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**title:** Alchemy : An Introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology Studies in Jungian Psychology ; 5  
**author:** Franz, Marie-Louise von.  
**publisher:** Inner City Books  
**isbn10 | asin:** 091912304X  
**print isbn13:** 9780919123045  
**ebook isbn13:** 9780585147840  
**language:** English  
**subject:** Alchemy.  
**publication date:** 1980  
**lcc:** QD26.F7eb  
**ddc:** 540/.1/12  
**subject:** Alchemy.

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Alchemy

An Introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology

Marie-Louise von Franz



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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Franz, Marie-Louise von, 1915-  
Alchemy

(Studies in Jungian Psychology ; 5)

Based on a series of lectures given in 1959 at the C.G. Jung  
Institute in Zurich, Switzerland.

Includes Index.

ISBN 0-919123-04-X (pbk.)

1. Alchemy. 2. Symbolism (Psychology) 3. Dreams.  
4. Jung, C.G. (Carl Gustav), 1875-1961. I. Title.  
II. Series.

QD26.F73 540'.1'12019 C81-094010-8

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Box 1271, Station Q, Toronto, Canada M4T 2P4

Honorary Patron: Marie-Louise von Franz.

Publisher and General Editor: Daryl Sharp.

Editorial Board: Fraser Boa, Daryl Sharp, Marion Woodman.

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Inquiries regarding manuscripts may be addressed to the Editor.

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Cover: Crowned dragon as Ouroboros, symbol of the alchemical work as a circular, self-contained process.  
(See Illustration 16)

Set in English Times by Ann Yeoman, Toronto.

Printed and bound in Canada

by University of Toronto Press Incorporated

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### Acknowledgements

This book is based on the transcription by Miss Una Thomas of the lecture series presented by Dr. von Franz at the C.G. Jung Institute, Zürich, in 1959. The author and publisher are grateful to Miss Thomas for her faithful preparation of the original version. The text in its present form was edited for publication by Daryl Sharp and Marion Woodman. Daryl Sharp selected the illustrations, wrote the captions, and compiled the index.



The philosophical egg is both birthplace of, and container for, the new attitudes symbolised by the alchemical goal of the *coniunctio*, the union of opposites (male and female, consciousness and the unconscious, etc.). Here that goal is pictured as hermaphrodite in triumph over the dragon and the winged globe of chaos, threatening faces of the unconscious. The seven planets represent different aspects of the personality and the seven stages of transformation.

Jamsthaler, *Viatorium spagyricum* (1625).

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1.

Mountain of the adepts. The process of psychological development is analogous to the stages in the alchemical transformation of base matter into gold the philosopher's stone here represented as a "temple of the wise" buried in the earth. The phoenix, symbol of the renewed personality, straddles the sun and moon (the opposites as masculine and feminine). The zodiac in the background symbolises the duration of the process; the four elements indicate wholeness. The blindfolded man represents the stumbling search for truth; the right way is shown by the investigator prepared to follow his natural instincts.

## Lecture 1 Introduction

I have given much thought as to how I should give this course introducing you to the symbolism of alchemy, and have decided on a short interpretation of a good many texts, instead of one text as at other times. As we have nine lectures, I thought I would give three lectures on Old Greek, three on Arabic, and three on later European alchemy, so that you may obtain at least a glimpse of every phase of the development of this science.

As you know, Dr. Jung has devoted many years of study to this subject, which he practically dug up from the dunghill of the past, for it was a forgotten and despised field of investigation which he has suddenly revived. The fact that now the smallest pamphlet sells for about 100 Swiss francs, while about ten years ago an excellent book on alchemy could be bought for two or three francs, is actually due to Dr. Jung, because except for the interest displayed by some Freemason circles, and later developments by Rosicrucians, nobody really knew anything about the subject when he began his work on it.

As soon as we get into the texts you will understand, to some extent, how alchemy came to be forgotten, and why still, even in Jungian circles, many people say that they can go along with Dr. Jung as far as myth interpretation is concerned, and with all else he has written, but that when it comes to alchemy they give up, and either do not read, or grumble while reading his books on the subject. This is because alchemy, in itself, is tremendously dark and complex, and the texts very difficult to read, so that an enormous kind of technical background of knowledge is needed if you wish to penetrate into this field. I am giving this introductory course to students in the hope that it may enable them to get into the material better, so that when they read Dr. Jung's books they will have a background of knowledge and be able to understand them.

In *Psychology and Alchemy*, Dr. Jung has, as it were, introduced alchemy into psychology, first by publishing a series of the dreams of a natural scientist which contain a great amount of alchemical symbolism, and then by quoting from old texts, whereby he hoped

to show how important and modern this material is, and how much it has to say to modern man. He himself discovered alchemy absolutely empirically. He once told me that he frequently came across certain motifs in his patients' dreams which he could not understand, and then one day he started to look at old books on alchemy and noticed a connection. For example, a woman patient dreamt that an eagle was at first flying up to the sky, and then suddenly, turning round its head, began to eat its own wings and dropped back onto the earth. Dr. Jung was naturally able to understand this symbolism without historical parallels the high soaring spirit, or thought bird, so to speak. The dream indicates a sort of enantiomorphism, the reversal of a psychic situation. All the same, he was very much struck by the motif which one at once recognizes as archetypal and which one feels convinced must have parallels; it strikes one as a general motif, yet it was nowhere to be found. Then one day he discovered the Ripley Scroll, which gives a series of pictures of the alchemical process partly published in *Psychology and Alchemy* where there is an eagle with a king's head, which turns back and eats its own wings.

The coincidence struck him very forcibly and for years he kept it in mind and felt that there was more to alchemy and that he should go into the subject, but he hesitated to attack this most complex field, realizing how much work it would involve and that it would mean rubbing up on his Greek and Latin and reading so much. Finally, however, he came to the conclusion that it had to be done, that there was too much buried in the subject which was important to us for a better understanding of the dream material of modern people.

For Dr. Jung it was not a theoretical problem, but a striking parallel to the material with which he was dealing. But now we might ask ourselves why alchemical symbolism should be closer to the unconscious product of many modern people than any other material. Why would it not suffice to study comparative mythology, fairytales, and the history of religions? Why has it to be particularly alchemy?

There are various reasons for this. If we study symbolism in the comparative history of religion, or in Christianity all the allegories of the Virgin Mary, for instance, or the tree of life, or the cross, or the symbolism of the dragon in Christian medieval material, and so on or if we study mythology, as we know it for instance from the



2.

Eagle as symbol of the spirit,  
by which, according to Jung, the  
alchemists meant "all the higher  
mental faculties such as reason,  
insight, and moral  
discrimination."

North American Indians the beliefs of the Hopis, the song of the Navaho, etc. we are in each case dealing with material formed in collectivity and handed on by more or less organized tradition. Among the North American Indians there are traditions of medicine men who handed on the songs and rituals to their pupils, while certain things were known by the whole tribe which participated in the rituals. The same holds good for Christian symbolism, for that is handed on in the traditions of the Church, and the whole symbolism of the liturgy and of the Mass, with all its meaning, is transmitted by doctrine, tradition, and human organizations. There are also the different Eastern forms of Yoga and other forms of meditation. Such formed symbols certainly originated in the unconscious, but they have since been worked upon through and by tradition. One repeatedly sees how anyone who has had original and immediate experience of unconscious symbols begins afterwards to work upon them.

Let us take as an example St. Niklaus von der Flüe, the Swiss saint, who had a vision of a wanderer and divine figure which came towards him wearing a shining bearskin, and singing a song of three words. From the original report it is obvious that the saint was convinced that either God, or Christ, was appearing to him. But the original report got lost, and until about eighty years ago there was only a report made by one of his earliest biographers, who told the story more or less correctly, but omitted the bearskin! The three words of the song refer to the Trinity, the divine wanderer would be Christ visiting the saint, and so on. All that the biographer



mentioned, but with the bearskin he could do nothing for why should Christ wear a bearskin? So that item was dropped and it was only by the chance rediscovery of the original report of the vision that it was afterwards included. This is what happens to original experiences which are handed on, for a selection is made and what fits or coincides with what is already known is handed on, while other details tend to get dropped, because they seem strange and one does not know how to deal with them.

It seems, therefore, that symbolism handed on by tradition is to a certain extent rationalized and purged of the scurrilities of the unconscious, the funny little details which the unconscious tags on, sometimes contradictions and dirt. That, on a small scale, happens even within ourselves. A young doctor suddenly became very sceptical over the way we write down our dreams, believing that a lot was falsified when one wrote down one's dreams in the morning. So he put a wire recorder by his bedside and when he woke in the night, even if in a half sleepy state, he recorded his dream and in the morning wrote down the dream as he remembered it and compared the two. He then discovered that his scepticism was exaggerated. The reports we make of dreams the next morning are almost correct, but involuntarily we introduce order into them. For instance, he dreamt that something happened in a house and that then afterwards he went into the house. In retelling the dream in the morning he corrected the time sequence and wrote down that he went into the house and then experienced this and that. Actually, the dreams recorded at once are more confused as to time, but otherwise they are pretty correct. Therefore even when a dream crosses the threshold of consciousness, consciousness in reporting it does something to it, amends it and makes it a little more understandable.

*Cum grano salis*, you could compare the above to the way in which religious experiences are handed on in a living religious system, namely that the personal immediate experience is usually purified, clarified, and revised. For example, in the histories of the personal inner life of Catholic saints, most of the saints had immediate experiences of the Godhead that belongs in the definition of a saint or visions of the Virgin Mary, or Christ, and so on. But the Church has rarely published anything without first expurgating what was considered to be personal material. Only what fitted in with tradition was chosen.

The same thing happens even in free primitive communities. Even the North American Indians omit certain details, considering them not interesting to collective conscious ideas. Australian aborigines celebrate a festival called "Kunapiipi," which goes on for thirty years. For thirty years certain rituals are performed at specified times it is a big rebirth ritual which lasts for a whole generation and when the thirty years are up, it starts all over again. The ethnologist who first described it took the trouble to collect the dreams in the tribes which referred to the festival. He discovered that members of the tribe often dreamt about it, and that in those dreams, as one would expect, and as would happen to us, there were variations in little details which did not quite fit with what actually took place. Australian aborigines say that if a dream contained a good idea, it was told to the tribe and adopted as a part of the festival, which in that way varied a little sometimes, though in the main they kept to the tradition which had been handed on.

When analysing Catholics, I have often seen the same phenomenon, namely that they dream of the Mass but something special happens, for instance the priest distributes hot soup instead of the Host, or something like that. It is all quite correct except for the one detail. I remember a nun's dream in which in the middle of the Sanctus, that is at the holiest moment, just when the transformation should take place, the old Bishop who was reading Mass suddenly stopped and said: "Now something more important is first necessary," and then gave a sermon on the Incarnation. Then he stopped again and said that now they would go on with the old traditional Mass, and handed over to two young priests to finish it. Apparently this nun, as is the case with many other people, had not enough real understanding of the mystery of the Mass it was to her just the mechanical repetition of the mystery and therefore, before the transformation took place, the dream showed that one should really explain to people what was happening, because if they did not participate with their minds, it was of no help to them, they were just believing without comprehension. So in her dream the Bishop gave a long explanation, after which the classical Mass continued with younger priests, showing that it was a renewal. Renewal takes place according to the way in which the Mass is understood, and here the old man handed over to the two young men. This illustrates how individual experience of religious symbols always varies a little from the official formula, which is only an

average pattern. There is very little immediate manifestation of the unconscious either in history or elsewhere.

By observing dreams, visions, and hallucinations, etc., modern man can now for the first time look in an unprejudiced way at the phenomena of the unconscious. What comes from the unconscious can be observed through individuals. The past has handed on some rare reports of individual experiences, but on the whole, symbols of the unconscious reach us in the more traditional way, due to the fact that, normally, mankind has not approached the unconscious individually, but, with few exceptions, has related to it indirectly through religious systems. This obtains generally, as far as I can see, except in the oldest and most primitive societies, and in certain other but also already codified forms of approach to the unconscious.

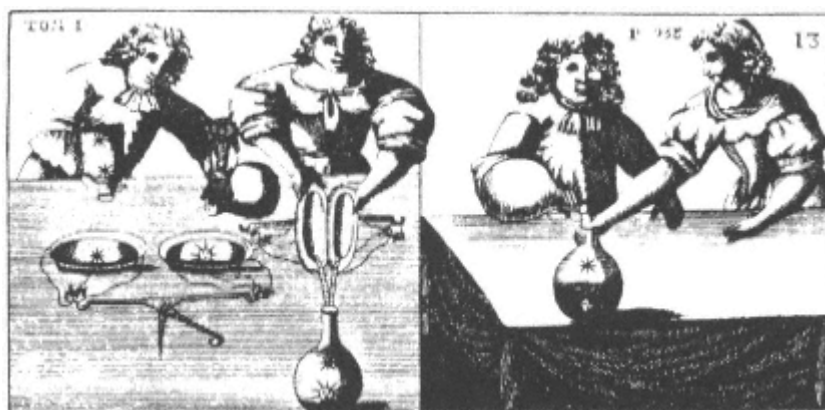
In a number of Eskimo tribes there are practically no contents of collective consciousness. There are some few teachings about certain ghosts and spirits and gods Sila, the god of the air, Sedna, the goddess of the sea, and so on which are handed on orally by certain people, but only personal experiences are handed on by the shaman or medicine man, who are the religious personalities of such communities. The Eskimos lead such a hard life and have such difficulty in surviving, owing to the terrific conditions under which they live, that normally everybody concentrates only on survival, with the exception of some few chosen individuals who have some commerce with ghosts and have inner experiences and dreams, so the people simply relate to those dreams and have their own thoughts about them, rather like a modern person in analysis. The only guidance they receive is in meeting other shamans and exchanging experiences, so that they may not be quite alone with their inner experiences. Generally, the younger ones look for older shamans, being afraid that otherwise they might go mad, just as we would. In that case there is a minimum of collective conscious tradition, and a maximum of the immediate personal experience of a few individuals.

I think it probable that this represents the remnants of an original condition, because, according to anthropological reflections, one can assume that mankind lived originally in little tribal groups of about twenty to thirty people, among whom there were usually two or three gifted introverts who had personal inner experiences and were the spiritual guides, while the strong hunters or fighters were the earthly guides. In such a case there is material about immediate

inner experiences and very little tradition.

Then there are still phenomena of individuals meeting the unconscious immediately in the organized initiation experiences of certain people. For example, in many of the North American Indian tribes, part of the initiation of a young medicine man consists in going to a mountain peak, or into the desert after fasting and sometimes also after taking drugs, and there seeking a vision or hallucination or experience, which he then reports to his Master, his Initiator. If, for example, he says that he has seen a lizard, then he is told that he belongs to the Thunderbird clan and will have to become such and such a medicine man. But there the interpretation of the individual experience is connected with collective conscious tradition and anything which is completely individual, anything strange, a medicine man would just omit. Paul Radin has published dreams of Indians showing how they interpret them and you see that they just skip what they don't understand. They pick out of the dream what connects with collective conscious ideas, and skip the funny details just as beginners in Jungian analysis do when they begin to interpret their own dreams. If you suggest that they try their hand at that, they usually pick out one motif which seems to connect with something they understand and say they know what that means, that it refers to such and such, and then I say but what about this detail and this other, which they tend to omit.

Immediate experiences of the unconscious by certain individuals may also later be codified, or interpreted, or built into a religious system. Naturally, in all religious systems there are sects which tend to revivify immediate experiences. Wherever a religion seems to be too codified a compensatory sect is usually formed to revivify individual experiences, and this accounts for the many splits. For instance, there are the Sunnites and Shi-ites in Islam, and so on; or the Talmudic School and the Kabbala in the Jewish Middle Ages, where the codified religious symbols are handed on. The latter group tends to give more value to individual experiences, the one claiming to be orthodox and the other claiming to have the living spirit, which would also be the contrast between extravert and introvert types. But even in the tradition of the introvert who claims to have the living spirit, there is very little real personal experience of the unconscious. There are always only a few individuals who have such experiences, probably because they are so dangerous and frightening that only rare and unusually courageous people go this



3.

Alchemist at work with his *soror mystica* (female assistant), representing the collaboration with his own feminine side.

way, or fools, who do not know how dangerous the thing is, and who therefore are driven mad by it.

In some of his early lectures at the E.T.H., the technical college in Zürich, Dr. Jung, in order to exemplify the symbolism of the process of individuation and what he meant by it, discussed a series of images in an Eastern meditation text and the famous spiritual exercises, the *Exercitia Spiritualia*, of St. Ignatius of Loyola, as well as Hugh de St. Victor's *Benjoumin minor*. He showed that all these forms of codified meditation contain the essential theories, or symbols, which normally appear in the process of individuation in individuals. But all these approaches to the unconscious, and most forms of Eastern meditation as well as medieval Christian forms, contain a program. For instance, a man who goes through the *Exercitia* of St. Ignatius has in the first week to concentrate on the sentence *Homo creatus est*, the next week on the sufferings of Christ, and so on. If in the middle of his contemplation he thinks that he would like some coffee, that would be a worldly disturbance by the devil, which he has to restrain. But there might also be holy disturbances! He might, when meditating on the cross, suddenly see a blue light, or a crown of roses round the cross, but as that does not fit in, that thought also has to be banished that would be the devil falsifying the process, for he should see the cross, not a bunch of roses, or something of that sort. He is therefore taught to reject those spontaneous irruptions of the unconscious and adhere fanatically to the program.

Naturally, he is still concentrating on symbols of the unconscious, for the cross *is* a symbol of the unconscious, but his mind is directed into a definite channel given through collective tradition. If he tells his *Directeur de Conscience* he has seen a bathtub instead of the cross, he will be told that he has not concentrated properly, he has deviated. The same thing applies to a certain eastern meditation form. If beautiful devas and goddesses appear and try to divert the Yogin from his goal, he must chase such thoughts away as disturbing factors. Thus in these forms of approach to the unconscious, conscious direction and a prescribed way, or path, must be conformed to, and certain thoughts which come up ignored. For this reason the symbolism which appears in such forms is not quite of the same kind as that in dreams and active imagination, for we tell people simply to observe what comes up, which naturally produces slightly different material, so that we can only compare the two products relatively.

The alchemists were in a completely different situation. They believed that they were studying the unknown phenomenon of matter the details I will give later on and they just observed what came up and interpreted that somehow, but without any specific plan. There would be a lump of some strange matter, but as they did not know what it was they conjectured something or other, which of course would be unconscious projection, but there was no definite intention or tradition. Therefore one could say that in alchemy, projections were made most naively and unprogrammatically, and completely uncorrected.

Imagine an old alchemist's situation. A man in a certain village would build an isolated hut and cook things which caused explosions. Quite naturally, everyone calls him a witch doctor! One day someone comes and says he has found a queer piece of metal and would the alchemist be interested in buying it? The alchemist does not know the value of the metal, but gives the man some money at a guess. He then puts what has been brought him in his stove and mixes it with sulphur, or something similar, to see what happens, and if the metal was lead, he would be badly poisoned by the vapours. He concludes, therefore, that this particular matter makes one feel sick if approached, and nearly kills you, and therefore he says that there is a demon in lead! Afterwards, when he writes his recipes, he adds a footnote saying: "Beware of lead, for in it is a demon which will kill people and make them mad," which

would be quite an obvious and reasonable explanation for someone of that time and level. Therefore lead was a wonderful subject for the projection of destructive factors, since in certain connections its effects are poisonous. Acid substances were also dangerous, but, on the other hand, being corrosive and a means of dissolving things, were highly important for chemical operations. Thus if you wished to melt something or have it in liquid form it could be melted or dissolved in acid solutions, and for this reason the projection was that acid was the dangerous substance which dissolves, but which also makes it possible to handle certain substances. Or else it is a medium of transformation you open up, so to speak, a metal with which you can do nothing and make it accessible to transformation by the use of certain liquids. The alchemists therefore wrote about it in the naive form which I am now describing and did not notice that that was not natural science but contained a lot of projection, if looked at from a modern chemical standpoint.

Thus there exists in alchemy an astonishing amount of material from the unconscious, produced in a situation where the conscious mind did not follow a definite program, but only searched. Dr. Jung himself approached the unconscious in a similar manner, and in analysis we too try to get people to adopt an attitude where they do not approach the unconscious according to a program. We simply say for instance that the situation looks bad, that the subject is in an unsatisfactory condition, and that we should look at that and at the life phenomenon which we call the unconscious and consider together what that might represent, or could be driving at. Such a conscious *point de départ*, which contains a minimum of programing, corresponds to the conscious *point de Qdépart* of the alchemist, so that the unconscious responds in like manner, and that is why alchemical writings are especially helpful for the understanding of modern material.

Question: In a volume of ancient dream material by Oppenheim entitled *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East*, one feels that ancient dream interpreters were also interpreting on a collective basis. Do you think that is so?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, in that they also made selections from the dreams, they took what connected with collective material. This applies also to Artemidoros. I know only one document from antiquity where there is a series of dreams which has not been

selected, and that is in a text from the Serapeum of Memphis. A man called Ptolemaeus (his paper I think was published by Ulrich Wilcken) got into some trouble, I believe for debts, for which he should have been imprisoned, but instead he elected to become a Novice, a *Katochos*, in the Serapeum of Memphis the Serapis Sanctuary of Memphis. According to the regulations, a *Katochos* must write down his dreams and we have Ptolemaeus's papyrus a unique papyrus in Hellenized Egyptian Greek in which there are the most amazing "modern" dreams. For example, "I met Mr. So-and-So, and said. . .," and then would follow some banalities, and then the name again, and so on, which would be typical of our dreams. It is impossible to interpret such a dream for one does not know the associations. In a series of about twenty-seven dreams, there are two or three in which the goddess Isis, for instance, appears. Collective dreams in which collective figures appear we can understand, but the others must be dropped because we have no associations. Ptolemaeus says, for example, that he met his nephew, but nobody knows what the nephew meant to him.

There is something else which was of great importance to me when I discovered this document, namely that those people dreamt exactly as we do. If you read the Babylonian dreams, you feel that they did *not* dream as we do, for in the Babylonian dream material dreams are selected to fit the traditional interpretation. For example, to dream about a black goat portends bad luck. Hundreds of other dreams of the same man who had such a dream are ignored, but because in collective tradition a black goat appearing in a dream means bad luck, that dream was recorded. That is still the case in our peasant countries where nobody takes any notice of ordinary dreams. But if anybody dreams about a coffin, or a wedding, or a snake, that is discussed and they wonder if anyone in the family is going to die; that only applies to traditional motifs, all the other material goes down the drain.

But the fragments of the dreams of Ptolemaeus show something completely different from the dream literature of antiquity, and one realizes that people then dreamt just as we do, though dream literature only relates the few dreams which fitted their theories if you dreamt the house was on fire, then you were in love, etc. You can always see how they arrived at their interpretations, which were not too bad, for it is quite likely that someone in love would dream of a house on fire. Such books are built up on average experiences,



but all medieval dream material, as well as that of antiquity, is concretistic. That is, if somebody is going to die you will have a visitor who will receive or lose money, and so on. A dream is never taken as an inner thing, or an inner process, but is always projected onto the outer world.

Even nowadays simple people here in Switzerland often discuss their dreams, but only on a prognostic level. I analyse a charwoman, and the other day her brother rang me up and asked why I was making his sister still madder by analysing her dreams, that dreams were all junk which he had proved himself, for he had three times dreamt of coffins last winter, and nobody in the family had died! He still thinks in the classical Greek-Egyptian-Babylonian way. Let us go back to the original traditions of little primitive groups living together and say that a man among them has dreams, or visions. There are two possibilities open to him: if he knows someone who is supposed to be a shaman or a medicine man, or a priest, then he goes to him and accepts his interpretation, or he can remain independent and build up his own interpretation, draw his own conclusions, and work out a whole system.

Remark: So it depends upon the attitude and understanding of the person in authority. Ultimately it resolves into the question of whose authority is most to be respected, that of the interpreter according to tradition, or of the person who has had the dream or experience.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, and ultimately on the person who has most mana, the great personality who leads the more spiritual life and has greater authority. For instance, sometimes people keep their experiences to themselves even in these primitive countries, and develop their own system, but if then they fail in life they are looked upon as fools so the man who is arrogant enough to want to remain alone risks being regarded as someone possessed and a fool, instead of a great medicine man. He has to run that risk, and only life can show which is correct. But even such tribes discriminate between fools who are possessed and medicine men.

Remark: In Christian terminology, you could say that such a man was carrying his cross, but everything depended on his motive.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, exactly. Or, for instance in the Catholic heresiology, someone may have an individual revelation of God,

which causes him to deviate from Church dogma. Let us imagine that he has a vision of Christ in which Christ tells him that he is half animal, or something like that, then he would say that he knows that Christ not only incarnated as man but even on the level of an animal. If a man believes that, the Inquisition which condemns him to be burnt says also that he may still be saved and still be right. He has to be burnt, because the orthodox creed must be defended, but the door is left open; they say that the heretic may be right, but that if he wants to adhere to his personal truth, he must accept being burnt for it. They do not claim that he has lost his soul for God may accept him in Paradise, but it is his fate also to be burnt.

Such a thing represents a kind of spiritual modesty, for while condemning him to be burnt they neither condemn his soul nor claim that he has missed salvation. Such a man is proud, or lonely, or spiritually independent enough to rely on his own beliefs and personal experiences and must accept the consequences, but the community will not accept him in Catholic circles. In other circles the attitude may be different. Modern Catholic teaching is also slightly modified in a manner of which I heard recently. A Jesuit told a friend of mine that you are allowed to believe something, like the man in the tribe mentioned above, provided that you do not tell anyone else about it, and do not make a doctrine of it and try to convert others to the same beliefs. If you just keep it to yourself, and decide not to reject your inner vision, then the Catholic Church will close its eyes to it.

Remark: I think that applies not only to the Catholic Church but to any group of people. It depends on whether the individual believes that he can tell his group of his experience or not.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, which is why I often say to schizoid people that their madness does not consist in what they see and believe, but in telling it to the wrong people. If they kept it to themselves it would be all right. I have, for example, a borderline case of a woman who goes to every psychiatrist and accuses them all of being idiotic rationalists who do not believe in God, and she tells them her visions. I think her only mistake is in telling these people, for that is simply being unadapted. Her visions in themselves are quite all right, and also what she thinks about them, but her extraverted feeling is inferior, she is socially unadapted. She should not speak of such things to a rationalistic psychiatrist who only wonders whether

he should intern her!

Remark: No, because his reputation in turn is at stake!

Dr. von Franz: Yes, of course. His colleagues would scoff at him if he started believing in his patients' visions. Colleagues always behave like that and speak of counter-transference, etc. It is so much a question of ambition and prestige and of collective convention just as it is with us.

There is another aspect to the problem of alchemy, namely why it is of such importance to modern man. Alchemy is a natural science which represents an attempt to understand material phenomena in nature; it is a mixture of the physics and chemistry of those early times and corresponds to the conscious mental attitude of those who studied it and who concentrated on the mystery of nature, particularly of material phenomena. It is also the beginning of an empirical science. I will go into the specific history later. The average modern man, particularly in Anglo-Saxon countries, but also increasingly in European countries, is trained mentally in the observation of natural science phenomena, while the humanities, as you know, are more and more neglected. That is a present-day tendency, in which ever-increasing emphasis is placed on the "scientific" approach. If you analyse modern people, you find that their outlook on reality is very much influenced by the basic concepts of natural science, and the compensatory or connecting material from the unconscious accordingly is similar. That is a superficial analogy, for the reason lies much deeper.

If one asks why natural sciences predominate to such an extent in our *Weltanschauung*, it can be seen to be the end result of long and specific development. As you probably all know, looked at from the more specific European aspect, natural science is regarded as having originated in the 6th century B.C., about the time of the pre-Socratic philosophy. But this was largely philosophical speculation about nature, for there was very little experimental investigation on the part of the early natural scientists. It could more correctly be said that the birth of natural science, as a theory or general concept of reality, took place at that time. Natural science, in the sense that man has always experimented with animals, stones, materials, matter, and fire and water, is much wider, and in former times was a part of those magic practices which are connected with all religions and which deal with materials. There are a few exceptions.

Therefore one might say that in his outlook on the ultimate realities of life, man is overwhelmed by ideas and concepts from within, symbols and images, but also deals with outer materials. That explains why in most rituals there is something concrete representing the symbolic meaning, for instance, a bowl of water placed in the centre for divination, or something of that kind.

Thus matter and material phenomena are approached in a "magic" way, and therefore in the histories of religion of different people there are religious symbols which are personifications or representations of demons, with half-personified aspects, as well as divinities, i.e., powerful factors which have a material aspect. You all know the concept of mana, which even by non-Jungian investigators of religion is compared to electricity. If an Australian rubs his churinga stone to get more mana, it would be with the idea of refuelling his totem, or his life essence, like recharging an electric battery.

The whole concept of mana bears the projection of semimaterial, divine electricity, of divine energy or power. Thus, for instance, trees struck by lightning would represent mana. Then in most religious systems there are sacred substances, such as water or fire, or certain plants, and so on, as well as spirits, demons, and incarnate gods, who are more personified and can speak in visions, or appear and behave in a half-human manner. At times the emphasis lies more on the depersonalized nature power symbols, and other times more on personified powers. In some religions one aspect is more dominant and in others, the other. For example, the religious system which in its decaying form is mirrored in the Homeric poems, in which the Olympic and half-personified human Greek gods with their human deficiencies appear, is an extreme form of mainly personified divinities. On the other hand, there is the counter swing, in Greek natural philosophy, for instance, where suddenly the whole emphasis is placed on symbols such as water, which is said to be the beginning of the world, or the fire in Heraclitus, etc., which is a revivification of the mana idea on a higher level.

In Christianity there is a mixture: God the Father and God the Son are usually represented in art as human beings, and the Holy Ghost is sometimes represented as an old man with a beard, absolutely as a cliché for God the Father just identical but frequently by an animal, which is another form of personification,



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William Blake's image of God the Father as a wise old man with a beard, a typical personification of the Self, archetype of wholeness and the centre of the personality.

or it may be represented by fire, or wind, or water, or the breath between God the Father and God the Son. So the Holy Ghost, even in the Bible, has certain forms in which it is described or likened to such natural phenomena as fire or water or breath. Thus Christianity has a god image representing both aspects. But in other religions there are either a number of human or other gods, so that we probably have to make the hypothesis that the unconscious likes to appear in its ultimate, archetypal manifestations, sometimes symbolised in natural phenomena and sometimes personified. What does that signify?

It is a very difficult question. Why, for instance, has someone a concept of God as a divine, invisible, all-pervading fire, while another person will imagine Him as being something like a human being? Nowadays people tend to think that a small child with kindergarten concepts will think of God the Father with a white beard, while later, when scientific views have been acquired, then, if thought of at all, it would be rather as a meaningful power in the cosmos, or something of that kind. But then we just project our own scientific situation! So far as I can see, it is not true that such personified manifestations or ideas of gods, or the Godhead, are more infantile.

To be able to answer the question we should be obliged to study carefully a lot of dream material and then, quite apart from this religious problem, ask ourselves what it means if an archetypal content manifests as a ball of fire, instead of as a human being. Let

us say that there are two men, and one dreams of a ball of fire which gives him comfort and enlightenment, and the other dreams of a marvellous, wise old man appearing to him, and both are equally overwhelmed. Superficially, you could say that both images symbolise the Self, that is, the totality, the centre, a form of manifestation of the image of God. What is the difference when one man experiences light, or the fire ball, while to the other the superhuman wise man appears?

Answer: The former would represent the abstract meaning.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, one is more abstract *abstrahere* but it is *abstractus* from what?

Remark: It would be further from the human.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, *per definitionem*, but how would you reply to the analysand who asked you such a question? We can never give an absolute answer, but we can say something about it. I would take it quite simply and ask the patient, and would try to lead him on. You can talk to a wise old man, ask him questions, or can present him with all your human problems, whether you should divorce, or if you should spend your money in a certain manner, and you can assume that since he appears in this form he should know about that, though perhaps he will say that he is far removed from such things! In any case, the primary feeling, or guess, or the attitude which it evokes is that you can relate to such a figure on a human level. But you cannot talk to a ball of fire, or make contact with it, except in some form of natural science perhaps catch it in a glass bowl, if that is possible, or watch it and see what it does, go on your knees and worship it and keep far enough away so as not to be burnt, or go into it and discover that it is a fire which does not burn, but that it is not possible to relate to it in a human form.

So manifestation in a human form would demonstrate the possibility of conscious relation, whereas an inhuman form, or a natural power form, is just a phenomenon and can only be related to as such. Obviously, whatever the Divine is, it has both aspects, and in most theologies this has been maintained. What is a god to whom you cannot relate? If you cannot tell him anything about your human soul what use is he? On the other hand, what is a god who is merely a kind of human being and does not reach beyond that? He also seems to be the completely mysterious Other, to which

you cannot relate, just as you cannot relate to mysterious phenomena in nature. Therefore, probably there have always been the two aspects of this ultimate, inner centre of the psyche, one being completely transcendent, which manifests in something as remote as fire or water, and another which sometimes manifests in human form, which would mean that it was now approaching in a form to which one could relate.

If someone dreams of the Godhead as a human being, then there will be a great deal of emotional and intuitive feeling experience of it and of its nearness. St. Niklaus dreamt, or had a vision, of Christ coming as a Berserk and in the same vision the Berserk afterwards told people the truth about themselves he saw into them and what they really were, and people ran away from him. He knew at once what they wanted to ask him and very often did not even put a question but simply gave the answer. Therefore obviously St. Niklaus had the same quality as Christ had in his vision, which would be an illustration of something belonging to the archetypal unconscious and entering the human being. If you dream of an archetype in a human form, that means that you could, to some extent, incarnate it. It could manifest in you, and could express itself through you, that is the whole idea of the inner Christ. If you dream of the wise old man, then it can happen that you get into an impossible situation where you are asked an impossible question, but suddenly a perfect answer comes to you! If you are honest, you feel obliged to admit afterwards that it was not you speaking. "It" spoke through you, you could not claim to have had such a thought. That would be the wise old man manifesting in you, someone or something not identical with the ego, but helpful in a difficult situation.

Question: Why do you necessarily deny identification with the ego?

Dr. von Franz: Because if you identify, you get into an inflation. You must be honest about it. If you have made a mental effort, you can say that it was your thought, but it has sometimes happened to me that I have said something, and afterwards people have quoted it, saying that by that I saved their lives. If I am honest, I reply that I had not realized what I was saying, but said what came to me, and that happened to be something much wiser than anything I could have thought. But even if you make the effort, and subjectively have the feeling that you thought it out, actually it came from the

unconscious, for without its cooperation you cannot produce anything. Even if you say that at twelve o'clock you must remember to do a certain thing, if the unconscious does not cooperate, you will forget it.

Of course, any kind of mental insight comes from the unconscious, but that is an exaggerated postulate for sometimes you have the feeling that you have worked out something by your own efforts, while another time that the idea just came to you, without conscious effort on your part. One must be naive and honest, and not be inflated and claim such good ideas for oneself; it was the wise old man, or the wise old woman, or the Divinity, speaking if this is confirmed by the dreams. If someone dreams of the wise old man and has such an experience, then that is an empirical demonstration. The fire ball will not provide the same experience, though in a way it is even more marvellous, for the person will be much more affected emotionally he will be overwhelmed, gripped by the mystery, by the complete otherness of the Divine.

An experience of the Divine is often of an overwhelming power beyond one's own comprehension, which is dangerous, but to which one has to adapt, as one has to adapt to a manifestation in nature such as the explosion of a volcano. That is a beautiful sight, but one must not get too near, and it is impossible to relate to it. You can only look at it, but it is something which you will never forget. Emotionally it does something to one, but it would need a poet to describe it. That would correspond to the manifestations of the archetype as natural phenomena. Nature has a numinous and divine aspect as experienced by the human being, which explains why the human image of God has both aspects. In most religions there are personifications of God in both forms.

In the history of the development of the European mind, a strange kind of enantiodromia and opposition has developed since Grecian times. In the Homeric religion the personified aspect was exaggerated. In the natural philosophy of pre-Socratic philosophers the nature aspect was exaggerated. While in Stoicism more emphasis was laid on the nature aspect, in Christianity there was at first a return to a more personified aspect. From the 15th and 16th centuries on, emphasis was again placed on the nature aspect. It seems as if in the development of the European mind there began a certain balancing of the opposites, namely of the difference or contrast between science and religion, which became the great



pseudoproblem of later modern times: science versus religion.

I refer to it arbitrarily and derisively as a pseudoproblem because originally it was no problem, and actually there is only the one thing the search for the ultimate truth. If you return to that question and say that your interest is in the truth and not in which faculty of the university it is to be found, then the problem collapses. Some people are caught in the projection of the nature power representations of the archetype, and others in the personified powers, and the two fight. Some among you might object, asking how natural scientists could also be caught by projections. To an analyst that is self-evident, but I want briefly to speak to those among you who have perhaps not given much thought to these things.

If you read the history of the development of chemistry and particularly of physics, you will see that even such exact natural sciences could not, and still cannot, avoid basing their thought systems on certain hypotheses. In classical physics, up to the end of the 18th century, one of the working hypotheses, arrived at either unconsciously or half-consciously, was that space had three dimensions, an idea which was never questioned. The fact was always accepted, and perspective drawings of physical events, diagrams, or experiments, were always in accordance with that theory. Only when this theory is abandoned does one wonder how such a thing could ever have been believed. How did one come by such an idea? Why were we so caught that nobody ever doubted or even discussed the matter? It was accepted as a self-evident fact, but what was at the root of it? Johannes Kepler, one of the fathers of modern or classic physics, said that naturally space must have three dimensions because of the Trinity! So our readiness to believe that space has three dimensions is a more recent offspring of the Christian trinitarian idea.

Further, until now the European scientific mind has been possessed by the idea of causality, an idea hitherto accepted without question: everything was causal, and the scientific attitude was that investigations should be made with that premise in mind, for there must be a rational cause for everything. If something appeared to be irrational, it was believed that its cause was not yet known. Why were we so dominated by that idea? One of the chief fathers of natural sciences and a great protagonist of the absoluteness of the idea of causality was the French philosopher Descartes, and he

based his belief on *the immutability of God*. The doctrine of the immutability of God is one of the Christian tenets: the Divinity is unchanging, there must be no internal contradictions in God, or new ideas or conceptions. That is the basis of the idea of causality! From the time of Descartes onwards this seemed so self-evident to all physicists that there was no question about it. Science had merely to investigate the causes, and we still believe this. If something falls down then one must find out why the wind must have blown it, or something like that, and if no reason is discovered I am sure that half of you will say that we do not yet know the cause, but that there must be one! Our archetypal prejudices are so strong that one cannot defend oneself against them, they just catch us.

The late physicist, Professor Wolfgang Pauli, frequently demonstrated the extent to which modern physical sciences are in a way rooted in archetypal ideas. For instance, the idea of causality as formulated by Descartes is responsible for enormous progress in the investigation of light, of biological phenomena, and so on, but that thing which promotes knowledge becomes its prison. Great discoveries in natural sciences are generally due to the appearance of a new archetypal model by which reality can be described; that usually precedes big developments, for there is now a model which enables a much fuller explanation than was hitherto possible.

So science has progressed, but still any model becomes a cage, for if one comes across phenomena difficult to explain, then instead of being adaptable and saying that the phenomena do not conform to the model and that a new hypothesis must be found, one clings to one's hypotheses with a kind of emotional conviction and cannot be objective. Why shouldn't there be more than three dimensions, why not investigate and see where we get? But that people could not do.

I remember a very good illustration given by one of Pauli's pupils. You know that the theory of ether played a great role in the 17th and 18th centuries namely, that there was a kind of cosmic air-like pneuma in the cosmos in which light existed, etc. One day when a physicist at a Congress proved that the theory of ether was quite unnecessary, an old man with a white beard got up and in a quavering voice said: "If ether does not exist, then everything is gone"! This old man had unconsciously projected his idea of God into ether. Ether was his god, and if he did not have that then there was nothing left. The man was naive enough to speak of his ideas, but all natural scientists have ultimate models of reality in which

they believe, just like the Holy Ghost.

It is a question of belief, not of science, and therefore something which cannot be discussed, and people get excited and fanatical if you present them with a fact which does not fit the frame. They are capable of saying that the whole experiment is false and photographs must be produced, and it is practically impossible to get them to accept the fact. I knew a physicist whose dreams pointed to a new discovery not yet made, and which he himself had not made, but which was in the air, so to speak. From the dreams we concluded that his belief in a symmetrical relationship between material phenomena should be given up. The physicist said that such an idea would drive him crazy! But about three months later, exact experimental results were published proving that what he had dreamt was correct, and that he would have to drop his former ideas about the cosmic order.

So the archetype is the promoter of ideas and is also responsible for the emotional restrictions which prevent the renunciation of earlier theories. It is really only a detail or specific aspect of what happens everywhere in life, for we could not recognize anything without projection, but it is also the main obstacle in arriving at the truth. If one meets an unknown woman, it is not possible to make contact without projecting something; you must make a hypothesis, which of course is done quite unconsciously: the woman is elderly and probably a kind of mother figure, and a normal human being, etc. You make assumptions and then you have a bridge. When you know the person better, then many earlier assumptions must be discarded and you must admit that your conclusions were incorrect. Unless this is done, then you are hampered in the contact.

At first, one has to project, or there is no contact, but then one should be able to correct the projection, and it is the same not only as regards human beings, but everything else also. The projection apparatus must of necessity work in us, nothing can even be seen without the unconscious projection factor. That is why according to Indian philosophy the whole of reality is a projection, which it is, in a subjective manner of speaking. To us reality exists only when we have projections on it.

Question: Can you relate without projection?

Dr. von Franz: I don't think so. Philosophically speaking, you cannot relate without projection, but there is a subjective feeling

status in which you sometimes feel that your projection fits, and that there is no need to change it, and another status in which you feel uneasy, thinking that it ought to be corrected. But no projection is ever corrected without such a feeling of uneasiness.

Let us assume that there is in you an unconscious liar and you meet someone who lies like a trooper. You can only recognize the liar in the other because you are a liar yourself, otherwise you would not be aware of the other. A quality in another person can only be recognized if one has the same quality and knows what it feels like to lie, and therefore one recognizes the same thing in the other person. Since the other person really is a liar, you have made a true statement, and why should you call that a projection which should be taken back? It makes a basis for relationship, for you think to yourself: If X is a liar, whatever he tells me I must not believe entirely, I must question it. That is very reasonable and well adapted and right. It would be very wrong to think it was only one's projection, and that one should believe the other person; one would be a fool to do so. But if you take that philosophically, then is it a projection or a statement of fact? Philosophically, you cannot reach a conclusion, you can only say that subjectively it seems to be correct. That is why Jung says and this is a subtle point which is seldom understood when people think about projection that we can only speak of projection, in the proper sense of the word, when there already exists a certain uneasiness, when the feeling identity is disturbed; that is, when I have an uneasy feeling as to whether what I have said about X is true or not. Until that has happened autonomously within me, there is no projection.

The same think applies to the natural sciences. For instance, the theory that matter consists of particles is based upon the projection of an archetypal image, for a particle is an archetypal image. Energy is also an archetypal image, an intuitive concept with an archetypal background. It is not possible to investigate matter without such hypotheses, i.e., that there is something like energy, something like matter, and something like particles.

But I may meet with phenomena which give me a feeling of uneasiness. For instance, there are phenomena where I cannot speak of this electron, or this meson, being in a given moment at a definite place, although if there is such a thing as a particle, then it must be at a certain place at a given time that seems to be archetypally self-evident. But now modern experiments show that

this theory is untenable, that you cannot determine where certain electrons are at a particular moment, so we are confronted with a fact which calls into question our whole idea of the particle. Now we are uneasy, and might recognize that, in part, we project in speaking of particles it is a projection that hampers our view of reality. But before the uneasiness arises, due to the fact that our projection does not fit, that in certain experiments the particle does not behave as one would expect, our concept would not be doubted.

So in natural science, just as in interpersonal contacts, there is the same problem of projection, even the most scientific and most modern and most accurate forms of modern natural sciences are all based on projections. Progress in science is the replacement of a primitive projection by one more accurate, so that one can say that natural science is concerned with the projection of models of reality into which phenomena seem to fit better, or less well. If the phenomena apparently click with my model, then it is all right, but if not then I must revise my model. How that links up is a great problem.

As you know, there was a famous quarrel between Max Planck and Einstein, in which Einstein claimed that, on paper, the human mind was capable of inventing mathematical models of reality. In this he generalized his own experience because that is what he did. Einstein conceived his theories more or less completely on paper, and experimental developments in physics proved that his models explained phenomena very well. So Einstein says that the fact that a model constructed by the human mind in an introverted situation fits with outer facts is just a miracle and must be taken as such. Plank does not agree, but thinks that we conceive a model which we check by experiment, after which we revise our model, so that there is a kind of dialectic friction between experiment and model by which we slowly arrive at an explanatory fact compounded of the two. Plato-Aristotle in a new form! But both have forgotten something the unconscious. We know something more than those two men, namely that when Einstein makes a new model of reality he is helped by his unconscious, without which he would not have arrived at his theories.

But what role *does* the unconscious play? The unconscious seems to deliver models which can be arrived at directly from within without looking at outer facts, and which afterwards seem to fit outer reality. Is that a miracle or not? There are two possible



5.

Releasing the *spiritus* from the heated *prima materia* : a projected image of what happens psychologically in the conscious assimilation of activated unconscious contents.

explanations: either the unconscious knows about other realities, or what we call the unconscious is a part of the same thing as outer reality, for we do not know how the unconscious is linked with matter. If a wonderful idea as to how to explain gravitation comes up from within me, can I say that it is the nonmaterial unconscious giving me a wonderful idea about material reality, or should I say that the unconscious gives me such a marvellous idea of outer reality because it is itself linked with matter, it is a phenomenon of matter and matter knows matter?

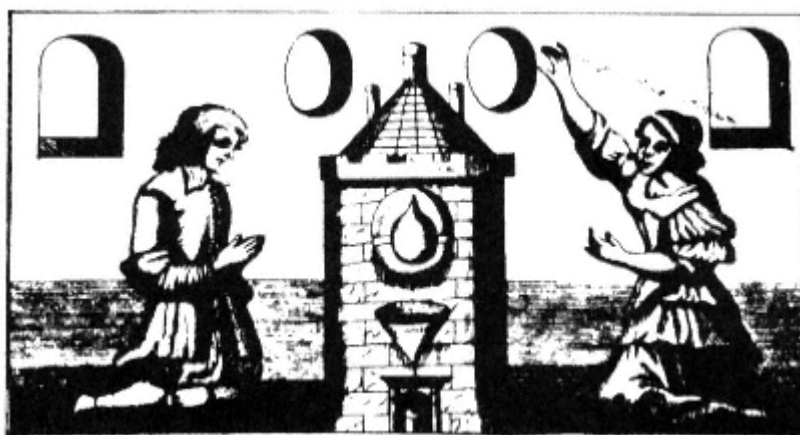
There we are at our wit's end as to how to proceed, and have to leave the question open and say that the great X is that we do not know how to proceed. We can make two hypotheses. Dr. Jung is inclined to think though he has never formulated the thought, or only hypothetically, because we cannot do more, we can only speculate or make a hypothesis that probably the unconscious has a material aspect, which would be why it knows about matter, because it is matter, it is matter which knows itself, as it were. If this were so, then there would be a dim or vague phenomenon of consciousness even in inorganic matter.

There we touch on great mysteries, but I speak of them because it is too cheap to say that the old alchemist, i.e., the medieval natural scientist of antiquity, projected unconscious images into matter and nowadays we are enlightened and know what the unconscious is, and what matter is, but those poor fellows just did not distinguish between the two, which explains why they were so backward and fantastic and unscientific! The psyche/matter problem has not yet been solved, which is why the basic riddle of alchemy is still not

solved. The answer to the question they pursued we have also not discovered. We can have projections of many things, just as they had about matter, but we prefer to speak of theirs as naive projections of the unconscious for we have outgrown those models. We can still recognize them as phenomena of the unconscious, or dream stuff, but we cannot recognize them any more as being scientific. For instance, if someone says that lead contains a demon, we can say that he projects the shadow and demonic human qualities into lead, but we can no longer claim that lead contains a demon, for there we have outgrown the projection and have reached a different conclusion as to how and why lead is harmful to us.

Basically, however, alchemy is still an open problem to us, which is why when Dr. Jung touched it he felt that he was touching something which led still further, and he did not yet know where. I think that is also partly why people have such resistance to alchemy, for it confronts us with something we cannot yet understand. But that is a good thing, for it puts one back upon oneself, and into the modest attitude of having to describe phenomena in accordance with our present knowledge.

Next time I will begin with our first Greek text.



6.

Alchemist and assistant kneeling by the furnace, praying for God's blessing.

## Lecture 2 Greek Alchemy

I tried last time to give you a brief sketch of the importance of alchemical symbolism: in the first place, it contains a collection of archetypal symbols with a minimum of personification; and secondly, there is a great deal of material symbolism from the images stored in the unconscious.

To man, these images of water, fire, and metal are just as important symbolically as any personification of the unconscious. Moreover, here the unconscious psyche and matter are not yet separated; religion, magic, and the natural sciences are not yet divided. We are confronted with the original situation where all the faculties and categories by which we observe outer and inner nature are not yet differentiated. Man as a whole looks at nature as a whole and makes certain working hypotheses in the search for the truth.

You will recollect that at the close of my last lecture I pointed out that much which was formerly said about the different materials and processes in matter we can now, having outgrown the early stages of natural science, recognize as projections of the unconscious even though no definite conclusions have been reached about certain assertions. For instance, in a medieval document attributed to Albert the Great there is a theory about heavy water which looks like a completely intuitive anticipation of the heavy water we now know. Therefore that symbolism also contains vague intuitions which anticipated discoveries of later scientific developments, though we still do not know what was anticipated, for we do not know what further discoveries will be made by natural scientists.

