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The Intrauterine Experience and the Image: An Exploration of the Archetypal Womb Image as Symbol, Myth and Ritual Related to a Case Study in Art Therapy

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ABSTRACT

**The Intrauterine Experience and the Image:
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Related to a Case Study in Art Therapy**

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An incubational mode for art therapy is proposed; a mode where an important aspect of the art therapy process can be seen as gestation. An investigation is made of how the womb symbol, the gestation and rebirth myths, and rituals have been defined in the literature, and how and why the archetypal experience of gestation is effective in producing change. Literature on mythology, on clinical data in psychology and on archetypal expression in women's studies is consulted. The central concern is an emphasis on presenting "the womb" as creative space; as container for gestation, growth and transformation; as container helping to consolidate the necessary forms for releasing potential and power. Emerging as significant are the concepts of containment and transformation. In this regard, a comparison is drawn between the temenos and the therapeutic frame within the context of a containing and holding environment. In an attempt to emphasize the metaphoric

aspect of the intrauterine experience for art therapy, reference is made to case material where womb symbolism and rebirth fantasies are expressed through drawings. Some implications of the incubational mode for art therapy are drawn.

PREFACE

> What we call the beginning is often the end
> and to make an end is to make a beginning.
> T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding.
> (Gordon, 1978, p. 128)

The source of this thesis is an inner one, a sort of unconscious collaborator. I was contemplating pursuing the topic of mourning and creativity, an idea of an earlier paper. Reflecting on the sense of potential in returning to this original idea in order to move forward, I explored the possibility of expanding this notion. The more it was explored, the further away it seemed to shift until its reach was beyond my grasp. I was beginning to feel that it might be time for its termination.

Bound by the immediate necessity of the situation, I was experiencing the anxiety of separation from an idea in which I had invested enormous time and energy. Unconsciously, I found myself suspended in an uncontrolled state of not-knowingness, a state of scattered attention. Surrender and chaos. Doubts. Uncertainties. Countless thoughts and images were invading my mind. Experiencing an emotional urgency, I fantasied, "If this were to be the end, what would be the beginning?" After endless hours of

sustained 'muddled suspense', a generalized ideation of a new theme was conceived. Truly, a new beginning: The Intrauterine Experience and the Image.

I realize that my concern with the continually unfolding dynamics of the intrauterine world had long been evident in my own art work. An ongoing quest for origin. An exploration of organic embryological forms. A metamorphoses. It now seems obvious that this energy would regenerate itself in another context. Indeed, the seed is planted. It is in its still-embryonic stage. Pregnant with thought, I am confronted with many possibilities. An attempt to transform and contain these within the structures of this paper will present a challenge.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

I. INTRODUCTION

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.
> T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding.
> (Gordon, 1978, p. vi)

My intention is to present a theoretical thesis that is exploratory and speculative rather than definitive, dealing with the archetypal womb image.

I will present some arguments to support my thesis that an important aspect of the art therapy process can be seen as gestation, while at the same time I am aware of the controversial aspects of some of my search. I am limiting my thesis for this womb model in its gestation phase knowing full well that birth is a natural consequence of gestation and labour. I am likewise ignoring the concept of procreation. I hope, therefore, that The Intrauterine Experience and the Image will be perceived with the recognition that it is simply the beginning of a work that will need to unfold further.

Given all the information I uncovered during my research, it is surprising that so little has so far been said in the literature about the relationship between the womb image and art therapy. To my knowledge there has been no consistent exploration of the archetypal womb image per se. This would seem to point towards the need for co-operative efforts of future art therapy research.

Referring to symbols, myths and rituals, I will explore

meaning in the womb image from an archetypal point of view. An investigation will be made into how the womb symbol, the gestation and rebirth myths, and rituals have been defined in the literature, and how and why the archetypal experience of gestation is effective in producing change.

The central concern will be an emphasis on presenting 'the womb' as creative space; as container for gestation, growth and transformation; as container helping to consolidate the necessary forms for releasing potential and power, what Jung, according to Arguelles (1975), may have called the archetypal form.

From a discussion of (1) the image as a vessel-body symbol of the feminine through (2) aspects of creation myths; and approaching (3) the image as ritual in initiation rites; from exploring these archetypal womb images, I hope to suggest a womb model for art therapy.

In effect, I am investigating how the vessel of conception, the 'inner womb,' can serve as a metaphor eliciting the idea of a range of possible qualities, qualities of containment, creativity and growth; qualities of transformation and potential. In trying to pull together various strands of ideas, the immediate relevant question arises: How can some aspects of the art therapy process be seen as gestation?

In attempting to emphasize the metaphoric aspect of the intrauterine experience for art therapy, reference will be

made to case material where certain characteristics of emerging feminine symbols were expressed through drawings. I was motivated to search for their relevance in the literature on mythology, on clinical data in psychology and on archetypal expression in women's studies.

Assuming the target audience to be familiar with psychodynamic theory, and with symbols, myths and rituals, I will introduce these concepts with only minimal discussion. Clearly defined, however, will be the concept of symbol in the Jungian sense and the concept of archetypal image.

The Intrauterine Experience and the Image will be directed to all psychotherapists, but especially to the female psychotherapist who, I feel, is under represented in the psychotherapy literature.

I am interested in what women authors say on the subject of the womb, since an underlying theme is one of finding new meaning for the contemporary woman's experience; it is that which is propelling the thesis along. There is literature in which men have written about, for example: the anima, the psyche and the symbol, but they have not written much about 'the womb.' It is through the women authors, namely, Hall (1980), Woodman (1985), Bertine (1967), Walker (1983), et al. that I have found my way into this topic. I am asking how we can take advantage of the womb archetype so that such understanding will make art therapists both more

effective in their work and better able to explain the results of their labours.

I realize that what I am seeking in this study is a sense of 'wombedness,' a sense of containment, a sense of healing for the feminine psyche through the process of art therapy. Analogically, this sense of containment is like inner space providing a foundation for creativity; like inner space subjected to continuous transformation.

In Hall's (1980) view, whenever the archetypal nature of words and images has been intentionally recharged by referring to roots of meaning, there is a correspondingly greater freedom to explore the parameters of feminine identity. I concur with the author who finds that women wander, in themselves or in the world, hoping to locate the places where they feel at home. Women who were the fundamental guardians and converters of elemental energy (tending hearthfires, bearing and feeding children) need to know if there is an inner source out of which all of this basic transforming energy radiates. Is there an inner, archetypal point of stability, balance, and leverage? Hall suggests that the search for psychic origins relies on one's willingness to find meaning in myths, symbols, dreams, and poetry--all appropriate source materials for expressing hidden nature.

Since I will be searching for archetypal significance, analytic depth psychology rather than psychoanalytic theory

will be prevalent. A Jungian perspective will prevail, one intuitively responding to the spirit of the image, to the feeling of soul, intellectually exploring the concepts, sensing the recurrent patterns and symbols in a non-reductive, holistic, expansive way.

It seems to me that one of the most outstanding features in Jung's work is the importance he has attributed to a person's drive to create, to invest and to transform, classifying creativity as one of the five main instincts. Giving special importance to art work, he found evidence in it, not of psychopathology and neurosis, but of the Self. The Self to Jung, which he defined as including unconscious and impersonal or collective parts as well as conscious ones, was of far greater significance in the psyche than the ego, which he defined as forming the centre of consciousness. It would be important to realize that Jung's therapeutic aim is to attain individual growth, not "cure."

Jung's main model of creativity falls within the context of the alchemical model where the transformation of matter (base metal into a priceless element) and of thought (growth of consiousness) occurred. Jung's many references to the alchemical vas or vessel (for complete details, see p. 49) as a symbol of the basic structure of analyses prompted McCurdy III (Stein, 1984) to link to it the concept of incubation. This prompts me to adapt Jung's model of creativity to a womb model and explore its meaning for art

therapy. The concept of a womb model struck me as important since it has not been developed before.

In my estimation, Jung's model is an apt one for art therapy; Jung's psychology has furnished a container for a rich body of theory in which art therapists are able to develop many facets and directions. Attaching great importance to the creative activity of fantasy, Jung argues that fantasy (imagination) is indeed the source of all creative inspiration.

Through imagination, the coalescence of images into a dramatic form can tell a story with emotional urgency and meaning. In Gordon's (1978) view, the image is like a still picture; with imagination it can be a moving film. In art therapy, when we work with a sequence of images, we must allow them to change shape and to speak with their own voice in their own time (Hamilton, 1980). A sequence of pictures can often graphically reveal changes in attitudes or relationships over time presenting a visual record of change.

There are radical differences in approaches to the imaginal. I consider the imagination as just as important a tool in this work as is reason. Bachofen (Hall, 1980) said that there are two roads to knowledge, Phantasie and Verstand:

> ...the longer, slower, more arduous road of rational combination and the shorter path of the imagination, traversed with the force and swiftness of electricity...the imagination (Phantasie) grasps the truth at one stroke, without intermediary links. The knowledge acquired this second way is infinitely more living and colorful than the products of the understanding (Verstand). (P. xvi)

Hall (1980) suggests that in order to become pregnant with the potential of realizing unknown facts--or facets--of one's self, one must be open to the strange fertilizing powers of the imagination.

Dalley (1984) says that a painting discussed in isolation is as limited in application as is an isolated dream. It is only through the dream series or picture series, forming an organic process that reflects the kaleidoscope of the psyche, that one begins to build a whole picture of the person and the direction in which the psyche is meaning him to go.

It is significant that art therapy is one way of working with symbolic imagery as a means of giving it form while letting it live in a fluid state. Here, as in dreams, pictorial images are intra-related. No image can be dealt with apart from the others and the

enlightening of any one image sheds light on the others. Wilson (1985) argues that it is in the course of appropriate valuing and deepening that the images themselves initiate movement. (For further elaboration I would refer the reader to pp. 22 and 37 in this thesis.)

The context in which I use the word 'image' is one in which we may see the image as narrative, (as an example, see p. 53) as a picture so that all the facets are seen at once (Berry, 1982). Jung (1973) describes patterns of functioning as images. In his view, the term 'image' is intended to express not only the form of the activity taking place, but the typical situation in which the activity is released. So from this standpoint, myths and rituals, as well as symbols, can be perceived as images. This idea will be more fully explored below. (see sections 11, 111 and 1V)

In the hope that it will assist the readers to orient themselves with greater ease, an abbreviated glossary will be included covering such terminology as analogy, imagination, individuation, metaphor, psyche, et al.

II. IMAGE AS SYMBOL

Symbolic Archetypal Experience

Redfearn and Newton (1977) tell us that the symbolic process is the all-important healing factor, the way forward arising from conflict, and that we need to draw a distinction between the image which is symbolic and the image which is not symbolic, to decide whether the image is archetypal or is the image of an object. (for examples, see p. 35)

The author informs us that only when boundaries develop between the early ego and the archetypes can archetypal images and experiences take on a creative symbolic quality. This is the beginning of the capacity to relate one's inner core to the outer world through symbolic archetypal experience.

In Moore's view, (Redfearn and Newton, 1977) the symbol arises out of conflict which has been sustained, and in turn the symbol enables the conflict to be sustained, leading on the self to new differentiation and growth.

The personal conflict may be represented by means of archetypal themes. Indeed it will be so represented in the unconscious if it is not represented consciously. The resolution or the creative potential may be presented as an archetypal image. In a segment of the clinical case study presented in this thesis, (see p. 67) it is the womb image

from the archetypal theme of rebirth that is expressed in the form of womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism. The client, A., at first did not fully grasp its personal implications and possibly, as Redfearn claims, the archetypal image was avoided because it was experienced as persecutory, engulfing and annihilating by the ego. Archetypal experience is either ego-enhancing or alienated and split off by the ego.

Jungians understand the "release" of new feelings and potentialities as being due to the activation of archetypal layers and contents of the personality. This is seen to be ego-enhancing. To gain insight into these contents and their psychological meaning, analysts employ the symbolic approach, using an "archetypal model" (Stein, 1984, p. 38). This archetypal dimension gives the image greater meaning than does a reductive interpretation, and indicates its significance for future psychological development.

