gets frozen inside me... At that moment if I have serious problems or have a thousand things in my mind, and somebody expects me to say things, I can't say anything.... It feels as though my heart gets frozen. And if I feel that something good is going to happen to someone, there is no pain, no pressure in my heart.... It doesn't matter who it is, I feel the person's energy next to me and I feel close to them at that moment. I feel closer to their mind. Occasionally I may feel what's crossing their mind.... For example, someone who might be very anxious, I feel their energy that they are anxious over something, some subject, and they want to know about what makes them anxious. And someone who might be very calm and have nothing pressing, no particular anxiety over an issue or situation. And that's ok with me too. But the person who's anxious, I feel that their anxiousness forces me to dig deeper to say it accurately because they are eager to know about something. That this is not just a reading out of fun but they need to know something about what's going on.... I don't talk or ask questions. I don't want to ask any questions. I don't want

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their words to get mixed up with my reading. I want to say something directly and then they can say things later....because what they say may affect and change what I am going to say....If they are happy...[reading] goes very smoothly, but if I get the sense that they are burdened, tired, or hopeless, it moves heavily for me....It's not difficult for me but the process is not as smooth. I feel the difference in energy; I feel their suffering or misery a little bit....If I sense something bad, I don't like to say it directly. And I don't want to believe in something bad either. I remind myself that it's just a cup...I may warn them but I won't say anything directly....I don't want to believe that I can tell these things...Nobody knows exactly what's going on except for the Higher Power....But I am [reading] because it's coming to me, maybe not 100%. Who am I to tell somebody's future....

Reader 2: (female, age 45)

I feel here at the top area of my head, near my brain....I sense that this is not my cup, this is somebody else's cup....when it's not my cup, it is as if my brain registers that this is not mine...Then I start looking. I turn the cup and look inside....And ideas come to me...Then I take a moment of rest and pause; I become quiet to see what's going on, maybe to collect myself, I don't know what's going on inside me. Then after silence, I start to see things. Maybe [silence] allows me to reconnect with myself, with my intuition? Maybe it does something that I am not aware of. I don't think I can start reading right away. I need this silence to regroup and prepare myself. Maybe that's the inner thing that happens inside me, I don't feel it, but that silence allows me to be able to read....It starts from the wiring in my brain and maybe slowly it goes down and starts communicating with my organs. But it always starts from my head and maybe goes

down....I see different patterns in each cup. It's not just a sun, a moon. I must feel it....I do get emotional. It's happened when I see an image and I am blown away, and I have felt strong emotions that I am seeing such a powerful image. I live that image at that moment and feel that whatever I say is going to happen for sure....When I read, I am not detached. I am more attached because I do want to read. The only way I might be detached is if I see something bad. But I always see...good things. It's as if my brain is wired to see positive things; I don't wish to see anything bad....When I say good things, I feel happy because I say it with all my heart....There are times when I don't want to read. When people come with negative energy and I know something bad happened to them. I have fear within me; if I see something bad I know which direction it's going to go. I don't want to say it. At that time, I truly feel bad inside my body. And that's when I tell [the seeker] I don't wish to read...It's better that I don't read. Because I sense that whatever they wish for is not going to happen....[Person's] energy has big importance. When the other person has bad things happening to them I don't want to read....I sense from their presence. They could hide it but I know they are not happy....Energy matters. If you come with happy energy, that positive energy comes to me. And I read your cup in a positive way. But if you come to me with negative energy, I already know I am going to see bad things. I don't want to do that. Energy affects 100%. Negative affects me; positive affects me....[I feel] in my body. I feel weak. No matter how much I try to ward off the negative energy and remind myself that this person came to have a good time with me, still I am a true believer of energy....If the person is angry or upset, I can't say positive things. I can say only what I see and I don't see positive things. It affects me....[To read] I get in the cup right away. I don't like to ask

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anything. I want the reading to be based on what I see, not what she tells me. I don't ask. I don't like to get information from them before I read...If they are sad, that energy is transferred to me. I don't want to lie. I might say a few things briefly so it doesn't affect them or me, and stop reading. I don't like to say bad things...I always like to make people happy but not by lying. I can't see something bad and say something good. That's not right and that's why I cut it. I feel it. I feel that their inner world is in turmoil...Even if they pretend to be fine and look normal, I feel what's happening inside the person...[I feel] right here [chest area], all over here, I must be feeling whatever feeling they are having. And it affects my whole day...If I am not in the mood, if I am sick, in pain, not in the right frame of mind or not feeling well, I am not able to read. I can't see things...[Reading takes] a lot of effort. It's like giving all of my energy to the other person when I read. All my energy goes to them because if I don't give my energy I can't read...When I am finished, the head is done with, everything is in my body. Now that I am finished with reading, I am relaxed and away from my head...What makes a good reading session [is] the energy... If you would come here and sit very sad, then it affects me and the reading, I feel very weak and unsure whether I should say what I see...I don't feel energized at the end because I give off my energy, but I am calm because it finished, I am done. There is nothing left to say...I say only what I see. That's why...if I sense something bad, I don't want to do the reading... because I don't want to disappoint them. But I feel it. So out of 10 things, I might just say 2 things...I don't want to please them. I must say the truth. Honesty is very important to me...I think that it's better that the person willingly offers to read the cup rather than being asked...When...I volunteer to read [a cup] because I am happy, I am

ready. I prefer not to be asked...[People] don't know or understand what's going on inside me. It's better that I read willingly. If they are urging me to read, I might say wrong things because it's not my day, it's not the right moment, I don't feel anything.

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