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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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**The Alchemical Attitude in Art Therapy:
A Transformation Perspective**

Jacqueline Wilson

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art Education and Art Therapy

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada**

February 1985

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ISBN 0-315-30608-4

ABSTRACT

The Alchemical Attitude in Art Therapy: A Transformation Perspective

Jacqueline Wilson

An essentially imaginal attitude toward art therapy, based on Carl Gustav Jung's investigation of the psychology and symbolism of the alchemical tradition is proposed. It is suggested that this perspective is a metaphorical derivative of a dialectical process at work throughout the animal, vegetable and mineral worlds, and may encompass the continuum of psychological experiencing, from the deepest pathologizings to the highest expressions of wholeness. Alchemical images and symbols, observable in modern dreams, fantasies and art work, are explored and examined, therefore, as natural products of the psyche or soul in its attempts to grow and transform. A review of one man's experiences in art therapy is presented in order to illustrate the psychic origins of the model, which is seen to be released from the literalisms of a

preconceived theory and instead to be aligned with the creative process itself.

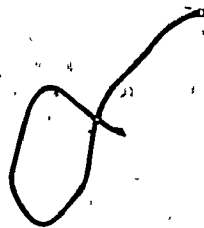


Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Alchemical Ideation	17
3	History of Alchemy	27
4	Alchemy and Individuation in Relation to Early Development of the Individual	44
5	The Work	69
	5.01 The Materials	72
	5.02 The Medium (The Psychoid)	105
	5.03 The Equipment	114
	5.04 The Procedure	131
	5.05 Active Imagination	147
	5.06 Symbol Formation and the Creative Process	160
6	Soulmaking	166
7	Summary	216
8	Conclusion	229
	Endnotes	236
	References	242

List of Illustrations

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1 | <u>Mountain of the adepts</u>
<u>Michelspacher, Cabala</u> (1654).
Photo Archives, Marburg. | 22 |
| 2 | <u>Cloud of chaos</u>
<u>Marolles, Tableaux du temple des</u>
<u>muses</u> (1655).
British Museum. | 48 |
| 3 | Series of illustrations from
<u>Rosarium philosophorum.</u>
In Mylius, J.D. (1622).
<u>Philosophia reformata.</u>
Frankfurt. | 76 |
| 4 | <u>Alchemist meditating in nigredo.</u>
<u>Jamsthaler, Viatorium spagyricum.</u>
(1625), p. 27. C.G. Jung Coll. | 82 |
| 5 | <u>Loon and fish. Colour print by</u>
<u>Jackson Beardsy, (1973).</u>
Canadian Native Prints Ltd.,
Vancouver, B.C. | 89 |
| 6 | <u>Transformation of Mercurius.</u>
<u>Barchusen, Elementa chemiae</u> (1718),
fig. 76. Nat. Lib., Paris. | 91 |
| 7 | <u>The reunion of the soul and the body.</u>
<u>Illustration to Blair's The Grave</u>
(1808), drawn by William Blake,
etched by Schiavonetti. | 100 |
| 8 | <u>Alchemist and soron mystica fishing.</u>
<u>Mutus liber</u> (1702), fig. 3.
Mellon Coll., Yale Univ. Lib. | 117 |
| 9 | <u>Alchemical furnace.</u>
<u>Geber, De Alchimia</u> (1529),
frontispiece. (C.G.J.) | 118 |
| 10 | <u>Philosophical egg.</u>
<u>Jamsthaler, Viatorium spagyricum.</u>
(1625) C.G. Jung Coll. | 121 |

11	<u>Artists in library and laboratory.</u> <u>Maier, Tripus aureus (1618),</u> <u>from title page (M.C.A.O.)</u>	124.
12(a)	Triadic possibilities in art therapy.	136
12(b)	Triadic possibilities in art therapy.	138
13(a)	The therapeutic relationship. Diagram from <u>The analytic encounter</u> (p. 25) by M. Jacoby (1984) Toronto: Inner City Books.	145
13(b)	Illustration 3 from <u>Rosarium</u> <u>Philosophorum.</u>	145
14	Selected illustrations from Mylius, J.D. <u>Philosophia reformata.</u>	168
15	<u>The quaternity of the cross in</u> <u>the zodiac.</u> Bohme, <u>Signatura</u> <u>rerum,</u> in Amsterdam edn. (1682), frontispiece.	213
16	<u>Entering the city with bliss-</u> <u>bestowing hands</u> The Ten Ox-herding Pictures. Suzuki, <u>Manual of Zen Buddhism.</u>	233
17	<u>The royal pair from</u> Jung, C.G., <u>Figurarum</u> <u>aegyptiorum sectarum,</u> p. 27 Cited in Jung (1963) <u>Mysterium</u> <u>Coniunctionis,</u> C.W. 14.	239

"...he who possesses the knowledge of this art should be scrupulously careful how he delivers it to another, and should regard it as the peculiar privilege of those who excel in virtue."

(Hermetic Museum. p. 9)

"In a sense, the secret of the psyche is safe because it is not communicable to those who have not yet experienced it for themselves."

• (Edinger, 1978(a), p. 10)

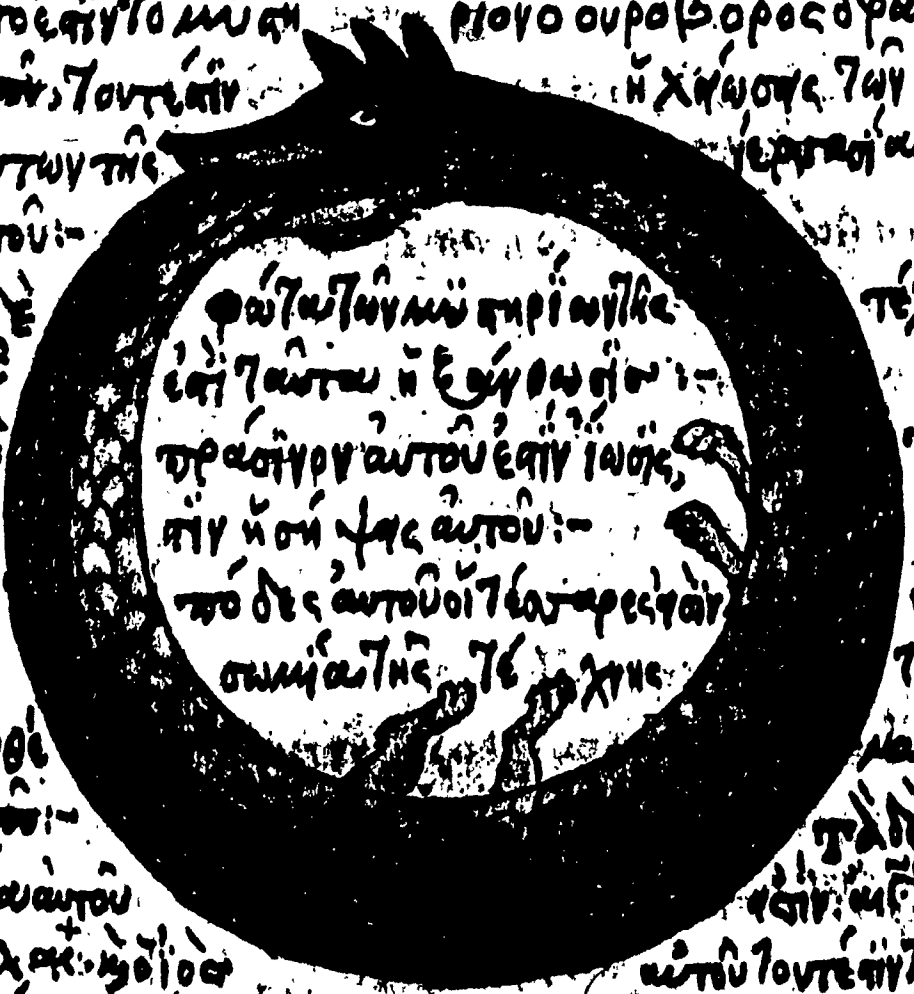
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The Uroboros, the dragon feeding on its own tail, is a reminder of the eternal, cyclic nature of existence. Here, as in all alchemical art, the colouring is of great importance: green is regarded as the colour of the beginning, red is associated with the union of opposites and gold relates to the goal of the work.

Pelecanos, T. (1478) Copy of Synosius. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. grec. 2327, f. 297. Reprinted in De Rola (1973).

Τούτο εἶν' τὸ μυστήριον ὁ οὐραβόρος δράκων
 πρὸς τούτῳ εἶν' ἡ χάρις τῶν σω-
 ματιῶν τῆς γενεᾶς αὐτοῦ:-

Τὰ δὲ φῶτα τῶν μυστηρίων ἔστι
 αὐτῶν ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ:-
 Τὸ δὲ πρῶτον αὐτοῦ εἶν' ἰωσήφ
 τὴν ἡσυχίαν αὐτοῦ:-
 Οἱ δὲ πόδες αὐτοῦ οἱ ἰσχυροὶ αὐτοῦ
 ὡς αὐτῆς τῆς τέχνης



τέχνης
 τοῦ
 ἡγε-
 τοῦ
 κατὰ
 τὰ δὲ
 εἶν' αὐτῶν
 ὡς αὐτοῦ
 τούτου

ὡς αὐτοῦ
 θαλάσσης καὶ ὁ ὅτι
Δράκων τις παρά κ' τῆς φύλας τῶν τοιμασίων τούτων
 τοῦ χρυσάμμου· πρὸς τὸν θύσον καὶ πὸ δερμά-
 τοσόν, καὶ λαβὼν τὰ σάρκα αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων,
 πρὸς τὸ σόμιον τοῦ μαοῦ ποίησον αὐτὸ βάσιν
 καὶ ἀνάβιβη καὶ εὐρίσῃς ἐκείτῳ τὸ ζήτημα τοῦ χρυ-
 ματοῦ· τοῦ γὰρ ἱερῆος τοῦ χαλκαίου μετέτεθι τοῦ
 χρώματος τῆς φύσεως καὶ γέγονεν ἀργυράνθος·
 ὃν μετ' ὀλίγον οὐκ ἤμελλεν εὐθελῆσαι εὐρί-
 σθαι αὐτὴν καὶ χρυσαῖον· τὸ δὲ τοῦ θύου ἀκάνθου
 λαβὼν θύον ἀπύριν λήσιν οὐραβόρου· ἅτα
 λαβὼν ἄχμιν δὲ καὶ ἀνέψε ἐως ἰδοὶ πλεύσῃ καὶ γί-
 νηται ἁκαυστον· δοκιμάζον καὶ πέρον καὶ βλέπον

1 INTRODUCTION

I am in a forest setting -- deep in the woods. Some people are carving stones and I look for one for myself. I see that there is a book of instructions which tells how to plan a design by modifying existing ones based on mysterious signs and symbols. I do not feel comfortable with this and feel that somehow I should find my own inspiration. I look for my stone and find an interesting lump of matter and know that it is mine. It is certainly not firm enough to carve -- it is only barely formed. My feeling is that I have to wait for it to solidify, so I find a place among the roots of a tree and place it there to mature, knowing that it will be safe. I will recover it later when Time has done its work.

This is an initial dream. I dreamed it after my first-ever session with a patient in art therapy a little over two years ago. As with the "unready stone"

I put it aside for a while and applied myself to learning as much as I could about becoming an art therapist. Over a period of time, in the course of exploring the various theories and ideologies in relation to practical work with patients, I began to feel the need for, in Hillman's (1979) words, "a consistent psychological attitude" rather than a "coherent psychological theory" (p. 194).

I was gradually coming to see that there evolves a reciprocal relationship between whatever model one uses and the experiences that one has in life -- both in and out of the therapeutic setting: reflection upon the model in the light of new experiences alters one's perceptions of the processes involved and leads to the establishing of new priorities. In the midst of my misgivings about ever finding an adequate container for this kind of thinking, I remembered the dream: it became apparent that what I sought was the Philosophers' Stone itself and that I had little choice in the matter. As a result, this thesis represents an interim examination of the stone in the tree-roots. I am very much aware that it is still only partly formed and that there is yet much work to be done as well as a lengthy waiting to be sustained: the achievement of the Stone

is a lifetime task and is by no means a certainty.

Carl Jung (1954) expressed his opinion that [t]heories in psychology are the very devil. It is true that we need certain points of view for their orienting and heuristic value, but they should always be regarded as mere auxiliary concepts that can be laid aside at any time. We still know so very little about psyche that it is positively grotesque to think that we are far enough advanced to frame general theories. No doubt theory is the best cloak for lack of experience and ignorance, but the consequences are depressing: bigotedness, superficiality and scientific sectarianism (p. 7).

With this forcefully worded caution in mind, I should like to propose an essentially imaginal attitude towards art therapy -- one which may be seen to encompass the entire continuum of psychological experiencing -- based upon Jung's (1961, p. 118) own insights into the psychology of alchemy. Alchemy is based upon what appears to be a natural dialectical process which is operational throughout the animal,

vegetable and mineral worlds. There exists an ever-repeating cycle of thesis, antithesis and synthesis which serves to underline the notion that the principle of change is our only certainty in life: as each new synthesis becomes established, it too meets its opposition and reaches yet a further synthesis. It is possible to see that this simple formula efficiently, yet non-reductively, describes all we would expect to meet in our inner and outer worlds of collective and personal experience. Cirlot (1962, p. 8) calls alchemy "the pattern of all other work" which would suggest that an alchemical model in art therapy could adequately contain other theoretical formulations for understanding the psyche. Indeed, when attempting to pinpoint the relationship between the alchemical and other thought models I am struck by the similarities in so many of the approaches which at first glance seem diametrically opposed. This is entirely in keeping with the alchemical view which expressly concerns itself with such issues as separation, opposition and reunion. Jung (cited in Newman, 1980) states that

[w]e know for certain that just any method or any procedure or any theory, seriously believed, conscientiously applied and

supported by a humanely congenial understanding can have a remarkable therapeutic effect. Therapeutic efficacy is by no means the prerogative of any particular system. What counts is the character and the attitude of the therapist (p. 124).

It seems likely therefore that there is an underlying unity, a common thread uniting our various attempts to understand psyche and its manifestations in the temporal world.

From this perspective it is possible to view all theory as theoria -- the projection of rich fantasy from the unus mundus, the collective unconscious, upon the material of the psychotherapeutic work. In this way alone can theory be considered living and vital, as opposed to being an intellectual structure which makes our work easier by providing a grid to place over any given material. In many ways a commitment to theoria, which by its nature carries a strong affective component, makes one's work more difficult: in Jung's (1961) words it becomes the therapist's "subjective confession" (pp. 227-228).

In all likelihood, the tendency for most of us is to repeat what worked for us before, thereby losing the elements of freshness and lived experience, and eventually becoming entrenched in a method or technique that splits the archetype of the Wounded Healer by giving all the sickness to the patient and all the power to the therapist. One's theoria takes time to solidify, to congeal, and there is no hurrying the alchemical congelatio; one must wait for theoria to present itself, its manner of doing so indicating, if one is lucky, the relation one must take to it.

Although Jung's original premise was that alchemical imagery in dreams and fantasies often accompanied the process of individuation or psychic integration which he believed occurred in the second half of life, I shall attempt to illustrate the operation of the psychological equivalents of alchemical processes in other periods of movement in the psyche as revealed in the imagery produced during art therapeutic treatment.¹ In this way I trust that it will be possible to consider alchemical symbolism as a natural product of the psyche in its attempt at growth and transformation, and to view "pathological" events and images as necessary expressions of this.

Although in certain instances I shall be drawing for theoretical support upon aspects of developmental theory, and my presentation, of necessity, will indicate a kind of linearity, I wish to state that when one enters the alchemical milieu the wordly conception of progress in the usual sense is relinquished. Indeed one may discern progression, but not at all in a linear, literal or measurable way. Instead there is the experience of the metaphorical language of psyche, of soul, which defies precise definition and which tolerates no rules for "proper order". Hence we shall see movement, stasis, progression, regression, success and failure occurring sometimes singularly and sometimes simultaneously, ever in the name of psychic growth or "soulmaking" (Hillman, 1975, pp. ix-xvii).

Edwards (1981) writes that

models of art therapy are difficult to formulate because the fundamental idea of therapy through art depends upon the calculated use of analogy. Although we may easily accept analogous thinking in poetry, religion or humour it does not so easily

accommodate a serious treatment strategy within a hierarchical institutional setting like a hospital (p. 21).

He does, however, see alchemy as "an elaborate symbolic structure of analogy representing psychological experiences in physical terms" (Edwards, p.21). This further suggests to me the suitability of an alchemical backdrop against which to view transformation and change in the context of art therapy, in that it serves to validate the latter's concrete aspect as a work with and on materials while at the same time releases it from a literal entrapment in the material world.

Since the signals for therapeutic intervention will be based upon the patient's natural tendencies and not upon the therapist's preconceived plan for treatment, it is well that the model be grounded in the idea of natural change which is assisted by the paradoxical notion of a "work against nature" or opus contra naturam, as it is expressed in alchemical texts. More specifically, this has been understood by Jung (1953) as a work against nature's unreflecting, instinctual ways: a work in the service of the Self, the integrating psychic principle. He perceived the goal of

the alchemists -- the Philosophers' Stone -- to be analogous to the Self and that some worked more and some less consciously of the fact that they were involved in a psychological process. Thus the artist, therapist, patient and alchemist can be seen as working similarly since the aim for all is greater consciousness. It is an attempt to create order out of what may be perceived at times as a chaotic situation, perhaps comparable also to the psychotic patient's effort at a restructuring of his psyche.

That the alchemical attitude is a workable one grounded in the psyche, is suggested by Cirlot's previously mentioned statement. Furthermore, its first three stages of Nigredo, Albedo and Rubedo would seem to be expressions of a natural dialectical process seen in both major and minor societal changes, as well as in individual healing and transformation.

Since an alchemical approach to therapy cannot be undertaken in a purely intellectual way, this study will draw upon the two aspects of alchemical functioning imaged as the library and the laboratory. There will be no attempt to "prove" the model on the basis of clinical work which will be included solely to

illustrate certain aspects of the proposed attitude. I would emphasize here that knowledge of the alchemical tradition on the part of the art therapist does not imply the application of a programme or a technique. The stages are simply held in mind until such time as an active intervention may be required in a particular therapeutic moment. The "transformation perspective" is a viewpoint, a means of perceiving something, rather than the thing itself. It should be noted, in addition, that the forms and symbols of transformation appearing in art therapy may not be the same in outward appearance as those observed in alchemical illustrations, since archetypal material may not manifest in either its archaic or medieval forms. However, the alchemical stages themselves will be seen to be relatively consistent, and personal symbols related to those stages will appear as well as collective ones.

The basic frames of reference which I shall be using throughout are drawn principally from analytical ("Jungian") psychology and to a lesser degree from object relations theory as interpreted by the London School of Analytical Psychology. Because of possible misunderstandings due to the popularization of certain of the concepts involved, I shall include here

definitions of selected elements from Jung's view of the psyche.

Topographical Divisions of the Psyche: As a result of observing a great deal of clinical material as well as engaging in a close monitoring of his own experiences, Jung considered the psyche as operational on four levels:

1. Personal consciousness -- our everyday awareness of events; the operational arena of the ego.

2. The personal unconscious -- events which belong to the past of a single individual, but which are kept out of conscious awareness.

3. The objective psyche ("collective unconscious") -- the apparently universally structured heritage of mankind, containing the archetypes.

4. Collective consciousness -- culturally shared and recognized values and beliefs (Jung, 1961).

Archetypes: Jung (1973, p. 40) compared his concept of the archetypes and their reflection in archetypal images to crystal formation: While the structure of a given crystal will follow certain known principles, the actual form that crystal will take is unknown until it appears. Thus, he believed that we are all born with a tendency to form certain images, but that the images themselves are formed by this tendency or archetypal activity in relation to the living experience of an individual psyche. In other words, while the archetypes cannot be apprehended in themselves, they are perceived by their effects, in images, ideas and relationships. Those universal, archetypal motifs e.g. royal personages, religious figures, etc., which hold meaning for many people over extended periods of time become part of collective consciousness and shared cultural experience. The complexes consist of groups of related images with an archetypal centre, bound together by the emotional tone of that centre.

Self and Ego: Jung (1961, p. 398) saw the Self as the totality of the personality; the central ordering principle of the psyche as well as its entire circumference. As such it embraces both conscious and unconscious and is subordinate to the ego which is the centre of conscious life. In Jung's view the ego is but one of the many complexes co-ordinated by the Self. Edinger (1973) sees the ego's relation to the Self as "highly problematic" (p. 4) and its vicissitudes as indicative of various stages of psychological development. He envisages a process of alternating ego-Self union and separation along an axis connecting the centre of each, occurring repeatedly throughout one's life, until there is a complete awareness of this axis, characterized by "a conscious dialectic relationship between ego and Self" (Edinger, 1973, p. 7).²

Individuation: The process of individuation is a concept central to Jungian theory and practice, and to this thesis. In his autobiography Jung (1965) tells us that

[o]nly after I had familiarized myself with alchemy did I realize that the unconscious is a process, and that the psyche is trans-

formed or developed by the relationship of the ego to the contents of the unconscious. In individual cases that transformation can be read from dreams and fantasies. In collective life it has left its deposit principally in the various religious systems and their changing symbols. Through the study of these collective transformation processes and through understanding of alchemical symbolism I arrived at the central concept of my psychology: the process of individuation (p. 209).

As already mentioned, Jung considered this individuation process to be the means by which a person of mature years comes to realize his own innate potential, leading to the experience of the Self more harmoniously linked with the ego. This is principally brought about by engaging in an ongoing dialogue between the ego and the Self, mediated perhaps by a therapist or analyst, using at appropriate times verbal, non-verbal and pre-verbal means of communication. Gordon (1979) expresses the intimate and the transpersonal aspects of the process as follows:

Individuation aims at the achievement of optimum synthesis of conscious and unconscious processes and fantasies. It leads a person to experience his own individual uniqueness together with the recognition that there are forces both within and without him that transcend his personal and conscious understanding. In consequence, the process of individuation encompasses the process of individualisation though it moves a person beyond this essentially ego-building process and on towards the search for values, meaning and self-transcendence (p. 209).

Jung credited the psyche with a teleological, Self-healing potentiality which operates through the seeming tendency toward compensation. In other words, it is purposive and goal-oriented, with every conscious view, emotion or impulse having another "side" in the unconscious. The more pronounced one side is, the more pronounced the other. This can be expressed in terms of the Hegelian dialectic as the tension between the original "thesis" and its "antithesis" culminating in the creation of a new "synthesis" which transforms the original oppositional pair. This process, essentially

alchemical in nature, is one of constant flux and transformation, because each new synthesis meets eventually with opposition from the unconscious as it becomes rigid and entrenched in conscious life. "The dialectical process makes change the cardinal principle of life; no condition is permanent; in every stage of things there is a contradiction which only the 'strife of opposites' can resolve" (Durant, 1976, p. 297). Transformation, where the basic drives are changed, as opposed to sublimation where substitute gratification is achieved, then, is the key to "Jungian" psychology, psychotherapy and analysis, as it is to alchemy itself. This is an assumption upon which this study is based.

2 ALCHEMICAL IDEATION

It will be necessary to consider alchemical ideation in some detail in order to illuminate its intimate connection with art therapy, although at first glance they may seem to be strange bedfellows.

A popular misconception has been that alchemy was merely the empirical and speculative forerunner of chemistry and that its highest aim was the transformation of base metal into gold. De Rola (1973) points out that while chemistry did eventually evolve from one branch of alchemical experimentation and that chemistry deals with scientifically verifiable phenomena, "the mysterious doctrine of alchemy pertains to a hidden reality of the highest order which constitutes the underlying essences of all truths" (p. 7).

Viewed in this context "gold-making is, relatively speaking, of little consequence: something comparable to the super-powers (siddhis) sometimes obtained by great Yogis, which are not sought after for their own sake, but are important by-products of high spiritual

attainment" (De Rola, p. 8). Nevertheless, the alchemists had a systematized procedure and a goal. Paradoxically, it was said that even if the adept started out literally to make gold from base metal, if he stuck to the arduous task with its repetitions and failures, and if he actually made gold, he would have no need of it because of his spiritual transformation. In other words, he himself was inwardly changed, despite the fact that he thought he was working on an outer change. The point of importance here is the underlying integrity of the adept in his devotion to the task at hand.

Our understanding of the process is further hampered by the fact that alchemical texts are notoriously obscure, although this has been generally thought to be a result of the alchemists' wish that only the initiates be able to comprehend them: one should not be "loose" with gains so hard won. Carl Jung's (1961) view, however, was that the texts are "the expressions of unconscious fantasies i.e. the matrix of mythopoeic imagination..." (p. 118) which should be considered in the same light as dream symbolism and the imagery of active imagination.