The case study reveals how A's drawings were developing an all-encompassing sense of importance, not only as the result of the image itself, but as a result of what happened within the therapeutic context within which that image originated. Essentially, the image was growing in worth, becoming more profound and involving, that is, becoming more archetypal as its pattern was elaborated as a symbolic archetypal experience. To quote Jung (Hillman, 1977), "Image and meaning are identical; and as the first takes

shape, the latter becomes clear. Actually, the pattern needs no interpretations: it portrays its own meaning" (p. 75). For A., it was the womb symbol that emerged as significant.

The concern of psychotherapy is to transform meaning in ways that are positive for the client. The aim is very much like the therapist's giving special attention to drawings, fostering active imagination and focusing attention on archetypal images. This occurs primarily through the therapist's understanding of symbolic aspects of experience.

Exploring the Archetype as Image

Many authors have contributed to defining the meaning of the archetype. It seems difficult to present a clear definition. Jung's (Jacobi, 1973) comment may help to clarify its meaning:

> The form of the archetypes might perhaps be compared to the axial system of a crystal, which, as it were, preforms the crystalline structure in the mother liquid, although it has no material existence of its own. Similarly the archetype...has an invariable nucleus of meaning - but only in principle, never as regards its concrete manifestation. (p. 43)

To embody it we use myths, fairytales, motifs in the arts, religion and depth psychology. By recognizing the "archetypal" nature of an image, we empower or value the image with the widest, richest, and deepest possible importance. Hillman (1977) tells us that while not adding anything descriptive, "archetypal" does value the image by pointing to fecundity and generativity, both concepts denoting a sense of growth.

Jung thought of archetypes as psychosomatic entities, whose physical expression takes the form of instinctive activity and its mental expression the form of images. Archetypal images, he claimed, represent the goals of the instincts, which they thus transform into psychic and therefore into potentially conscious experience.

This means that the archetypes are devoid of content to begin with until personal experience renders them visible as images and hence potentially conscious. The activation of archetypal contents is usually accompanied by strong affect and powerful fantasies, bringing with it a certain influence or power by virtue of which it either exercises a numinous or a fascinating effect, or impels to action. An archetype has an organizing influence on images; it enables the image to reverberate.

Spontaneously developing good and bad effects, archetypal images can have a positive, favorable meaning or a negative, evil meaning. The emergence of dark or negative

archetypal material serves as a signal that something is out of order on a very deep level. Hence primordial chaos can rise to the surface through dreams, fantasies, drawings, etc., since archetypal content expresses itself first and foremost in metaphors. Imbued with an aura of 'otherness' (Gordon, 1978, p. 163), these images tend to be experienced as overwhelming, and so they can indeed create states of crises and of ego disintegration.

The understanding of these symbolic images takes place via a constant withdrawal of projections from the person or object invested with them, and by a corresponding introjection by their psychic content. What concerns me in this study is the ability of the archetype to represent in the present, simultaneously, the past and the future; certain experiences from the past activated together with their quality of releasing potential and power, and in effect, of encouraging change. What underlines this is Jung's theory that the archetypes taken as a whole represent the sum of the latent potentialities of the human mind and serve as a bridging concept opening up vast possibilities for understanding the transformational quality of psyche-soma.

Keyes (1974) tells us that the incubation state during which the creative field develops and is expressed without conscious manipulation can last from a few seconds to many years. Some of the patterns which recur time after time

correspond remarkably to universal symbols that are found in myths, fairy tales and art of all cutlures. She states that they also recur in the art processess of the person looking inward at his own conciousness; and that they are partially what Jung identified as the archetypes, inherited experiences unconscious in the present individual.

Through art therapy, as illustrated in the case study, my client, A., was able to explore the meaning of her images; images expressing womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism, that is, archetypal womb images, images carrying potential towards change.

Womb Fantasies and Rebirth Symbolism

Jung (1976) indicates that what psychologically happens in womb fantasies (see pp. 76-78 for examples of A's womb fantasies) is that the libido immerses itself in the unconscious, thereby provoking infantile reactions, affects, opinions and attitudes from the personal sphere, but at the same time activating collective images, or archetypes, which have a compensatory and curative meaning such as has always pertained to the myth.

The regressing libido apparently desexualizes itself by retreating step by step to the presexual stage of earliest infancy. Even there it does not make a halt, but in a manner of speaking continues right back to the intrauterine, pre-natal condition and, leaving the sphere of personal

psychology altogether erupts into the collective psyche. But, Jung says, it can also tear itself loose from the maternal embrace and return to the surface with new possibilities of life. (as an example of this, see p. 73)

Jung's followers have explored this idea. For Hall (1980), the return-to-the-womb as the archetype of rebirth is initiation--an active entry into darkness, an entry into an experience of psychic significance.

Plaut (1977) suggests minor forms of rebirth which take place during our life-span. He informs us that regression with its varied symptomatology such as leaden inertia, or alternatively, oceanic blissful states and infant-like play and rhythmic activity can be a precursor to new developments and insights, in short, rebirth: thus turning what appears to be the end into a new beginning. He also discusses participation in rituals, as in initiation and healing through birth ceremonies, as positive and hopeful, with idealistic potentialities. (I will expand on this theme on pp. 18 to 21.) Within this process of rebirth symbolism, the author tells us, we wait and watch what looks like labour pains which come and go. (see p. 73 for a confirmation of this in my client's behaviour)

In describing rebirthing through art, Garai (1984) tells us of a method of creative exercises he feels to be effective for participants who are induced to go through the four states of: being in the womb, being born, facing

death, and willed rebirth with the help of imagery. Experience has shown, Garai says, that this method leads to an unusual unfolding of creative energies in the rebirth state in which colorful images are created. These symbolic representations of rebirth include mountains, flowers, rainbows and scenes from the bottom of the sea.

Obviously, in the context of rebirth symbolism, the mother symbolizes nature in the primordial state, the prima materia of the alchemists. This is proven by the many symbolic forms of return-to-the womb, a plurivalence that enables the womb to be constantly reevaluated in different spiritual situations and cultural contexts (Eliade, 1958).

As an example, Jung (1976) tells us that the "realm of the Mothers" (p. 125) frequently symbolizes the creative aspect of the unconscious. Jung equates the return-to-the-womb with the return into the teeming depths of an as yet unconscious creativity, thus indicating that the womb image can indeed symbolize the creative aspect of the unconscious.

Consequently, it seems that the proposed womb model for art therapy would suggest the client interacting with his art and his story, with his mythology, is creating, in part, symbols from the deepest, phylogenetic levels of the unconscious. We may ultimately assume that the client has his being in the womb on a subterranean level. Might we ultimately assume this as being an intrauterine experience?

Birth Fantasies in the Termination Phase of Therapy

Rank (Novey, 1983) views the experience of a therapeutic relationship as being similar to being in the womb--the ending of each session representing birth in a symbolic form. He had observed that as all his cases came to an end, the patients produced material pertaining to rebirth. "The freeing of the libido from its object, the analyst, seems to correspond to an exact reproduction of the separation from the first libido object, namely that of the newborn child from the mother..." (p. 990).

In a way, Rank developed a theory focused not on a physical experience of birth, but on the psychological experience of the birth of the individual. He described case termination as symbolic of birth, (for details of A's discharge, see p. 76) but less traumatic because the patient, now older, can tolerate anxiety better than the infant. The separation from the analyst is easier to bear because the ending is planned in advance.

Cases have been documented where patients revealed birth fantasies during the final phases of therapy, serving as a reliable barometer of termination. It is noted that fantasies and experiences related to birth may include recollections of abortions (see p. 75 for A's experience with abortion) and miscarriages and of births of any kind as allusions to an opportunity for new life.

Initiatory Symbolism of Return to the Womb

An origin myth often forms the basis for an initiatory ritual; to perform the ritual is to reactualize the primordial time, the participant emerging regenerated. I should like to draw special attention to the fantasy element involved using Bachofen's sense of the word. (see p. 7 for Bachofen's quotation) It is this sense of fantasy that provides the foundation for the images which are described below.

Eliade (1958) relates two important categories of archetypal womb images where the idea of gestation and of childbirth (which is not being explored in this thesis) is expressed by entrance into the womb of the Great Mother (Mother Earth), or into the body of a sea monster, or of a wild beast, or even of a domestic animal.

1. In the first, the return to the womb appears as an operation that is mysterious but comparatively without danger, where the stress is on the complete regeneration of the initiate through his gestation and birth by the Great Mother.

(a) An example of this is in the aboriginal Kunapipi cult (translated as "Mother," p. 48). What happens in this initiatory pattern of return to the womb is that the neophytes are said to enter into the sacred ground, the Mother; they go into

her uterus, the ring place, as happened in the beginning. When the ritual is completed, the Mother "lets them out" (p. 50). Then at a certain moment, the neophytes are covered over with bark, sleep in the hut, later to "hang from the pole" (p. 50) as though in the womb; and then emerge painted with ocher and arm-blood, reborn with a cry like that of newborn infants. Initially they had experienced a ritual swallowing by the Snake, interpreted as a return to the womb, on the one hand, because the Snake is often described as female; on the other, because entering the belly of a monster also carries a symbolism of return to the embryonic state.

Because it sheds its skin, the snake also symbolizes a sense of new beginning. In addition to its constructive side, the snake also reflects its essential ambivalence in its destructive side. Jung (Cirlot, 1962) has pointed out that, psychologically, the snake can be a symptom of anguish expressive of abnormal stirrings in the unconscious; that is, of a reactivation of its destructive potentiality. (for an example of this in A's drawing, see p. 74)

(b) Eliade (1958) relates the motif of gestation and

rebirth in the symbolism of Indian initiations when the teacher is said to change the boy into an embryo and keep him in his belly for three nights. The teacher conceives when he puts his hand on the boy's shoulder, and on the third day the boy is reborn as a Brahman. The initiate in the interim lives in his teacher's house, dresses in the skin of a black antelope, eats nothing but food for which he has begged: and is bound by a vow of absolute chastity. It is said that to be wrapped in a skin signifies gestation, and crawling out of it symbolizes a new birth.

2. In the second category, the return to the womb implies the risk of being torn to pieces in the monster's jaws (or in the vagina dentata of Mother Earth) and of being digested in its belly, involving the risk of death. Examples of these myths are as follows:

(a) myths in which the Hero is swallowed by a sea monster and then emerges victorious by forcing his way out of its belly;

(b) myths and miraculous narratives of shamans, who during their trances are supposed to enter the belly of a giant fish or whale;

(c) myths of an initiatory traversal of a vagina dentata, or a perilous descent into a cave or

crevasse, assimilated to the mouth or the uterus of Mother Earth--a decent that brings the hero to the other world.

What characterizes all forms of this dangerous return to the womb is that the Hero undertakes it as a living person and an adult--that is, the Hero does not die and does not return to the embryonic state.

I have focused in detail on the initiatory symbolism since these examples can contribute valuable insights towards developing a broader understanding of the archetypal womb image for art therapy. For example, in expressing the idea of gestation and childbirth, initiatory symbolism reflects a sense of growth and of birth of insight. When the client's series of images contain these aspects of womb symbolism, such as huts, caves, entering the mouths or bellys of sea monsters, of giant fish or of whales, et al, we can presume that some psychological movement is in progress.

Jung's Theory of Symbolism

The crucial aspect for the understanding of Jung's theory of symbolism lies in their quality of futurity: "In the form...lies its effective power" (Philipson, 1963, p. 76). It is the form of the expression which makes possible the reconciling function of the symbol. The value of Jung's position is that he emphasizes the meaningfulness of such expressions, here interpreted as having prospective significance.

Gordon (1978) says that in symbolism, the form is intimately relevant to the content; the physical configuration itself, the composition, formal patterns, rhythms, colours, shapes, tensions, balances, etc. all carry and are intimately connected with the meaning. She adds, too, that content and medium are indivisible and uniquely united, and that the psycho-physical embodiment (containment) that is art is a good analogue of our own psycho-physical existence.