Ultimately, the question as to whether and how the unconscious is in some way connected with matter is, as I said, quite unsettled. We do not want to speculate and so refrain from making statements; we merely make the hypothesis that there is a psyche which manifests in dreams and in involuntary psychological ways which we can study, just as physicists say that there is something like matter, or energy, and study that. But we are already beginning to see that certain results are so similar that it is as if we were



tunnelling from either side towards the centre of the same mountain. Though we have not really met yet, it looks as though we are moving towards the same goal and therefore there is the possibility of meeting one day.

You remember that I also stressed, perhaps the most important point, that the alchemists, in observing and experiencing their symbols and in their written descriptions, worked without any conscious religious or scientific program, so that their conclusions are spontaneous, uncorrected impressions of the unconscious with very little conscious interference, in contrast to other symbolic material which had always been revised. Therefore it is very gratifying to discover that this spontaneous material is akin to certain products of the unconscious in modern people who, with a natural kind of scientific attitude, a minimum of prejudice, and an attitude of inner withdrawal, observe what comes up without drawing hasty speculative conclusions with results, however, which are very similar. The unprogrammed approach, so to speak, is common to both alchemy and analytical psychology.

This time I want to look at one of the oldest of the known texts, namely one from the prophetess Isis to her son Horus, on which the sign of the sickle moon appears behind the title. But first we should consider how we come to be in possession of such texts at all.

The products of antiquity, as you know, disappeared in the Middle Ages and then were rediscovered. First the critical sciences found them in large tomes. For instance, the history of philosophy and philology was collected by scientists of late antiquity into books such as we would call encyclopedias, or school books, which give summaries: Plato says. . ., Aristotle says. . ., the Stoic philosophers say. . ., and so on. Unfortunately, compared to our modern critical scientists, these people were rather muddled. Therefore their theories were produced in a somewhat sloppy way, making the whole thing resemble a stream of muddy water. The more ancient and the more recent writings are confused with the commentaries which have been copied and recopied, rearranged and abbreviated, etc., and to all of this we have fallen heir. In the uncritical Middle Ages, a selection of these texts was made from which they again quoted.

Chemistry met with a like fate. Olympiodorus, for instance, of the 5th century, wrote a volume containing a collection of older sayings. We have many different works of this kind, as well as



7.

The Codex Marcianus  
Ouroboros, symbol  
of the alchemical  
work as a circular,  
self-contained process.

separate productions. All these were reassembled and brought into one huge Greek manuscript in Venice and accordingly received the title of the Codex Marcianus, the Marciana being the library in Venice. In this Codex Marcianus is assembled the whole conglomeration of old and more recent sayings, Greek material, and so on, which was published more or less as is by the famous M. Berthelot. He published the whole without much criticism, and together with a M. Ruelle added a rather superficial French translation so that it could at last be printed and discussion started. Since then more versions and more manuscripts have been collected, but that still constitutes the basic edition and the main basic text.

Decisions as to who was who, who wrote what, and the age of the different writings would be pure speculation, for some speak of the first and others of the third century differing by as much as three hundred years in their estimates and very little order has been made in this salad of tradition. As in the case of all natural sciences, there were first direct Greek traditions from Constantinople. Another stream of scientific tradition came from the Orient and returned to Europe via Spain and Southern France and Sicily from the 10th century onwards, when Europe became connected with the Orient by the Crusades. The history of chemistry is completely identical with that of mathematics and astrology, and other branches such as geometry: part went to the Byzantine Empire, via Constantinople, and the rest to the Orient and returned to Europe via the Arabs.

The Arabs, in general, were very faithful translators and added very little, they simply translated from Greek into Arabic. There were also many famous Syrian translators. Parts also went to

Persia, and in the Orient there were certain centres which translated the texts. We have Greek and Arabic and later Latin texts. Where the Greek text was lost we have the Arabic text but conclude from the names, etc., that the original was in Greek. Then in these Arabic, Moslem centres there were the different sects who cultivated these traditions; for instance, the Shi-ites, a Persian sect formed in A.D. 644 in opposition to the Sunnites, or orthodox Moslems; and the Druses, a Syrian people half Christian and half Mohammedan, whose language was pure Arabic. Already in these Islamic centres some few Arabs recognized that alchemical symbolism contained religious symbolism and reexperienced it as being even more religious than chemical, and added a little to it from their own experience. Usually, however, they only translated.

One of the most famous of the Arabs is ar Razi, or *Rasis* in Latin, who developed the sciences on the chemical side. He was the famous man who introduced into chemistry the necessity of weighing matter. Formerly it was simply said: "Put a little bit of sulphur into a little bit of lead, and then you have it." But Razi said: "A little bit, that makes the whole difference. You must take so many parts, or so many ounces of each," so one of the great accomplishments was in making exact weights and divisions, which meant a great step forward in accurate natural science. Much merit is due to him on that side, but none on the symbolic side. He was a pure technician.

His counterpart in the Arabic world would be Mohammed ibn Umail, who figures in the Latin texts as *Senior*. He was called the Sheihk, and in the Latin this was translated as *Senior*, "the old one," which would be the correct translation, so that he became *Senior* in the Latin tradition, and only later was it discovered that this *Senior* was Mohammed ibn Umail. In Hyderabad about a hundred writings have been found of this most important mystic, but have not yet been published. Though it is such promising material, so few people are interested in alchemy that nobody bothers about translation or publication. So there are gold mines ahead and nobody to work them!

Some of these people have added little bits and then, as I mentioned, there was a return through the Crusades. One of the intellectual bridges to Europe was via the Templars. They got into close connection with the Druses, a more mystical and pagan sect within the Islamic world, who were subject to the "Old Man of the Mountains," the Imam, i.e., the chief of the sect. They had a

whole hierarchy of initiation and the Templars became interested in the symbolism of their doctrine. These Druses, probably in Jerusalem, got into close touch with certain of the High Templars and with their so-called pagan practices, for which they were later persecuted. The Druses became infected by such sources, as well as by the pagan leanings of Frederic II, the Stauffer, at whose court in Sicily were Jewish and Islamic astrologers and mathematicians and prophets, to the great annoyance of the Pope.

It was in this way, as well as through the famous island of Rhodes, where the Knights of St. John had a connection with the Orient and such places as Spain and southern France, that these writings came to be translated by Jews as well as others. They translated the texts into Latin and then began a big influx of this natural scientific tradition into Europe. The Church, represented chiefly by Albert the Great, St. Thomas of Aquinas, and certain others, endeavoured to eliminate the double tradition of Church and natural science, and to assimilate and integrate the whole into the Church doctrine, but was only partly successful in the attempt.

That is just a short resume of the historical situation and the material we are confronted with.

I said I would give you three hours on Old Greek alchemy, three on Arabic alchemy, and three on medieval Latin texts. We will begin with the Old Greek text which is in the Codex Marcianus. It probably belongs to what we call the oldest writings and is entitled "The Prophetess Isis to her Son." We know that the son is Horus, though the title does not say so. Behind the title is the sign of the sickle moon, but what that means nobody knows. I will give you the material without speculation so that you can have the fresh impact and not what has since been said about it. The document probably goes back to about the 1st century A.D. That is the *communis opinio* of the scientists, but it might be older. If you read what has been written about these books you will find it said that they were most probably written in such and such a century, but that they were certainly based on older texts, which implies some uncertainty. So let us say the Hellenistic time. To those among you who might have the original text, I want to say that I am not using the French but my own translation.

You will remember the famous battle in which Seth blinded Horus, and that Horus cut off Seth's testicles, and you know that later both were cured by the moon god Thoth, and even cooperated

in the resurrection of their father Osiris. You will also recollect the famous battle of Horus, the sun god who restored order, with Seth, called the Hot One (representing chaotic passion, destruction, brutality, and so on), who was the enemy and murderer of Osiris. Isis begins:

Oh, my son, when you desired to go away to fight the treacherous Typhon [i.e., Seth] over your father's kingdom [the kingdom of Osiris], I went to Hormanouthi, i.e., Hermoupolis, the town of Hermes, the town of the holy technique of Egypt, and stayed there some time.

After the words "the town of Hermes" there is a little marginal note, written in the original hand, and not by a later, which says: "She means that in a mystical sense," that is, the name of the town should be understood in the mystical sense. "The holy technique" *hiera techne* refers to alchemy.

After a certain passing of the *kairoi* and the necessary movement of the heavenly sphere, it happened that one of the angels who dwelt in the first firmament saw me from above and came towards me desiring to unite with me sexually. He was in a great hurry for this to happen, but I did not submit to him. I resisted, for I wished to ask him about the preparation of gold and silver.

The *kairoi* plays an enormous role in another very old alchemical text where the writer Zosimos, of whom you know through Dr. Jung's comments, says that the whole of alchemy depends upon the *kairos*, and he even calls the alchemical operation the *kairikai baphai*, the *kairos* colouring. His theory is that chemical processes do not always happen of themselves, but only at the astrologically right moment; that is, if I am working with silver, the moon, which is the planet of silver, must be in the right position, and if I am working with copper, Venus has to be in a certain constellation, otherwise these operations in silver and copper will not work. One cannot just take those two metals and unite them, but must also consider and wait for the astrological constellation and pray to those planet gods, and if these things are also in order, then the chemical operation might work. Taking the astrological constellation into consideration is what is meant by this idea of *kairikai baphai*. *Kairos* therefore at that time and in this connection means the astrologically right time, the time when things can turn out successfully. The alchemist is the man who must not only know the technique, but must always consider these constellations. Therefore Isis says that according to the passing of these moments,




8.

Isis suckling Horus.

one moment after the other (one has to choose the right one) and according to the movement of the heavenly sphere (which means all the movements of the planets), it happened (the Greek word *sunebe* is also a synchronistic happening of the events) that one of the angels of the first firmament cast an eye upon her and wanted to unite with her sexually. She puts him off, because she wants to get the alchemical secret out of him; she makes a bargain with him and will only give herself to him if he first tells her all he knows about that.

When I put my question, he said he did not wish to answer me since it was such a *great* mystery [the superlatively great mystery to give a freer translation because this mystery is too overwhelming], but said he would return next day and with him would be a greater angel, Amnaël, who would be able to answer me and solve my problem. And he told me about his sign [meaning probably how she should recognize the angel] and that he would bear on his head, and take it and show me, a ceramic vessel full of shining water. He [the other angel] wanted to tell me the truth. This vessel is a possoton and has no pitch in it.

I am giving you the text exactly as it is, and here there is in the margin of the text this sign . I may add that we know that this

is the sign of the god Chnouthis. Sometimes the same sign is also used for the moon god Chons.

The next day, when the sun was in the middle of its course [that is, at midday], there came down the angel who was greater than the other, and he was gripped by the same desire of me and was in a great hurry. [He too wanted to rape Isis]. But none the less I only wanted to ask him my question. [She again delays, thinking only of the question.] When he stayed with me, I did not give myself to him. I resisted him and overcame his desire till he showed me the sign on his head, and gave me the tradition of the mysteries without keeping anything back, but in the full truth. [So she wins the battle and he tells her all he knows about the technique of alchemy.] He then again pointed to the sign, the vessel he carried on his head, and began telling the mysteries and about the message. Then he first mentioned the great oath and said: "I conjure you, in the name of Fire, of Water, of Air and of the Earth [twice a quaternio]; I conjure you in the name of the Height of Heaven and the Depth of the Earth and the Underworld; I conjure you, in the name of Hermes and Anubis, the Howling of Kerkoros and the guardian dragon; I conjure you, in the name of that boat and its ferryman, Acharontos; and I conjure you in the name of the three necessities, and the whips and the sword." After he had pronounced this oath, he made me with this oath promise never to tell the mystery I was now to hear, except to my son, my child, and my closest friend, so that you are me, and I am you.

The text is rather short. It means that it is a tremendous mystery which Isis now gets from the angel and which she will only be able to tell her son Horus and her closest friend. Whether her son is her closest friend, or there are two people, is not clear from the grammar; nor whether "so that you are me, and I am you" means "You, my son, are me" or the angel and Isis, but probably both apply. It simply means that the person who imparts that mystery to the other person fulfills at the same time the mystical union, the sacred marriage between mother and son, Isis and Horus, or that between the angel and Isis, because each time the mystery is told the two also become one that is probably the meaning.

Now you go and watch and ask Acheron the peasant. [A variation gives Acharontos. There is no transition here in the text, but probably from now on we hear the mystery. Unfortunately in those days they had no signs, no quotes, or anything like that. One never knows where the quotes should be, but I think it is obvious that it begins here. It means that now the mystery will be imparted and you should listen to it.] Come and look, and ask the peasant Acharontos, and learn from him who is the sower, who is the harvester, and learn that he who sows barley will also harvest barley and he who sows wheat will also harvest wheat. Now my child, or my son, you have heard that as an introduction, and now realize from that that this is

the whole creation and the whole process of coming into being, and know that a man is only able to produce a man, and a lion a lion, and a dog a dog, and if something happens contrary to nature [probably meaning contrary to this law], then it is a miracle and cannot continue to exist, because nature enjoys nature, and nature overcomes nature. [That is the famous saying which also appears in many other texts, but usually as: "Nature enjoys nature, nature impregnates nature, and nature overcomes nature."] Having part of the divine power and being happy about its divine presence, I will now also answer their questions about sands, which one does not prepare from other substances, for one must stay with existing nature and the matter one has in hand in order to prepare things. Just as I said before, wheat creates wheat, and a man begets a man, and thus also gold will harvest gold, like produces like. Now I have manifested the mystery to you.

At the beginning of the next section there is something strange, where it says "we will prepare" and so on, speaking in the plural. Possibly it means that Isis and Horus are now already together. Then comes a classical beginning of oral and antique recipes. In German recipes begin "*Man nehme*," and in Greek they begin with "*Labon*," i.e., "taking." Here the next paragraph begins:

Take quicksilver, fix it in lumps of earth or by magnesia or sulphur and retain it. [This is fixation through warmth, the mixture of species.] Take one part of lead and of the preparation fixed through warmth, and two parts of the white stone, and from the same stone one part, and one part of yellow Realgar [that means red sulphur of arsenic] and one part of the green stone [one does not know what that is]. Mix the whole with lead, and when it has disintegrated, reduce it three times to a liquid [i.e., melt it three times].

Take quicksilver which through copper has become white, and take from it another one part and from dominant magnesia, with one part of water, and from what remains at the bottom of the vessel and which has been treated with lemon juice, use one part, and from arsenic which has been catalysed with the urine of a not yet corrupted boy, one part, and then from Cadmeia [*cadmia*, calamine in English, which simply implies a mineral which engenders fire], one part and from Pyrite [also a mineral which engenders fire] one part and one part from sand cooked with sulphur, and from lead monoxide with asbestos two parts, and from the ashes of Kobathia [that is probably also an arsenic sulphite] one part, and liquidate the whole with a very sharp acid, a white acid, and dry it, and then you have the great white remedy.

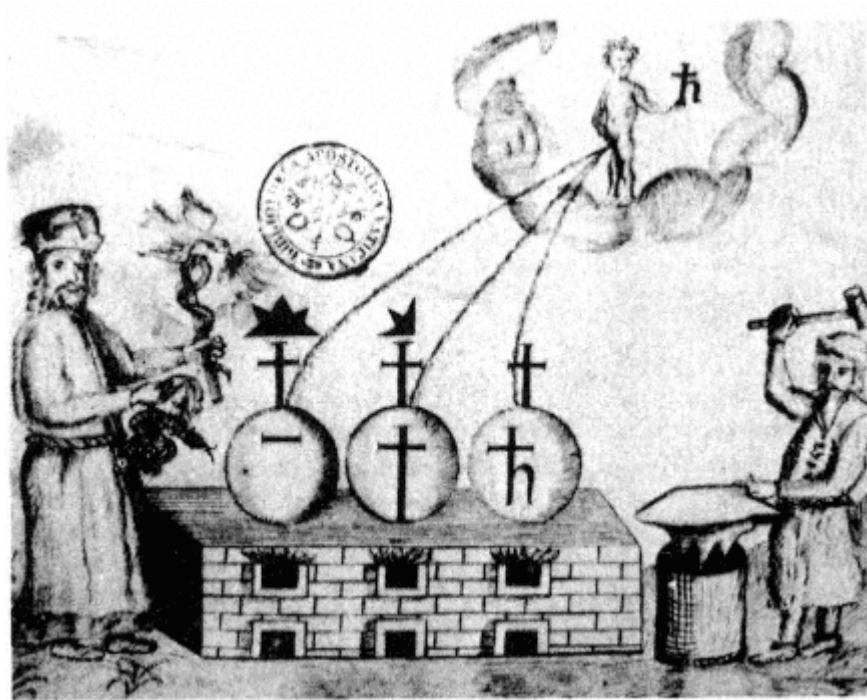
This continues for two more pages, but I will take the liberty of shortening it. I want to confront you with it, for up till now we have not known what these words mean. Naturally chemists have made a



profound study of the texts and with a certain probability have been able to make out which Greek words might mean which substance, since in some cases there is a little description showing that they have such and such an effect, from which the chemist could deduce that a certain definite substance was indicated. But in the case of a number of other words, for instance Kobathia which I translated as "green stone" and the word which I did not translate but left as "magnesia" though it is not what we mean now by magnesia, we really do not know what they mean; we are pretty sure they refer to some cooked chemical substances, but they are so paradoxically described in the different texts that we cannot be certain.

Then there is a quite different material, namely the urine of an uncorrupted boy. Naturally, urine also contains important and corrosive substances and was used a lot, but the fact that it must be that of an uncorrupted boy, one who had not yet reached the age of puberty, shows also what a large part magical representations played. It is a general prejudice, or ancient superstition, that the urine of uncorrupted boys is particularly efficient, not only in chemical operations but in love charms, etc., where it is more efficacious than ordinary urine. It has something magical in it.

I just pick on this because here we know something more from other fields. For instance, we know that in the practice of magic the urine of an uncorrupted boy was often used; that was an African and also particularly an Egyptian tradition. Shortly before puberty boys are more gifted mediums, a faculty which they lose later on. Magicians who very often practised hypnotism used other people as mediums, putting them to sleep so they would reveal the truth. For such magical and in ancient times very widespread experiments, children were preferred who had not reached the age of puberty, sometimes girls, but more often boys, and uncorrupted boys were regarded as being purer vessels of the unconscious through which ghosts and gods could speak. There are innumerable magic recipes where, for instance, it is said that if you wish to find something which has been stolen, then put an uncorrupted boy to sleep, cook such and such a thing, give him such and such a thing to eat, and then when he is asleep, ask him where the lost subject is and while in a trance he will tell you. That was the role of the uncorrupted boy in other fields and therefore probably the urine of an uncorrupted boy has the same connotation here, where it is also regarded as the magical substance since they have such associations in mind.



9.

The alchemical image of the "pissing mannikin," and the use of "the urine of an uncorrupted boy" as a solvent, relate to the psychological reality that the unconscious is more responsive to the naive and spontaneous attitudes associated with childhood.

Remark: A parallel to Isis getting the alchemical mysteries from the angel would be the fallen angel, Azazel, giving the Jews knowledge of the blacksmith's art. The professor at the E.T.H. who lectured on alchemy at an Eranos meeting said that the idea that the smith was connected with alchemy originated in Tobalki.

Dr. von Franz: Yes. In the Book of Enoch, there is a whole description of all the techniques given to the angels. Originally, the art of the smith at the forge and that of the alchemist were regarded as being the same and held the same tradition, though I think the Tobalki idea is rather arbitrary. But it is a tradition. In the Old Testament it is said that the daughters of men got the art of the forge and alchemy either from the angels or from the fallen angels, either by whoredom, or, as in this case, its opposite, for Isis at least

puts him off until she has got out of him what she wants to know. So there are different versions. Sometimes it is said that the daughters of men had relationships with giants, so the angels are sometimes replaced by giants. The text continues for over a page with these recipes and then turns to operations. I will give you a little so that you can get the feel of it:

If you want to make something white of the bodies [i.e., the material], mix it with quicksilver and drops of asbestos and urine and goatsmilk and natron, and then you can make everything work, and if you want to know how to double a substance, or how to colour the material, and all the dispositions, then know that everything has the same meaning [and that is important], that everything tends to have the same meaning [i.e., the meaning is likely always to be the same for the same operation]. Now realize the mystery, my son, the drug, the elixir of the widow.

Isis is frequently referred to as the widow in the text and therefore from the very beginning in alchemy the philosopher's stone, the mystery, is called the mystery of the widow, the stone of the widow, or the orphan's stone; there was a connection between the widow and the orphan, but it all points to Isis. The text ends with another recipe:

Take arsenic, cook it in water, mix it with olive oil, and then leave it in a bottle and put coals on it until it steams and also the same thing can be made with Realgar. . . .

Here the text breaks off, and then is repeated all over again. So you see what we are up against! Sometimes the formula varies a little. For instance, a man may not be called Acharontos, but Acharos, and so on, but otherwise it is exactly the same. Acharontos is quite a problem which we will discuss later.

I would like now to discuss and amplify the text bit by bit in order to find out what it could mean. Dr. Sas has already mentioned a general amplification for the first part, or rather for the whole structure of the tale, namely that it is a parallel to the story in the Book of Enoch where it is said that all arts and crafts, as well as cosmetic tricks, and so on, were stolen by the daughters of men from either angels or, according to other versions, giants. That is, at first the angels, or the giants, have it, and then the women get it. Here it is not the women but Isis who gets it from the angel and then imparts it to Horus, which is how the tradition began.

What would you say psychologically about this myth? All evil is said to come from women, as we know from Genesis and the story



10.

The Tempting of Eve. "Knowledge is either poisonous or healing. . . . One has to have a double attitude about it, the teaching of the *felix culpa*."  
von Franz.

of Eve, who also was closer to the problem of how to get knowledge from God. In that story, Eve got it from the snake, and then imparted it to Adam which was also theft because God kept knowledge of Himself to Himself and afterwards man knew good and evil, as God did.

In Genesis the theft is looked on as being only evil, and in the Book of Enoch the theft of the technique is coloured in the same way, namely that the theft of these secrets by women has played a part in the corruption of our world, since thereby the original innocence of the world has been lost. But in our text the feeling is quite changed, for when Isis succeeds in getting the secret from those angels it is seen as a great achievement. So here we have a switch in the feeling judgement, though the event itself seems a very near parallel: the female element, the feminine principle, gets it from deeper layers and then is the mediator who hands it on to mankind.

We can recognize the symbolism of the anima, for the story of Eve is even more true for the anima than just for women, and here there is the same idea expressed symbolically from the unconscious. The goddess Isis has beside her the sign of the moon. In these late times Isis was identified with Hathor, the cow goddess and the moon goddess, and the sky goddess Nut. She was already there in this late phase of historical development. In the late Egyptian religion she is a kind of cosmic feminine goddess, embracing the aspect of all other feminine goddesses of old Egypt and is, so to

speak, the great carrier of the mystery of nature. She embraces nature completely. As you know, in Apuleius's prayer to Isis, in *The Golden Ass*, she is addressed as *Domina rerum*, ruler of the whole cosmic nature, and in these late times she was worshipped in the aspect of cosmic nature. Here she does not appear directly as a goddess, but rather as a prophetess *Isis prophetis*. That she is also a prophetess is naturally stressed because she anticipates future developments: she tells the truth, which then comes to pass; she imparts the truth which before was hidden.

Question: I am still vague as to the relevance of this to the total motive or purpose of Jungian psychology. I see that you have spent some energy and effort on this text. Now do I hear you say that this is relevant in terms of the interpretation of the symbolism of one's dreams? Is that correct?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, certainly. Say you are confronted with a man who dreams that a mysterious woman comes towards him. I remember such a dream, it was the initial dream of a man who had a sex problem. I do not know exactly what, for it was not my case, but he had some kind of sex problem, and in his dream an unknown woman, who made a great impression on him, told him that the whole secret consisted in drying the powder within the apple.

Question: So the point would be the relevance this had to the person's life?

Dr. von Franz: Yes. Suppose a man comes to analysis and says he is impotent, or a Don Juan. We may say that we will see what the unconscious says about it. Colleagues have told him long ago what can be said consciously, but that has not helped him and he is at the end of his tether. He says that he knows all about it, namely that it is his mother complex, but nothing has changed. So apparently that does not help. Therefore one says, let's look at the dreams. And then in a dream a marvellous woman appears and tells him that it is all the problem of drying the white powder in the apple. He thinks that is rubbish, but he has something to learn. He will not give any associations, for people cannot give associations to their archetypal dreams. White powder in an apple does not suggest anything to the man; he may say that he likes apples, or something like that, but you get nothing out of him and therefore you have to know mankind's associations.

If you can get the analysand's associations, that is much better, but when you have such motifs in a dream there is generally a blank and you have to say, for instance, that mankind has believed that the apple contains the knowledge of God, of good and evil, and you remind him of the Bible, and that people always said that the apple renewed the secrets. You tell him a few myths about it and then he begins to get impatient and says, "Yes, but what does that mean for me?" The myths show that there is another evaluation, for in the biblical myth evaluation is from the feeling standpoint and is specified as bad luck and an accident. Only in later Catholic interpretation is there the *felix culpa* which says, "Thank God Adam and Eve sinned, for otherwise Christ could not have redeemed us." But originally the feeling tone was that Adam was corrupted through Eve and everything then went wrong. Even the Church always said that Mary put everything right and Eve everything wrong. Eve is only tolerable because things were put right later, but the feeling tone, at least in the Old Testament, is that in Eve's sin originated all the bad luck, and that it was very unlucky that Adam and Eve ate that apple. In our text, however, it is an achievement for now Isis has got the marvellous secret out of the angel and says she is going to tell her son about it. The text tells us that a lion generates a lion, and that is what Isis tells as the secret.

As already indicated, our Isis story is a parallel to the biblical story, but with a different feeling judgement. In the Bible it is rather the corrupting accident, while here to have obtained the secret from the angels is described as a wonderful achievement. Nothing is said about everything going wrong with the world because the secret has been revealed, but rather that it is so marvellous that Isis will only tell her son and her best friend about it. If you want to go on to the psychological interpretation, what would that difference mean? Mankind is quite divided over the evaluation of the origin of science and technique, the origin of chemistry and of the natural sciences, of some kind of knowledge. Does knowledge corrupt, or does it help?

Remark: It seems to me that the Bible says that knowledge which is what the apple represents is corruptive in itself.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, through it we got thrown out of Paradise.

Question: Are you looking at knowledge as belonging to God?

Dr. von Franz: Yes from one point of view it is an identification with God, so taking that knowledge constituted an act of inflation. The ego seized something which did not belong to it, so got inflated and lost its balance and everything went wrong. But here, in the Isis story, the evaluation is entirely opposite, implying that we have made great progress, we have got this secret out of the angels, something so immense that I will only tell my son and my friend about it. Here there is no mention of any inflation or bad luck.

In this text there is the opposite of the religious tradition and natural sciences *in nuce*. Have the techniques and natural sciences we have attained brought us bad luck? Have they just corrupted man's original state, or are they an indication of progress? It is something much deeper, for an increase of consciousness is implied, a development of human consciousness. Is that advantageous to us or not? Will we get worse and worse by becoming more conscious, and estranged from nature and lose our balance, or is it the one thing we must do? If we try to become conscious do we fulfill the will of God, or go contrary to it? That is the hidden question.

It is a religious projection, and if we put it more humbly, psychologically, there is a discussion of the problem as to whether an increase of consciousness is progress or not. When people come to you in analysis, men or women, they say that they often think it better to let sleeping dogs lie. Why should one dig up problems about which the more you think, the more muddled you become? Leave it to nature and problems will right themselves somehow! Then there comes a boy who has a mother fixation and does not want to leave home and you analyse and show him from his dreams that obviously he should pull away from his mother, but then she comes storming in and asks why you dig up such things and destroy the family harmony, why you say such things to her son and destroy their good contact the whole family is upset and the boy no better!

So *is* an increase of consciousness a good thing or a bad thing? We therapists have to put that question to ourselves every time. And we always meet such life associations. Somebody speaks to you in the train and asks what you do professionally, and if you say you are a psychoanalyst, they say that is very interesting, and that they have had a dream and will tell it to you! They think dreams mean nothing, but the dream shows the man's problem and you wonder whether you should stick a pin into him and a drop of the poison of knowledge and give him an idea as to what it really means, or just say that this is not a consultation.

Knowledge is either poisonous or healing, it is one or the other, and that is why some myths say that knowledge brings about the corruption of the world and others that knowledge is healing, and then we have the biblical idea which says that it is first corruption, but later turns, thank God, into healing. In the Old Testament it meant corruption, but Christ, who made something out of it, turned it into healing, so one has to have a double attitude about it, the teaching of the *felix culpa*.

In an actual situation, however, you cannot assume a double attitude. Each time there is the terrible problem, shall I tell them, or not? You have the whole ethical responsibility and each time do not know whether you have done the right or the wrong thing. It is the problem of consciousness. What should man do with his consciousness? How should he handle it? You see, if I am conscious of what a dream means, how shall I handle it? Shall I use it as poison or as a healing factor? Consciousness, or knowledge, is a terrific problem which we have not solved yet.

Remark: We never will solve it, it is the problem with which we live.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, that is true, but a generality. One must go more deeply into it than that. We need a more specific attitude, for otherwise one can be sloppy about it and say that it is a problem one will always have since one is a psychotherapist, but it is a problem of relationship. It *is* a problem and one that we have to take seriously and not just dismiss.

In a most general way, you can say that it is the problem of mankind, for man is that strange invention of nature which carries a new form of consciousness. Anthropology books say that man is distinguished by the phenomenon of consciousness and does not himself quite know how to evaluate this quality. Is one to experience it as a curse or as a blessing? Here we are at the beginning of the natural sciences of European tradition, our text comes from pagan sources without any Judaeo-Christian influence, but Egyptian and Greek influence, and there is an entirely positive evaluation. When you analyse modern men, modern physicists, you will be confronted with a man who has the same attitude. He believes in science and that he will help mankind by his additional discoveries, so there is the same attitude and situation. Therefore it is interesting to study the unconscious symbolism of such a trend for it is again present and very much discussed in our time.

I am very pleased you ask such questions because these things



have to be brought into reality. You may say why dig up these heavy old texts with all their complications, but don't forget that that is the root of the good ideas and the prejudices of our civilization. If we don't discuss these basic prejudices of our civilization, we shall never contact other civilizations. We must know what prejudices we have, though we may still keep them, saying that we like them, but one can think differently, opinions do differ. Such broadness of mind is necessary if one wishes to analyse people objectively and not be the propagandist of one trend; an analyst should be broadminded and see what the inner nature of the analysis and constellates as a healing process, wherever it leads. That at least is our conviction.

Question: How does this attitude towards knowledge compare with the ancient Promethean attitude?

Dr. von Franz: That is a very good question. In Greek mythology you have that typical Greek myth which mirrors the Greek attitude, and does not make it primarily an ethical problem as the Bible does either good or evil. There is again a theft from the gods, something is stolen which the gods try to keep to themselves and according to the myth that is punished Prometheus gets into trouble and has bad luck but there is no moral evaluation. The Greek mind just states that stealing knowledge from the unconscious must be paid for, but you can still have the right attitude! You can say, never mind, I will pay, but I want it! The myth does not recommend doing or not doing it, but you must know that there is always the price to pay.

That is the very different attitude of the Greek mind, as compared with the Jewish and Judaeo-Christian attitudes, for they make it a moral problem. That is something we do know, and it is a very basic archetypal truth. Knowledge is part of the development of consciousness; there are other aspects, but that is one and it must be paid for. It is costly, but it is up to you to choose whether you are willing to pay the price or not. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the stress is on the ethical aspect, and in the Greek it is dispassionate and more a statement of facts, but here there is yet another nuance and the evaluation is highly positive and means divine progress.

Remark: You spoke twice of the angel's desire for sexual relations with Isis, and the second time you used the word "rape," but that would make a difference in terms of paying for it, for one is forced while the other is voluntary.

Dr. von Franz: Literally, the text says simply that he wants to unite sexually, and she does not want it, and I just shortened that to the word "rape." She simply made a bargain, as a woman typically does. She says he should not be in such a hurry but should first tell her the secret, and then in a typically feminine way she does not afterwards say whether she paid the price or not. Isis was a woman! The Greek actually says that he rushed into what he wanted, "but I, Isis, had in mind what *I* wanted." What would the angel's sexual attack on Isis mean psychologically, and her delay in order to attain knowledge? How does that compare psychologically with the psychological situation in which we always find ourselves?

Remark: It is the irruption of collective contents, for which she demands an explanation.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, the angel would represent a content of the collective unconscious, in our terms, which irrupts into the psychological system with a demand, in this case a sexual one. What is the parallel which we always experience? Alchemy was born through Isis' resistance and the fact that she did not cede quickly at least delayed the sexual process, if it did not stop it altogether. We do not know what she did in the end, she very discreetly won't even tell her own son. But what does that mean?

If she were a human woman, the angel's attack would be an animus invasion, but I would rather formulate it much more generally because that would apply to a single case, and this is not case material. It means that very often contents of the collective unconscious irrupt in an instinctive form, in the form of some kind of instinctive urge, either power or sex, or something of the kind. That is, the libido irruption of the unconscious presents itself on a relatively animal or low level first, and that is something we experience again and again. The development of further consciousness often manifests initially in this form. One of the great problems in the psychological realm was to recognize this. If such an irruption takes place you can say that that is being flooded by the sexual impulse, or fantasies, or even a physical sexual impulse. We have always to decide whether that is genuine sex or a disguised unconscious impulse, which really implies knowledge or a progress of consciousness, which appears first in this form.

If you are unprejudiced, you would first be obliged to try it out, but it has often been proved that to delay is wise. Let us say that a man has a tremendous anima projection onto a woman and the

experience comes as a very strong urge for sexual union. Let us assume that she falls for it, and that then the whole thing disappears. With the Don Juan that often happens. *Après le coup*, it means nothing more to him! He leaves her and thinks: "Oh, dammit, that was not Qwhat I wanted!" So you can just as well say that from the very beginning it was not really that, it was only veiled in that way, but the impulse did not reach its goal and its meaning, and no progress of consciousness was achieved. The urge might just as well have been resisted and an effort made first to find out what it was really driving at, because, as we frequently see, impulses of something you ought to do, first appear in the form of physical reactions if they cannot reach consciousness directly.

For example, if you are faced with an analytical situation where you just don't know what to do, it can happen that while sitting in your chair and analysing, you have a sudden sexual reaction, to which it is *not* advisable to accede quite apart from the conventions but we are not discussing the conventions and can speak openly. Experience has shown that it is wiser to stop and ask why this happened at this particular moment of the analysis? What was the discussion about when this urge suddenly welled up, which dream was being discussed? You can be absolutely sure that you have touched on a point where both you and the analysand should become conscious of something, that something is pushing towards consciousness and is so far from what you can conceive that it can only manifest in a physical way. It is a kind of below-stairs explosion, because it cannot come up by the staircase; it is as though you tried to push utairs an animal which instead just jumped out the window. Something wants to come up from the unconscious, but there is a short circuit and it appears as a sexual urge, because there is some sort of difficulty in getting on further.

But sometimes it is a genuine sexual urge. You cannot always say that it is not exactly what it appears to be, because after all we are warm-blooded animals and have our normal physical reactions. But primarily, it can happen that in such a situation we do not know which is which and therefore Isis' technique is only wisdom, namely to delay, and first ask the thing that rushes in for all its secrets, and then afterwards make up your mind to have a little affair, or not. Isis does not tell she is very discreet! She neither says she did or didn't. That is a free ethical decision among human beings, or, as here, among gods, and that is on another level. But as long as it is such a forceful urge you are not free to decide.

First you must delay and find out what you are confronted with. What is behind it? A sexual urge can take place when you are confronted with a dying person. How misplaced that seems! In such a case it would be very plausible to think that this was not your natural sexual instinct wanting to copulate with a dying person, such a thing would be impossible. You know from the very start that it does not mean that, yet it is a typical situation and something with which I have frequently met. Behind it there is a whole archetypal symbolic problem. Why is the sexual urge so tremendously important at this moment that it falls on the dying person and those in the surroundings? That is just one example among many others. Then you have to delay the angel and say that he should first tell his secret, that you want to become conscious of what is behind the urge, namely the strange connection between instinct and archetype.

## INSTINCTS

infra-red

(Physiological: body symptoms, instinctual perceptions, etc.)

## ARCHETYPES

experience

ultra-violet

(Psychological: ideas, conceptions, dreams, images, fantasies, etc.)

11.

The connection between instinct and archetype compared to the spectrum.

Jung in his writings sometimes refers to instinct as if it were the same thing as the archetype and sometimes as if it were different. What he means is that the archetype, if we look at it as opposite to instinct, would be an inherited and instinctive way of having emotions, ideas, and representations with symbols, and instinct would be the inherited way of acting physically, a certain kind of physical action. Naturally, the two are connected.

For example, suppose when walking in a field you suddenly begin to run for no apparent reason and jump over a hedge, and on looking back see that a bull was chasing you! People would say that was a miracle, for they didn't know why but suddenly felt that they had to run; they had not realized what was happening, but their instinct had saved them. That happens frequently. One crosses over the street, not knowing why, and then something falls from the roof! It is very important for us to learn to trust such impulses.

Now that is something which happens physically. I begin to run without even noticing the danger, but thank God, my body is cleverer than I! But instead of physical action, I may hear a voice, or have a hallucination which tells me to run. In the one case the warning comes as a physical reaction and in the other as a thought, which is the difference between instinct and archetype; the voice would be a manifestation of the archetype and the physical movement a manifestation of instinct, but really they are two aspects of the same thing. Actual physical behaviour according to pattern would be instinct, and the concomitant inner representations, emotions, auditions, visions, would be manifestations of the archetype.

Man has a structural inherited something in him which makes him act and think in a certain way, which is why we are sometimes not clear about the two. Since these contents of the unconscious have a kind of physical aspect, and also a somatic and psychological aspect, sometimes something which should go through the psychological aspect switches over into the physical, or the physical aspect switches into the psychological; they are like communicating taps, and if there is a blockage in one the water flows out from the other.

If often happens that people have great psychological problems, the whole cause of which they consider to be psychological, and then they experience something on the physical side and the whole problem collapses. They had blocked an instinct, let us say a sexual urge, which then manifested in their minds as a philosophical problem about God. That was what Freud generalized! He saw that this often happened and thought that you could explain everything on that level, but that is not so, you might just as well block the other end and then it goes through the other way round.

That is one of the eternal conflicts shall I live it concretely, or shall I take it symbolically? Is this meant as a realization, or must it be simply lived, without thinking about it too much? That is one of our great problems. Here it is said that by blocking, or delaying, a physical urge a progress in consciousness takes place.

Remark: This was not the first bargain struck on behalf of knowledge, for Isis undertook to cure the sun god Ra of the bite of the poisonous worm, provided he would tell her his sacred name. How do you explain this parallel?



12.

The sun god Ra with his attributes.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, it is certainly a parallel. When the sun god Ra became old and senile and unable to carry on properly any more, Isis put a poisonous serpent in his path and it bit and poisoned him so that he became very ill. At that time it was believed that a man's power lay in his secret name, which was his soul, or mana, his life power, and when Ra lay on his sick bed, Isis came to her own father and offered to cure him if he would first tell her his secret name. In face of this blackmail, Ra broke down and told her his name, and from then on she had the power of the sun god.

But what does that mean? We cannot discuss this on the same level as the other motif which would be the level of a physical urge behind which we believe something archetypal to be hidden. To answer your question we would need to go briefly into the whole development of consciousness in the Egyptian civilization.

In Egypt the cult of the sun god and the sun god's son was in general, in terms of the social and political structure, a patriarchal order. In about the years 3,000 to 2,800 B.C., sun worship gradually exceeded that of the moon and bull worship; the principal king represented the sun god, and was no longer closely linked with the moon and the bull, or there was some slight difference. With this development and increase in the sun cult came a development in law, science, geometry, the planning of fields, of building, and so on. There was enormous progress in rational civilization and in

organization and war, etc. That was a development of the masculine world, of the mind world and the world of order, that went along with the sun cult.

To a certain extent it may be compared with the early development of the Christian civilization where the same thing took place belief in law, belief in dogma, belief in order, belief in knowledge, and then, because these things come to an end, to an enantiodromia, the masculine mode of consciousness tires. That is a typical archetypal event, and then the feminine, or the unconscious and nature, the chaotic, have to take back the light. This first big myth illustrates the enantiodromia where the masculine, the male sun god, hands all the power to the feminine order.

Nowadays our official organizations believe more and more in red tape, in more and more congresses, more regulations, and more religions to save the world. They are intent on bringing order, thinking that that will solve the problem and that those other tendencies which we find in the dreams of our patients will not succeed. But the world has once more tired so the Pope declares the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and we see the reevaluation of the feminine in men's present-day dreams.

I can give you an instance. The other day a man, in revulsion over the slaughter now taking place in Tibet, wrote a fiery article to the effect that we Swiss, who are also a mountain people threatened by surrounding big Powers, should show more sympathy and feeling for that other little mountain people who are fighting for their freedom, and that it is not enough just to read the papers and express sympathy, for tomorrow the same thing could happen to us with a Russian invasion. We should do something about it and stop trading with China. But then he dreamt that the world was coming to an end, and that a few people dug up in a glacier in the mountains an old ship in which sat a beautiful woman. The ship was like Noah's ark which was moving towards the sea and only those who went in the old ship with the woman would be saved!

So you see, the unconscious says that what you in your masculine, political, thinking mind see is only a small aspect of what is really happening. We are now confronted with the deluge. Our real problem at the present time is that of overpopulation and not tension with the Arabs or the Russians. We are confronted with a hopeless situation. The saving principle is the feminine principle and this time it will not be Noah in the ark, but a woman, that is, a goddess. What does that mean? You see the dreams with which one



13.

The life-giving power of the feminine represented as the sea of renewal arising from virgin's milk.

is sometimes confronted! You cannot evaluate this woman as a woman. The dreamer is all right in his relationship with women, there is nothing wrong on that level. What does the woman in the ark represent, and those few people who go with her?

That is not easy to interpret, but at the end of the Egyptian civilization there was a similar enantiodromia. Suddenly Isis got everything into her hands and the male gods faded and it is interesting that that was at the end of the Aries age and that now we are at the end of Pisces, the astrological fish age, and again a woman is gathering the harvest and the men are a bit tired.

Question: But the angel did not lose anything when he gave his secret to the goddess. He still understood it himself, did he not?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, but whereas the angel made no use of his knowledge, Isis founded alchemy; she did something with it, whereas the angel just kept it to himself.





14.

The spiritualization of matter portrayed as the coronation of the Virgin Mary. The scene represents the alchemical quaternity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (dove), with the feminine (matter) as the fourth.

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### Lecture 3 Greek Alchemy

Last time we discussed the possible meaning of the handing over of the secret of alchemy by the angel Annaël to the goddess Isis. We used amplifications from ancient legends which say, in effect, that all natural scientific knowledge, from mathematics to the making of women's cosmetics, was taught human beings by angels or giants. We also discussed the strange fact that very often at the end of a patriarchal civilization, there comes an enantiodromia the power is handed over to a feminine figure, as for instance when towards the end of the Egyptian civilization the cult of Isis became predominant, and Isis more and more took over the role of all other gods. There are even late Egyptian prayers in which Isis is invoked as the one who is all other gods in a feminine form. This we compared, *cum grano salis*, with the fact that now within the Christian civilization, at least the Catholic part of it, the Virgin Mary has suddenly been raised to a more dominant role than hitherto.

We should not forget that these mother goddesses are also connected with the concept of matter, for not only is the word itself connected with the word "mother," but the whole projection of matter, and the model archetypal idea at the back of the minds of natural scientists, is drawn from the mother archetype. Plato, for instance, says that space is like a nurse to the whole cosmic order, thus space is regarded as a feminine container, a nourishing function of the mother.

Since the idea of matter is always secretly connected with the mother archetype, if the Pope shifts emphasis in the Christian cult onto the Virgin Mary, this is, consciously or unconsciously, a blow struck against communistic materialism. It is a gesture in that sense, and an attempt to get at its materialistic aspect by placing emphasis on matter in a different form. Interest in matter therefore springs from a resurgence of this archetype.

When young natural scientists choose their profession, frequently Mother Nature appears to them in dreams in the form of an old woman, or some such figure, and shows them the way. I have seen

several such dreams in cases of young people who were uncertain whether to study natural science, for instance medicine, or something else. You can thus actually prove by the material of modern people that the drive towards interest in the material aspect of outer nature very often springs from the constellation of this archetype, which is the dynamism behind natural science. If the biblical story evaluates this imparting of knowledge to man as a catastrophe, or as unlucky, that certainly can be compared to the fact that natural science, including mathematics, has tended from the very beginning to possess people in an autonomous way, to possess their interest in a totalistic way to such an extent as to give them a demonic drive, upsetting not only their personal balance but also, to some extent, the balance of civilization.

This excessive drive of natural science and its destructive aspect is nowadays such a banality that I do not need to enlarge upon it, but it springs from the fact that one archetype is, as it were, moving out of the general instinctual order. Therefore you can say that the myth of the origin of natural science is partly the myth of an instinctual dissociation; *homo faber* is already dissociated, or is in a dangerous way estranged from its natural instinctive roots. That is what the biblical myth says, while this Isis myth, on the contrary, lauds the same event as an enormous progress. If there are two myths, one of which is more or less the opposite of the other, or the same thing with a different evaluation, we can only conclude that there is a basic uncertainty in the human being, and even in his consciousness; the problem is real and not invented, and we have to look at it from both angles.

The angel bears on his head a vessel not caulked with pitch and which contains shining water. This absolutely transparent or clean water, the Greek text says, is in alchemy the symbol of the mysterious basic matter *par excellence*. The idea of the eternal water is, as you know from Jung's innumerable amplifications, and associations from other texts, one of the very greatest alchemical symbols. It is the divine water which is naturally not H<sub>2</sub>O, but is actually a symbol for the most basic matter of the world, the *prima materia*. So in this image it is said that the angel bears the mystery of the basic material of the cosmos we would say and that is exactly what these alchemists, just like modern physicists, had in mind: that possibly all material phenomena went back to one basic material, the search for which was their great *fascinosum*, for with it goes the



15.

The alchemist and his assistant make the sign of the secret, in accord with the experience that much of what happens in a relationship between two people cannot be shared with others.

feeling that if this basic material could be discovered, one would, in a way, look into the divine fabric of the cosmos.

Isis insists on getting the secret, after which the text continues with the oath by which Horus is conjured not to disclose it. This accords with the style of the mystery and late religious initiations in general. In the Hellenistic world it is an emphasis which shows that now the great thing has been imparted, and therefore Isis' son, Horus, has to realize that the secret is for him only and nobody else, and that he must never talk about it.

We have in this oldest text something which we shall meet again and again throughout the history of alchemy, namely the motif of the great secret which cannot be just scientifically told and imparted from one individual to another. In the history of alchemy and chemistry this has always been regarded as a trick to make the whole thing appear important and mysterious, and to veil secrets. Naturally, there is a certain amount of truth in that, because, as you know, at this time alchemy was also chemistry and therefore knowledge as to how to make alloys, etc., was a trade secret for the very banal, financial reason of keeping the upper hand. In our modern industries the same thing goes on; there is even a system for spying out the secrets of industrial management and metallurgy, for such knowledge means power and money, as it did in olden times. If, for instance, you could make an alloy which looked like gold, thanks to the very indifferent police control at that time, false money could be made and a fortune quickly acquired, so that naturally the secret would only be imparted to one's best friends.

But this banal aspect does not explain the whole phenomenon. Consider what happens in an analytical situation. Perhaps you all have experienced that certain things can only be said, or explained, or done, with one other person, and generally, if an analysis goes deep enough, there comes a point where analyst and analysand share the secret which both know could not be shared with anybody else and which therefore establishes a unique relationship.

This is experienced by people in the surroundings exactly in the same way as was felt about alchemy, namely that there must be something dirty connected with it, for otherwise it could be spoken of straight out. But it is quite impossible to say and do certain things except with one person; that is the uniqueness and exclusiveness of every real human relationship, and of every real meeting with the unconscious. That is why it is so difficult, and in a way misleading, to report on case material, for certain things come up which cannot be told, not for reasons of discretion or because they have to do with sex, or concern a divorce, or marriage, or have something to do with finances, or some kind of indiscreet dirt which people always think is the case but because the thing is *ineffable*.

Sometimes the relationship or analysis goes on in half-said words which are understood in a specific way by the other person, but which you cannot repeat when speaking of the case. You can tell the dreams, and repeat what you told the analysand about their meaning, but you know perfectly well that you are telling only half the story. There are also things which cannot be told because they happen without your knowing. Somebody may say later: "I don't remember what you said at the time, but you laughed in a certain way which suggested something to me." That can happen without either party noticing at the time, and such effects cannot be helped and cannot be spoken of, though in actual fact they may form the basis of the analytical and therapeutic process.

There is also the sympathy between two people, the *sympathia*, which means that they suffer together, the two are impressed together, and this condition of "togetherness," which comes from participating in the same experience, cannot be explained not because one *wants* to make a secret of it, but because it is inexplicable and irrational and very complex. So you can say that in every process of analysis there is a secret, and generally one cannot talk about it. If, therefore, you report a case, you only report it in part; it is a unique thing, but usually people go home and think that

now they know how the process of individuation works, and then they are completely off the track, because their process of individuation could be guaranteed to go quite differently. *Per definitionem*, it is an individuation, which means something unique.