He elsewhere states that our current concern, rather than focussing on the "aberration" of alchemical beliefs, would be better employed in investigating the psychological foundations on which they rest (Jung, p. 60). Through personal experiences, numerous case studies and histories, Jung demonstrated that "the inner alchemist is still alive and dreaming in all of us even if we are for the most part unaware of his presence" (Hillman, 1979, p. 131). He studied alchemical literature for a period of fifteen years before making any of his thoughts on it public, and finally delivered two lectures on the subject in 1935 and 1936. The first comprised a series of dreams showing the stages of psychic growth in relation to the alchemical opus; the second, a psychological interpretation of the central symbols in alchemy with special emphasis on the symbolic idea of the redemption of matter. Both texts were later amplified and published in his Psychology and Alchemy (Eliade, 1962, p. 223).

Eliade interprets Jung's discoveries as follows:

The unconscious undergoes processes which express themselves in alchemical symbolism

tending towards psychic results corresponding to the results of hermetic operations... [I]n the very depths of the unconscious, processes occur which bear an astonishing resemblance to the stages in a spiritual operation -- gnosis, mysticism, alchemy -- which does not occur in the world of profane experience, and which, on the contrary, makes a clean break with the profane world. In other words we are in the presence of a strange solidarity of structure between the products of the "unconscious" (dreams, awakened dreams, hallucinations) and those experiences which, ...may be considered as belonging to a "trans-consciousness" (mystical, alchemical experiences, etc.) (p. 223)

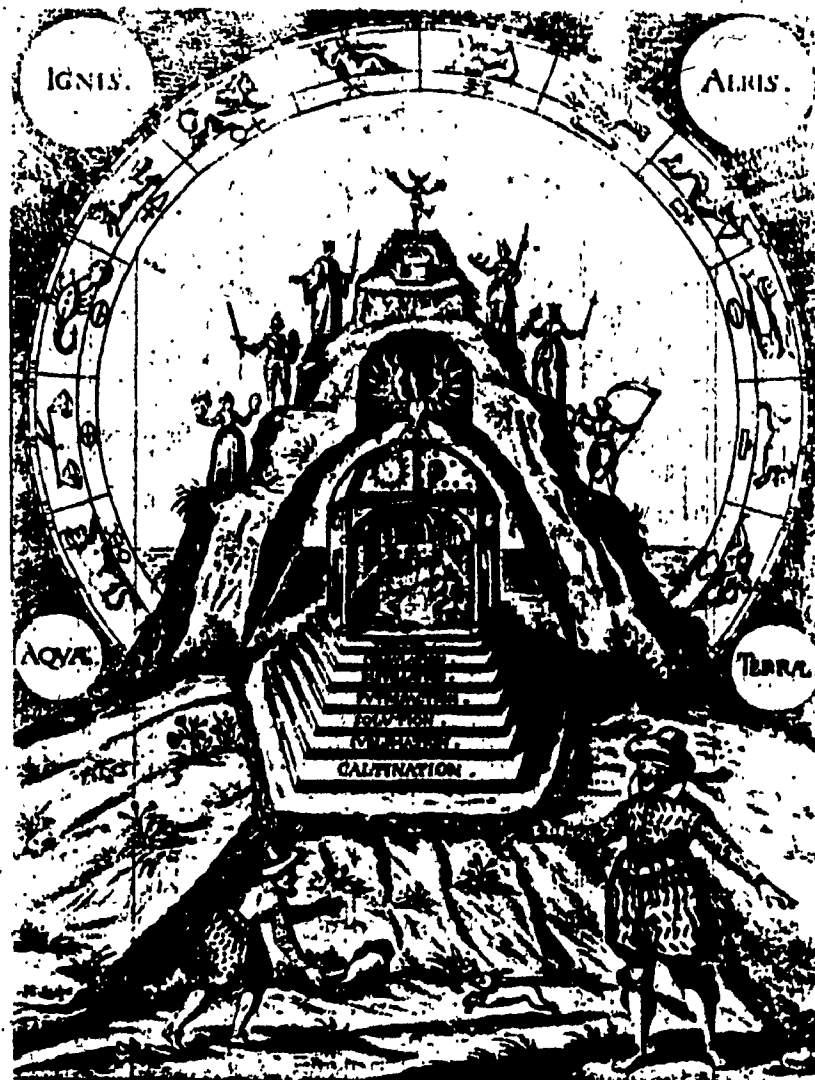
At the outset of his investigations, Jung had observed that those modern dreams and fantasies which related to alchemical symbolism accompanied the process of individuation or psychic integration. He saw, therefore, that these products of the unconscious had a most precise goal, namely the discovery of one's own Self. Thus, bearing in mind that the goal of the alchemist was the Elixir Vitae and the Philosophers' Stone, that is, the

conquest of mortality and the gaining of absolute freedom

it becomes clear that the process of individuation, assumed by the unconscious without the permission of the conscious, and mostly against its will, and which leads man towards his own centre, the Self -- this process must be regarded as a prefiguration of the opus alchymicum...Imagination, dream, hallucination -- all disclose a similar alchemical symbol -- and by this very fact place the patient in an alchemical situation -- and achieve an amelioration which at the psychic level, corresponds to the results of the alchemical operation. (Eliade, 1962, p. 224)

(See Figure 1)

Figure 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 Philosophers' 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 (opposites as masculine and feminine). The zodiac in the background symbolizes 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. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 12)



In Mandala Symbolism Jung (1959) speaks of a 55 year-old woman patient of his during the 1920's and mentions the ease with which the unconscious slips its subliminal images into the art work of those unfamiliar with this type of expression. It was in her imagery that he first saw, in concrete form, modern alchemical expression in a patient's work, a fact which lends important support to the suitability of the alchemical model for art therapy. Jung some years earlier had begun making pictures of his own fantasy images and after he, himself, had passed through a process which on reflection he felt was analogous to an alchemical transformation, he was convinced that he had "run into the same psychic material which is the stuff of psychosis...This is the fund of unconscious images which fatally confuse the mental patient." (Jung, 1981, p. 188) He saw it as an imaginal matrix which is both tabooed and dreaded, although present everywhere.

Jung's own mandala drawings, begun in 1916, led him to understand that "there is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self". (Jung, 1961, p. 196)³

In considering collective cultural material Von

Franz raises the question of why specifically alchemical imagery and symbolism should be closer to the unconscious functioning of many modern people than any other material, such as comparative mythology, fairy tales, religion (Von Franz, 1978, p. 14). She sees various reasons for this, but more especially the fact that in most of these other cases we see an organized tradition of "handed down" material. For example, most initiates in religious traditions are taught to reject spontaneous irruptions from the unconscious and to adhere to a given programme. Only what fits in with tradition is retained. Von Franz tells us that

[t]he alchemists were in a completely different situation. They believed they were studying the unknown phenomenon of matter... 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...Therefore one could say that in alchemy, projections were made most naively

and unprogrammatically and completed uncorrected...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 programme, but only searched. (pp. 21-22)

This innocent spirit of inquiry together with spontaneous creative gesturings and imaginings, unhampered by restrictive or repressive traditions, is of the essence for any model of art therapy. Nevertheless, it will be of value to consider the historical development of alchemical tradition and thought, since it is related to the growth of mankind's ability to symbolize.

3 HISTORY OF ALCHEMY

As observed by Jung and further elaborated by Von Franz, the alchemical process is a projection of archetypal processes from the collective unconscious on to matter (Eliade, 1962, p. 224). Jung (1974) called the receptors of these projections (whether persons or things) imagos, stating that "[o]ur imagos are constituents of our minds...They are subjective factors ...expressing this or that meaning, not for extraneous reasons but from the most intimate promptings of our psyche" (p. 52).

As in the dream, the alchemical situation is like a theater in which the alchemist "is himself the scene, the player, the prompter, the producer, the author, the public, and the critic" (Jung, 1974, p. 52). All the characters in the fantasy are personified features of the adept's personality, constituting a true "waking dream" or active imagination. In the adept's total commitment to his work and method, the link forged between himself and his imago is of a profound depth. Jung (1974) tells us that

The autonomy of the imago is not recognized by the conscious mind and is unconsciously projected on the object -- in other words, it is contaminated with the autonomy of the object. This naturally endows the object with a compelling reality in relation to the subject and gives it an exaggerated value. This value springs from the projection of the imago on the object, from its a priori identity with it, with the result that the outer object becomes at the same time an inner one. In this way the outer object can exert, via the unconscious, a direct psychic influence on the subject, since, by virtue of its identity with the imago, it has so to speak, a direct hand in the psychic mechanism of the subject. (p. 60)

Jung here addresses the relationship between the archetype and the archetypal image and describes an aspect of psychological functioning which is relevant to the condition of primitive man. Since there is much support for the developmental approach to understanding man and culture among those who embrace the "ontogeny

follows phylogeny" dictum, it would seem pertinent here to consider the predecessors of the alchemist and their relevance to the development of his art.

An examination of what is known of the psychological state of primitive man suggests that he believed that natural objects were endowed with attributes and powers. He acted towards them as if they contained part of him and as if he were psychologically continuous with them. Even today, primitive man in extant communities shares in the power of these objects by means of "participation mystique", which has to do with his projecting of unconscious contents into the environment -- into people, things and situations. (Levy-Bruhl, 1926, p. 129) These unconscious elements are not recognized as being part of the individual's own psyche and this may cause a numinous quality to be perceived in the chosen objects. An individual might have, for example, a chosen tree with which he identifies -- this identification being so strong that if the tree is cut down, he himself might die. In his daily life he

may feel that his tree or snake or other
mana-containing object has a superior wisdom
and can tell him what to do in times of

doubt. That is to say, his thinking ability has not been developed to a conscious function, but has remained as a potentiality in the unconscious and is only perceived in the projection..." (Harding, 1965, p. 39)

Participation mystique, then, is an exceedingly unconscious state in which no external boundaries to the individual psyche are perceived. This state is characteristic of primitive man, infants and very young children, and certain temporary states connected with the creative process, although it may also be a fairly regular mode of functioning for many adults.

My own original interest in, and provisional model for art therapy stemmed from a fascination with this "way of being" and its manifestation in the belief-system known as shamanism which reveals certain characteristics linking it to the later development of alchemical practices. Shamanism, which arose in the Alpine Paleolithic period (approximately 30,000 to 50,000 years ago) represented a lengthy period of stability in man's history, when he was involved in a hunting and gathering economy. He was still at the mercy of overwhelming forces of nature -- both inner

and outer -- and his world was populated with his projected images in the form of spirits -- some friendly, some neutral and some dangerously hostile. The shaman was the central figure in the community, as he is today in groups where an early hunting economy has continued, namely Siberia, parts of North America, South America and various regions of Africa and Australia (Lommel, 1967) Eliade (1967). calls it a "technique of ecstasy" with a central theme of an initiation ceremony: dismemberment of the neophyte's body and renewal of his organs; ritual death followed by resurrection. Common to most expressions of shamanism are

trances, divine election, animal transformation, bird-like flight of the soul, knowledge of the world of the spirits and of the dead, mastery of fire, rebirth from the bones and the guardianship of the traditions and the psychic and physical equilibrium of the community. (Furst, 1977, p. 2).

Shamanism itself involves the psychic technique of subordinating the "spirits" which are inner images, projections to which the shaman gives form by portray-

ing them and identifying himself with them, recognizing them as real forces and interpreting them artistically. Among the attributes of the shaman, Lommel lists "unstable" personality traits, intuitiveness, artistic gifts and a quick adaptation to any given situation (p. 12). Furst presents evidence of several researchers to lend weight to his argument, unlike that of Lommel's that the shaman is in no way psychopathic or even neurotic, stating that as a rule he is strong and healthy in body and mind and in general capable of intellectual effort far beyond that of the other tribe members (p. 25). Huxley (1974) comments that while many people go "mad" relatively few become shamans, the essential difference between them lying in the shaman's ability to transform his "disabilities" into an asset in that "[n]ot only does he see visions, but he knows how to apply them; moreover he becomes endowed with a vigor, [sic] endurance, and application that far outstrip those of other men..." (p. 272).

The effectiveness of the shaman is better understood if one considers that he and his community are a single organism. In the tribal situation, the group is the individual, each member being merged in its totality with little sense of personal value, although

each believing himself to be the carrier of the tribal "essence". Survival of this organism depended upon the availability of as many hunters as possible as the tribe could not afford to carry any incapacitated members. The shaman, therefore, may have acted as a kind of "repository" (the first container or "frame") for the community's unconscious life and possibly for the incapacitating effects of mental instability, thus freeing the hunters. This may be why, in his initiatory stages, he appears to be suffering from an emerging psychosis, which he proceeds to work with before he is able to treat others. There is a great similarity in shamanic initiating motifs in all parts of the world, remnants of which are seen in alchemy and in the major religious traditions of today. Perry (1976) believes that an initial psychotic episode may have an initiatory function in that it may be seen as the psyche's attempt at a massive reorganization of an unendurable way of existing and could therefore be seen as an archetypally valid experience.

In the tribal situation the essential factor in the shaman's experience of being "called" is that he becomes artistically creative, that is, his transcendent or symbolic function comes into play and the

collective psyche is thus brought into order. There is a great deal of graphic imagery, poetry, dance and dramatic enactment, together with the continual reactivation of images of the tribal mythology in evolutionary form. This giving of shape to inner images is perceived as a communion with the spirits and was considered by Lommel to be an ancient technique not yet accessible to modern psychology, but which

represents a means of curing certain depressive states, based on thousands of years of experience. The essence of this process of self-healing consists in imposing order and form upon these confused and chaotic images which threaten to overwhelm the individual.

(p. 64)

In the primitive tribe, then, the shaman "cured" himself while the tribespeople used him as a container for projections; later he would be called upon to treat specific individuals and would do so by repeating his own cure again and again with certain varieties, depending on the circumstances. This could be seen as early man's concrete version of the modern therapeutic experience involving transference and projection on to

a therapist who consciously works on himself in his own therapy and in his examination of his counter-transference behaviour. Again, the "shamanic situation" can be viewed as a dynamic model of the Self before a complete differentiation of the ego-complex has occurred.

The shamanic model, however, served me well as an ideational backdrop only until I actually began working with people in art therapy. To be sure, it was still valid, but nonetheless limited, as was confirmed for me by Champernowne (1971) who writes that

the repressed elements, even evil and criminal aspects of the unconscious, can often be expressed in the less destructive way of an art form and temporarily held there...The activities are at first free and unself-conscious, but there comes the time when this process should temporarily cease and the ego needs to consider what has been happening, if a great work of art or healing is to be the result. (p. 135)

While I recognized that not actually having to face insights consciously can at times allow certain patients to carry things further, it was a thought with which to reckon. This happened synchronistically with my discovery of Jung's writings on alchemy, the position of which, in society, was the absolute antithesis of what shamanism had been. When the hunting peoples settled to agriculture a process of differentiation was well under way and it is possible that some of those individuals who, in a less conscious time would have accepted a group projection and become shamans, turned to alchemy instead. It appears that alchemists in general, suffered from a certain justifiable paranoia as their self-appointment, unlike that of the shaman, was not met with group endorsement. Many alchemists led an outcast, lonely life and certainly were not universally recognized as genuine.

Eliade's (1962, p. 114) writing shows how the origins of the alchemical opus contra naturam can be traced directly to belief in the magical identification of the inner essence of man with matter, as described above in shamanic ritual. Unlike the shaman, however, the alchemist was able, possibly because of a more differentiated thinking function, to become aware of a

dissonance between his "imago" and the actual behaviour of the object, necessitating the acquisition of some new attitude towards it. Since he believed that by working on basic materials one accelerated the growth of the spirit which resides in both man and matter, the alchemist chose to work with the dissonance, rather than act in a propitiatory manner, thereby opting for movement and growth as opposed to the primitive's investment in stasis. ⁴

The road from shamanism to alchemy was by no means a direct one, although the latter adopted and gave new significance to the former's belief in ores and metals as living organisms and to the drama of death and resurrection as a prerequisite for transformation. Eliade (1962) tells us that

it was probably the old conception of the Earth Mother, bearer of embryo-ores, which crystallized faith in artificial transmutation (that is, operated in a laboratory). It was the encounter with the symbolism, myths and techniques of the [Egyptian] miners, smelters and smiths which probably gave rise to the first alchemical operations. (p. 148)

In relation to Greek alchemy, he adds that

[i]t is known that the essence of initiation into the [Eleusinian] Mysteries consisted in participation in the passion, death and resurrection of a God...The meaning and the finality of the Mysteries were the transmutation of man...[T]he dramatic spectacle of the "sufferings", "death" and "resurrection" of matter is very strongly borne out in the very beginnings of Graeco-Egyptian alchemical literature. (p. 149)

As a result of the alchemical operations which corresponded to the tortures, death and resurrection of the initiate, the substance underwent a transformation and here we see the measure of the alchemists' innovation -- the projection of the initiatory function of suffering on to matter (Eliade, p. 151).

The alchemist accepted the traditional identity of microcosm and macrocosm so familiar to Eastern thought, but there developed both introverted and extraverted traditions nonetheless. Von Franz (1978, p. 79).

indicates that true alchemy as a distinct "discipline" began in the first century A.D. and reached its height in the 17th century. At that point it revealed three important identifiable historical elements: the first was the religious conception which led back to Hellenized Egypt and further back to the Isis/Osiris myth; the second was the recipes which originated in the secret traditions of the smith craftsmen and the African medicine men; the third was Greek natural philosophy. When the thought models of Greek philosophy met with the experimental practices of Egyptian tradition, alchemy as we understand it was born (Von Franz, 1978, p. 79).

The Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris is important in that it represents a real emotional drive and desire to find the immortal part of man and to ensure the perpetuity of his Ba-soul (individual consciousness). The chemical procedures involved in mummification were employed to this end: the "integration of the Godhead" in the transformation of the dead one into Osiris and his Ba. "Osiris was, in Egypt, the cosmic and individual principle in every man" (Von Franz, 1979, p. 6) -- a Self symbol. In every way, this was an alchemical opus (Von Franz, pp. 4-6).

Originally the Greek natural philosophers had been more extraverted while the Egyptians had been more introverted. However, as Von Franz (1979) relates, they met and exchanged roles, and in general the Westerners, with a few notable exceptions, followed the extraverted path, with emphasis on the objective, physical, observable processes and results of their operations (pp. 7-8). The traditional approach to life in the East had, in any case, been characterized by a degree of introversion, with an ability to permit an interplay among the complexes, positive and negative, including the ego-complex: there had been recognition of the continuity between inner and outer life, as revealed in the poetry, visual art, drama and religions of the East. The Western attitude, by contrast, developed somewhat one-sidedly in favour of ego-supremacy and the dim recollection of an inner-outer continuum is acknowledged by the urge to employ the same rigid controls to both psyche and matter. The Western fear of loss of boundary control has been immense, this being substantiated by the Church's assurances that one unguarded moment was sufficient to permit entry to the forces of evil, that is, anything not directly under ego control.

The Gnostics had made an early attempt to redress the balance in their own confrontation with primal, instinctual images, but according to Jung (1961, p. 201) it was unlikely that they had any psychological conception of their activities. In his search for historical and literary parallels to his analytical psychology Jung had studied the Gnostic writings as early as 1918, but had found it difficult to establish a direct link with them until he began studying alchemy and found many bridging elements there. The most notable one was the alchemical vas, the container or vessel within which transformation of material took place. This corresponds on several levels to the containing function necessarily activated during the promotion of individuation, whether it takes place in a therapeutic setting or not, as well as to the krator (mixing vessel) which the Gnostic creator-god sent to mankind so that those who actively struggled for higher consciousness could receive baptism in it. This vessel has been seen as a "kind of uterus of spiritual renewal and rebirth" (Jung, 1961, pp. 200-201) -- an important symbol for this study.

Being inwardly oriented and lacking the militance of the Church, Gnosticism failed to attract enough followers and seems to have gradually disappeared as a movement. Already the West was fixed in its commitment to working on the "outside" and preferred a model that had something to "show" for itself. The alchemists continued in the traditions of their own hemispheres -- the Easterners working consciously on the inner being and the Westerners working consciously on matter and, for the most part, unconsciously on inner transformation. Jung perceived that the alchemists were, by the late middle ages, operating a kind of counter-culture in the West as a desperate, albeit unconscious measure to create some sort of psychic equilibrium where there was a debilitating imbalance promoted by the Church. Although their imagery is replete with the ecclesiastical symbolism of the period, the work of the alchemists allowed expression to a far greater range of archetypal material than the Church would have entertained, since it was not subject to the Church's rigid censorship system which expurgated individual experiences that did not conform to rules already laid down. There was an absence of the "feminine" in Church teachings and the alchemists worked intuitively on the redemption of matter (Mater).

-- her spiritualization (the Albedo) and eventual integration (the Rubedo) in the mainstream of life.⁵

In tracing the historical elements relating to alchemy, De Rola cautions that it

cannot be bound to a single system of thought, any more than it can be reduced to a single symbolical interpretation because it transcends all dogma and all religions. One must not forget that at one time or another, sometimes in turn and sometimes simultaneously, Chinese, Indians, Egyptians, Greeks and Arabs have practised the art. All of them contributed to making it what it ultimately became in medieval times... (De Rola, p. 10)⁶

This is important in the choice of any model for art therapy which must be "unencumbered by cultural dialect and geographical determination" (Feder and Feder, 1981, p. 30), especially the distinctly Northern European bias of that which is commonly considered "psychology" today by the rather more literal-minded (Hillman, 1981, pp. 218-226).


4 ALCHEMY AND INDIVIDUATION IN RELATION TO EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Given the cross-cultural occurrence of dialectical processes, it is appropriate to look at the alchemical work, known as the magnum opus, for its possible verticality by commenting on developmental issues in the individual. The image that this now calls forth, of intersecting vertical and horizontal lines, is suggestive of the fixing of a position, and herein lies the principle danger of reductive as opposed to synthetic thought in relation to psychological theory. I am encouraged to believe that it is an important area for consideration, however, by the alchemists' chemical "fixing" as a necessary preliminary to further synthetic work, which implies a teleological aspect.

Nonetheless, while an explanation of early developmental issues in relation to later life concerns is a necessary component in the adoption of the alchemical attitude in art therapy, some care must be taken to remember the "hidden literalisms" to which the former is bound (Berry, 1982, p. 171).⁷ With the

appropriate attitude, however, our literalisms can be seen as our prima materia: our concrete reductions to "nothing but" are the materials we have to work upon. The task is to move them from the literal to the metaphorical and that is why the work is an opus contra naturam. The natural way seems to be one of concretistic literalism which sees the material as "only matter", thus doing a disservice to psyche which must partake of both the spirit and material worlds. The alchemist shows us how to perform a metaphorical reduction, by going into the concrete and material, but without a defining formula of what he expects to find there. Berry says that

[r]eduction [in psychoanalytic terms] is taken literally as reduction, leading back or leading again, in the sense that going through the same events again may free one from them. Alchemical reduction moves rather toward the prima materia at the core of the complex, which need not be seen as prior in time but as prior in ontology, status, or value. This unformed is never fully formed and always present. It is as it is always. As a core it is the basic matter of what's the



matter, and it is always described by the alchemists in metaphorical terms, terms of outlandish perplexity so that one could not possibly confuse them with actual incidents of an actual life. (p. 178)

According to Cirlot (1963) alchemy

was essentially a symbolic process involving the endeavour to make gold, regarded as the symbol of illumination and salvation. The four stages of the process were signified by different colours as follows: black [the Nigredo] (guilt, origin, latent forces) for "prime matter" (a symbol of the soul in its original condition); white [the Albedo] (minor work, first transformation, quicksilver); red [the Rubedo] (sulphur, passion); and, finally, gold [Aurum Philosophorum or the Philosophers' Stone]. (p. 8)

A manuscript by Pierre-Jean Fabré, Les Secrets Chymiques, 1636, defines alchemy as follows: "Alchemy is not merely an art or science to teach metallic transformation, so much as a true and solid science

that teaches how to know the centre of all things, which in the divine language is called the Spirit of Life."

The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, the legendary father of alchemy, infers that one must first obtain the hidden prima materia -- first matter or "our chaos" -- which can be likened to the state of the world before creation -- before the separation of all things into distinct elements. (See Figure 2) The work is seen to be one of "re-creation" by forces symbolized by two dragons -- one white and winged, the other black and wingless -- locked in eternal circular combat. They are frequently accompanied by the universal alchemical formula "solve et coagula" (De Rola, p. 16).