In her view, images are intrinsic to each other; (see p. 8) the therapist and the client return again and again to the same fantasy, the same image or series of images--but with some new insight and with some new understanding. Where a symbol operates there is always meaning-behind-meaning-behind-meaning.

Neumann (1974) tells us that each symbol lays bare another essential side of the object to be grasped, points

to another facet of meaning. He describes how, by a continual process of circumambulation and approximation, the mind attempts to understand the meaning provoking it to integrate the symbol into consciousness.

The symbol is always grounded in the unconscious archetype, but its manifest forms are molded by the ideas acquired by the conscious mind. Jung believes the symbol to be the underlying generator of thought and the transformer of instinctual energy, its function being to convert libido from a lower into a higher form. The deeper the therapy penetrates, the more clearly the effects of the archetype appear; the symbol becomes increasingly dominant, for it encloses an archetype, a nucleus of meaning that is not representable in itself but is charged with energy (Jacobi, 1973). It is a process in which the energy is carried by the image and the image is carried by the energy.

In Gordon's (1978) view, image and symbol are closely related in that imagery is the essential material out of which symbols are made. Hillman (1977), too, tells us that each symbol is articulated, vivified or deadened, by the image that presents it. The symbol, for Jung (1976) is an analogy, and therein lies its wealth of meanings. He believes that the healing is in the symbol, for the symbol brings together body, mind and soul through the creative imagination.

To quote Gregoire (Mazurkewich, 1988) "Not only does

it [art therapy] allow patients to express what is difficult to put into words, but, by making images, the patient can literally put outside herself what is inside and overwhelming" (p. 1-2).

As art therapists, we look for the image that gives form to the client's experience, the image describing different ways of being in the world. By making the image more precise and as a result less overwhelming, the therapist and the client can sometimes find the image working out its own solutions. The symbolic image itself entails a visualization of the process and also brings a re-experiencing of it. (for an example of this, see p. 75) It is as if the particularity of the image is allowed to create its own phenomenology of the client's world, or to suggest a possible development inherent in its own structure.

Whatever is verbalized, in addition to the literal image which is drawn, may become part of the precision of the image. We observe, as well, the client's gestures, tone of voice, way of interacting, her presenting complaints and history. It seems that the more precision is expressed, the more actual insight is attained. Illustrating this is an art therapy session where A., in addition to creating her deeply felt images of a fantasy pregnancy, she poignantly expressed her feelings provoked by the images. Curling up in a fetal position, M. rocked slowly, back and forth.

Jung feels that the prime task of the psychotherapist

must be to understand the symbols anew, and thus to understand the unconscious, compensatory striving of the client for an attitude that reflects the totality of the psyche.

Jung's Distinction Between the Symbol and the Sign

One of Jung's important steps was to distinguish between the symbol and the sign and thus give psychotherapy a fresh theory of symbol. In Jung's (Philipson, 1963) opinion, a symbol is alive "only so far as it is pregnant with meaning, but if its meaning is born out of it, [that is, if the symbol is brought to conciousness] then the symbol is dead: ie., it possesses only historical significance" (p. 70). It merely serves as a conventional sign for associations which are completely and better known elsewhere.

As an example, Jung (1976) tells us that womb fantasies are not to be taken literally, for they are not to be understood semiotically, as signs for definite things, but as symbols. A symbol is an indefinite expression with many meanings, pointing to something not easily defined and therefore not fully known. But the sign always has a fixed meaning, because it is a conventional abbreviation for, or a commonly accepted indication of, something known. The symbol therefore has a large number of analogous variants, and the more of these variants it has at its disposal, the

more complete and clear-cut will be the image it projects of its object.

Jung (Gordon, 1978) believes that symbols are in fact the natural langauge of the unconscious and that they are 'the best possible expression with which to describe a relatively unknown and complex fact, which, though experienced as existing, is not yet fully grasped by consciousness' (p. 107). Were the referent of such an expression clearly knowable, the formula would not be a symbol but a sign. In effect, signs appear to be representatives of specific, known referents, whereas symbols appear to be representations of otherwise unspecified or unknown referents.

When a symbol acts 'symbolically' then it inevitably links the past to the present, the collective to the personal, and the private and unique to the social and cultural. Consequently, a symbol which functions as a symbol forms a link between archetypal processes and ego activity, and so acts as a bridge between the ego-making and the ego transcending processes. Through the symbol, history, both personal and collective, is transformed into relevant and experienced actuality, private emotions and phantasies become shareable forms of communication; personal experience can expand into collective experience and collective experience can condense into personal experience (Gordon, 1977).

Differentiating the symbol from the sign, Langer, Cassirer, Barthe, and Reid, according to Gordon (1978), think of the sign as something to act upon, as something 'physical' (p. 106) to which we react directly, in a practical way. Symbols, they suggest, are 'charged with meaning' (p. 106) and are infinitely interpretable. Most analysts would add that symbols always involve affect and feelings.

In Jung's theory, the symbol no longer points from the general to the particular, but on the contrary, from the particularized symbol to the generalized idea. This approach is best described by Victor White (Brown, 1966): "Behind the particularized mother's womb lies the archetypal womb of the Great Mother of all living" (p. 44).

We now move from the theoretical discussion to a survey of examples.

Symbolism of Gestation

Looking at some examples of the archetypal experience of gestation, we find Paul Klee's (Walker, 1983) statement:

> Which artist would not wish to dwell at the central organ of all motion... from which all functions derive their life? In the womb of nature, in the primal ground of creation, where the

> secret key to all things lie hidden? (p. 1092)

Expressions of the vessel connected with the womb are found in primitive peoples today and in objects as old as early Egyptian images. We can understand that the frequency with which the earliest jugs and containing vessels were given breasts suggests that our ancestors arrived at the jug by the process of reifying the maternal image and abstracting the holding and giving qualities to a degree necessary for their purposes.

Emphasized in each is the generative centre; the concept of gestation, of the growth of life in that which has been fertilized. An important aspect in the symbolism of gestation remains the very ancient symbolism of the fertilizing activity of the pitcher, expressed in antique phraseology as the 'impregnation of Isis by the seed of Osiris.' (Philipson, 1963, p. 85)

In southern India and in Borneo, the Great Mother is frequently represented in the form of a pot. That this is always a symbol of the uterus is proven, for Indians, by the miraculous birth from a pot of the sages Agastya and Vasishta.

It is of interest to note Philipson's observation that the survival or unconscious revivification of the vessel-symbol indicates a strengthening of the feminine principle in the masculine psychology of Biblical times; and that

psychic energy in the unconscious, which Jung terms libido, effects a certain activation of images of which this vessel symbolism is the expression.

This quite naturally introduces the following chapter, the Vessel-body Symbol of the Feminine.

Vessel-body Symbol of the Feminine

In this chapter, extensive reference will be made to Neumann (1974), who has explored, in The Great Mother, the central symbol of the feminine as the vessel-body symbol. Citing that in her is the life-vessel in which life forms, and which bears all living things discharging them out of itself into the world, he emphasizes the aspects of containment, protection and transformation. In this study, it is the containing and transforming factors that concern me.

The symbolism of containing dominates in the vegetative symbol of the fruit, for example, the pomegranate and poppy, in which the abundance of seeds stresses containment; and in the animal world, such as the pig where the accent is on fertility; in the shellfish on the form of the womb, in the squid and owl on the uterine form of their bodies. Regarding cultural symbols, we might mention containers such as the box, basket, chest, et al. Another symbolic sphere incudes the nest, cradle, bed, ship, boat, wagon and coffin, but these represent transition to protection as well.

The function of protection is evident in the mountain as 'hiding' and 'safety'(p. 46). Mountain as mound or tumulus also embraces this function of protection and safeguarding. Neumann tells us the sheltering cave (see p. 53 for example of cave ritual) as part of the mountain also represents the temple, house, hut, village and city; lattice, fence and wall, signifying what protects and closes off. Here, gate and door are the entrance to the womb of the maternal vessel. Down to our day, the feminine vessel character, originally of the cave, later of the house, (the sense of being inside, of being sheltered, protected, and warmed in the house), has always borne a relation to the original containment in the womb. As well, anything big and embracing which contains, surrounds, enwraps, shelters, preserves and nourishes anything small belongs to this primordial matriarchal realm.

Transformative functions are evident in symbols of jar, kettle, oven, etc., suggesting movement and transformation inside. Thus the jars are in every sense "pot-bellied." Some of them have at their center a circle symbolizing both navel and female genitals, this "generative center" bearing a symbol of life.

The essential features of the feminine transformative character are bound up with the vessel as a symbol of transformation. We know how great a role the sacral vessel played in the primordial era, particularly as a vehicle of

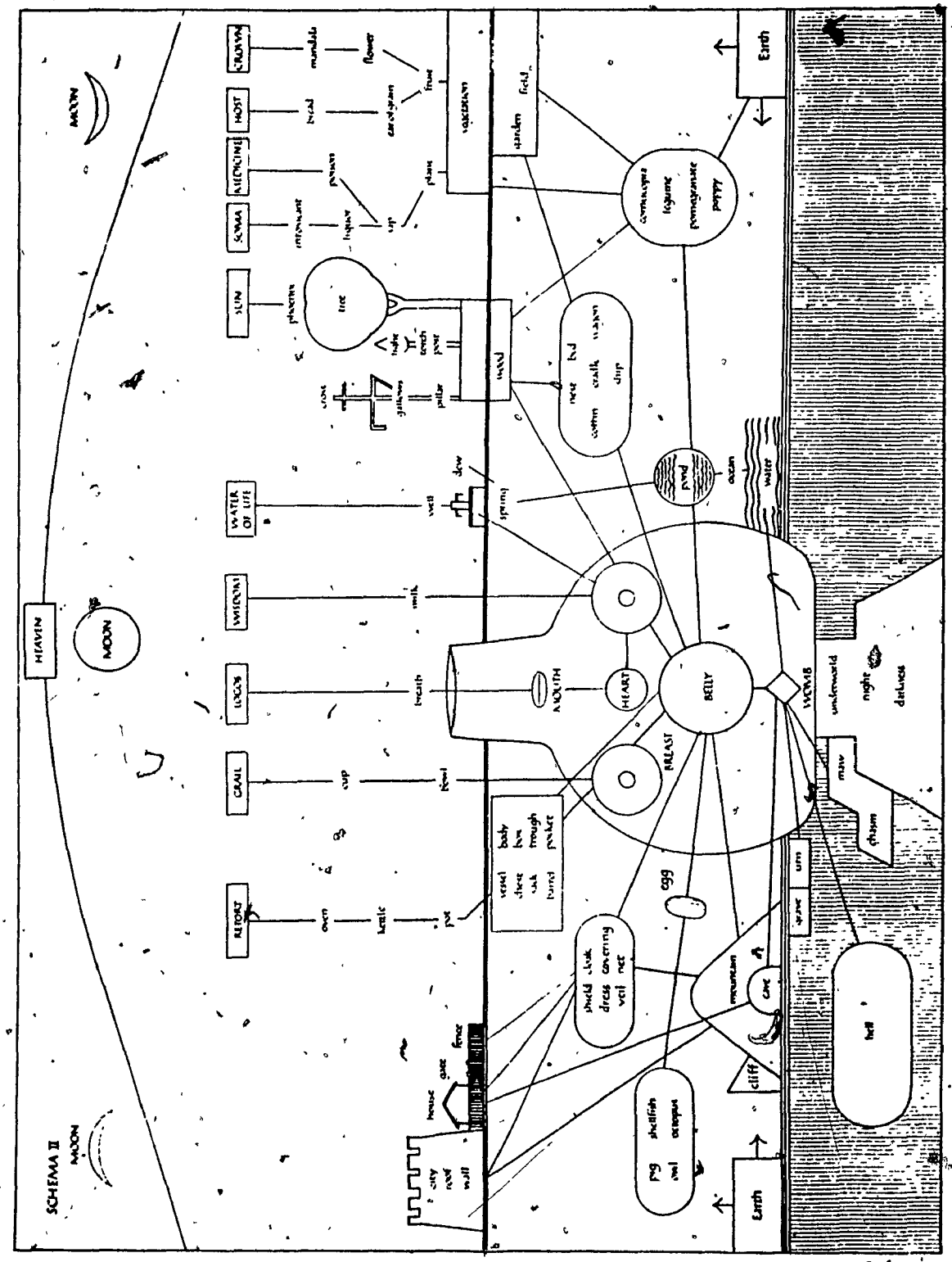

Fig. 1. Schema of the great vessel of the female body (Neumann, 1974, p. 45).

magical action. The rites with which the sacred object was surrounded often reveal very clearly its nature as transformer of energy (Jung, 1960).