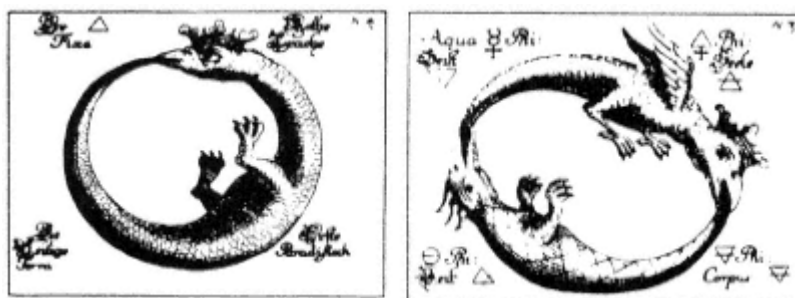
Therefore it is even misleading to recount a unique case for involuntarily people generalize about it, thinking that they now understand how therapy is conducted but they are already barking up the wrong tree. There is a real secret, for as soon as you touch the uniqueness of the process, or of the individual, it cannot be talked about any more. Often, when asked to speak on case material, when looking through my cases I think that it would be wrong to give any of them. Generally, one can only speak of slight cases, or of those which go wrong which is humiliating to one's vanity but at least such a case can be talked about.

Remark: Isn't Isis referring to something like that when she says: "You are me and I am you," after which there is nothing more to be said?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, exactly, that is what I am driving at. There is the "I am you and you are me," in it, and that is the element which cannot be told. That is the *unio mystica*, the thing which happens at the bottom of what we try to push off with the word "transference," thus making it a technical thing. But it is a real mystery, a mystical experience, one which therefore can never be imparted or shared with another person.

Isis swears first in the name of Hermes, which is probably the Greek translation for Thoth, the moon god and ape god, then in the name of Anubis, which has not been translated and therefore is recognizable in its Egyptian form, and also in the name of Kerkoros the howling of Kerkoros, referring to the howling of the dog Kerberos. In the parallel text the name is Kerkourobos. Ouroboros is the snake which eats its own tail, so it must refer to a doglike demon which has been confused with this snake and is here described as the snake and the guardian of the underworld. So this is a mixture of the figure of Kerberos, therefore "Ker" in the first syllable, with certain guardian figures of the Egyptian underworld, among which we very often find the snake which eats its own tail.

I will now read the text which speaks of the Ouroboros snake, as depicted on certain Egyptian tombs. In the tomb of Sethi the First, for instance, there is a drawing of a house with two sphinxes outside,



16.

The Ouroboros, the snake that eats its own tail, as crowned dragon and as winged and wingless serpents (compare winged and wingless birds, page 124).

which is a kind of schematic representation of the underworld, where the resurrection of the sun god takes place. Just before his resurrection, the sun god is represented as an ichthyphallic man lying on his back with erect phallus and around him is the snake which eats its own tail. The inscription merely says: "This is the corpse." You see therefore that in the underworld when the sun god has reached the moment when death and resurrection meet, when he is in his tomb at the depth of the underworld, he is represented as surrounded by this snake. According to the Egyptian text, the snake which eats its own tail is considered to be the guardian of the underworld and it is probably this snake which is invoked here.

The text continues: "I conjure you also in the name of the ferryman Acheron." And later: "Go to the peasant Acharontos and he will tell you the whole secret." One thinks first, naturally, of the Greek underworld stream Acheron, but since obviously the translation represents Egyptian ideas and images, we have to see what underworld godhead or figure might have given rise to such a name.

In this connection I have found some very interesting amplifications. There is an Egyptian god, or concept, called Aker, or sometimes Akerou. This god is represented by two lions sitting back to back, with sometimes the disc of the sun between their two backs. That is called Rwti, or the double lion, and that is how the god, or the word Aker, is represented. He is shown as the double lion, or the double dog, or as Yesterday and Tomorrow, because in Egyptian mythology this whole picture represents the moment of the resurrection of the sun god. Yesterday he was dead, tomorrow

he will be alive again. Midnight, when the sun is at its lowest point and begins to rise again, is the turning point from death to life, from yesterday to the next day. This lowest moment of the enantiodromia and of the resurrection is Aker, for Aker means "that moment."

In these late languages and in primitive old languages, Aker means not only the moment, but also the place and situation, the situation of death and resurrection, of yesterday and tomorrow, of the resurrection and regeneration of the sun god. Sometimes Aker is not represented as this deepest point of the underworld, but as the door to the Beyond to which the double lions are the doorkeepers, so there is an admixture of two ideas; it is the entrance to the Beyond, the *limen*, or the deepest point in the underworld itself. In the tombs of Tut-Mosis III and Amenophis II there is the same scene as in the tomb of Sethi the First.



17.

Rwti, the Egyptian double lion with the disc of the sun, representing Aker, the moment when the sun reappears after its journey through the underworld, i.e., the rebirth of consciousness after the "night sea journey."

I will now read you some of the invocations. In the Book of the Caverns, one of the books of the dead in the many Egyptian variations, the sun god when in the underworld says: "Oh, Aker, I went your way, you whose forms are mysterious, open thy arms before me. Here I am, those who are within you call to me." When he says "those who are within you call to me," Aker is simply the whole underworld, the space in the underworld, and those who are in the underworld are the spirits of the dead and the god of the dead, and the spirits call the sun god when he plunges into the underworld. The text continues: "I have seen thy mysteries, my sun disc and Geb, the earth god, are those whom I carry on my back."



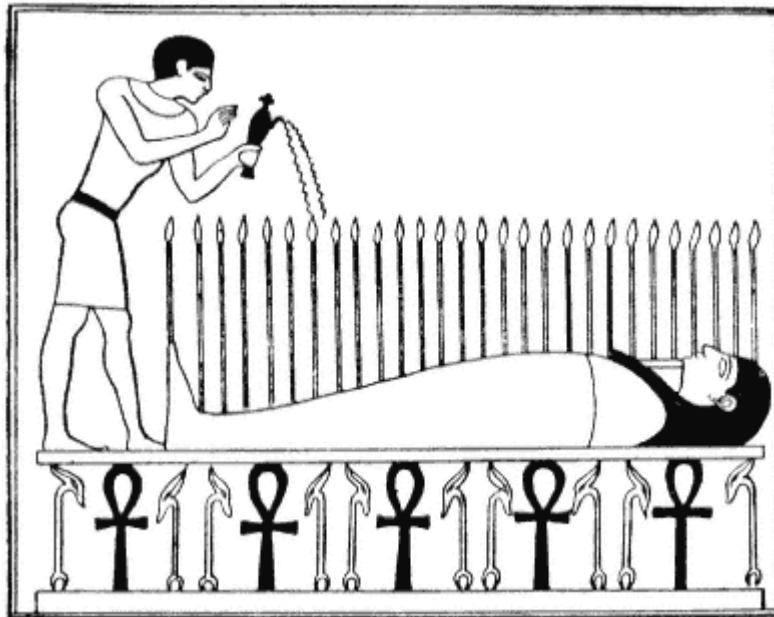
Chepera is now inside his envelope." Chepera is the resurrecting form of the sun god who is now as in the egg, he is in the envelope and next moment will appear over the horizon. "Open thy arms, receive me. Here I am, I will chase away your darkness."

In the tomb of Rameses VI, Aker is depicted by the two lions and beneath them are the words: "See what this god looks like. Geb, the earth god, and Chepera, the scarab, watch the images which are within him." So Aker is a space which contains the dead, or the images of everything which exists. He is not only the double lion, or the door to the Beyond, but that mysterious space in the underworld in which are the dead people and the images. He watches them and has them in his arms. This great god stays below in the underworld and speaks with the great image which carries his corpse. Aker is the great image which carries the corpse or body of the sun god, as can be understood from the drawing. The sun god sheds light on everything lying in the arms of Aker, who brings about the reunion of the bones of the god he re-collects the scattered bones of the corpse.

One of the great motifs of the Book of the Dead in Egypt is that the dead are dismembered, as was Osiris, and must therefore be reassembled before they can resurrect; they must be put together again so as to be able to rise from the underworld. Aker is the agent in re-collecting the bones and members of the god.

Another representation found in the tomb of Rameses VI is of the double lion standing between the primordial waters. Underneath the inscription is "Aker" and then an ellipse, which in this connection symbolises the underworld, or the world of the dead; and the inscription says that Aker and Shu, the air god, are the two creators of the world. Thus you see that Aker is not only the agent in the resurrection of the sun god and the whole underworld, but also one of the agencies in the creation of the world. Sometimes the double lions are replaced, as I mentioned above, by two of Anubis's jackals, two doglike animals, and then the inscription below is: "These are the openers of the way, the agents of resurrection."

I think, therefore, it would not be too far-fetched to conjecture that Acharon, or Acharontos, alludes to this Egyptian god, for, as you know, the main content of the great secret imparted by Isis to Horus is that a lion generates a lion, barley generates barley, wheat generates wheat, and so on; therefore a man is only generated in the same way, and, it is also especially said, a dog a dog.



18.

Osiris with wheat or corn sprouting from his body.

So what at first seems a completely banal statement of nature, namely the secret of sexual generation, and of the germs, and plant generation, reveals itself as having, in the late antique Greek and Egyptian of that time, a completely other net of associations. These images were all connected or associated with the idea of the resurrection of the dead, of the re-creation of the sun god, and of the re-creation of the world; that is a secret allusion in the text.

As you know, the resurrection of Osiris has very often been represented by the simile though it is more than a simile of the resurrection of the corn. In late antiquity, for instance, in many Egyptian towns there were rituals during which a pine tree was cut down and hollowed out, representing the body of Isis, or the coffin the coffin *is* the mother goddess, as you know. Wheat, or corn or barley, was then put in and watered and the grain sprouted when put in the sun, and so represented a spring ritual of resurrection. In the museum in Cairo, this corn mummy can still be seen. In a kind of flat box with sand in it, corn was sown in the form of Osiris's mummy. It was sprinkled with water, sprouted, and then



19.

Anubis anointing the mummy of Osiris, with Isis giving directions.



20.

The resurrection of Osiris, attended by Nephthys and Isis.

withered. Such things were known as Osiris gardens and represented the resurrection of the dead. The process was repeated at every classical Egyptian funeral: corn was placed inside the bands of the mummy of the corpse and sprinkled with water, and when the corn began to sprout, that was a sign that the dead had now resurrected. In this typical primitive and magic form all these rituals were performed completely literally on the mummy of the corpse. So the process of the death of the corn in the earth and its resurrection as wheat or barley was closely connected in the minds of the people with the idea of the resurrection, first of the god Osiris, and later of every human being.

Now what on earth has this to do with alchemy? Clearly it seems to refer to certain late antique mysteries of the dead in the Hellenistic Egyptian world, and we can recognize the connection with the famous archetypal mystery of the death and resurrection of the young spring god. But why does that come as the essential explanation of the whole alchemical mystery? And why on earth, in the text I read you last time, after this explanation, are there such completely banal recipes? I think in order to understand what these people had in mind one must first of all be extremely naive, and follow a naive thought.

Let us assume that you think of your own resurrection if you hope for one, even though you may not believe in it. Naturally the first thing that occurs to you is the corpse and what happens to it. The worms eat it, or in the crematorium it is burnt to ashes. If we are naive and honest, we cannot detach our minds from the immediate sight of what remains of us after death, and therefore in all human civilizations the corpse is treated with great care and all kinds of rituals because it represents a mystery. The form of the human being who lived is still there, but something is lacking, or has changed. Naive feeling still takes what lies before you as your father, or your friend, or whoever it may be, and if not, what is it? If you hope for resurrection, you think that if there is such a thing, then the body which has disintegrated must somehow be put together again. If you continue to follow that thought naively you will think that if one knew the basic matter from which the whole complex phenomenon of the body is built up, then it could be remade.

Don't imagine I am preaching that to you as something true! I only want to show you that it would be an idea likely to occur to a

naive mind, and in trying to discuss the problem of resurrection with people, I have often seen that they do think along these lines. They speak of the glorified body but there might be a basic matter, or substance. We do not know what matter is, so from that basis, which we do not know and which is God's own secret, why should He not remake the whole body again? That is a common belief among many Christians who have not thought too deeply but who, in an effort to understand, have a general idea of the resurrection of the body, and I think that similar naive thoughts were behind these texts. Namely, that the problem of resurrection is somehow linked with the problem of what matter is and that if it has a basic form, it can be transformed.

Now if there is a basic matter which can be transformed into something else, then that basic matter is immortal and can never be dissolved. That is even the idea of the atom that which cannot be split further that is, the most basic particle, or material, which is what the word means. It also means the individual, the last unit. It cannot be split or disintegrate, and is therefore immortal, so there one touches an eternal thing and if one gets to the bottom of that then one has the secret of resurrection and of immortality, and of how God made the world.

That was the trend of thought and the reflection behind the ideas contained in this text, which accounts for the investigation into the basic composition of cosmic matter. That the problem of the resurrection of the dead was for these people bound up with such thoughts shows that the hope for immortality, the whole tremendous emotional drive man feels in his longing for immortality, went at that time into alchemy, which explains how the imagery of the process of individuation got projected into this problem. So far, I have only asserted and amplified the above with a few Egyptian texts, but afterwards I am going to read you a completely different 5th century text from which you will see that such thoughts really existed. Up to now they have only been alluded to, so that we have to reconstruct from other texts.

After the allusion to the statement that a lion generates a lion and a dog a dog, the text continues: "Having been fortunate in participating in the divine power we can now proceed with the preparation of other things. Therefore take quicksilver. . .," and so on. Then the text goes on with the recipes, which I cannot interpret because I simply do not know what they mean. Some, like the urine

of an uncorrupted boy, can be amplified, for we know that this played a role in late antique magic. What other substances refer to we don't know, and historians of chemistry conjecture and quarrel as to their probable meaning, most of which have not been definitely established. We only know that they are mixtures of metals, etc., principally used in the manufacture of alloys, and that there were certain procedures of melting or of slow corrosion by acids. While still giving such recipes, Isis says: "Now, my child, you know the mystery which is the elixir of the widow." That sentence shows that some of the recipes refer to healing elixirs, to some powerful medicines, in the African sense of the word, rather than to the production of some kind of metal. How does that link up if you think of it naively?

I had an experience in my childhood which might elucidate this. When I was about ten years old I frequently had to stay away from school because of illness and went to school only in the mornings. In the afternoons, when my sister was at school, I was alone and very bored and had nobody to play with. So at the back of the hen house I established what I called my laboratory. I had once read that amber was formed by resin falling into sea water and solidifying after many years. So I thought I would make amber. Promptly, in my fantasy, amber became a yellow pearl, and I thought I would make a round yellow pearl of amber.

By means of endlessly climbing and falling from fir trees, I collected a quantity of resin, but then thought that I had to produce sea water. From the dictionary I discovered what sea water consisted of, and I stole salt and iodine from the bathroom and mixed, as completely as one would at that age, something which I called sea water. Then, thinking that the amber had to be purified before the yellow pearl could be produced, I started to melt and cook it so as to get rid of the dead ants and such things in it and while doing this, and watching the amber being heated up and melted, in my loneliness, I started to feel pity for it, thinking that it was being burnt and that I must propitiate it. So I started talking to the resin, saying that it should not be unhappy if I burnt it for in the end it was to become a wonderful yellow pearl, and it must just bear being tortured with the fire now.

In this way, I got into a whole fantasy about producing this yellow pearl, the idea of which had originated quite rationally from something I had read. But in the loneliness of the task, the thing

became amplified into a complete alchemical opus with prayers for its success. I prayed to the amber, begging it not to be angry with me for cooking it, and promised to make it into a pearl, and so on. That is primitive or infantile mentality and we must suppose that these people had a similar attitude. It must be remembered that at that time it was very dangerous to make chemical experiments, because then you were looked on as a witch doctor with all the consequences that entailed. You were respected, but also hated and feared and therefore such things had to be done secretly and in loneliness, which always brings up the unconscious.

You could describe this childhood occupation, which lasted for over a year, as play or something like active imagination, performed with chemical substances which to a great extent is what alchemy is. Active imagination can be done with colours; nowadays we do it chiefly by painting, or by writing stories, but it can also be done another way by collecting substances and mixing them. That is what these people did and thus went a little bit off the track of producing only a chemical experiment into producing one in which fantasy material was predominant, just as I rationally began by wanting to make amber and, in the process, fell into the fantasy of producing a yellow pearl.

Synchronistic events do happen in these as much as in other fields of experiment; they are experienced as miracles, and naturally confirm such fantasies. That this still continues in modern chemical laboratories is evidenced by a story I heard of a scientist who tried to produce a certain vitaminQ in a chemical form. He had everything figured out, and knew that the product should be produced, but it did not seem to want to crystallize. *When* something crystallizes depends on very irrational factors. Of course the weight and heat and form of the mixture all play a part, but there are still nowadays factors which cannot be overlooked in chemical manufacture, but one does not know upon what they depend. So the wretched thing, contrary to all expectations, did not crystallize. He watched it day and night, saying it ought to crystallize, but it just remained liquid. The scientist became sick of watching it and got a helper to carry on and keep the heat at a certain temperature and himself went home and fell asleep and had the most amazing alchemical dream in which a voice said: "Now go, and you will see that it has crystallized!" He got up and telephoned, and it was true, it had crystallized! So the unconscious of this man was actually connected to, or informed

about, the chemical process going on in the retort.

You can label that as synchronicity, but in doing so you have not explained anything. It is simply a fact. And it shows that we do not know how the unconscious is connected with matter, but only that it is, and that it has a knowledge of such things; how we do not know, for our scientific knowledge in its respect has come to an end, for the time being. Apparently chemistry, even in the most modern times, still has a connection with the unconscious of the person performing the experiment, even to the extent of such things happening as I have described. There again we touch on a secret, and that kind of experience, but on a more primitive and crude basis, was generally at the back of the alchemists' experiments.

If we sum up the text we have just discussed, not from a psychological but from an historical standpoint, we see that in alchemy there are religious ideas and conceptions which lead back to Hellenized Egypt with its early admixture of Greek and late Egyptian religions. I cannot read you all the texts, but in others there are traces of Jewish and Gnostic symbolism and many other religions of that time. The other element, connected in thought but disconnected as far as the texts are concerned, is that of the recipes, obviously remnants of secret craft traditions, which originated with African medicine men and were concerned with the making of love charms, medicines to ensure beauty, and with the making of alloys and so on. All such recipes were the secrets of the smith craftsmen and medicine men. During the Egyptian civilization they were probably handed down by certain classes of priests who had monopolies on the manufacture of their particular alloys or medicines, which they obtained through the ruling Pharaoh and probably kept in secret books stored in the temples.

In the same way, there is now in the museum in Cairo a papyrus which has been dug up and which contains all the recipes for the embalming of corpses. The instructions for this very complicated procedure are given in a purely technical and chemical way. That was the secret of the class of the Anubis priests, and constituted knowledge imparted only to initiated priests. That probably goes back to the oldest kind of primitive African medicine men's tradition and can still nowadays be unearthed in Africa in a more simple form, the psychological attitude and secret at the back of such procedures being still unchanged.

My next Greek text introduces a third element into these early



chemical writings, namely Greek natural philosophy. Perhaps one of the greatest historical events of late antiquity was that in Greek natural philosophy, the pre-Socratic philosophy, men like Democritus, Heraclitus, and Thales of Miletus, Anaximenes, and Anaximander, speculated on established theories about nature and were the creators of such technical terms as time, space, atom, matter, and energy.

All the basic concepts of modern physics go back, as you know, to Greek philosophy, for the Greeks were the creators of these concepts in the specific, natural scientific meaning, though they did not experiment with matter to a great extent. They had few or no laboratories and most of their theories about nature came from speculative intuition, though they sometimes used practical examples to explain what they meant. For instance, if Democritus says that the atom has different forms let us say like a little pyramid with corners like hooks by which they are connected that would be the kind of materialistic model of his idea of the atom. Round atoms would be the soul, and there are also fire-atoms which roll through the spaces of the atom, that is Democritus's model of reality.

Such things the Greeks never thought of proving or demonstrating by experiment, as is common scientific procedure nowadays; if you have such a speculative model, you try to prove it by practical experiment, showing that it does or does not fit the facts. This the Greeks did not do. But then Greek thought naturally, and unfortunately in a very watered-down phase met the Egyptian secret sciences, which consisted entirely of an age-old practical craft tradition about the behaviour of matter. The Egyptians knew a great deal from the practical angle. They knew how to make enamel and invisible ink, and all sorts of complicated alloys, and when these two worlds met, in Ptolemaic Egypt, that was enormously fertile for both, because what in Egyptian tradition consisted of recipes and religious thought now met with the accurate scientific thought of the Greeks.

We could call that the moment of the birth of alchemy, when the thought models of Greek philosophy met with the experimental practices of Egyptian traditions. To give you a little more insight on this point, I would like to read a brief outline of a very long text by a later alchemist, Olympiodoros, whose name you have certainly come across in Jung's writings.

Olympiodoros was a Minister and official at the Byzantine Court in the 5th century A.D. He went as a member of a delegation to Attila, king of the Huns, and wrote a rather famous history of his time which he published in 425. Some of his biographers say that at the same time he was known as a great magician and medicine man at the Byzantine Court and, according to the texts, was much occupied with alchemical experiments. However, in the histories of alchemy this is said to be not true, for he did not possess much practical knowledge, and even if he did perform such experiments it is certain that he was more interested in the theoretical or symbolic aspects of alchemy.

He claimed that the aims of alchemy could not be achieved in a rational way, that you could follow the recipes as much as you liked but would never get anywhere without the help of magic and magical powers. So he began to have a double attitude about what could be called serious or practical sciences and magic, a split with which we have not met in the earlier texts. The reason for this is that Olympiodoros had a Greek philosophical education which he tried to apply to his knowledge. I would like to give you the text, as I did that of Isis, namely in its strange literal confusion, so that you may get your own personal impressions. I will take a section from Chapter XXX on the Sacred or Divine Art and then go on from Chapter XLI, which gives, as it were, the essence of his writings.

In Chapter XXX, Olympiodoros speaks of lead, and quotes the Prophetess Maria who is reported to have said that black lead must be considered as the basis of the work. He then comments on this. The theme is continued in Chapter XLI which says:

Now see how black lead is prepared. As I said before, common lead is black from the very beginning, but *our* lead becomes black, which at the beginning it was not. Experiments will teach you, and by them you will discover the real demonstration and proof. Opinions worthy of credence are unanimous on this matter. I will now try to approach our goal. If the Asem [an alloy like silver, though exactly what is not known] does not become gold, or could not become gold though it is a work, one should not despise what the old people said, namely that the letter kills but the spirit brings to life. [". . .for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." II Cor. 3:6.]

Now this is in complete harmony with everything said by the old philosophers and points to the same end, to the saying of the Lord. [Olympiodoros was a Christian and quoted the Bible, pointing out that one must not take alchemical texts and the recipes literally, for that killed, but one must understand the spirit of the text and what *that* meant.) The

oracles of Apollo are also in harmony with what we mean for they mention the tomb of Osiris. [This amplifies our other text.] But what is the tomb of Osiris? There is a corpse, swathed in linen mummy bands, with only the naked face visible, and, interpreting Osiris, the oracle says: "Osiris is the suffocated coffin in which are hidden his limbs and whose face only is visible to mortal beings. Hiding the bodies, nature is astonished. He, Osiris, is the original principle of all moist substances. He is kept down as a prisoner by the sphere of the fire. He, therefore, has suffocated all the lead."

Another oracle by the same author says:

Take some gold which is called the male of the Chrysokolla [whatever that substance is] and a man who has been kneaded together. The gold of the Ethiopian earth produces it from its drops. A certain species of ant brings the gold to the surface of the earth and enjoys it. Put him together with his wife of vapour, till the divine bitter water comes out. When it has thickened, or colored red [red copper] with the juice of the golden vine of Egypt, then smear over it the leaflets of the light-bringing goddess [that must be the moon] and also of the red copper ["cypris" can stand for either copper or Venus] or of the red Venus [probably Venus is meant] and then thicken it until it coagulates into gold.

Now the philosopher Petasios, who speaks about the beginning of the alchemical world, is in complete harmony with this, and he also means our lead when he says that the sphere of the fire holds down and suffocates through the lead. Then, interpreting his own sayings, he says: "All that comes from the male, or the arsenic water."

The word "arsenic" means male; it is not the arsenic we know, but refers to all substances which have a dynamic drive in them which affects other substances. Everything which seems to affect another substance was male because it was active, so it is not to be confused with what we call arsenic. Arsenic is what he is referring to when he speaks of the sphere of the fire.

The lead is so possessed by devils and is so shameless that those who want to learn about it fall into madness on account of their unconsciousness. [You will have met that saying in Dr. Jung's books for he often quotes it.]

Now I will explain about the chemical elements and then this will become clear. They call lead the egg I mean the egg of the four elements that is what Zosimos says, and by that he really always means lead. If they explain its shape, they really in secret allude to the whole thing, because, as Maria says, the four elements are one. When you hear the word "sands" you must understand that that means "shapes" or ideas [in Greek it can mean either one or the other]. If you hear "eide" [shapes, forms, ideas], that really means "the sands" the type of sand because the four bodies, or the four elements, are also the four "bodiness" [that is an invented word, but it is also in the Greek].

Zosimos explains the four-bodiness in the following way: Now the poor



21.

The double face of alchemy laboratory and library corresponds to the twofold nature of the individuation process: the active participation in outer reality and relationships, together with the process of inner reflection.

[in Greek the adjective is feminine] thing falls into the four-body in which it is chained, and at once changes from one colour to another, all the colours into which the technique wishes to bind it: white, yellow, or even black, or first black, then white, and then yellow, and when this feminine thing has evidenced all these colours, and has rejuvenated, it continues into old age and then dies in the four-body, which means iron, tin, bronze, and lead, with each of which she dies in the *rubedo* the state of becoming red and so is completely destroyed so that she cannot run away, which fact is very satisfactory to the alchemists, for now she cannot escape. And then one repeats the whole thing, by which her persecutor is also chained [the one who persecutes this woman is also chained], all of which takes place outside the round vessel. What is the round vessel? Either the fire or the round form of the vessel prevents her from running away. Just as though, in an illness, the blood had been destroyed and was now renewed, so in her silver state she is seen to have red blood, and that is the gold.

That is a long literal passage of real alchemy, from which you can see how charitable Dr. Jung has been in selecting passages and publishing them together in chapters, because if you read the original text you too might go into the madness of the lead. When

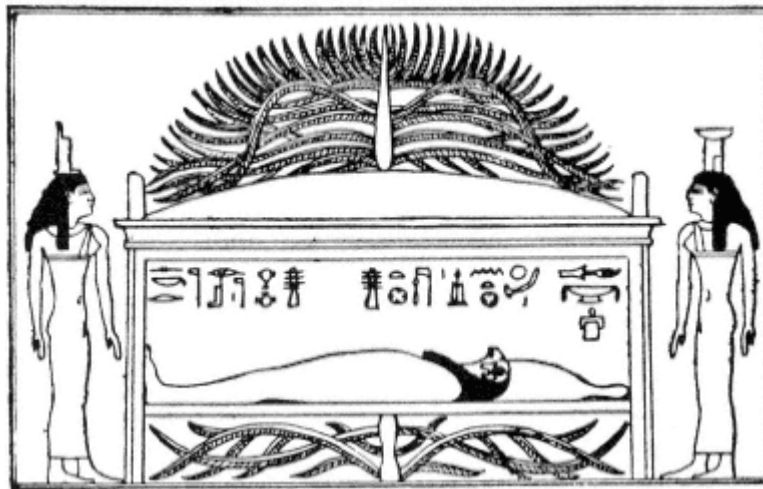
you read Dr. Jung's books you think it is impossible to understand the thing, it is all so complicated, but actually he has enormously simplified it, and has made a tremendous effort to get the pearls out of the dunghill and bring some form into it, for the original material was like the above. If you have once accustomed yourself to follow this line of thought, you will find that the whole thing is completely logical, it has the same logic as a dream and can be taken as such. The first time you hear a dream you could think it completely crazy, but if you read this material as you would a dream you will get to its meaning.

For example, Olympiodoros speaks of the black lead and it is clear that this is the original substance and is therefore the mystery of which we have already spoken the *prima materia* the basic substance of the world in which lies God's secret of life and death. He speaks of it as "our lead," which in the beginning is not black, and contrasts it with the common lead, by which he means that what ordinary craftsmen called lead (such as is used in the manufacture of pipes, for at the time of the Roman Empire lead was used to make water pipes) is not what they the alchemists are referring to when they speak of lead. It is a different kind of lead, a more basic substance with which you must experiment, he says, to discover what earlier writers meant.

He then quotes the Bible, saying that the text must not be taken literally, which is also understandable, and says that the transformation of the lead is a secret. Then he quotes an oracle of Apollo, which must be in an older writing which has been lost, and says that this is Osiris's coffin.

To understand this you must know the legend, according to which Seth killed Osiris by first making a leaden coffin and then getting people when drunk at a party to enter it under the pretext of finding out whom it would fit. But when Osiris got into the coffin, Seth promptly put the lid on, covered it with lead, and threw it into the sea. Therefore it could be said that Osiris was suffocated in lead, so you can think of the tomb of Osiris as a lead coffin, or a coffin sealed up with lead within which lies the dead god, or the divine spirit, in the form assumed in death.

That is the meaning he is trying to convey. Osiris lies as a mummy in the coffin, with only the face visible. You have seen mummies swathed in linen bands with the mask showing the face. The meaning of this is not clear, but one could say that there was



22.

Osiris in the cedar coffin covered with lead, representing the eclipse of consciousness, i.e., depression.

something human and something inhuman in it, for if you were to interpret it symbolically, as a dream, you would say that it must refer to a semihuman being; if the face is human, then part can be understood from the human aspect, but part one cannot understand.

Olympiodoros continues by saying that Osiris himself is the suffocated coffin, or tomb, which conceals his limbs and shows only the face to human beings. *Brotos* is a specific name for human beings and means "the mortals." Osiris is immortal, or the mortal immortal one; to mortals he only shows his human face, while the rest of his body is a secret. "Hiding the bodies, nature marvelled, or was astonished." I cannot entirely understand this, except that it must mean it is partly understandable because there is a human face, and partly a mystery, about which even nature marvels. I cannot give any further explanation. "That is the beginning of all moist substances" i.e., basic matter, original matter, the starting point (*Arché*). The moist substance stands for the basic material of the cosmos, being caught in the sphere of the fire.

From what takes place later it can be seen that there was the following connection: matter was put into a bottle which was securely sealed and then cooked, and this was considered to be an exact parallel to the divine spirit, Osiris, the god man, lying dead in



23.

The alchemical sealed vessel (here containing Mercurius as symbol of the spirit imprisoned in matter) is comparable psychologically to a basic attitude of introversion which acts as a container for the transformation of attitudes and emotions.

his lead coffin, for the matter in the bottle was in exactly the same state.

That was precisely what I felt when I tortured my resin in my early childhood, for I felt it to be tortured by fire in its bottle, so to speak; it could not run away, that means it could not evaporate, for I also had closed my bottle. Therefore it is caught and I have it in hand and am doing something with it. The analogy is Seth catching Osiris, and now because he has been caught by Seth, by the powerful principle of evil, he is transformed and resurrected. That was probably their association. So he has suffocated all the lead. I do not understand this, but it seems to me that this imprisonment in a coffin, or in an alchemical vessel, would represent a process of suffocation, the death of the *prima materia* by suffocation.

Obviously there is here an analogy to what we do when we stop a human being from naively projecting, and force that person to look only at him or herself that would be like suffocation, for one wants to go to the analyst and say "that is how my mother brought

me up." To which the analyst replies that one should see the part played by one's own complex, and then one has to accept everything for which one had previously blamed God and Fate, parents and husband. That all has to be taken back, and it is like suffocation, a kind of death, for the drive to project everything onto the outside is stopped.

The vessel is a symbol for the attitude which prevents anything escaping outside; it is a basic attitude of introversion which, on principle, does not let anything escape into the outside world. The illusion that the whole trouble lies outside oneself has to come to an end and things have to be looked at from within. That is how we now "suffocate" the *mysterium* of the unconscious. We do not know what the unconscious is, but we suffocate it through this concentrated treatment by which all projection is stopped, intensifying the psychological process. It is also the torture of fire, because when the flow of intensity of the psychological processes becomes concentrated, one is roasted, roasted in what one is. Therefore the person in the tomb and the tomb itself are the same thing, for you roast in what you are yourself and not in anything else; or one could say that one is cooked in one's own juice, and is therefore the tomb, the container of the tomb, the suffocated one, and the suffocator, the coffin, and the dead god in it.

The one within is naturally not the ego, but your whole being, for you are looking at your whole being and not your ego which would run away. Now this is so painful that we all try to escape. I think I have not analysed for years and years anyone who has not from time to time flirted with the idea of dropping it all and returning to so-called normal life. Therefore I think it is very understandable that the text, after a time, speaks of the woman who always tries to escape and who has to be bound into the fourfold body, or the fourbody.

Returning to the text, Olympiodoros says to take some substance, i.e., the golden stone, which is called the male part of the Chrysokolla probably he had some specific material in mind and a moulded man.

Now who is the moulded man, or the man who has been kneaded into shape? Olympiodoros is a Christian, and that is a definition of Adam! It simply means to take two chemical substances (which we do not know) and make Adam. The connection for a man of that time would be that Adam was made from clay and therefore,



according to the Bible, clay is the *prima materia* of man, the basic secret of man. They were no longer referring to clay, they knew then that it could not mean clay; their knowledge of biology and physiology was sufficient to know that the man made of clay was simply a simile. Therefore clay stood for the *prima materia*.

The man formed out of clay was therefore Adam, who at that time was a symbol of the Self, or, one could say, the man who has just come from the hands of God, the unspoilt man, the man who has not yet passed through the process of corruption. Uncorrupted man straight from the hands of God, that is the man who has been kneaded, and that is why he does not speak of Adam, for Adam is associated with sin and corruption and Eve, etc. In alluding to Adam in this way he means Adam in his original, unspoilt form, when just created by God. Obviously this refers to the *prima materia* which we call the Self, which is why in Zen Buddhism it is said: "Show me thy original face." In one of the *koans*, one of the Masters gets enlightened when another Master says that to him.

The gold of the Ethiopian earth generates it i.e., the man out of drops and there some species of ant brings it up to the surface of the earth and enjoys it.

That refers to the famous Arimasps who also are mentioned in Goethe's *Faust* (in English, Arimaspians). There was a legend in late antiquity that in India there existed at one time enormous ants, as big as human beings, which dug up gold. For the Greeks, India was the land of wisdom and riches, it was the Paradise where gold was to be found on the trees and in the streets and everywhere else, and where wise men walked about. In descriptions of India at that time there was mention of these Arimasps, huge legendary ants who brought gold up out of the earth and that was supposed to be the secret of India's great wealth. Therefore when Olympiodoros says this, he is referring to the ants.

If you go into the symbolism of the ant at that time, you find that according to certain versions ants resurrected the sun by pushing it every morning over the horizon, so that they were a complete parallel to the Egyptian scarab who every morning pushes the disc of the sun over the horizon and makes it rise. The scarab is a symbol of the rising sun and of the resurrection. This legend of the scarab was in late antiquity replaced in certain traditions by huge ants which have exactly the same function. Therefore the reference here is again to the resurrection of the sun, or that moment of the very



24.

The creation of Adam from clay.

first creation of the sun god, which, according to our interpretation, would be the symbol of consciousness.

In psychological language one would say: "Go back to the original human being within you, go back to that place where the nervous sympathetic reactions (or your unconscious) link up with the origin of your consciousness." Put more accurately, it means: "Go back to the original point of your consciousness, try to return to the place from which your consciousness comes, to the threshold of the unconscious."

Then put this "Adam" together with his wife, the vapour, till the bitter divine water issues. This means that this Adam, the original

thing, is united with its opposite, which seems to be a vapourlike substance, and the two together then give birth to a bitter, watery substance. That is the motif of the *coniunctio*, the bringing together of the opposites, and the result is the mystical divine water, the bitter water.

Psychologically that would mean: Put yourself in an attitude of reflection in which you ask yourself where your conscious processes come from, link that with the fantasy material the vapour which comes up from the unconscious and that creates a living insight which is bitter. The insight we obtain by looking at ourselves is generally very bitter, which is why so few people do it; it is *pikros* bitter for it corrodes and is very disagreeable to the illusions of consciousness. That is why we speak of "bitter knowledge" and "bitter realization" and "bitter truth," for self-knowledge is a bitter experience at the beginning.

Thus, if you read the text psychologically, if you take it like a dream, it is not rubbish, but completely logical. One of the great merits of Jung is that he gave us a key to these texts which are looked upon officially by historians of chemistry as absolute nonsense, for to them they mean nothing at all. But to us it is clear what Olympiodoros is driving at, namely an inner experience, an introverted religious experience which those people had in their meditations and experiments with material phenomena. That was the basis of alchemy.

Question: Does the reference to Adam refer to him before or after the Fall?

Dr. von Franz: I think before the Fall, because otherwise the text would say Adam, and not use this peculiar expression of the moulded or kneaded man. The kneaded man refers rather to one aspect of Adam, namely his creation; the fact that he is made out of clay is what is emphasized and therefore I would say the man made out of clay is what should be in one's mind when thinking of him, and *not* the fact that he was with Eve and the snake, etc. I think that can be corroborated by the fact that Olympiorodos knew Zosimos, who had a Gnostic theory about Adam being the unspoilt original man, before the Fall. One can therefore be pretty sure the reference is to Adam before the Fall.

So the sphere of the fire keeps the lead and suffocates it, says Olympiodoros, and that is the male thing, and the lead is so

demonically possessed, so shameless, that those who wish to investigate it fall into madness through their unconsciousness, through their lack of knowledge of Gnosis.

Chemically, that probably alludes to the fact that lead is usually poisonous. That would be its chemical aspect, and naturally it coincides with the fact that at the beginning (of an analysis, for instance), when one looks at the unconscious such strong instinctual drives and emotions generally come up that one goes through states which could lead to madness. Alchemists frequently assert that many of them have gone off their heads, which may be taken literally.

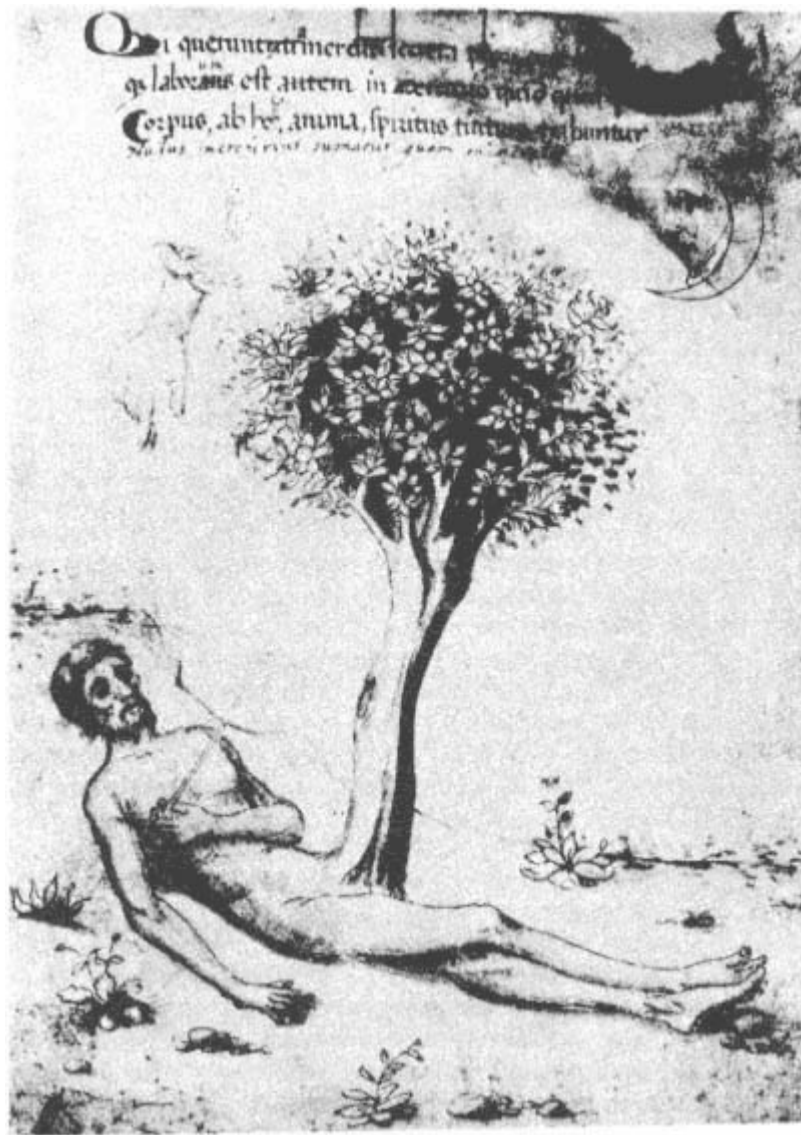
Many years ago I had an interesting experience showing that here in Switzerland there are still mad alchemists. When I was working on these texts in the Central Library, one of the officials asked me whether I was studying alchemical texts, and when I said I was he told me that I had a colleague to whom he would introduce me. He thought that would be a great joke and he went over to a little, shrivelled up old man sitting in the Central Library poring over an alchemical text and introduced me, saying I was a specialist in alchemy. I looked at this man, whose name I have forgotten, and when I saw his eyes I saw at once that he was completely schizophrenic.

I sat down beside him and after a while he said: "Have you got the secret?" I said: "No, not yet." And then he said: "I am very near it, I think I shall have it in another two or three months." I said that was marvellous, and then he asked me if I knew Greek, because his trouble was that he didn't know Greek, and that if I could help him with the Greek we could get it. I said: "Yes, yes, but not now!" That was a real alchemist who had fallen into the *mania* of the lead.



25.

The Ouroboros.



26.

The fallen Adam as *prima materia*, showing the phallus, the creative masculine, as a living tree.

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Lecture 4  
Greek/Arabic Alchemy

We stopped last time while discussing a very obscure passage in the Olympiodoros text. The recipe from which he quotes said that one should take the Chrysokolla, the golden stone, which was called the male, together with the kneaded man, which obviously refers to Adam, who was kneaded or moulded out of clay. Thus there is indirectly a reference to Adam in Paradise which would be confirmed by the fact that Zosimos was known to Olympiodoros.

As you know, in *Psychology and Alchemy* there is reference to a Zosimos text which speaks of Adam as having been created in Paradise from the four elements and afterwards having fallen into the world. The task of alchemy, according to Zosimos, consists in reassembling the light sparks of Adam and bringing him back to Paradise. Olympiodoros, who lived two hundred years later, knew of this Zosimos text, so quite obviously the reference here is to the reassembling of Adam, to restoring the fallen Adam, who lives as a light spark in every human being, to the heavenly realm. Therefore our text is a variation of the idea that at bottom in matter there is, in an extended or dissolved form, or in the cosmic figure of a human being, Adam, the first man, called under different names, who has to be liberated or redeemed from matter.

I refer you to that part of *Psychology and Alchemy* concerning the fallen Adam, the fallen anima or man, where Dr. Jung refers to different texts showing that this mirrors the process of projection. If you remember, he says that the myth of an angel, or Adam, or of a cosmic anima figure falling into matter, represents the moment when this figure is projected into matter, which means that such theories which come from the unconscious in alchemy bring in the idea that suddenly the symbol of the Self is consciously sought for in matter.

This is clearly so for our earlier text referred to the funeral ritual of Osiris and all funeral rituals, in the Egyptian sense of the word. The search for immortality was actually the search for an incorruptible essence in man which would survive death, an essential part of the human being which could be preserved. Thus

the search for immortality, for the eternal in man, is to be found at the very beginning of alchemy. We can say that the emotional drive and interest in the phenomenon of matter was not a modern scientific interest, in the sense of curiosity as to what matter looked like, but that what gave the impulse and libido for the search to understand the mystery of matter was a real emotional drive and desire to find the immortal part of man.

This search continued till practically the 17th century with all the later theories of the elixir of life, the *pharmakon* of life, and so on. Something immortal which would survive death, translated into modern psychological terms, could be expressed as an aspect of the Self, the search for the greater, incorruptible, and essential part of man.

The next part of the text deals with the bringing up of the gold by the ants from the Ethiopian earth. Behind that is the myth of the Arimaspians of India, for both countries, India and Ethiopia, at that time carried the projection of being the countries where miracles took place as well as being those of the greatest piety. In the late Greek Alexander novels there are many pseudoletters of Alexander the Great to his mother, Olympias, where he speaks of India and says that there Brahmins walk about naked and are the wisest men on earth and the most pious. This same idea was also projected onto Ethiopia. In the late geographical novels and reports in Greek, it is always said that the black Ethiopian people are the closest to God and the most pious people in the world. It can also be said that the Greeks, through their intellectual evolution, lost a certain aspect of primitive religion, that immediate primitive religious attitude which, as far as we can see, is common to all primitive civilizations.

A study of primitive civilizations shows their religious attitude towards life as being something completely self-evident. Religion was not separated from the profane, everyday life, but the self-evident basis of everything done, believed, and said. In his primitive condition, man is naturally religious and his religion pervades his whole nature and all his activities. Greek civilization had evolved from that state through the pre-Socratic and the Sophistic philosophy and the various evolutions of Greek philosophy. The upper layer of learned people in Greece, perhaps for the first time, had cut away from the primitive religious attitude which was then projected first onto the Indians and Ethiopians and later, according

to late Greek literature, onto the Egyptians and such people, who were then considered to be the highest and closest to God, and in their realm, our text says, the alchemical mystery was to be found. A return to the primitive self-evident attitude towards life is a requisite for the experience of the Self, which cannot be found through the conscious mind and with the developed part of the personality, but by first returning to that primitive human attitude.

The text goes on: "Then put with the gold which the ants bring up, the wife, or the woman of the vapour, till it comes out, i.e., the divine bitter water." So here there is the motif of a *coniunctio*. You take the gold which has been brought up out of the Ethiopian earth, the male substance, and put with it a female substance which is called the woman of the vapour, or the steam.

Question: Would the primitive religious attitude have to do with *participation mystique*?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, it has all the symptoms of primitive religion, namely *participation mystique* observation of synchronistic events, observation of signs, not acting without first observing inner and outer symptoms and signs, or, as it has been defined, the constant, careful attention towards unknown factors.

According to that definition, religion means never acting only in accordance with conscious reasoning, but with constant attention and consideration of the unknown participating factors. For instance, if someone says: "Let us have coffee together after the lecture," if I think only that I have time since I don't have lunch until 12.30, that would be conscious reasoning, which of course is also correct, but if I am a religious person, I will stop for a minute and try to get a feeling as to whether it is right to do that, and if I have an instinctive feeling against it, or at that moment a window bangs shut, or I stumble, then I might not go.

One can laugh at that as superstition, and naturally on that level it is not different from superstition, but it is not just a mechanical thing such as the idea that if a black cat crosses your path you should turn back, but rather that all the time one should concentrate and try to get some sign from the Self, or from inside oneself. In Chinese philosophy, it is tantamount to paying constant attention to Tao, whether what I am now doing is right, in Tao. Naturally there are also personal arguments, the pros and cons, but to live in a religious way would mean being constantly on the alert



for those unknown powers which also guide one's life. If I get no contrary indication, I can decide to have the coffee, since I have time, or because I like it. A bell does not always ring warning us, but if it does and one ignores it, then something goes wrong. The religious and primitive attitude involves constant consideration of these powers.

When Dr. Jung was in Africa, his Safari guide was an Islamic, I believe a Shi-ite. At breakfast every morning all the black carriers discussed their dreams, after which the leader of the group would go to Dr. Jung and say that they would proceed, or not, on that day. Dr. Jung found that when they said they were not going, the general aspect of the dreams had not been favourable, so they felt probably they should stay another day before proceeding. Dr. Jung accepted such decisions and even managed to be drawn into the discussion on dreams, and take part in it, and they were very much impressed to find that he knew something about and was interested in dreams and could even interpret them better, and like that he could observe what was happening. But an Englishman who went to the same place some weeks later naturally did as most white men do he accused the men of being lazy and insisted that they had to arrive at their destination in five days time and used force, and he was killed.

The one illustrates the attitude of careful consideration of all the irrational aspects. The natives acted like that because there might be a day when there were thunderstorms, or one might meet a rhinoceros and be attacked, and so on. In nature one is constantly confronted with such things and our unconscious does know about them, and when one is living in wild nature attention to such factors is essential to survival. Animals always receive warning about earthquakes and other dangers, they get them instinctively, and if we pay attention we receive them also through our dreams, which is why those natives, in an adaptable and reasonable way, paid attention to their dreams every morning.

I had an illustration of something like this the other day when I was at my holiday home. There was obviously a thunderstorm coming up from the upper part of the lake. Naturally I did not know that it would hail but my dog suddenly put her ears back and rushed into the house and up to the top floor and hid her head in my bed. I rushed after her to see why she behaved in that way and at that moment down came the hail! Animals have such warnings by a kind of telepathy.

But really, telepathy only means being aware of something far away, and that explains nothing, for telepathy is only a word. We only know that in the unconscious, instinctive functioning of higher animals, including man, there is a supernatural or, better said, a superrational awareness of things about which we could not know rationally, and that therefore it is helpful, healthy, and very important to pay attention to such impulses. They seem not only to work for the survival of animals and human beings, but to have a further extension, namely that of working for the higher development and maturity and the psychological welfare of the person, which is what we call the unconscious in its preserving and healing aspect.

Religion in our definition, in its most basic form, would simply be constant alert attention directed towards these facts, instead of ruling and deciding one's life by conscious rational decision and reasoning of the pros and cons. Therefore, in primitive societies, religion pervades everyday life. Before primitives go hunting there is a hunting ritual and if during it there is an accident, they don't go. There is nothing either mystical or transcendent or special about it; the basic religious attitude is linked with the idea of survival, and therefore to be religious is an immediate advantage for it ensures survival.

When we are confronted with the phenomenon of neurosis, when people get stuck in their difficulties, we try to discover what the unconscious has to say and analysts are first guided to attend more to their instincts, behind which is the whole phenomenon of religious insight and experience. Jung, of course, began as all doctors did, on the basis also of his contact with Freud, with the idea of helping people to become more instinctive, in order that they might be healthy, but then he discovered that behind instinct was also religion, or that the latter was something instinctive and completely natural, for the natural man is the religious man. One therefore has to return to the natural, immediate man within and to a religious attitude, for we cannot have one without the other.