This formula and emblem symbolize the alternating role of the two indispensable halves that compose the Whole. Solve et coagula is an injunction to alternate dissolution, which is a spiritualization or a sublimation of solids, with coagulation, that is to say a re-materialization of the purified products of the first operation. (De Rola, pp. 16-17)

Figure 2. 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. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 206)



There was no doubt about the actuality of the alchemical operations. They were concrete experiments carried out on various vegetable and mineral substances which were not inert, but

represented stages in the inexhaustible manifestations of primordial matter...The operational context with the "substances" was not without spiritual consequences...To work actively on ores was to touch prakrti...the primordial mode of the Goddess. (Eliade, 1962, p. 140)

Von Franz (1978) notes in addition that the

mother goddesses are...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. (p. 65)

We may query the reasons for this perpetual "work upon mother" and in doing so look for the connecting

links between individuation-like processes in early life when the ego is forming, and "individuation proper" as perceived by Jung, as a later-life process when a firm ego has been established. The making of these connections and the finding of these links will be seen to be a prerequisite to the use of the alchemical model in art therapy whenever there is a focus on the ability, or otherwise, to use the transcendent function which requires a bringing together of opposites i.e. an ability to tolerate paradox. It is, therefore, appropriate to examine the views of some of those who have sought an understanding of the early phases of the individual's development and the relation to "mother".⁸

Working within the framework of Jung's psychology, Gordon (1978) states her belief in the theory that "psychological development proceeds not from chaos to order but from a state of relatively undifferentiated unity, through the process of differentiation, towards states of ever more differentiated unity" (p. 29). In discussing the original experience of mother-child unity while the infant is still in utero she is careful to distinguish between actual physical "fact" and a description of "experience" which is especially

immediate for the infant before birth. She reminds us that the foetal environment is not favourable to the experience of boundaries or identity (1978, p. 29).

The infant thus lives, psychologically, within the archetypal wholeness of the Self which is later constellated in the world of space and time at birth. At that time it becomes "embodied" and is seen by Fordham (1971, p. 85) as a psychosomatic "integrate" of all personal and archetypal possibilities for the individual. Fordham uses the phrase "deintegration of the self" to describe his theoretical formulation of the processes by which the neonate comes into relation with the new world of objects and finds support for his theory in Jung's statement that "the self, like the unconscious, is an a priori existant out of which the ego evolves. It is an unconscious prefiguration of the ego" (Jung, Transformation Symbolism in the Mass, 1954, p. 259, cited in Fordham, 1971, p. 84). In a later writing Fordham (1980) contends that

it is safe to introduce archetype theory here by conceiving archetypes as parts of the self brought into being by deintegration of the self. Their images sustain the infant's

omnipotence and lead on to the state of primary identity, often referred to as fusion, between self and mother objects (p. 75).

His use of the idea of de-integration rather than dis-integration for the processes involved emphasizes the wholeness implied in each of the deintegrates (archetypes) which finds its image in the world of somatic reality (archetypal images). (cf. the "essence" of tribe carried by each tribesman, mentioned in Chapter 3.)

Following Fordham, Lambert (1981) describes the rhythmic deintegrative/reintegrative sequences which lead to

a self with increasing inner differentiation and conscious participation with, or incarnation in, flesh and blood, space and time [and which are] helpful in understanding how ego-fragments cohere into a more or less unitary ego-consciousness. Thus the ego-inclusive self composed of personal and archetypal internal objects, plus archetypal

images and archetypal potentiality can move into progressively more intensive realization. In these circumstances, ego consciousness, though subordinate to the self, emerges as its enabling awareness and consciousness, its focus of perception, and its factor of mediation between itself and the environment within and without (pp. 16-17).

It is as if the original Self "deintegrates out" in order to create an ego that can eventually relate to its contents and make some meaning out of them. Not that there is any choice involved because the original paradisaical unity is shattered by the confrontation with "reality" after birth, which forces the infant into a lengthy process of re-orientation. For this there is no option but to build or create something with which to relate to what is only now "our chaos". So the ego comes into being -- a reflection of the self which does not know that it is, and which needs to find this out over a lifetime.

The recent work of Sidoli (1983) has been an attempt to provide empirical data to support the primal Self/deintegration theory by direct infant observation.

In this she has linked Jung's and Fordham's hypotheses, based on analytic experience, with Klein's views in relation to actual, observable interactions between mothers and infants (Sidoli, pp. 202-203). Briefly, her findings seem to substantiate the theory, with clearly identifiable sequences of de-integration (observable in such behaviours as, e.g., wriggling, crying, searching for mouth with fist, or nipple with mouth), reintegration (e.g. finding of the breast, nursing successfully and subsequently entering into a state of peaceful sleep) and dis-integrative periods (e.g. steady, angry crying during which the infant may wet and soil; seeming inability to hear mother's voice; being too "worked-up" to take the breast.) (Sidoli, pp. 207-210). The mother is seen in the sequences as performing an ego function for her baby, containing and transforming his emotional discharges, naming the archetypal experiences through which he is living. This was observed as simply as the mother's saying "Bad mummy!" when she had to bathe her infant against his will.

The deintegrative process is seen as producing tension and energy which drives the infant towards the outer world of objects (breast/mother) in an attempt to re-establish the original steady state. Sidoli's

observations support the concept of an early constellation of

opposing archetypal experiences, psychophysiological in nature:

1. Positive experiences lead[ing] to good, satisfactory, loving and comforting feelings in the baby which analysts name the good breast, good holding, good loving mother and good loving baby (thus constellating the good aspect of the mother archetype);
2. Negative experiences, such as feelings of discomfort, hate, despair, rage, violence, persecution, fear and panic, when the mother and the baby are experienced by the latter as destroyed by the baby's own impulses and violence, lead[ing] to a constellation of the bad aspect of the mother archetype (the bad breast) (p. 203).

Both states are absolute for the infant, "absoluteness" being an attribute of the Self which Jung stressed, indicating the predominance of Self over ego. The mother's capacity for "holding" her infant during the sequences when "the containing function of

the primal self recedes, allowing full sway to instinctual drives, violence and archetypal discharges" is crucial (Sidoli, p. 204).

It is therefore in the context of the nursing couple that consciousness emerges and effective integration occurs. As the ego differentiates, the infant is able for increasingly longer periods of time to keep inside him the experience of the "good breast" and to "use" it in times of stress, i.e. in any prolonged maternal absence or in deintegrative sequences. This is the introjected maternal function which helps the infant become ever more tolerant of the normal frustrations and anxieties of living. When the good breast experiences outnumber those of the bad, the archetypal images take on humanized form and the infant begins to relate to the "real" aspects of the mother. However, if the bad experiences predominate, the mother, and later others, will continue to receive unmediated archetypal projections from the child.

Already at this stage, somewhere between birth and three months of age, as a result of deintegrative and reintegrative processes, we can recognize something of the alchemical injunction solve et coagula, as a

natural process.

Newton and Redfearn (1977) note that different developmental models of psychology emphasize different aspects of the mother archetype. She is seen variously in her containing, nourishing, spiritual, transforming and divine forms, as well as in terms of her rejecting, devouring, magical, destructive and terrible possibilities. The tendency of archetypal psychologists is perhaps to attend to the actual mother's transforming role (which of course can embrace the others) on a biological/ spiritual level, where she is seen as mediating the mother archetype while promoting a sense of identity in the infant as he differentiates out first of all from the original Self into a state of primal relationship and from there to independent functioning. Jung makes a connection between alchemy and the maternal transforming function when he says that a reactivation of the archetypal mother image allows a transfer of libido from the material, or bodily experience to that of the psychological -- from the literal to the symbolic. (Jung, 1923, cited in Newton and Redfearn, p. 300).

Up to this point we have been addressing essentially "pre-alchemical" issues, searching out the prima materia of the child and the alchemist. The developmental models of both Klein and Mahler shed more light on the subject as we move into later stages of the child's psychological growth (Segal, 1964 and Mahler, 1969).

Klein's emphasis is on unconscious fantasy related to zonal experiences, while Mahler focusses more on dependency issues and their associated images (Newton, 1975). Newton finds in Mahler's researches an affinity to work on the mother archetype carried out by Neumann, further illustrating a connection between developmental models and archetypal motifs (Newton, p. 185). Added to this, her work shows how the quality of the mother/child relationship has a bearing on the infant's ability to trust and to imagine -- attributes necessary for the symbolizing capacity which is linked to ego formation (Newton, p. 185).

According to Kleinian theory, the infant of approximately six months of age realizes that the dual aspects of the archetypal mother are contained in the one person of his actual mother. His subsequent guilt

at having projected on to both her aspects promotes, if all is well, a willingness to make reparation (Segal, pp. 92-102). Ehrenzweig (1967) says with reference to Klein that "the will and capacity for reparation is the foundation of all creative work, which is felt unconsciously as helping the restoration of the good mother" (p. 293). In Kleinian terms one could therefore see the entire alchemical opus as a re-negotiation of the depressive position, a mourning of lost unity and an attempt at reunion. Alternatively, on a more conscious level, one could view the so-called depressive position, the stage of the first reunion of opposites, as the prototype of the opus. Indeed it is said that one never fully negotiates the depressive position and that it is a lifetime task, a true opus for which a fair degree of basic trust is necessary.⁹

In summary, Fordham's concept of a deintegration of the primal Self enables us to imagine how the infant "finds" mother in the outside world and splits her by projection, while Klein's theory breaks down the external workings of the archetypal image (in the paranoid-schizoid position) and deals with its re-introjection. Mahler elucidates Klein's subsequent depressive position with her separation/individuation

process, thereby bringing object relations theory into closer relation with Jung's archetypal psychology.

Having considered how the "first matter" is met and dealt with in the early months of life, we must look at whether this meets with Jung's criteria for individuation, and by extension, for an alchemical work. It appears that Jung thought of individuation as a life task which was never quite completed. Speaking of his work with adults he observed that it was never something that

came exclusively either from within or without. If it came from outside the individual, it became an inner experience; if it came from within, it was changed to an outer event. But in no case was it conjured into existence through purpose and conscious willing, but rather seemed to flow out of the stream of time (Jung, 1967, p. 16 cited in Storr, 1983, p. 228).

Here he views the necessity to individuate as coming upon one uninvited, perhaps even against one's conscious will, reminiscent of the infant's dilemma. In

addition he gives validity to both introverted and extraverted attitudes. Once the psyche has established that this is what it wants, it may develop into a deliberately experienced process, reinforced by a specific technique or approach. Jung's concern was to deepen this natural process with the opus contra naturam, "resolving the thesis of pure nature and its antithesis of the opposing ego into the synthesis of conscious nature" (Adler, 1948, p. 109) -- which sounds considerably removed from infant experience.

Jacobi (1958) recognizes two kinds of individuation -- one the natural process, taking place outside of awareness, and the consciously experienced work on the development of the whole personality. She sees them as falling naturally into the first and second halves of life with "the duration and extent of the phases, the nature of the tasks they present and the solutions found, the depth and intensity of the experiences [varying] enormously from one individual to another" (p. 98). The later conscious process is described by Fordham (1968) as "classical", but he draws on the writings of Baynes, Harding and Perry for support of the "extended thesis" (p. 54), the view which holds that individuation begins in childhood and continues

throughout life. Fordham reiterates Jung's belief that before the "classical" form of individuation can take place the ego must be already firmly established. His work shows an attempt to find out whether the process of ego formation can be seen as part of individuation and as a result of clinical findings he states that "[t]he essentials of the individuation process start in infancy and continue through life" (p. 55) adding that any one-sidedness of development observed is the product of distortion induced by a specific society rather than of an inherent developmental trend. He feels that experiences of the Self are as valid in earlier as in later years, with the range and nature of identifications differing in each life stage (Fordham, 1968, p. 55).

These changing identifications, first with family members, then with culture patterns and latterly with individualized elements, bear witness to the idea that deintegrations of the Self occur throughout life. This allows for a recognition that childhood experiences, i.e. the earliest de- and reintegrations, are not in fact all-determining for the individual.

There would seem to be adequate support for Fordham's view by Jung (1923) himself, who wrote that in his view individuation "was "a process of differentiation, having as its goal the development of the individual personality" (p. 561), and that "[i]ndividuation, is practically the same as the development of consciousness out of the original state of identity" (p. 263). Fordham's concern is with the differentiation of the individual state of identity, which he sees as being central to the definition. A noticeable developmental step would be at around six months when the child is believed to feel the existence of a boundary between himself as an object and others as objects. During this time (Klein's depressive position) the child who is developing normally achieves a whole-object relationship: he brings the opposites together and "a significant extension of consciousness occurs. It is clearly a milestone in the individuation process in terms of Jung's definition. The paired opposites lead directly to the experience of individuation" (Fordham, F., 1969, p. 9).

Lambert . (1981), reiterates Michael Fordham's position that by the end of the child's second year he has achieved "a kind of individuation" as a result of

"ordinary good mothering" (p. 14).

Because, according to Jung, each developmental position remains as an autonomous unconscious content of the psyche, we may understand development and growth in terms of archetypal themes and imagery as well as of direct experience of the world. Newton and Redfearn (1977) note that

[t]hese images are returned to again and again from different ego positions. The symbolic meaning will be experienced at greater or lesser depth according to the level of individuation which has been achieved. There is an inherent paradox: it is the infant's personal experience which will colour the images and so determine his "personal myth". (p. 313)

While these remarks may seem to dwell at some length on determining factors in infancy, they are important in that they throw into relief the archetypal basis of the alchemists' repetitions of their operations. These were necessitated by changing perceptions of the opus caused by engagement in the

opus. In other words, as the living of life modifies life, we find our current prima materia in new deintegrates of the Self and not necessarily in the actual events of our life history. These new deintegrates occur throughout life, allowing many opportunities for creative change, relatively unhampered by unresolved issues from earlier times.

The value of an understanding of the stages in infancy and early childhood from a Self-deintegration viewpoint lies in the possibility of thus reaching to the origins of symbol formation as an event or series of events in space and time, while acknowledging and valuing its archetypal roots. It may then become possible in working with the psychologically disturbed to identify points at which the symbolic function has failed to become operational and has resulted in archetypal identifications at one pole, ranging to extreme intellectualization at the other. Fordham states that in order to rectify this failure, a regression needs to take place so that the affective roots of the problem can be re-experienced, preferably within a therapeutic relationship -- another return to the matrix. As Fordham (1968) concludes:

[N]obody ever truly separates from his or her mother and this continuation of union makes possible recurring and fruitful states of fusion with others in later life. The state of identity can be grown through, it can recede into the background, but it never disappears (p. 57).

Perhaps we can see a little better why the symbolic return to "mother" for "refuelling" is with us whether we be "primitive" shamans or "sophisticated" nuclear physicists. The work of the Fordhams, Gordon, Lambert, Sidoli, Newton, Redfearn, Klein and Mahler clarifies to a degree the initial work with "mother" in projection, however, the sense of a "return" subtly changes when one goes beyond the body, through the actual breast or mother, to the archetypal level. A forward movement is activated when one locates the child archetype behind the actual child and one is no longer compelled to look for literal causes buried in one's personal past. Matter is Mater, but working on "mother" should not be thought of in a reductive way -- in other words the work of the alchemist or the person in therapy is not simply a reworking of their relationship with the personal mother. Rather it is a work on the archetypal.

matrix of all existence -- psychic and somatic -- which first came into lived experience in somatic form with the actual mothering figure. When this is literalized as the source of all experience, when all our symbols are seen as our actual mother's body parts in disguise, then we are cut off from the true opus. In our impoverishment there is no room for the imaginal to come into play or for the transcendent to manifest.

As to the question of what we can or cannot justifiably call "individuation", I feel that there is much less of an issue if we remember that it is a process and not an event, and that the result is just as elusive as was the gold of the alchemists. It is indeed "not the common gold", as many of the texts state. There is a paradox in the alchemical opus that holds true for the individuation process: the prima materia and the Philosophers' Stone are in essence the same -- it is a transformed substance -- and in neither process can you come in half-way through!

5 THE WORK

The following sections will cover a brief review of the general approach to the opus, followed by a more detailed account of the materials and processes involved and their relationship to art psychotherapy or "soulmaking".

In attending to the material aspects of the alchemists' work -- what they actually did and with what -- one is faced again with the problems surrounding literalization. Since the entire process is a metaphor in itself it permits a validation of the concrete (as well as the spiritual) because it uses materials imaginatively, in conjunction with fantasy in a non-reductive way. I should like, therefore, to emphasize once again the idea of the "alchemical situation" where, as in the unus mundus, more or less everything can be everything else, either by virtue of the process itself, or if the adept so chooses. It would be a relatively simple task to draw one-to-one correspondances between, for example, alchemical materials and equipment and the concrete aspects of art

therapy, but this is not the hermetic way, and to do so would be to deny the boundless possibilities inherent in both processes. To treat the accoutrements of either discipline as direct (or even indirect) representations of the other would be to operate on the "sign" level ("this means that") and to ignore the essentially symbolic qualities that ensure psychological movement as opposed to stasis. In other words, the manner of approaching the task of linking art therapy with alchemy must be consonant with the attitude suggested, that is, it must be "alchemical". The following sections, therefore, are written in the spirit of the alchemists' solve et coagula -- a moving in and out of the material in an alternating experiencing and distancing -- the process being the essential link with art therapy.

Alchemy works with processes of dissolution and coagulation -- the separation and rejoining of the various ingredients of life. It is representative of the repetition of everyday experiences which accumulate to reveal, eventually, the true meaning and value of life. The dissolving and coagulating aspects of the work are representative of active and passive elements of the cosmos, seen in traditional alchemical symbolism.

as male and female, spirit and matter, life and death, the volatile and the inert and their various interactions. All these are understood to reach resolution in death, and so "pseudo-death" is seen as desirable -- voluntary isolation, fasting or withdrawal from normal experience, succeeded by a "return" to apply one's "revelations" to the material life. It is frequently equated with the creation of the world, i.e. individuating as world-creating (Chetwynd, 1982, p. 6). Edinger (1978) emphasizes the need to find categories for understanding the psyche within the psyche itself, and quotes the alchemical dictum "Dissolve the matter in its own water" to illuminate his attempt to comprehend in terms of alchemy the psychotherapeutic process as "service to the psyche" rather than "psychological cure" (p. 5). The spontaneous imagery of the psyche can be seen as its "own water", so it is to these projected depths that one turns when engaging with alchemy, whether it be in the process or in an attempt to understand that process.

5.01 The Materials

The working on metals and minerals as the "valuable and enduring components of the psyche" (Chetwynd, p. 260) has been with us since the shamanic "masters of fire" tempered their souls in the flames (Eliade, 1962, pp. 79-86).

Each of the planets is understood alchemically to correspond to a mineral in the earth, explaining the planetary and astrological allusions in the opus, the larger cosmological goal being the bringing together of heaven and earth. As a result of revolving around the earth, the planets spin their metals into the earth, whence man extracts them by his chemical means -- the more personal goal (Edinger, 1978(a), p. 7).¹⁰

Psychologically we can understand this in terms of the deintegration and reintegration of the Self -- the archetypal, divine spirit qualities of the dismembered god seeking their own earthly realization and embodiment. The alchemical texts frequently illustrate the projection of psychological processes on to chemical ones, thereby turning them into symbolic

images as in the following recipe for the solutio, i.e.
a "reduction" to the prima materia for the purposes of
transformation:

Dissolve then sol and luna in our dissolving
water, which is familiar and friendly, and
the next in nature to them; and as it were a
womb, a mother, an original, the beginning
and the end of their life. And that is the
very reason why they are meliorated or
amended in this water, because like nature
rejoiceth in like nature...Thus it behooves
you to join consanguinity, or sameness of
kind...And because sol and luna have their
origin from this water their mother; it is
necessary therefore that they enter into it
again, to wit, into their mother's womb, that
they may be regenerate or born again, and
made more healthy, more noble, and more
strong. ("The Secret Book", pp. 145-146)

Edinger (1978 (b)) extrapolates:

The chemical fact that lies behind this text is the capacity of mercury to dissolve or amalgamate with gold and silver, here referred to as Sol and Luna. In fact, this process is the basis of a very old method for extracting gold from crude ore...Sol and Luna will stand for the masculine and feminine principles as they concretely manifest themselves in the personality at the beginning of the process...These two are dissolved in "friendly water", i.e. mercury, which is equated with the maternal womb...We have here a picture of a descent into the unconscious which is the maternal womb from which the ego is born. (p. 65)

As often occurs, we see in the extract above from the "Secret Book of Artephius" a mixture of the imagery of both solutio and the coniunctio (the union of opposites), indicating the two-fold effect of the dissolution.

A significant sequence of images of the king and queen bathing in the mercurial fountain in the Rosarium Philosophorum text (See Figure 3) illustrates the procedure, as does the following:

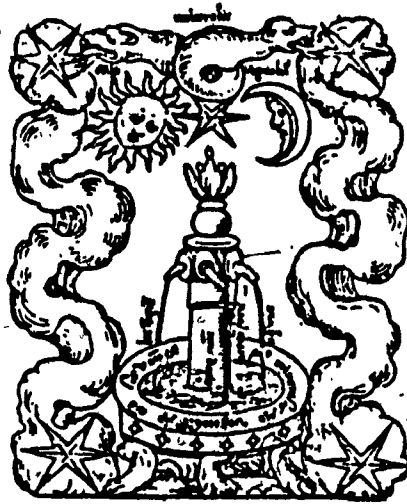
Our solucyon ys cause of our coagulacyon; for the dissolucyon on the one syde corporall causyth congelacyon on the other syde spyrytuall. ("The Lives of the Alchemystical Philosophers", p. 219)

In other words, the "philosophical water" is both the beginning and the end of the work -- prima materia and gold -- the paradox which runs throughout alchemical imaginal thought. "This 'divine' water makes the dead living and the living dead, it lights the darkness and darkens the light." (Jung, 1963, p. 237) As well as emphasizing the wholeness (with its positive and negative sides), and completeness (as in "beginning" and "end") each operation has its greater and lesser aspect.

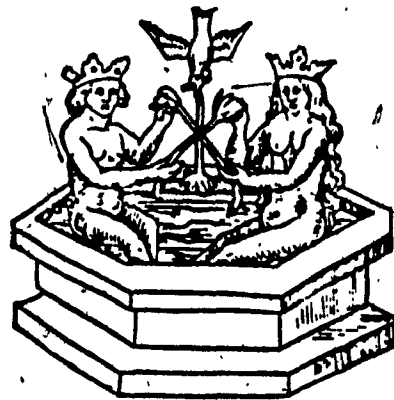
The first solution is...the reduction of it to its First Matter [e.g. the lesser solutio, as in the literalized, reductive-only psycho-

Figure 3. Series of illustrations from Rosarium philosophorum. This sequence showing the king and queen bathing in the mercurial fountain illustrates a mixture of solutio and coniunctio imagery.

1



2



3

4

therapies]; the second is that perfect solution of body and spirit at the same time, in which the solvent and the thing solved always abide together, and with this solution of the body there takes place simultaneously a constellation of the spirit. (Hermetic Museum, I, p. 40)

Because there is a great deal of overlapping in the imagery of the operations, much in the way that the archetypes themselves are known for "shape-shifting", they are often interchangeable. Consequently an entirely linear approach to the material is impossible, although by experience it is possible to come to "know" it by other means. Although I have chosen to illustrate my overview with the solutio, any operation may be the initiatory one, and the others will follow in the order necessary for the individual.

To recapitulate, the approach to the opus is as follows: locate the material to be worked upon, the prima materia, and then subject it to a series of operations (of which there is no exact number, although the number seven, symbolic of the individuation, is often quoted) which will change it into the

Philosophers' Stone (gold, Elixir Vitae, etc.). This sounds fairly simple, But Edinger (1978 (a)) advises that

[e]ach of these operations is found to be the centre of an elaborate symbol-system. These central symbols of transformation make up the major content of all culture-products. They provide basic categories by which to understand the life of the psyche, and they illustrate almost the full range of experiences which constitute individuation.
(p. 15)

De Rola gives a poetic description of the events in the alchemist's laboratory when he has located his first matter:

The prima materia, an actual substance, is placed in a mortar made of agate, pulverized with a pestle, mixed with secret fire and moistened with dew. The resulting "compost" is placed in a "hermetically" sealed vessel, or philosophic egg and place in the athanor (philosopher's furnace) which keeps the egg

at a constant temperature for long periods of time. The outer fire stimulates the action of the inner fire, so it must be restrained, lest the vessel break. Inside the egg, "the two principles within the Prima Materia -- one solar, hot and male, known as sulphur, the other lunar, cold and female, known as mercury, interact." (p. 10)

A great battle follows in which the male and female elements "kill" each other, the deaths resulting in decay and putrefaction. The opposites are then dissolved in the liquid Nigredo (blackness) known as the "first work". While Jung (1954, p. 182) emphasized that the Nigredo frequently is not representative of the absolute beginning of the opus, its appearance often as a depression (cf. the depressive position as prototype) is a sign that one is on the right track. (See Figure 4) The following chart may clarify some of the colour imagery as it relates to alchemical symbolism, individuation and developmental stages.