Neumann (1974) describes how the natural elements essentially connected with vessel symbolism include both earth (as abyss, valley, ground) and water. (see p. 70 for A's use of water symbols) This source of containing water is the primordial womb of life from which, in many myths, life is born. It is the water "below", the water of depths, ground water and ocean, lake and pond. The maternal water not only contains, it also nourishes and transforms since all living things build up and preserve their existence with the water or milk of the earth. To this realm belongs the spring, fountain, waves, (as an example, see p. 70) the rising, erupting motif of "being born" (p. 48) and of creative movement, all attuned to the rhythm, tides, needs and possibilities of concrete life expressions. Of course, water also stands as a mediator between life and death with a two-way positive and negative flow of creation and destruction. We see the idea of floods and drownings in many myths.

Worthy of mention, as well, are the Stone Age sculptures of the Primordial Mother where the symbolism of the rounded vessel predominates and where, in these figures, the fertility of the Feminine has found an expression both prehuman and superhuman. The head is sightless, inclined

towards the middle of the body; the arms are only suggested and they too stress the middle of the body (Neumann). Giving the impression of "brooding maternity" (p. 36) and of containment, she takes all things into herself and incubates them. Her body is thus impregnated with the burden of creation. (Hall, 1980).

Symbolism of the Womb in Mythology

The meaning in the following two womb motifs is clearly that of the longing to attain rebirth through a return to the womb, and to become immortal like the sun (Jung, 1976).

In the first, we have the symbol of the containing aspect of the womb as chest or casket as being a common conception in the older mythologies. The chest, barrel, or basket with its precious contents was often thought of as floating on the water, thus forming an analogy to the course of the sun. If then we find the blood-red sunrise connected with the idea that a birth is taking place, the birth of the young sun, we can assume that all the sea-going gods are solar figures enclosed in a chest or ark for the "night sea journey" (p. 210). During this journey the sun-god is shut up in the mother's womb, and often threatened by all kinds of dangers.

A very close parallel is Noah's journey over the Flood that killed all living things; only he and his animals lived to experience a new Creation. We therefore see how the ark,

chest, casket, barrel, ship, etc. is an analogy of the womb, like the sea into which the sun sinks for rebirth. That which swells in the mother can also signify her conquest and death.

Walker (1983) informs us of megalithic tombs and barrow-mounds which were designed as "wombs" to give rebirth to the dead. Their vaginal entrance passages show that Neolithic folk went to considerable trouble to devise imitations of female anatomy in earth and stone. Tomb and womb were even related linguistically. Greek tumbos, Latin Tumulus were cognates of tumere, to swell, to be pregnant. The word "tummy" is thought to have come from the same root.

Womb-temples and womb-tombs point backward to the matriarchal age, when only feminine life-magic was thought efficacious. Rebirth from the womb-tomb was the meaning of the doomed funerary stupa of the Far East, where the remains of the sainted dead lay within a structure called garbha, the "womb." The parallel with barrow graves, Mycenaean tholos tombs, cave temples, and other such structures is now well known. Even a Christian cathedral centered on the space called nave, originally meaning "belly." Caves and burial chambers were said to be sunk in the "bowels" of the earth--that is, of Mother Earth. The biblical term for "birth" is "separation from the bowels." (p. 1092)

In Image as Symbol, I hope to have shown how various contexts, including the archetype as image, womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism, and the vessel-body symbol of the feminine can be understood as contributing towards the meaning of a womb model for art therapy.

We learn that the personal conflict may be represented by means of archetypal themes (arising form the unconscious), the resolution or creative potential of which may be presented as an archetypal image (brought to consciousness).

In art therapy, when the client's image is an expression of the body-vessel symbol, or of symbolism of the womb in mythology, or of other womb fantasies, we can consider its containing, gestative, and transformative characters as generating psychological movement in therapy. Of course, there may be times when the image as vase, poppy, house, boat, et al., is simply the image of an object and not a symbolic image. (for details see p. 9) It is at these times that the therapist's knowledge of womb symbols can aid in the birth of new ideas.

Image as Myth, which follows, will concern itself with gestation myths and with how and why this archetypal womb schema is effective in producing change.

III. IMAGE AS MYTH

Exploring the Myth

> The Womb of the mother is our first home. Caves were the first homes of humankind. "Just as every adult was once inside the mother, every society was once inside the Great Mother". (Hall, 1980, p. 91)

Eliot (1970) reminds us that by knowing that myth is always related to a "creation," one knows the origin of things, and hence can control and manipulate them at will. This is knowledge that one "experiences" ritually, either by ceremonially recounting the myth or by performing the ritual for which it serves as both a model and a justification. He who recites or performs the origin myth is thereby steeped in the creative atmosphere in which these miraculous events took place. As the ceremony ritually transforms the mythological symbols, so too the person in transformed in a parallel process.

The return to origin gives the means for a rebirth as suggested in the numerous ritual applications. Olson (1980) believes that what ritual has done to the category of space, diluting it by means of a particular space-bound activity, myth has done to the category of time, widening it by means of a particular time-bound storytelling, both resulting in an awareness of going beyond immediate space and time.

In Olson's opinion, a symbol is of a more static

nature; a myth is more dynamic because of its sequence of events or stages, so that it can be called a "moving symbolism." (see p. 8) Mythic elements derive their force precisely from the fact that they suggest rather than explain, at the end of which an insight may arise. The author states it is difficult not to respond to myths, for myths awaken something, certain intonations make themselves valid, and certain longings and wishes arise. Myths evoke feelings and imagination.

Is there something universal in a myth? Is the meaning of a myth in its proposing a solution to a particular problem? In fact, when looking at it, in Olson's view, we may notice the beginning of an inner dialogue about the life it represents, the world it has made, and the solutions it proposes for problems that also confront us, solutions which may be concrete, visible and direct, or otherwise. The myth affords us analogies to better understand a situation; the myth amplifies our life situation and helps us to find new ways towards integration.

Hillman (1972) cites that the model for the personal emotions going on in therapy arise from an enactment of a myth which hints that therapy is a myth-making, mythical procedure. If analysis is an enactment, he says, then a tale about this ritual--a myth--is necessary. Authentic to the ritual, they belong to a mythical pattern. The author contends that mythology must be related to psychology for

myths to remain vital. He feels that the chief danger lies in taking myths literally. They are likenesses to happenings making them intelligible, but they do not themselves happen.

The image of the myth serves life-furthering ends by telling us in picture language of powers of the psyche to be recognized and integrated in our lives. What is therefore required, contends Jung, (Campbell, 1972) is a dialogue, by way of symbolic forms, put forth from the unconscious mind and recognized by the conscious in continuous interaction.

The healing practices of the Navaho relies on womb symbolism. Reichard (1950) cites the womb as the most important symbol in all of Navaho folklore. Womb rituals include the practice of sandpainting where the patient, entering the safe confines of the mandala sand form, would be placed on the image in specific alignment with supernatural and psychological forces. The patient is projected back into primordial time and is reunited with the origins of the mythological universe.

Representing the seed of generation and potentiality, the next chapter, Creation Myths, will be initiated with a discussion of gestation myths, implying a sense of the archetype experience; a sense of representing in the present, simultaneously, the past and the future leading to a state of growth and transformation. Exemplifying these myths will be The Symbol of the Egg, viewed as universe

embryo; and The Alchemical Vessel, seen as container for transformation of matter and thought, where I will allude to their meaning for art therapy.

It seems obvious that myths of creation stress the capacity for searching the imagination. With this in mind, I reiterate the significance of the fantasy element involved.

Creation Myths

In Walker's (1983) view, myths of creation generally present a symbolic view of birth, conditions before creation suggesting the uterine environment; darkness, liquid, stirring or churning environment, the "eternal flux" (p. 183) associated with the blood of the mother. The author exemplifies this with the Bible's version, "..the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the Deep" (p. 183). The Deep was the Mother's womb, tehom, derived from Tiamat, the Babylonian name of the primordial Goddess. In Egypt, she was Temu, mother of the abyssal elements: Water, Darkness, Night and Eternity.

Quoting Jung, Hall (1980) illustrates how myths of creation tell the human story of the birth of creative thought from the discovered place where memories and childhood are constellated:

> ... the libido sinks back into its own

> depths, into the source from which it originally flowed and returns to the point of cleavage, the navel, where it first entered the body...the Mother, because from her the current of life reached us. (p. 233)

We learn from Neumann (1954) that the first cycle of myth is the creation myth where the world and the unconscious predominate and form the beginning of the world as the mythology of creation. Its symbol is the circle, a symbol of perfection, where there is no beginning and no end; no before and no after, no time; no above and no below, no space.

Allied to it is the egg, the World Egg, the nucleus of the beginning, and the germ from which the world arises. It is also the perfect state in which the opposites are united -- the perfect beginning because the opposites have not yet flown apart and the world has not yet begun, the perfect end because in it the opposites have come together again in a synthesis. It is suggested that through the power of this "coniuncio" (p. 13) the earth conceives and everything that fills the world is brought into being.

From Neumann's (1954) viewpoint, the question about origin must always be answered by "womb" (p.13), for it is the immemorial experience that every newborn creature comes from a womb; hence the "round" (p. 14) of mythology is also

called the womb. In fact, all mythology says over and over again that this womb is an image, the woman's womb being only a partial aspect of the primordial symbol of the place of origin. The author states that this symbol means many things at once; not just one content or part of the body, but a plurality, a cosmic region where many contents hide and have their essential abode.

The Symbol of the Egg

It seems evident that we cannot consider creation myths without considering the symbol of the egg; (as an example of my client's painting, see p. 78) it also seems evident that we cannot consider the symbol of the egg without thinking of the womb. In presenting a variety of representations illustrating the symbolism of the egg, Hall (1980) tells us that the most important aspect in these ancient figures is that of egg laying and incubating.

Viewing the egg symbol as a phase of initiation, Hall (1980) relates that an unhatched egg (Fig. 2) as seen from the inside would be a dark egg, a lightless place, where there would be no possibility of seeing with outward looking eyes. The author sees this as the dark before the dawn. One can also speak of someone who is brooding or has withdrawn into one's shell.

Hall tells us that initiation as a feminine mystery implies submission to a natural process of transformation

that is analogous to the "work" (p. 49) of a brood hen whose warmth brings embryonic life out of an egg into the world. This suggests the jug (Fig. 3) modelled in an egg-containing shape symbolic of ritual use, which may have been used primarily as a source of food for neolithic people. (See p. 43 for an example of the egg in initiatory symbolism.)

The Great Mother (Fig. 4) was represented as all-bird and bore the egg of creation in her buttocks. The concept of brooding or incubating was represented by the feet of a bird resting on an egg (Fig. 5) as expressed in a fragment of a Greek vase.