Question: Does the word religion come from *religare* or *religere*?

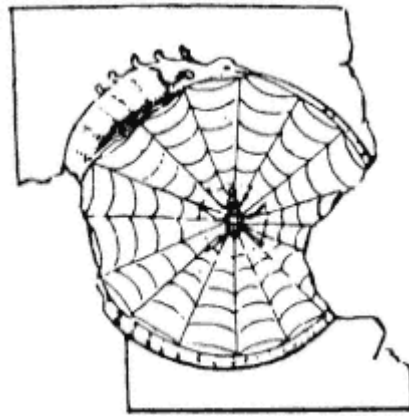
Dr. von Franz: There has been an etymological dispute as to whether the word *religio* comes from *religare* or *religere*. Naturally both have the same root *legere*, to pick up. Originally it referred to picking up or collecting wood, but *legere*, to read, has another

connection, namely one "picks up" or "gathers together" the individual letters; that is how people read at first and how children still learn.

*Religare* has been accepted as the official interpretation since the time of St. Augustine, with the theological reflection that it means to bind, to bind one back to God. St. Augustine said man had been severed from God through original sin and that the task of religion was to bind him back again. That obviously is not a scientific interpretation, but it is very interesting and a good reflection of the Christian idea of religion. Modern etymologists think that probably it comes from the word *religere*, which would mean "careful consideration," on which I have given amplifications, e.g., alertness in regard to irrational factors, but they are not in the word itself, which simply means careful consideration. The "re" indicates "backwards," so it means that one looks backwards to find out whether what is behind is coming too, or if it is doubtful. One has always to watch and ascertain what the other forces have to say about our lives.

Question: Could that be said to be just superstition?

Dr. von Franz: No! Superstition would be the mechanization of this attitude. Generally one thinks of superstition when one knocks on wood, or when one says that to see a black cat means bad luck, or that a spider in the morning is depressing and a bad sign. All that can be true, but if applied mechanically, if careful consideration of the signs becomes codified, then superstition comes in. A spider indicates spinning, the spinning of fantasies. The superstition is that in the morning a spider means bad luck and in the evening good luck. Obviously that really means that if in the morning one is slack and sleepy, gets up late, and sits about half dressed and just thinks of one's neurotic problems, that would be the spider in the morning which would certainly bring bad luck. But if after working all day one lights a cigarette in the evening and sits in front of the house, as peasants do, and lets one's fantasy run, or if one philosophizes about life, that is quite all right, it is a very good way to prepare oneself for sleep. Therefore the spider in the evening is propitious, and that probably was the original meaning of this widespread superstition. The spider is a negative mother symbol, it is the Maya, and so on. When it comes in the evening, or at the evening of life, it is all right, but it is very bad to start the day with it.



27.

Spider as symbol of the Maya, weaver of a fantasy world. "When it comes in the evening, or at the evening of life, it is all right, but it is very bad to start the day with it." von Franz.

It would be amusing if one of us were to write a thesis on common superstitions and what they mean symbolically. That would be highly interesting and I propose the theme to anyone who does not know what to write upon, namely just to take some of the ordinary superstitions and analyse them for they are very meaningful. It is only mechanical application that is superstition in the bad sense of the word; that is just a stupid habit and has nothing to do with the religious attitude.

Now in our text, with the male substance is put the vapour wife, or the woman who consists of vapour, until the bitter water comes out. That is the conjunction of male and female, and the child is the bitter divine water. The wife is characterized as vapour. Other texts show that, in general, vapour or steam is regarded as the psyche of matter. Even up to 1910 in the Swiss military service a short course used to be given in general medicine, just to teach people about the bones and the circulation of the blood and so on, and one teacher said that the brain was like a cupful of macaroni and that the steam above it was the soul! He had got into the old alchemical pattern! You could say that that fantasy was two thousand years old, for in the old texts on alchemy the idea of steam or vapour always carried the idea of the psyche, of sublimated matter, a subtle body, something half material. In parapsychological reports, if a ghost appears there is first something like steam, or a nebula, so it can be said that one of the most archetypal ideas is that the psyche has to do with the quality of steam or vapour, which expresses the idea



28.

The water of life flows between the opposites: the masculine (sun consciousness, here represented as sulphur) and the feminine (moon consciousness, symbolised by Mercurius, spirit of the unconscious).

that it is somehow linked with, but not identical to, solid matter. There is probably a certain anima factor in it for this text was probably written by a man.

After the union of the male substance with the vapour came the divine bitter water. The word "divine" is in Greek *theios*, which also means sulphur, so that it can be translated as the divine water, which is the generally accepted official translation, or as sulphur water, since sulphur was regarded as being a divine substance. It is the water, or the liquid, of the divine substance.

Water in general, including urine, carries the projection of knowledge. In medieval Church symbolism they spoke of the *aqua doctrinae*, and in the Swiss dialect if somebody comes out with a lot of nonsense, just a lot of words, we say he is urinating. Psychogenic kidney troubles very often have to do with people being filled up with such bad water, for they have not the right attitude, or the right connection with knowledge; they just blather a lot of undigested knowledge and that is like urinating. So usually it can be said that

water has to do with knowledge extracted from the unconscious, which can either be misused or used positively.

In alchemy water was either the great healing factor, or poisonous and destructive. Usually we interpret water as the unconscious, and differentiate its specific meaning according to the context. If in a patient's dream water is rising, or if there is a big inundation, then we would say: "Be careful, the unconscious is overwhelming you"; there the water would be negative, but on the other hand, if you are in the desert and thirsty, then it is the water of life. Christ is the well of life and there are various other similes you may know. In all religions, water is the life substance, which boils down to the fact that the *extractio* of the anima, or that watery knowledge, is what takes place in the interpretation of a psychological situation, or a dream.

If someone comes with a problem, instead of arguing with that person we look at the dream which comments on the situation; perhaps it can be interpreted in such a way as to vivify the other person and give a feeling of hope and a sense of the problem as having a hidden meaning, even though it may not yet be clear. In such a case, knowledge obtained from the unconscious has the quality of the water of life, for that person has, as it were, drunk of the water of life and will go away with the feeling that now something is flowing and the period of stagnation over. Then there is a certain tension until the next analytical hour, for the analysand wonders how the inner adventure will continue so that life gets a new start and flows once more.

On the other hand, we have all seen people drowned in the unconscious, namely schizoid or borderline cases, or people in a psychotic episode who *talk knowledge* of the unconscious. They sit in bed, or in their cells in the asylum, and talk of the creation of the world, and of what God is and what should be done to save the world, saying that the doctors in the asylum are all fools and that they know better, and so on. That is knowledge of the unconscious; it is water, and is even full of wisdom, but the speaker's head is under the water, and the knowledge has got the person and not the person the knowledge. That poor person is literally drowned in the wisdom of the unconscious; he does not want to get out for he feels that he is drowned in something very good and very marvellous, which is why most refuse to be cured.

Seen from a reasonable standpoint that is a very bad condition to

be in, for such people become so unadapted that they have to be confined. They have too much of the water of life, although what they say is not nonsense. If you have sufficient symbolic knowledge you can understand what a psychotic person says from A to Z, just as though it were everyday talk.

In our text we have the normal situation, namely that the divine water has to be produced as a result of the *coniunctio*, which in psychological terms would be what we do every day. We unite our conscious attitude with the unconscious, for instance in the interpretation of dreams. By that we get this vivifying knowledge, the sense of understanding, and that would be the water. Now here water is spoken of as bitter. Why?

Answer: Because it is the truth.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, naturally! Very often we have not a very happy reaction but the contrary, for often the truth given by the unconscious is very bitter. It is a bitter pill to swallow because it contains very obvious criticisms of our attitudes and that is a bitter experience. That accounts for the resistance against psychology, for very many people do not want to take the bitter pill. They have a vague feeling of being badly off the track, and that they could only return to health by swallowing certain criticism; they are determined to fight if the criticism comes from outside, but it is very awkward if the criticism comes from within. Then the analyst can just wash his hands of it and say he is sorry, but it is the analysand's own dream and not something the analyst has said, and then he has to swallow it.

The text continues that the philosopher Petasios also speaks of the work in the same way, saying that the sphere of the fire is kept down by the lead. The same philosopher, interpreting himself, says that this is from the male water. Olympiodoros says that the male water therefore seems to be the same thing as the sphere of fire, which in the earlier part of the text we saw was the tomb of Osiris who was suffocated in the lead. Therefore we have Osiris, the sphere of fire, and male water, and all three are suffocated in the lead, the enemy.

In the knowledge of late antiquity lead was the metal of the planet Saturn and had the same qualities: on the negative side, depression, and positively, creative depression. Saturn is the god of mutilated people, criminals, and cripples, but also of artistic and creative



29.

The *coniunctio*, union of opposites, as harmonious interplay between male water and female fire.

people. In our modern language that would mean the strange quality in certain depressions in which one feels literally like lead. Without thinking of these alchemical similes, people often say: "Today I feel like lead." In a heavy depression one feels unable to get up from one's chair, or even open one's mouth to explain that one is depressed; one just sits like a block of heavy matter. Confessions of people in such a state have innumerable lead similes.

As the word implies, in a depression the person is pressed down, compressed, usually because a part of the psychological libido is below and has to be fetched up; the real energy of life has fallen into a deeper layer of the personality and can only be reached through a



depression. So unless there is a latent psychosis, a depression should be encouraged and people told to go into it and *be* depressed not try to escape by the radio or *The Reader's Digest* and if the depressions says that life means nothing and that nothing is worth while, then accept that and say what about it? Listen, go deeper and deeper, until you again reach the level of the psychological energy where some creative idea can come out and suddenly, at the bottom, an impulse of life and creativeness which has been overlooked may appear.

People who are professionally creative, like artists or great actors and so on, know that before every performance or new piece of work they are likely to have such a depression. One can have it on a smaller scale, for instance I always have it before a lecture, for the libido first goes down. Those are smaller rhythms of something which happens on a large scale in a depression. It means that one has overlooked certain creative factors which have constellated below and attracted the libido, causing listlessness and lack of energy.

It can also be a prepsychotic symptom, as psychiatrists well know. What comes up afterwards is also a creative content, but it wells up to such an extent that it can destroy the personality. In such cases one must think twice before encouraging the person to go into the depression because, though the mechanism is the same, there is the risk that what comes up may be too strong and burst the personality. Lead is therefore that heaviness, listlessness, that feeling of nothingness which covers up or suffocates the contents of the unconscious.

As the text which I gave you briefly in the last hour says, there is in this lead even the element of madness. This refers to another fact for if you dig up depressive states in people, usually at the bottom there are either creative contents or a violent, unsatisfied desire. Frequently depressed people dream of voracious lions or other devouring animals such as dragons, but particularly lions, which means they are depressed because they are frustrated in the fulfillment of their wild desires. They want everything: to be top dog, have the most beautiful partner, money, and everything else. They have the childish, wild desires which would like to eat everything up, but at the same time they are intelligent enough to know that life is not like that, that they cannot have what they want, so the desire curls up into sulky depressiveness. Such a depression



30.

The alchemical "green lion" devouring the sun relates to the experience of consciousness being overwhelmed by violent, frustrated desires (often masked by depression).

has the quality of sulkily frustrated desire and explains why, after an unhappy love affair, people drop into an awful depression. Their lion has been frustrated and has returned sulking to its lair.

Some people have a frustrated infant within them. Usually they are very correct and polite, and make very few demands on the analyst, but being too polite and correct and considerate is always suspect. One knows that they would like to eat up the analyst completely like the lion, making childish demands and scenes, because the analyst has stopped five minutes before the time, or answered the telephone, or put off the hour, or even had the flu! Such demanding infantile people compensate by being very correct, knowing that if they admit their demands then the devouring lion will come up and the analyst will naturally hit back, something which they have experienced often in life when, after hiding their feelings, they one day took the risk and as a result got banged on the

head. So the hurt child retires once more, bitterly frustrated, and then comes the depression, the devouring lion. That is a part of primitive nature, of primitive archaic reactions which have all the conflicts of wanting to eat and not being able to do so, so that the depressive mania takes over.

That is the symbolism of the madness in the lead, but it also contains Osiris, the immortal man, and if only you accept that spot within you, you will come to the creative content where the Self is hidden. The frustrated child could be said to be an aspect covering up an image of the Self, and the devouring lion also an aspect of the Self.

If you take the image of the devouring lion this is quite clear. If I think I ought to be top dog everywhere, have the most beautiful partner, have money, be happy, and so on, that is a paradise fantasy, and what is *that*? It is a projection of the Self! So actually, the childish thing is the desire to experience everything in the here and now. The fantasy in itself is entirely legitimate, it has the idea of the *coniunctio*, a perfect state, a state of harmony. It is a religious idea, but naturally if projected onto outside life and wanted there, in the here and now, that is impossible. The *way* in which the person wants to realize the fantasy is childish, but in itself it is valuable and has nothing wrong or unhealthy in it.

So just in that undominated mad spot of the person, or in the wild or problematic spot, there is the symbol of the Self. That gives it the drive, which is why people never know what to do for they cannot repress it; or if they are reasonable and just give the thing up and realize how childish it is and that one should be resigned and adapt to life, then they feel that they are cured but that they have been robbed of their best possibilities and so are frustrated.

I once had an analysand who came to Europe for a Jungian analysis while his best friend went into Freudian analysis. After a year they decided to meet again. The Freudian analysand said that he was cured and was going back to his own country; having realized all his neurotic illusions and nonsense, he was going to begin to earn his living and find a wife and marry. The other said he was not cured at all but still very mad and in a condition of great chaos, and though he saw his way a little bit more clearly there was still a great deal which had not yet been solved. The Freudian patient then said that it was strange, but that though all his devils had been driven out, unfortunately so had his angels!

A lid had been put on the mad spot, but the religious fantasy in it of perfection, the romantic fantasy, the fantasy of the Self, had also had the lid put on it, so that man will be a resigned, socially adapted animal who functions, but all his romantic dreams of truth and life and real love admittedly childish fantasies in both those young men are buried too.

The great difficulty, therefore, to return to alchemical language, is to extract Osiris from the lead, to save the fantasy which is life giving and cut away the childishness of the wish to realize it. That is so damn subtle. The whole task is to save the nucleus, the fantasy of the Self, and cut away all the childishness, the primitive desire, and so on which surround it, which would mean getting Osiris out of the lead coffin. That is what the alchemist did in a projected form when he said that the divine man had to be extracted from the lead coffin or from the corruptible matter.

I think that now we can go on to an Arabic text by a man named Mohammed ibn Umail at-Tamini. It is sufficient to speak of Mohammed ibn Umail, because at-Tamini the Tamin refers only to the specific Islamic tribe to which he belonged. He lived from about 900 to 960, that is, at the beginning of the 10th century, according to our dates. One of his writings has been published in Arabic in "The Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal," which were printed in Calcutta in 1933, according to a manuscript Mr. Stapleton found in Hyderabad. Stapleton states that there are another hundred or so manuscripts by the same author in Hyderabad with most interesting and promising titles, such as "The Pearl of Wisdom," "The Hidden Lamp of Alchemy," and so on, but if you write there and enquire about them you get no answer.

Since the 12th century, or the beginning of the 13th, this man has been famous in European alchemy. The writing I am going to present to you was translated into Latin at the end of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century and has become one of the most famous medieval writings in the Latin alchemical world. In these Latin texts his name is given as Senior, and until 1933 nobody knew who Senior was. Even the famous J. Ruska asserted most authoritatively that Senior was not an Arab, that that was a Latin misrepresentation. But one should never believe Ruska, for he is always a doubter, and he was completely wrong in his contention that it was mistakenly taken to be an Arabic text. Now we have the

original and know that the name Senior is simply the Latin translation for "The Sheikh," which actually means "the old man" and explains how Mohammed ibn Umail came to be called Senior. This Latin text was published under the title *De chemia*, meaning that it is about chemistry, but the real Arabic title is "Silver Water and Starry Earth." The Arabic text is given on one side and the Latin on the other so it is possible to compare one with the other. The Latin translation is quite correct and deviates only in minor details.

After Mohammed ibn Umail had left the country, his best friend was burnt as a heretic, being a Shi-ite. In the Islamic world, the Sunnites were the official sect and, expressed roughly, the split between them and the Shi-ites was due to the fact that the latter had a more symbolic and mystical interpretation of the Koran. For instance, they did not take the Koran literally, but allowed for symbolic interpretation, while the Sunnites insisted on literal obedience to the rules and on its literal truth. The Shi-ites developed an extensive mystical system of symbolic interpretation and in that way could be compared to the mystics of the Middle Ages who also tried to interpret the Bible in a symbolic way, in contrast to other tendencies.

You could make a comparison with the parallel split between the Talmudic and Kabbalistic trends in the Jewish tradition. The Shiites would correspond to the Kabbalistic tradition, the true introverts who were more directed towards a psychological symbolic interpretation and personal experience of the religious truth, in contrast to the literal minded people who rather insisted on dogma and the holy text.

I will give you the Arabic text just as it is in all its complexities, as I did with the Greek text, so that you may get the full impact and strangeness of this kind of literature.

I and my dear Obouail [the ending is feminine] entered the Barba. [Barba means beard, and of course everybody said that one could not enter a beard, nobody knew what to say about the word, but it simply stands for "Birba" pyramid which was obviously something the translator had not understood, thereby causing a lot of confusion.] I entered the Birba and a certain subterranean house, and afterwards I and El Hassan, that is Hassan, saw all the fiery prisons of Joseph, and I saw on the roof the nine painted eagles with their wings expanded as if flying and with their feet open, and in the talons of each eagle was a big bow, such as is also used by those who shoot with a bow. On the walls of this house, at the left and right

of the man entering, I saw the images of human beings standing about. They could not have been more perfect or beautiful, or had more beautiful clothes in all colours. They had their hands extended towards the centre of the room and were looking at a certain statue in the middle of the room near the wall of the inner chamber, and which was facing them. The statue was represented sitting on a throne, similar to the doctor's throne, and on that the statue sat, with on its lap, over its arms, and with expanded hands over its knees, a marble plate, which was extracted from it [from what is not known], in the length of one arm, and as broad as one hand, and the fingers of the statue were clasped over the edge of the tablet which it held. The tablet had the appearance of an open book facing the person who entered, as if the statue wanted to show it to him.

That sounds complicated, but it simply means there was a seated statue at the back of the room holding a tablet over which its fingers were clasped outwards, and it looked like an open book, which apparently it wanted to show to the person who came in.

In that part of the room in which the statue sat were images of infinite things, and letters written in a barbaric language [which simply means a language not Arabic]. This tablet one saw on the lap of the statue was divided by a line in the middle which separated the two sides. On the lower part was the image of two birds bent over each other, one of which was wingless and the other winged, and each held in its beak the tail of the other.

Looked at schematically, the birds would be lying one over the other, each with its head to the tail of the other bird, one being winged and the other wingless. It was as though they wanted to fly together, or as though the wingless one was keeping the other back, that is, the upper bird wanted to carry away the lower, but the lower bird held it back and prevented it from flying away. The two birds were bound together, were homogeneous and of the same substance and they were painted in one sphere as though the image of two things in one.

Near the head of the flying bird, and above it, the sun and moon were represented. This was near the fingers of the statue, and in the other part of the tablet that is, to the right was another sphere or round object facing the birds and as a whole there were five time rhythms [that is also something which is unexplained], namely below the birds and the sphere. Above this sphere is the image of the moon and another sphere. On the other side, near the fingers of the statue, is the image of the sun which emits its rays like the image of two in one.

Opposite is an image of the sun with one ray falling downwards and together that would make three, namely the two planets the sun and the moon and the ray of the two in one, and from the ray one part goes down and reaches into the lower part of the tablet surrounding the black sphere and divided by this surrounding sphere, which altogether makes two, three, and the third.

What is clear from the above is that the sun and moon are beside each



31.

Statue of wise old man (Hermes Trismegistus) holding tablet,  
from Senior's *De chemia*. (Detail on page 124.)

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other, with the moon facing you on the right and the sun on the left, and below is a black sphere which the rays penetrate. The third has the form of a waxing moon, the inner part of which is white without blackness, but it is surrounded by a black sphere, and the form is like the form of two in one of a simple sun, and that is the image of one in one and those are again five, and together they make ten, according to the number of the eagles and the black earth.

I have now told you all this and have written a poem and without the grace of God, whose name be blessed, we should not have this secret. So that you may understand and think well about it and meditate on it, I have painted for you the image of the tablet, and what the images are will be explained in my poem and afterwards you can look at the chapters and see what each figure meant. Now I have already explained those ten figures and I have shown the figures in my poem and certainly one could not do without my poem, but I want to manifest to you something which all the wise men have hitherto hidden who produced this statue in this house, in which the whole science is described in a symbolic figure teaching his wisdom on this stone and displaying it to those who can understand. I know that this statue was the figure of a wise man. [This statue represents Hermes, so it means Hermes invented the science and drew the figures.]

We now have to find out what this all means. The statue is the figure of a wise man, and on his lap is the occult science which he describes by means of symbolic figures so as to direct the one who knows and understands. The wise who understand it must look at the inner with subtlety, and must know the terms of wisdom and must understand an obscure and symbolic language. When he then compares such obscure language with our images, then he will open the one from the other and will become the ruler of the secret stone.

Then follows another part which has a new title, "Letter from the Sun to the Waxing Moon." This, as you will see, is a love letter.

"In great weakness I will give you light from my beauty till I have reached perfection." [The sun will be exalted to the greatest height.] First the moon says to the sun: "You need me as the cock needs the hen, and I need your works, O Sun, without interruption, because you are of perfect character, the father of all lights, the high light, the great Master and Lord. I am the waxing moon, moist and cold, and you are the sun, warm and dry.

"When we have united in an equality of the status of our house, in which nothing else happens except that the heavy has the light with it, in which we will stay, then I shall be like a woman who is open to her husband and that is true in word, and when we have been united, staying in the belly of this closed house, then I will receive, by flattering you, your soul, and you will take away my beauty and through your closeness I will become thin and we will be exalted in a spiritual exaltation, or heightened in a spiritual exaltation.

"When we go up in the order of the Sheikhs, or the old men, the glowing substance of thy light will be united with my light and you and I will be like the mixture of wine and sweet water, and I will stop my flow and



afterwards I will be wrapped up in your blackness and that will have the colour of black ink, but after your dissolution and my coagulation, when we have entered the house of love, my body will coagulate and I will be in my emptiness."

That probably means the moon has completely waned, i.e., it is the new moon. To this the sun replies:

"If you do this, and if you do me no harm, O Moon, and if my body will return, then I will give you a new virtue of penetration and after this you will be powerful in the battle of the fire of liquefaction and purgation and there will no longer be any diminishing, or darkness, as it is with the copper and the lead, and you will not fight me any more because you will not be rebellious any more."

The sun therefore says: If you will do me no harm in this *coniunctio* for the moon might harm the sun then I will make you powerful in the battle of the fire, and then you will not be corruptible any more as the copper is, and you will not fight me, the sun, later, because you will have no rebellious feelings any more. So the moon, which is characterized by waxing and waning and being hostile to the sun, and as being dark and corruptible, will lose all those negative qualities and become a solid light, as the sun is. The sun continues:

"Blessed is he who thinks about my words; my dignity will not be taken away from you and will not become cheap, as a lion will not become cheap, being weakened by the flesh [the lion is here another image of the sun], but if you follow me then I will not deny you or take away from you the increasing of the lead, but then my light will be extinguished and all my beauty will be extinguished, but they will take from the copper of my pure body and from the fatness of the lead by verifying it in the syllogism of their weight, but without goat's blood, and then one will make a distillation between what is false and what is true.

"I am the hard, dry iron, I am the strong ferment, every good thing is in me, the light of the secret of secrets is generated through me, and every active thing is my action. What has light is created in the darkness of the light [everything that shines has been created in the darkness] but after I have been led to perfection I will recover from my illness and from my weakness, and then will appear that great liquid from the head and the tail and those are the two qualities and the ten orders or weights, five of which are without darkness and five of them are shining in beauty."

That is the end of the letter. After this Senior promises to give an explanation, but the text just goes on in the same way. The explanation he gives is simply what we would call an amplification, a very meaningful one it is true, but still not an explanation.

Actually we know that Mohammed ibn Umail was one of those damned robbers who broke open pyramids and investigated the inner coffin chambers. In those times the Arabs destroyed a great number of pyramids, stealing all the gold in them, so that nowadays most pyramids are empty, but Senior, or Mohammed ibn Umail, did not do it as most of the others did, just to find and steal the gold, but because he projected into the death chamber of the pyramids the alchemical secret.

He thought, as we discover in the succeeding parts of the book, that the Egyptians knew alchemy, and that what was to be found in the innermost chamber of the pyramid was the secret of alchemy, but what was written in the old Egyptian language he could not read, which is why he speaks of a barbaric language this was before Champollion, as you know. So he thought that in those mysterious hieroglyphic signs was written the secret of alchemy, and as he describes in another text, he found a mummified queen in a gold coffin who had a pair of scissors and little bowls of gold and he was absolutely sure that that was the queen of alchemy, as it were, the wise prophetess of alchemy, and that the instruments hidden in the coffin of the Egyptian queen were symbolic allusions to the alchemical work.

That is one of the strange things of projection into the past. He projected the whole symbolism of the alchemical opus into the mummification. But what is even more interesting is that we know now, from what I told you before, that actually alchemy did originate from the Egyptian death cult, that the chemistry of mummification played an enormous role, that actually the Egyptians mummified their dead in order to obtain immortality and make the dead person divine, and that alchemy tried to do the same thing, namely produce the immortal man, produce immortality. Therefore there is a very good hook for old Senior's projection he just projected the whole thing backwards into Egyptian mummification, which is why he so passionately helped to break open and destroy the funeral chambers in the pyramids. Naturally he looked at everything he saw there and tried to find out whether there were allusions to the work of alchemy.

The picture of this statue holding a tablet is a classic topic of many other alchemical texts. It is not specific to Senior. You all know, from Dr. Jung's lectures on Zarathustra, of the *tabula smaragdina* the emerald tablet. It is a classical text to the single

sentences of which Jung has given an interpretation, so that I need not go into it. The oldest form of such a text was found in the writings of Gabir, which would be in the 7th century, and from the whole of this oldest version of the finding of the *tabula* it is clear that the tale goes back to Greek sources. There must have been a Greek story of a Hermes statue found in a tomb which had the whole secret on its knees.

That story became a topic of alchemical literature in innumerable alchemical writings, for instance in the *Kitab al Habib*, or also the *Book of Krates*. It always starts off the same way: "I entered the tomb and found a statue with a tablet, on which was. . .," and then follows a kind of explanation. So in Senior's time that had become a theme in literature. That is a parallel to the emerald tablet, and there are new variations. Senior adds something which I have not found in any of the other tales of the finding of the tablet, namely the nine or ten eagles which, in the picture, shoot at the statue with bow and arrow. He has also changed the content of the tablet, for on it are not sentences of wisdom, as in the others, but two symbolic drawings, the one of the two birds which try to fly away from each other, and the other of the sun and moon and the black sphere, and that, as far as I can see, is Senior's contribution.

I am now taking some of the information given in the rest of the book, all of which I cannot read to you. According to it, the eagles represent the sublimated or volatile substance and therefore something similar to the wife of the steam in our other text. Flying substances like steam and vapour were very often symbolised by birds because they said that these substances had acquired spiritual qualities. The bow and arrow are quite mysterious and are never explained throughout the whole book, so we must either leave them unexplained or give a psychological explanation. Hermes sits surrounded by the nine eagles which shoot at him with bow and arrow. That motif is just skipped by Senior in his later explanation of the text, but from the rest of the text you can make out that the eagles represent the spiritualized substances.

What would you say the bow and arrow represent? Imagine it was a patient's drawing. What would you then say of the eagles shooting at Hermes? We have first to amplify the bow and arrow. What does that suggest?

Answer: Eros.



32.

King and queen holding eagle and swan, symbols of the volatile spirit. Saturn, whose positive aspects are self-discipline and endurance, is in the foreground.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, that is the most obvious idea the little boy Cupid with his awkward arrows, and the whole literature of antiquity concerning the bow and arrow and how Cupid even sometimes shoots an arrow at Zeus at a very bad moment and gets him into his power.

A bow and arrow would indicate direction something is pointed at an object. The libido has been directed, just as happens if you fall in love: you are swimming along in the stream of life and suddenly you are shot at, and then you go home and think of that woman or man from morning till night. Suddenly all the libido is directed and concentrated there. You do not want to think about it, but then you begin to wonder whether you will meet that person tomorrow at the same place, and so on, for that's where the energy is.

Therefore you can say that the bow and arrow have to do with the sudden directedness of the unconscious libido; it has to do with the

projection, for an arrow is a projectile and through projection the libido gets pointed. It is just the same if you hate someone. There is even a saying which questions who is closer to God I believe it is an Indian saying he who loves him or he who hates him? And the answer is the man who hates him, because he will think of God even more often and more intensely than the one who loves him, for his bow and arrow are constantly directed, that is the direction of libido through projection.

You can say that all the dissociated forces of thought and of the soul are now concentrated on what is on this tablet, i.e., round this the whole psychological attention is concentrated. There are the two wings of the tablet, like two parts of a book, and on the one side is the problem of the two birds and on the other that of the union of sun and moon.

The problem of the two birds is obviously a variation of the Ouroboros as in old alchemy, for in the old Greek texts we find a drawing of the snake which eats its own tail. Usually the head has stars on it and the rest is black, which would be the secret opposition. In the old Greek text that is explained as the head being different from the tail. It makes a marvellous picture if you say that it is one thing but that there is an inner opposition between the head and the tail. Therefore there are such sayings as: "Take the head, but beware of the tail," or "Unless the head has integrated the tail, the whole substance is nothing." There is a great deal said about the head and the tail, and how they should relate to each other, therefore it well describes the opposites which are secretly one. It is a kind of European *tai-gi-tu* the Yin-Yang symbol, the opposites in one.

Remark: The eagles give me the impression of having a relation to Apollo for it is said that they can look at the sun, and of course Apollo has the bow, as has the winged boy Cupid.

Dr. von Franz: Apollo is the representative of the principle of consciousness, but that does not contradict the interpretation. Apollo's bow and arrow would refer to the attention given by love, the concentration of mental libido through love. According to the scholastic theory of knowledge you can only get knowledge through love, which means that you only acquire knowledge by loving your subject, by being fascinated by it. Thus the anima is always behind the search for truth.



33.

Frustrated expectations and desires, arising partly from the phenomenon of projection, are the basic material of analytical work.

The emotional reactions involved in the process of withdrawing projections may be likened to the alchemical image of the salamander, as *prima materia*, roasting in the fire.

If you have to learn about a subject you do not love, where you have no projection, which means that you have no relationship to it, it does not mean anything to you and is not connected with your flow of libido, so you have to toil and sweat at something and learn it for the exam, but ten minutes later you have forgotten it again. If you are fascinated, however, which means that a projection has taken place, then you get emotional and acquire a tremendous amount of consciousness very easily and quickly. That is the whole secret of teaching and learning. You can say that those are simply two aspects of what as a general description one might call attention, which is created either by the concentration of consciousness, or by love, and behind both is projection. Fascination always involves projection.

Remark: You talk of projection, but these are all archetypal figures.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, and that raises the question as to whether archetypes project. I think they do. Certainly it is so in our idea of projection. Consider what actually happens. We know quite well that we never make the projection, but that it is done to us. I do not myself project something; that is the way one talks, but it is not true. The fact is that I suddenly find myself in the situation of projecting, and when I have seen that it was a projection I can begin to talk about it, but not before. For instance, someone who has projected the shadow will insist the other person is a rotter and will carry on like that, but perhaps two years later, in the course of analysis, he will realize he was projecting his shadow onto the other. Therefore who projected? That is a great mystery.

When the Greeks fell in love they were modest enough not to say, "I have fallen in love," but expressed it more accurately by saying: "The god of love shot an arrow at me." And that is how it really happens one suddenly has the painful sting which one has not made oneself, one finds oneself being shot at. So one can therefore speak of the archetype of the god of love. If you go into the history of Eros you will find that he is a variation of Hermes; the Eros of antiquity is similar to Hermes Kyllenios. In olden times when he was a fertility god of Boetia he was represented exactly like the priapic Hermes statues. You can therefore say that the Greeks meant a variation of the god Hermes. It is a symbol of the Self, or of the totality, which makes the projection. I think that is correct. If I find myself in a projection situation, that is an arrangement by the Self.

Remark: Here the eagle is connected with Eros, or with Apollo, so the gods are projecting onto the gods.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, you are quite right, and therefore in general we can say that it is always the unconscious, or some aspect of it, which produces the projection. It is the Self or a god. It is always a god who produces the projection, which means that it is always an archetype, the ego complex does not do it.

The next step is to ask what the god of the unconscious projects onto. Usually he projects onto outer objects, either human beings or things. Or can it happen that an archetype projects onto another archetype? I think it can, it is something which occurs frequently, and that would be a process of unification in the systems of religion.



34.

Cupid, Venus, and the Passions of Love, by Bronzino. "When X falls in love with Y, an onlooker might call that projection. . . . But as long as there is no uneasiness, I have no right to cut into that *participation* by calling it projection; that is a horrible poisonous mistake people constantly make."  
von Franz.



Take polytheism, for instance. In most polytheistic systems of religion there is the secret knowledge that they are all aspects of one god. Even the Greeks knew that; in late Greek Stoic philosophy it is always said that there is really only one god and that all the other gods Athene, Hermes, and so on are only different aspects of that one, so you can say that there is a latent monotheism within Greek polytheism. The same thing happens with the Elohim in Jewish monotheism. When God created the world He said, "Let *us* create," and it has always been supposed that the "us" was addressed to the Elohim. So there is also a secret polytheism within monotheism, which also comes in the figures of the Malak Jahwe, the angel of God. Sometimes Jahwe interferes Himself and sometimes He sends the Malak Jahwe, who is more or less just one aspect of Himself.

It can be said in general that in any monotheistic system, just as in Judaeo-Christianity, there is a secret tendency towards polytheism, which though not quite realized or admitted yet exists, just as in polytheistic systems there is a secret tendency towards monotheism, to ensure that all those many gods are really only different aspects of the one god. If you express that in psychological terms it would mean that the multitude of archetypal constellations are all really one in the Self, although the Self actually manifests in practical life very often in single aspects which we prefer to call different archetypes.

The problem is whether there are many archetypes or if the archetype of the Self is really the one archetype. For instance, when someone is dominated by the mother archetype, one speaks of a mother complex, but if we go into that it will always be found that the whole Self is in it. An archetypal complex always leads to the symbol of the Self. So here again there is a secret monotheism in polytheism, whether the stress is on the one or the other. If the many point to the one, I would say that in the unconscious there is a tendency towards putting all the energy onto the Self and away from the different single archetypes. The many archetypes tend to concentrate round the one archetype, which you could say mirrors the tendency in the unconscious itself towards greater consciousness.

It could be said that the eagles are like an assembly of gods gathering round the one God, which psychologically interpreted would mean that many archetypes begin to fall into an order

concentrating on the archetype of the Self. The archetype of the Self begins to be dominant and the dissociation into many archetypes begins to be ordered round a centre. It would follow that if a single archetype is dominant in one's psyche, let us say the mother archetype, or the anima archetype, or whatever it may be, then there is a certain amount of one-sidedness in that person. It is only when the archetype of the Self really begins to carry the process that the thing becomes unified and everything falls into place; I would say, in fact, that the sense of unity is a symbolic representation of that moment when the many archetypes begin to give their energy to one.

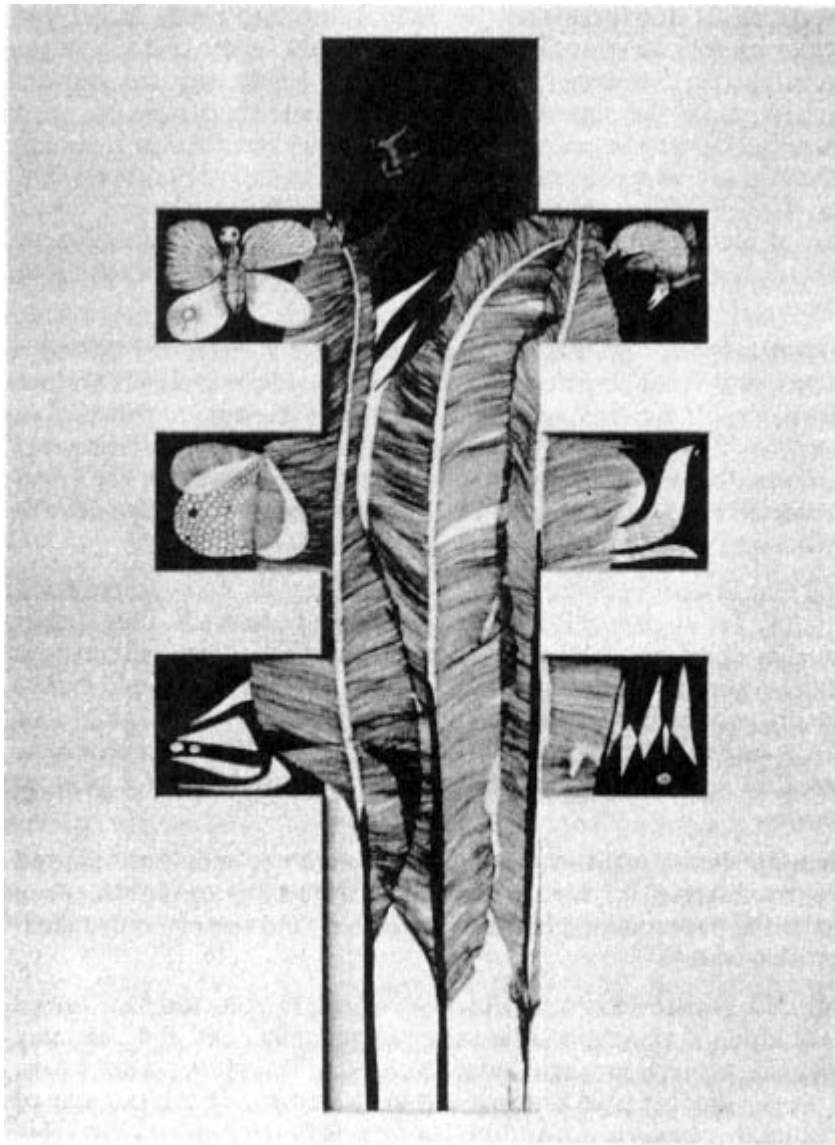
Remark: I was thinking of something slightly different, getting a little away from archetypes and more to the primitive religious attitude such as the experience of the god in the tree, or the spirit in the tree. The parallel I would see in this case is the following: Perhaps there *is* a spirit in the tree and the archetypes are being projected onto the tree, so God is really in the tree and the gods are projecting onto God. That is a speculation.

Dr. von Franz: Yes it is, and I cannot answer it. You can believe it or not, for such a thing cannot be proved. Actually that simply touches upon the question as to whether, if an archetypal image is really projected, there is also a transcendental reality which makes the projection. But we have no means of checking such a thing, so it is a question of belief and you can believe it or not. I do believe it, but I do not intend to try to convince anybody because I have no proofs.

Remark: If you really get back to the primitive religious attitude and try to analyse it, saying that this is just a projection, then immediately something has been projected, and one can only take it on that level.

Dr. von Franz: That is completely wrong. If you read Dr. Jung's definition of projection, he says categorically that you can only speak of projection when doubt has arisen. Therefore we are wrong if we say that the primitive projects onto the tree. That is our way of talking, because we doubt whether God is in the tree and therefore we can say that it would be a projection *for us*, but since no doubt arises in the primitive we have no right to speak of his projection.

Look up Jung's simple definition of projection in *Psychological*



35.  
Tree Spirit, by Margaret Jacoby.

*Types.* There you will read that one can only speak of a projection when doubt has arisen and that until then the assertion that there is a projection is not legitimate. Only when within myself I feel insecure can I begin to speak of projection, and not before. Projection implies that I am no longer entirely convinced, that I am already to a certain extent out of the *participation mystique*, or archaic identity; until then there is no projection.

Naturally the onlooker doubts, which is why if one takes a modern case, for instance X falls in love with Y, the onlooker will call that a projection of the animus. But for the person involved there is no projection, and it would be an analytical mistake to say there was that would be infecting the other person with one's own doubt. For X that man is now the beloved, and not simply an image of the animus. If I doubt it because I am not in the same *participation*, I have no right to poison the other with that doubt. I have to wait until the analysand begins to feel some disquiet, until the man she loves does not behave as she had expected he would. Once this state of disquiet has manifested, I can say that perhaps she has projected onto that man something within her. But as long as there is no uneasiness, I have no right to cut into that *participation* by calling it a projection; that is a horrible poisonous mistake people constantly make.

We no longer believe that trees and animals are gods, but it would be wrong to assert that it is projection in the case of the primitive, for what to us is projection is to the primitive the whole experience of reality. It is their truth.

If I were to go to Africa and become black myself emotionally, then I would not speak as I used to of the primitives' projection, I would say that now I see the primitives are right: God *is* in the tree. But as long as I stay in Europe, and the primitive says God is in the tree while I do not see anything divine about it in that case I could speak of projection. The use of the word depends on the state I am in. When I doubt, I can use it, but if there is no doubt in me I cannot, and I should never use the word to poison another person's reality.

Projections die autonomously suddenly the thing has disappeared, and that happens completely without conscious cooperation. Such things are psychological events *per se*. Afterwards I can say there was a projection, but that is only a relative and not an absolute truth.



36.

The winged and wingless birds, and the just and unjust suns, symbolic drawings from Senior's *De chemia*. (Detail of scene on page 110.)

## Lecture 5 Arabic Alchemy

We are now going to discuss the drawing of the two tablets as it contains rather more than the text I have already read you.

On one part of the tablet there is a winged bird and a bird without wings. The winged bird is above and the other below; the text says the latter prevents the winged bird from flying away. Each eats the other's tail, so it is a variation of the Ouroboros snake which eats its own tail. Above the birds, though this is not mentioned in the description, are the moon and the sun, and below is the sphere to which the text later gives different names: it is called the moon and also the earth and the inferior world, the world below. Therefore, in a way, the moon is double; above, it is the bride, or the opposite of the sun, but it is also somehow mixed up with the world below, called the earth. So there is one moon identical with the earth, and one which is the partner of the sun.

In the second tablet there are two suns: one emits two rays onto the lower world, and the other only one. Both radiate to the lower world, where again there is the full moon, described in a later part of the text as being white and surrounded by a black sphere; looked at from the outside one would see only the blackness, but the inside is white, having a white moon substance. In this picture the sun is doubled and in the other the moon is doubled, and each is the partner of the other.

In both pictures there is an interconnection between the lower and the upper worlds and, in between, the fight between the birds. The sun radiates onto the lower world. The bottom sphere, which is black outside and white inside, is again called the lower world the *mundus inferior* which here means this cosmos below the firmament, or up to the outermost spheres of the planets. In antiquity and medieval times, it was thought that below was the moon and the corruptible world and above were the stars and the eternal world.

Question: Why does one sun have one ray and the other two?

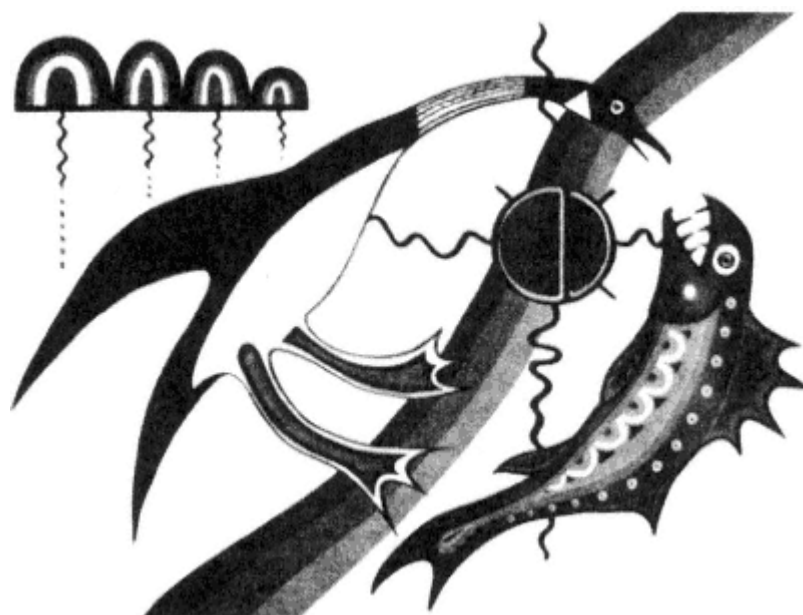
Dr. von Franz: It is just so! Actually, the rays are not shown on the tablets; an old alchemist who once owned the book has drawn in two rays in ink on *both* sides, but according to the text one sun sends down only one ray. There it is said that the one sun radiates with justice and the other without, and that is the difference between the two. Although the text does not say so, I suppose that the sun with the two rays is the one which radiates with justice, for it is balanced, it has the two sides. *Sol cum justitia* and *non cum justitia* as the very clumsy Latin translation says. But both suns radiate upon, and penetrate, the lower world with their rays.

We have now to try I say try for many parts are far beyond my comprehension to understand the text psychologically. First we have to refer to Senior himself and read the amplifications he gives throughout the book. Senior says of the two birds that they are also sun and moon, that the wingless bird is the red sulphur and its exalted soul is the winged bird; he says the birds are brother and sister, and of the lower thing that it is the basis of the two birds, as the earth is the basis of the moon, or the lower world.

Let us consider these few amplifications. Sulphur is one of the most important basic matters in the alchemical process. In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* Jung wrote a whole chapter on it, from which can be seen that sulphur is an active substance, a corrosive substance, and a dangerous one on account of its evil smell. As you know, in folklore the devil always smells of sulphur, and leaves an air of sulphur behind when he leaves or has been exorcised. Sulphur also produces all colours, is the lover of the alchemical bride figure, and so on, and it is a thief which interferes with the loving couple.

Thus you could interpret sulphur as drivenness, a state of being driven. It would not be right to speak of the drive itself; it is rather the state or *quality* of being driven or overwhelmed. If you look at it from a certain religious angle, that would naturally be the devil; it is sex, for instance, but in the sense of being driven by sex, or sex in its overwhelming form, i.e., something not under one's control.

Sulphur is the active part of the psyche, the part which has a definite goal. In a psychological connection, one watches to find out where the libido is driving towards its goal. It may not be sex, but another kind of drivenness; it could be ambition and the power drive, or something else. Therefore it has the double aspect of supplying the original impetus the male matter as it is called here and is positive and negative at the same time. Anyone who examines himself, if he is honest, is usually first confronted with



37.

Loon and Fish, modern variation on the alchemical "winged and wingless birds" motif, by Jackson Beardy, Ojibway Indian. The loon represents the spiritual aspect of the psyche (the "exalted soul"); the fish is symbolically equivalent to the wingless bird (red sulphur, the instinctive drives).

The tension between the two worlds spirit and matter, consciousness and the unconscious is indicated by the wavy lines. The halved circle radiating energy would represent the Self.

that part of the psyche which is in such a condition.

The red colour refers to fire the emotional quality. The wingless bird is the red sulphur; it is the bird below, and is also referred to as the female, so that we have a paradox because, being driven, it is regarded as the male active quality but projected onto the lower bird it is the female. So the characteristics female-male are very vague; the terms are used in different ways in alchemy. It could be said that the wingless bird, the red sulphur, is an underlying factor of the inner psychic life and is always what one has first to unearth, for it is the *prima materia*.

To get to the bottom of someone's problem it is necessary first to find the make-up of such drives. We all have them in us and until we bring them up and face them we have a hidden corner where they live autonomously. They have to do with the unconscious and, as



you know, Freud was so impressed by this aspect that when he discovered the "red sulphur" he thought that was the whole thing, that that was it. In a way he was right. He was impressed by the driving nature of the unconscious, by the sex aspect, as Adler was by the ambitious or power aspect, so they fell upon the *prima materia* of the red sulphur and from that angle tried to explain the role of the unconscious.

The winged bird is called the exalted soul of the other, meaning that once one has the *prima materia*, which I would interpret here as the basic instinctive drives of the personality, that has to be cooked and when cooked emanates steam which "flies" above matter, which would be what the alchemists call the soul of matter. We had that before, you will remember, as the wife of the steam in our other text. This vapourlike, steamlike, volatile substance the "flying fugitive substance," as it is called, which explains why the bird is winged wishes to rise during the cooking process.

Expressed in our language, what would be the corresponding psychological aspect? Let us assume the wingless bird would be the basic fact of the human personality with the specific aspect of the strongest basic drives. How do we cook drives?

Remark: They are cooked in analysis, surely.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, but how is that done practically?

Answers: By making them conscious. By going into depressions.

Dr. von Franz: Well, yes, that would be going to meet the drives. If you don't know them, you have first to go into a depression in order to meet them. When you have met them, you are at the bottom, and then you are in the *prima materia* and there you touch it. You meditate on it and do active imagination, or you look for the underlying meaning.

Suppose someone is in love but doesn't get anywhere; being frustrated, one gets into a depression, saying that it is not possible to get away from the loved one. That would be continuous torture. Then one would say, well at bottom there is the drive, the dependence, something which constantly occurs in a transference. Many analysands resent the transference because of the dependence it entails, but nothing can be done about it for they *are* dependent; they are driven, they write letters, they telephone twenty times a day, etc. The whole business is not pleasant either for analyst or analysand. Frequently the partners, being reasonable, agree it is



38.

The transformation of Mercurius, as *prima materia*, in the heated, sealed vessel is comparable to cooking the basic instinctive drives in their own affect until their essential fantasy content becomes conscious. "Instead of arguing with the drives which carry us away, we prefer to cook them and . . .ask them what they want. . . . That can be discovered by active imagination, or through a fantasy, or through experimenting in reality, but always with the introverted attitude of observing objectively what the drive really wants." von Franz.

strange and crazy and annoying for both, but the unreasonable drive pays no attention, it takes no notice of what consciousness preaches. Anyone who has ever been deeply in love knows that.