Stages of Descent to Nigredo	YELLOW	- Leaving the sun of ordinary consciousness behind	State of Primary Unity	Autism
	BLUE	- The sky empty of sun or ego		
	GREEN	- Dissolution in the sea		
FINDING THE PRIMA MATERIA -				
	BLACK (NIGREDO)	- Death of ordinary conscious Outlook	Deintegration First Matter Primary relationship	Paranoid-Schizoid Position
	WHITE (ALBEDO)	- Purification	Lead Earth Sensation function	Depressive Position
	RED (RUBEDO)	- Relating conscious with conscious (a reunion)	Quicksilver Air Thinking function	
	GOLD (PHILOSOPHERS' STONE)	- Germination of the seed of the new self	Sulphur Fire Intuition	
			Water Feeling function	Whole-Object Relationship

This chart is partly based on information contained in Chatwynd's Dictionary of Symbols.

5

Figure 4. Alchemist meditating in the initial Nigredo state, corresponding psychologically to the self-reflection induced by conflict and depression. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 223.)



In the course of the Nigredo the subject is purified by means of repeated dissolutions, distillations, coagulations and solidifications until it becomes a pure mercurial substance. This is the Albedo (whiteness), known as the "second work". De Rola continues:

Once the Whiteness is reached, our subject is said to resist the ardours of the fire, and it is only one step more until the Red King or Sulphur of the Wise appears out of the womb of his mother and sister, Isis or mercury, Rosa Alba, the White Rose. The third work recapitulates the operations of the first, with a new significance...The King is reunited in the Fire of Love (the salt or secret fire) with his blessed Queen...The red sulphur fixes the white mercury; and from their reunion the ultimate perfection is effected, and the Philosophers' Stone is born. (p. 12)

In his comparative study of psychotherapy and alchemy, Edinger (1978(a)) tells us that pre-Socratic thinkers were gripped by the assumption of a single original material, the so-called first matter, from

which the world derives. Since this idea has no empirical source in the outer world which is obviously a multiplicity, it must be a projection of a psychic fact. By a process of differentiation, it was believed, the prima materia separated into the four elements -- air and water, earth and fire -- i.e. into two sets of opposing pairs. In psychological terms we see that this image correlates with the four functions -- thinking and feeling, sensation and intuition, and with Fordham's integrative sequences. It was from these philosophical origins that the alchemists inherited their idea of matter that could be transformed after reducing it to its original state. Edinger states that this is analagous to what happens in psychotherapy where the fixed, static aspects of the personality are led back to their undifferentiated condition in order that psychic transformation might take place. He illustrates this simply by quoting the following dream: "I am back in a hospital ward. I have become a child again and I am in the ward to begin my life from the beginning". Edinger sees the dream as indicative of the patient's urge for transformation, symbolized in this instance by the child as prima materia of the man.

Most often the texts speak of "finding" the prima

materia as opposed to "making" it, and this procedure is frequently shrouded in mystery. (Edinger, 1978(a), pp. 12-13) Alchemical writings, given that they are a defiance of linear logic, must of necessity be read as dream imagery. The clues given, for those prepared to seek, would be as follows:

1. It is found everywhere, which means, in psychological terms, that psychotherapeutic material is to be found in everyday occurrences.

2. The prima materia, while of great inner value, is in outward terms despised. Psychologically, this tells us that the shadow aspect of the personality must be brought forward to be worked upon even though this may be a painful procedure.

3. It is multiplicity of form as well as being a unity. In therapy this is borne out by the fact that in the initial stages the patient becomes aware of his relative fragmentation which may slowly be seen to be part of an underlying unity.

4. There are no definite boundaries to the prima materia, reflective of the deintegrative sequences in the psyche. When this is experienced it may evoke fears of annihilation as it reveals the chaos prior to one's "world creation". The "finding" of the prima materia, then, would be the result of deintegrates of the primary Self discovering images to relate to in the temporal world. This material could not be described in the texts since, psychologically, it was each adept's own archetypal and personal material derived from the "chaos" of deintegration, and out of which his world was and continued to be, created. It was matter from a preverbal position, hence the "mystery" as to its properties.

Within the prima materia were the elements to be worked upon -- the sulphur, salt and mercury of the alchemists -- which corresponded to spirit, body and soul (McGoveran, 1981). The sulphurous aspect of the material is interpreted psychologically as the state of being driven by a fascination or compulsion not under one's control. It is the original impulse, its red colour relating to fire, the emotional quality. In alchemy this state is symbolized by the winged and wingless bird or dragon.

The winged bird is called the exalted soul of the other, meaning that once one has the prima materia...the basic instinctive drives of the personality, it has to be cooked and when cooked emanates steam which flies above matter. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 128) (See Figure 5)

The Elementia Chemia of 1718 shows a variation of the winged and wingless bird motif. This is the transformation of Mercurius as prima materia in the heated, sealed vessel which is comparable to cooking the basic instinctive drives in their own affect until their essential fantasy content becomes conscious. (See Figure 6) More conflict follows: the text states that while the wingless bird prevents the winged from flying, the latter wants to raise up the wingless one. In a life-situation this would be the conflict between the opposing tendencies to psychologize or to concretize. According to Von Franz we have here the ultimate conflict for which there is no ready-made solution: this is where individual work begins in earnest and an ability to tolerate paradox must be cultivated.

Figure 5. Loon and fish, a modern variation of the alchemical Winged and Wingless Birds (Dragons) 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 unconscious -- is indicated by the wavy lines. The halved circle radiating energy would represent the Self. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 127)

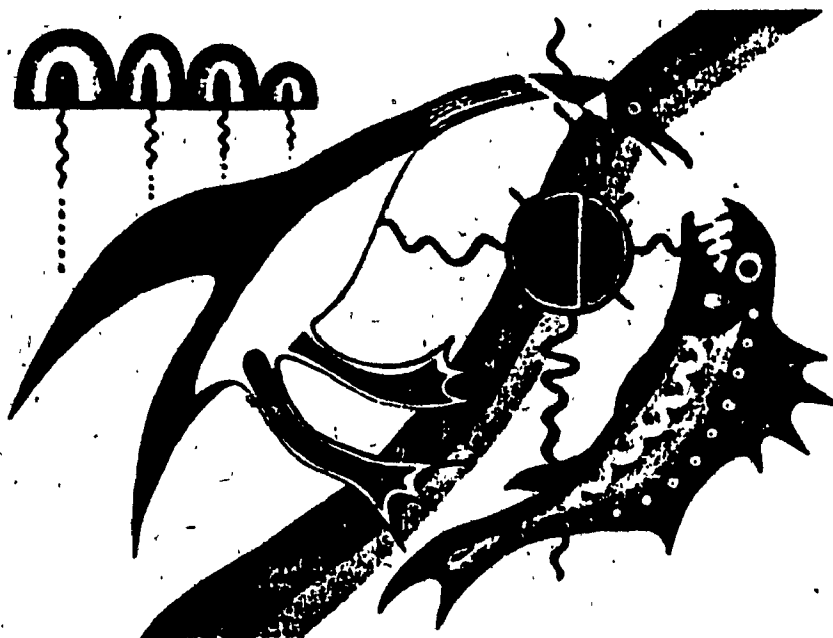
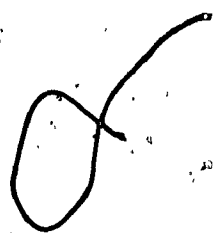


Figure 6. The transformation of Mercurius, as
Prima Materia, in the heated, sealed vessel.

(Von Franz, 1978, p. 129)





In the final analysis [says Von Franz] it is consciousness that makes the conflict between the inner and the outer by projecting one as materially real and the other as psychologically real, because we do not really know the difference between material reality and the psyche...The alchemists did not know and we do not know either. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 147)

Of the salt in the procedure, the Rosarium text of the middle 15th century says:

Who therefore knows the salt and its solution, knows the hidden secret of the wise men of old. Therefore turn your mind upon the salt for in it alone...is the science concealed and is the most excellent and the most hidden secret of all ancient philosophers. (Jung, 1953, p. 257)

Hillman (1980) sees the salt as being

mined from our internal microcosmic world... Tears, sweat, semen, especially blood and urine. We recover salt from our interior sub-

jectivity and it refers us back to its source
in the residues and tastes of experience. (p.
32)

Salt has been considered not merely as pertaining
to the physical body, but also to the incorruptible
astral body; the essence of life discovered through
bitter suffering (Gooper, 1978, p. 144) the wisdom that
comes from disappointment in the feeling area
(Chetwynd, p. 348). Jung (1963) interpreted it as a
symbol of differentiated feeling, relatedness, Eros
supported by wisdom. He says that

a confirmation of our interpretation of salt
as Eros...is given by the fact that the
bitterness is the origin of the colours. As
can be seen from the drawings and paintings
of patients...colours represent feeling
values. (p. 40)

The colours to which Jung refers here are seen towards
the end of the Nigredo stage of the opus. This is known
as the Peacock's Tail and its appearance heralds the
arrival of the Albedo, the whiteness that contains all
colours. The Peacock's Tail is also associated in

alchemy with the rainbow, a frequent image in art therapy, sometimes interpreted as a denial of negative feelings. This could possibly be the case if it occurred before the descent to the Nigredo and a real engagement in the process.

The actual transforming substance, central to the work, is the mercury, symbolized by Mercurius -- the world soul or the wounder-who-heals. Weaver (1973) sees Mercurius as

an embodiment of the unconscious...the spirit which surpasses personality. He is the impulse from inner reality or underneath which rises from the depths of the body toward the spiritual sphere. He is the urge in the unconscious which co-ordinates diverse values and enlarges consciousness. He is a principle which assembles separate parts into a whole and so is the principle of individuation. Of him Jung says "He is the spirit that penetrates into the depths of the material world and transforms it." (p. 83)

Von Franz (1980, p. 83) views Mercurius as another image of the Self, but of the darker, more ambiguous side which, as many fairy tales featuring this figure show, must be redeemed from matter (undifferentiated state) in which he/she is trapped.

In keeping with his duplex characteristics, "Mercurius" is used to cover a range of meanings, from the chemical quicksilver, Mercury the planet to Mercury (Hermes) the god. He is the aqua permanens -- the spiritual, transforming water as a medium for the conjunction of opposites (coniunctio) as well as that which is to be united. Jung (1963) explains that this is because

he is the essence or "seminal matter" of both man and woman. Mercurius masculinus and Mercurius feminicus are united in and through Mercurius menstrualis, which is the "aqua". Born gives the "philosophical" explanation of this in his "Physica Trismegisti": In the beginning God created one world (unus mundus). This he divided into two -- heaven [masculine] and earth [feminine]. "Beneath this spiritual and corporeal binarius hid a third

thing...This same is the medium enduring until now in all things, partaking of both their extremes, without which it cannot be at all, nor they without this medium be what they are, one thing out of three." The division into two was necessary in order to bring the "one" world out of the state of potentiality into reality. Reality consists in a multiplicity of things. But one is not a number; the first number is two, and with it multiplicity and reality begin. (p. 462)

Dorn, writing in the 16th century, make curiously close connections with Fordham's theory of the Self's deintegrative/reintegrative sequences, while Jung goes on to give his conclusion that Mercurius "is none other than the 'unus mundus', the original, non-differentiated unity of the world...The Mercurius of the alchemists is a personification and concretization of what we today would call the collective unconscious". (Jung, 1963, p. 462)

Both Dorn and Paracelsus see Mercurius, the arcane substance, as a kind of universal panacea -- the best medicament, says Dorn, not only for the body but for

the mind. (Jung, 1963, p. 465). Again we have the idea of a return to the matrix, the unus mundus, for the universal "cure". In Dorn's view, a "mental union" is but the first stage in the work, and this may be associated with the achievement of object constancy.

Jung continues:

The second stage is reached when the mental union...is conjoined with the body. But a consummation of the mysterium coniunctionis can be expected only when the unity of spirit, soul and body is made one with the original unus mundus. (p. 465)

Perhaps here the "second stage" might be equated with a relatively successful negotiation of Mahler's separation/individuation stage of development. The third, however, would be an achievement of the mature ego in harmony with unconscious contents i.e. the autonomous complexes, manifesting in the ability to utilize the transcendent function. When the alchemists spoke of freeing the spirit from an entrapment in matter (concretization) through their distillations, evaporations etc., it was to the precise end of bringing them

together again, but with added awareness and knowledge that only consciousness brings. It means a joining in the flow of life again, but this time with a responsible ego. (See Figure 7).

The basic analogy to be drawn between art therapy and alchemy is that they both comprise work upon "matter", whatever we may conceive that to be. They operate with materials, tools and equipment which have psychological counterparts and which can be viewed as concrete projections of the latter. Arguelles (1975) reminds us that

[f]undamental to the alchemical tradition is the notion of the "great work", the transformation of consciousness through a directed use and understanding of the forces available. In these terms the work of art is not only an external object created by a certain learned technique; but an integral and integrating psychophysical process that welds intelligence and feeling, sensation and intuition into a fully realized whole that can be outwardly expressed through symbols. What we commonly call the work of art, then,

Figure 7. 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 analyzing everything. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 233)



is but the outer symbol of a profound psychological process. (pp. 170-171)

If one accepts this premise, then the metaphors of alchemy may be productively applied to the understanding of the art therapeutic procedure without unnecessarily reductive interpretation. Schafer (1967) writes of the artist's engagement in "forbidden investigation and exhibitions in his work; he omnipotently controls, manipulates, and destroys by rendition, simplification, distortion or transformation..." (p. 92) One may readily associate these remarks with alchemical secrecy, Nigredo experiences and eventual transformation. It should be noted, however, that one does not necessarily equate "artist" with "patient in art therapy", but that again the total situation should be borne in mind, that is, that there is an "alchemical situation" for both artist and patient. This is a possibility for the artist because of his good-enough ego position in relation to the Self, and for the patient, because of the "holding function" of the therapist's ego, presumably also well related to the Self. This holding capacity of the therapist will be discussed in later sections.

Because the pictures produced in art therapy are objective representations of psychic conflicts it is perhaps easier, initially, for a patient to relate solely to the images as images. Although this is a valid "way" in itself, to be discussed later, there may come a time when the patient is ready to own the feelings expressed in the work. As with the alchemical operations, the art expressions can form a bridge to inner feelings or feelings underlying behaviour. Both art therapeutic and alchemical processes allow for an initial recognition that certain issues do exist, but safely removed from the individual until they are gradually seen to have a personal as well as a collective component. A conscious work on integration can then begin. The ability, either spontaneous or in response to questioning, of an individual to make connections between himself and his creations is an index of his capacity for reflection and introspection. (Rubin, 1978, p. 73) The ability to step back and reflect upon process as product is indicative of readiness to employ an insight-oriented approach to the therapeutic work. On the other hand, the art activity may remain on the level of building integrative capacities and self-esteem rather than being used to uncover and establish insight about unconscious

impulses. The alchemical or symbolic model may be seen as operating somewhere between the two, in a specific "third area", again to be discussed later.

The alchemists set great store on the ego attitude of the adept to the opus: there had to be just the right degree of humility and a belief that only if God were willing could the goal be approximated. Fordham (1960) sees that the

comparable...[therapeutic] requirement is for the ego first to realize the existence of uncontrollable archetypal forms within the personality and then to grasp the importance of the self as a more powerful and more effective organizer of psychic elements than the ego. (p. 122)

For an art therapist viewing her work from the alchemical perspective this is the essential attitude which mediates the process for the patient until such time as he is able to carry it for himself. He may thus, whatever his level of functioning, be able to engage with the sulphur, salt and mercury of his prima materia in a direct work with materials.¹¹

5.02 The Medium (The Psychoid)

Jung saw in alchemy the richest possible model for the individuation process as a whole and for the psychology of projection in particular. In its chemical symbolism -- salt, sulphur, mercury and the rest -- he saw a way of finding insight into processes he called "psychoid", i.e. processes that cannot be designated "only matter" or "pure spirit" or in any case experienced directly. Grinnel (1980) informs us that

the alchemical model thus permits us to follow the psyche's symbolic fantasies commenting on events at a pre-personified level, that is, at a neurobiological level -- the unconscious psyche "within the body" or "below the ego". Here it is a case less of "facts" than the psyche's myth-making projections in regard to facts, conditioned by the archetypes and man's physiological and phylogenic past...The alchemical model also offers us a symbolism of a cosmological and cosmogonic order, likewise conditioned by the archetypes and arising from the subliminal

intuitions sharing the space-time relativity of the collective unconscious ... We accordingly have what amounts to a physiological mythology juxtaposed with a cosmogonic mythology. In between is the psyche itself -- the arcane substance, the subjective factor -- which achieves a personified level in the divinities of mythology. It is the psyche's own image-making activity, its self-creation through symbols, that is central to the model. (p. 101)

Here Grinnel points to both the body level and the archetypal level of symbolization, with psyche (Mercurius, soul) as link or medium. What is hoped for is a gradual transformation over time into psychic experience of instinctual and biophysical events which may, if all goes well, be brought within conscious will and reason.

Chetwynd feels that over the centuries the alchemists, as a result of continually projecting archetypal symbolism on to a microscopic universe, "proved" its validity for both psyche and matter (p. 9). For example, in the same way as fluids could be

distilled, so emotion when isolated and concentrated was reduced to its essence; while matter could be broken up, refined and purified by fire, so the painful events of life were seen to, at times, enhance the character of the sufferer; liquids could be evaporated and solids condensed, showing that transformations were indeed possible.

The fact alone that alchemy is an opus, a work upon materials, make it valuable as a model for art therapy. While the alchemist projected psyche into matter, Hillman (1979) sees that today "[m]atter is now the projected material: our materialisms and our materializations, all the concrete fixations of our psychic life in ideas, beliefs, systems, feelings, persons" (p. 138). As a result of this substantial investment in concretization, art therapy would seem to be a suitable form in which to work through and differentiate our problems with matter. The outer matter is converted to inner ground as and when projections are withdrawn.

The alchemists focussed their attention on material substances because one of their principle stated aims was to "fix the volatile" -- to give actuality to the

potential -- and Chetwynd connects this with the idea that sensation was the inferior function through which the union of the whole was achieved (p. 385). This suggests a further parallel with early developmental stages in the light of Fordham's (1971, p. 87) statement that there is a unity of perceptuo-motor activity and archetypal imagery in infancy, in which "mother" is perceived in kinaesthetic/sensory terms. She is the sensations the child experiences -- a touching and a holding in immediate terms, which suggests sensation as the earliest utilized function for relating. Imagery develops out of this experiencing, deintegrating into "good" and "bad" and leading to the state of primary identity in which projective and introjective identification are active. In an adult today, this might be seen clinically as a developed delusional system, but for the understanding of alchemy it illustrates activities within the psychoid as described by Jung.

Given the "concreteness" observed in "regressed" patients in therapy one may query the possibility of sensation, which is related to earth and unconsciousness, having remained as their inferior function, or of perhaps becoming so as a result of necessity.¹² This

leads to yet another -- psychoid -- way of looking at the winged and wingless dragon motif where winged intuition (the polar opposite of sensation) may come into play to help raise the unconscious, wingless function. The operation here would be the calcinatio, since intuition relates to fire. Verne (1969) reminds us that it is only through sensation that we become existing beings; that the archetype comes to us from our unconscious depths to be clothed in images from the world that we know by our senses. He, too, suggests that individuation may be facilitated by making the sensation function conscious (p. 29).

The alchemist, although to some extent identified with his materials as a result of operating within the psychoid, is capable because of the variety of his operations to move to more differentiated states. Our normal functioning seems to promote initial personalizing of things and people -- we work out and resolve the problems and archetypal conflicts in our inner lives by finding them in the outer world. As we have seen, this is rooted in the primitive "participation mystique" of shamanic ritual and in normal early infant development. In art therapy, this is the stage where the images are "left on the paper", and where a degree

of healing may take place subliminally as a result of this undifferentiated continuity between the psyche and the material creation of one's hands. We can only speak of projection in a clinical way, as opposed to a lived reality, when a discomfort begins to be felt. At this time the patient may notice certain things about his work -- the recurrence of certain elements -- a certain sequence of actions, which he may begin to relate to his way of living life.

Looking at the task of the alchemist and that of the person in art therapy one could relate it to the rapprochement subphase in Mahler's separation/individuation process. (Nathans & Fleming, 1981, pp. 25-36) During rapprochement the child is trying to become a separate person while returning for refuelling and reaffirmation to the mother. The alchemists can be viewed as following a similar procedure by returning to nature, working on matter (Mater) to effect the task. In the projection of suffering on to matter, the ores and metals were regarded as living organisms and were spoken of in terms of gestation, birth, marriage, death, etc. Their activities were described in multi-levelled terms -- from very literal and concrete to spiritual -- sometimes for deliberate concealment and

sometimes because of the level of understanding and stage of individuation of the adept. We can see several parallels here to the art therapeutic procedure: the art work may act as a container for projected suffering and the images are often dealt with as having a life of their own. Both works are carried out in a context permeated with the idea of "relationship". The alchemist often worked with a female assistant, known as his soror mystica -- a kind of anima figure -- or with an apprentice, although even when he did not the relationship aspect of the work was palpable. (See Figure 8) In the process of art therapy, I do not see anyone as carrying an immutably fixed role: rather, I see the patient and therapist as in the "alchemical situation" where transformation on many levels is possible and where, thanks to the variety of archetypal constellations, both may try on different roles, as required by the operations performed and the stages reached.

Figure 8. 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 (Von Franz, 1978, p. 231).



5.03 The Equipment

When the prima materia has been identified, the next stage requires that it be placed in a closed container, the alchemical vas, and heat be applied. In his exploration of the realm of the psyche, the "underworld", Hillman (1979) sees its fundamental image as

that of contained space (even if the limits are shrouded and undefined)...[e]very response to the underworld should resonate from a similar contained space, whether this be the consulting room itself, the close therapeutic relationship, the hermetic vessel in which the work is done, the dream-journal, or the going inward in imagination. (p. 189)

The symbolism surrounding the alchemical equipment is as rich as that of the materials. The modern consulting/art room has been seen by Wadeson (1980) as a "nurturing laboratory", (p. 34) although not necessarily in a conscious alchemical sense, while for Jung and many others who followed him the alchemical

vessel stands for

the ego function of containing and holding archetypal interaction and conflict so that further synthesis and resolutions come about. That the vessel is a reified mother, and that originally it is the actual mother who holds and reflects, needs no arguing...The temenos, the theatre and the picture frame are further abstractions of the same containing... function... Some ability to "get outside" i.e. contain an affective experience, is necessary for reflection, for thinking, for imaging, and for working symbolically. (Redfearn, 1982, p. 231)

Redfearn touches here upon the familiar concept of the "frame" for the therapeutic work and relationship. Yet another contemporary version of the alchemical process has the body/mind entity as the entire laboratory, materials, opus and alchemist. I refer to Woodman's (1982) combination dream analysis/body workshop of which she writes:

The goal is to integrate body and psyche: to take the healing symbols from the dreams, put them into the unconscious body areas and allow their energy to accomplish the healing work. One of the dangers in analysis [or therapy] is that we have done our work when we think we understand the dream images; we become fascinated by the interpretation. If the symbol is not contemplated, however, its healing power is lost. It has to go into the fire of the heart in order to be transformed. As Von Franz points out, "Emotion is the carrier of consciousness." (p. 87).

Here we can easily read "spontaneous art image" for "dream image" and arrive at a satisfactory transposition.

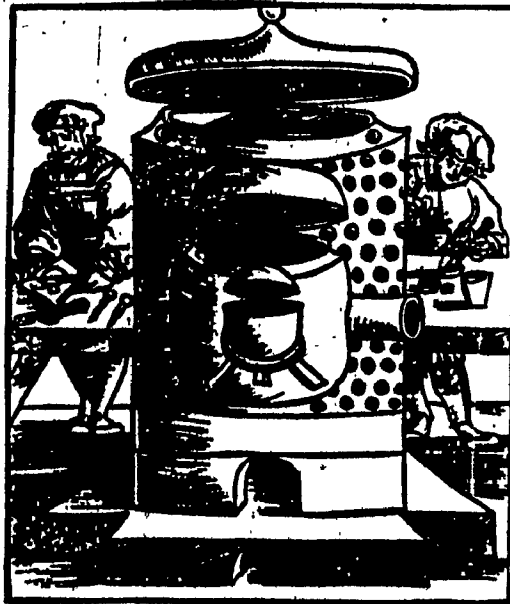
The alchemists believed that their "well-sealed vessel", the vas bene clausum in which transformations took place, also, psychologically speaking, underwent transformation (Newman, 1981, p. 229). The vas had two basic capacities: the protection of the contents and its own potential development as well as a holding function which prevented the transforming substance

from escaping and regressing to its original state. Underlying these functions was the belief that within the vessel there already existed all of the necessary ingredients and means of transmutation: neither intrusion nor extrusion was desirable. The vas itself is seen by some, therefore, as symbolizing psychotherapy itself -- as both vessel and process. The original image seems to have been of three containers, however, each one nesting in the other, as is seen in the cross-section of an alchemist's oven in Jung's Psychology and Alchemy. (See Figure 9)

According to Newman

we might, psychologically, see the innermost vessel as that of the individual psyche and personality of the [person] in therapy. The second vessel would then correspond to the therapeutic setting... The third and outermost vas bene clausum may well symbolize the vas rotundum which [has been related to] the world-soul, or cosmos, that encompasses the physical universe from outside. (p. 231)

Figure 9. Alchemical furnace, showing three containers, each nesting within another, illustrating the many levels of the psychological vas.