Marie-Louise von Franz (Hall, 1980) tells us:

> As soon as the image of the egg comes up it is associated with the idea of concentration: tapas, brooding, and with the birth of intelligence...I have seen the same thing practically in analysis, where the motif of the egg very often appears in a state where one could say that the human being has, for the first time, a chance of reflecting on himself. (p. 51)

In elaborating on the initiatory symbolism, Eliade (1958) views the symbolism of the egg and the chick as very probably one of "twofold birth" (p. 54) of birds which is at the origin of the image of the dvi-ja (twice born). In any

case, he feels we are in the presence of archetypal images, documented on the level of archaic cultures. As an example, the author tells us it is among the Kavirondo Bantu that they compare the initiate to a white chick creeping out of an egg just like a newly fired pot. It is remarkable that the same image brings together two motifs that are at once embryological and initiatory, the egg and the pot. (see p. 42 for more details)

The author also presents us with examples of women's celebration of the mysteries of universal fertility. Among the Mordvins, the young married women, when they reach the house where the society's ritual banquet is held, are struck three times with whips by the old women, who cry, "Lay an egg!" (p. 79) and the young married women produce a boiled egg from between their breasts. In the Nyemba societies, at a certain moment, the woman directing the ceremony breaks an egg on the roof of the initiatory hut "to ensure the hunters a plentiful harvest of game" (p. 79).

Neumann (1974) tells us the symbol of the black and white egg indicates that the Femininé contains opposites and that the world actually lives because it combines earth and heaven, night and day, death and life.

It is interesting, as well, to note that Buddhist imagery recognizes that the second, spiritual birth is accomplished like that of the chick, that is, "by breaking the eggshell" (p. 54).

The egg is a common Oriental image of creation. We learn from Walker (1983) that the Egyptian sign for the World Egg is the same as for an embryo in a woman's womb. Cirlot (1962) informs us that the meaning of the Egyptian's determinative sign of the egg, representing the mystery of life, persisted among the alchemists who added explicitly the idea that it was a container for matter and for thought. In this way was the transition effected from the concept of the egg to the World Egg, a cosmic symbol which can be found in most symbolic traditions.

The alchemical vault of space came to be known as an egg, a fitting transition to another archetypal womb image, The Alchemical Vessel.

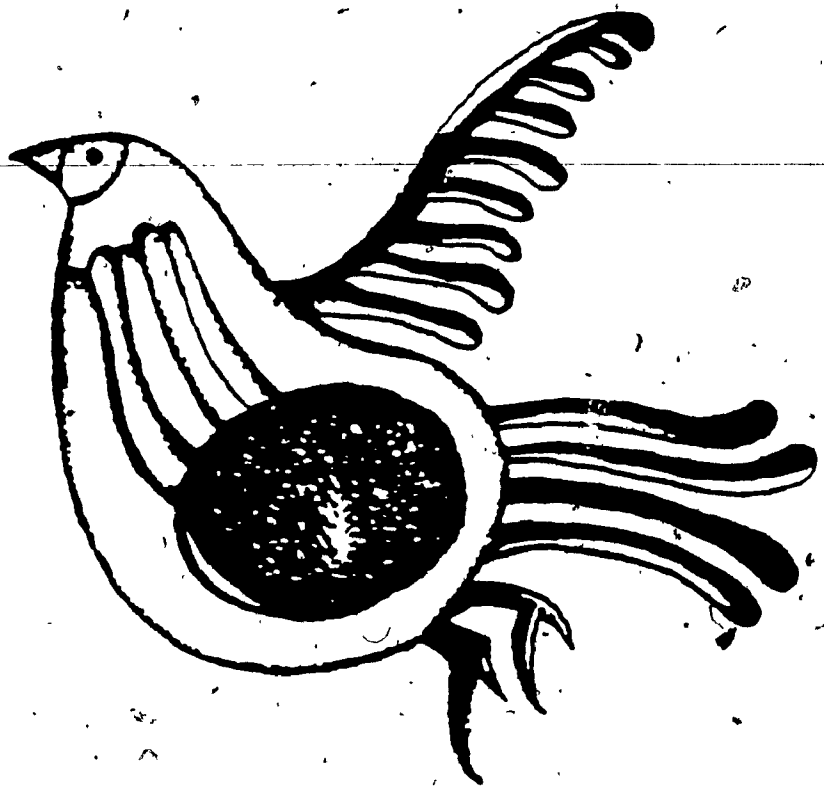

Fig. 2 An unhatched egg as seen from the inside (Hall, 1980, p. 48).

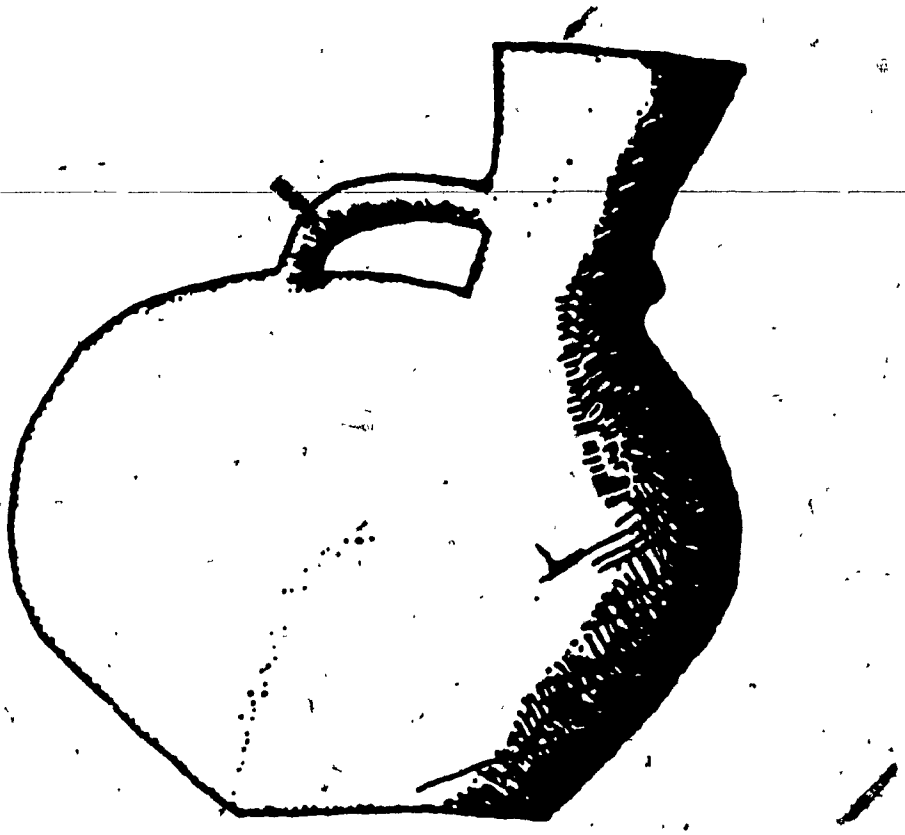

Fig. 3 Jug as egg-containing shape (Hall, 1980, p. 48).

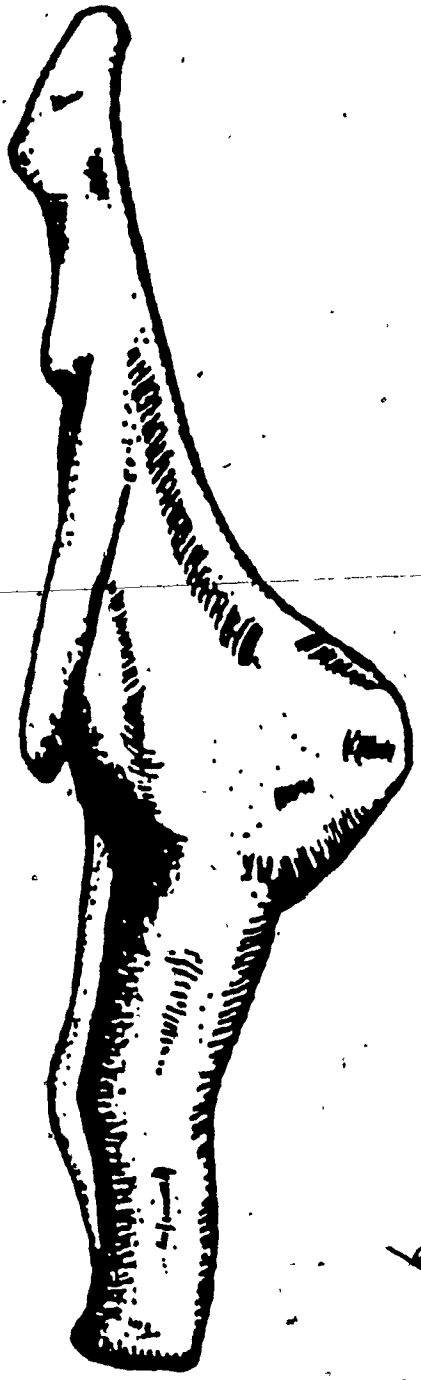

Fig. 4 The Great Mother with egg of creation in her buttocks (Hall, 1980, p. 48).

Fig. 5 Feet of a bird resting on an egg as expressed in Greek vase (Hall, 1980, p. 48).

The Alchemical Vessel

Some aspects of alchemy are very much like the womb. Many writers have made this inference. In fact, Adler (1961) points out that one of the designations of the alchemical vessel is mater (or ovum): Jung is quoted, "It is a kind of matrix or uterus from which the...miraculous stone is to be born" (p. 137).

For Jung, the alchemical vessel stands for the ego-function of containing and holding archetypal interaction and conflict so that further syntheses and transformation come about. It is these aspects of containment and transformation that concern me. Alchemy is a very broad subject but these are the issues that interest me in this study--issues of containment and transformation.

Newman (1981) tells us that the image of the vas is more than just a protecting temenos. The vessel is both the container and that which is contained, in that it holds the contents worked upon, while, at the same time, it is also that which is worked on. It both contains the process as well as being the process likening itself to the transforming content, namely the psyche itself. In other words, he believes that the psyche is both the vessel containing the contents submitted to transformation as well as being that which undergoes the transformation. This seems to reflect Jung's (Hillman, 1972) reference of "psychic pregnancy" in regard to the "opus" (p. 198).

Redfearn (1982) suggests that the vessel is a reified mother who holds and reflects; and that the temenos, the theatre and the picture frame are further abstractions of the same containing function, the same ability to "get outside" (p. 231), that is, to contain an effective experience necessary for reflection, for thinking, for imaging, and for working symbolically.

In alchemy, the symbolism shows quite unmistakably the principle of transformation of energy (Jung, 1960): In art therapy, the metaphor generates power and energy in the image. The image becomes a container for creative space, a holding environment, a therapeutic frame.

Wilson (1985) comments that 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. In her view, 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 basis 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, she feels, is therefore counter-productive.

When one thinks of the 'vas' as something secret, closed and private, providing a protective area within which transformation takes place, one can also think of the alchemical image of the vessel as an image for psychotherapy, as both vessel and process; as container and gestation. Further, when one thinks of a vessel, the Latin 'vas' and the Greek 'skuos' (Newman, 1981, p. 229) as referring to a human body or person possessing a containing capacity, one can also think of the creative aspect of the holding womb; the womb as rhythm of life, as rhythm of growth-- the womb as pulsating with rhythmic activity--as a fertile gestative center generating movement and change.

From the alchemical vessel to psychotherapy to the womb; we can compare all these states of containment and transformation in varying degrees with movement from 'vessel' to 'vessel' to 'vessel', as being less like a change of gears or a quantum jump and more like a rhythmic or oscillating motion. It is as if a sense of rhythm facilitates the passage from one realm to the next.

One can speak of a womb model for art therapy where a pulsating movement essentially links together these varied experiences of gestation, where archetypes represent in the present, simultaneously, a sense of times past and a sense of potential. One can speak of a womb model where it is the symbolic element of the inner process that is of prime importance, each concept determined by an integrative

process of past, present and future, whose aim is likewise transformation; a birth of new ideas, new consciousness, new life.

The foregoing material has focused on how alchemy is another way of thinking about the womb. The alchemical myth also involves ritual. Ritual is pregnant with meaning. Exploring a womb symbol in the form of cave symbolism, Image as Ritual will focus on the extent of therapeutic influence as derived from the incubational process.

IV IMAGE AS RITUAL

Ritual Process of Incubation

Hall (1980) describes those rites, which enabled the passage of a person from one life stage to another, and which often included the first step of incubation in order to ensure the kind of isolation and self-containment that makes one receptive to the unconscious.