Let us take the same thing in the case of a power drive. You may be madly jealous of a friend who has been successful in his career and argue with yourself, saying you should not be jealous, that it is not fair, but your self-admonitions change nothing; your power drive or ambition, which is the cause of your jealousy, is not affected or touched by what you say. The red sulphur remains untouched, so we need stronger medicine to deal with this drive. Instead of arguing with the drives which carry us away, we prefer to cook them and decide to fantasize about them and ask them what

they want. One has to be quite objective, without opinions and without condemning the thing as unreasonable. One must try to find out amicably what the drive really wants, that is, what it is driving at, for it has an objective.

That can be discovered by active imagination, or through a fantasy, or through experimenting in reality, but always with the introverted attitude of observing objectively what the drive really wants or desires to get at. That would be cooking the red sulphur. Generally, strong drives emanate a fantasy content, they comprise a bunch of fantasy material. You could just as well say that to cook something until its soul appears would mean to let the fantasy material emanate from the drive, allow that fantasy material connected with the drive to emerge.

That would be the psychological aspect, and would correspond to the winged bird. But when you have done that a terrible conflict begins. Our text says that the wingless bird prevents the winged bird from flying away, while the winged bird wants to raise the wingless bird, and so they remain attached, linked together in a kind of insoluble conflict, which keeps the whole thing arrested. How would that appear in reality?

Remark: Wouldn't it be a tendency to spiritualize or concretize?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, exactly, for if you develop the fantasy material, then there is a tendency to conclude that it is all a psychological projection. If I am in love with someone, I can call it an animus or anima or father or mother projection, and in that way spiritualize or "psychify" it, with the nuance of "only" psychological, and the mistake comes in with the word "only."

Naturally, on the concrete level I have to be resigned and not start anything; I must behave conventionally and properly, and everything else I have to take within me because it is the projection of a psychological factor, it is a fantasy. It is the fantasy which binds me to the analyst or the other person, and if I introject that fantasy I shall be free. But do you know what happens if you try to do that? The devil the red sulphur insists that all the same there is something real about it, or there should be, for *otherwise it is only psychological*, and a relationship which is "only" psychological is something I do not want. I want the real thing, which means the completely material thing contact, for instance or, if it is ambition, real recognition, a career, and so on.

The introjection of a fantasy concerning ambition would appear as follows: Someone in a humble situation has a megalomaniac ambitious drive, desiring to be top dog. If one tries to find out what that person is driving at, it will generally be discovered that, just as in the case of the sex drive, the ambition is submitted to the goal of the Self. Such a man might say that he wanted to have a position of authority so as to realize his ideals and improve the world; his desire is not based on egoism and vanity. He wants to realize something, and it usually transpires that there is a very high ideal behind the ambition. But sometimes with the ambition the person will have the hidden feeling of being very special; he secretly feels he ought to have recognition and this he mixes up with ambition.

The desire to be something special really comes about through the hunch or intuition of individuation; there is the vague idea of being a unique individual, and without realization of that uniqueness it is not possible to individuate. Therefore *that* aspect of the ambitious fantasy is quite right. But if you say to someone in a humble position that such an ambition is quite legitimate, and is really an inner thing the drive to be something and become something special, to realize oneself as a unique son or daughter of God, deriving from the vague intuition of one's divine inner nature but that that cannot be exteriorized into wanting to be more than other people, such a person will feel quite relieved. A part of the ambitious drive will quiet down, but then the red sulphur will insist on the other side. It will ask if one really has to be a typist in an office all one's life? Is it all *only* on the inner level? Can one never have anything in outer life? Thus the phenomenon is cut into polar opposites: "only" psychological, and concrete. The devil is the one who wants the concrete thing. He is the great realizer who says that something which has no existence in concrete reality is just not real, and then begins the conflict between spiritualization of the problem and the concrete thing.

Question: What would spiritualization of a problem mean?

Dr. von Franz: The word used was spiritualization, but I think probably "psychologize" was what was meant, that is, reducing a drive to an exclusively psychic, inner event. But it comes to the same thing.

Suppose a monk masturbates and in his fantasy is always with a beautiful woman, but feels that such behaviour is out of keeping

with the vows he has taken and with his ideas of morality, and comes to consult you. He will be told to look into the fantasy he has of the woman at such times. He will be pretty sure to produce especially as an introvert, and usually only introverts become monks though there are exceptions a beautiful anima fantasy, containing all the material of the Virgin Mary, the Sophia of God, and such figures. Then it can be pointed out that though the fantasy starts on a low level Christ after all was born in a stable it is really the fantasy of union with the divine wisdom and should be accepted in that way.

That might solve the whole problem, so that he even no longer feels driven to masturbate; he realizes that the inner psychological factor, which turned up first in a rather disgusting form, is his anima, and he will relate to her. That would be a spiritualization of the factor, it would be producing the winged bird.

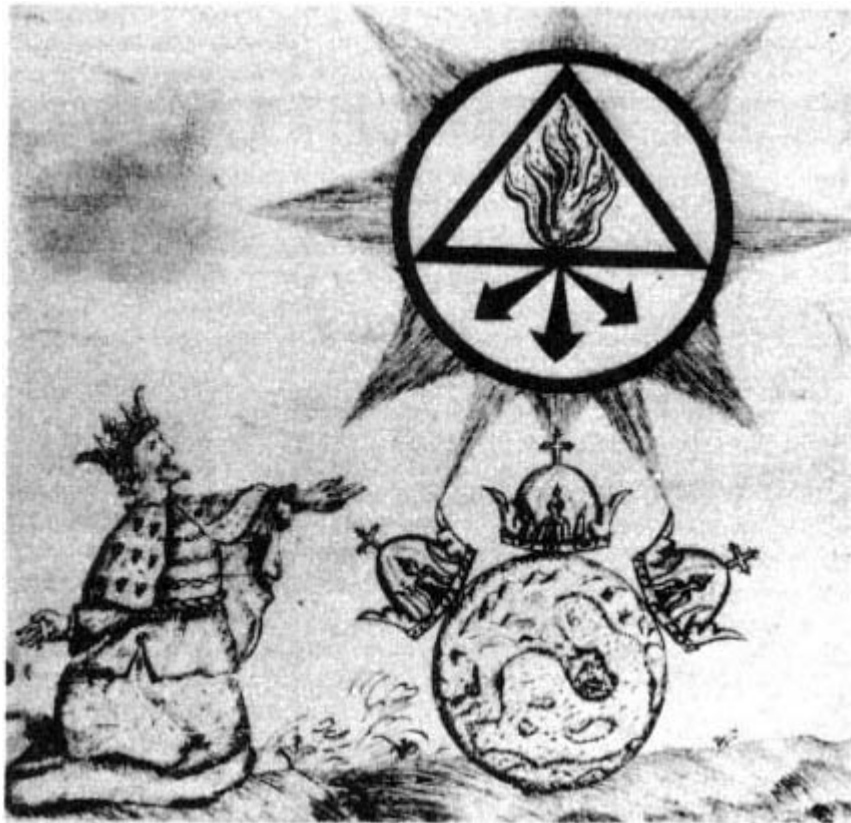
But as Goethe says, "*Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest, zu tragen peinlich,*" that is, a little earthiness always remains behind, awkward to bear. Even after the greatest process of spiritualization, there is always something which resists and wants the earth, and such a monk, ten years after being "cured," may still wonder whether, in his fantasy, there had not been the wish for a real woman too. That thought nags him from time to time, and if he is still caught in the medieval concept he will think it is the devil, something he has absolutely to refuse.

Question: Why shouldn't that hold good for 20th century people too?

Dr. von Franz: If you wish it to, that is for you to debate; you can still say it is the devil if you want to.

Question: But do we not all have to live with those dregs within ourselves?

Dr. von Franz: No, certainly not, that is an individual question having to do with each person's fate and open to conscious decision. It is the ultimate conflict. There are people who have no peace and think it is simply dishonest to cut the thing off and call it the devil; they feel that to be an absolute dishonesty, while others feel it is a heroic decision, the right one they intend to hold to all their lives. One finds peace of mind in one way and others in the other way, but it is something which no analyst can impose upon the



39.

Alchemist as king, worshipping the fiery red sulphur ("the wingless bird").

"Sulphur is the active part of the psyche, the part which has a definite goal. . . .It may not be sex. . . .it could be ambition and the power drive, or something else. . . .The wingless bird, the red sulphur, is an underlying factor of the inner psychic life and is always what one has first to unearth, for it is the *prima materia*." von Franz.

analysand; it has always to be an individual decision to be arrived at by each person for himself. There are no recipes. For one side it would be pure cowardice to cut that off, and for the other it would be weakness if he gave in to it. But that is the great insoluble conflict.

Remark: It is also a matter of the words we use in describing our inner feelings.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, and a matter of the kind of fantasy we have, and that is the individual problem which no one can solve for another, but there is a general type of the same problem which can be talked about, and which the alchemist tries to exemplify in this form. There is the red sulphur and the exalted soul and, as the alchemist says, it is the insoluble problem for the one bird holds down and the other tries to rise up.

In a way, this picture says that the problem is eternal; it circulates in itself, and its totality of opposites is the whole thing. The one is the lower world, which naturally is connected with the red sulphur, and the other is the higher world. Above there are the sun and the moon and we shall presently interpret the love letter of the sun to the moon, which appears in the psychic or spiritual realm and not in concrete reality. Therefore it can be said that the upper part again falls into two opposites, namely the sun and moon, for both characterize the upper part, while the earth and the moon form another pair of opposites in the lower part. The moon is again divided into the heavenly moon and the terrestrial moon, expressed in Senior's words. The text is ambivalent, in one place it speaks of the moon and in another of the earth and the basis of the two birds.

So there is opposition between the lower and the upper worlds, and within the upper world there is opposition between sun and moon and then there are the two aspects of the moon. It is rather complicated, but unfortunately psychological processes are like that. If you have reached the stage where it is possible to extract the soul of one of your strongest drives and are torn between the opposites of the spiritual and the concrete, or the "only" psychological, then you proceed further in the upper part by bringing the conflict into the fantasy material and doing active imagination about your drive. In writing down the fantasy one is talking to the inner figure.

Remark: Some of us do not understand active imagination.

Dr. von Franz: Unfortunately Jungian psychology is so interwoven that every analytical experience is linked with every other one. Expressed in a few words, active imagination consists in making a fantasy about such a drive when confronted with it. I cannot now go into the question of how to fantasize, but there are certain important technicalities which have to be observed. Suppose you are in love with a beautiful woman and cannot have her and so fantasize or dream about her. You can then continue your dream by meeting and talking to her in your imagination.

By this procedure the meaning of a great deal becomes clear to you. You understand why you fell in love with that unknown woman and that much of it belongs to you; it is part of your pattern and is meaningful to you, and then perhaps you will put the fantasy aside because now you understand. But usually the problem I mentioned before comes up, and one wonders whether one should not perhaps also ring up the real woman. After all, she originated all the fantasy! You can say that is just curiosity, but people are curious why was it *that* particular woman?

That is the red sulphur talking. But now you have a choice of two things, either to telephone the woman and fall into the world below, or ring her up in active imagination and tell her she is your anima, that you have settled that, you know she is within you, but something still nags you and you would like to meet her in a concrete form. What has she to say about that? And then you let the imagined anima deal with the concrete problem.

That would be continuing the split on the spiritual side, bringing up the concrete problem also, for bringing the conflict into your active imagination means a further spiritualization of it. Or the red sulphur wins, and you go to the telephone in actual life and ring the woman up, and then you fall into the world below, into the *mundus inferior*, the corruptible earth, which is reality, concrete reality, and the whole drama naturally begins there.

Remark: What you are asking your imagination to do is. . . .

Dr. von Franz: You *ask* nothing! There are always two possibilities.

Question: You must in your imagination find out what this person will say to you?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, if you go the upper way, then you bring your concrete conflict into the upper by asking the inner woman what



you should do about your desire for something more concrete, and then you have to listen to what she has to say about your conflict, and that is a very difficult thing to do. Many people cannot do it because they cannot listen to what the inner figure says; they just imagine something themselves, instead of really listening. It needs quite a lot of practice. But you can transpose the conflict in such a way and continue to discuss it on the other level, and that would be dealing with it from within. Then the fantasy becomes a conflict, and you battle with the inner figure on a psychological level in an attempt to clarify it.

Take the masturbating monk and please excuse the crudeness of the example, but the lower world has to be brought in too. Suppose he comes to me and says it is quite all right as regards Sophia and the inner anima, but from time to time the devil gets at him and says that all the same he is missing something on the real level, and what can be done about that? I would reply that he should ask the inner Sophia!

Remark: Inner knowledge.

Dr. von Franz: No, Sophia is much more than that. Sophia is the knowledge of God. You could just as well say: "Ask God." I cannot settle the analysand's problem, he must speak to the image of the Godhead within him, say that something still worries him and ask what he should do about it. And then he must listen, after which a lot of things can happen; one of the most frequent is that he realizes God has two hands, and that He Himself originated the conflict.

It is an imagined case, but let's say the monk has realized the inner Sophia, and knows that she is the wisdom of God in a form he finds within his own soul. Later the red sulphur pushes him into saying that that is not it, or is not the whole of it, that he should still also have the real experience. To which I can only say that he should ask his inner figure, ask the Sophia within him. I do not say that it is always so, but the inner figure often answers in paradoxes. It says that in a way reality should actually come in, that he does miss something, and at the same time it says it is all psychological. Something like that is said and the poor man will say that he has reached the end of his tether, for this is not a clear answer, it is paradoxical.

If he can understand it, he will realize that this is the double play of the One, that the conflict is necessary and wanted and should not

be solved rationally. The only way the Self can manifest is through conflict: to meet one's insoluble and eternal conflict is to meet God, which would be the end of the ego with all its blather. That is the moment of surrender, it is the moment where Job says he will put his hand on his mouth and not argue about God. It is consciousness that creates the split and says either-or.

I have often seen in such cases that Sophia or some other divine figure, or the old wise man answers, if you look at it negatively, in an evasive form, and if you look at it positively, in a paradox. Then the paradox of the psychological factor, or the psychic reality, hits the quality of consciousness, which always wants to make an either-or and then talk about it, and when the Self appears that is the end of talking. Then the conflict is no longer in the head.

It is the moment where the conflict transcends verbal discussion and becomes an intuitive experience of Oneness behind the two. One is between the right and the left hand; something is secretly one yet it wants to be torn, to suffer, till something happens which is very difficult to grasp and then a switch takes place onto another level. If you let yourself be torn in the conflict, then suddenly you change, you change from the deepest root of your being and the whole thing has another aspect. It is as though you tortured an animal so much that it jumped onto a higher level of realization, and that can come about in very different forms. You can say that it is an aspect of the symbol of the cross, that one has to be crucified utterly and say, as Christ did on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And then something happens which outstrips the conflict.

Remark: If the monk is going to keep his vows he has to stop masturbating.

Dr. von Franz: He has stopped long ago, according to my hypothesis. He has stopped since he had his fantasy, but the devil is much more clever and says, all right, now he is cured and everything is all right and so on, but yet, should he not leave the monastery and have a "real" experience? Has he not now developed enough so as to be able to do even that? For instance, in the Middle Ages it was said: "*Ubi spiritus, ibi libertas.*" That is from St. Paul who said: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Cor. 3:17) So the devil might say that since he has now solved his conflict, is he not free to live?

Remark: Well, I think he is.

Dr. von Franz: That is your opinion, but it is not relevant to his situation. He has to wait until God tells him what to do, it is not up to you to tell him what is right. You, with your extravert's spontaneity, would say: "Yes, all right, I think you should go ahead," but I would not, I would say he should ask God.

Question: Suppose the monk has very weak intuition, and has to get his answer from some other place. Where would it come from?

Dr. von Franz: It depends on how you mean that. If you mean that is how it generally happens, then you are right, but if you mean it *ought* to be that, then you are wrong.

Remark: You said before that the answer would come intuitively, but not everybody can get it intuitively.

Dr. von Franz: Now you bring in the problem of types and that is something else. Speaking generally, the introvert needs a concrete experience, an outer experience, in order to feel he is complete and that things are total, but the extravert does not. Which means that if the monk is an introvert he must have some experience in general.

Question: Sexual experience? Do you mean by that what Freud meant by sex?

Dr. von Franz: I mean it quite simply and concretely contact with an earthly, human, female being.

Question: You mean sexual intercourse?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, quite concretely, but I say that in general that happens and not that it ought to. It does not happen in each case, you can only say it is a statistical average tendency. But what is important for him is his connection with God, not the woman, so if God sends him that experience he has to take it, and if God does not send it to him, he doesn't.

Remark: My point is I speak as a theologian that God's natural laws are related to him and his relationship with a woman in terms of sex as well, and I can say dogmatically that a theologian or priest of the Church, if he goes out as a Christian priest and has a relationship with a woman outside of his vows, that is going to be wrong.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, because you *do* know what God wants in each case, but we do not. We always try to ask Him first from within.

Remark: Well, I know He has natural laws involving human beings.

Dr. von Franz: To us the experience of God is greater and more unknown and therefore we consult Him again each time. We have not the idea that He has uttered His last word. That is the great contrast between psychology and theology. We think of God as a reality who can speak in our psyche. One never knows what God may ask of an individual. That is why every analysis is an adventure, because one never knows what God is going to ask of this particular person.

Question: Are there limits to that?

Dr. von Franz: No, there are no limits, one cannot set limits for God. We have a much humbler attitude than theologians. We simply say we should wait and see what God has to say about the situation in each case. We make no assumptions as to what He is going to do, so each human life becomes a unique spiritual and religious adventure, and a unique meeting with God. God can set His own limitations.

Remark: But the point is that He has not yet done it.

Dr. von Franz: He hasn't in your life, perhaps, but wait until God gives you an order! You are quite right to speak as you do until God makes you think differently, and you have the right to say that He has not interfered with your theories. So that is all right for you, but not for others. There are other people with whose conscious theories God has interfered, and very strongly, and then they have to readapt to a new reality.

Remark: The course I am suggesting is on the level of experience, a valid experience.

Dr. von Franz: If it is a valid experience that is, if it is genuine for a person then there is nothing further to discuss. He is in accordance and at peace in a certain mode of behaviour which to him is codified by God so that he is at peace with God, which is the highest aim in human life. There there is no trouble.

Remark: Think of the prophet Hosea. God told him to marry a prostitute.

Dr. von Franz: Two thousand years later, after he has been canonized as a prophet and since it is in the Holy Scriptures, we

cannot doubt that it was God and there it is quite all right. That is God's paradoxical behaviour. But if that happened nowadays to *you*, and you went to a colleague and said God had ordered you to marry a prostitute, what would the colleague say? The colleague would probably ask if you are sure it was God, for he thinks God could not give such a command and therefore it could not be God. How would you prove it was God?

Remark: I would want to be sure his motive was genuine and know who the woman was, and so on.

Dr. von Franz: I said *you*, but never mind. Then with your reasonable ego judgement you would decide if it were God or not?

Answer: It would not be my judgement, but His. All I could do would be to help the man think through the area of decision.

Dr. von Franz: Then you bring the whole thing onto the level of conscious reasoning.

Remark: Not conscious reasoning only, but feeling and intuition and everything involved.

Dr. von Franz: That is the human, rational, conscious way. The real mystery of God is right out of it.

Remark: I don't mean to make God's decision for Him, God has to decide Himself.

Dr. von Franz: But then you seduce Him into making up His own mind instead of your relating to God.

Remark: I think God relates through me to some extent and through anybody else.

Dr. von Franz: That is an inflation. Why should the man not relate to God directly?

Remark: Because he can't do it; humanly I can't do it either. I can't carry on a conversation with God within myself, that is humanly impossible.

Dr. von Franz: Is it?

Remark: Yes, I have to have some human contact, through which to relate to God.



40.

Alchemist conferring with God. "That is the great contrast between psychology and theology. We think of God as a reality who can speak in our psyche. One never knows what God may ask of an individual. That is why every analysis is an adventure, because one never knows what God is going to ask of this particular person." von Franz.

Dr. von Franz: There are people who cannot risk loneliness with the experience. They always have to be in a flock and have human contact, as you call it.

Remark: I would not deny the efficacy of prayer when I and God work together, but that involves not just myself and God but also people with whom I live, my family and what have you, in relation to God, the Holy Spirit.

Dr. von Franz: There you mention the main thing but the Holy Spirit bloweth where it listeth, where it will. You, the theologian, identify with a conscious position and take that as absolute. From that standpoint you can talk about everything, but you don't notice your unconscious identification. If you question your conscious

standpoint long enough, I am sure the Holy Ghost will one day whisper something to you about it.

For us, there is always only the individual and his or her experience of God and all the rest is secondary. In therapy it is not we who connect the individual with God, even that would be a megalomaniac presumption of the psychotherapist though many do presume to do so, and by that they have already become hidden theologians again. If you are with an analysand the only way you may perhaps help is by always saying: "I don't know, but let us ask God." By that you prevent the analysand from drawing rash conscious conclusions or seducing you into making them, and therefore every religious experience becomes a unique event. God in every experience is experienced in a specific and unique form and that includes even the red sulphur, which means that if you put the question of the red sulphur before God, God will give His unique answer in each case.

Remark: I think God has already given His unique answer in each case.

Dr. von Franz: That is where we differ. You think God has published general rules which He keeps Himself, and we think He is a living spirit appearing in man's psyche who can always create something new.

Remark: Within the framework of what He has already published.

Dr. von Franz: To a theologian God is bound to His own books and is incapable of further publications. That is where we lock horns.

But let us return to our text. If you raise the conflict to the realm of psychological inner detachment, then the problem of the opposites becomes clear: the Oneness becomes visible in the psychological realm and you realize your conflict is between two aspects of the psyche. But one unsatisfactory factor remains, for you have cut the moon into two. The feminine element remains divided; a split remains between what we would call the unconscious, or the anima, and what could be called the concrete world. That is still an open question, which would mean that in analysis you realize the conflict but still cannot quite link it up with outer concrete life. As soon as it comes to problems in the outer, concrete life, there is still uncertainty.

Senior gives no advice as to how to proceed from there, but he

switches to the other possibility. You must never forget the division into two, the two aspects of the same problem. He exposes it as two because it can only be described by attacking it from both sides, and now he tries to attack it from the other side. In one picture the sun with its two rays attacks the lower world, as does the sun with one ray, without justice. The lower world is a secret duality: it is a black sphere outside with a white shining moon inside.

The sun in general represents a male principle of collective consciousness, the unknown psychological factor which creates collective consciousness. We see that wherever human beings flock together a phenomenon of collective consciousness is created. For instance, the words of a language have an average similar meaning to each individual, and through this medium of language much knowledge is imparted and exchanged, and so a store of collective consciousness is formed.

It is very difficult to say what is an individual's own consciousness and how much in it is collective. In earliest childhood one sees sparks of individual conscious reactions, for instance in the marvellous sayings of children and when they ask those wonderful questions. There the child makes an effort towards individual consciousness. There are also the charming tactless questions: "Grandmother, when are you going to die?" and so on, for then the child speaks quite naively and individually. But when it goes to school it is confronted with conventional consciousness; schools have to be like that and if you speak of the lion, or the bear, and tell the children to write a little essay on those animals there will be a maximum of three in a class who will say anything individual.

As a teacher I often fought with the children, begging them to write what they thought and not what I had told them, and there I saw that children have tremendous difficulty because it is the function of the school, and the tendency of the development of those years, to grow into collective consciousness. The assimilation of collective consciousness is in fact the function of the school, and therefore the originality of individual consciousness generally fades and at twenty people are a sack of collective knowledge. If you ask their opinion about anything, they just repeat what their parents or their friends say, or what they have read in the paper, and you have the greatest difficulty bringing them back to one unique conscious personal reaction.

So we can say that the sun is that light within which we all swim,



it is the light of all our days. We think we are conscious but that is not true; we are conscious in the realm of the collective and we do not even know how little our individual consciousness is. It needs quite a search to find even fragments of consciousness that are personal. If you analyse an individual the sun is always shining; that is collective consciousness in which individual consciousness is enclosed, and the conflict is then either against the unconscious or against reality. People when they have a conflict either are fighting with outer reality outside things are wrong and they want them corrected or they are in trouble with their unconscious. Something from within, or something from without, is in opposition. It is quite rightly said that the enemy with which consciousness is confronted is secretly double, for people come saying they have an outer conflict but you discover it is an inner one, or vice versa.

If there are two suns then there are two principles of collective consciousness. In a society that would mean two forms of relationship to God, for instance Catholicism and Protestantism; the one lives in the light of the one sun and the other in the light of the other sun. To one group certain truths are completely self-evident; they are never discussed, because to this group they seem as clear as the sun, and to the other group the same applies to their own truths. Then already there is a differentiation a split, or something in opposition, within the realm of collective consciousness. That would refer in general to a collective conscious conflict of some kind: two "isms" or two collective attitudes clash, but both are collective, for the conflict is common to many in the same form.

In Senior's text the conflicting attitudes are characterized as one sun which directs two rays towards the opposite the dark thing and one sun which directs one ray, and it is said that the one ray is the sun without justice. What principle of collective consciousness is without justice towards the world below while the other sun has justice? What would that mean?

Clearly there are two possibilities of consciousness, namely a rigid one and one which has a *paradoxical attitude* and therefore does justice to the paradoxical factor of the unconscious. The latter would be what you could call a consciously open system, an open *Weltanschauung* which is always ready to accept its opposite, or meet the opposite and accept its contradictions. If you have a conscious attitude which is ready to accept the opposite, to accept



41.

The *coniunctio* as a fantastic monstrosity, comparable psychologically to the unconscious union of masculine and feminine, i.e., an undifferentiated personality.

the conflict and the contradiction, then you can connect with the unconscious. That is what we try to achieve. We try to bring about a conscious attitude with which the person can keep the door to the unconscious open, which means that one must never be too sure of oneself, never be sure that what one says is the only possibility, never be too sure about a decision.

One should always have an eye and an ear open towards the opposite, the other thing. That does not mean to be spineless, it doesn't mean just to sit there. It means to act according to one's conscious conviction, but still always having the humility to keep the door open and be proved wrong. That would be an attitude of consciousness in living connection with the other, dark side. The unjust sun is that attitude of consciousness which knows exactly what is what, a rigid attitude that blocks contact with the unconscious, while the two-rayed sun has a moulding and formative

effect upon the unconscious; the latter would be with justice and the former without. I think that is highly meaningful.

If we think of this man Senior who lived his life between the Shiites and the Sunnites, I imagine, though it is pure guesswork, that in his material the two suns would stand for that. In any case, consciousness always tends to be one-sided and sure of itself, and that does harm to the mystery of life. But consciousness can have the double attitude and then it enlightens the mystery of life and does not harm it. The humble attitude which always keeps the door open is the necessary acceptance of the fact that one may be wrong, morally or scientifically, or that one may know to some extent but not for certain, and that even the greatest certainty may be only negative, or something plausible in accordance with which I act.

A conscious attitude connected with the religious attitude is what is required always to give humble and careful consideration to the unknown factor, that is, to say, "I think this is the right thing to do," and then watch for a sign warning that one is not allowing for everything. Consciousness is essential to the unconscious for without it the unconscious cannot live. But consciousness is only a good channel of communication through which the unconscious can flow if it has a double, paradoxical attitude. Then the unconscious can manifest, and the hardening of the conscious attitude against the unconscious, which means a split in the personality and in civilization can be avoided.

Here there is a secret duality in the object. At a rough guess, we can say that this dark world underneath is the unconscious because it is the unknown; it is that which I cannot penetrate with my mind and say I know what it is. The "unconscious" is a concept which simply refers to that which is not clear to consciousness. That includes a whole conglomeration of things. There are two aspects, two ultimate unknowns, with which an alchemist would specially deal and of which I spoke in the introduction. We are still faced with two unsolved mysteries which in a strange way are interdependent though we do not yet know how. They are psyche and matter. The science of physics, in the final resort, postulates matter as something unconscious, namely something of which we cannot become conscious. By definition the unconscious is the same thing: it is something psychological of which we cannot become conscious, and we never know how our descriptions of the unconscious are combined with matter, which creates the whole conflict between the inner and the outer.

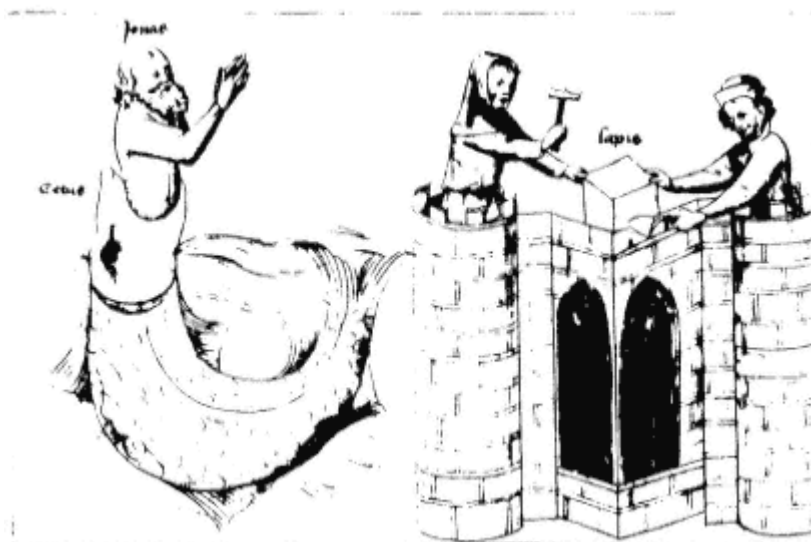
In the final analysis it is consciousness that makes the conflict between the inner and the outer by projecting the one as materially real and the other as psychologically real, because we do not really know the difference between material reality and the psyche. Actually, if we look at it honestly, we are confronted with something unknown which appears sometimes as matter and sometimes as psyche, and how the two are linked we do not know as yet. The alchemists did not know and we do not know either. It is a life mystery which seems to manifest both psychologically and materially. If we describe it from the outside with an extraverted statistical approach it appears as matter, and if we approach it from within it appears as what we like to call the unconscious.

Question: Is there not also a duality between object and subject?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, that is quite correct. Outside is the *nigredo*, and that would be the destructive aspect of the unconscious as we experience it very often, at least at the beginning when we first meet it. All one's dreams are critical at first; the unconscious is full of drives and dissociating factors, destructive factors, and then if we penetrate deeper we see something very light and meaningful. Enlightenment can come from that dark place; that is, if we direct the ray of consciousness upon it, if we warm it up by our conscious attention, then something white comes out and that would be the moon, the enlightenment which comes from the unconscious.

Sometimes one has an awkward dream which disgusts one on waking; it is either indecent or obscene, dreadfully silly or stupid and it is irritating. One wanted a wonderful archetypal dream and then this comes! But then I say, now wait a minute, let us investigate that, and find out what it means and generally it is just such dreams that are the most enlightening if one can get to the meaning. The meaning was not known but it had a dynamic content by which you are much enriched. It is just those dreams which are so valuable; they have an unapproachable, disgusting shell of depressing blackness but within that is the light of the unconscious. It is often in the depressing motifs of the dream that the light is to be found, and naturally it is also to be found in the shadowy impulses which are full of meaning if one can lovingly investigate them with an attitude that accepts the paradox.

Senior in that stage seems to have a conscious conflict between two attitudes towards the unconscious; it would be a life conflict but would seem to be all right as far as conscious views were concerned.



42.

Jonah emerging from the belly of the whale, and alchemists fitting the *lapis angularis* (cornerstone, a symbol for Christ), indicating that the goal of the "night sea journey" psychologically a state of conflict and depression in which one is forced to pay attention to the unconscious is equivalent to the philosopher's stone.

Life itself would present the conflict, on the one hand in the sphere of the moon, and on the other in the sphere of the sun; the one is a conscious and the other an unconscious conflict. Usually they are interwoven, having something in common and being only two aspects of the same thing, namely the fundamental paradoxical duality of all psychological phenomena.

What is not said in the picture but is contained in the text, if you read the book, is that the whole thing together describes the philosopher's stone, the alchemical work. It is said that the one is the first stage of the alchemical work, and with the second added to it the philosopher's stone is made, for the life conflict has become conscious. That is the later stage of the opus. When we have already related to the unconscious, then comes the increasingly subtle problem of how to keep the relationship right instead of dropping back into one-sidedness. Even people who have had a long Jungian analysis tend to codify their process of individuation. Even though they have had tremendous experiences and life-giving reactions, still if they remain with that and codify what they have experienced for

instance, say they just preach their own experiences to others then they do not develop. That is because every conscious phenomenon wears out.

For that reason the conflict is eternal and must be sustained; the one-sidedness of consciousness must be continually confronted with the paradox. This means that whenever a truth has been experienced as such and has been kept for a while alive in one's own psyche, one has to make a right about turn, for that truth is no longer valid. As Jung says, every psychological truth is only a half truth and that also is only a half truth! The analyst himself has always to keep up with his own unconscious, to be consciously ready to throw over everything hitherto attained, which would correspond to a constant double attitude.

Therefore perhaps the sun with the two rays is more rightly adapted to influence and more able to assimilate the unconscious by virtue of an open attitude, just as though there were a second consciousness behind consciousness as if one had in the foreground of one's mind the ordinary operating consciousness, while at the back something realizes that that is only a part of life. Thus there is a moveable "consciousness behind consciousness" which just observes and knows that, for the time being, the thing is so. Jung describes that, on an emotional level, as being right in the storm of the conflict and at the same time out of it and watching it in serenity.

Now we will turn to the sun's love letter to the crescent moon, the waxing moon. The sun says: "In great and ultimate weakness, I will give you from my beauty the light through which one reaches perfection."

Purely astronomically, the sun has light while the moon only borrows from the sun; that is, the sun gives light to the moon, there is a quite natural basis for this. The sun in its radiant, emanating form intends to impart some of its light to the moon so that the moon may reach perfection.

We have to realize what the sun and moon meant to people at that time. The sun in general is an image of the Godhead; it is even later said in the text that the sun is the spiritual divinity, and this is in beauty emanating goodness, perhaps without shadow. It is beautiful and it imparts its light to the imperfect moon. Now the moon is feminine, it is a receptacle for the dead, it is responsible for all waxing and waning phenomena on earth: the growing of plants

and their withering, the menstruation of women, the ebb and flow of tides, the becoming and dying again, and it therefore rules the corruptible world.

Expressed briefly, that would be what such people would think about the moon, so it is the phenomenon of earthly life in its paradoxical tides, in its irrationality which still seems to have a secret meaning. For a man the moon would represent an aspect of the feminine personification of his unconscious, while for the woman it would personify her vegetative life basis, her instinctive life.

The sun then says that through it one reaches to any height, one is raised to any height; that is, the sun is that which lifts up. In antiquity and such times people were puzzled at the fact that the sun raised the water by warming it, so that clouds were formed, and that when the sun disappeared the rain would come, so the sun was often spoken of as the principle of spiritual elevation. It is therefore that which makes things perfect; it exalts them to the heights and makes them visible.

Then the moon says to the sun: "You need me just as the cock needs the hen, and I constantly need your effect on me, because your ethics are perfect, you, the father of all planets, you are the high light, the great Lord." The sun has to some extent indicated its superior quality by saying, in a very dignified way, that it is going to give the moon light from its beauty. So the moon is inclined to point out that the sun needs her just as much as the cock needs the hen, that it is nothing without her, that though she is the recipient, the imperfect thing which receives from the light, yet the sun needs her too, because what would be the use of a sun which could not shed its light on something else? Its light would disappear into space for it needs a material object where it can become visible, through reflection.

Therefore the moon in all feminine humility and submission points out her absolutely equal right to existence: the sun needs the empty vessel into which its light can be poured, it needs darkness on which the light can shine, it needs matter in which the spirit can become visible. The moon uses a very vulgar and ordinary simile as the cock needs the hen which is an allusion to the fact that there is also a purely instinctive and even a sexual attraction between the two principles. The moon says she needs the sun's effect upon her without cessation, because the sun is perfect, the

## CONIUNCTIO SIVE Cortus.



© Luna durch meyn vmbgeben/vnd fusse mynne/  
Dirstu schön/starck/vnd gewaltig als ich byn-  
© Sol/du bist vber alle liecht zu erkennen/  
So bedarffstu doch mein als der han der hennen.

43.

Concrete image for the psychological union of opposites:  
"O Moon, folded in my embrace/ Be you as strong as I, as  
fair of face./ O Sun, brightest of all lights known to men/  
And yet you need me, as the cock the hen." (See also  
page 251.)

father of all light. *Perfectus moribus*, the Latin words mean particularly ethical perfection, which is something the moon doesn't have.

In the mythology of the moon, the moon is wicked, for it is unreliable. The alchemists frequently quoted a psalm which says that in the darkness of the new moon the wicked shoot with their arrows at ethical just people, which means that the new moon protects thieves and the wicked when they attack the righteous. Thus the moon has all the wicked poison and unreliability typical of the anima in her original condition and also for feminine beings in general, not only the feminine in man, for in the feminine there is



that catty, unreliable cunning, and rather doubtful ethics one could call it the ambiguity of nature. The moon says that she is the waxing, moist, and cold moon and the sun is warm and dry, and when they are coupled in a balanced state, then she is like a woman open to her husband.

Here there is the conflict between the principle of consciousness and nature the unconscious, the unknown. The conflict between the masculine and feminine is amplified into a quaternity because both contain two qualities: the moon contains the qualities of moistness and coldness, and the sun of warmth and dryness. That alludes to the late antique and medieval teaching that there are four elements: water, air, fire, and earth, and four basic qualities: warmth, dryness, wet, and cold. Throughout the Middle Ages that was considered the basic principle and the categories in which basic matter could be observed, the four elements and the four qualities.

It is of course a beautiful mandala, for fire is hot and dry and air is moist and cold. There are many different variations for the disposition of the elements and qualities. This was not so in terms of material reality, even for people of that time; they realized that it was a simplification of material phenomena which did not fit reality. As soon as you think more profoundly, it does not fit, like all archetypal schemes of order which are projected, and even the very first alchemists said not to think that this was meant concretely, that it was just a way of introducing order into our ideas. Zosimos, for instance, says that, which means you see clearly an image of totality through the four qualities projected onto matter; even in those days it was simply a symbolic network which the human mind projected onto matter to bring order into it.

We can compare that to the modern use of concepts such as particle, energy, time-space continuum, and electro-magnetic phenomena. Physicists know that these concepts are vaguely interwoven, and not quite as simple and clear as we think they are, but they have been created as a means of expression.

The four qualities appear now and complete the duality of sun and moon. It is the same when two people meet: there are four, he and his anima and she and her animus. In an analytical discussion there are always four elements, two in the conscious and two in the unconscious. Every conscious assertion already constellates its opposite, namely negation. If I say a plant is a plant and a dog is an animal, that seems simple enough, but it is a contraposition of two

things and contains something more, because if I say a tree is a tree, I express the fact that it is not a mineral, or anything else but a tree. Everything I say has already in it the shadow of what is excluded. Therefore every time consciousness produces something, even two words, there are always four, because the unconscious is always there too; something unknown is involved, and that should also be taken into consideration.

Take the counterpositions of physics and psychology. By looking at what physicists do, psychology discovers that the physicist is full of unconscious projections, he sees that at once. But when the physicist looks at us, he naturally sees what we discover psychologically from a physical aspect and says we are unaware of that aspect, which is because we are not sufficiently developed in our consciousness to be able to keep a contradiction in mind, something very difficult to do, and yet we should.

Every polarity contains its opposite, but it is most obvious when two human beings discuss together, as in analysis. Then there are always the four, the unconscious of each is always there too. As soon as you give the problem of relationship your close attention, that fact makes it much more complicated for there are always the two qualities in each.

Let us assume that in a projected form this refers to that problem. The sun and the moon say that if they are coupled in a balanced state then it is like a man and a woman who are completely there for each other. So there is the problem of the *coniunctio* in all its aspects, where there are two known factors and two others unknown. But when they are all related then a state of balance and completeness is reached.



44.

The *coniunctio* as a harmonious balance between moon and sun furnaces, i.e., feminine and masculine energies.



45.

The *coniunctio* as meeting of king and queen. The queen stands on a globe to indicate her connection with the earth; the king stands in fire, showing the emotional attraction.

## Lecture 6 Arabic Alchemy

I will continue with the love letter of the sun to the moon. In the moon a conflict has arisen for it appears in two forms, one in heaven and one on earth. The sun also appears in two forms. From one sun, only one ray descends upon the earth, and this is called the sun which shines without justice; a second sun sends out two rays and is called the sun which shines with justice.

The sun is an aspect of consciousness, being a phenomenon partly linked with the ego and partly with the Self. One aspect of the sun is open to the unconscious, for the two rays imply a principle of consciousness capable of embracing the opposites, while the other sun is "a closed system" it is one-sided and therefore destructive. In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* Jung describes the sun as an image of the spiritual divinity, i.e., the Self on the one hand, and an aspect of the ego on the other.

The ego is identical with the Self to the extent that it is the instrument of self-realization for the Self. Only an egotistical inflated ego is in opposition to the Self. In its rightful function the ego is the light in the darkness of the unconscious, and in some ways identical with the Self. The two suns seem to illustrate this contrast between the destructive and positive aspects of ego consciousness. The sun with one ray would represent an inflated egocentric conscious principle, unjust to the unconscious or reality and opposed to the Self. The sun with two rays, on the other hand, symbolises the ego as an instrument of realization for the Self, and in that sense it functions with justice.

The ego of an individuated person, for instance, would be a manifestation of the Self, it would be open to the unconscious. Such an ego manifests the Self by having a double attitude towards and being constantly, humbly, open to the unconscious and thus offering a basis of realization for the Self. God needs our poor heart, says Angelus Silesius, in order to be real.

Thus the double sun in Senior's text shows a conflict between a wrong ego attitude towards the earth, or unconscious, and an ego attitude which allows the Self to manifest. The goal would be to find

this double-rayed conscious attitude, namely a capacity for standing the opposites. This would not mean wavering between the opposites but rather holding the tension between them.

A tendency to deviate and to become one-sided is inborn in consciousness, it is linked with its need for clarity and preciseness. People often say, for instance, that Dr. Jung does not write very clearly, but he does that on purpose he writes with a double attitude, giving full justice to the paradoxes of the unconscious. He describes psychic phenomena from an empirical standpoint. Buddha once said that all his sayings were to be understood on two levels and Jung's writings also have this double floor, these two levels.

People who are stuck in the Vishudda chakra, so to speak, believe in words and cannot grasp the thing itself. But Jung uses a descriptive method, which has now also been adopted in nuclear physics, where facts are described in two complementary approaches which contradict each other but yet are needed in order that the whole thing may be grasped. Words are only instruments and not the thing itself.

Question: Does the Sol niger allude to the negative, unjust aspect of consciousness?

Dr. von Franz: Yes, the Sol niger would be the dark shadowy aspect of consciousness. Thus the sun god in mythology often has a hidden destructive aspect. Apollo, for instance, is the god of mice, rats, and wolves. The negative aspect of the sun is especially realized in hot countries where the burning midday sun destroys all the plants. In hot countries ghosts come out at noon and in the Bible, for instance, there is the demon of midday. The dark or shadow side of the sun is demonic.

Drivenness pushing the ego from behind would illustrate the dark, demonic side of the sun, and there is a misuse of consciousness to justify the drive when the ego is not strong enough to decide on the objective facts but is swept away through the weakness of its passions: fear, power, or sex. Perfection also, in itself, is hostile to nature. There is a tale in Indochina that once the sun was too hot and a hero shot it down. Thus the Sol niger Saturn is the shadow of the sun, the sun without justice, which is death for the living.

Man, with his consciousness, is a disturbing factor in the order of nature; one could really question whether man was a good invention



46.

Saturn as Sol niger, shadow of the sun (or dark side of God) devouring his children. "When the Self is not supported it sends a neurosis, i.e., the shadow of the Self comes into action and God and nature become enemies to man." von Franz.

on the part of nature or not. There is the myth of the trickster god who is especially stupid, and from a certain angle man is very stupid and does not have enough sense to be balanced. As an animal he is disturbed and overreproductive. Whether he is a mistake, or the crown of creation, depends on the functioning of his sun with or without justice. If consciousness functions as it should, it is helpful to life, but when it gets off the track it becomes destructive.

One aim of analysis is to get consciousness to function again according to nature. Inflation is a symptom of the unjust functioning. If a highly focussed consciousness is driven, then one has a dark sun. People use consciousness to convince you that they are right in doing the wrong thing. Each of us is born in an imperfect and questionable state to be wrong and split is human nature. The myth of Adam in the Garden of Eden was the original pattern for this, showing that from the very beginning man's condition limped. When the Self is not supported it sends a neurosis, i.e., the shadow of the Self comes into action and God and nature become enemies to man.

A wrongly functioning consciousness receives the dark side of God. If consciousness works according to nature, the blackness is not so black or so destructive, but if the sun stands still, it is stiffened and burns life to death and then, according to certain Indians, the heart has to be sacrificed to keep the sun moving. Every



47.

The peacock, symbolising the renewal of life, rises from the sealed retort ("the belly of the closed house") in which takes place the union of opposites, the integration of masculine and feminine.

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time we make a rule, we have to make an exception, for otherwise consciousness and life are not in accord.

The two moons and the two suns make four. A quaternio is always present in two people, namely man and his anima, woman and her animus. The *coniunctio* takes place, according to our text, in the belly of the "closed house," which would be the alchemical vessel where sun and moon unite. The Egyptian coffin is such a closed house, where the king marries his mother: Isis and Horus, or Hathor and Horus. The priest says: "Now you stay, uniting in love with your mother," as he closes the door of the funeral chamber. A Japanese Zen Master also says: "He has the door of his heart closed so that no one can guess his feelings." One becomes a mystery to others, because of the oneness with the Self.

If you can guess a person's reactions, then he still functions collectively. There is a sense of "I know how you feel" because of similar collective reactions. Empathy, feeling into the other person's state, is based on collective qualities. We meet most people on the collective level and know the qualities we share, such as jealousy and love, and without empathy we cannot relate, but that is not the uniqueness of the individual. It is the quality of genius to produce the unexpected; it is the surprising thing which clicks and yet is not banal. You can never guess what a creative person will produce for it is a new creation and there is no knowing what it will be. From the mind come ideas and from the feeling side come reactions which in such a person are absolutely unique.

The individuation process leads to unique creativeness in each moment and the shut chamber alludes to this secret centre of the personality, the secret source of life. It is the shut chamber of the heart, the unique creativeness in each moment of life. Where the process of individuation leads to the realization of this uniqueness others can no longer guess about you, for they cannot see into the shut chamber of your heart from where the unexpected, creative reactions spring.

I would say that the unexpected creative reactions come from the oneness with the Self. It is the Self which has this quality of unique creativeness in each moment of life, which is why the Japanese Master says that one can no longer guess the movements of his heart. It means that if the Zen Master says or does something it will always be unpredictable and creatively surprising. The shut chamber alludes to this secret, for ultimately the individual is a



unique and closed system, a unique thing which centres round an unpredictable source of life. If that becomes real in an individual then one feels the mystery of a unique personality. That has to do with shutting the house, which means separation from collective entanglements and contamination, not only outwardly, but inwardly, separating within oneself from what is ordinary and not oneself.

Question: How does that reconcile with the Satori experience of Zen Buddhism where the openness and oneness with nature and with the collective too is one of the goals?

Dr. von Franz: That is one of those paradoxes. In the last of the "Ten Ox-herding Pictures" of Zen, the old man goes to the market. He has a sweet smile, and has even forgotten his own enlightenment. There you have the completely collective man who goes to the market with his pupil and his beggar's bowl, and has even forgotten his Satori experience with the gods. That means he does not subjectively feel unique, but, the story adds, the cherry tree blossoms as he goes by and that is something you would not guess when an old fellow with a fat belly goes to the market with a rather insipid smile. Uniqueness springs from him as a creative act, but it is not intentionally in his mind. He does not feel unique, he *is* unique, although subjectively the same old man would say that he is a poor old man and what do you want of him? Such people have an extreme, natural humility, in spite of which their uniqueness manifests.

It is again the paradox of the ego and the Self. The ego must have the attitude of a human being among other human beings, and then the uniqueness, if it has been found within, will emanate involuntarily. It is just the opposite of being inflated with one's uniqueness, feeling so different from others and making those prince- and princesslike remarks such as: "I am so sensitive nobody understands me." That is just not it, and if people say that to me I always say I know there are a lot of people like that, and I don't say that out of wickedness; it is quite true, it is a very common quality to be so sensitive that nobody understands you. It is very widespread, especially among introverts, who feel unique but they are not. The enlightened one does not feel unique but very human and that is why you can say such people are very open to the world and very human with everybody, or paradoxically you can say they are infinitely unique and incomprehensible.



48.

Entering the City with Bliss-bestowing Hands, the last of the "Ten Ox-herding Pictures" of Zen Buddhism, represents the culmination of the process of individuation: "And now having moved through the stage of emptiness, and also having seen God in the world of nature, the individual can see God in the world of men. Enlightened mingling in the market place with 'wine-bibbers and butchers' (publicans and sinners), he recognizes the 'inner light' of 'Buddha-Nature' in everyone. He doesn't need to hold himself aloof nor to be weighted down by a sense of duty or responsibility, nor to follow a set of patterns of other holy men, nor to imitate the past. He is so in harmony with life that he is content to be inconspicuous, to be an instrument, not a leader. He simply does what seems to him natural. But though in the market place he seems to be an ordinary man, something happens to the people among whom he mingles. They too become part of the harmony of the universe."

Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism*.