Newman explores the rôle of the therapist in this multi-levelled image of the vas, and finds that one approach addresses itself to vas no. 1, and a second to vas no. 2. In the first case, the therapist takes care to neither interfere nor contribute to the patient's process, maintaining the integrity of the latter's psyche as vas bene clausum; in the second she engages in the process with the patient and responds on either a "real" level, or when deemed necessary, with a technical intervention. While both states exist in the therapeutic situation Newman indicates that vas no. 2 is often the one preferred in the more regressed conditions (p. 235). The question of the therapist's role in the individuation process raises once again the issue of whether a patient can progress only as far as the therapist herself has gone. My own feelings on this have led me to believe that once the transformation process is underway and there is a sense of being in the presence of the Self, then the channels are open for each to go as far as he is able at that particular time. While the container may be closed, it may be understood to have indeterminate depth and breadth. (See Figure 10)

Figure 10. The Philosophical Egg, as birthplace of, and container for, new psychological attitudes brought about by a union of opposites and a consequent furthering of the ego/Self relationship. The goal is seen here as hermaphrodite triumphing over dragon and winged globe of chaos, the threatening aspects of the unconscious.



Newman has also looked at the way the alchemist began and kept the process of transformation going without being overly influential. He illustrates this with a picture from the Tripus Aureus of 1618, (See Figure 11) described by Jung (1953) as follows:

The picture is divided into two parts. On the right is a laboratory where a man, clothed only in trunks, is busy at the fire; on the left a library, where an abbot, a monk, and a layman are conferring together. In the middle, on top of the furnace, stands the tripod with a round flask on it containing a winged dragon. (pp. 290-291)

Here we see the two aspects of alchemy -- the laboratory and the library -- reflective of the two aspects of therapy, the practical work on psyche and its theoretical and spiritual framework. Each "side" views the centrally placed furnace and vessel from its own perspective and one may at times take precedence over the other, but ultimately they must reach a reconciliation and a balance. We see the alchemist providing the "outer fire" for the events taking place in the closed vessel, i.e. the therapist's expenditure of

Figure 11. 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. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 83)



affect and caring in dealing with the psyche of the patient as vas no. 1, the innermost vas bene clausum (Newman, pp. 236-237). The picture also reveals, due to the fact that the alchemist holds a hammer in his right hand, the possibility that he may be about to forge what could be a piece of metal held in his left hand. In other words, as Newman speculates, he may be about to work on his "own matter" as a by-product of the process already underway (pp. 238-239). Here we see, perhaps, a very basic illustration of "mutuality of process" in therapy and the opportunity or obligation that being a therapist brings, to continue working on one's own process.

Lambert (1981) relates the multiple image of the vas to the mother-infant relationship, to the family as container of the mother-infant pair and to society as container for the family. He links the ~~first~~ to clinical practice where there is often the development of new adult beginnings "expressed in the imagery of infancy...distorted by events in the patient's past" (p. 243). Lambert considers that when it is the Self that is to be facilitated from the beginning of life there are several requirements related to the alchemical vas imagery:

1. "holding" without intrusive "impingement";
2. "facilitating" [of] object formation by affording...opportunities, through the provision of constant and reliable presence, to test out reality through love and aggression;
3. meeting the spontaneous unpacking, through deintegration, of the archetypal potential of the original self by providing objects and situations that correspond to the deintegrates;
4. providing space and opportunity to move through the paranoid-schizoid position to the depressive position via genuine experiences of gratitude, aggression, depression and reparation. The parallels between these four features of the mother's authority in caring and what is required of the alchemist...[are] clear enough. (pp. 243-244)

In relation to the therapeutic situation Winnicott (1980) indicates that a kind of parental functioning may be required on the part of the therapist, and it must be borne in mind that this is not at all the same as sentimental mothering, but, according to Lambert, a "functioning that is adapted to the fact that the patient is an adult...[and that he] can never, in reality, be a child again in the full sense of the word" (p. 245). Here we meet the necessity of the "as if" attitude in a working therapy, although this is by no means a foregone conclusion or a "given". The acquisition of the "as if" attitude is often a major task for the patient in therapy, since it requires activation of the symbolic function -- the goal of the opus. However, if the therapist temporarily carries that function for the patient, it is possible to see that the vas requirements of infancy may also apply to patient care.

In his article dealing with the difficulties in attaining the symbolic situation with patients Redfearn (1980, p. 206) uses Neumann's terminology to describe the "uroboric" stage of psychic development. This is the early part of the great mother stage characterized by the "life-giving all-powerful world or great mother

and a world-destroying and annihilating, great mother" (p. 206). At this level we are dealing with undifferentiated psychic energy and an undifferentiated cosmos. Both therapist and patient at this stage are caught up in an archetypal situation, the first task of which is differentiation. If the word "transference" is to be used here, it has to be in relation to the total scene, and not to an object. The alchemical tradition supplies us with the images of opposing psychic forces coming into contact inside a container as a model for understanding the "psychotic" condition, which could be seen as a natural developmental phase in infancy. When the ego's holding capacity is not enough to enable the conflict to be sustained and resolved, a vessel-like container must be found. The therapist, therefore, by providing structure, limits and inhibitions becomes, in association with the art work, that container within which the conflict may be resolved. However, at the uroboric stage there is probably no separation between the patient, therapist and the art work, if, in fact, any art work can be produced: the container and the contained are one.

Jacobi (1958) writes of Jung's conviction that it was essential to complete the first stage of individuation -- the development of a consistent ego -- before undertaking the hazards of the second. Here is where the mediating and transforming ability of the art therapist comes into its own. Only, however, if she has a strong-enough ego herself, in a "good-enough" relation to the Self can she "love the pathologized images" of the unconscious for themselves and not for the promise of "progress" (Hillman, 1975). It is in the loving and holding of the images when they occur and for what they are, whether expressed pictorially or as yet simply "in the air", that constitutes the Mercurial transforming function of "mother", matter and therapist.

5.04 The Procedure

A consideration of the containing features in art therapy leads us directly to the practical issue of how one actually conducts a session. The foregoing material has focussed on an imaginal/therapeutic backdrop from which perspective the ego is but one among many complexes. In the conducting of a session one must be in no doubt, as to their relative positioning. It is thus appropriate to ask: Where do we perceive reality? While the reductive psychotherapies are concerned with bringing the patient back to so-called "objective" reality, Jung felt that reality lies in the psychic realm where things can be subjectively true. Of course there is an area of overlap, but the emphasis is variable. If one uses the approach of meeting the patient where he is at any given time, pressure is taken off this issue, with a major caveat that the therapist must not abdicate the ego-role while accompanying the patient on the "journey". We dare not go completely with the imagery as did some ill-fated alchemists: the therapist must stand for the "real world", as a person who is managing her life, and the provision and use of the frame, be it perceived as the

theory, the therapeutic contract, the room, or the paper itself, permits therapy to take place. This frame, identical with the vas of the alchemists is also a complex abstract structure which one carries and which becomes modified by the individual situation. The therapist must take into account her own tolerance levels -- how much she is able to allow while still maintaining the frame. Unconscious material itself is seductive if one abandons too much of the ego-role, but bringing it to the art work and channeling it into the image is a way of maintaining ego control for both therapist and patient. On the other hand, it would appear that the use of materials in both alchemy and art therapy can serve the purpose of relaxing the ego's boundary-keeping function. This is a Mercurial function (Mercury as Hermes is the god of boundaries) which permits archetypal forms to come into relation with the ego.¹³ Various alchemical texts, notably Sendivogius' "The New Chemical Light", c. 1600 A.D. show the work upon and with materials is a necessary prerequisite to the ego's assimilation of unconscious content. In other words, some degree of merging with matter is required if anything is to happen. As in art therapy, the degree of intellectual understanding (verbalized insight) would be dependent upon the ego position of the adept,

although in art therapy the therapist's holding ego can facilitate subliminal insights. There is, therefore, an ever-present need for enough ego strength in the situation to make unconscious material manageable and it remains the therapist's responsibility to be alert to the many levels of the framing or containing required.

One cannot look at the therapeutic situation for long without considering the relationship of those involved. The very idea of an "alchemical situation" suggests that there is a movement, a stirring and a mixing of an elemental nature. Raw materials are being used. Sometimes there is a slow, gentle simmering and occasionally a shattered container as volatile contents explode. Here there are no grandiose delusions of power being the immutable attribute of any one individual. Sometimes patient or therapist may find himself in the role of alchemist; sometimes the bubbling sulphur, the evaporating mercury or a manifestation of the Stone itself. In this way the Wounded Healer archetype is kept whole, and there is a movement along the axis from each polar extreme, without the therapist abandoning the ultimate responsibility to remain ego-intact.

Jung and others have likened the meeting of two personalities in therapy to the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction at all, both are transformed. This process of mutual transformation asks as much of the therapist as it does of the patient, if not more so in the areas of honesty, perseverance and readiness for change. There is a heavy demand on the therapist for in the last resort it is always her own personality rather than a method or technique which is the determining factor. When the therapist brings her own person to the relationship there are no compulsions to silence, reflection, interpretation or impersonal technique. Whitmont's (1978, p. 299) description of iron filings in a magnetic field -- arranged at each pole in a circular pattern, but with an intersecting ellipse at the area of their mutual encounter, gives us an image of what happens when two people meet and an interaction of their psychic fields takes place. Whether they know it or not, accept it or reject it, their unconscious patterns arrange themselves in relation to each other in a typical fashion. There is a shared energetic space and unless something of this is understood we remain in unconscious relation to the other and are in no position to experience freedom of choice in our dealings with that other. Thus in the

special atmosphere of therapy an "enabling space" is prepared (Whitmont, p. 300).

The process of mutual transformation in therapy calls forth, therefore, the idea of a work shared -- a third area which comprises the relationship itself. This is comparable to Winnicott's (1980) intermediate region between mother and child which both joins and separates the two and from which all cultural experience springs. It is the mediating area or space between the inner psychic world and the world outside. In verbal psychotherapy this is viewed in abstract or projected terms; in art therapy it is given, in addition, concrete form in the art work. The work of the alchemist, the verbal psychotherapist and the art therapist always takes a triadic form; it is in the third area that we find the so-called transference and counter-transference phenomena.

Figures 12(a) and 12(b) illustrate some of the triadic possibilities in art therapy.

In this example the patient is "learning" how to be in therapy:

- The building of a working alliance within which to deal with the tasks and the relationship.
- Work on the internalization of the vas (framework)
- Meanwhile "borrowing" therapist's ego as vas.

Here is a joint task:

- Work on the relationship projected into the art work.
- Masculine and feminine elements (regardless of the actual gender of patient and therapist) can be seen as a projection of the relationship, as well as the patient's internal conflicts.

Figure 12(a). Triadic possibilities in art therapy.

The Work
(projection; art work)



Alchemist
(Therapist)

Apprentice
(Patient)

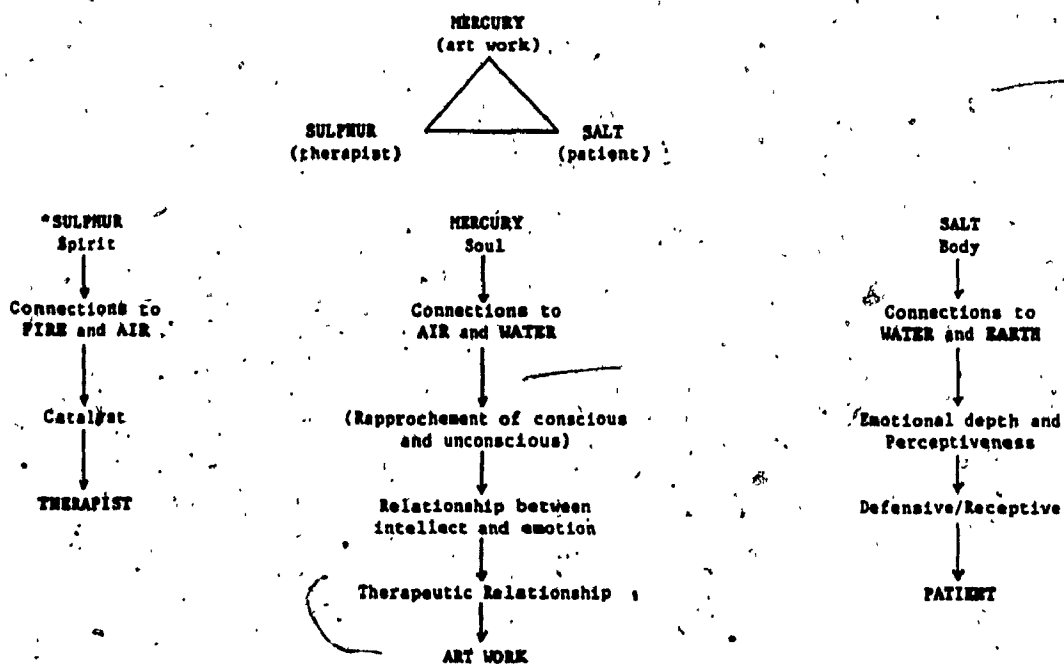
The Work
(projection; art work)



Alchemist
(Patient)

Apprentice
(Therapist)

Figure 12(b). Triadic possibilities in art therapy.



In classical psychoanalysis countertransference was seen as a flaw; Jung (1954, pp. 329-330) originally saw it as bringing the therapeutic process to a standstill. This classical view would undoubtedly promote guilt and probably a repressive mechanism in the therapist thereby clouding his perceptions even further. These considerations led to a modified approach and this succeeded in releasing both transference and countertransference from the onesidedness of their original meaning of a reactivation of past feelings. As its positive and ²⁰later its negative elements found acceptance, it was seen to have redeeming qualities as a therapeutic tool. This strikes me as quite appropriate for those who are dealing with patients capable of "transference" i.e. those who have reached the stage of object constancy, and can therefore deal with an interpretation of the experience. The therapist of those hospitalized on a psychiatric ward, however, receives more of an archetypal projection in the form of the Great Mother in both her aspects and is more often related to as a part-object. In this situation the concept of the "mirror-transference" fits better, a process in which the therapist acts as a Self-object for the patient in a kind of re-enactment of the early holding and facilitating environment described by

Winnicott (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, pp. 45-50 and Lachman-Chapin, 1979, pp. 3-9).

Expanding on the idea of the mirror-transference Schwartz-Salant writes that the mother

is the first carrier of the archetypal Self image, the central source of order in the personality. Properly containing the child's anxiety helps constellate the positive Self as an internal reality for the child, and with this an inner sense of security and actual inner functioning of the archetype of order. Unless this mirroring takes place, a child will not readily have the inner ground for development. All change will be fraught with anxiety and fear, and its sense of identity will be chronically diffuse. (p. 46)

On the same subject, Jacoby (1984) tells us that "[t]he gleam in the mother's eye is a phrase used by Kohut to describe this first mirror when it is reflecting joy in the baby's existence and its various activities" (p. 44).

Work in art touches directly the narcissistic yearnings of those in need of self-affirmation, and the actual art work in therapy may well perform a mirroring function, until the symbolic function is activated, and the symbolic attitude possible. The work of the artist is closely related to that of the alchemist who formed an empathic bond with matter. Both project their subjective states on to an object, perhaps indicative of the lifelong need for a personally affirming Self-object. The artist, therapist, alchemist and patient in therapy can be seen as working to similar ends, since the aim for all is greater consciousness. Infants, shamans and alchemists have shown us that an "increased consciousness" is relative: it can range from greater awareness of the early body/Self to classically understood psychological insight. The alchemical attitude allows for work on whatever level is presented: the patient engaged in art therapy may therefore productively work on repairing early narcissistic wounds caused by the empathic failure of the first Self-object, or on more current life issues.

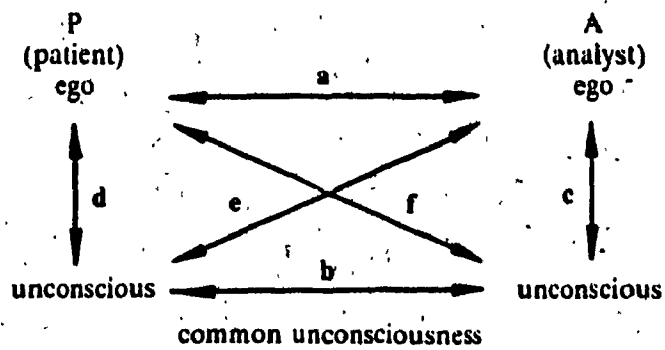
My belief is that in working on the archaic stages of narcissism, where something analogous to soothing, tension-releasing relationship is needed, then

9 progressing through the normal frustrations to the production of the transitional object and beyond is the key to "transformation" where the basic drives are changed, as opposed to "sublimation" where substitute gratification is achieved. If those early stages are left untouched, then strictly speaking we come up with a superficial solution, especially with hospitalized patients. This is where we find the "Myth of the Eternal Return" in its most tragically concrete form. When we hear of a successful sublimation we may actually be hearing of a happily accidental transformation.

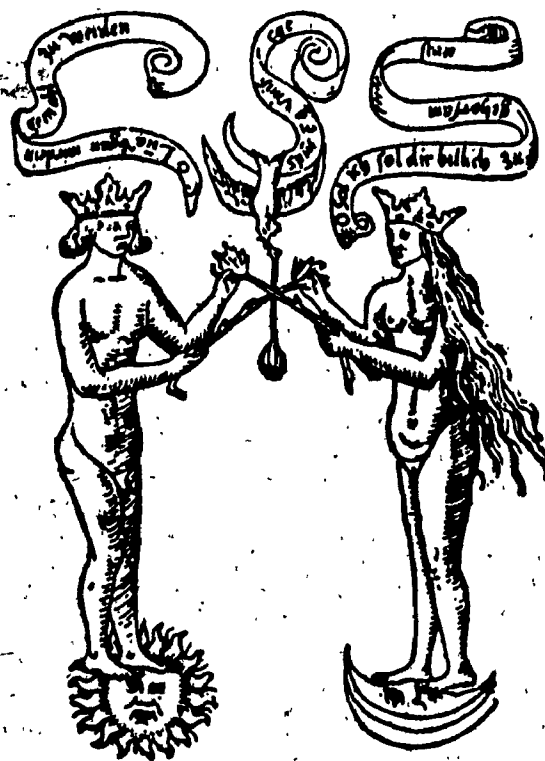
Mirroring and holding are also models for the patient before and during the blackness (depression) of the Nigredo phase of the work: there is a closed container and a reflection. The work is towards the Albedo, the whitening, where the art work becomes a kind of magic mirror for the patient. Where there was blackness there is now a silvering. The therapist has been modelling the mirroring and reflecting process until such time as the patient is able to see his own art work, rather than the person of the therapist, as a Self-object. His art work then reflects aspects of the Self and he is able in turn to reflect upon what he

sees. (See Figure 13(a) and (b))

Figures 13(a) and (b). The therapeutic relationship. Jacoby's (1984) diagram shows the complexity of the psychological interactions between patient and analyst/therapist. The Rosarium illustration reveals these unconscious dynamics in metaphor, the dove symbolizing, as the Latin inscription indicates, "the spirit which unites".



(a)



(b)

5.05 Active Imagination

For the alchemist, "holding" and later "mirroring" of the Self came from the materials and their transformations and as a result the ability to imagine was promoted. The following text illustrates its place in the work:

And take care that thy door be well and firmly closed, so that he who is within cannot escape and -- God willing -- thou wilt reach the goal. Nature performeth her operations gradually; and indeed I would have thee do the same: let thy imagination be guided wholly by nature. And observe according to nature, through whom the substances regenerate themselves in the bowels of the earth. And imagine this with true and not with fantastic imagination, (Rosarium Philosophorum, quoted in Jung, 1974)

We can recognize here references to the sealed vessel and the admonition against hurrying the process. Jung (1974) tells us that

[t]he imaginatio is to be understood as the real and literal power to create images -- the classical use of the word in contrast to phantasia, which means a mere "conceit" in the sense of insubstantial thought... Imaginatio is the active evocation of inner images...an authentic feat of thought or ideation, which does not spin aimless and groundless fantasies "into the blue" -- does not, that is to say, just play with its objects, but tries to grasp the inner facts and portray them in images true to their nature. This activity is an opus, a work... The resemblance to the opus is obvious enough to anyone familiar with alchemy. (p. 241)

Jung is clearly making a distinction between the technique of "free association" (whereby a dreamer, for example, indicates the first idea that comes to him when thinking of the dream images, then following from this to wherever his train of thought leads him) and

the autonomous creative activity of the unconscious in collaboration with the ego which he subsequently termed "active imagination". While in his view free association only leads back to its originating complexes, active imagination, he felt

leads beyond to the structure of the psyche, in which psychic life is contained and maintained. That is, it not only exposes and explains personal properties of the psyche, but it leads into and reveals the non-personal realm. It is this non-personal realm which is the source of myths, fairy tales and specific forms of religious belief and rituals. It is here one finds the basic struggles of mankind, the psychic growth and forms upon which consciousness rests. (Rix Weaver, 1973, p. 4)

The introverted tradition in alchemy has been described by Jung as the art of active imagination with material and this definition may be extended to include any art form or psychic experiencing which involves a fully co-operating ego, and which serves as a means of expression for the individual (Von Franz, 1979, p. 18).

It can be seen as a conscious turning of attention to the unconscious, although in the beginning stages the alchemists did not dwell upon "meanings". They participated wholeheartedly with their materials, one experiment following the other by suggestion, according to the needs of the individual, deepening the images with each operation by imaginatio. Jung's (1961, pp. 173-175) own experiences with active imagination led him to see that the returning again and again to the "products" permitted their meanings to be assimilated and a "healing" to be effected without a necessary recourse to interpretation. Von Franz (1980(b)) cautions, however, that

the alchemists...always had a vessel. This vessel is the imaginatio vera [true imagination] or the "theoria", they did not get lost, but had a "comprehension" in the literal sense of the word...(p. 79)

In other words a containing framework is an absolute necessity, and the activity presupposes the presence of an ego that is capable of separating itself from the fantasy activity.

In active imagination such archetypal images as present themselves are felt to have an autonomous character. The ego reacts in such a way as to value the experience of the images, thereby laying the groundwork for creative work with them. Fordham (1967, p. 59) sees these "objective" imagery sequences as resulting from the Self's deintegrative processes, noting that it is the participation of the ego which promotes subsequent integration and further modifications of the ego itself. A connection between active imagination and transitional phenomena has also been observed by Fordham (1977, p. 325) who illustrates his point with a recounting of Jung's own experiences, when, after undergoing significant separations in his life, he felt the urgent need to "play", using stones, bottles and mud to create an entire miniature village. As a result of these building activities much fantasy material was released which Jung was able to use in his own individuation process. Fordham's study of the relationship between transitional phenomena and active imagination throws into relief several important parallels to art therapy processes where a working relationship has been established:

1. There is a concentration upon the images which emerge: the ego relinquishes control over them and there is an exclusion of external objects during the process.

2. The ego is felt as separate from the imagery which "does itself", that is, it has an objective quality. The inner relation is only perceived when the subject ego stands back and reflects upon the dynamic processes going on in the imagery.

3. Active participation of the ego is required, similar to the child's "doing things with" his transitional object, that is, there are the rudiments of relationship. We might align this with the results of certain alchemical operations, e.g. the mortificatio -- the sadistic, destructive work out of which new life may spring -- and compare it with the child's mutilation, etc., of his transitional object and its relative indestructibility. It is "always there" (cf. the psychoid) and only changes (transforms) when the child himself changes through inner growth, i.e. is able to symbolize and experience an "as if" existence in play, etc. The same holds true for processes of change in art therapy.

4. The products (paintings, drawings, sculptures) are recognized as the patient's possessions, although they may be held in trust by the therapist.