Therapy has ancient roots in the ritual practices of incubation. These are reflected in archetypical womb images, an example of which is the cave of Zeus-Trophonius. Hall reveals that before entering this sacred cave, (for cave symbolism, see p. 30) the incubant had first to go to a place where two streams met in order to drink of the waters of Lethe and Mnemosyne, waters of forgetfulness and memory. In psychotherapy these streams are called amnesia, a complete death of an old way of life, and anamnesis, a recalling of an entire story, a narrative of experience.

Hall (1980) describes this narrative (see p. 6) as

> telling the tale of "passing through the double rocks of the sea" as through the birth canal into daylight. The beginning of life is entry into the cave. From the infant's perspective it is the lowering into the pelvic cave of the mother. In Porphyry's Cave

> of the Nymphs, the spirit children call their mother's vagina the "rock hole." When they intend to be born they say, "I am going into a rock hole." ...the rock hole is the womb of the mother, great bulk body, place of eruptive creation, place of origins. (p. 25)

Then, as if recreating the experience of return to the womb, the incubants lowered themselves into the dark hole where they crept feet foremost into the cave opening that was only big enough to allow a human body through. When in as far as their knees, they were swept right in as if in a whirlpool. After three days of visionary solitude the incubants were drawn out by attending therapists who were functioning as midwives (for detail see pp. 85-86) for the psyche, aiding in remembering, in retrieving thoughts and feelings; aiding in the birth of insight, in the labour of self-knowledge.

In some cultures, as Spretnak (1987) observes, rituals were held in womb-like caves that had vulva-like rock formations at the opening, which were rubbed with red ocher to represent the sacred blood of the female. The writer states that the conceptualizations of the Earth Mother, even from the earliest expressions onwards, were celebrations of the elemental power of the female.

Bertine (1967) suggests the "cave of sacrifice" as a womb symbol which gives a hint of meaning of what will

happen there, the concept of darkness and light reflecting an important aspect in this rite. She observes that for the primitive the really important birth does not take place until initiation. (see p. 58 as an example of new birth)

It has been shown that thousands of years ago, according to Hall (1980), the Chinese recognized the spiritual value of incubation, identified with the image of brooding. In India this force is called tapas, the feminine mood of meditation that releases heat for hatching new life. Hillman (1979) tells us that we may experience the tapas as being "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" (p. 189), as an incubation, a labrynth, a pregnancy.

Meier (Fordham, 1978), suggests that for a cure to take place conditions must be set up that give scope for unconscious archetypes to get as full expression as is possible so as to mobilize individuating processes. This is accomplished through a series of ordeals of initiatory type.

Meier feels it is evident that in each case the person, patient or incubant must be motivated from within to undergo a rigorous discipline in which consciousness is reduced and brought into relation with dreams and imagination in such a way that ordinary rational thought is least temporarily suspended.

Hall (1980) notes that in approaching the task of anamnesis, one must not resort to one's own memory until the proper ritual prescriptions have been carried out (bathing,

cleansing, divesting oneself of the outer layer, the persona or mask by which the world recognizes us). As well, the desire to descend into the incubation chamber must be prompted by an authentic searching rather than mere curiosity. Entering the cave with inappropriate intentions robs one of the psychic energy necessary to effect a healing transformation.

The motif of incubation, of going down into the dark of unconscious sleep, is encountered as a necessary step in the transformation cycle. It is felt by Hall (1980) that before any period of creative awakening, there is an incubation period that appears gray, motionless and without passion, where there is no horizon, no promise of its ending. It seems as if in searching light out of darkness, in wearing a veil as it were that paradoxically permits seeing, the clients come to birth in their own bodies emerging to a level of psychological consciousness.

The author tells us that many fairy-tales show women sitting through years of hiddeness, a sort of dark incubation, in which something grows, a certain sense of stirring in an inner sanctuary. Hall believes that growth needs invisibility: perfection of form needs time. In her view, rites of passage have been turned inward where they can be lived out as stages of psychic transformation.

For Toni Wolff (Hall, 1980), the woman's incubation is the sleep that precedes the final transformation from a

state of resignation and despair to an awakening of a loving relationship with herself and with others. She describes the process of psychotherapy as a withdrawal into an alchemical vessel where a woman is healed by coming in closer to her unconscious nature.

Reed (Walker, 1976) believes one can understand an incubation ritual as "an externalization of a psychological fact--a projection mirroring a natural inner process" (p. 24). It is "as if the incubant were able by aligning him or herself with the symbolic structure of the ritual, to allow a certain inner condition to arise which cannot be produced directly"(p. 24).

McCurdy III (Stein, 1982) emphasizes that only when a proper period of psychological incubation has taken place will a person be able to comprehend the material arising from the unconscious in a nontheoretical way, in a way that can affect the course of development to produce real change and reorientation. This implies a period of incubation in analyses where the experienced and comprehended information is held and ripened to its proper age of birth.

The slow rather laborious process of inner change is also symbolized in art therapy by the fragile and tenuous thread, often half hidden, that connects a person's art work together. Leading through so many unaccountable twists and turns over a period of time, an umbilical path as it were, is in itself the process of healing (Dalley, 1984).

Ritual Process of Initiation

In Eliade's (1958) view, it is impossible to exaggerate for the primitive the importance of the obsession with beginnings. Initiatory death is often symbolized by darkness, by cosmic night, by the telluric womb, the hut, the belly of a monster, all expressing regression to a preformal state, to a latent mode of being. These images and symbols of ritual death are inextricably connected with germination, with embryology: they already indicate a new life in course of preparation. The initiatory new birth is not natural, though it is sometimes expressed in obstetric symbols. The second initiatory birth does not repeat the first, biological birth, but the sacred history preserved in the myths.

Initiations by return to the womb have as their first aim the novice's recovery of the embryonic situation, from which one develops in different directions pursuing different ends. That is, having symbolically returned to the state of "embryo" (p.58), one can begin an entirely different, a transcendent, as it were, mode of existence: one has experienced an embryonic gestation and a new birth. (see p. 55 as example of a cave ritual)

Exemplifying this is the rite of the"golden embryo" (p. 56). The person undergoing the rite is placed in a golden receptacle in the shape of a cow, where, upon emerging, is regarded as an infant and is put through the rites of birth.

Eliade explains the continuity between archaic rites and symbols of initiatory "new birth" (p. 59) on the one hand, and on the other, techniques of spiritual rebirth. Since in the former, in puberty rites, the person is made an adult by an initiation involving return to the womb, it is hoped that similar results will be obtained in the latter, when other things are to be made, that is, identifying with the supreme example of the "made" (p. 60) in cosmology. The author feels that the newness of spiritual life, its autonomy, finds expression in the images of an "absolute beginning", (p. 60) images whose structure is anthropocosmic, deriving at once from embryology and from cosmogony, as it were, archetypal womb imagery.

Exploring the Ritual

Every ritual presupposes a transformation of the human personality. We know that in all probability a ritual precedes the formulation of the myth, just as action must come before knowledge, the unconscious deed before the spoken content (Neumann, 1974). The ritual grows in accord with the need to make meaning (Hall, 1980). In Hillman's (1975) view, ritual offers a primary mode of psychologizing, of deliteralizing events and seeing through them as we "perform" them. As we go into a ritual, he says, the soul of our actions "comes out" (p.137). Ritual brings together action and idea into an enactment.

Whitman (1982) tells us that ritual brings about containment and acceptance, control of intensity and "dosage" (p. 235). A pattern of wholeness is found that enables one to endure the tensions of mutually opposing emotions and to balance affects with ego intents and needs. Ritual offers us an alternative to repression for dealing with potentially overpowering affect.

Any affect or emotion which in its raw and unaltered form is too intense to be controlled by will alone may need a specific ritual. Without ritual, such energies may inundate the ego and force it into acting out or into obsessive behaviour. By virtue of seeking and creating a formalized context, these energies are safely contained.

Aspects of Containment

Since this study concerns itself with the containing elements of the archetypal womb image, its aspects of gestation, growth and transformation, I consider the element of containment as crucial in my search for a womb model for art therapy.

Redfearn (1977) tells us that the various aspects of 'containment' and 'holding' (p. 300) whether real or imagined, physical or metaphysical, can, within the psychological realm, be considered as either a containing boundary, or a facilitating support, or an imprisoning grip. These can apply to the fetus in the womb, to the infant,

contained and sustained in the confluent boundary between archetypal determinants and maternal care, or can be understood as a symbol of a quality of ego-self interaction. The author feels, therefore, we can consider them to be symbols of the self leading the way to individuation.

We learn from Jung (1976) that the motif of containment, in the light of teleology, signifies the latent state that precedes regeneration.

In Hall's (1980) view, the recognition of the self as container of endless transformations is another way of understanding the meaning of pregnancy, the meaning of gestation. The author declares that the woman, at a certain stage, is both container and contained; she is the procession of forms and the forms of the process. She feels that the work of woman is transformation; making something out of nothing; giving form to formless energy.

In bringing us close to the womb concept, Woodman (1985) suggests the aspect of containment for woman falls into three phases; enclosure, metamorphosis and emergence as natural cyclical plans.

A comparison will be drawn between the temenos, the sacred art therapy space, and the therapeutic frame within the context of a containing and holding environment.

The Temenos as Container

Adler (1961) considers that the unseen Great Mother is the primal womb, the vessel of transformation, suggesting that she is the temenos inside which the numinous experience can take place. In this sense, she also symbolizes the analytical situation as such. For it is inside the magic protective circle, the vas hermeticum or "philosophical egg" (p. 135) of the analytic relationship, that the process of integration is experienced. He feels that the dialectical relationship between analyst and analysand is in itself an archetypal situation; it is the locus generationis, the place of gestation and integration. The intensity of the experience creates a temenos, a krater and spiritual womb, inside which the ego becomes one with the mother goddess of the feminine initiation. Its ideal aim is to produce the integrated self.

The author states that the temenos can begin to be constellated as an inner image, that is, an internalization of the transference, a sense of containment within the analytic relationship. He says that the Great Mother is the personified constellation of her own integrative, "generative" power, made possible by the essentially "feminine" (p. 137), loving, accepting analytical situation. Within the analytic relationship there is a continuous building-up of the temenos, the vessel, and a testing of its strength. Adler states that the vas hermeticum inside which

the opus takes place is itself part of the opus. The analytical relationship, the uterus inside which the integrated personality can grow, is itself part of this personality in so far as its development is a touchstone for the growing integration of the analysand -- and the power of the analyst to activate and contain it.

Adler speaks of his client as being contained in what one might call the analytic temenos. He indicates that the feeling of protection in this situation is strong enough to contain the client's aggression, relieving the fear of spontaneous feelings in the therapeutic work. The author quotes Jung as follows:

> This temenous -- the "magic" protective circle or enclosure--is both the "prison" in which one is held for the "term" of the "opus" and the creative "womb" as the "seeding place" where the "diamond body" --the integrated personality--is produced. (p. 23)

The Therapeutic Frame as Container

Holding and containing depends on the successful introjection of the affirmative analyst's attitude. It would seem that the core process is the therapeutic alliance where the sense of containment, of a deep connection, is

formed between the client's self and the therapist's self and where the nurturance of the therapeutic relationship evolves as an incubation of growth.

In Redfearn's view (1982), in psychotherapy, 'acting in' (p. 233) that is, pathological manifestations, if contained by the therapist, tend to be replaced by imagery which is symbolic and which corresponds with or represents the impulses which were formerly acted out. In the symbolic image the formerly acted-out impulses, (e.g., a naughty or terrifying animal) may be represented, often alongside a representation of the containing mother/therapist, either as victim or punisher or container. Conversely, if during therapy more freedom is being attained for emotional expression, as in the case of my client, A., birth or liberation symbols may be in evidence. (for details of this in a series of my client's drawings, see p. 76)

Hillman (1979), as well, brings us in touch with 'contained space' (p. 189), 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.

With reference to art therapy, Wilson (1985) suggests 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.

