

Re-visioning business:
Archetypal patterns in the business domain
and
their relation to the concept of business creativity

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Date of submission: September 2017



The doors of the Bank of England with caduceus on them. Caduceus is the key symbol of Hermes/Mercury. Jung states that Hermes/Mercury 'is always passing between heaven and the lower regions (...) and that the caduceus is assigned to him because he brings enemies together in friendship by mediating confidence' (*CW14*, para. 305, fn. 584).

I am very grateful to my supervisor Andrew Samuels and my friend Murray Stein, both of whose works were inspirational for my thesis. I would also like to thank everyone in the department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex for the wonderful and warm atmosphere they create for their students, and Roisin Tangney, the best editor one could have.

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Abstract

The principal aim of the thesis is to re-vision what I am calling 'the business domain' by showing how different archetypal energies of the collective unconscious operate in it and how they structure the domain's creative dynamics. In this task, I am drawing on a range of Jungian theories. While the psychoanalytic organisational approach, with its focus on the personal/group unconscious, is well developed, the Jungian organisational approach is in its infancy with the result that little is said in the relevant literature to date about collective unconscious dominants, the archetypes. The introduction of this perspective involves arguing against the prevailing psychoanalytic emphasis on the pathological aspects of the business domain.

The key value of the archetypal approach is that it exposes the inherent tensions within business life. In addition, it adds a much-needed catalyst for bringing insight into creativity and innovation as they manifest in the business domain. Jungian psychology, as I argue, offers a perspective that is instructive for grasping the complexities of creativity in business, which differs from manifestations of creativity in other domains such as the arts and sciences. Jungian psychology could thus make a valuable contribution to the analysis of business dynamics.

I will also demonstrate how the archetypal approach can be helpful in containing the unconscious projected contents (both personal and collective) inherent in the business domain. As a first step in delineating the value and scope of an archetypal understanding of the dynamics in the business domain, this thesis invites further consideration of the question about how this approach can be used to construct a theoretical framework for analysing the business domain and what this framework could look like.

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