5. Validity is given to the products of the psyche during therapy.

- a. There is an ongoing process during which the images, not the therapist, are seen to be doing something, thereby validating their existence. Jung is quoted by Von Franz (1980(b)) as saying that "one essential effect of active imagination is that it enables the analysand to become independent of the analyst" (p. 96) by diluting the transference. This relates to Winnicott's "potential space" -- the "third area" in which pressure is taken off the mother when the child is able to play by himself in her presence. The parallels with art therapy are self-evident, although it may take some considerable time to achieve this with patients who have difficulty in utilizing the symbolic function.

- b. Interpretation is not necessary unless the psychically objective experiences become entangled with "real life" issues. However, even then it may be destructive of the "synthetic" processes and as an alternative, amplification may be used, although not necessarily so.

While Jung considered active imagination to be an intra-psychic dramatic enactment, Davidson (1966) writes on the use of a form of "lived-through" active imagination with patients who have poor ego identity. For this to occur, the therapist must carry the ego attitude necessary to deal with the affects and imagery released, if she is not to be unconsciously collusive in a projective identification. She must be prepared to risk regressing herself, deliberately, to the less differentiated states required for creative work and thus mediate the symbolic experience which, as yet, is not directly available to her patient. This is a Mercurial function.

which involves the emergence of ever new forms of synthesis of the opposing psychic forces and attitudes, and thus the

confrontation of the wishes for death and fusion and the wishes for identity and uniqueness may lead to the emergence of new, genuine and creative work, life styles and personal growth. (Gordon, 1978, p. 125)

This procedure is central to the task of the art therapist whose work is with hospitalized or otherwise very regressed patients and requires an acceptance of the need at times for fusion as

an essential and recurring phase in the development of all creative relationships. Accepting this, and when the time is ready, being seen to accept it, may sooner or later encourage a patient to expose himself also to these risks in relationship to himself and to his inner world. (Gordon, 1978, p. 124)

The value of active imagination as a "technique" lies in the fact that it cannot be taught or copied. It is, as is the alchemical opus, a truly personal work in that each subjective experience is unique and cannot be duplicated, even by the person himself. It is a "method" of finding one's own way, from within the.

"way" itself.

An understanding of the development of the symbolic function has been broadened by Winnicott's (1980) concept of the transitional object, which is the object, tangible or intangible -- chosen by the child as his first "not-me" possession. It usually appears when the child no longer experiences complete fusion with his mother and acts as a bridge between the worlds of fantasy and reality -- the third area: the area of experience discussed in Section 5.04 as the mediating space. Winnicott's thesis is that there is "a direct development from transitional phenomena to playing, and from playing to shared playing, and from this to cultural development" (pp. 112-121). The transitional object, then, can be seen as the earliest expression of creativity, invested as it is with meaning from the child's own inner world. Its identity as a symbol is proposed by Fordham (1977) who writes that

it lasts a variable time and is relegated "to limbo" as its contents and meanings become exhausted and assimilated into the area of mental functioning dominated by it; dreaming, play, fantasy, thought and the creative

activities of any particular child. Thus it is a symbol in having a life of its own, and it can die; it is also truly symbolic in containing opposites.. (n.p.)

Jung (1967) has observed that the most important problems in life are fundamentally insoluble and that they can only be outgrown. He perceived that this outgrowing was in fact a new level of consciousness resulting from

[s]ome higher or wider interest [appearing] on the patient's horizon, and through this broadening of his outlook the insoluble problem lost its urgency...It was not solved logically in its own terms, but faded out when confronted with a new and stronger life urge. [as with the transitional object -- the mediating bridge -- the Mercurius] It was not repressed and made unconscious, but merely appeared in a different light, and so really did become different...One certainly does feel the affect and is shaken and tormented by it, yet at the same time one is aware of a higher consciousness looking on which

prevents one from becoming identical with the ~~affect~~, a consciousness which regards the affect as an object, and can say "I know that I suffer." (pp. 14-15)

The decathecting of the transitional object, the outgrowing of a life problem and the so-called "death" of the symbol can be related to the withdrawal of a projection and the ability to symbolize, i.e. the transformation of Mercurius as prima materia. The paradoxical element in alchemy reveals itself yet again in that, (1) the process of symbolization is necessary to enable active imagination as used by the alchemists (as well as patients and therapists) to occur, and (2) the goal of the opus is the reunion of opposites and a "new birth", that is, the ability to symbolize. In other words, the thing to be transformed (fantasy behind the transitional phenomenon), the agent of transformation (the transitional object) and the goal (symbolic functioning) are one and the same. There is identity of process and product, with differences perceived only according to perspective, which is ultimately dependent upon the existence and position of the observing ego.

In order to engage the process of growing into consciousness, an attitude was needed which conscious and unconscious elements could work together to experience connections between objects which are also seen to be discrete. Jung called this the transcendent function which he saw as being made up of the other functions and which could facilitate transitions from one attitude to another. This is the symbolizing activity already referred to which comprises a shaping and reshaping of the opposites by thesis and antithesis into a new synthesis. Jung's concept of the transcendent function developed out of his personal experiences with active imagination which led to his coining the phrase "as-if attitude" in referring to the symbolizing capacity which develops with ego growth and which permits the formation of a working therapeutic alliance.

5.06 Symbol Formation and the Creative Process

The alchemical process was symbolically a "safe place" in which to experiment with a variety of materials, many of them volatile, in a concrete manner. Winnicott's "third area" -- that of transitional phenomena and experiencing -- is a similar haven, as is the art therapeutic relationship, for exploring perhaps volatile contents of the psyche. Redfearn (1982) sees that

the fundamental question [is] to do with the individual's power to contain affect and tolerate paradoxes, incompatibilities, separations, loss, despair etc...It is this which determines how "symbolic" experiences can be. (p. 231)

In respect to this the alchemist used his powers of symbolization in order to engage in his work of active imagination, which promotes ever "higher" syntheses: the infant and frequently the regressed patient have to develop the necessary ability to symbolize in order to make the first synthesis. At this point, the

symbolizing or transcendent function is still carried by the mother or therapist, and later it will be concretized in the transitional phenomena or art work, i.e. in a form in which it can be experienced through the sensation function, an "embodied" form for subsequent transformation.¹⁴ If, however, for any reason the "holding" is inadequate, if the mother or therapist has been unsuccessful in her "transforming" role, then the ability to symbolize is impaired. The opposites have been constellated, but not reconciled -- a necessary component of the symbolizing process.

Bion (1955) finds that the capacity to form symbols is dependent upon

1. the ability to grasp whole objects
2. the abandonment of the paranoid-schizoid position with its attendant splitting, and
3. the bringing together of splits and the ushering in of the depressive position.

(p. 228)

Although he uses Kleinian terminology we can hear in Bion's words echoes of the opus in that there is a move from a state of fragmentation to a state of unity, with an accompanying sense of depression, indicative of the

Nigredo phase. As in the alchemical tradition, however, the reconciliation of opposites, even in the healthiest of development, is not dealt with once and for all. The depressive position is never fully negotiated and there is a constant ebb and flow, based on archetypal potential together with initial and subsequent life experiences, of one's ability to tolerate the juxtapositioning of the opposites. We spend our lives approaching the task and retreating from it, and we do this by utilizing and losing touch with the transcendent function in the context of the individuation process.

Edinger (1972) writes of three possible patterns of relation between ego and symbol, all of which may be used at different times by an individual:

1. Ego identified with symbol. This would be the stage of "participation mystique" or "primary relationship" which Segal (1957) calls "symbolic equation". Here the symbol carries the same emotional value as the thing symbolized and is a characteristic of the paranoid-schizoid position, where there is no "as-if" attitude. It would embrace a "pre-alchemical", shamanistic functioning -- the concretistic fallacy.

2. Ego alienated from symbol. This is what Jung would see as the capacity to make "signs" only i.e. there would be one object substituting for another known object, with little or no affective component. It might be considered to resemble Segal's "symbolic representation" and would be seen as defensive from a Jungian perspective. The alchemists who believed they were making actual gold would be operating here under the reductive fallacy.

3. Ego distinct and separate from the archetypal psyche, but affectively and cognitively open and receptive to symbolic imagery. Functioning on this level would be the alchemists who worked on the inner quest (Edinger, 1972, pp. 109-110).

Jackson (1963, pp. 156-157) enlarges upon Edinger's proposition by suggesting that the true symbol is produced when the level of symbolic equation is experienced by a relatively mature ego, that is, by one who has the "symbolic attitude" toward such events. It would seem therefore that there are essentially two positions in the production of symbols (although they can be broken down even further) which relate to the

discoveries of those researching creative processes in general.¹⁵ These are expressed in various terms according to the orientation of the writers, but principally seem to be covered by the idea of a "shuttling" mechanism between primary and secondary processes, a "regression in the service of the ego" in Kris's words, or a return to the prima materia. Mind blends with matter; the rational with the non-rational.

The capacity to mobilize seemingly contradictory processes which are interactive and interdependent has been explored by Gordon (1977, p. 115) who identified four phases in the production of a creative work. These are: preparation, incubation, inspiration and verification, which involve the ability to both use and surrender ego functions. She links the incubation phase in art production and in psychotherapy with depression, sadness, despair and a possible living out of themes of torture and death -- all Nigredo experiences (Gordon, 1978, p. 162).

There is no way of knowing while experiencing the Nigredo if it is really the forerunner to a creative act, or whether it is the regression that it feels like. There can be no cheating -- no relief in trying

to convince oneself that it is simply the "usual"
fragmented chaos before the great achievement. It must
be suffered, believed in and valued for itself.

6 SOULMAKING

Alchemy can be seen as an imaginative exercise described in terms of concrete substances and impersonal operations into which the adept projected his depth and thus worked upon his own psyche -- his soul. Alchemy is about soulmaking, as are both art and therapy. Hillman (1975) writes that

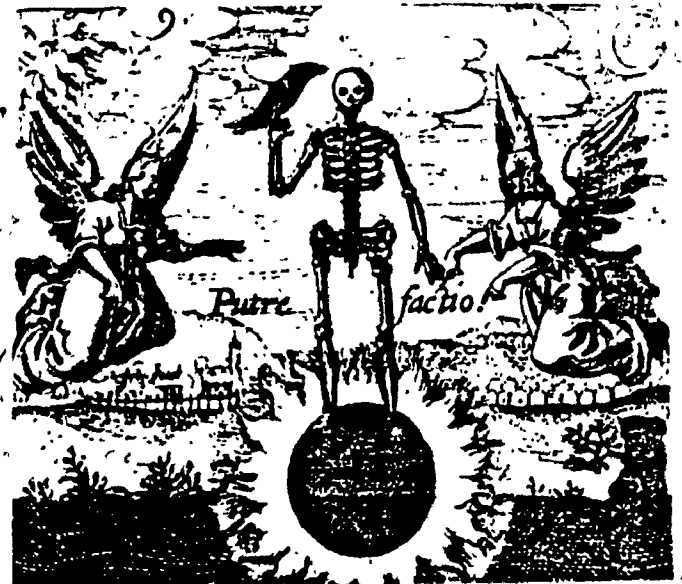
[in] the depth of the soul there was also psychopathology, and in fact the substances and processes themselves were conceived in pathologized language, so that in alchemy we find pathologizing as an integral, necessary aspect of soul-making.

So much is this the case that when we enter the thought of alchemy these events lose their stigma of sickness and become metaphors for necessary phases of the soul-making process. So we find: processes of dismemberment, torture, cannibalism, decapitation, flaying, poisoning; images of monsters,

dragons, unipeds, skeletons, hermaphrodites; operations called putrefaction, mortification, pulverizing, dissolution. The woodcuts and drawings of the alchemists display the processes with every sort of bizarre and obscene configuration. Fundamental to these strenuously pathologized images and activities was one basic idea: the soul is lost in its literal perspective, its identity with material life. (p. 90) (See Figure 14)

Although, as Jung has observed, the pursuit of alchemy as a discipline ended long ago, alchemical processes continue within the psyche today. However, without the alchemical attitude many of these processes have come to be classified as clinically psychopathological. Hillman (1975, p. 91) has seen in the transformation from the "natural" perspective to the "imaginal" one (the opus contra naturam) a necessity for pathologizing, since the creative act requires a preliminary "death" or a temporary return to a state of non-differentiation. This state, as suggested previously, is contiguous with paranoid-schizoid functioning where annihilation and destruction

Figure 14. Images from the Nigredo phase of the
opus.



fantasies abound. Hillman (pp. 89-90) sees alchemy as one possible imaginal background to pathologizing, as it does not expect the psyche to comply with other perspectives -- medical, moral, humanistic, etc. It is, rather, a descriptive system of the imaginal psyche that offers a wholly psychological approach to psychopathology by virtue of its remaining within the realm of the imagination.

"Seeing" from the psychological viewpoint means that we see by means of our complexes and their pathologizings, hence the need to come to know them better by a "deepening" of their images in therapy, rather than by simple associations or reductions. They must be visited and revisited in an imaginal rather than a literalized sense in order that psyche or soul may be served, rather than subjugated. In his argument for a new perspective on psychopathology, one whose viewpoint comes from neither the medical nor the religious model, Hillman cautions against indiscriminate rejection of descriptive terms from either discipline, since they refer to a highly differentiated awareness of the psyche's condition accumulated through observation and reflection. Instead, he urges that we need only hold in abeyance

the structural model from which they are derived; otherwise we are in danger of losing the focus on psyche (1975, pp. 56-58). He adds that

[w]hen we lose this focus on psyche, psychology becomes medicine or sociology or practical theology...Notoriously, in all these fields, the soul is secondary or absent; psyche is reduced to a factor or function of something more literal. (p. 180)

Psychotherapy means serving soul, which implies letting it rule; it leads, we follow. This means that we must be prepared to suspend fantasies of cure and value the pathologized images for themselves alone instead of performing a premature coagulation by literal interpretation, diagnosis, or steering the patient away from his own images. Admittedly this can be difficult for the art therapist in a hospital setting which uses a team approach geared to rapid discharge of the patient. Nevertheless, within the closed container of the art therapeutic relationship the prima materia will and does emerge and will be worked upon, in a confirmation and validation of experience and imagery as real and true. While one may lament the lack of adequate

"working through" time, it can be seen that from a perspective that values images for themselves alone, such a regret may carry over-literalist connotations.

Jung wrote that even a psychosis can serve the individuation process which embraces both pathological and mystical states (Fordham, 1969, p. 1). With this in mind I should like to explore the alchemical implications in some of the art work, attitudes, behaviour and interactions of a hospitalized patient who attended art therapy twice a week for seven months on a day-care, and later on an out-patient basis. Six months later he was hospitalized again and had a further 16 in-hospital sessions. Termination was brought about by the hospital's internship policy rather than by the needs of the patient in therapy.

I shall be considering the imagery of the "alchemical situation" rather than referring to its concrete manifestations in the art work alone, in an attempt to enter the alchemical mode of imagining which, Hillman (1980) tells us, is therapeutic in itself. He finds that

its beauty lies in its materialized language which at the same time we can never take literally...I know that I am not composed of sulphur and salt, buried in horse dung, putrefying or congealing, turning white or green or yellow, encircled by a tail-biting serpent, rising on wings. And yet I am! I cannot take any of this literally, even if it is all accurate, descriptively true. Even while the words are concrete, material, physical, it is a patent mistake to take them literally. Alchemy gives us a language of substance which cannot be taken substantively, concrete expressions which are not literal. This is its therapeutic effect: it forces metaphor upon us. We are carried by the language into an as-if, into both the materialization of the psyche and the psychization of matter, at once, as we utter our words. (p. 124)

So it is in our work with patients when we see the visual "language of substance" which also cannot be taken literally. As in the alchemical language, we are given a communication as to the state of the soul in

all its ambiguity, but in material form which we must view imaginably until such time as our patients give us cause or permission to do otherwise.

In the hope of preserving these sentiments I present the following lived-through sequences of active imagination.

At the time E. began art therapy he was 36 years old, hospitalized on a short-term psychiatric ward, awaiting discharge to day care. He had had numerous hospital admissions since 1971, his clinical diagnosis being Chronic Schizophrenia with Mild Mental Retardation. Since E. was experiencing acute anxiety at the prospect of leaving hospital it was suggested that art therapy might assist during his transition period by providing him with an opportunity for self-expression in a supportive, non-threatening situation which would sidestep his difficulties with verbal communication. It was thought that this might also help him to avoid any destructive acting-out behaviour in response to his impending discharge (he had a history of fire-setting under stress) by allowing him a possibly cathartic experience using art materials.

E. had been admitted to hospital on a Lt. Governor's Warrant as part of a rehabilitation plan after serving several months in a psychiatric prison. He had been convicted of fire-setting, the latest in a series of such incidents, responsibility for which he had systematically denied.

E. was the third in a rural family of four children, having two older brothers and a younger sister. He attended school for only a brief period. When E. was five years old his mother was hospitalized as a result of a schizophrenic episode; shortly after, she gave birth to a daughter with cerebral palsy. All three boys were placed in foster care, but three years later the mother returned home and the family was reunited. However, she soon broke down again and was re-admitted to hospital, where she died two years later of a heart condition. When E. was sixteen years old his sister was killed in a hospital fire; one of his brothers died in the same psychiatric hospital as the mother, also of a heart condition, aged 27. In his late teens E. found work on a farm where he was involved in his first barn-burning incident, soon after his sister's death.

According to E., his mother repeatedly beat her children and on more than one occasion attempted to kill him. E. excuses her on the grounds that "she must have been very sick", and retains a fondness for his father who is now bedridden in a nursing home. E. visits him when he is able.

On our first meeting, E. presented with the dishevelled appearance which is apparently fairly usual for him. He walks with a certain jerkiness and awkwardness which is emphasized by his greater-than-average height. His articulation is poor and he is supposedly unable to read, although I subsequently discovered otherwise. He suffers from nocturnal enuresis.

The Sessions

E. was resting on his bed when I was first introduced to him. He sat up slowly and in response to the invitation to come for art therapy, he gazed at me sadly for several moments before silently accompanying me to the art room. During that first session a whole style of interaction evolved between us, reminiscent of play activity. He talked in a child-like manner,

greatly amused at times as he created a coloured marker drawing of a farmyard scene. Occasionally his facial expression would go through a series of changes from a blank stare to a piercing look or to silent laughter with head thrown back. His often wide grin would fall away to show what appeared to be a moment of abject despair; then he would brighten and continue drawing. He engaged me in an exchange by inviting me to guess what he was drawing, and slowly there came alive a scene where several animals were "allowed" out of the barn into the farmyard (See Slide 1). E. made sure that there were two horses and two cows "so they won't be lonely" and surrounded the animals with a fence. At one point he made a figure lying in a hammock, just above the farmyard, next to the house and we joked about his lying there when there was work to be done on the farm. He responded that it was his farm and that he would get up to milk the cows, drawing himself, a small stick figure with a bucket, on a stool beneath the largest cow. The picture was completed with the addition of a single tree outside the farmyard, some clouds and a sun.

At this point E. wanted to draw a pond with ducks, but felt that there was no room on the paper. He asked

for a separate sheet for "a big pond" which he drew and partly coloured in blue, adding a yellow duck and showing a great concern for how it looked. Again, he added a second one "so he won't be lonely" (See Slide 2).

In retrospect, I see that two things were firmly established during this first session. The first was E's particular "vocabulary" in the art language and the second was the form of our relationship which has all the aspects of early "play" experience, and thus the connotation of Winnicott's "potential space" -- the mediating area between inner and outer worlds. In his theory of play, Winnicott (1980, pp. 54-56) outlined a sequence of relationships between mother and baby which promotes an understanding of the way in which deep psychotherapy may occur without interpretive work. The initial stage is one in which the baby and object are merged with one another, followed by one in which the object is repudiated, re-accepted and perceived objectively. This is a highly crucial stage in which the mother must be prepared to be present, to participate and to reflect back what is given. This gives the baby an experience of magical control, and the confidence which this inspires forms the beginning

of the capacity to play. The next stage concerns the ability to play alone in the presence of someone who is reliable and available; this person is perceived by the child as reflecting back what happens in the playing. The final stage is one of mutual playing: this is where the mother may introduce some of her own playing and a give-and-take relationship is established. Winnicott (p. 44) sees the base of the helping intervention as an overlap of two areas of playing -- that of the patient and that of the therapist in an atmosphere of trust.

E. showed his readiness, at this point, for play in the presence of another, while if left alone he would sit and smoke or wander aimlessly around, unable to engage in any activity.

Writing on self-healing and creativity, Muller-Thalheim (1975) notes that

[t]he ability to play proves particularly fertile in the pictorial arts where it becomes visible, proveable, collectible and comparable. It constitutes the free area which can be visited over and over again, the play field of the spirit...a magic garden. He

who plays can detach himself from his surroundings, can free himself and yet tie himself to his tasks, can bewitch us and be bewitched by his own game, can produce rhythm and harmony. This form of play leads beyond catharsis to regularity, grip and orientation. (p. 168)

E. could not yet, however, play alone, and since his transcendent function was therefore not apparently operational, it was carried by myself in an "enabling" role.

E's art vocabulary has been drawn from the world that he "knows", images of which hold the key to his many life conflicts; these were revealed time and again, worked and reworked in his very precise visual expressions over the next seven months. The significance of the first pictures produced in art therapy has been observed by Shoemaker (1978) who states that "[t]he 'Map of the Journey' through art therapy seems to be an exposure of wholeness before a specific sequence is undertaken step-by-step" (p. 157). This is a recapitulation of the alchemical notion that the prima materia, Mercurius and the Philosophers' Stone are one and the

same: everything that is necessary is already with us. E. has presented his prima materia in the farmyard scenes at a level of symbolic equation and primary relationship.

Both works produced by E. in this session show what I prefer to call "mandaloid characteristics" in that they reveal in form, content and actual physical manner of production a Self-regulating tendency, while not fulfilling all the criteria of the "mandala proper". Slide 1 shows a mandaloid form with extruded elements, perhaps indicative of deintegration and projection, and a single isolated element. The farmyard is closed, with no gate for entry or exit (except that which is curiously suggested by the "hammock" area) and can therefore be seen as Newman's vas no. 1 or the individual psyche. Alternatively, one could see it as vas no. 2 -- the therapy itself -- the "play-space" into which the animals (deintegrates) come from the barn (Self). Again, the barn and the depiction of E. in a hammock are both "inside" and "outside", suggestive of the psychoid dimension which is the bridging or "gateway" area. (This is relevant to E's "burning" which will be discussed later.) Both house and tree are "outside" although the house is barely just connected

to the main form and adjacent to the psychoid hammock. These two external forms are depicted in bright colour -- the house in affective, transformative red (Rubedo, promising a reunion of spirit and matter) but relatively insubstantial, while the tree also symbolic of Mercurius, is boldly filled in with green -- the alchemical "green of the beginning". It is as if we see the ambiguity of the transforming Mercurius in four stages, from completely external (tree) to barely joined (house) to existing in both spheres (barn) to active involvement in the psyche (man in hammock who enters the farmyard).

E. experienced an upsurge of libidinal energy and a willingness to become involved in the work of transformation, but sadly the tiny armless man beneath the huge cow has the container all ready to receive the milk, but no means as yet to make it flow by anything other than oral means. E's emotional investment in "mother" is seen in the relative sizes of the cow and the man. Viewed in clinical terms we would see this work as illustrative of the hopes and fears of the paranoid-schizoid position, where Klein located images of the roots and fixation points of psychosis (Segal, 1973). The farmyard with its variety of possible

meanings contains the good (breast) mother/therapist with her life-sustaining milk, as well as other part-objects or deintegrates. The red, "dangerous" bad (breast) mother/therapist is kept outside of the yard, indicative perhaps of his ambivalence towards me and his urge to protect himself. The resting/sleeping/unconscious/helpless part of himself is associated by contiguity with that bad object. E's primary object is therefore split into two parts at this stage -- the ideal "mother" and the persecutory one. E's aim could be seen as an attempt

to try to acquire, to keep inside and to identify with the ideal object...and to keep out the bad object and those parts of the self which contain the death instinct. The leading anxiety in the paranoid-schizoid position is that the persecutory object or objects will get inside...and overwhelm and annihilate both the ideal object and the self. (Segal, 1973, p. 26)¹⁶

In this light the sturdy Mercurius tree, the most solid of all of E's forms, although not steadily grounded or firmly rooted, and although perhaps likely

to be considered by some as merely defensive in form, is of necessity pushed out and thus made safe. It possibly contains E's transcendent function in projected form.

An entire farmyard scene did not occur in E's image-making again until Session 27, after six months of twice-a-week art therapy, and was concerned with termination issues. (See Slide 3) It was a very sad session for E. but he produced what he termed "a whole farm" -- not just a farmyard -- in which the entire scene expands and activity goes on outside as well as inside the farmyard. There are ways of exit and entry as well as means of problem solving. E. depicts himself outside the farmyard, on a tractor, ploughing a field for a new spring planting. We see here Newman's vas no. 3 -- the outside world adequately containing E.