The importance of containment has been stressed by various analysts which seems to suggest that a clearly delineated therapeutic frame provides a secure containing environment for the patient. I support Woodman's (1985) view that the stronger the container the more flexible it can become and the more easily the contents of the unconscious will become available to consciousness.

In the preceding section, Image as Ritual, I hope to have shown how the vessel of conception, the inner womb, has served as a metaphor stressing the importance of incubation in order to ensure the kind of isolation and self-containment that makes one receptive to the unconscious. It is through this sense of incubation that the identification of the "incubational mode" for art therapy emerged. This mode is but one phase of the womb model.

In summary, the symbol, myth and ritual, demonstrating the womb metaphor, have shown a variety of analogical 'as if' experiences. It is 'like' the hidden connections between the symbol, myth and ritual are there; the connections do not have to be forced into literal life. When we work the image through by means of metaphorical analogies, the hidden connections seem to ramify

on all levels.

Not only have we become increasingly aware of the influence of the archetypal womb image towards qualities of creativity and growth, transformation and potential; we have also become aware of how the womb can serve as a metaphor standing for a psychological state.

Exemplifying some of the foregoing theoretical aspects for art therapy, case material will follow, where images of womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism are explored.

V. ART THERAPY INTERVENTION

Case Study of A.

A case study of a thirty year old woman illustrating art therapy as gestation is presented. The study presents a selection from a series of drawings made by her during a seven month period. For two months she was an inpatient and for the remaining five months she was an outpatient of a psychiatric ward.

As an art therapy intern, I worked with A. twice weekly during her ninth psychiatric admission. She had been diagnosed as manic-depressive. The only years she was not hospitalized were while she was attending university where she had graduated with honours four years previous to her present admission. Registration in graduate school had precipitated a breakdown; her hospitalizations continued yearly for the following three years.

The youngest in a family of three children, A. revealed that her brother had had a three year incestuous relationship with her, beginning when she was five and he was twelve. She discussed little of her relationship with her father, except to recall that he had committed incest with her, but then later said, "Forget it." Her psychiatrist suggested that her father's incestuous relationship had not be substantiated, as opposed to her brother's relationship with her which was confirmed

by her brother.

A. suffered many losses. Her mother, an alcoholic, had been dead for eight years. Her father died five years later, followed by her sister's death two days after A. entered the hospital. A. revealed that she was close to her mother and missed her terribly after her death. She said she had much sadness but could not cry.

A. had very high ego ideals and high values, experiencing failures in development as a consequence. Realizing her dream of becoming a lawyer as inaccessible, A. dropped out of university, perceiving that anything less was beneath her.

With regards to therapy, the art became the container for our relationship. Drawing spontaneously, A. was expressing her stifled anger without untoward repercussions and with an opportunity to reflect on the experience. I used a non-directive approach in order to facilitate creative, constructive, self-expression, where A., through the reflection of herself in her work, could explore feedback in personal problems with the hope of trying out alternatives and solutions. Her openness and eagerness encouraged her to become an active participant in the interpretation of her images.

It appeared from the beginning that A. had a strong self-propelled drive in search of wellness, which in terms of Jungian therapy, is in search of the Self. Expressing

her inner world through the process of creating images, A. was feeling in touch with a creative centre within herself. She was experiencing an increasing commitment to the art therapy process and had begun to sense her own creative power.

In trying to understand the psychodynamics of the patient, the main recurring themes in her artwork seemed to focus on her anger at family rejection and on a pre-occupation with aspects of her femininity. In this study we shall look at drawings expressing her primitive fantasies and primary process materials (I am here using a Freudian concept) in the form of back-to-the-womb images and fantasies of rebirth.

When I found myself asking, "To what primordial image in the collective unconscious can we trace the image we see developed in A's symbolic work of art"? the obvious conclusion seemed to be the archetypal womb image. Concentrating on the crucial points to do justice to the limits of the thesis, I shall not discuss every detail of the drawings but only the main line of symbolic development. I will consider how the patient's interaction with the image expressed her struggles, fears and preoccupations and, in effect, how this womb image influenced her integration and growth.

Initially, A. flooded me with verbal information revealing unrealistic grandiosity, reflecting a rapidly

shifting focus in both her words and her images. Gradually and with some difficulty, I broke through her manipulations by asking her to put her feelings on paper.

Engaged in inner images, A's unconscious seemed to be leading the way to her innermost source; she was able to get in touch with images of water symbolism (for its meaning, see p. 32) making a connection with the mother matrix, the archetypal mother. In fact, it seemed natural for A. to use a variety of watercolours, for example, gouache and acrylics, expressing flowing, moving images with nuances in feeling and a sense of mystery. Metaphorically, the medium seemed to suggest to me a rhythmic activity of the pulsating womb, a sense of vitality in the fertile stage.

In the first session (see slide 1) and in many subsequent ones is found the image of waves, (see p. 32 for water symbolism) the feminine water symbol of birth, of a wish to be reborn, waves of sexuality, of creative movement. In Robbins' (1976) opinion:

> The art therapist sets the stage for the patient to start identifying with a deep primitive part of herself. She calls forth from the patient an identification with the power of the ocean, the energy inside her, the deep maternal root of her past that is inextricably woven into her sense of self. (p. 97)

We can think of a symbolic return to the womb, the water, to be reborn on a psychic level. This wave symbol aptly reflected an expression of A's own emotions which she seemed to be 'controlling' and 'denying.'

What was revealed was that A. had been so over involved in her intellectual function and so cut off from feeling, that it became persecutory; (for an explanation, see p. 84) her animus figure was telling her she was no good. She had no adequate access to the depth of her feminity. Whitman (1982) tells us that the creative abyss of the maternal ground, the Feminine, can be split off and rejected. Hence taboo and repression are needed to prevent regressive merging and to assure order and rationality. A hope for the reformation of her feminine values evolved in the process of art therapy.

A. seemed to feel undermothered and to lack a sense of confidence in being a female. Unable to be a woman in the right relationship to womanhood, she was caught in a bind. She must find a middle place and reconcile thought and feeling in order to exercise her female potency.

It seems evident that A's schizoid development of feeling may be regarded as due to early failure going beyond warm distress and normal tearful grief. A's 3-year 'secret' incestuous relationship with her brother was more than enough to cause a premature attempt to 'hold' (p. 310) herself, and indicated a painful hardening of the body image

in an effort to maintain a functional unity (Newton and Redfearn, 1977).

Her Mother's Death

Painfully, A. spoke of the hole left after her mother had died (see slide 2), this thought emerging from the spiral form which, to her, expressed feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and turmoil. Symbolically, it was like her carrying the image of mother represented within her. The red vertical slash was remindful to A. of her incestuous abuse and her abortion, issues elsewhere explored.

Admitting that this was the first time in a long while that she cried, A. was able to reflect on her relationship with her mother and to mourn her loss which up to then she had avoided. Touching her arm gently, I reassured her it was alright to cry. A. said that her mother always boasted that A. was too brave to cry, so as a result, A. said "I never cried."

Being left with a vacant interior space is an irreversible experience of motherhood that makes one more aware of the outside world and more aware of the inner world, where the emptiness can be felt as either loss or potential. A hole can be something missing, a place to go into, a space to be filled (Hall, 1980, p. 88).

A Fantasy Pregnancy

In the second session, using metaphors in search of her own centredness, A. drew a dream of two womb babies, (see slides 3,4) the first, a fantasy (slide 3) of her own pregnancy (for details, see p. 77)--"of a nice warm place, soft, safe, in limits, in boundaries." A. expressed that in her dream she had been pregnant and that when she awoke she had birth pains. (for details, see p.15) She was now reflecting on the experience. "This baby needs me. It needs my love." Suddenly, she stopped, looked quizzically at the drawing and realized, "The baby really looks like me. Look at the colour of the body, full of anger!"

At this point, A. was sitting back on the chair with her arms wrapped around her knees in a fetal position. She said, "I just feel like rocking." And she did, her gesture and body movements communicating her emotions. A. had obviously put a great amount of energy into this drawing, an important fact as regards to her assimilation of the content of the fantasy and of its curative powers. (for details of Jung's womb fantasies, see p. 15)

The black curves which surround the grotesque figure seemed to express the full pathos of A's concept of herself, revealing her needs for nurturance, acceptance and love. A. had lost her mother; psychologically, she now wanted to be the mother--she wanted a child of her own--she wanted to be filled.

Woodman (1985) tells us that as the transformation process goes on, pregnancies and new-born babies frequently appear in dreams. When the conscious ego is able to release repressed psychic energy, or reconnects with unconscious body energy, or makes a decision on its own behalf, that new energy is symbolized as new life.

It is suggested by Woodman that a body that appears in dreams wrapped in wire, encircled by a black snake (see p. 19 for snake symbolism) may be holding a death-wish too deep for tears. The security of the mother's body world is not present for her in the original matrix, when she might be consolidating a sense of her physical identity. She is instead responding to the unconscious rejection by her mother.

A. felt that she was the scapegoat of the family and that her parents had wanted a boy, "I was the wrong sex and as a result I'm feeling the confusion now." In Woodman's view, in cases where a person was unwanted or unwelcome because of gender, the body/psyche split begins in utero or at birth, as if the soul had chosen not to enter the body.

Revealing an image of science fiction in turning the babies into abstracted possibilities (see slide 5) seemed to express A's lack of confidence in being a female. Reflecting on this image, A. related that this was two womb babies, two ideas waiting to be born; the first, a business venture, and the second, a thesis on the sociology

of culture.

Her Struggles with Abortion

In the seventh session (see slide 6), A. poignantly expressed the sense of being chained down and "the feeling of a big black blob still in me," describing the pain she still felt of a dead umbilical cord after her abortion. (see p. 17 for more details) "It was not my decision. It was taken from me. My stomach has been hurting ever since."

When the mother is separated unwillingly from the child or when the fruit is taken from her rather than given, a certain understanding is lost, an organic bond severed that severs the mother from her own life's meaning (Hall, 1980).

Of the image which followed (see slide 7), A. added, "Look at the center part...it's so full of pain!" We meditated on these images for a long time. Finally, "Now that I see it, it doesn't seem all that black. There is some hope." A. was becoming increasingly able to acknowledge her fear and anxiety. To her surprise she felt considerably calmer after she finished the painting. As the image and experience interpenetrate, the symbolic image becomes an eye through which one perceives and senses. (for details see p. 24)

Impending Discharge

A. continued to express feelings of anxiety and anger, and ambivalent feelings about impending discharge. After spending some days and a week-end at home, she explored, in her drawings (see slides 8,9,10), feelings of separation anxiety, anxiety of being discharged from therapy...from "the womb." (for details of termination, see p. 17)

Discharged one week later, A. continued her art therapy sessions for an additional five month period.

A Fantasy of Rebirth

It seemed significant, in the eleventh session, for A. to explore a pregenital fantasy world into the regression of a fetal existence. (see p. 64 for details) Exploring womb imagery (see slides 11, 12, 13), A. was allowing the images to evolve as they wished, creating an animation-like series of fetal forms resulting in a fantasy of rebirth. (see pp. 14-16 for details of Jung's womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism) Ecstatic, she jumped out of her chair, flung her arms in the air, joyously shouting, "I now have arms and legs...I now have feelings of freedom and goodness...I'm out of the womb!"

According to Bertine (1967), the goal of longing for the mother is not the nonsensical return to infancy for irresponsible comforting which it becomes if it is not

understood symbolically. The goal is rather a symbolic return to the womb because the fragmentary ego-self needs rebirth. Once the mother is recognized as the procreative source form which consciousness springs, the concretization of the symbol in a human carrier ceases to be necessary or desired. If the analyst refrains from dogmatic or reductive interpretations that short-circuit, as it were, the natural happening, the unconscious is capable of producing in dream or fantasy a means of transcending the impasse as if by a true spiritual rebirth. (see p. 73 for details of A.'s fantasy pregnancy)

From a psychoanalytic view, Guntrip (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983) suggests that the early traumas generated by inadequate mothering are essentially frozen in time; the helpless and terrified infantile ego, overwhelmed by unrequited longings and dread of abandonment, remains alive within the regressed ego in the heart of the personality, generating a perpetual sense of inner dread and vulnerability.