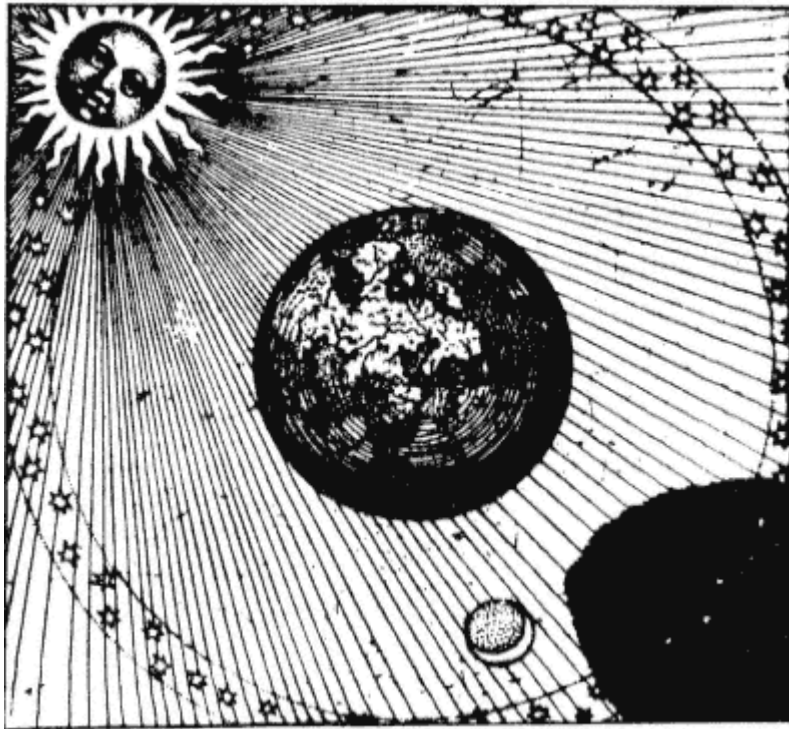
Remark: I think, to express it in another way, that the aim is to eliminate subject and object, while at the same time to honestly discriminate between subject and object.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, that is absolutely fitting. This is to illustrate the belly of the closed house; that is, the innermost creative is secluded by nature, and not by any artificial act. It has also to do, very concretely and in a banal way, with the problem of analytical discretion. As soon as one touches the uniqueness of the partner in an analysis, discretion is imposed. Before it was just a conventional rule, not really necessary, but if the uniqueness is touched upon it is natural never to talk about it to a third person. One realizes it is unique and that it should never be talked about with anybody else, quite naturally. It cannot be, and that has to do with the mystery of meeting with uniqueness in any love relationship, for then the house shuts naturally, by itself.

Behind the shut door the moon receives its soul from the sun and the sun takes away the beauty of the moon, which becomes quite thin and weak. That means the *coniunctio* takes place in the new moon, in the underworld. You know that the moon is new when it is close to the sun. When it is opposite the sun then the whole moon is lit up and you have the full moon but when it is close to the sun then it is not hit by the sun's rays. That is an interesting fact about which Jung has written in *Mysterium Coniunctionis* that the *coniunctio* does not take place in the full but in the new moon, which means it takes place in the darkest night where not even the moon shines, and in this ultimately dark night sun and moon unite.

There is a specially interesting nuance here, because in medieval Church symbolism the sun symbolises Christ and the moon symbolises the Church the *Ecclesia* and the *coniunctio* of sun and moon is interpreted as the meeting of Christ and the redeemed Church. But not one of the writers has pointed out the fact that when they united the moon was gone, or darkened, blotted out completely. They have tactfully skipped that detail, or never questioned why it is so.

The *coniunctio* happens in the underworld, it happens in the dark when there is no light shining any more. When you are completely out and consciousness is gone, then something is born or generated; in the deepest depression, in the deepest desolation, the new personality is born. When you are at the end of your tether, that is



49.

The moon in the shadow of the earth. "The *coniunctio* takes place in the new moon, in the underworld. . . .In the deepest depression, in the deepest desolation, the new personality is born." von Franz.

the moment when the *coniunctio*, the coincidence of opposites, takes place.

The sun gives its light to the moon, but at that moment the moon is blotted out and fades and becomes very thin, so it can be said that the sun harms the moon by coming closer. Later the sun says: "If you do me no harm in the *coniunctio*, O Moon," then this and that will happen. So the *coniunctio* is apparently dangerous, for the sun does some harm to the moon and the moon can harm the sun. That could perhaps be avoided, but the closer those two lights get to each other, the greater the danger that they destroy each other instead of uniting, which comes from the fact we discussed before, namely that both sun and moon have a shadow.

Both have a dark and destructive side, and when they come close

together it is like two loving people where the more the love increases, the more doubts and distrust increase too; one is very often afraid, since if one opens one's heart, the other can do so much harm. If, for instance, a man shows his love for a woman, then he is exposed to her animus. If he does not love her, he just says it is her damned animus, but if he does, then he minds when she makes horrible animus remarks. The same thing holds good for the woman, for if she acknowledges her love for a man, the poison of his anima may hit her. Therefore there is always that trembling fear in approaching each other in the human love situation, mirrored symbolically in the process of sun and moon becoming one.

If we take the *coniunctio* on a purely inner level, it can be said that when the conscious and unconscious personalities approach each other, then there are two possibilities: either the unconscious swallows consciousness, when there is a psychosis, or the conscious destroys the unconscious with its theories, which means a conscious inflation. The latter generally also happens when there is a latent psychosis, and then people get out of it by saying the unconscious is "nothing but. . .," thereby crushing the unconscious and its living mystery, or pushing it aside. Many people leave the analytical process under such conditions. They get closer and closer to the unconscious and then a disagreeable realization creeps up; the work becomes difficult and the person puts an end to it, saying he knows all about it and it is "nothing but." In such a case the sun has destroyed the moon. If the unconscious overwhelms consciousness and there is a psychotic interval, the moon has destroyed the sun.

Always, when conscious and unconscious meet, instead of love there might be destruction. Here these two lights in the love letter try to avoid that. The sun says: "If you do not harm me, then I will help you," and the moon says the same thing. They do succeed in keeping the relationship right; the moon at a certain moment becomes very thin and is blotted out, but then they become exalted and they join the Order of the Old Men. Since the word *Seniores* is mentioned, this must be the Sheikhs.

This is a strange part and I have tried to interpret it. I cannot say I am sure of the interpretation, but there is a parallel text in which the Order of the Old Men is spoken of as the Order of Twenty-four Old Men, referring to the twenty-four old men of the Revelation of St. John, the twenty-four Elders of Israel who sit round the throne of God day and night. This would refer to the house of the day and

night and would mean that the sun and moon go through all the stages of the twenty-four hours.

The Order of the Elders in the Shi-ite sect, the mystical movement within Islam, has also to do with the secret tradition of Imâm. In each generation there is one Sheikh who is the spiritual initiator, known as the Imâm. When he carries the light of the Godhead he represents the incarnation of the Godhead and is the secret Guru, the teacher of those mystical Islamic sects. This occurs with the Shiites and the Druses and certain others, different sects having different classifications. They quarrel as to who should be the spiritual leader, but in all of them is the idea of the one spiritual leader, the enlightened one, in whom the light of the Godhead has been most incarnated.

As we have to do with an Arabic text, there might be something of that kind here too, which would also connect up with the other interpretations, namely a multiple aspect of the Wise Old Man in different stages or phases. Practically, that would mean that the archetype of the wise old man, an aspect of the Self, appears multiplied in specific connection with time, in the idea that one Imam comes in each special time or world period, or it compares with the twenty-four hours of day and night, which is also a time symbolism. The same idea reappears in Christian symbolism as Christ and the twelve apostles, who were attributed to the twelve months and twelve hours of the day.

I think it has to do with the simple fact that the realization of the Self, or the process of individuation, has only reached reality when it appears in each moment of this sidereal time. Many people first realize what the Self is intuitively, by reading a book, or by the interpretation of a dream, but that does not solve the question as to what they should do this morning and tomorrow evening, which means that it has not yet entered time. They have an intuitive connection with the Self and with the wisdom of the unconscious, but it has not yet entered into the time and space of their lives, their personal lives.

It is only real if at each moment at least theoretically, for one never actually reaches that stage one is constantly in connection with it, constantly expressing it and knowing what it is. Therefore it can be said that the Self has only become real when it is expressed in one's actions in space and time. Before it has reached that stage it is not quite real, but then it becomes a moving thing.

For instance, what is right for today may be wrong for tomorrow, which is why someone who has reached this stage of consciousness will be unpredictable and always act differently in the same situations. Today the thing is like this and the person will react in one way, and tomorrow the same situation will occur and the person will react differently. There are no more rules, for each moment is different, and therefore time acquires a creative quality; each time-moment is a creative possibility and there is no longer any repetition.

So when the sun and moon unite they begin at the same time to go along a cycle which has to do with time. That is symbolised in Eastern alchemy through the process of the circulation of the light; after having found the inner light it begins to rotate by itself. In *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, and in alchemy, this is called the *circulatio*, the rotation, and there are many different texts in alchemy in which it is said that the philosopher's stone has to circulate. Usually that is connected with time symbolism, for they say the philosopher's stone has to pass through winter, spring, summer, and autumn, or it has to go through all the hours of the day and night. It has to circulate through all the qualities and all the elements, or it has to go from earth to heaven and back again to the earth. There is always the idea that after having been produced, it begins to circulate.

Psychologically, this would mean that the Self begins to manifest in space and time, that it does not become something at a certain moment with afterwards a return to one's former way of living, but has an immediate effect upon the whole of life; then action and reaction are constantly in accordance with the Self, real and manifest in its *own* movements. The stone, or the new light, the Self, can itself move. Naturally we have to listen to it, but if we do, then it can move and can produce autonomous impulses.

Question: But are they necessarily the right impulses?

Dr. von Franz: There is no final judgement as to what is wrong and what is right. Many people will say it is wrong, and others will say it is right, and subjectively you will sometimes feel it is wrong or right.

If I could say something very personal, I would say that it is not a question of right or wrong, for if one is one with the Self one does not care any more. If it is wrong, then naturally one has to pay for

it, but the main thing is the connection, for separation is spiritual death. To be connected with the Self is spiritual life; if it tells you to do something which is looked upon as being wrong, then everyone will attack you and if you begin to think that it was perhaps wrong, then you can still say it was worth it because it was in connection with the Self.

I think if one does something out of a living connection with the Self, then paying the price is worth while, the price of being accused of wrongdoing and perhaps passing through the stages of thinking it is wrong. Subjectively, one never really feels it is wrong, but one must allow for people saying it is, and be tolerant. But if you are happy and feel alive, that is the one thing nobody can take away from you. If I say I am happy, what can anyone else say about it? If one is in harmony with the Self, there is a feeling of absolute happiness and peace and others can judge as much as they like with destructive intellectual theories; that doesn't do any harm, for feeling close to the Self becomes the indestructible thing. Naturally one loses that time and again, because it is too difficult to keep for a long time.

Then the love letter continues, the moon saying to the sun:

"The light of your light will flow into my light; it will be like a mixture of wine and water and I will stop my flow and afterwards I will be enclosed in your blackness like ink and then I shall coagulate."

There you have the admixture of two lights compared to the mixture of wine and water, a symbolism better known in the Christian tradition where when Mass is read wine and water are mixed, which depicts the human and the divine spiritual aspect of Christ, His humanity and His spiritual aspect.

Wine naturally belongs to the sun and water to the moon, for the moon is the ruler of all moist things, according to the antique way of looking at things. It is an idea of the *coniunctio* in a wide and general meaning, not only in the Christian tradition but also in the Arabic world, the mystical exalted connection of the spiritual substance with the Godhead. In the seemingly drunkard's poems of El Hafis, or El Roumi, water is generally the corruptible, the feminine, an aspect of the flow of life and of the unconscious. If those two come together, then the moon will stop its flow and coagulate and, according to the end of the text, that is something positive.





50.

Mercurius as the divine child symbol of a new, objective attitude beyond conflict is born in the "philosopher's egg" (the sealed alchemical vessel). As product of the union of opposites, consciousness and the unconscious, he stands on the sun and moon. The birds indicate the spiritual (psychic) nature of the process; the rays of the sun signify the importance of heat (emotion).

So it means that up to the time of the *coniunctio* the moon flowed, which would have to do with the constantly waxing and waning of the moon, the constant flux, but it also produces the dew, according to their theory, and moisture, and naturally also menstruation in women and the flow of the feminine. But since menstruation stops when the child is generated, there is the idea that the flow is stopped when the two lights have united and the new light is born.

Apparently something corruptible and nasty, which has to do with the changeable nature of the feminine, stops and comes to an end. That refers directly and immediately to the whole alchemical process, which as you know is the production of the philosopher's

stone, an object of hard substance, something which does not flow and is in alchemy the highest symbol of the Divinity.

It is a strange thing, if we look at it naively, that in alchemy the end product is something which in the order of nature we look upon as very low, namely a stone, something whose quality is just to be there. A stone neither eats nor drinks nor sleeps, it just remains there for all eternity. If you kick it, then it stays where you kicked it and does not move. But in alchemy this despised thing is the symbol of the goal. We have to go deep into the mystical language of the East and of alchemy and of certain other Christian mystiques to get an idea of what this means.

If through fighting and meeting the unconscious one has suffered long enough, a kind of objective personality is established; a nucleus forms in the person which is at peace, quiet even in the midst of the greatest life storms, intensely alive but without action and without participation in the conflict. That peace of mind often comes to people when they have suffered long enough: one day something breaks and the face acquires a quiet expression, for something has been born which remains in the centre, outside or beyond the conflict, which does not go on any more as it did.

Naturally, two minutes later it begins again, for the conflict has not been solved, but the experience that one thing is just quietly beyond the conflict remains, and from then on the process becomes different. People no longer search, they know the thing exists, they have experienced it for a moment. Thereafter the opus has a goal, that of finding this moment again and slowly being able to keep it, so that it becomes something constant.

In all the struggles of life there is always that one thing which is beyond the struggle; as Dr. Jung describes it so beautifully in his comment on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, it is as though you were standing on the mountain above the thunderstorm. One sees the black clouds and the lightning and the falling rain, but something in one is above it all and one can just look at it. In one way you are in it too, but in another way you are out of it. On a humbler or more minor scale, you have reached it if in a storm of despair or in a destructive dissolving attack of a conflict you can keep a sense of humour for a second or perhaps you are swept away once more by a negative animus, and then suddenly say to yourself that you have heard that kind of talk before.

You may not be able to get out of your destructive animus, it may

still be too strong, but something in you smiles and says it has heard that silly song before; you would like to laugh at yourself, but pride will not allow that, and you go on with the negative animus and he gets you again. Those are the divine moments when something is clear and moving beyond the opposites and the suffering. Usually they are only brief moments, but if you continue working on yourself long enough, the stone slowly grows and becomes more and more the solid nucleus of the personality which no longer participates in the ape-circus of life.

That is probably what is meant here: the moon, who is the ruler of life as a gorilla-circus, stops its flux and something appears that is eternal and beyond the conflict. The moon "coagulates," the life process is seen as something eternal outside of life. Life itself coagulates and steps out of its own rhythm, which is probably the preparation for death, since death is the natural end of life, the fruit which grows out of life: the lived life creates the eternal attitude which transcends death.

So the moon says, "When we have entered the house of love, my body will coagulate in my eclipse," and the sun answers:

"If you do this and do me no harm, my body will return [probably back to its original form] and I will give you the virtue of penetration, and you will be powerful or victorious in the battle of fire, of liquefaction and purgation, and you will go on without diminishing or darkness, and will not have any conflict for you will not be rebellious."

So the sun only confirms what the moon says and I think from what I said before that this is clear: now the moon, even in the fight of the fire which means even in the destructive attacks of emotions from within and without remains firm and beyond them, and is no longer rebellious against consciousness. Unconscious and conscious are at peace with each other.

"Blessed is he who thinks about what I say and my dignity will not be withdrawn from him and the lion will not fail or become cheap, weakened by the flesh."

The lion is a well-known symbol of the solstice of the sun, when the sun is at its highest, speaking astrologically, but it is also a symbol of resurrection. We had it, you will remember, in our first Greek text, where lion generates lion. I gave you the drawing of the double lions, and you will remember what I then said about the lion, that it is also a symbol of passionate devouring, the power drive, not only in the narrow sense of the word, but generally the

desire to possess. The outstretched paws and wide open jaw illustrate the lion, the powerful, passionate hot nature. It stands for resurrection, but also can be weakened by the flesh.

This is an allusion to the shadow of the moon, namely, that if power and passion get stuck on the concrete level, wanting this or that thing and unable to sacrifice that desire, then that same passionate libido which is the basis of the process of individuation is weakened, it becomes destructive and destroys itself.

"If you have followed me," the sun then says to the moon, "then I will not keep from you the growing of the lead." The idea is that lead, which we discussed in an earlier lecture, is the basic material, the material of passion, and is growing now by itself. That refers to a stage in alchemy which is often described as growth. For instance, they say the first part is hard work, it is either washing linen, or washing sand, or cooking things, or killing the lion, or bringing forth the *coniunctio*, but afterwards, at a certain moment, it becomes what they even describe as child's play, and one only has to water the garden, or to play about. No effort need be made, for from now on the thing grows by itself; one need only attend to it and watch it, without all the painful efforts one made before. That is the *augmentum plumbi*, as it is called here.

It is like the growth of a child in the mother while the child grows within her, she can only see to it that she herself is healthy and do as little as possible. That is a simile the alchemists often use, that after one has transcended the stage of conflict there comes the stage where one is just like a pregnant woman waiting for the birth of her child, a stage where one need not think about doing the right thing or not. The Chinese would call it doing nothing, just letting things happen; giving constant, loving attention to the process is all that is now needed.

Then the text says:

"My light will fade and my beauty will be extinguished and they will take from the minerals of my pure body and from the fatness of the purified lead in the harmony of their weight, and without goat's blood, and a difference can be made between what is true and what is false."

Goat's blood, or he-goat's blood, really, was supposed to have a corrosive effect upon everything and allegorically was interpreted in late antiquity as sensuality. The blood of the he-goat is the essence of sensuality, of lasciviousness, the sensual drive which is very obvious and destroys everything. The strong, sexual drive destroys

everything except the adamant. An old legend says the adamant is the one precious stone which cannot be dissolved by goat's blood, and therefore is that firmness of the personality which resists the impulse of sensuality.

Here there is the same symbolism, namely the *coniunctio* of the substances of equal weight. That would refer to a state of psychological balance where there is no goat's blood, that is, where sensuality does not any more sweep away the personality. Then one is capable of distinguishing the true from the false; there arises or grows within the personality what one could call the instinct of truth.

In general, life is so complicated that if one has to think about things one is always too late. I am hopeless in that respect. If someone telephones me and says they must see me that evening, or they need an hour tomorrow, I am not quick enough in deciding whether to say Yes or No, or to find an excuse by saying I am not free. My nature sweeps me away, my inferior function; I say Yes, and afterwards am caught in it, it is all wrong. And then I say: "Confound it all, I was too slow again." I should have said No, but the instinct of truth did not work strongly enough. The instinct of truth was there, something kept telling me to say No, but reflection and the inferior function came in and once more I was too slow. Then comes a bad dream which gives me a good blow on the head and I wonder if I will ever get out of that stage and be quick enough not always to get caught in the same trap.

There is a speeding up of this possibility by the development of the instinct of truth, that is, when the Self is so present and so strong that the instinct of truth gets through quickly, like a radio telegram, and one reacts rightly without knowing why, it flows through one and one does the right thing. One says Yes, or No, sometimes doing one thing and sometimes the other, and can carry on without intermission, because consciousness with its reflection is no longer a disturbance. That is the action of the Self becoming immediate, and only the Self can accomplish this. On a higher level, it is the same thing as being completely natural and instinctive, when one can discern between the false and the true. That is why the Holy Ghost has also been called by certain theologians the instinct of truth, which is a very good description.



51.

The "instinct of truth" is seen by some theologians as an aspect of the Holy Ghost, here shown descending in the form of cloven tongues.

Psychologically, the immediate awareness of what is right and true for the personality ("the truth without reflection" von Franz) indicates a connection with the Self; in alchemical language it is the philosopher's stone.

The text goes on:

"I am the hard, dry iron and the strong ferment, everything good comes through me and the light of the secret of secrets is generated by me and

nothing can affect my actions. What has light is created in the darkness of the light. But when it reaches its perfection then it recovers from its illnesses and weakness and then will appear this great flux of the head and the tail."

I think the first part is clear. It refers to the generation of a new light, a third thing born or generated in the *coniunctio*. It is a new light born in the darkness, and then all the neurotic symptoms and illness and weakness go; the new thing appears, now called *illud magnum fluxum capitis et caudae*.

There one must remember the Ouroboros, the tail eater, where the opposites are one: the head is at one end and the tail at the other. They are one but have an opposite aspect and when the head and the tail, the opposites, meet, there a flow is born, which is what the alchemists mean by the mystical or divine water, which I described as the meaningful flux of life. With the help of the instinct of truth, life goes on as a meaningful flow, as a manifestation of the Self. That is the result of the *coniunctio* in this case. In many other cases it is described as the philosopher's stone, but as many texts also say, the water of life and the stone are one.

It is a very great paradox that liquid the unformed water of life and the stone the most solid and dead thing are, according to the alchemists, one and the same thing. That refers to those two aspects of the realization of the Self: something firm is born, beyond the ups and downs of life, and at the same time is born something very living which takes part in the flow of life, without the inhibitions or restrictions of consciousness.

I have now used up all the time we were to devote to our Arabic texts and next time we shall move on to European alchemy. I am sorry to have given you only one Arabic text, but I think this Shi-ite alchemist, Senior, was one of the very great men in alchemy.

Question: You spoke of the instinct of truth. What do you mean by that?

Dr. von Franz: It is what gives me the truth without reflection; something within me knows the truth by my immediate reaction without my thinking about it, or even expressing it. The instinct of truth, for instance, is something very similar to telepathic knowledge. Those are words a name for something. Telepathic in Greek simply means "feeling from afar," which does not explain anything for telepathy is a mystery, we do not know what it is.

If, for instance, somebody proposes that you take part in some



52.

The *coniunctio* as fountain, symbol for the meaningful flow of life.

business which seems quite all right and clean and straightforward and, from outer appearances, you cannot see anything wrong with it, you would naturally say, "Yes, all right, I will participate in that." Then something within you says, "No, don't do it," and *après le coup* you discover that all the same there was something unclean or wrong about it. You couldn't know that, but "it" knew it, something smelled a rat.

That would be the instinct of truth. Instinct knew something you didn't. Your unconscious, or your instinctive personality, knew it. In this case I do not mean the religious truth of a doctrine, I mean the truth of the moment. For instance, if someone offers you some good business which is really a fraud, the instinct of truth would know that. Or it is the truth of a certain situation, or of what is said to you. Somebody may tell you a long story and you just feel it isn't true, though you cannot say what is wrong about it. Someone may



tell you of a marriage problem and you have the feeling something is not true about it, though you don't know what. In another case, you have the immediate feeling you are being told the truth.

Now if you judge instinctively, then it is something inside you which decides, and if that proves to operate consistently well, then you can decide to trust that inner thing. That would be a discernment of truth, but on an instinctive level which has nothing to do with the head.

Question: How does that differ from intuition?

Dr. von Franz: Intuition can be 50% right and 50% wrong. Jung uses a marvellous simile about intuitive people. He says they either hit the nail on the head, hit the bull's eye without any reflection, or shoot away into the woods twenty kilometres on the other side. That is why they should develop another function, because they can sometimes just look at the situation and know all about it, but sometimes they are completely wrong.

It is better not to trust intuition all the time, for it may be blurred by projection. If the intuitive is not involved with the shadow, or the animus or anima, he has a fantastic way of hitting the mark. But if the shadow or animus or anima comes in, if projection gets in, then the same intuitive can still swear he knows the thing is so-and-so, for he thinks he can trust his intuition, but it is all objectively wrong he is shooting into the woods.

So intuition is a 50-50 business; it is a function, and like all functions is only sometimes right. But the instinctive truth is a manifestation of the Self and has nothing to do with a function. It is something which operates in every human being, a discreetly quick word which the Self whispers in your ear and which generally you are too slow to catch or you, yourself, talk too much and then "it" cannot be heard.



53.

Union of opposites as hermaphrodite.

## Lecture 7 Aurora Consurgens

We have now given all the time we can spare to Arabic alchemy and will dedicate the last three lectures to European alchemy. I have three propositions to make and will ask you to vote on them:

1. The text of the "Aurora consurgens," about which I wrote in the third volume of the German edition of *Mysterium Coniunctionis* but which has been said to be so complicated and difficult that it needs an introduction.
2. Part of a text by Petrus Bonus, an Italian of the 14th century, who gives a typical picture of medieval alchemy.
3. A combination of the two.

It has also been suggested that I take a text by Paracelsus, but I have avoided this writer because of the amount of specific explanation required, on account of the many strange words he uses. One has to dig one's way into Paracelsus, as one must with Jakob Boehme, and therefore I do not think much would be obtained by a short excerpt.

If you would like a text which, in my opinion, was written from an immediate religious experience of the unconscious, I would advise the "Aurora consurgens." But if you would prefer an introduction into the ways and thought, and the more average style, of medieval European alchemy, then I would say vote for Petrus Bonus, because the "Aurora consurgens" is not a typical text, but unique and out of any kind of order. If you choose the third possibility, a combination of the two, I would give you a short introduction on Petrus Bonus and then go on to the "Aurora consurgens." Chronologically that would be wrong, but I would prefer to do it that way.

[A vote was taken and the "Aurora consurgens" chosen.]

I am very happy about this decision because I think of the three possibilities this is the most exciting.

The words "Aurora consurgens" stand for "rising dawn" (*Aurora*, dawn; *consurgens*, rising). The discovery of this text has been in the nature of a detective story. In an old collection of books

Dr. Jung came across the text of "Aurora consurgens, Part II," a rather dry kind of chemical work, with at the beginning a brief note stating that it was only the second part of the text and that the first part was omitted by the printer because it was blasphemous.

This aroused Jung's curiosity and he spent some time trying to track it down. Finally he discovered that in the monastery on the island of Reichenau, on the Lake of Constance, there had been such a manuscript which was now in the Central Library in Zürich. It is incomplete and begins in the middle of the text we have now published. Dr. Jung found that the text was not readable in that form, since it was written in 15th century Latin stenography, and he therefore handed it over to me.

After digging my way into it, I discovered there was a complete manuscript in Paris, another in Bologna, and a third in Venice, so we were able slowly to collect several versions and where unclear to complete one text from the other. In most manuscripts the text was ascribed to St. Thomas of Aquinas, which I did not consider for one moment, thinking that it was usual to put the name of a famous man onto such a treatise and that it might easily have been written by someone else. That was also the usual reaction of other scholars.

It is quite an amazing text, consisting of a mosaic a puzzle of quotations from the Bible and a few early alchemical writings. If regarded as a puzzle which someone might make for his own amusement, then it would be extremely uninteresting, and it is possible that some who have read it superficially have accepted it in this way. But as you will soon see, it is impossible to explain this phenomenon that way, because of the tremendous excitement and emotion contained in the text.

The next conclusion was that it was a schizophrenic product it sounds rather like one and that is much nearer the truth. However, I do not think it is quite that, although it was probably written by someone overwhelmed by the unconscious. The classic situation of someone in this condition is described as a psychotic episode, but in the opinion of Dr. Jung, given as his medical diagnosis, it would represent either the outbreak of a psychosis, or a phase in a manic depressive psychosis, or the description of an abnormal situation written by a normal person who at that particular time was overwhelmed by the unconscious.

I am inclined to agree with the third theory, though from the document it is not possible to come to a definite conclusion. I have

interpreted it symbolically, like a dream, and have concluded that it is the text of a dying person. The whole symbolism and problem circles round and is concentrated on the problem of death, and at the end there is a description of the mystical marriage, or love experience, rendered in a form which seems to have to do with the experiences many dying people are known to have, resulting in the tradition that death is a kind of mystical marriage with the other half of the personality.

Having translated, studied, and interpreted the text thus far, Dr. Jung suddenly decided we should publish this unique document. He asked me if I would be kind enough to write a brief, historical introduction the rest was finished giving the dates and saying who might be the author, and so on.

I started with the assumption that although the text had been ascribed to St. Thomas of Aquinas, naturally there was no question of that. I intended to continue by saying that it belonged to the 13th century. But then I thought that since I knew nothing but quite superficial things about St. Thomas of Aquinas, why should I write that!

So, just out of conscientiousness, I decided to look into other writings of his and, in order to be rather more on the safe side, to read a biography, which however led me to the unsafe side, for if you read such a biography you will find that at the end of his life, a few weeks before his death, St. Thomas suffered from a very strange alteration of his personality. He had for long overworked and through that, and for certain other psychological reasons which I would like to discuss in detail later, he began to have strange states of absent-mindedness. For instance, once when reading Mass in public in Naples, he suddenly, although a Cardinal was present, stopped in the middle and remained in a kind of ecstatic, absentminded state for twenty minutes until someone shook him and asked what was the matter, at which point he came to and excused himself.

It has generally been said that that was the beginning of his illness, while some say that as well as a rational side, he must have had a mystical streak in his personality, which broke through from time to time in these strange fits of absent-mindedness. Such conditions were more frequent in his later years he died at the age of 49 or 51, we don't know for sure because we don't know exactly when he was born and then something happened which has never

been explained. He used to get up very early every morning and read Mass to himself in the chapel of whatever monastery he was visiting, for he travelled all the time. He had a friend, Reginald of Piperno, a very humble monk, who was his follower and personal servant, a man who worshipped him and is one of the main biographical sources.

This monk relates that one morning, as usual, St. Thomas read Mass and when he returned he was quite white. As the Latin report of Reginald literally says: "I thought he had become crazy." He went to his desk and pushed aside the pen with which he was writing his Summa, the chapter about penitence; he pushed away his writing utensils and just sat there the whole day in a kind of catatonic state with his head in his hands. Reginald of Piperno asked him why he was not writing and he only replied: "I cannot." That continued for several days. Reginald again went to him and asked why he was not writing and got the same answer: "*Non possum*" "I can't." About five days later they tried again to find out what was happening to him, for he did nothing all day, neither worked nor preached, but just sat around looking crazy, and he said that he could not write for everything he had written seemed to him to be like straw (*palea sunt*).

In later biographies, written by people who were not present, the words "in comparison with the magnificent visions I have had" have been added, but those words are not in the original sources.

Reginald of Piperno became very upset about the condition of St. Thomas and, because he had always had conversations with a cousin, an Italian countess, he took St. Thomas to her thinking there he might open up and say what had happened. But the countess said: "My God, what has happened to Father Thomas, he seems to be crazy," for she too had the same impression. St. Thomas himself did not utter a word during the whole of teatime. But then, slowly, he returned to his former state of mind, to the extent that he could again take part in Church politics and such things, and he agreed to attend a Church congress in Milan, or in southern France.

He went there on a donkey. He was a fat, stout man at that time and on the way he hit his head against the branch of a tree and fell. It was a very hot summer day and he just got up and did not say much about the accident. That night they stayed in a little monastery Santa Maria di Fossa Nuova and there in the door-

way he suddenly felt ill again and became giddy and, touching the doorpost, said: "This is my death coming, I shall not come out of this." Then he went to bed.

The monks of Santa Maria di Fossa Nuova, thinking they had caught someone marvellous, the famous Father Thomas, bothered him to give a seminar in spite of the dreadful state he was in. Being obliged to follow his Christian obligations, with his last strength he tried to do this and, according to the oldest traditions though this too was omitted in later reports he gave a seminar on the Song of Solomon of all things! In the midst of it, when he interpreted the words, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field," he died.

Notes of this seminar have never been found and already at the time of his canonization, in 1312, this last episode is more or less skipped; nobody showed any interest in his last words, though usually the last words of a saint play a great role in his biography. However, in this case everything was smoothed over with the oil of roses! You will not find this in an official biography, but in the *Acta Bollandiana*, the original Latin sources and reports of the oldest witnesses of the process of canonization.

After reading the above, I conceived the terrible suspicion that the "Aurora consurgens" might indeed have originated in the notes of St. Thomas's last seminar. As you will see, the text is a paraphrase of the Song of Solomon and the last chapter ends exactly at the same place, which according to tradition is where Father Thomas died.

I was quite anxious about my discovery, for I thought I would make myself very unpopular if I said what I had found. But after struggling with my own vanity and the feeling that I should make myself look ridiculous by saying such things, I published the book as it now stands, stating that there was no proof, but that the evidence was rather in favour of than against my theory. Up to the present, I have met with *no* reaction from Church people, neither positive nor negative. The official reaction to what I said in the book has so far been absolute silence; not a single specialist has published an article saying that it is all rubbish, and that the writer does not even know the ABC of St. Thomas's life, and so on.

Of course I took a great deal of care to establish my statements, as far as I could, but nobody has either accepted or rejected what I wrote, there has been nothing but an awkward silence. When the

subject is discussed in the Press, it is always in connection with Dr. Jung's first two volumes of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*; then it is said that the third volume, mine, is a very interesting document and my last chapter, in which I speak of the things I am now telling you, is simply ignored. I am still waiting to see what will happen it seems to be a delayed time bomb! Also, I loaded the book with so many learned footnotes that that rather covers up, and most people seem to be too lazy to read to the end. I did that on purpose. It was like quietly and discreetly putting a bomb in the Vatican!

There is one exception: a Dominican Father and teacher of theology has reacted very positively. He is a specialist on St. Thomas and he said that it made complete sense to him, that there was nothing that could not be accepted in such a hypothesis if one were broad-minded.

Question: You have no way of knowing whether the former Pope ever saw it?

Dr. von Franz: No, I don't think he ever did. I did think of sending him a copy with a dedication, but did not do so. I had to write to him for permission to use the Vatican Library, addressing my letter "*a la sua Sanctità*" to His Holiness and I was very much impressed by having to address him like that, but that was a pure formality.

Question: He was acquainted with the writings of Jung, wasn't he, and was friendly to him? In "The Symbolic Life" Jung says he had the Pope's blessing.

Dr. von Franz: That is rather indirect. I can only tell you that there has been a lot of talk and that Dr. Jung has not told me anything about this. The late Pope certainly had a positive attitude to psychology in general; he stated in one of his introductions to a Congress of Psychology in Rome that he recommended the study of psychology, and among the different psychologies, the Freudian and others, he seems to have had rather a leaning towards Jungian psychology.

I would rather like now to give a short translation of some parts of the text. I shall not be able to do it all for it amounts to some fifty pages, but I can extract the most important parts.

The first five chapters are all concerned with the apparition of a female figure called the Wisdom of God. In the Books of Wisdom



54.

Sapia Sophia (Sophia, the Wisdom of God) as mother of the wise.

which are all late material in the Old Testament and influenced by Gnostic thought and Gnosticism, from about the 2nd century B.C. till the 1st century A.D. in those various writings, like the Proverbs, there is a personification of the Wisdom of God who appears as a feminine figure. She was with God and played before him before the world and mankind were created. This Wisdom of God is mixed up with the Gnostic idea of the Sophia.

This female personification was an awkward figure for Christian theologians. What is she? In the late writings of the Old Testament there appears a kind of bride or wife of God there is certainly a female figure but who was she? The usual medieval attitude was that she was identical with the Holy Ghost, just a feminine aspect, and wherever the Wisdom of God was mentioned one should really read the Holy Ghost, but some saw her as the soul of Christ *anima Christi* who already existed before Christ incarnated, and in that way was identical with the form of Christ as the eternal word, the Logos, with God from all time, and before his incarnation as Jesus





55.

God the Father as Logos creating the zodiac. "The Logos would represent the structural element of the unconscious structure and meanwhile in the feminine qualification there is more the idea of its pictorial, emotional manifestation." von Franz.

Christ, but here the Wisdom of God has been looked on as being the same thing, and to explain the femininity the expression "the soul of Christ" is used the *anima Christi*.

The third explanation, which to my mind is the most interesting, is that she represents the sum of all archetypes this is medieval language, I am not projecting Jungian words the *archetypi*, or the eternal ideas in God's mind when He created the world. They explain it like this: when God created the world, like a good architect He first conceived a plan in which everything trees, animals, insects, and so on was present as an idea. Before there were thousands of bears in this world, there was the idea of a bear in God's mind, and before there were millions of oak trees, there was the idea of an oak tree.

That idea of an oak tree in God's mind would be the *archetypos* or *rationes aeternae* or *ideae*, the eternal plans or ideas. God conceived the world and then cast His idea into matter and created the real world. If we translate this into psychological language it would mean that the Wisdom of God represents the collective unconscious, the sum of all the original idea patterns of reality but that would be the feminine side of the Godhead.

Question: How is this to be reconciled with the idea that the word, the idea, the Logos, is connected with the masculine while the feminine is connected with matter, materialization? A differentiation between the archetype and the archetypal image should surely be made here.

Dr. von Franz: I do not think that comes in yet. I would say that in the Logos idea the accent is on the oneness and the spiritual order, and in the feminine parallel the accent is on the multiplied and more imaged type. That is the nuance. The archetypal image does not come in yet, that is really a later stage. Speaking in medieval scholastic terms, that would be the *unus mundus*, a purely spiritual existence that has not yet become an image in anybody's mind, save that of God.

I would rather make this distinction: some people experience and are most impressed by the unconscious through its spiritual orderedness, for instance in the meaning of a dream and that, by the way, would be more the thinking type. Though I interpret a good many dreams a day with different people, I am always overwhelmed by the marvellous structure of the dream. There is an exposition, and then in a cunning way the pictures are mixed, and the meaning becomes clear. Because I am a thinking type, I admire the thinking in the unconscious, the wonderful structure of it.

If I were more a feeling type, perhaps artistically inclined, then, as I often see in my analysands, I would be more impressed by the beauty of a dream picture, by the feeling impressiveness of one dream element. When I say: "Isn't that dream structured wonderfully?" an analysand may say, "Yes, yes," but be more impressed by the vivid image or the impressive emotional tone. A more rational Logos type is impressed by the wonderful structure of something which one might expect to be completely irrational. The logic of a dream is something which always amazes me, the fantastic logic in those series of images.

I would therefore say that the Logos would represent the structural element of the unconscious structure and meaning while in the feminine qualification there is more the idea of its pictorial, emotional manifestation. I would rather compare them to each other in that way. But both mean the unconscious in our terms, and even those scholastic authors say it is just a manner of speaking it can be called the Sophia, or it can be called the Logos, for they are one and the same thing, or two aspects of the same

thing to them, and we could agree completely with this kind of teaching.

The third theory, which existed already in the Middle Ages, comes from the Arabs. Avicenna the famous Arabic philosopher Ibn Sina, who was known in European literature as Avicenna developed an Aristotelian idea about the so-called *nous poiétikos*, which is the following: Within the cosmic reality of the world is a creative intelligence which exists in things themselves; it exists in the cosmos, it is created by God. God created the world and in it He created a creative spirit or, as generally interpreted, a creative intelligence which is responsible for the meaningfulness of cosmic events. This meaningfulness the fact that the cosmos is neither chaos nor an engine which just continues in accordance with causal laws, but is also a mystery in which meaningful synchronicities take place was attributed to the *nous poiétikos*.

St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas, his pupil, dug up the writings of Ibn Sina and got into great difficulties because they were absolutely fascinated by the idea of the meaningfulness of the cosmos, the notion that the cosmos has an intelligence, and they did not know how to reconcile it with their Christian ideas. St. Albert was an intuitive and a great genius, but not a very accurate thinker, and he just remarked happily that that was something like the Holy Ghost. St. Thomas, who was a thinking type, could not completely swallow that and he therefore cut the *nous* into two, saying that in part the *nous poiétikos* was not in the cosmos but in the human mind, of which it was the basis in modern terms we would call it the basis of the mystery of consciousness and the other half, St. Thomas said, was simply the Wisdom of God.

Thus he cut the Islamic concept into two parts, putting one into man and the other into the Wisdom of God. That is very interesting, for originally the intelligence, the meaningfulness or spiritual order, of the world was projected outside. Medieval people, like primitives, did not realize that we see the order through our minds. Causality is not something which exists, it is simply the way in which we explain the sequence of events, a philosophical category. The same thing applies to synchronicity, but the connection of the sequence of events in themselves is not known to us.

People in medieval times still thought that causality, etc., existed objectively in the outer world and that therefore the outer world had an intelligence, which was not too stupid an idea. The idea of

the intelligence of the world struck them very much and through it they were able to understand why God had created the world and its meaningful connections. Then St. Thomas introjected, or withdrew, this projection and realized that, in part, it is a question of our own mental operations for there is no meaningfulness unless we see it and if nobody can describe causality then it does not exist. Both depend on the mind which observes and can describe.

Thus St. Thomas took the modern step of introjecting the theories of natural science, realizing that the terms we use come from our own minds. Being a great thinker, he went even further and asked why our own minds produced such ideas as meaningful connections and this he attributed to the *nous poiétikos*. This is the state of consciousness of the man who perhaps wrote the text we are now considering.

The text continues:

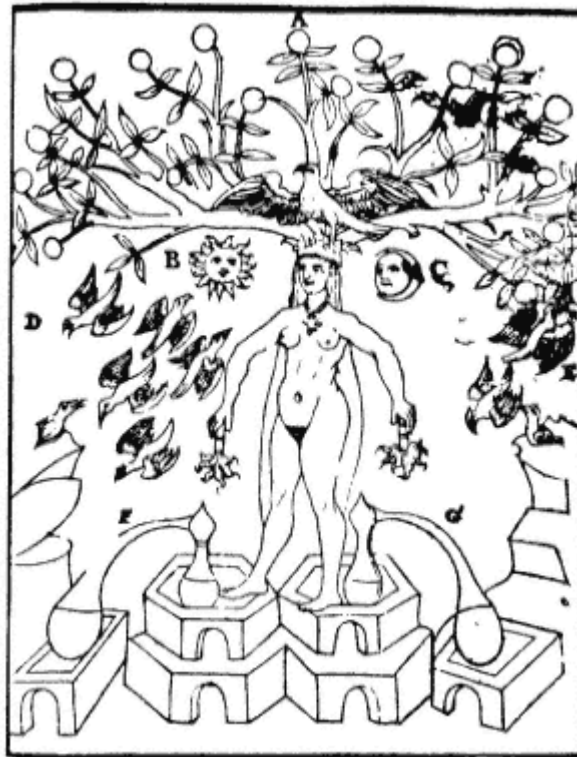
All good things came to me through her, the Wisdom of the South [literally, the south wind], which complains in the streets, calling to the people, and which speaks at the entrance to the town: "Come to me and be illuminated and your operations will not be ashamed. All you people who want me shall be filled with my riches."

Come, my sons, and listen, for I will teach you the Wisdom of God, who is wise and who understands that about which Alphidius says that adult people and children pass it in the street, that it is stamped into the dung every day by the animals there, and of which Senior says nothing is outwardly more despised and nothing in nature more precious and God has not given it to be bought with money.

She, the Wisdom, is that which Solomon says one should use as a light and he placed it above all beauty and all salvation, for even the value of gems and diamonds was not comparable to her value. Gold in comparison with her is as sand, and silver in comparison with her like clay. That is very true, because to get her is more important than the purest gold and silver. Her fruits are more precious than the riches of the whole world and everything you may want cannot be compared with her.

Long life and health are in her right hand and glory and immense riches in her left. Her ways are beautiful and praiseworthy works and neither despicable nor bad, and her paths are measured and not hasty, but connected with persistent continuous hard work. She is the tree of life for everybody who understands her and a light which is never extinguished.

Blessed are those who have understood her because the Wisdom of God will never pass away, to which Alphidius testifies when he says that he who has once found this Wisdom will have legitimate eternal nourishment from her. Hermes and the other philosophers say that if a man had this knowledge [here the word knowledge is used instead of wisdom] for a thousand years and had to nourish seven thousand people daily, he would



56.

The Wisdom as virgin and tree of life.

still have enough, and Senior says that such a man is as rich as the man who possesses the philosopher's stone from which you can get, and so give, fire to whomever you wish. [You know that if you have a fire stone then you can always reproduce fire without any loss.]

Aristotle says the same thing in the second book, "About the Soul," where he writes that there are limits to the size and growth of every natural thing but the fire can grow eternally if given further nourishment. Blessed are the people who find this science [now he uses the word science instead of wisdom, but he means the same thing] and to whom the intelligence of Saturn flows. Think of her in all thy ways and she herself will lead you.

Senior says only the wise and the intellectual, and the man who thinks accurately and the inventive man, can understand her, and only after their spirit has been clarified from the book of the aggregation. Because then the mind of such a person begins to flow and follow its desire [here, for desire, the word concupiscence is used, a very shocking word for a medieval monk]. Blessed are those who think upon my words.

And Solomon said: "My child, hang her round your neck and write her

on the tablets of your heart and you will find." Say to the Wisdom you are my sister and call her your friend. To think about her is a subtle perfection which completely follows nature and brings wisdom to perfection. [Suddenly the text shifts and man has to add perfection to wisdom, the Wisdom of God. She is the most perfect thing and in spite of that man has to add wisdom to her.]

Those who stay awake for her day and night will soon be secure. She is very clear for those who have insight and she never fades and passes away. She seems easy to those who know of her, for she herself goes around and seeks the one worthy of her. She goes towards him full of pleasure and meets him in each providence, because her beginning is the truest nature from which no deceit comes.

Notice the elated poetical language and the many allusions to different biblical quotations. If you know your Bible well, a bell will constantly ring in your ears. The quotations are chiefly from the Vulgate and therefore, naturally, formulated a little bit differently than in the English Bible.

At first one is rather puzzled because there is a paraphrase of the words of the Wisdom of God. She appears in the streets, she calls for men. That is taken from the Bible, as you know. It is principally in Jesus Sirach and the Proverbs. Then if you listen carefully you notice something very strange. Namely, first there is the Wisdom of God as a feminine being who calls people towards her saying: "Come and listen to me." And then the thought shifts, and it says: "This is the thing which is trodden upon in the streets, it is despised by everybody."

That is an alchemical quotation and refers in the original text to the philosopher's stone. So whoever knows this quotation knows that the writer from the very beginning of his text identifies the Wisdom of God with the philosopher's stone, that to him they are one and the same thing. He must have had an experience about which he felt that what had entered him and got him was what the alchemists call the philosopher's stone.

He goes on to quote a few more alchemists, Senior, etc., about her being very precious but despised by ordinary people, and there is a long comparison to show how much more precious she is than worldly goods. Then there comes a nonbiblical allusion to the fact that one has to work a very long time to find her, and the fact that she is a kind of eternal nourishment, or something like fire which can light other fires, and then suddenly it says that to find her only one thing is needed, namely a subtle perception of the true nature.

That is followed by an even more striking quotation from our

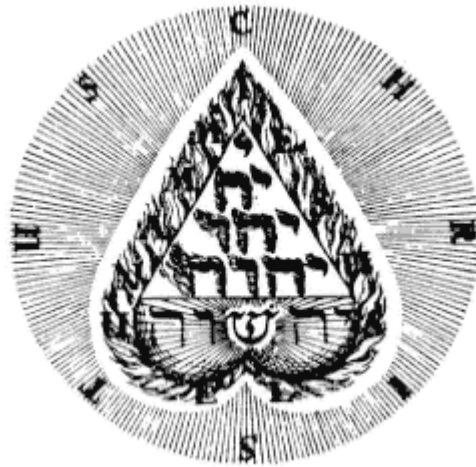
friend Senior: "If you do that, then your mind will begin to flow and follow its concupiscence." Concupiscence, in medieval scholastic language, means the ordinary appetites sexual desires, desire for food, and so on, but mainly sexual desire, the plain, vulgar basis of higher love. St. Thomas himself had a theory of love, namely that it always began with concupiscence and had to be sublimated into the love of God.

Either we cannot understand this text at all and just say that it is beyond us, or we must look at it like a dream. We can take it as though it were a document from the unconscious, in which case its meaning becomes clear: the collective unconscious has broken into that man's mind and has invaded it, in the form of a feminine personification which he felt to be the Wisdom of God you will see later that he thinks the Wisdom of God and God are one. A feminine aspect of God has overwhelmed him, and he says you get at this by observing nature in a subtle way and by following your own inner desire, that is, it is a subtle truth which anyone who has the simplicity of mind to follow his own desire can find. If it means anything, it means an overwhelming experience of the unconscious within the form of a feminine personification.

From the feeling of the text, I think, and I hope you will agree with me, that this is not an invention of the intellect. It feels to me rather as though it had been written by someone who was first overwhelmed by such an experience, and afterwards tried to express it by those biblical and alchemical quotations. Such a thing can be observed, for instance, in the outbreak of a psychosis.

One of the most destructive syndromes in a psychotic interval occurs when people are overwhelmed by emotional or hallucinatory experiences and cannot express them. As soon as they are able to tell someone, they are no longer completely psychotic, then the first stage is over. If they can say something about it, and can describe it even in a stammering way or symbolically, if they can get it out in some form then they are no longer lost and the healing process is already underway.

The worst is when the thing is so overwhelming that they simply turn white and sink into bed and become catatonic. One knows they are going through the most tremendous inner experiences, but outwardly they lie in bed like a piece of wood and refuse nourishment. When they get excited and begin to stammer and speak of what they have seen, that is already an improvement for then they have found a mode of expression.



57.

Flaming, inverted heart, symbolising religious devotion and transcendent wisdom, by Jakob Boehme.

It is therefore extremely important, if you have to reckon with such a possibility, that you treat such people as though they had a latent psychosis and provide them with a tremendous amount of symbolic knowledge. Into such people, if you suspect a possible outbreak or invasion of the collective unconscious, you must force as much symbolic knowledge as you can, making them read Jakob Boehme and alchemical texts and mythology as much as possible. They will not know why and might even think it rather strange, but then if the overwhelming experience comes they can perhaps express it, or at least describe it. If you can do that well enough, that is, prepare the ground by symbolic understanding ahead of time, even though they do not know its use, then when the experience comes they have a net in which to catch and re-express it.