To return to the first session, E's second picture of the two companion ducks, each a mirror-image of the other, is a profound expression in wonderfully simple terms, of the solutio operation. It is, in addition, an expression of trust, for the injunction solve et coagula can mean either exposure to death by drowning or salvation by baptism. This imagery illuminates a

recurring theme in E's work in art therapy -- that of regression under stress, so that this was not at all a voluntary operation for him, that is, it is the lesser solutio, and the trust aspect exists only in potential. E's image of water contained in a round pond occurs many times (once in rectangular form) with references to being fed, to some aggressive tendencies and to regressive behaviour, e.g. recurrences of enuresis. There are several pictures in which there is ice in the pond indicative of "the stultification of the potentialities of water" (Cirlot, p. 55), a coagulation of its transforming ability. Ice can be seen as a rigid defining line between conscious and unconscious or any other dynamic interchange, e.g. therapy. It may therefore represent a defensive resistance to boundary loss, to which E. was particularly susceptible. For example, while drawing one of his solutio pictures he asked "Was there a house in my dream?"

As could be expected, E. repeated and overlapped several operations in the process of therapy, but what I felt was his central issue, the calcinatio (related to the element fire) presented itself only once, during the sixth session. While drawing a picture of himself before he was hospitalized for the first time, he said

"Once when I was very sick I burned a barn. There was smoke and flames everywhere so I went in the house and called the fire brigade." I asked if he could make a picture of this, which he did with some difficulty and with much drawing upon me for support and assistance. (See Slide 4) The session was extremely tiring for E. and he looked quite ill. Until this time he had denied responsibility for any of the fires, therefore this session represented yet another step towards trusting and symbolic experiencing. The colours used underscored the alchemical nature of the work -- black for the Nigredo, white for the Albedo and red for the Rubedo (as a return of lost affect). Augustine's words "He 'burns' with grief for the things he has loved and lost" seem particularly relevant to E. When he uses fire, which must have a deeply cathected meaning for him as a result of his sister's tragic death, we are witnessing an archetypal event with undefined boundaries. I refer to E's first picture in which both the barn and the figure in the hammock occupy the psychoid dimension and ask: Who is it that sets fire and who is it that burns? Again the alchemical notion of the entire work being "one" is evoked.

E's attempt to effect change was carried out in

terms of the calcinatio operation -- transformation by fire, which Edinger (1978 (b)) tells us follows "the death of the ruling principle of consciousness, the highest authority of the conscious personality" (p. 20). This would mean that there has been a regressive dissolution of the conscious personality as in a psychosis and certain other pathological states. The purpose of the operation is a purging and a purification, allowing a "rebirth" of the ego after a period of regression to "the original 'autos' stage of autoerotic desirousness" (Edinger, 1978(b), p. 21) symbolized by fire. Encounter with fire refers psychologically to a confrontation with intense affect; the result of fire is ash, which in alchemy has paradoxical associations, rendering it a true symbol. On the one hand it signifies the alchemical stage of the Albedo (whitening, purifying) and on the other despair, mourning or repentance. Ash is alchemically equivalent to salt, which as noted previously has been equated by Jung with differentiated feeling, the result of purification by fire.

The problem with calcinatio arises when performed on the wrong substance, and many alchemical texts issue dire warnings about this. In E's case, there is the

tendency toward projection and concrete thinking, and so the operation is externalized and an actual burning takes place. It is then re-introjected, rendering it indistinguishable from a masochistic self-conflagration. An early alchemist points out that "Calcinatio can only take place by means of the inward heat of the body, the 'inner fire' within the alchemical vessel assisted by a friendly outer warmth...the alchemical Athanor, or furnace" (Edinger, 1978 (b), p. 36). In the art therapeutic situation, the "outer warmth" is provided by the gentle stimulation of the therapist, guided by the response of the "inner fire" of the patient -- his tendency to self-calcination. In alchemy there are cautions given for this, indicating that the outer warmth must be greatly restrained lest the vessel break and the whole work be lost.

In encouraging E. to project his inner conflict and its resolution on to the paper, in guiding him to express graphically his calcinatio, one would hope that there would be a lessening of the need to act it out in a concrete fashion. The patient and therapist thus find themselves together in an alchemical situation from which neither emerges unchanged. The counter-transferential implications are illustrated in Hayes' (1972)

poem:

Filled with the clutter of unsorted stuff
a spark can set a man ablaze. What's there
heaped high among stored rubble at a puff
will burst in flame. No man can be aware
of how inflammable he is, how prone
to what can rage beyond control, unless
the piled up litter of his life is known
to him, and he is able to assess
what hazard he is in, what could ignite..
A man, disordered and undisciplined,
lives in the peril of a panic flight
before the onrush of a flaming wind.

Does it now seem I seek to be profound?

I stand on smoking ash and blackened ground!

(p. 26)

The next six sessions comprised imagery relating to E's feelings of ambivalence and to memories confirming the bond with his father. A "mirror transference" was established, in which E. would change roles, sometimes mirroring my gestures and expressing concern for my wellbeing. By this time it was noted that E. was

engaging in more sociable interaction on the ward, was displaying more congruence between affect and action, and was no longer enuretic. His sense of humour was flowering, indicative of some ability to use the transcendent function. Unfortunately, his sudden total discharge from hospital, the Christmas break and my illness caused a gap of three weeks in therapy and his "housemother" reported a recurrence of bedwetting, incidents of lying and stealing, and violence towards another resident in his half-way house. Alchemically, these events relate to a neglected work, where there has been insufficient heat and the contents of the vas have returned to their original state.

When sessions were resumed, E. was using baby-talk and exhibiting highly dependent behaviour, with a return to solutio imagery. One such image depicted his despair in a most poignant way. (See Slide 5) Here we see E's drawing of "a whale and a little fish for it to eat". Both are within a circular pond, the inner vas, side by side, not communicating, blind to each others' presence. They have no mouths to obtain sustenance and are amniotically suspended. The setting -- the outer vas -- is in the far north, surrounded by ice and snow. A reindeer looks at the scene and a man in a sled

pulled by six dogs travels toward an igloo. The whale and little fish in the circle could be seen as either vas no. 1 (E's inner psyche) or as vas no. 2 (the therapeutic relationship), either of which is a bleak thought when one looks at the absence of communication, the insufficiency of the food and the chilling surroundings. However, the man in the sled seems to have a purpose, even though the breast-shaped igloo towards which he heads is an ice-form. Rather than being seen as indicative of aggression perhaps the suggestion of the little fish as food for the larger one is more appropriately to be considered as coagulatio imagery (if seen as contents of vas no. 1) in the positive sense of assimilation of a similar object ("like cures like"). If seen as vas no. 2 it may indicate the incestuous aspect of the uroboric relationship -- an incestuous coniunctio (the lesser coniunctio), occurring simultaneously with coagulatio. There is therefore an investment in matter and remaining in the concrete.

According to Edinger, "coagulatio constitutes an elaborate symbol-system which expresses the archetypal process of ego formation" (Edinger, 1979, p. 46). It belongs to earth symbolism (all solids in alchemy may

be referred to as "earth") and refers in laboratory terms to the solidification of a liquid by cooling. Ice is one of the least stable of solids having a ready tendency to dissolve into water (all liquids in alchemy are considered "water"), so that we can readily see E's precarious ego-position. Drawing on analogies from various mythologies Edinger (1979, pp. 27-28) relates the coagulatio to "action" (c.f. play activity) as a way of solidifying the personality. As in the other operations, Mercurius as the autonomous spirit of the psyche is the substance to be coagulated, thus connecting the ego with the Self, the goal of individuation. Problems arise therefore when the substance has a tendency toward repeated dissolution.

Edinger (1979, p. 36) notes the fact that coagulatio, by virtue of its connection with earth and matter (Mater) is governed by the feminine principle, the principle of relatedness. He therefore adduces that relationship serves the greater coagulatio. He sees that where early relationships have been inadequate

a kind of hole is left in the psyche. An important archetypal image has not undergone personalization or coagulatio through a

personal relationship and hence retains a boundless and primordial power which threatens to inundate the ego if it is approached. (1979, p. 35)

An extreme failure of the coagulatio (i.e. a distortion in the concretization of archetypal images) is found in schizophrenic conditions, where, says Edinger, there is a need for a re-experiencing of the mediation and personalization of the archetypes in human relationship. Coagulatio is promoted therefore by an active, participating approach by a therapist who is familiar with the "holding environment".

The conveying of a spirit into an image is a coagulatio quality of the Philosophers' Stone and as such refers psychologically to the expression of the immaterial or not-yet-known in some specific fantasy or art image. Edinger (1973, p. 285) quotes an alchemical text as indicating that it is the Stone itself that transforms the spirit into image, that is, the image-making power comes from the Self and is not an ego-function (Edinger, p. 285). This is why images that "look symbolic" can be made by an immature ego, although not related to by that ego as such.

E. is therefore engaging in an "incarnating" process of coagulatio with the art materials in a holding environment where the transformative powers of the Self are recognized and valued. The sessions continued in this vein with a steady increase in E's ability to play, until termination after seven months of art therapy, in what was termed "a stabilization of a condition previously in evolution, with a prognosis of further stabilization". Six months later E. was re-admitted to hospital as a result of a general decompensation.

New Sessions

E. was pleased to begin in art therapy again, but it was immediately apparent to me that there was a very different "feel" to the first session. I noticed that the peculiarity of his gait was even more pronounced; there was a strong sensation of "imminence" with a discrepancy between his images and his verbal behaviour. He used socially appropriate and "polite" phrases which had a distancing effect, although he

seemed to be trying very hard to recreate the ambience of the previous sessions. There was a feeling of being pulled in two directions. His manner of drawing was different -- more hurried, less precise, and with a bizarre quality that had been absent before.

His first work is of a fairly sturdy figure in plasticine, with a certain twist to the body which gives it a jaunty air, and which gave me a totally different perspective on E's manner of walking.¹⁷ His second work is a drawing of the same man with a snowblower, clearing away all the snow that E. used frequently to say "covered up things" in his pictures. The mandaloid farmyard is here again in his third work (See Slide 6), with the extruded elements separate and inner contents quite frightening. It may be interesting at this point to note some of E's behaviours while producing pictures: he has a history of somatization (an expression of the lesser coagulatio) and in the previous sessions when his work evoked certain memories, he would clutch at different parts of his body as if in pain. In this picture he drew the figure at left, the farmer, and then the farmhouse, at which point he gripped his drawing hand and grimaced, urgently searching my face, as he used to, before

continuing with the work. Hillman (1979) tells us that

the wounded puer personifies the spirit's
structural damage, and, maybe, damaging
structure... Sometimes the damage shows in the
hands that cannot take hold, grasp the tools,
comprehend the problems, sieze the issues...
[They] cannot "manage"...[and] there is
difficulty at hanging-in or hanging-on to the
matter at hand so that it can be resolved.

(p. 104)

If one thinks of "house" as "mother" (Mater) and sees
the two cows on the right of the farmyard as
"nurturers", then we have some ideas as to E's pulling
back from contact. With their sun-like heads and spiky
udders, there can be little doubt that they are
persecutory, and the last one drawn (bottom, RHS) shows
the loosening of association that accompanies a
dissolution of boundaries. E., for the first time, has
chosen green paper on which to make his drawing --
again the "green of the beginning" before the descent
to the Nigredo.

During the second session, E. went through a

nostalgic remembering of previous shared moments in therapy, with a palpable sadness at being unable to recapture them. Again, there was a discrepancy between his gently affectionate manner and his aggressive/persecutory drawing in which a lion was going to eat a buffalo. (See Slide 7) This time the vas is completely open at the top and all the elements are inside. The third session had a very strong feeling of "focussing". He produced a marker drawing, with an ongoing commentary (unusual for him) relating to childhood memories, especially the year when he was eight years old, and "my mother was well enough to look after me". (See Slide 8) He spoke of the subsequent deaths in the family, balancing this with remarks about the positive aspects in his life, adding in reference to his imagery "This was the happiest year of my life...you can write "E's Childhood" on the back". The imagery, together with the "feel" of the session gave a strong sense of a "fixing" or "positioning" with the placement in the four corners (again a mandaloid form) of the four elements described by E. as (clockwise from upper left corner) the monkey bars at school, the school, the local store and his house. It is as if one is now directly inside the vas depicted in Slide 7, with the elements ordered and ready.

His second work is of a plasticine horse called "Silver" -- a horse, he maintained, that he had owned as a child, and which was looked after by an "old Indian" when the family broke up. He made a drawing of Silver with "a nice warm barn" before excusing himself from the session because of extreme fatigue. (See Slide 9)

The transitional "feel" of this session was endorsed by the imagery of the following one in which E., using Silver as a bridging element, projected his Self into the concrete form of his art work, in preparation for a major attempt at transformation. The arena for this transformation was the "creation" of an American Indian family who had cared for E. as a child and who had remained friendly with him as an adult. The central member of this family was an old Indian Chief who had looked after Silver until the horse died and who had taught E. many things about life in general and about Indian culture in particular. Slide 10, a solutio depiction, shows E's drawing of the old Indian sitting on a rock in the centre of a pool, fishing, while E. observes from the side, perhaps indicative of a forthcoming dissolution of ego-Self ties. Fish are

often seen as the "arcane substance" and as such have Mercurial transformative qualities and would be seen as equivalent to the horse Silver, the horse being both a life and death symbol, as well as a shamanic sacrificial animal (Cooper, pp. 68 & 85). Slide 11 shows the Indian and his wife, their hut and the "dance hall" made of birch bark -- a meeting place for the whole tribe, where they would dance to the "medicine man's" drumbeat and drink "fire-water". In Slide 12 we see E's depiction of the inside of the dance hall, with the fire in the centre and the seating positions of the Indian, his wife, his granddaughter, E., and the medicine man. Again in this form we see a positioning of archetypal elements into what is coming to look and sound (from E's descriptions) more like the mandala as a Self-regulating form -- an archetypal image of the Self in a state of "readiness", with the "imagos" personified.

E.'s final work in this session is a portrait of the old Indian in full ceremonial costume made of deerskin, which he (the Indian) cut out and which his wife sewed. (See Slide 13) The figure is full of movement (reminiscent of E.'s plasticine man) and is in the colours of the opus: green, black, silver (white),

orange (red) and gold, lending a veracity to Chetwynd's (p. 237) statement that "the "king" is the human personification of the opus.

In the fifth session E. completed the picture of the Indian Chief by adding the rest of his family (wife, granddaughter, brother-in-law (who was the medicine man)), all in ceremonial dress, with rows of dots to indicate the tribespeople. (See Slide 14) This was a gathering, he said, for a special yearly ceremony, which required the services of the medicine man who was in touch with the spirits and who could heal people and even save them from dying. He added that this medicine man had told him as a child that he would "outlive them all", and proceeded to enumerate, as in a kind of liturgical recitation, all of his family members who had died since that time. The medicine man's costume was described by E. as being black with a lining of silver, decorated with silver and gold buttons. E.'s second work was of the fire, another mandala-like form with a typical "eye" at the centre, which he described as comprising different coloured wood, representing each of the months of the year. (See Slide 15) He spoke of the basic human values he had acquired from the old Indian Chief, then tear-

fully spoke of the latter's death which, he said, had occurred the previous night. The form and content of the exchange which followed suggested his need to protect me from this knowledge which he could now no longer contain. He began to fashion the figure of the Chief in plasticine, but found that the legs could not support him and decided to "let him lie down". He left the session in a calm, but extremely sad manner, saying "Maybe I'll feel better when he's laid to rest".

E.'s process now was one of the alchemical mortificatio, an operation which belongs to the Nigredo and which, having no chemical reference at all, is a complete projection of a psychological image. It is the most negative of the alchemical operations, its images being expressed by killing and the experience of death. (c.f. its preparatory expression in Slide 7.) It is characterized by the colour black (as worn by the medicine man, E.'s "inner healer" constellated by the endurance of the Nigredo) and often leads into rebirth images as suggested by E.'s yearly ceremony. One subject for the mortificatio is traditionally the state of innocence and purity as depicted by images of childhood, which E. presented in Slide 8, "E.'s Childhood". At the other extreme is the imaging of an

old and infirm character, which may represent an attitude which has outlived its effectiveness, perhaps suggestive of E's old Indian who was no longer needed to care for the already "dead" mercurial Silver, E's arcane substance (Edinger, 1981 (a), p. 27).

Perry's (1966, p. 147) investigation into what he terms the "reconstitutive process" at work in a psychosis has led him to believe, as mentioned earlier, that even in the most severe cases one can discern the activity of a synthetic work in the unconscious. He has found this to reveal itself in specific imagery related to the archetypal themes of death, rebirth, "centrality" (images relating to the Self as centre), archaic kingship and an "ideal society" all of which are found in alchemical symbolism. Referring to the kingship motif, Perry (1976) writes: "[I]n the archaic psyche of today as we observe it analytically, this symbolism is the foremost expression of the central archetype [Self]" (p. 77).

We see the theme of archaic kingship in E's old Indian chief. Perry's theoretical formulation of the dynamics of the schizophrenic process is discussed by him in terms of a "central injury" (i.e. damage to the Self)

in early childhood and of a withdrawal of libido from ego functions to the deeper levels of the psyche in an effort to reorganize the Self in regression during the acute phase of the process. It follows that Perry sees the way to "recovery" lying within the resulting imagery, rather than in a purely ego-strengthening approach to treatment (Carabell, 1982, pp. 15-16). He finds that

[i]n the imagery that wells up from the depth of the psyche, the process is expressed as a dissolution and reconstruction of the affect image [archetypal image] of the center [sic], which in its emotive dimension is experienced as a thorough-going transformation of one's feelings about oneself, one's self-worth and self-image. The historical parallels to this process indicate that it is the nature of the center [Self] to undergo periodic disintegration and re-integration, expressed as death and rebirth, world destruction and recreation and cultural revivification. (Perry, 1976, p. 11)

He notes the difficulty that a personality who is undergoing the acute episode has in making use of the growth-enhancing components which intrude into the field of awareness. Rather, the elusive quality of these elements tends to allow them to "slide back obstinately into unconsciousness, leaving the personality prey to the same repetitive sequences of events so damaging to its growth and survival" (p. 50).¹⁸

Ideally, there is a prompt intervention whereby a connection is made with the patient's reality in the inner realm and an alliance is made. If the imagery is given no validation, an abyss forms, leaving him isolated and alone. Perry (1976) notes that

[p]erhaps the most remarkable feature in [acute psychosis] is the instant recognition ...of the therapist's openness or lack of it, whether he/she is accepting and cognizant of the myth world in which the client is dwelling. If the client senses a negative feeling towards this non-rational inner experience, there results an immediate clamming up and withdrawal, sometimes

irrevocable. (pp. 195-197)

Not only do we find, then, that validation of the inner psychic experience is essential for the clearing up of the turmoil, but even more impressively Perry shows that invalidation becomes an equally essential factor in the psychopathology that marks the syndrome we call "schizophrenia".

Perry speaks of initial schizophrenic episodes, while we know that E. has had several, without benefit, according to his records, of any consistent psychotherapeutic intervention until he began art therapy. His need to "protect" me/himself from the experience of the "death" of the old Indian may be connected to possible "invalidations" in the past, beginning with faulty mirroring of the Self in infancy.

Perry questions the archetypal content going back, not to mother-imagery, but to father-imagery, given that one might expect a preoccupation with the Great Mother in a profound regression. He answers this simply by restating that the process deals with the Self and that this is normally represented in the "language of kings", but acknowledges that this may be refuted

because of other possible ways of representing the "centre" (1966, p. 157). My feeling would be that the process relates ultimately to the ego-Self axis and would therefore be expressed in "heroic" terms. The (healthy) king is often seen as the ruling principle of consciousness and as such would represent the ego. There is therefore a compensation for the mother-bound state in the activation of the creative dynamism of kingship renewal imagery.

Speaking of phylogenic development, Perry (1966) states that

[t]he natural progression in the evolution of the kingship...was the arduous work of realizing inwardly that which had been naively lived out in projected, concrete, externalized form...[K]ingship is the natural historical framework and vehicle of this transition from the concretism of the archaic mentality to the spirit-quality of the more fully awakened mind of our ego...Kingship myth and ritual were the vehicle of man's coming to awareness of his spiritual potential as an individual...The psychotic,

in his reconstitutive process, evidently must travel a similar road from paranoid externalizing and concretizing to an inward realization of his potential individuality. (pp.

159-160)

During E's next few sessions the theme of "renewal" gradually took precedence — over the mortificatio imagery. While making a drawing of the Indian burial ground (four rows of crosses) in the seventh session, he spoke of having been asked to become the new Chief when the old one first became ill 20 years ago. (E's initial psychotic regression occurred 20 years ago.) At that time, he said, he was not ready to do so. In the eighth session, however, he drew himself as the new paleface Chief who "wore a different kind of headdress". (See Slide 16) Accompanying this work is a double portrait in silver and gold of the medicine man in his dual role of healer and drummer, beside the drum which, according to E., was played with lead hammers. (See Slide 17) The use of "duplex" imagery, silver and gold, together with lead symbolism which belongs to the coagulatio theme and kingship renewal imagery, underlines the transformatory significance of these works.¹⁹

In the eleventh session E. produced pictures of life on the Indian reservation, speaking approvingly about hunting, trapping and "making a good living" and adding many details of cultural life and values there. Perry (1966, p. 157) has commented that in the reconstitutive process there is often a concern with a "New Society" (as there is in alchemy in terms of a conscious unus mundus) which is represented by the style of life most idealized by the person concerned. For E. this seems to be the positive, contained and protected form of reservation life which (theoretically) preserves "freedom" and "dignity" within it, despite the tragic reality of the situation.

Eliade (1954) tells us that the principle ritual of the kingship was the New Year Festival and the Rites of Renewal of the King and the Kingdom -- création rites emphasizing the centre and new beginnings. E's imagery in the twelfth session relates closely to this theme and was congruent with his now-expressed wishes to "make a new start". Slide 18 shows E's depiction of the Indians' New Year Celebrations, all in purple, he said, because that was the proper colour. He drew a silver sun, a dance-hall, kitchen and two "dance circles"

which he explained were made of wood and painted gold. The Indians danced over them, then built their fires on them. In the thirteenth session he played with some plasticine, saying he was making a "flat stone". He began drawing it, saying "It's gold. We found it behind the barn and I buried it under dog-dirt and put a cross on it so people would think it was a grave." (See Slide 19) A second drawing is of the Chief's old and new houses. In his fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth (final) sessions E. produced images in silver and gold of the house he "would have had" if he had become Chief, indicative of a readiness to step back from identification with the opus. (See Slide 20)²⁰

E. was discharged the day following his sixteenth session, with no provision for follow-up treatment.

Sessions twelve and thirteen (depicted in Slides 18 and 19) would seem to have been the culmination of this particular opus for E. In Slide 18 (the New Year Celebrations) E. has appropriately used purple, which, according to Cooper (p. 40) is the colour of royalty, used for ritual services for the underworld deities, Chetwynd states that it is representative of "the transmutation of inner spiritual values into outer

concrete events with the "suffering involved" (p. 93).
(c.f. the coagulation in its greater aspect). The gold
"dance circles", the form of which is repeated in the
"gold stone" are mandalas as described by Jung (1961):

Mandalas...usually appear in situations of
psychic confusion and perplexity. The
archetype thereby constellated represents a
pattern of order which, like a psychological
"view-finder" marked with a cross on a circle
divided into four, is superimposed on the
psychic chaos so that each content falls into
place and the weltering confusion is held
together by the protective circle...At the
same time they are yantras, instruments with
whose help order is brought into being. (pp.
396-397)

Although these archetypal images of the Self are
capable of endless elaboration E. has produced the
mandala in its simplest, most direct and unmistakeable
form -- the of the quadrated circle. The prima materia
is given a fourfold structure, representing the four
elements and, by extension, the creation of the ego out
of the undifferentiated unconscious by the process of

discriminating the four functions.