Guntrip's opinion is that the regressed ego seeks to return to the prenatal security of the womb to await a rebirth into a more hospitable human environment. Thus, regression entails a flight and a longing for renewal. When the flight aspect is more prominent, the regression is experienced as a longing for death which may entail relief from conflictual relations with external and internal

objects. A. had expressed suicidal ideation a few months earlier at a time of deep depression when she felt she could not resolve her inner conflicts. Guntrip says that when the hope aspect is more prominent, the regression is experienced in connection with a return to the protection of the womb. A. was now feeling hopeful and expressing ideas for her future.

Guntrip feels that, in psychoanalytic treatment, the weak and helpless infantile ego emerges and the maternal relationship with the analyst, through "replacement theory" (p. 213) allows the ego to reintegrate and enter the world on a positive basis.

Feeling Loved

Several months had passed. It was a bright sunny day. In a happy jovial mood, A. looked radiant in a lovely yellow sundress. Painting her images quickly (see slides 14, 15), she spoke of a safe and understanding love she had never felt before. With great sensitivity, she added, "Love finds you...love is a healer...I'm going to need healing...What I'm feeling is helping me to heal." She said that she feels strong when she's creating; that she's creating her own identity and that she's accepting now and wants to grow. Extending the drawing into a dyptich, A. called it, "The Sperm and the Eggs." (see p. 41 for details of egg symbolism) "I'm feeling love. I'm feeling loved as a

woman...as the woman I am."

It seems evident that A. was viewing the egg as a symbol for fertility or growth or femininity, the image generating a sense of forward movement towards change and a new beginning.

Six weeks later we terminated our sessions. A. had experienced recurring periods of movement both towards and away from growth. Her final drawing seemed to reveal the authenticity of her self-image, the omnipresent ambivalence, the insecurity of her foundation, once again evoking the pathos and reality of her cyclical illness. A.'s self-image was fragile; at the same time it seemed that on the whole, she was experiencing a sense of forward psychological movement, a sense of healing in the Jungian sense and not "cure." The slow transformation of her personality was coming about not as a result of rational or theoretical understanding on her part, but by working through the material in personal, experiential forms in the course of art therapy.

VI. OVERVIEW

To gain perspective on where we are we need an orientation based on where we have come. This chapter will present a summary of the major themes explored in this paper; the subsequent chapter will examine the possible implications of the study for art therapy. I will then make some concluding remarks in order to review the key issues in my search.

My intention in this thesis has not been to break new ground of the discovery of the archetypal womb image per se. Rather I have sought to explore the meaning of a womb model for art therapy and to find some explanation for what I suspect may be common but uncomprehended links between them. Essentially, how can some aspects of the art therapy process be seen as gestation?

An investigation was made of how the womb symbol, the gestation and rebirth myths and rituals have been defined in the literature, and how and why the archetypal experience of gestation is effective in producing change. The meaning of the archetypal image and the significance of the symbol in the Jungian sense was shown.

In the exploration of the archetypal vessel-body symbol of the feminine, a central symbol of the matriarchal world, "the womb" was emphasized as one of its principal symbolic elements. Stressing its containing and transformative

characters as symbols, I considered why this womb schema, with its fertilizing and gestational aspects, is of fundamental importance to art therapy.

Representing the seed of generation and potentiality, the idea of Image as Myth was initiated by a review of gestation myths. The Symbol of the Egg, seen as universe embryo, as an archetypal symbol of world creation; and The Alchemical Vessel, seen as a container for the transformation of matter and thought; suggested its significance for a womb model for art therapy.

In exploring the Image as Ritual, a parallel was made between the ritual process of incubation in the initiation rites and in the art therapeutic frame; between the initiate re-entering the mother, Earth Mother, the archetypal womb image, and the therapeute entering the temenos, the special sacred space of the art therapy session, both to be made more receptive to the unconscious. A further elaboration was made on the aspects of a containing and holding environment in the temenos and in the therapeutic frame.

Illustrating art therapy as gestation, a case study explored the significance of images for the incubational mode that expressed womb fantasies and rebirth symbolism, and considered how these archetypal womb images encouraged the client's potential for growth.

VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR ART THERAPY

It is generally felt that an intrauterine basic fantasy is often revealed in deep states of regression. According to Rollo May (Anderson, 1977), the nature of symbols and myths which are born in the creative act bring into awareness the infantile, archaic, unconscious longings and similar psychic content, which reflect such states of regression.

However, although pathological regression is not my concern in this study, and my interest is not with an infantile regressive longing, it is worth pointing out that Guntrip (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983) states that womb fantasies are fantasies of a withdrawal to a completely nurturative, supportive environment of perfect mothering, devoid of deprivation, insensitivity or malevolence. His premise is that a dynamic pull within human experience is a total retreat from others, real and imagined, in a deep longing for a "return to the womb" (p. 214). He views the lack of good mothering as producing a retreat to a lifeless withdrawal, until the analyst awakens the wish for birth in the client.

This is, in part, what the art therapist does. In Naumberg's (1966) view, the art therapist convinces the client that whatever the client may express will be accepted, eliciting the release from the unconscious of a

concretized image of the client's conflict; that is, the drawing. She further says that the therapist does not interpret the symbolic art expression of the client but encourages the client towards self-discovery of its meaning.

I feel that the art therapist can create an atmosphere, a temenos, where art can happen, particularly images expressive of fantasy life, and can help the client work with them. Facilitating the emergence to consciousness of these symbols allows creativity to flourish, bringing out new meaning, new forms, disclosing reality which was literally not present before; in effect, forming an integration of the imaginal and the daily.

In approaching the central issue, in trying to tie the knot, the navel, as it were, several issues come to the fore. I realize that what I am proposing is an incubational mode for art therapy which is somewhat limited in a sense. Firstly, the incubational mode is only a part of the whole process of art therapy, albiet an important aspect; secondly, this mode is not suitable for all populations all of the time. I am, however, speculating that it would be applicable to (a) some therapists, and to (b) some clients, (c) some of the time.

(a) While it is true that some therapists work more creatively with mythological and imaginative material than others, it is obviously most important that the therapist work with tools that are one's very own and part of oneself.

However, the therapist's awareness of myth and ritual can help to retrieve the client's personal myth and, in effect, can help to create a narrative from the client's streams of association. In Watkin's (1981) view, the therapist allows the image to teach both client and therapist the depth of meanings--historical, existential, mythical, poetic--lived by the client, and respects the image in spite of possible fears or doubts.

(b) In dealing with the question of the type of client most inclined towards the incubational mode and for whom this attitude would be naturally most effective, I would consider the person who had experienced a sense of relative maternal failure. Redfearn (1982) observes that often in this population intellectual and schizoid defenses are represented by successive containerization such as containers-within-containers. Each level of containing represents a further stage in the dissociation between image and primal affect, a further safety boundary against unbearable affect. (see p. 71 for an example of this in A's behaviour) This depersonalized attitude is often a result of introjecting the non-caring, impersonal aspects of the mother and her impersonal, mechanical feelings and behaviour. In the same way, a caring, holding attitude and capacity of the ego usually results from introjecting the mother's caring, holding behaviour and feelings.

Redfearn believes in a holding and containing physical

environment; in feeding the infant's sense of being a person, something in the nature of a psychic umbilical cord. Just as the foetus contained in the womb, and nourished by the umbilical cord, slowly evolves the potential for differentiated bodily functioning until ready for birth and the cutting of the cord, so the infant, contained in the social symbioses, slowly evolves psychic physical functions. Essential is both physical and emotional rapport and interaction with the mother to stimulate the process of emotional and psychic growth.

In the incubational mode that I am proposing, is the art therapist fulfilling the role of midwife or that of mother? (for details of the midwife's role, see p. 54) Is it the role of Artemus, goddess of childbirth, of perilous passage, of instinctual rhythm and psychic energy? Is it the role constellated in "emergency" situations where an alternative, a new being is emerging--wherever things appear to rise spontaneously from the depths of the unconscious, "to bring someone out of himself"? (Hall, 1980, p. 197).

(c) In my view, when the client has acquired sufficient ego strength, when the pulsating womb--the containing, protecting, giving womb--is labouring for a new quality of rhythm of life, the child emerges, a new consciousness is born, a new attitude or idea, an unknown strength. When the client has acquired a sense of embodied ego which is related to feelings, a functional ego-self

interaction arises.

Then, from the intrauterine experience of gestation, from the incubational mode, the art therapist shifts elsewhere; from the role of midwife, from aiding in the birth of new meaning as unknown to the therapist as it is to the patient, to other more pressing concerns, to tend to the seeds where they fall, to help in the search of lost parts of the self.

Subsequently, offering a compensating primal relationship in an effort to re-establish an early quality of mothering, the art therapist, in effect, becomes the 'as if' archetypal mother affording the nurturing, creative and holding environment; that is, laying the foundation for a harmonious ego-self interaction, where a sense of growth and transformation could evolve.

Redfearn (1982) views that birth and rebirth symbolism, positive primal scene material (although not within the scope of this thesis, see Janov, 1983) and coniunctio symbolism, all tend to indicate that therapeutic changes are in train and that some fixated defenses are being abandoned. The author tells us that during the course of psychotherapy it is often possible to witness, perhaps even to help bring about a resolution of some of the schizoid defenses whereby affect and major parts of the personality are split off from each other.

Moreover, he suggests that we can envisage recurring

cycles of differentiation and separation followed by re-unitings, rebirths, etc., representing further growth. He sees all such cycles as manifestations of the individuation process and finds them represented in paintings and dreams as wheels or other rotating images as expressions of rebirth fantasies.

This leads me to believe that when the client in art therapy spontaneously engages in these specific symbols, and produces archetypal womb symbols, we can assume that the individual is attempting to abandon some fixated defences and to attain a sense of self-containment in an effort towards a change, a new beginning, a sense of rebirth. In effect, this would indicate the incubational mode to be considered as the gestational or growth phase of the womb model; this suggests that a birth mode might be another phase.

I realize that the incubational mode is but one mode where certain theoretical and practical considerations concerning images can be exposed. I concur with Hillman (1977) who says that there are all sorts of things one can do with images. Of main importance is that we recognize what we have been doing and been taking for granted and now what else we might be doing, what else images can be heard to say when listened to more acutely.

This thesis is founded upon my belief in the relevance to art therapy of the womb model in which we find the theme of the archetypal womb image. The hope is that I have

convinced the reader that art therapy is a wide ritual and within it is the ritual of incubation. It seems entirely plausible that if an art therapist thinks in an incubational mode while working with a client, that is, adapts an incubational attitude, understands and acknowledges the meaning of womb imagery, then these types of images can be expected to appear: archetypal womb images which carry emotion-rousing potential for change.

Glossary

Analogy. A likeness in function but not in origin. It keeps us in the functional operation of the image, in the patterns of similarities, without posting a common origin for these similarities. The operative term is "like." Analogy keeps the image alive and well.

Archetype. A primordial psychic process transformed into an image, where consciousness can grasp it, but only elusively via symbol and metaphor.

Imagination. The coalescence of images into a dramatic form so that they tell a story which has not only cognitive content but above all emotional urgency and meaning. As well, fantasy or phantasy.

Individuation. Jung uses the term 'individuation' to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'individual,' that is, a separate, indivisible unity or 'whole.'

Metaphor. When an image is seen as a metaphor it has many sides and allusions. It cannot be reduced to one type of experience; it can never be equated or dealt with sufficiently.

Psyche. In ancient Greece the word for soul was psyche. Generally used as a substitute for mind or soul.

Self. Jung claims that the self is not only the centre but also the whole circumference which embraces both consciousness and unconscious; it is the centre of the totality, just as the ego is the centre of the conscious mind.

Temenos. A sacred enclosure, a sanctuary, a square or ovular space where individuating or unfolding life is protected.

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