Dr. Jung told me that he once had a case of a very rational, narrow-minded woman doctor, a foreign medical doctor who had studied psychiatry and who wanted to have a training analysis. He at once recognized that she had a latent psychosis and that the situation was pretty dangerous. Instead of giving her an ordinary training analysis, he rammed into her as much symbolic knowledge as he could: the history of religion, mythology, as much alchemy as he knew then, and so on. Due to her strong transference she



swallowed all this but did not quite see what it had to do with her.

Then she went back to her own country and suddenly the thing exploded and she jumped out the window of the hospital where she was working. She only broke both legs but when brought back into the hospital she was raving mad, and had completely disappeared into a psychotic episode. The doctor who treated her wrote Dr. Jung about the development of the case and described how after three days of being what one could call completely mad and talking completely psychotic stuff, she apparently began to remember some of the symbolic things she had read and what Jung had said about them. She began to bring that into order and around this formed the nucleus of a new ego personality.

After three weeks she was right out of it and quite normal. What she had heard and read earlier now came to her rescue, and enabled her to contain that overwhelming emotional experience in the framework of a symbolic psychological understanding. She recovered, and according to the correspondence Jung had with her for many years he never saw her again personally, for she came from a faraway country she never had a relapse; that was her only psychotic episode and there is every reason to believe that the thing is now really integrated, that she is cured.

So you see how a knowledge of symbolism is a net, so to speak, in which one can at least catch the unspeakable mystery of an immediate experience of the unconscious. I think our author had such an indescribable and overwhelming experience of the unconscious and that he tried, in a rather chaotic way, through a potpourri of biblical and alchemical quotations, to catch and describe that had happened to him.

Remark: I am wondering how to reconcile what you just said about being able to express these experiences with what you said in an earlier course, maybe last year, when you said that if psychotics would only not talk then no one would know about it.

Dr. von Franz: That is very simple. I meant that they should not speak about such things to people in general, but it would be all right with their analyst. If our author were to proclaim on the street that the Wisdom of God had visited him and that he now knew all about it, that would not be the right thing, but he seems to have written a paper, or to have given a seminar on it, or if it was St. Thomas's last seminar then he was in a coma and just talked

approximately in this way. I don't think St. Thomas could write any more, so this must have been written up from notes taken, which would fit in with the fact that the manuscripts are very different, some richer and others poorer. There is a very great difference even in the oldest manuscripts.

We have notes of other lectures given by St. Thomas. It was usual at that time to take seminar notes and several of his writings have only been collected in that way by his pupils; I would imagine that he talked, as the original report says, in a half-ecstatic way and, when very weak, about the Song of Solomon. In such a case you could not say that he should hold his tongue, but the effect was that later on this part of his life and what he said at the time were just set aside. Wilhelm of Tocco and Reginald of Piperno, the earliest biographers, record the events, but the later biographies do not mention them, because how could this great man with his marvellous, clear, rational mind say such things on his deathbed even in a half-coma?

Normal or not interned persons who had had such an experience would have kept it to themselves, or told it to a few people who would have understood. If one has already broken down and is in Burghölzli or some other mental hospital, then it must be told to someone who will listen, which is better than lying in bed and saying nothing, that I think would be quite wrong. The one case is much further gone than the other. Besides, this kind of speech is not addressed to any one person. It is in the style of an announcement, a kind of ecstatic announcement: "Now I will teach you the Wisdom of God. . . ." One recognizes such a style! One has not necessarily crossed the borderline if one uses such language, because that is the style of the unconscious.

I remember when doing one of my first pieces of active imagination that a figure came which had such a marvellous feeling and made such announcements, and I simply could not write them down! It seemed to me so disgusting that I just blocked, but Dr. Jung said that that was the style of the unconscious. It is in very bad taste, if you want to judge it that way. In one young man's active imagination the Holy Ghost appeared personally and spoke as one would imagine it would, and the poor man's stomach nearly turned at having to write down such pompous stuff.

There is something sceptical in us and in our down-to-earth nature which cannot stick it, but that is the style of the unconscious

and explains why, as soon as people fall into it, they speak with conviction and begin to have this pompous, emotionally impressive style. It is carried by the whole emotion and is a ritualistic or sacramental style, like those beautiful songs of the North American Indians, with a lot of repetition and three Amens, and so on. When deeper emotional layers are touched upon, one just has to accept this. One can still observe dispassionately, but if such things are to be allowed expression in their original form one must allow for the very pompous and emotional way of speaking. That I think is why here there is this preaching, ecstatic style.

I would like to skip the next chapter for it is very disgusting. It says that you should love the light of wisdom because then you will rule the world, that it is a sacrament of God which one should not betray to the common people because everybody would become jealous, and so on. Only at the end is it a bit better where it says if one finds this secret then one says:

Be happy, Jerusalem, come together in pleasure because God has had pity on the poor, and Senior says there is a stone which if somebody finds he will put over his eyes and never throw away because it is the elixir which drives away all distress and, besides God, man has no better thing.

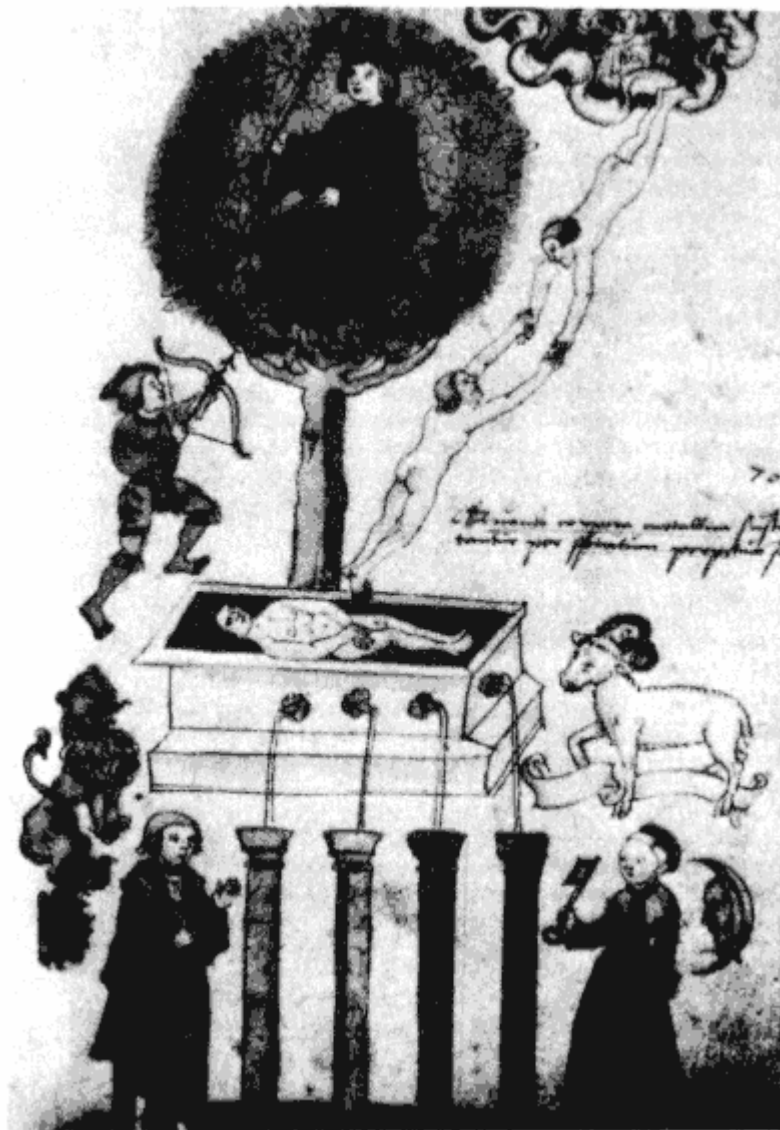
What has happened to the man here? You can probably see what it is since he speaks about ruling the world and says the common people should not be told. Who speaks like that?

Answer: Someone in an inflation.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, he has an inflation in this chapter. The experience of the Wisdom of God was overwhelming, and now as the one who had that experience and knows all about it he is naturally the great man. At once you get the arrogant undertone of one who is elected, others being all fools and jealous. These are typical symptoms of an inflation and unavoidable after such an experience. I do not think any human being can have such an experience without for a moment going through such a stage; it belongs to the experience, the point is only whether one remains in it.

The next chapter is even worse. It speaks of those who do not know this science and who deny it.

This science of God and teaching of the saints, the secret of the philosophers and elixir of the doctors, is despised by fools who do not know what it is. They reject the blessing of God and it is better that they



58.

The alchemist and his *soror mystica* (psychologically his soul) holding the keys to the work, here represented as freeing the soul from the fetters of the body (*separatio*), which Jung interprets as "a withdrawal of the naive projections by which we have moulded both the reality around us and the image of our own character."

should not get it because whoever does not know about this is its enemy, which is why Speculator says that mocking this science is the cause of all ignorance and that one should not give salad to donkeys who are satisfied with thistles, and pearls should not be thrown before swine, etc. One should speak to fools as one would to people who are asleep and one should never put them on a level with the wise man. There will always be poverty and unhappiness in the world because the number of fools is immensely great.

There the inflation reaches its height. Afterwards comes a rather dry chapter which shows a change in the psychological situation. Very dryly he says that the title of his book is "The Rising Dawn," for four reasons:

First the word "aurora" [dawn] could be explained as "aurea hora" [the golden hour that is a play on words in the Latin], because there is a certain good moment in this opus when one can reach one's goal; secondly, the dawn is between day and night and has two colours, namely yellow and red, and thus our science, or alchemy, produces the yellow and the red colours, which are between black and white.

That is classical alchemical knowledge about the *nigredo-albedorubedo-citrinitas*, the four stages of colour, and the dawn would be the coming up of the yellow-red colour, the fulfillment of the alchemical work.

Thirdly, in the dawn sick people who have suffered through the whole night generally feel a bit better and fall asleep and thus, in the dawn of our science, the evil odours which disturb and infect the mind of the working alchemist disappear just as the psalm says: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). And fourthly, the dawn comes at the end of the night, as the beginning of the day or the mother of the sun, and the climax of our alchemical work is the end of all darkness of the night in which if a man walks he stumbleth (St. John 10:10), which is why it says in the scriptures: "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Psalm 19:2), and ". . . the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are alike to thee."

This last quotation (Psalm 39 in the Vulgate) is the psalm which is sung the night before Easter Day in the Catholic Church, where the night turns to light and becomes as light as day and so on. So we must certainly suspect that even if it is not St. Thomas, this man is a Catholic priest, for probably nobody else could quote the Bible so fluently. He alludes there to the Missa of the Easter Night, and compares the dawn of the science, the rising dawn, with the night before Easter, the moment of rebirth and the resurrection of Christ.

As far as the state of the author is concerned, you see that now



59.

Alchemist as priest. "You see what an official creed, or religious attitude, is good for: it is a boat into which one can retire when the sharks attack . . . . when the influx of the unconscious becomes too strong." von Franz. At the left is Mother Earth suckling the Mercurius-child, indicating that nature looks after her own.

the ecstatic style has completely ceased and become slightly pedantic. The Aurora for four reasons is called so-and-so. Therefore I would say that he has got out of his inflation and returned to a relatively sober state of consciousness and now tries to bring order into his experience.

This order is very typically fourfold. He gives four explanations of the word "dawn" four reasons. Every time consciousness tries to establish itself, it puts a fourfold order onto things; that is the net with which it catches things and brings them into order, and he therefore now tries to give a fourfold explanation of the rising dawn. The dawn *is* the Wisdom of God, as we shall see later, so he tries to put some distance between what has happened to him and see what it is; he has met the rising dawn and can describe it with four reasons.

His explanation seems to me to be very superficial. First he makes a play on words *aurora*, *aurea hora* and then he compares it to the morning dawn when people fall asleep after a bad night of sickness. What do you think of this?

Answer: It sounds like a thinking compensation for the emotional excess.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, but one which goes too far. That happens very often in schizophrenic stages. There is a play on words, then scurrilities appear and there is a sudden very nasty lightheartedness. It is a compensation for having been pulled too deeply into the emotions. It is understandable as an act of compensation or to escape the emotion, but to the onlooker it is just disgusting. A human being has had the deepest inner experience, in which one participates with one's feeling, and then that same person comes one day and says it is all rubbish!

I have noticed that practically every time when somebody has fallen too deeply into the unconscious. It is the defence mechanism of a weak consciousness against a too-overwhelming experience. I would like to describe it as schizoid taking serious things very lightly, laughing them off almost in a cynical way but it is the compensation for having been pulled in too deeply. Here we have such a flat reaction.

In extreme cases there occurs what doctors and psychiatrists even *want* to reach, namely the "regressive restoration of the persona," when people say that all they have seen was a part of their illness and that they will never think of it again. They bury the whole experience and go out and try to adapt socially; they take on an office job and want never to be reminded of what they said and thought in that stage. They usually go to another town so as not to meet the same people, and if they mention that time at all it is as something that happened when they were ill.

The experience is absolutely rejected, because it is too hot. Its effect at first was too strong and afterwards, when perhaps by shock therapy they have got out of that state, then as a rule there comes this flat attitude. If without therapy you get people out of such a state, through largactyl or some such remedy, or electroshock, then generally that is the reaction. Such people are ashamed of their past when they were crazy; they adapt to reality in a superficial, flat way and if you meet them they bore you. You have the feeling they have

become boringly normal all the gist and vitality of the personality have gone.

Here, thank God, it is just a temporary phase and that is something which often happens and which one can understand. It is a normal rhythm in human reactions, illustrated for instance in the classical antique plays where three tragedies are succeeded by a comedy. One could not go home after having seen Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and two others like it; there had to be one of Aristophanes' comedies at the end so that everybody would roar with laughter. Or there is the typical mechanism where at the height of a very dramatic funeral one suddenly sees something funny and has a nervous reaction wanting to laugh. It is the climax of excitement which turns into the wish to laugh one cannot stand too much of such an exaggerated tragic condition so that occasionally one is compelled to make fun of it.

That also accounts for the Mock Mass of the Middle Ages. For 364 days of the year the Mass and the Host were taken very seriously and on one day it was just taken as a joke. Or, in the North American Indian ritual, there is a clown who belongs to the Thunderbird clan, who makes fun of the holiest ceremonies, making obscene remarks and jokes about them; that shows how the climax of excitement in normal people arouses the desire for some kind of compensation. So the reaction of the schizoid who is threatened by the unconscious is quite normal.

We have at home a maid who sees ghosts and can speak most graphically of her experiences. To her it is the absolute reality in which she lives and she talks to the ghosts for hours. It is a great secret into which one has first to be admitted and then she will speak of it with great emotion, but she never ends such a conversation to return to her household duties without saying: "Oh well, you know, ghosts do not exist, that is all rubbish!" And then she gives a broad grin and goes back to her work. That remark is simply a *rite de sortie*, for she cannot switch immediately from her experience with the ghosts to boiling the potatoes; the *rite de sortie* is her release from something which has moved her deeply. Most people when they get too dramatic, if they have any sense of humour, do the same kind of thing.

The next chapter is entitled "Exciting the Ignorant to Search for Wisdom."



Do you not hear the Wisdom and is not the cleverness understandable in the books of the wise when she says: "Oh you men, I call to you and call the sons of understanding. Understand the parable and its interpretation, understand the word of the wise and its riddle. The wise have used all kinds of expressions making comparisons with all the things on the earth to increase this wisdom. If a wise man hears the wise people he will become more understanding and he will know it."

This is the Wisdom, Queen of the South, who has come from the east like the rising dawn to hear and understand the wisdom of Solomon. In her hand is power, honour, glory, and the kingdom. She has a crown of twelve shining stars on her head like a bride decorated for her bridegroom, and on her garment there is a golden inscription in Greek [in Arabic probably] and Latin: "As a queen I will rule and my kingdom will not come to an end for those who find me with subtlety and the spirit of invention and constancy."

Now the author tries to deal with his experience in another way he suddenly understands that all the symbolic texts he has read before, in the Bible and in alchemy, point to that same experience. He probably is now capable of reading alchemical texts and feeling that he knows what they mean, for he can link them up with his own experience and he thinks that the entire Bible and the whole alchemical tradition is symbolic, a kind of simile or symbolic description of what he has just now experienced.

Here you see that what I described before now happens: he is trying to catch and consolidate and understand his inner experiences by amplifying them with other texts. He sees in the Bible and in alchemical literature possible amplifications. And now this figure, which is really the key figure of the whole experience namely the Wisdom, the Queen of the South, or the Rising Dawn appears again and he praises her. She is the queen who will rule in her kingdom forever. She is called the Queen of the Midday, or the South Wind in Latin *auster* stands for both "south wind" and "midday" and that refers to the Bible text in Matthew 12:42: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

This text, which is more or less the same as Luke 11:31, refers to the famous Queen of Sheba who came to visit King Solomon and had with him, as you know, a love affair from which the present Abyssinian kings still stem. The Queen of Sheba was an Ethiopian, heathen queen, who came and was converted by Solomon to the



60.

Union of king and queen as  
androgynous god holding  
male serpent with sun, and  
female serpent with moon.

true religion. With her black negress servants she slept with him and then returned pregnant to her kingdom and gave birth to the first king of Abyssinia. This love affair of the aging Solomon became *the* great theme of European love literature.

In the Orient, as you know, especially in Persian mysticism and in some Islamic mysticism (mostly of the Shi-ite tradition, to which Senior belonged), there are books which could be said to constitute the literature of the *coniunctio*, i.e., the union of an outstanding man, a king with a queen, etc., which is said to be an image of the union of the soul with God, the soul of man being thought of as feminine: the anima marries God in the moment of highest religious ecstasy and therefore in that moment the mystic is a bride who marries the Godhead. Of the very earthy and understandable love poems of El Hafis, it is said that they must be read with a mystical meaning and that El Hafis is *not* describing an ordinary love affair with a woman, but uses that language to describe the *unio mystica* of the soul with God. The same applies to El Roumi.

The love letter of the sun to the moon is a typical variation of this kind of love literature, in which you can say that the problem of the phenomenon of transference with the process of individuation is in the most beautiful way united and expressed in symbolic language. The experience of the anima for the man and the animus for a woman is really quite outside a real experience with a human partner. The extent to which the human partner plays a role as only a faraway picture or as a genuine connection varies from case to case, but this experience is the paramount one leading towards the experience of the Self.

You can therefore say that in every deep love experience the experience of the Self is involved, for the passion and the overwhelming factor in it comes from the Self. This experience was much better understood and cultivated more in the non-Christian realms which have a more balanced attitude towards the female principle; in the Jewish and in the official Christian tradition this kind of love literature, and the problem of the love union with God, has been rather rejected, with a few exceptions. In the Jewish tradition it is chiefly the Kabbala that has again taken up this theme, and in the Christian tradition there are a few mystics like St. John of the Cross and his famous poem, which is a paraphrase of the Song of Solomon and where again this language is used. Probably St. John of the Cross knew a great deal about Islamic literature, since he lived in Spain.

In our civilization otherwise, there has been a split. The Church has not encouraged this kind of mystical and religious literature, which therefore deeply affected the half-religious literature of the medieval novels, mainly the poetry of the Grail cycle and the Grail legends. Here the whole love mysticism, as you might call it, penetrated, and in it the legend of the Queen of Sheba played a great role. The story of the Queen of Sheba had at this time already given rise to a very romantic novel of which there were different Ethiopian, Abyssinian, and Islamic versions. The text has been elaborated as an experience through mystical love to conversion to God, and that was picked up by the medieval novels of knightly chivalry and enormously influenced all the beautiful love stories in the novels of the Middle Ages, the Church not actually rejecting it but casting a rather mistrustful eye on it.

The Queen of Sheba has therefore a long tradition. She represents in the Christian tradition an anima figure not as sublime as the Virgin Mary. For the sublime aspect of the anima, the Virgin Mary stands as a fitting symbol, but for the less sublime aspect where could a man project it? The Queen of Sheba with her negro shadow, her negress servant, became a fitting object upon which this aspect of the anima could be projected, and therefore many novels elaborated the theme of the love story of King Solomon.

It was also very legitimate, because on her way to King Solomon the Queen of Sheba came to a river where there was a little bridge made from part of the wood which later became the cross, and the Queen of Sheba, in her mediumistic farsightedness, refused to step

on it, preferring to go through the river and wet her feet than step on that wood. She foresaw that the wood would become the cross. Thereafter in medieval legends she was looked upon as being one of the prophetesses, a seeress who foresaw the life of Christ and his death on the cross and that opened the door by which she could enter Christian literature. By that act she was legitimized, though all her negro shadow and all her earthly love affairs with King Solomon went with it. It was all tolerable because she had foreseen the death of Christ.

So the Queen of Sheba is a highly interesting anima figure of medieval time; that is the allusion in Matthew 12:42, and here our author alludes to her in this way. The Wisdom of God to him is also the Queen of Sheba who is the rising dawn.

The beginning of the next chapter, called the first parable, will amaze you.

Looking from afar, I saw a big cloud which having been absorbed by the earth covered it with blackness, and covered my soul which the waters had entered so that they became corrupted, from the aspect of the deepest hell and the shadow of death because the flood has drowned me.

Then the Ethiopians will fall down on their knees before me and my enemies will lick my earth. Nothing healthy is in my body any more, and from the sight of my sins my bones are afraid. I have cried the whole night, my throat has become hoarse. Who is the human being who lives, understanding and knowing, who can save my soul from the underworld?

He who enlightens me will have eternal life and I will give him to eat of the wood of life which is in Paradise, and I will let him share the throne of my kingdom. He who digs me up like silver and acquires me like a treasure, and dries the tears of my eyes and does not mock at my garment, who does not poison my food, who does not desecrate my bed with whoredom, and, above all, who does not harm my body which is very delicate, and even more who does not harm my soul which is without bitterness in beauty and in which there is no stain, who does not harm my throne, he for whose love I am longing, in whose fire I am melting, in whose perfume I live, from whose taste I am becoming healthy, from whose milk I am nourishing myself and in whose embrace my whole body melts away, to him I will be father and he will be my son.

Wise is he who brings joy to his father, to whom I will give the highest place among the kings of the earth and with whom I will keep my covenant for all time. He who forsakes my laws and who does not walk in accordance with my orders and does not keep my commandments, he shall be overwhelmed by the enemy and the son of iniquity shall do him much harm, but whoever respects my orders will not fear the coldness of the snow for his household will have garments, linen and purple.

And on this day he will laugh, for I shall have been satiated and my glory

will appear for he had not eaten the bread of idleness. Therefore the heavens will open for him and like thunder will the voice sound of him who has the seven stars in his hands, whose spirits are sent out to testify to all the world [the Apocalypse].

He who believes and has been baptised will be blessed, but he who does not believe will be damned. The sign of those who have believed and have been baptised when the heavenly king judges them is the following: They shall be white as the snow on Mount Zalmon and the feathers of the dove which shine like silver and whose wings are radiant as gold. He will be my beloved son; look at him for his form is more beautiful than any of the children of men, he whom sun and moon admire. He has the right of love and in him human beings have their trust and without him they can do nothing.

He who has ears to hear shall hear what the spirit of wisdom tells the son about the doctrine of the seven stars through which the holy work is fulfilled. About these Senior speaks as follows in his chapter on the sun and the moon: "After you have distributed those seven [metals] through the seven stars, and attributed them to the seven stars, and cleansed them nine times till they look like pearls, that is the state of whitness [the *albedo*]."

I will give you a short comment so as not to leave you alone with the amazing impression of this chapter. It begins with somebody in a state of despair. Sometimes it seems as though it were the author, but sometimes it looks rather as though it were the Wisdom of God, that feminine being, and then after a process, the chapter ends with the statement that something has been whitened, that the stage of whitening has been reached.

So from praising a personification of the unconscious which has broken into the conscious realm of the author, the text now changes into an effort at describing a process, a sequence of events. As you will see that constantly happens in the following chapters. Every chapter begins with a black, chaotic state and ends on a positive note. Therefore the author is now beginning to digest the experience in the form of a process. Before, he described the impact of what had happened to him; now he tries to express what is going on, but all he can do is begin to explain again and again and end in the same way.

One could say he is now trying to circumambulate the meaning of the experience. That is what happens where somebody is first overwhelmed by the unconscious, then gets an inflation, then laughs it off, then recovers his balance again and says he must face it, and after that begins to think about it and try to describe how it began, what happened, and the result. When people begin to regain consciousness, at first they can give only one feature, but

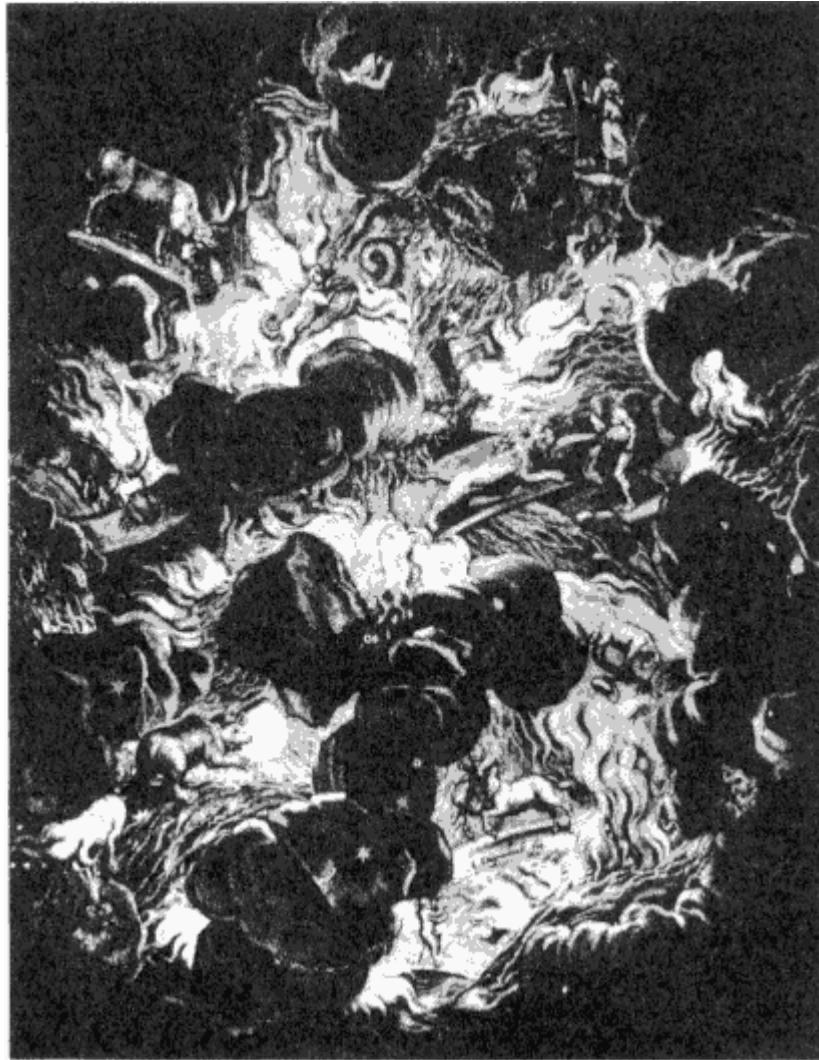
afterwards, when they are a bit more conscious, they begin to repeat historically what happened.

For instance, if it is a psychotic episode people will say that at first they just felt tired and then listless, and then heard a voice and then suddenly whatever happened then. They can thus go back and digest what happened. Here the experience was so exciting and overwhelming that St. Thomas uses seven chapters to chew over the same process, always describing it from a different angle; that is typical behaviour for someone whose psyche has been overwhelmed by the invasion of a content of the unconscious.

You see the mechanism on a minor scale when people have experienced something exciting, let us say a car accident in the street. They will recount it at least three times that same day, they have to tell and retell it. By repetition a shock is assimilated, and therefore if you have had a psychological shock you tend to digest it by repetition till you have integrated all its aspects and then you get your balance back. Here that is what happens. The same thing happened to St. Niklaus von der Flüe who, after he had his frightening vision of the Godhead, tried to digest it by making a painting and explaining it to a number of people, over and over again, and in that way he assimilated the shock. Until his death he was really only concerned from that time on with assimilating the shock of his vision of God.

I have an analysand, a woman who has tremendous experiences of the Godhead and she asked me the other day how many years it would take her until she had digested them. I answered that I supposed it would take at least ten years. She said: "So much?" She became thoughtful and then said that I was probably right. One cannot digest such an experience immediately, and in this case it means that every time I see her again we have to talk about hers from yet another angle. That is not abnormal, but normal in an unusual condition.





61.

The *prima materia*, or *massa confusa*, as a black, chaotic cloud, a state of conscious confusion typical of the beginning of both the alchemical work and the process of individuation.

Lecture 8  
Aurora Consurgens

As you remember, I read briefly the text of the so-called first parable, which begins quite differently from the first five chapters. They were concerned with the appearance of a feminine personification of the Wisdom of God, who appeared to the author in an overwhelming form. From the different ways in which he described her, we deduced that at first St. Thomas was quite overcome and afterwards identified with the image and became slightly inflated, saying that now he would tell people about her, etc. Later the inflation turned into a kind of scorn for the uninitiated those who do not know and have not understood which is still a symptom of inflation, and then he fell out of the inflation and into a state of dry flatness.

He then described the same experience but in a rather prosaic way, which is typical for people when they come up again after having been pulled into the unconscious; there is a kind of dry disappointment about the whole thing which compensates for the inflation. This is obvious in a much more extreme form after a psychotic interval interrupted by largactyl, or electric shock, or some kind of physical cure.

In the parable I read last time, the author himself enters the picture. Before, the writing had been in the style of an elated and pompous announcement of the truth, typical of identification with contents of the unconscious, which explains its use in primitive religious literature, in certain poetry, and in this document. Now we see the effect it had on the writer.

From afar I saw a big cloud which overshadowed the whole earth with blackness; it had absorbed the earth which covered my soul, the waters had entered my soul which had become corrupted from the aspect of the lowest hell and the shadow of death because the flood had drowned me. Then the Ethiopians will bow before me and my enemies will lick my dust. Nothing is healthy in my body, and from the aspect of my sins my bones are frightened. I have cried the whole night till I am tired; my throat is hoarse. Who is the man who lives understanding, and who will save my soul from the hand of the underworld. . . .



When he says he saw a big black cloud, one feels it must be the author who from above sees the black cloud which has covered the earth. But later this person, who asks who is the man who can save him, is the Wisdom of God. One of the most interesting things in this text is that the "I," as seen from the context, on one line is the author and two lines later the Wisdom of God. So there is genuine confusion and we see how the author has identified with the Wisdom of God and fallen into the unconscious.

First he sees hovering over the earth the black cloud which covers everything. The black cloud is a well-known alchemical symbol for the state called the *nigredo*, the blackness which very often occurs first in the opus; if you distill the material it evaporates and for a while you see nothing but a kind of confusion or cloud, which the alchemist compared to the earth being covered up by a black cloud.

In the language of antiquity the cloud also had a double meaning, being sometimes compared to confusion or unconsciousness. There are many late Hermetic texts where it is said that the light of God cannot be found before one has come up from the dark cloud of unconsciousness which covers people and which is the negative connotation often met with in religious language. In Christian language the cloud is produced by the devil who is in the north and out of whose nostrils constant clouds of confusion and unconsciousness blow over the world. But you find the cloud also in early medieval texts in a positive connection, namely as that unknown, bewildering aspect of the Godhead.

Probably some of you know "The Cloud of Unknowing," a mystical medieval text which describes the fact that the closer the soul of the mystic gets to the Godhead the darker and more confused he becomes. Such texts say in effect that God lives in the cloud of unknowing and that one has to be stripped of every idea, every intellectual conception, before one can approach the light which is surrounded by the darkness of utter confusion. Here the cloud has the same double meaning: it describes a state of utter confusion, of complete unhappiness, which at the same time is the beginning of the alchemical work.

The aspect of the deepest hell, and, as is said sentences later, the aspect of his own sins, have frightened the speaker, after which there is the mention of the Ethiopians. This refers to Psalm 72:9, which speaks of victories over the enemies and the Ethiopians bowing before the Israelites. But here the Ethiopian naturally has a



62.

Two paintings by a woman at the beginning of analysis: bottom, a state of depression in which unconscious contents are activated but repressed; top, conscious conflict and confusion after the unconscious contents have "broken through."

classical meaning, which also appears very early in Greek alchemy, and represents the *nigredo*.

You will remember we had the Ethiopian earth before in one of the Greek texts. Ethiopia was the country whose people carried the collective projection of utter piety and religious fervour on the one hand, and on the other they were considered to be unconscious heathens. Here in alchemy the Ethiopian is often the symbol of the *nigredo*, and it is obvious what that would mean in psychological language for it is not very different from the form in which negroes still turn up nowadays in the unconscious material of white people, namely the primitive, natural man in his ambiguous wholeness. The natural man in us is the genuine man, but also the man who does not fit into conventional patterns, and who in part is very much driven by his instincts.

The Ethiopians appear in this *nigredo* and then there is the question: "Who is the human being of understanding who will save me from the hand of the underworld?" and that same drowned being whom one first assumed to be the author, but later turns out to be the Wisdom of God, says: "To him who enlightens me I will give eternal life, he will receive from the wood of life which is in Paradise and share my throne in my kingdom," etc. Then comes the passage I read last time: "He who does not mock me and who does not harm me and does not desecrate my bed," and so on, after which comes the declaration of love.

It is Christ Himself, as God Himself, who promises to share His Kingdom, so we must conclude that the person speaking and the adjectives which here refer to the "I" are always feminine is the Wisdom of God, in absolute identity with God and Christ, who speaks out of the darkness of the *nigredo* and calls for help, asking for a human being who will save her soul from the underworld. This shows the tremendous turnabout which has taken place, for suddenly it is the Wisdom of God who cries for help from the depths of the earth, and who needs a human being so as to be pulled out of the darkness. First she appeared as an overwhelming divine factor from above, and now she calls as a helpless feminine being from below who needs the understanding of the human soul.

This is one of the most striking sections and illustrates what Jung described also in *Psychology and Alchemy* as one of the great mythological themes of alchemical thinking, namely the idea that the divine soul, or the Wisdom of God, or the *anima mundi* a kind



63.

The *nigredo* as Ethiopian, personified projection of the dark, unknown side of the personality, "the primitive, natural man in his ambiguous wholeness" (von Franz).

of feminine figure falls off the original man, the original Adam, into matter and then has to be rescued.

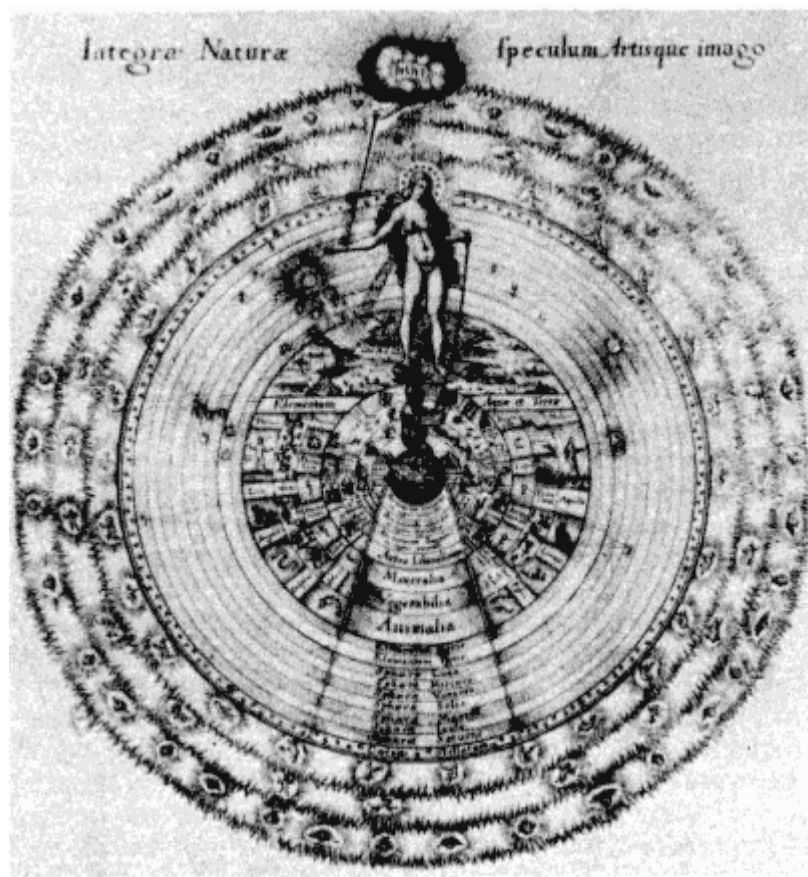
If you remember, Jung explains that this represents what happens when something is projected, namely that there is the archetypal idea of the divine man, or the feminine Godhead, and that archetype is projected into matter, which actually means the image falls into matter. Such myths amplify what the alchemist did not know consciously, or only in part that really they were looking for the unconscious, or the image of the feminine Godhead, or for the experience of the divine man in matter. That was what they sought, as I tried to explain with the Greek alchemical text.

That would correspond to a modern man getting to know a woman, being very much attracted to her and then dreaming that an image of the goddess entered her. The image of the Godhead before was carried within and now has entered this woman. That is how the unconscious pictures a projection; it is not something we do or even realize, it just happens to us and such dreams often show that a projection has taken place. Here the alchemical imagery says that this has happened and the alchemist is unconsciously searching for such a figure.

In the Jewish religion, as you know, this process has already begun, because although from the beginning there was no feminine goddess, the Hebrew word for primordial chaos is *Tohu wa bohu*, which is really an allusion to the Babylonian Tiamat, a feminine goddess. One could say that in the Jewish tradition the great mother goddess does not appear personified in the Bible, but only exists in a hidden way in these few allusions.

The feminine reappeared in the late Gnostic fantasy of the Wisdom of God, but only a sublime divine aspect of this feminine goddess appears in the Bible and the feminine aspect of the Godhead is not properly represented in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. There are a few obscure allusions to a dark chaotic mother-mass underneath, which is identical with matter, and a sublime feminine figure which is the Wisdom of God, but even she was eliminated in Christianity for God was declared to be identical with the Holy Ghost or the soul of Christ, and matter supposed to be ruled by the devil.

This pronounced lack of a feminine personification of the unconscious has therefore been compensated by the radical materialism which has gradually taken hold of the Christian tradition. One could say that practically no religion began with such



64.

The Wisdom of God as *anima mundi* (world soul), guide of mankind, herself guided by God.

a highly one-sided spiritual accent and has landed if you think of Communism as the end form of Christian theology in such an absolutely one-sided materialistic aspect. The swing from one to the other is one of the most striking phenomena we know of in the history of religion; it is due to the fact that from the beginning there was an unawareness, an unbalanced attitude towards the problem of the feminine goddess and therefore of matter, because the feminine Godhead in all religions is always projected into and linked up with the concept of matter.

If you like this book, buy it!

Only yesterday I had in my hand this is in the nature of a digression, but quite an interesting one a book by Hans Marti entitled *Urbild and Verfassung*, which could be translated as "Archetype and Constitution." Marti shows that since man originally conceived of the constitution of a democratic state he is mainly concerned with the Swiss Constitution a secret switch has taken place from the patriarchal concept of the State (the juridical State, the State being a legal concept, a kind of father spirit) to what he calls the Welfare State. Swiss democracy in its beginnings, let us say until the last fifty years, was chiefly administered by a Club consisting of men you know women in Switzerland still cannot vote and the basis of the Constitution was a certain number of laws, the main object of which was to guarantee the freedom of the individual, freedom of religion, freedom of possession, and so on.

Into this slowly crept, as Marti very beautifully demonstrates, another idea, namely that of the Welfare State, a mother archetype where the State has to care for the health of the people, their material welfare, old age pensions, etc. Marti points out very clearly that this is a switch, that the State is no longer the father but has become the mother, and as such interested in the physical welfare of her children. He shows how, according to Swiss law, the State now has the right to impose certain regulations on the possession of land, in order to protect agricultural areas, for instance.

Some years ago the State assumed control over water rights water is a feminine symbol in order to protect people since the water gets so dirty and unwholesome, and slowly it has acquired the right to issue laws to fight epidemics. If, for instance, there is some kind of plague, or rabies, then the State can issue regulations which did not previously exist. Formerly mankind was not so interested in the people's physical and material welfare. If they died of the plague or were bitten by mad dogs, that was just a part of life and not important; the emphasis was on spiritual freedom while physical welfare was rather neglected. Over the last fifty or sixty years physical welfare has gradually become an important concern of the State, and with that it has by degrees become more and more the carrier of the projection of the mother, and less so of the father image. We are slowly and without noticing it gliding into a matriarchal situation.

Marti shows very clearly how certain emotional factors are unconsciously at play, that the people conceive of the State in some



65.

The Assumption of the Virgin Mary: ". . . raising to a higher position the symbol of the feminine Godhead, and with it matter." von Franz.

vague archetypal form and from that standpoint vote for certain laws. But what seems to be self-evident, i.e., that the State should look after its children, is really the projection of the mother image, and that is *not* self-evident. He ends his book very intelligently by saying that we should become conscious of what we are projecting onto the State and begin with a real *Auseinandersetzung*, or confrontation, and not change our laws by just projecting a mother image.

This book describes a small aspect of a slow turn which on a large scale has happened in the whole Christian civilization and which one could call a secret unobtrusive return to matriarchy and materialism. This enantiodromia has to do with the fact that the Judaeo-Christian religion did not face the archetype of the mother consciously enough. It had to a certain extent excluded the question. It is well known, also, that when Pope Pius XII declared the *assumptio Maria* his conscious aim was to hit Communistic materialism by elevating, so to speak, a symbol of matter in the Catholic Church, so as to take the wind out of the Communists' sails. There is a much deeper implication, but that was his conscious idea, namely that the only way to fight the materialistic aspect would be by raising to a higher position the symbol of the feminine Godhead, and with it matter. Since it is the Virgin Mary's body which is raised to Heaven, emphasis is on the physical material aspect.



Here we have the image of the Godhead completely fallen into matter, from where she cries for help. Taken as the personal drama of our author what would that mean?

Answer: That the anima had got lost in the material world, because he had no relation to her.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, we must conclude that this author had no relationship with the feminine principle before. It is quite obvious from the text that he is a clerical man, and I would imagine he had a negative mother complex and for that, or some other reason, had no relationship to the feminine principle, which means neither to his own feminine side nor to women. In such a case an overwhelming influx of the feminine Godhead would take place.

There is a striking parallel in the famous mystic, Jakob Boehme, who as you know was a very poor shoemaker and somewhat of a borderline case, but who had the most tremendous religious experiences and was capable of expressing them in his difficult writings. This man was an introverted intuitive of the prophetic type. His marriage was very unfortunate; there was nothing but mutual contempt and hatred, understandable on both sides, for his wife was a down-to-earth woman who thought he would be better employed in mending shoes and earning money, for he had six children by her, than in writing books about the Holy Ghost while she had nothing to eat. So she made constant scenes, saying he should provide his children with food instead of writing books about the Godhead.

He, on the other side, felt quite naturally that she was a worldly woman and a weight on him, someone who hampered his spiritual creativity. It was one of those classical tragedies. Boehme rejected the feminine completely I mean he had only a negative attitude towards it until the later phases of his life. Shortly before his death, he was suddenly completely overwhelmed by the image of the Wisdom of God, the Sophia, that same image, and he left a text in which he praised this figure in the most ecstatic loving terms so much so that it is even rather distasteful, for a very strong sexual note is visible in his love song to the Wisdom of God, and one sees the whole mud of what had been rejected and which welled up with this great experience.

I assume our author is in a similar condition, that he had no relationship to the feminine principle and is now overwhelmed by it

in its most impressive form. That would be a typical compensation for the scorn and contempt he must hitherto have had for the feminine. In such cases the unconscious breaks in with such tremendous emphasis that it can no longer be avoided.

What for consciousness is a realization of an archetypal image is for the archetypal image a great downfall. Imagine the ego with its field of associations, like a spider in its web. When the archetypal image approaches the field of consciousness, that is to the ego a condition of great enlightenment, a state of elation, etc., as was seen in the first five chapters of our text, but to the poor archetype it is just the opposite for it falls into something very small and quite inadequate. Therefore seen from one side it is a great realization and from the other a very bad downfall.

Many creation myths describe the creation of the world as the Godhead falling from Heaven, as is also typically illustrated in a dream of Gérard de Nerval, a French poet whose book *Aurélia* depicts the beginning of de Nerval's psychosis. One of the most frightening dreams he had during this time was that he went into the backyard of a typical Paris hotel, where there were old dustbins with cats eating out of them. Such dark courtyards are to be found everywhere in Paris. In such a courtyard at the back of his hotel to his horror he saw an angel of God, a tremendous, overwhelming archetypal figure with coloured wings who had fallen into the backyard and was jammed into this constricted space.

The sudden frightening realization for the man was that if the angel wanted to free itself, if it made the smallest movement, the whole building would collapse, which would mean the outbreak of his schizophrenia, which did occur soon after. His conception of life was much too narrow in comparison with his genius. He had a great unconscious genius, as evidenced by the angel, and his conscious concept of life was exactly that of the typical French rationalist of Paris and its backyards. His conscious mentality was therefore not adequate to his real make-up and his own inner destiny.

Very often the reason for schizophrenia is not so much the invasion of the unconscious, but that it happens to someone who is too narrow for the experience, either mentally or emotionally. People who are not broad-minded and have not enough generosity and heart to open to what comes are exploded by the invasion.

Gérard de Nerval's life illustrates this very clearly: he fell in love with a girl and was overcome with the most romantic emotional

feelings for her, but instead of accepting them he revolted against them, saying: "*C'est une femme ordinaire de notre siècle*" she is an ordinary woman of the present day and he ran away from her. Afterwards he felt extremely guilty but she did not pardon him. His guilty conscience came from the fact that he was running away from his own feeling. During this time he dreamt of the angel, showing that his narrow-minded, rational, backyard idea of life and of love was not up to his experience, which was why he later hung himself in the gutter.

I only mention this dream as an illustration of the fact that what is seen from the conscious as a realization of the archetype is for the archetype falling down into matter. There is the same thing in the theological teaching about the *kenosis* of Christ, which refers to the biblical quotation where Christ shed his plenitude to come down as a servant and incarnate in man. Onto this theologians have hung the theory that Christ was identical with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, that he lived in plenitude and expansion in Heaven and it was a tremendous self-sacrifice when he emptied and reduced Himself so as to enter human life and incarnate. Thus from His side it meant humiliation and a reduction in his condition. As an archetype he would be the Godhead, the Logos, which entered the miserable human life, but for mankind it was a revelation of the light of God.

This is not a unique case. Whenever an archetype approaches human realization it means a great narrowing for the archetype, which accounts for the catastrophic visions and dreams of the fall of a divine being onto the earth. As can very clearly be seen from the case of Gérard de Nerval, at such times understanding is the essential factor. If he had understood what was approaching him when he had those tremendous feelings and fantasies about the girl he loved, he would not have gone off his head, but it seemed to him it was all crazy and stupid and had to be repressed, which resulted in the catastrophe.

In our text the fallen Wisdom of God calls for a human being of understanding to dig her up. She asks where the human being is who lives and will understand her, and promises eternal life to that person he whom she loves and in whose embrace her whole body melts away, etc. So she goes over into a passionate declaration of love to the unknown man who should understand her and get her out of matter.

Then comes a most surprising turn, for she says: "He in whose embrace my whole body melts away, *to whom I will be father and he will be my son.*" This is taken from Hebrew 1:5, as you probably know, and is what God said to Christ. When reading the text it is easy to overlook these strange allusions, but the Wisdom here clearly says that she herself is God the Father and that whoever saves her is the son of God himself. This sentence is the key to all that follows in the text. The Wisdom of God is simply an *experience of God Himself but in His feminine form*, and the beloved bridegroom of this feminine appearance of God is the author who replaces Christ and becomes Christlike.

Christ Himself predicted that through the spreading of the Holy Ghost many would do greater works than He, leading to the idea of the Christlikeness of each individual. Christ was not the unique case of the incarnation of God, but through the Holy Ghost this would continue and spread among the many and every individual would, to a certain extent, become Christ and therefore deified. This was predicted in the Bible by Christ Himself but has been ignored in theological interpretation because it is an awkward statement and means nothing more nor less than that each human individual could potentially live the same fate as Christ and be identical with the Godhead.

This aspect was ignored in medieval theology and not brought out into the light; it was carefully not preached about because it is nothing other than the process of individuation. It means that to follow Christ is not to follow outer rules, not the outward imitation, but to take upon oneself the total experience of Christ Himself in one's own form to go through the whole process oneself. Because this was too difficult, or people were not up to such a task, it was ignored and therefore reappears here as unconscious pressure in the form of God who, as a woman, elects a human being as her bridegroom, a human who understands her. As the text says, this is the relationship of God the Father and God the Son.

She then says that if she can find such a bridegroom she will appear in her glory and will manifest in all her beauty, and in this context is quoted the appearance of God at the end of days, as in the Apocalypse. She compares herself also to a dove, a silver shining dove. There she appears again very clearly as a feminine spiritual symbol. The text ends rather flatly or dryly with the words: "and all this is just that one has to wash the substance nine times until it has

the appearance of pearls, and that is the whitening." Here there is a sudden return to purely chemical language which says that in practice the whole experience indicates that one has to wash the stars, as it says, till they are as white as pearls.

I want to comment briefly on the next part:

Who has ears to hear, shall hear what the spirit of the science tells the sons of the doctrine about the seven stars through whom the divine work is accomplished. Senior says in his book in the chapter on the sun and the moon: "When you have distributed those seven with the seven stars and attributed them to the seven stars and then cleansed them nine times till they look like pearls, that is the whitening."

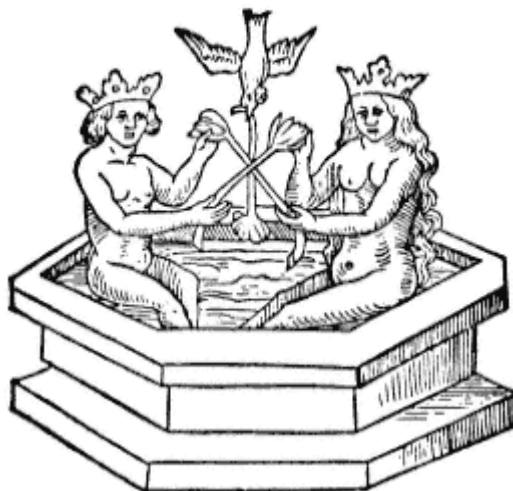
The seven stars were mentioned before in our text; they are the seven stars the Godhead holds in His hands when He appears in the Apocalypse and at that time they naturally referred to the seven planets.