Redfearn (1974, p. 120) connects mandala symbolism with early ego development and finds it gives a feeling of wholeness without a functioning wholeness at this level. This has a bearing on Fordham's thoughts on de- and dis-integrations of the Self and Perry's work on synthetic initiatory and reconstitutive processes in the schizophrenic condition. In these cases, the symbolism is not related to an achievement of individuation (which even in a "healthy" person is unlikely) but to an attempt to stay on the road towards it. Jung (1953) says of quadrated circle imagery:

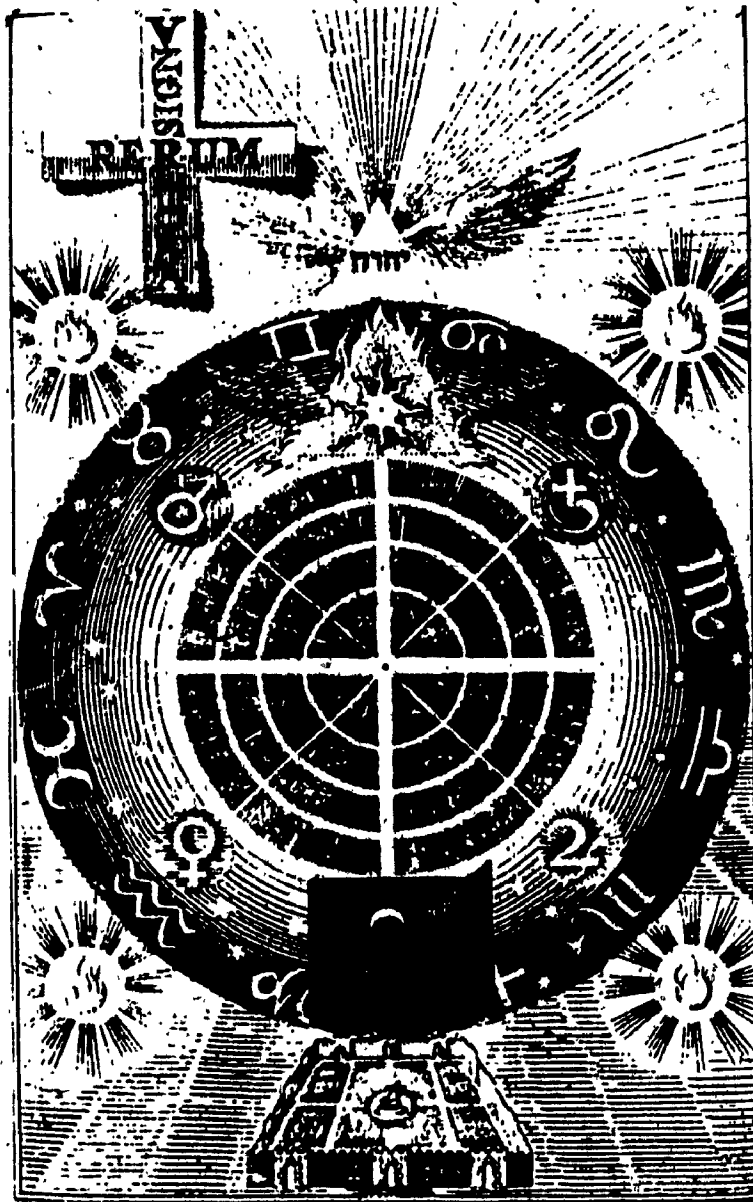
To the best of my experience we are dealing here with very important "nuclear processes" in the objective psyche -- "images of the goal", as it were, which the psychic process, being goal-directed, apparently sets up of its own accord, without any external stimulus. (p. 221)

In the prima materia all is potential, nothing actual and it requires an act of creation to separate out the four elements. When the Stone is produced the

elements are reunited in a quintessence and the original unified state of the unus mundus is restored on a new level. This is done many times on the journey toward ever greater consciousness. The number four is a symbol of wholeness, and "the fourfold nature of the Philosophers' Stone immediately relates it to the fourfold mandala images of the self and indeed we have alchemical pictures of the Stone which are in the form of mandalas" (Edinger, 1973, p. 264). (See Figure 15)

This is what we see in E's depiction of the "gold stone". (See Slide 19) Not only that, he has made a composite image of the prima materia (often described as excrement) and the Stone in that his treasure lies buried under dog-dirt and a cross. Again we see that the opus is one: the substance to be transformed, the transforming agent and the goal are identical in the unus mundus. In the case of E., a man struggling with emotional, cultural and educational deficits, who was treated from an early age as being mentally defective and who has identified with this role,

Figure 15. The quaternity of the cross in the zodiac. The complicated symbolism in this mandala image refers to the realization of the Self (achievement of the Stone).



the reality of the psyche is beginning to find witness to itself. The Philosophers' Stone is a symbol for that reality. There is a healing power in the images that cluster around this symbol. It is a potent expression of the source and totality of independent being. Whenever it appears in psychotherapy it has a constructive and integrating effect. It is truly a pearl of great price. (Edinger, 1973, p. 295)

7 SUMMARY

I have proposed as an attitude toward art therapy a philosophy of paradox: I have asked for an attendance to "first matter" without a reduction to "first causes"; for a recognition of goal-directedness that demands a whole-hearted engagement in the present. Furthermore, I have suggested a suspension of the belief that it is leading anywhere. It is, in a curious way, the positive pole of the double-bind theory, and a literalization of it may also lead to an inability to unite the whole and a further entrenchment in a concrete materialism. It is a theory which demands to be outgrown, yet ever grows to contain itself: it is the conscious uroboros.

A presentation such as this has inbuilt difficulties which reflect those of the alchemists themselves. In their work, concealment and imprecision, while supported in some cases by the possibility of a real threat to their personal safety, was also related to the inherent obscurity of their subject. As mirrored in this thesis, it dealt with issues which were neither

wholly material nor completely psychological; they were archetypal processes in projection, a fact which is reflected in any attempt to elucidate the alchemical opus. In such an effort there is an ongoing cycle of merging and stepping back from the material -- a lived validation of the alchemical solve et coagula -- a dissolution and coagulation as the crucial components of the creative process. Therefore, while the purpose of this thesis has been an attempt to demonstrate the applicability of alchemical thought to the art therapeutic process, there has been, in my view, a necessary retention of the alchemical attitude toward such an undertaking. Such a position has not always been a conscious choice; usually it has been a "natural" consequence of the task. It has been difficult for me at times to gain a perspective on the fusion that I have come to know as the art/alchemical process and this particular work against nature has been a perpetual challenge. I do not know if the results mark for me the unconscious or the conscious unus mundus. Consequently, I find solace in Jung's (1967) kindly admonition that

[w]e should not begrudge the alchemists their secret language; deeper insight into the

problems of psychic development soon teaches us how much better it is to reserve judgement instead of prematurely announcing to all and sundry 'what's what'. Of course we have an understandable desire for crystal clarity, but we are apt to forget that in psychic matters we are dealing with processes of experience, that is, with transformations which should never be given hard and fast names if their living movement is not to petrify into something static. The protean mythologem and the shimmering symbol express the processes of the psyche far more trenchantly and, in the end, far more clearly than the clearest concept; for the symbol conveys a visualization of the process but -- and this is perhaps just as important -- it also brings a re-experiencing of it, of that twilight which we can learn to understand only through inoffensive empathy, but which too much clarity only dispels. (pp. 162-163)

In examining the question of whether the proposed approach does, in fact, meet the criteria for psychological movement through art therapy, I find

Rubin's (1978) definition of art therapy helpful. She states that

...it refers broadly to understanding and helping a person through art, and it encompasses a wide variety of dimensions. These include the integrative aspects of the creative process itself, as well as the use of art as a tool in the service of discharge, uncovering, defense or communication...[i]t seems that for anyone, the art activity over time ranges from being central and integrative to peripheral and adjunctive and back again, serving many different possible functions. What is important is to know what is occurring when it is happening, and to have some sense of its meaning and function for that person at that moment in time. What seems equally vital to me, is that the [art therapist should] have the flexibility and openness to permit the individual to flow in different directions over time, and the wisdom and creativity to stimulate, unblock, or redirect the flow when necessary (p. 17).

The distinctly alchemical flavour of her comments is also discernible in her observation of inner pressures towards destructive and constructive acts in response to art media, and in her recognition of "overlapping, regressions and the persistent presence of all throughout the process" (p. 75) of art therapy.

* With Rubin's words in mind, I present the following review of the study:

An imaginal attitude toward art therapy, grounded in the psychology of the alchemical tradition has been proposed and examined. This attitude is based on the idea that there is at work in man an innate dialectical process which is seen to embrace the entire continuum of experiencing, from the deepest pathologies to the highest expressions of wholeness. The process takes on a spiral formation as each new psychological synthesis meets its opposition in the dialectical motif. Because it originates in the psyche itself, the model which the alchemical attitude promotes is released from the literalisms of a preconceived theory and instead aligns with the creative process itself. Alchemy is essentially a spontaneous expression, unrestricted by repressive traditions; it helps us gain access to the

world of archetypal configurations by means of metaphor, as does the art therapeutic procedure, rather than by speculative abstraction.

The history of alchemy is traced from its beginnings in the shamanic world-view of an identity of spirit with matter, through Egyptian experimentation and mortuary practices, Greek philosophy and Gnosticism to alchemy as a "discipline" of symbolism. It is suggested that the growth pattern of individual consciousness parallels that of mankind as a whole and that both reveal what may be considered an archetypal dialectical motif which is symbolized in the alchemical tradition. The cross-cultural aspects and applications of the alchemical model for art therapy are noted.

Jung's theory of individuation is discussed as originating in childhood; as being an ongoing life process, suggestive of the possibility that alchemy, which Jung saw as a paradigm of the individuation process in later life, may also be used as a model for psychological functioning during earlier periods and, by analogy, in regressed states. These regressed states can be seen as a necessary component of the creative process as well as of pathological disturbances. They

are therefore not to be regarded as prior in time, ~~and~~ as substrata of current functioning potential, characterized by a dissolution of boundaries, the alchemical solutio. As a consequence, problems related to the "current child" in the psyche must be addressed: this is made possible on the grounds that there are new deintegrates of the Self being produced through life.

Although there is observed to be a "return" to working on "mother" in therapy, it is suggested that this is more productively dealt with in therapy if it is seen to be a work on the universal matrix of existence, rather than on unresolved problems with the personal mother only. Here is the link with the alchemical work upon matter as Mater and the use in art therapy of materials as a means of dealing with matter. We use "mother" to work on "Mother".

In discussing the opus, it is the actual and imaginal processes of alchemy and art therapy, rather than discrete one-to-one correspondences between the two that are described as forming the bases of comparison. It is in the acceptance of the images of both, as opposed to an understanding of how the processes work, that enables psychological movement to

occur: a too-facile comparison is therefore counter-productive. An ego-attitude of humility toward the opus is emphasized, and this is linked to the requirement that the art therapist cultivate the ego-Self relationship in order to mediate the work for the patient in therapy.

It is suggested that psychological transformation is possible because of the existence of the psychoid dimension, which comprises both spirit and matter. This is the realm of Mercurius, who is the duplex transformer and transformed, and who personifies the area of psychic identity for patient and therapist. It is the space in which transitional phenomena abound. The "alchemical situation" that this permits in therapy allows for a certain role-flexibility, due to the fluctuations -- the dissolution and coagulation -- of boundaries in the psychoid.

The need for a contained space for transformation is discussed -- from the concrete, physical conditions of art therapy and alchemy to the metaphorical holding implied in both by virtue of their "relationship" aspects. The container itself is considered to undergo change as well, thus avoiding a rigidifying of the

living reality and ambiance of the therapeutic environment. The containing features of both art therapy and alchemy offer and enhance the possibility of experimentation and choice of action, while allowing for regression, repetitions and even failures.

The possibility that the work of both artist and alchemist is related to the lifelong need for "mirroring" from a Self-object is suggested. The fact that both can receive it from a work of art or imagination is indicative of a functioning symbolism in their lives: until this is possible for patients in art therapy, the therapist performs a mirroring as well as a holding function as part of her mediating role.

Active imagination is discussed as a therapeutic resource, its value lying in the fact that it is always a uniquely subjective experience. It is related to transitional phenomena and play, finding its home in the "third area" of the psychoid. The use of active imagination in the creation of art work is dependent upon the ability to symbolize. Paradoxically the activation of the transcendent or symbolic function is intimately linked with the performance of active imagination. This is one of the major reasons for

"staying in the metaphor" and "sticking with the image" in art therapy, rather than dealing with the products interpretatively (Hillman, 1979, p. 194). By keeping the work on an imaginal level, the patient gradually learns the "shuttling" mechanism between primary and secondary processes which permits true creativity to take place. It is an important goal in art therapy that the patient make his own links and connections through his art experience, and this is facilitated by the art therapist in a kind of midwife role.

The ability to symbolize is presented as being dependent upon the transcendent function which promotes a working interaction between unconscious and conscious, primary and secondary processes (the "shuttling" mechanism). This develops with ego growth and permits the "as-if attitude" necessary for a productive therapy. The principle aim of that therapy is the promotion of a good-enough relation between ego and Self, thereby allowing the other complexes the space they require in a fully symbolizing psyche. The starting point (fantasy), the process (symbolization) and the goal (the ability to symbolize) are seen to be identical. By extension, in the unus mundus the art therapeutic procedure does not merely run parallel to

alchemy, it is alchemy.

The supreme importance of the image in the soul-making process is stressed. The appearance of the image either concretely or not, is psyche's way of presenting herself -- her only way -- and there is something of a promiscuity involved in a too-rapid movement from one image to another. Psyche is owed more than a cursory glance and to use her images merely diagnostically, as jumping-off points for clinical conclusions, or even for allegorical meanderings is an insult as well as a sad mistake. It is in the course of appropriate valuing and deepening that the images themselves initiate movement, as was seen in the case of E.

There is sometimes an issue in therapy concerning the appropriateness or otherwise of reductive work on the psyche at particular times. The move from the Nigredo to the Albedo, repeated many times through different operations corresponding to similar concerns seen from different angles, can be classified as reductive work on the personal unconscious. The Albedo to Rubedo progression, the "easy part" where the alchemist simply tends the fire, can be seen as the time when synthetic work with archetypal and analogical

material just "happens". My sense of this is that perhaps it uncovers an essential difference between verbal and art therapy: the use of actual materials and observable imagery relates one more accurately to the experience of the alchemists in that there is a more direct contact made with both personal and collective unconscious states during the Nigredo phase. This allows for "incarnation" of archetypal elements from the beginning of therapy, in that they appear materially before the patient as a creation of his own hand (much in the way an infant "creates" mother in an actual person, out of his own archetypal potential). Well before any kind of reductive work could be considered, he is being influenced by his own archetypal psyche in a directly perceivable manner. In other words, he can experience the work through the sensation function, which as mentioned earlier, seems to be the "earliest" channel to relationship in the temporal world. This more accurately recapitulates the alchemists' operations in that there is a simultaneity of experiencing (reductive and synthetic) through work in art which may not occur in the more usual methods of conducting verbal psychotherapy, that is, where active imagination is not used.

My feeling is that it is probable that an alchemical model holds within it, due to the diversity and repeatability of the operations, possibilities for meeting most styles of growth towards, and away, from wholeness and health, and would thus be compatible with Rubin's view of art therapy. Viewing the art therapeutic process from the alchemical position, the therapist can gain a perspective on the changes occurring during ongoing therapy and utilize it in her decisions regarding when and when not to increase or decrease the "outer fire". It is important to note, however, that there is no alchemical technique -- only an alchemical attitude.

8 CONCLUSION

Jung associated the appearance of the mandala, as mentioned earlier, with times of psychic confusion and described it as a kind of psychological viewfinder which is superimposed on the chaotic condition: the circle protects the contents and the cross allows them to fall into place. In some respects this also describes the function of a theory when it has become theoria, one's own "way". On the other hand, when used merely as a tool it remains "theory", the stamp of one's defensive ego position toward a set of data. It is an abstraction, a formula which can also be represented by the crossed circle, but with the intrusive reductiveness of a gun-sight. Von Franz (1978, p. 164) warns that one of the dangers of the inner coniunctio is that the conscious may destroy the unconscious with its theorizing, resulting in a conscious inflation and alienation from the Self. As a way of living, theoria represents a reunion of oppositional tendencies permitted by an attitude of openness which can only exist when the ego ceases to use theory defensively. This allows the ego to come

into a better relation with the Self and in this way the image of theoria as the quadrated circle begins to look and feel like the Philosophers' Stone.

Alchemically, once the Stone has been created it can transform base matter into gold; this is accomplished by the operation of proiectio (projection) which is no longer a function of the alchemist himself, but of the Stone. It should be noted that although this may appear, psychologically, to be a return to the initial stages, it is not at all the same as unconscious projection. It is a projection of the Self rather than of split-off parts, which may help us understand the way in which psychotherapy works. In this respect, Edinger (1982) notes that

[t]o some extent, the consciousness of an individual who is related to the Self seems to be contagious and tends to multiply itself in others...However, for the patient to be influenced by the psychotherapeutic process, the ego must be open...Paracelsus says: "For if the tincture is to tinge, it is necessary that the body or material, which is to be tinged should be open, and in a state of

flux: for unless this were so, the tincture could not operate." In psychotherapy, openness (to the objective psyche) is required of both patient and therapist. (p. 20)

It would therefore appear that the relation of theory to theoria is similar to that of the ego to the Self, and again we see all the elements in the process as "one": the materials and the tools must go into the fire time and again, the therapist mediating the openness required until such time as the patient receives it by proiectio. The two-way action of the Stone is emphasized by the realization that the unconscious takes the same attitude towards the ego as the ego takes towards it, and the simple act of paying attention to the imagery from the objective psyche is sufficient to generate reciprocal effects.

This is the exchange to be encouraged between theory and theoria. After the Stone has been made (analogous to the congelation of theoria) the vas is opened to allow transmutation by proiectio to occur. This return to spontaneous participation in the flow of life is illustrated in the last of the Ten Oxherding

Pictures of Zen Buddhism in which the old man goes to the market, having forgotten his Satori (enlightenment) experience. (See Figure 16) Suzuki tells us that

[h]e doesn't need to hold himself aloof, nor be weighted down by a sense of duty or responsibility, nor follow a set of patterns of the holy man, 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 to be natural. But though in the market place he seems to be an ordinary man, something happens to people among whom he mingles. They too become part of the universe. (1978, p. 161)

For the art therapist cultivating the alchemical attitude, therefore, the opus must include her own work on the making of gold in the form of theoria: the living theory which is itself ever-prepared to undergo transformation, ever open to the experiences of dissolution and coagulation which identify the genuine adept.

Figure 16. 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. (Von Franz, 1978, p. 161)



I began this study with a dream of the "unready stone" and the image in mind of theory as container which, by implication, was closed. The transformation of the container itself into theoria allows a solidification of the stone and an opening up without fear of a chaotic overspill: instead there is a reciprocal flow of energies and an infinite spreading outward of the regulatory function of the Self.



has become :



...and the dream stone must be returned, yet again, to its place amongst the tree roots.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The use of the word "movement" in relation to the psyche, as opposed to "development", allows for forward, backward and lateral courses.
- 2 When using the term "Self" from analytical psychology in my own writing, I shall capitalize the first letter in order to distinguish it from its usage in other psychologies. It should be noted, however, that some Jungian writers use the lower case.
- 3 Arguelles in The Transformative Vision, Colorado: Shambala Publications, Inc., 1975; links Jung's work with the mandala as a re-establishing of connection with the alchemical tradition, with André Breton's attempts to do the same on the Surrealists' behalf. He views the work of the Romantics and the Dadaists in the same light -- that of a "conscious re-immersion in the spirit with the end of transforming both the individual and his cultural mean" (p. 220). Arguelles sees Jung's special contribution as helping "restore to art some of its dignity by demonstrating its importance as a tool for psychic survival...By declaring the enduring psychogenic nature of symbols -- the archetypes inherent within our constitution -- Jung placed art in the context of psychobiology, and psychobiology in the context of the eternal" (pp. 222 and 223).
- 4 This is not to say that there was no movement whatsoever in the shamanic way of life. However, it was a circular, self-contained uroboric movement within the Great Round of relative unconsciousness, rather than the alchemists' spiral movement.
- 5 While there may be some question as to the etymological validity of equating the word "matter" with the Latin "Mater" (mother), there is sufficient cultural evidence, found in mythology etc., to indicate that there is a perceived link between the actual substance or material of "mother" and the substance of earth as "matter", e.g. Mother Earth.

6 The appearance of alchemical activities in so many different cultures is strongly supportive of archetypal theory. There would seem to be an archetype of the dialectical process which is observable in the imagery of the material operations.

7 Berry points out the significant difference between Jung's insistence on the archetypes as psychic "possibilities" and the literalized archaic "memories" of psychoanalytic theory (Berry, 1982, p. 170).

8 Since we meet our inner conflicts in projection in the outer world, issues relating to the mother archetype will involve confrontation with the actual mother.

9 One can now begin to comprehend the courageous nature of the alchemists' efforts, especially of those who were aware of the symbolic nature of the work. Small wonder that, usually alone and unsupported, they clung tenaciously to the material aspect of the task. One could perhaps see, on the more defensively "manic" side of the coin, the charlatans whose reward would be the glittering, material gold -- the "common gold" -- the concrete goal of their unrelenting greed and unresolved envy.

10 Sun = gold; Moon = silver; Mercury = quicksilver; Venus = copper; Mars = iron; Jupiter = tin; Saturn = lead.

Each of the elements, too, has its own operation -- Fire = calcinatio; Water = solutio; Earth = coagulatio; Air = sublimatio.

11 I use the generic terms "she" and "he" respectively when referring to therapist and patient.

12 N.B. Not all of those who have sensation as their inferior function are to be classified as regressed!

13 In some theoretical orientations to art therapy certain media or tasks may be "prescribed" to enhance ego boundaries at particular stages in therapy.

- 14 As mentioned in Section 5.02, the sensation function is possibly the one through which the union of the whole is achieved.
- 15 Anton Ehrenzweig, The Hidden Order of Art.
Silvano Arieti, Creativity: the Magic Synthesis.
New York, Basic Books, 1976.
Ernst Kris, Psychological Explorations in Art, New
York: International Universities Press, 1952.
Hans Kreidler and Shulamith Kreidler, Psychology
of the Arts, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press,
1972.
- 16 Although Segal does not use the term "self" in a
"Jungian" sense, I feel that a substitution of the
latter is acceptable and relevant in this
quotation.
- 17 What Jung referred to as "lesions of the ego"
resulting from experiences of the Self is
symbolized by the sun-hero who is lame, or who has
an amputated extremity. Shamans were frequently
said to be lame (Edinger, 1981(a), p. 37). The
children's game of "hopscotch" is said to be a
mimed repetition of the shaman's soul-journey,
derived from the dismemberment theme which also
occurs in alchemy in the mortificatio. Hillman
(1979) relates laming to "puer wounds" (pp.
100-104) and to the archetype of the Wounded
Healer -- Mercurius himself. There are numerous
heroes with damage to lower extremities, e.g.
Jacob, the Fisher King, Vulcan, Lucifer,
Hephaistos -- all transformative figures. This
connects directly with the alchemical unipeds and
world-tree symbolism. (See Figure 17)
- 18 Perry's therapeutic community, Diabasis, accepted
schizophrenics in their acute episodes and found
that they emerged spontaneously from their
confusion and incoherence usually within two to
three days, the longest being nine days, without
medication. "In other words," says Perry, "given a
proper subculture for this state of mind, the so-
called thought disorder may vanish of its own
accord quite quickly and easily." Sometimes it was
found that patients came out of their psychotic
state too quickly, before the inner process had
had time to operate. "Something wants to happen in
depth, and being withdrawn and absorbed in that
depth seems to be a requisite for good integrative

Figure 17. The royal pair depicted as a form
of the hermaphroditic uniped.



work." Consequently, when emergence is too rapid and rationality once more reigns, patients are apt to turn their backs on their inner work. "Therefore, when persons are losing touch with their process, we sometimes want to make the paradoxical suggestion, 'Please stay with it, live with it for a while,' as if to say, 'just be a little more psychotic for a time, please! Don't leave it too soon!'" (Perry, 1976, pp. 5-6) Perry's stages of the renewal process in schizophrenia as revealed in the recurring imagery of the acute phase are as follows:

1. Establishing a world centre as the locus
(locating the prima materia)
2. Undergoing death
3. Return to the beginnings Nigredo
4. Cosmic conflict as clash of opposites
5. Threat of reversal of opposites
6. Apotheosis as king or messianic hero Albedo
7. Sacred marriage as union of opposites
8. New birth as reconciliation of opposites Rubedo
9. New society of prophetic vision
10. Quadrated world forms The Stone

19 Jung (1959, p. 60) notes that the duplication motif occurs when an unconscious content is about to become differentiated.

20 While it will be observed that there is a paucity of expression in Slide 20 compared to the majority of the previous ones, and that it certainly lacks the organization of, e.g., Slide 1 (produced when E. was non-psychotic), I feel that it illustrates the genuine feelings of loss engendered by the giving up of one's total involvement in primary process activity, i.e. the state of "participation mystique" with one's environment. It marks a move into the depressive position and conveys the sadness and emptiness which immediately precede an attempt to utilize the transcendent function.

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