To the seven planets are attributed the seven metals, and it is quite customary in alchemy for the seven metals tin, copper, lead, iron, and so on to be attributed to the seven planets, but they are more than that; they are, so to speak, the same thing as the seven planets. Iron is the same thing as Mars, and copper the same as Venus; in the sky, therefore, one can call iron the earthly Mars, and copper the earthly Venus, etc. That was a common way of speaking about the metals in those times so the seven stars are really the seven metals in the earth, and these earthly stars have to be distilled and cleansed nine times, at which point they become white, which is the process of the *albedo*.

In alchemical literature it is generally said that the great effort and trouble continues from the *nigredo* to the *albedo*; that is said to be the hard part, and afterwards everything becomes easier. The *nigredo* the blackness, the terrible depression and state of dissolution has to be compensated by the hard work of the alchemist and that hard work consists, among other things, in constant washing; therefore even the work of washerwomen is often mentioned in the text, or constant distilling, which is also done with the object of purification, for the metal is evaporated and then precipitated into another vessel, thus removing the heavier substances.

The psychological analogy is obviously to the first hard part of an analysis where Venus, the love problem, must be washed, as well as Mars, the problem of aggression, and so on. All the different

Perfectum non alteratur, sed corrumpitur.  
Sed imperfectum bene alteratur, ergo corruptio  
vnius est generatio alterius.



66.

Immersion of king and queen in the bath, with dove (spirit) as uniting symbol. Alchemical images of washing, cleaning, distilling, etc., are paralleled in modern dreams, indicating the process of "cleaning up" conscious attitudes.

instinctive drives and their archetypal background generally appear first in a disturbed form in the earth, that is in the form of a projection people love or hate somebody or they have a boss who depresses them and they do not know how to defend themselves.

If the projection is on the outside it would mean that Mars has fallen into matter: the principle of aggression and all it covers up is seen in Mr. So-and-So, or Venus has fallen into the ups and downs of a love affair and sexual difficulties, and naturally the analysand when he first comes tells you that that is it, because to him the thing is all outside. First it has to be taken out of matter, so the analyst says they should leave Miss So-and-So out of it and look at what is going on in the analysand.

That is the *prima materia* which has to be constantly washed and distilled and thus the first activity of the opus is distilling, washing,

and cleansing, over and over again. Here it says nine times, others say fifteen times, and some say ten years. It is really a very long process and sometimes means endlessly rehearsing the same problem in its different aspects. That is why also in alchemical texts they always allude to the fact that this part can go on for a long time and is characterized by endless repetitions just as, unfortunately, we fall again and again into complexes which have not been worked out and have to be looked at time and again. But through this hard work the matter becomes white.

Whiteness suggests purification, no longer being contaminated with matter, which would mean what we call technically, and so lightly, taking back our projections. That is not an easy thing to do; it is something very complicated and difficult, for it is not as though one understood that one was projecting and would therefore not do it any more. It needs a long process of inner development and realization for a projection to come back. When it has been withdrawn the disturbing emotional factor vanishes.

As soon as a projection is *really* withdrawn a sort of peace establishes itself one becomes quiet and can look at the thing from an objective angle. One can look at the specific problem or factor in an objective and quiet way and perhaps do some active imagination about it without constantly becoming emotional, or falling back into the emotional tangle. That corresponds to the *albedo*. It is, in a way, the first stage of becoming quieter and more detached and objective, more philosophically detached. One has a standpoint *au dessus de la mêlée*; one can stand on top of the mountain and observe the thunderstorm below, which naturally is still going on, but which one can look at without fear, or feeling threatened by it.

So what the alchemist symbolised with the idea of the whitening was that the material they had been working on had now reached a form of purity and oneness and they could now begin the synthetic work. After the metals have been melted out of the minerals they must be cleansed, which would be the analytical work, and then the chemical synthesis can begin an exact parallel to what happens in analysis with first the analytical and then the synthetic aspect. The *albedo* is characterized by something wonderful, for, the alchemists say, from now on one has simply to feed the fire, keep it going, but the hard part of the work is done. Only, as you will see, the process of getting from the *nigredo* to the *albedo* is repeated many times. Here it is described seven times.



67.

Alchemist meditating in the initial *nigredo* state, corresponding psychologically to the self-reflection induced by conflict and depression.

The next parable again starts with the *nigredo*, and again describes the whole process until it again comes to the *albedo*; it is the same thing seen from a different angle, which is exactly what we experience. How many times in analysis has one got a little bit out of the problem, really feeling at peace and to some extent at one with oneself so that the worst seems to be over? but three weeks later it all begins again as if one had done nothing at all. Many repetitions are required before the experience is consolidated, until finally the work holds.

Question: When did the alchemists begin to have doubts about the projection?

Dr. von Franz: I would say our author has not yet any doubts. Doubt appeared first at the end of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century. That, naturally, is not a very accurate way of putting



it, for there are medieval alchemists even after the 16th century, but some had doubts earlier than that. You could say that, on the whole, doubt started about the time of the Renaissance, after which alchemical symbolism became an allegory, no longer a genuine symbolic experience, and the old texts are thrashed out allegorically.

Basilius Valentinus, for instance, and Michael Maier, and then later the Rosicrucians and the development of the Freemasons are examples. The Freemasons still use the symbolism, as do the Rosicrucians, but to them it is an allegory. They explain it completely rationally, what each thing means; others continued on chemical lines but without speaking of such things as the bride and bridegroom any more, they said that was just flowery language.

Still others used symbolic language but no chemistry. There you could say there was a projection, for now the element of doubt had entered. They really did not believe any more that the thing was to be found in matter, or only half-believed it, or pretended to do so to themselves, but it was not a clean attitude, which is why there came in what has put alchemy into such disrepute, namely the nasty boasting, half-religious gold-maker style. In this text there is an inflation, but nothing of the charlatan, while in the writings of Basilius Valentinus there is an arrogant gold-maker's style. But Gerhard Dorn, who lived at the end of the 16th century, was still a genuine alchemist. I would say it was approximately then that the first doubt arose. Here it is still what we would rather call, from their standpoint, archaic identity the Wisdom of God really *was* in matter, that real belief was brought about through archaic identity.

The second parable is about the flood and death caused by woman and driven out again by her.

When the multitude of the sea has turned towards me and its torrents have flowed over my face, and when my arrows have become drunk with blood and my cells perfumed with marvellous wine, when my barns have been filled with corn, and when the bridegroom with the ten wise virgins has entered my bridal chamber, and when my body has been impregnated by the touch of my bridegroom and when my door has been unlocked and opened by my bridegroom, and after Herod has killed all the children in Bethlehem, and Rachel has wept over all her children, and when the light has come out of the darkness, and when the sun of justice has appeared in Heaven, then the time will be fulfilled, then God will send His son, as He said, whom He made heir to the universe and through whom He created the world and to whom He once said: "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee," to whom the three kings brought precious gifts.

In that day which the Lord has created we will be happy because today

God has had pity on my sadness, God who reigns in Israel. Today death brought by the woman has been driven away by her, and the locks of the underworld have been broken open. Death shall no longer rule and the doors of hell will not stand against it for the tenth drachm which was lost has been found, and the hundredth sheep has been brought home from the desert and the number of our brethren among the fallen angels has been completely restored. Today, my son, you must be happy for there will be no more crying nor pain, for the former things are passed away.

He who has ears to hear let him hear what the spirit of the doctrine tells the sons of wisdom of the woman who introduced death and then drove it away, which the philosophers allude to as follows: "Take away his soul and return it to him again because the corruption of one thing is the generation of the other," which means take away the corrupting humidity and increase it by natural humidity and that will be its perfection and life.

Again at the beginning there is a catastrophe which is described as a deluge, and involves the slaughter of the children at Bethlehem. But as you see, though it again starts with the *nigredo* and therefore with a disaster, the positive aspects are given at greater length. There is the description of a love union, of the bridegroom entering the bridal chamber and the pregnancy of the feminine figure, and then a long and rather conventional allusion to the birth of Christ to whom the three Magi brought their gifts, and then triumph that death has been overcome by this birth.

So it can be said that although the process is repeated there is already a lighter aspect, one which was not hitherto mentioned, namely that the catastrophe happened at the moment of a birth, that just when the *nigredo* was at its worst a secret birth took place in the unconscious. Within the catastrophe, in the midst of depression and confusion, the new symbol of the Self was born. It was born in the unconscious, so the author has not yet realized what has happened, and only vaguely realizes that although he had fallen into this terrible depression and the anima figure had fallen into the earth, something was born.

As you know from Dr. Jung's comments on the divine child, when a hero is born and the birth of Christ is no exception there is always an outburst of the destructive powers. That is why, if there is a suicidal tendency in a person, it will always be strongest at that moment which might be called the crisis of the healing. In a deep depression, or a completely schizoid confusion, only rarely and exceptionally is the danger of suicide great, though it does exist under certain circumstances. But if such a case is nearly through, say on the threshold of healing, then there is often an acute danger



68.

The devil as aerial spirit and ungodly intellect, personification of the negative masculine (destructive animus).

of suicide. Then you must watch the case day and night, a fact well known in asylums.

Naturally this is only an extreme illustration of something which is also true in analytical work on a less dramatic level it is what I call the last attack of the devil. The devil sees he is losing the game and so makes his last desperate attack. Just as when fighting the destructive animus, slowly the woman has begun to fight and stand against him, yet the battle has not been won for he is still hanging round the corner; the devil is not quite driven out and perhaps a little more fire is put into the thing and then comes a final attack, which is generally so bad that it looks as though everything would have to be started all over again for it is as bad as at the very beginning: everything has been lost and the devil is raging as badly as ever before.

Generally that is a very good sign, for it simply means that now hell is losing its power and therefore there is a last attack, the devil

uses the last of his ammunition. Saying goodbye to a neurotic attitude is a very sad business and nobody has ever got out of it without feeling sad, for unfortunately a neurosis is a lovable condition and one resents being separated from it. So when one reaches the final stage, where once and for all it is necessary to say goodbye to some kind of infantility or animus opinion or so on, there is always some kind of a crisis. That is what mythology illustrates by the fact that when the saviour child is born all the powers of darkness attack worse than ever before, and in our own Christian myth we see it in the form of the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem. The divine child naturally always escapes; it is a last outbreak of darkness against something already so powerful that though newly born it cannot be suppressed any more.

The author here illustrates this by saying it is the light born in darkness. You will remember that in Senior's love letter from the sun to the moon it was also said at the end that the light was born in utter darkness, when God would send His son, and then came what you could call the adoption of Christ by God. When St. John the Baptist baptised Christ, the heavens opened and the dove came down and the voice of God said: "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." At that moment it was made manifest that Christ was the son of God.

Here God is feminine, being represented by the Wisdom of God, and the son is the author. So it is a repetition of Christ's life, but it is the author who has been accepted as the son by the Wisdom of God, which means that the archetypal figure which broke in adopted him as a son. He becomes a child of the Wisdom of God. He then sums up the experience by saying that this is the death which woman brought in and which woman has driven out.

In the official Church allegory the woman who brought death into the world was Eve, by the apple of Paradise, and the Virgin Mary drove death away when she gave birth to Christ. So in the patriarchal tradition there are two women: Eve who brought death into this world, and the Virgin Mary who drove death out. Our text is unusual for the 13th century in that somebody dared to say that the woman who brought death into the world and the woman who drove it out were one and the same. There is only one woman Eve and Mary are one.

It is so confused in the text that unless you think about it you might not notice or realize what he is saying, but that is typical for

this author. He says the most shocking and amazing things, but in such beautiful biblical language that one wonders what he is really getting at, and then one realizes the terrible things he is saying, from a medieval point of view.

I think that springs from the fact that he spoke unconsciously; he was overwhelmed by the image of the unconscious and proclaimed its compensatory truth without quite realizing the enormity of what he was saying. He just felt his own experience, that an image of a woman he thought to be the Wisdom of God had killed him and then restored him to life, which is why he describes her as the woman who brought in death and afterwards restored life. This he amplifies in purely chemical or alchemical language by saying: "Take away his soul and bring back his soul. Take away the destructive humidity and nourish it with the natural humidity and that will be perfection."

The *extractio animae*, the extraction of the soul, means in chemical language a distillation. If you evaporate a chemical substance then it has a vapourlike form; that is its soul and if you precipitate or coagulate it again, then it returns into the body, an obvious simile. Then the simile of the humidity comes in too, for by fire the corruptible humidity has to be distilled and then the vivifying humidity is poured in.

That has been described in other alchemical texts, for instance by saying you have to reduce everything to ashes, the driest substance on earth. If you have ever poured water on ashes you will know how much can be absorbed, so they say everything has to be burnt to ashes to make sure every bit of destructive humidity has left the substance; then pure water must be poured on to restore them to solid form.

Pouring water on the pulverized ashes would be nourishing them with living water. That corresponds to our analytical work, for it is in effect what we do when we drive out the corruptible humidity which, in practical language, means all the different kinds of unconsciousness, all the blind and unconscious spots which hamper living existence. We do not even know in how many ways we are hampered in our fullness of life by unconscious assumptions or feelings. That is something more obvious to the other person than to the individual concerned, but if such an unconscious spot is hit in another person, that person will say, "But I thought . . .," for something has just been assumed.

For instance, there are many people who live far below their spiritual level because they assume they are nobodies and are so sure of it that they never even think of questioning the fact. It is so self-evident to them that they would not think of speaking of it to the analyst for they do not think there is anything to discuss. But then one day the dream shows what they think, and they are quite amazed, for they had thought it true that they were nobodies. That would be corruptible humidity, a spot of unconsciousness which has crept into the system with women in the form of animus opinions, or shadow drives, or whatever it may be. It is so self-evident that one does not even think of driving it out, and it is the task in dream analysis to discover such things. It is quite a shock to realize that one has always thought something about which one might think differently.

That is one of thousands of possible examples of what corruptible unconsciousness means. Unconscious feeling, or thinking in a certain way, is a corruptible humidity which we do not notice and it is the aim of the opus to cook all that out. The dreams spot the fact and by interpreting and integrating what they say we slowly get rid of that corruptible humidity. But if we go on too long, if we overanalyse, we miss a certain very decisive moment in the process which should be continued only for a certain time since if it is continued too long people become unspontaneous.

You may have met such overanalysed people who have lost any kind of spontaneity in life. Before they even greet you they say they know they will project the anima onto you, or they come and say that they hate So-and-So and are sure it is a shadow projection. But why shouldn't one dislike somebody? Overanalysing, continuing the process too long, creates a second neurosis, which is a very general disease and very difficult to cure. Naturally it is a kind of unconsciousness too. We could therefore call it the second phase, the return to the water of life, the return to spontaneity, return to an immediate and natural and spontaneous way of living without forgetting what one has learnt.

To climb out of the water and sit in the sun and then have to jump back into the water is a very dangerous business. It can be done by just falling back into the former state, but that has no merit. One should return, but keeping the second form of analytical consciousness, keeping the awareness of the shadow and the anima and so on. So the second phase is conscious spontaneity in which

the participation of consciousness is not lost and that is something very difficult because it is so much easier to go on overanalysing, or to slip back into the former state of unconsciousness.

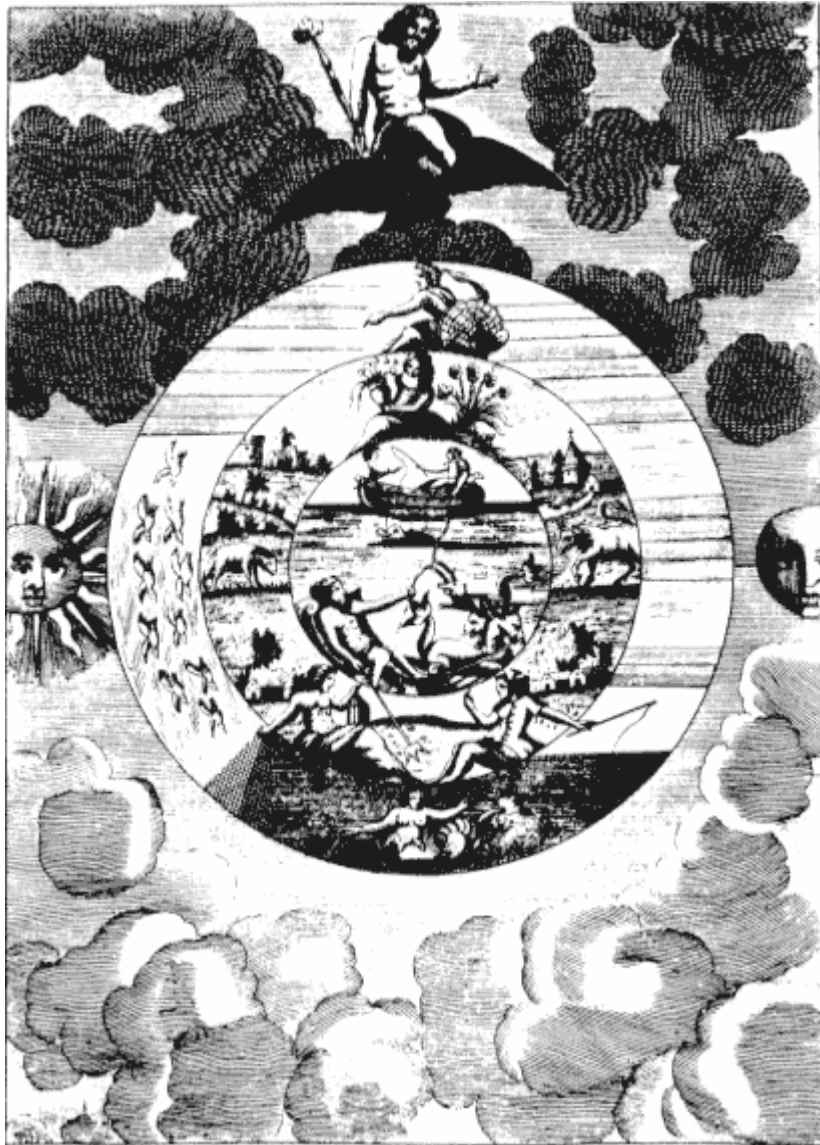
Question: If people are overanalysed, is it not the fault of the analyst, namely that he gives too much interpretation and does not leave the analysand to his own process?

Dr. von Franz: I would not say so. I think that might contribute to such an unfortunate state, but in general, in my experience, that is not the only reason. I know analysts who are completely passive and who excel in not interfering and can still produce overanalysed analysands, because the latter do it themselves! For what was positive in the beginning, namely the need to find out and to reflect and realize what is going on, is experienced as something very redeeming. They have got out of a problem by reflection, by thinking it over, and naturally, because it had such a redeeming quality in the beginning, they keep on with it and miss the moment.

I even think it is necessary that each case *should* reach a period of being overanalysed, that it is a necessary phase of the work, a stage which must be reached so that then this conscious return can take place, namely the realization of the need to return to spontaneity, and returning to it constantly, for otherwise you slip back unconsciously.

The alchemist Gerhard Dorn says that the anima is caught in the body of a man and he has with a mental effort to fish her out, but then the body is dead. That is the way he describes it. He says it would be as if a monk retired from the world and meditated and got his anima out of the body through asceticism and then, he says, if he went on with that he would just be dead. If you reject the body you cannot live, so now you have to get the body back.

Imagine the mind and the soul and body as entities the mind for the Christian is a little higher, it represents good intentions and a positive program of life, etc. Such a person may fish up his anima through a period of asceticism. Dorn compares it to the monk who meditates instead of living. What happens is that the mind pulls up the anima and the body below lies dead. The body has nothing more to say because the projection has been completely withdrawn and that would represent a condition of complete mental introversion the *unio mentalis* between mind and anima. Dorn says he does not want to stop here, for what is to happen to the poor



69.

The secret content of the alchemical work: alchemist and *soror mystica* fishing (centre) for Neptune (animus, the unconscious masculine) and (below) for mermaid (anima, the unconscious feminine). Fishing, a common motif in dreams, refers to the process of becoming aware of unconscious attitudes, opinions, and feelings.



body? He says that now comes a terrible danger because the body should be redeemed too, but if mind and soul go only a bit towards the body they fall plumb into it; it is like an iron magnet and then the whole work is wrong.

Therefore it is to be approached with wisdom, and Dorn does this by a chemical act of imagination: instead of snapping back into the body, the *body too* has to be raised onto a higher level, and then the two are united but not in the old state. That would correspond to saying that one is going to forget about projection and the shadow and so on and just live.

That is why I think the state of being overanalysed is necessary; it is a stage which has to be reached in order that this *unio corporis* be accomplished in the right way, and not according to the old pattern. In an indirect way the analyst allows a mistake to occur, but under certain circumstances you have to allow for that in order to make the return in the right way. I think the mistake an analyst can make is not to know about the necessity for the return, and so when the dreams announce the need for the change it is overlooked.

I remember the dream of an analysand who had overanalysed and who dreamt that he was near water where a man was fishing. In the water he saw a beautiful golden fish and he told the fisherman to get it. But the fisherman, a very natural, simple man, said No, the man should jump in and join the fish! That is a beautiful illustration showing that now the moment of return has come the unconscious could not have spoken more clearly. To jump down and join the fish instead of fishing it out would be completely *contra naturam*, but the process could not have been better illustrated. That was someone who had had eight years of analysis, beginning with a Freudian, and now he should swim with the fish. I think this has to do with taking away the corruptible humidity and bringing back the natural humidity; that would be getting back into the flow of life.

The next parable says:

He who breaks the locks on my doors and takes away the light from its place, and who loosens the fetters of my prison of darkness and gives my soul which is thirsty corn and honey, and invites me to dinner so that I can rest in peace, so that the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost shall rest over me, that one will have had pity on me. One will collect me from all countries and pour pure water over me, so that I will be purified from my greatest sin and from the demon of midday.

From the soles of my feet to my head there is no health in me. One will also cleanse my hidden and extraneous blemishes so that I will forget all my



70.

The Reunion of the Soul and the Body, by William Blake. The alchemical stage of reanimating the body (after the *separatio*, differentiating spirit and matter) corresponds to the psychological goal of "conscious spontaneity," i.e., participating in the flow of life consciously yet without analysing everything.

sins, for God has baptised me with oil and has given me the capacity for penetration and liquefaction in the day of my resurrection when I will be glorified by God. Because this generation comes and goes, till that one comes who should be sent and who frees me from the yoke of my prison in which we sat for seventy years near the waters of Babylon, crying and hanging up our harps because the daughters of Jerusalem were proud and high-necked and flirted with their eyes.

Then the Lord will make bald the heads of the daughters of Sion, then the law will come forth from Sion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. On that day seven women will seize one man and they will say we have eaten our bread and covered ourselves with our own clothes, why do you not defend our blood which is shed like water in Jerusalem? And they will receive the divine answer: "Wait still a little till the number of our brothers is complete, and he who then will be left in Jerusalem will be saved and the filth of the daughters of Sion will be washed away by the spirit of wisdom and insight. Ten acres of vineyards will give one bucketful of wine, and thirty measures of corn three bushels."

He who understands this will be unshakable in eternity. He who has ears to hear shall hear what the spirit of the doctrine says to the sons of wisdom about the Babylonian captivity, which lasted seventy years and which the philosophers amplify by the following words: "Manifold are the aspects of the seventy prescriptions."

This chapter is not as interesting as the others so I can finish it briefly. There is again the idea of a prison being broken open, and then of the daughters of Jerusalem who have been arrogant and luxurious and have to be washed and punished by the spirit of wisdom and insight. Then there is the notion of the Babylonian captivity in which one has to stay on for seventy years till one is freed from it, and afterwards comes an allusion to the fact that this captive being will experience a resurrection. It says, "In the day of my resurrection I will come out when I will be glorified by God." The analogy to the former chapters is clear, but before it was first the dark cloud which was the negative thing, then the water and Herod killing the innocents; now there is the aspect of being in a prison and being punished for arrogance, and that from this kind of captivity, which lasts a certain time, one will also be freed.

You probably noticed the repeated mention of the number seven. Before we had the seven stars and now there are the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity and so on. This has to do with the fact that seven was looked on from the standpoint of number symbolism as the number of evolution, because of the seven planets the five known planets, plus the sun and moon which are the constituents of every human totality represented in the horoscope. The idea is that there are seven days in the week and then the cycle begins



71.

The alchemical seven-petalled flower, symbolising the seven planets and seven stages of transformation, relates psychologically to "evolution in time," the slow process of becoming conscious.

again there is always the idea that seven has to do with a process of slow evolution in time. And that is why here the time factor is in the foreground: it is a problem of having to stay in prison for a certain length of time, which is characterized by evolution, after which a resurrection will take place.

It compensates what we all also know from our own experience of the unconscious, namely a tremendous conscious feeling of impatience where people always wonder why they do not get on and whether they cannot yet do this and that, and so on. One has sometimes to tell people that they have to remain in their depression and difficulty as long as it lasts. People ask how long it will take to get rid of their symptoms, or problems, or whatever it may be, and one can only say until the evolution has taken place; taken from a sidereal time standpoint, nobody knows how long it will last. It can be long or short, because as Dr. Jung says, one does not solve conflicts, one outgrows them. Therefore to come out of a problem means an evolution, either long or short.

The problem here in our text is certainly one which cannot be solved, it can only be outgrown through an inner transformation of the author. That is the meaning of the endless repetition of the same problem, which is bound to a number which stands for evolution. This man has fallen into a problem which he cannot solve intellectually, and that is destiny. He has been hit by fate and can only grow from it when he has recovered his balance, if there is still time but if St. Thomas was the author then he died in the middle of it.

The motifs of death and resurrection after death are beginning to show up, together with the idea of eternal life. For instance: He who hears this will be not shaken in eternity. When one is resurrected,

the figure says, then one has the power of penetration in the day of resurrection. The power of penetration is a very strange expression in this text because from Greek time on it was said that the philosopher's stone had the capacity of penetrating every other object, and that is linked up with the idea of the Egyptian funeral ritual and ideas of life after death.

In Egypt it was thought that if somebody did not go through the process of resurrection properly, then that person would after death be imprisoned in the coffin chamber, while someone who had gone through the process of becoming Osiris and becoming divine, i.e., had gone through the whole ritual of the resurrection, would be able, as the papyri texts say, to appear in any shape any day. That meant the dead could leave the coffin chamber; they could leave the tomb of the pyramid and walk about in the daylight and could change shape. They could appear as a crocodile and lie about in the sun by the Nile, or they could fly about as an ibis.

The highest goal of the resurrection was thought of as this ability to be completely free to change into any shape and to move about through anything in this material world, a kind of ghostlike being which could walk through closed doors and could manifest in any desired form. That is the highest goal of life after death, according to the papyri of the Egyptian prayers for the dead, and the alchemists connected this idea with their concept of the philosopher's stone, that divine nucleus in man which is immortal and ubiquitous and able to penetrate any material object. It is an experience of something immortal lasting beyond physical death. You know that in parapsychological reports this is also sometimes mentioned as a typical quality of the soul of a dying person.

I remember the story of a man who had had a severe operation. He woke up from the narcosis and feeling all right got out of bed and walked through the hospital. He noticed, but without much of a shock, that he could walk through closed doors, though he did not take that very seriously, it did not quite come to his consciousness. He walked on right out of the hospital to the street and suddenly a voice said to him: "If you want to return, this is the last moment, quick!" So in a panic he rushed back into the hospital and at that moment he really woke up from the anesthetic and the doctor was saying: "My God, we nearly didn't bring him back." His heart had failed and through heart massage they had brought him back at that very moment, but subjectively he had the experience of just walking

out and the specific experience of walking through doors, which he half-consciously thought was rather odd.

So you see that is the subtle body in a parapsychological form, the ghost of the dead already capable of walking through shut doors. These reports have to be taken as they are, we cannot discuss them psychologically. We can believe them or not; we cannot make a point out of such things because they are reports of unique situations but probably from such experiences has arisen the generally widespread idea that the ghost of the dead, the surviving soul, can walk through material objects, something believed in all countries where they believe in ghosts. That was and is looked on as proof of the immaterial, immortal aspect of the psyche.

If we take this, not as an experience of the death process, but as the experience of a living being, it could be the influence of the unconscious on the surroundings not an intentional one, but because one is in connection with the Self, the Self begins to have a certain effect on other people. As soon as one *intends* to exert such an influence it generally goes, but an unintentional influence can certainly happen. *If one is connected with the Self inwardly, then one can penetrate all life situations.* Inasmuch as one is not caught in them, one walks through them; that means there is an innermost nucleus of the personality which remains detached, so that even if the most horrible things happen to one, the first reaction is not a thought, or a physical reaction, but rather an interest in the meaning.

It is as if a part of the conscious alertness of the personality remained steadily concentrated on the meaningfulness of any event in life, so that one is never unconsciously lost or caught in it. Psychological captivity is an emotional factor. Being caught is simply being caught in something emotional or instinctive. If one is caught in a projection, a feeling of hate or love, one can't get out of it, which is why people always say: "I'm awfully sorry, but I can't help it."

That is a prison, for a prison is any kind of psychological factor in which one feels trapped, while if one has an awareness of and constant alertness to the Self, one is no longer caught in anything; there is an innermost part of the personality which remains free and cannot be caught any more. The state of helplessness in which one is caught by one's own inner processes stops, which amounts to a tremendous steadying of the innermost core of the personality; that

is comparable to the philosopher's stone, which is symbolically what the steady inner experience forms.

Question: Would you connect this with what you said earlier about the overanalysed person who had to jump into the stream with the golden fish? Because that person was also staying outside the experience.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, but if he returns now and swims with the fish he will not think he is a fish and he will not be caught in the fish existence. One returns to experience, naive experience, but one is no longer caught in it. To return to the water, to use the metaphor of the dream, would mean to go completely and spontaneously into the experience while something yet remains outside, as if a second part of the personality were watching the experience.

If you use Eastern terms, you could say that you go on living spontaneously but one part of you is concerned with Tao all the time. You are not caught by what is happening, but are directed towards Tao, and if you can detach from life as much as that you have reached immortality; that is something which cannot be altered even by death death becomes a chance event which does not affect the *nucleus* of the personality, so that at least subjectively it is an experience of being immortal.

Question: Jumping into the water is like jumping consciously into the unconscious, isn't it?

Dr. von Franz: No, not always; in that case I would say it meant jumping consciously into some experience, an experience of life. With an introvert it would be that. In this case it was not jumping into the unconscious he did that long ago it was jumping into life, beginning to live again without always thinking: "That's my anima," and so on.

Remark: It would mean the river of life.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, getting into the river of life.

Question: But is spontaneity not incompatible with consciousness?

Dr. von Franz: No, that is the paradox which has to be reached conscious spontaneity. It is being spontaneous but with a slight retardation. Consciousness becomes something like retarded spontaneity. Put practically: suppose you are in a situation where

you get angry and intend to let your anger out because that is what you feel like spontaneously, and you are not going to be unspontaneous. Yet it is not like just flying into a rage for then the rage gets you. Rather you have it in hand. You stop and time it a minute, say Yes or No to it, the time is measured, and then you let it out. Then it is the paradox of conscious spontaneity.

The other may accuse you of putting on an act, saying you were not really angry; but it *was* honest anger, only consciousness had it absolutely in hand and in that way it was consciously active. It is a paradox for it is consciously active and still spontaneous. That I would call conscious spontaneity complete spontaneity yet always knowing what one is doing.

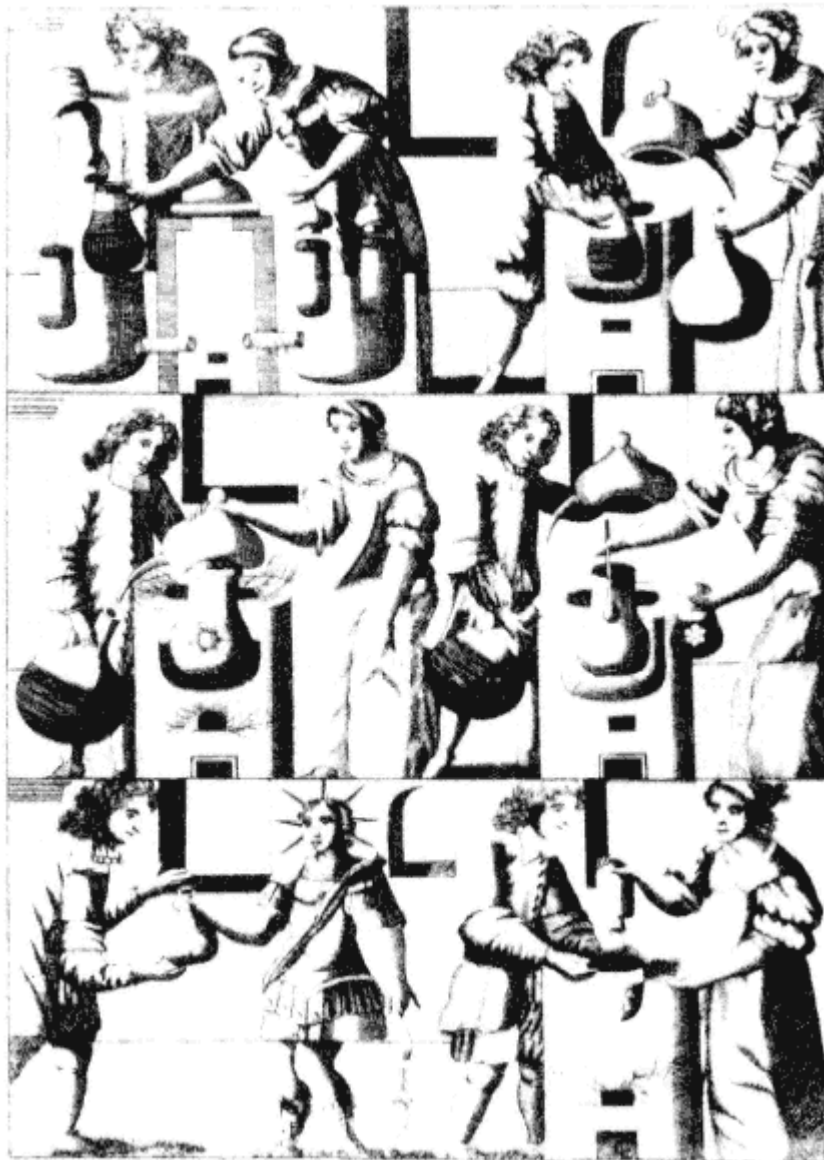
Remark: The water was transparent in the dream, so it couldn't be the unconscious.

Dr. von Franz: That is right, in this man's case it was not unconsciousness, it meant life. He was an introvert and had overanalysed so much that he didn't live any more and he had simply to learn to go and live in spite of all he knew.

For instance, he had a terrible boss in his profession, a brutal military officer who liked to shout at people if the work was not brought punctually. He treated them like dogs, which naturally had a castrating effect upon other men. My analysand's spontaneous feeling was to hit back, but that kind of thing he could not do. He always said his boss must be a shadow figure for him, he always analysed his aggression. So jumping into the water meant, among other things, just to be aggressive, but to time it right, because he could have hit this man and knocked him out, and to knock out your boss would not be a good thing for you depend on him for a living! It had to be done in the right way, so once he shouted back and said he was not going to be treated like that, and he got up and walked out of the room and slammed the door.

The result was that his boss invited him to supper. He said he was a real man and he made friends with him. That was the result of for once jumping into the water and living, instead of always analysing his own aggression and the awfulness of his aggressive shadow but he had to do it consciously, because his naive, spontaneous reaction would have been to knock out the man's teeth, which would have been a bit too much!





72.

Alchemists at work on various stages of the process. Enlightenment is personified as the sun (bottom left) bringing the golden flower, symbol of the philosopher's stone.

Lecture 9  
Aurora Consurgens

We were in the middle of the circular process, as you remember, where each chapter seems to begin with a similar situation to use an alchemical expression, with a *nigredo* and then a description of a certain treatment of matter, and at the end of each chapter there is an aspect of the *albedo*. It is first shown in the form of the black cloud which covers the earth and the soul or woman who is redeemed from it, and then it comes in the form of a flood covering matter and a woman bringing and then driving death away again, after which the white pearls appear.

In the last chapter we commented upon, the *nigredo* took the form of the Babylonian captivity, which lasted seventy years and from which later the daughters of Jerusalem and of Sion are redeemed. The process has been described either as a washing process the matter is washed again and again or in the form of an anointing with the water of the Church, the chrism, so that the power of penetration enters the object treated, and so on.

Just which object is treated is the great problem; sometimes it is said the *prima materia* is the matter treated in the alchemical process, but then from the sayings it is clear that it is the Wisdom of God which has, so to speak, fallen and become identical with matter, and then again it is sometimes the author himself for he speaks in the first person: "*I am crying in the night. . .*" From that we have to conclude that the spirit in matter and the author are sometimes contaminated the difference between the two is blurred, and the alchemist has become literally identical with the mystical object he is cooking in his vessel.

This borders on, or gets very close to, a psychotic state where it is typical for ego consciousness to be swallowed up, having become identical with certain complexes of the unconscious, generally of an archetypal nature. It also happens in what Dr. Jung calls a voluntary psychosis, namely in active imagination. We therefore do not quite know and cannot quite judge by the paper itself, whether we are faced with an involuntary psychosis or with what one could

call a voluntary psychosis, namely with a product of such a form of meditation.

If my hypothesis is correct and this document was written by St. Thomas of Aquinas in his death struggle, then both these things are not quite true. But there is a third possibility, i.e., that in this case it is an irruption of an archetypal content of the unconscious which cannot be called a psychotic episode, but rather a premortal invasion of the unconscious, so to speak, which can also take on similar forms, reached not by meditation but by a sudden breaking through of the collective unconscious into the very rational mental system of an unusual personality. Then these chapters would show how in the death struggle the personality still tries to assimilate this shock, to digest it and find a right attitude towards it, to integrate the content which has broken in. That is my hypothesis of the text. It is not more than an hypothesis; I can only say it is probable, but cannot declare it as a certainty.

Here is the next chapter:

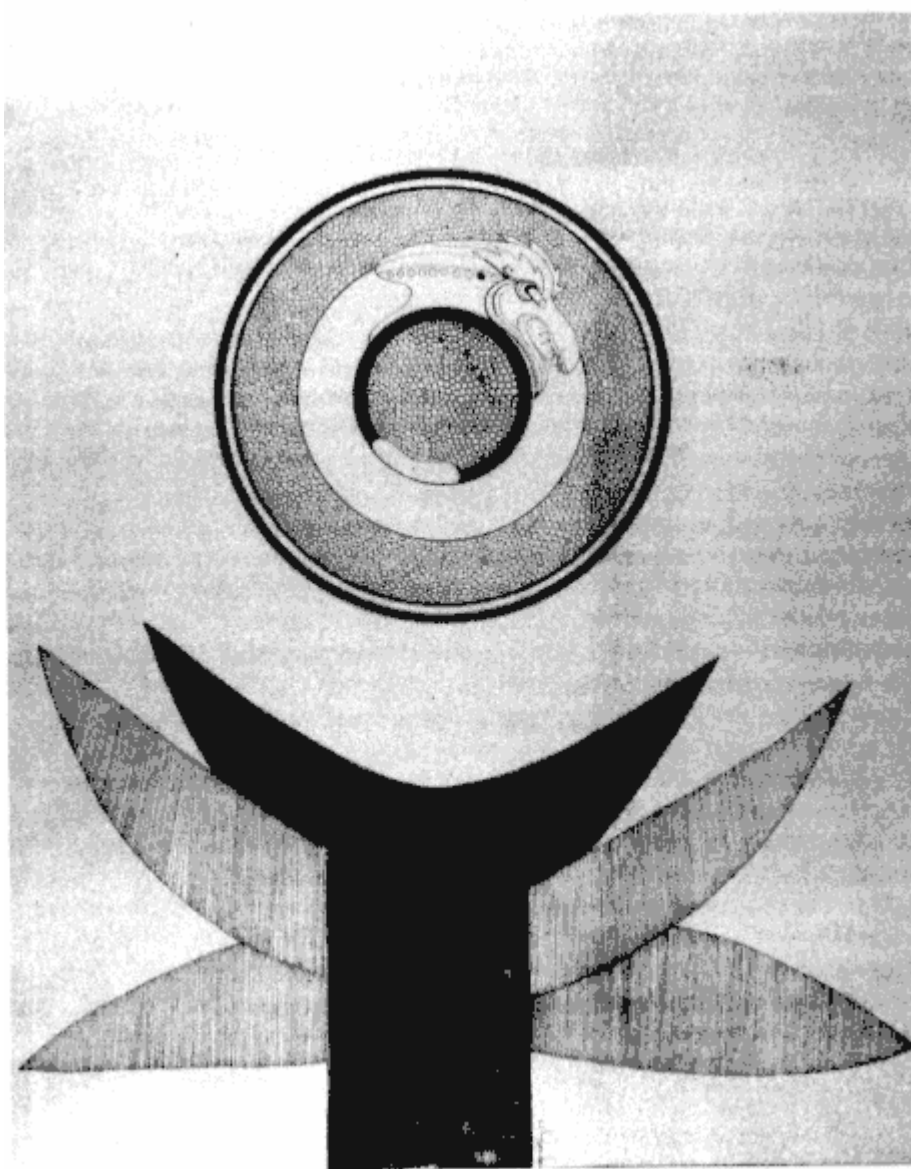
He who does the will of my Father and casts off this world into the world, he shall sit with me upon the throne of my kingdom above the chair of David and the thrones of the people of Israel. That is the will of my Father, that one may see that He is true and that there is none other who gives abundantly, without stint or hesitation, to all nations truly, and His only begotten Son, God of Gods, Light of Lights, and of the Holy Ghost which proceedeth from both and is coequal with the Father and the Son. For in the Father is eternity, and in the Son equality, and in the Holy Ghost the union of eternity and equality.

Inasmuch as it is said, as the Father so the Son and so the Holy Ghost, these three are one, namely body, spirit, and soul, for all perfection is founded upon the number three, i.e., measure, number, and weight for the Father is made of none, the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceedeth from both.

To the Father is attributed wisdom by which He rules and orders all things in moderation, whose ways are incomprehensible and whose judgement is beyond understanding.

To the Son is attributed the truth [but with the nuance of the *realized* truth] since when He dwelt among us He accepted something which He was not, perfect God and at the same time man sprung from human loins and rational soul; obeying the order of His Father and supported by the Holy Ghost He has redeemed the world lost through the sin of the parents.

To the Holy Ghost is attributed the love which transforms every terrestrial thing into a heavenly one and this in three respects: by baptising it in the stream, with blood, and in fiery flames. In the stream he quickens and purifies, washing away all dirt and removing all that is "smokey" from the soul.



73.

Birth of the Dragon, by Margaret Jacoby. Snakes and dragons are common representations, in mythology and dreams, of the impersonal spirit of the unconscious; when it irrupts into consciousness it may demand to be pictured in order to assimilate the experience.

As it is said: Thou dost fructify the waters for the vivification of souls. For water nourishes all living beings, therefore water streaming down from Heaven intoxicates the earth which receives the power by which all metals can be dissolved. Therefore the earth desires water, saying: Send thy spiritual pneuma, i.e., water, and it will be renewed and thou createst anew the face of the earth, for he bloweth his breath onto the earth and maketh it tremble and when he toucheth the mountains they smoke, but when he baptises in blood he nourisheth.

As it is said: The water of blessed wisdom has nourished me and his blood is the true potion, for the soul is located in the blood. As Senior says: The soul remains immersed in water which is similar to it in warmth and humidity and in which all life consists. But when he baptises with flaming fire, then he pours in the soul and endows perfection of life. For fire shapes and perfects the whole. As it is written: He breathes into his nostrils his living breath and man who before was dead becomes a living soul.

The first, second, and third effects are testified to by the philosophers who say: "The water conserves the embryo during three months within the womb, air nourishes and sustains it for three months, and during the last three months fire preserves it." And the child shall not come to light before all these months are fulfilled, but then it shall be born and receive life from the sun who is the resuscitator of all dead things. Therefore it is ascribed to this spirit because of his perfection and sevenfold gift that he hath seven powers in his effect upon the earth.

This is a very long chapter so I will skip part of it. First he warms up the earth, and so on:

As it is said: Fire penetrates and refines through its warmth and Caled Minor says: Warm up the coldness of the one with the warmth of the other. As Senior says: Put the male over the female, i.e., warmth over coldness. Secondly, the spirit extinguishes the inner fire, of which the prophet says: And the fire was kindled in their assembly and flame consumed the impious on earth, and Caled Minor put out the fire of the one with the coldness of the other.

There are a few other quotations which mean the same thing, namely that you have to put out fire with fire.

Thirdly, the spirit softens and liquefies the hardness of the earth. In the process he will send out his word and liquefy them, his pneuma will blow and the water will flow. And somewhere else it is said: The woman dissolves the man, as the man congeals the woman, i.e., the spirit dissolves the body and softens it, and the body lets the spirit become solid.

Fourthly, the spirit illuminates, for it expunges all darkness from the body, as it is expressed in the hymn: Purify the horrible darkneses of our mind, let the senses be enlightened. And the prophet says: He leads them the whole night in the light of the fire and the night shall be as bright as the day. As Senior also observed, he makes every black thing white and every white thing red, for water whitens and fire gives light. And in the Book of the Quintessence it is written: Thou beholdest a marvellous light in the darkness.

Fifthly, the spirit segregates the pure from the impure, for it removes all accidental things of the soul, the vapours and bad odours, and as it is said: Fire separates what is different and aggregates what is similar. Therefore the prophet says thou hast proved me in the fire and no evil was found in me. And Hermes says: Thou shalt separate the dense from the subtle and earth from fire. And Alphidius says: The earth becomes liquid and is transformed into water, water becomes liquid and is transformed into air, air becomes liquid and is transformed into fire, fire becomes liquid and is transformed into glorified earth. And this effect is what Hermes means when he says in his secret: Thou shalt separate the earth from fire, and the subtle from the dense, and this must be done smoothly.

Sixthly, the spirit raises up that which is low, for it brings to the surface the soul that is hidden deep in the earth of which the prophet says: He bringeth forth the prisoners in his power and also, thou has delivered my soul from the deepest Hell. Isaiah also affirms: The pneuma of the Lord lifted me up. And the philosophers say: Whoever can make the hidden visible understands the whole work, and whoever knows our Cambar [i.e., fire] he is a true philosopher.

Seventhly and lastly, he confers the living spirit, spiritualizing by his breath the earthly body of which it is said: Thou spiritualizeth man through thy breath. And Solomon says: The spirit of God filleth the earth. The prophet also says: And through the pneuma of his mouth all their glory exists. And Rasis says in the Light of Lights [an Arabic text]: The heavy can only be raised by the light and the light can only be weighed down by the heavy. And in the Turba [another text] it is said: Make the body incorporeal and the solid volatile.

All this is done with our spirit because it alone can purify that which was conceived of impure seed. Do not the Scriptures say: Wash yourselves and you shall be pure. And Naaman was told to dip seven times in the Jordan when he would become clean. For there is only one baptism for the ablution of sins, as the Creed and the prophets testify. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear what the spirit of the doctrine says to the sons of the science of the effect of the sevenfold spirit, of which the whole Scriptures are filled and to which the philosophers allude in these words: Distill it seven times, when you will have accomplished separation from all destructive humidity.

It has probably struck you that the tone of the text is no longer ecstatic. From time to time there are beautiful poetic quotations, but in general there is a rather monotonous tone in this chapter, and in the beginning, as you no doubt noticed, there is a nearly literal repetition of the credo of the symbolum: Father of the Son, Light of Lights, God and Man, and so on; it may vary in expression in the various creeds, but there is no great difference. Here, naturally, we have the Catholic version.

As you remember, at first in the process there was an overwhelming, positive invasion of the Wisdom of God, whom the author praised in his elation, then he seemed to get into an inflation

he scorned those who do not know anything of such an experience and became aggressive against ignorant people, then he dropped down into something rather boring and made a play on the words *aurora, aurea hora*.

After that first phase begins what I would call the circulation of a spiral: he always begins with a dark process and describes what has been done, and then ends with a positive result, and this is repeated. Here we are in the middle of the spiral, but what would you say was typical for this chapter compared to the previous chapters? There is a striking return to the official Christian attitude! At the beginning he even repeats, literally, the symbolum of the Creed, the Confession of Faith, the official version of it: I believe in God the Father, and so on. Why does he do this? What does it show?

Answer: That he is more or less back to himself.

Dr. von Franz: Yes, he is returning to his conscious self; he is trying to return to his former conscious attitude, or you could say to retire from the flood which drowned him, and there you see what an official creed, or religious attitude, is good for; it is a boat into which one can retire when the sharks attack.

One can go out bathing in the unconscious, but if the sharks come there is the boat to get back into, which is why the Church has been compared to a boat, or an island, to which one can retire when the influx of the unconscious becomes too strong. If I have only my human reason and just tell myself to be reasonable, that is not enough to keep back the influx of the unconscious, but to have a belief which still exists in consciousness is like a boat, a place to which one can retire.

We must conclude, therefore, that our author was not a heretic and did not doubt his Creed but believed it, as one would expect of a cleric of the 13th century. He was a truly believing Catholic, a medieval Christian, and he therefore now tries to retire to his belief, but there is one change! If you look at the balance, he first confesses that he believes in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that lasts for about the first ten lines of the first page, but the whole of the rest of the chapter is concerned with the effects of the Holy Ghost. That is amazing. The Holy Ghost fills the whole of one of the longest chapters in the entire book, he is concerned only with its different alchemical effects. Thus the whole emphasis of his Creed is suddenly shifted towards the Holy Ghost.