THROUGH THE TRANSFERENCE KEYHOLE
AND INTO JUNG’S WORLD

Crystals and Compost: Jung’s Alchemical Transference

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Dedication

All the Alchemists

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Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text.

I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

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Abstract

This research investigates psychological transference through a lens constructed by Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961). He links transference inextricably to alchemy. I explore his ideas of transference as a phenomenon that exists inside the analytical dyad and in the world of relationships generally. Transference is an unconscious phenomenon made evident through the way the self is experienced in the presence of an other. The implication is that self and other create a field of unconscious expectations, positive and negative, loving and hateful. Contents in the self appear first in projected form onto the object/other. In the entangled relationship the two create, each has the opportunity to sort out who owns which components, and how they construct a personal world through which the wider world is viewed. Self needs the other to reveal, in projected form, contents of which the self is unaware. These components might then be recognised and reclaimed by the self which grows in scope and complexity in the process.

More specifically, the research investigates its topic with the assistance of data drawn from two sources: one theoretical, one experiential. The theoretical source is a guide which is applied and critiqued. The guide is an essay published by Jung in 1946. Jung’s relatively brief essay is *The Psychology of the Transference*. Considered his major work on the subject of transference, it is notable in two ways: it presents transference through the metaphor and filter of alchemy; and it is organised around a series of alchemical woodcuts, from 1550, called *Rosarium philosophorum*. These place the sexual and erotic energies of the transference centrally within the discourse. Jung writes that only by associating his ideas with alchemical ones could he think about transference and construct a phenomenology of the unconscious process and its outcomes.

The second and practical data source is my own position as a Jungian analyst in training. In this document I think about and experience transference as analysand and as person living in the world. My relationships, as analysand working with four analysts, in four analytical relationships, have formed data, experienced and thought, as has my exposure to other training analysts and the Jungian world in general. These influences operate in the essay as the bases for discussion and departure points.

The thesis is an application of *The Psychology of the Transference*, and assumes that transference exists inside the analytical setting and outside of it. The research records my intellectual and experiential relationship with Jung’s essay as my own guide to the psychology of the transference in the way that Jung presents it, and in the way I have come to understand it for myself.
Chapter 1

Introduction to the Research

To Begin

This first chapter introduces work. It outlines the contents and organisation of the research. It contains:

- The stated research objective
- The components in the research
  - 1: Jung’s essay *The Psychology of the Transference*
  - 2: The research configuration
  - 3: My position as researcher
- The overall organisation of the research

This research applies and critiques an essay written by Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), a pioneer thinker whose legacy includes a theoretical body of psychological speculation called analytical psychology. Jung’s essay is *The Psychology of the Transference*, a comparatively brief work. He published it in German, in Zurich, in 1946. It is considered to be his major work on transference. In it he links transference inseparably with the process of maturation he calls individuation. His essay is complex, and dates from late in his life when alchemy was the primary inspirational vehicle through which he expanded his thinking. Jung explains: “To give any description of the transference phenomena is a very difficult and delicate task, and I did not know how to set about it except by drawing on the symbolism of the alchemical *opus*” (Jung 1946, Paragraph (¶) 538).
He forms the essay around a set of alchemical woodcuts, *Rosarium philosophorum*, whose masculine / feminine, solar / lunar symbols introduce the “hostile opposites” which must be united to create the Philosopher’s Stone or Self—the overarching intra-psychic structure supporting the personality in its most complete form. Transference contents are initially projected, thought of as “not me”, and only slowly recognised as aspects of a potentially more complete self.

The thesis is an application of *The Psychology of the Transference*. I assume that transference exists inside the analytical setting and outside of it. The research records my intellectual and experiential relationship with Jung’s essay as my own guide to the psychology of the transference in the way that Jung presents it, and in the way I have come to understand it for myself.

**Stated Research Objective**

I will share an examination showing that Jung’s essay, *The Psychology of the Transference*, constitutes a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of alchemical transference. I will show it to be a blend of present and absent content, daringly original, somewhat dated, obscure, and adequate for the reader determined to understand Jungian alchemical transference.

I regard *The Psychology of the Transference* as Jung demonstrating his own transference to the material. Thinking about his essay in this way lends it coherence, and exposes to the reader an undefended Jung exploring the objective character of unconscious processes by observing his own subjectivity. I contend that his
transference is evident in the essay’s associative, non-linear language. It is evident in his fluctuating levels of interest resulting in different sized sections, and different types of response to each woodcut: some trigger little response, some set off long discursive meanders; some he responds to by entering the hermeneutics of alchemy. It is evident in the way the text folds back on itself: points introduced in one place may peter out to reappear in another section entirely, or a very personal association gets linked in, or an alchemical detail takes on intense transient fascination, or an argument is developed then left. The organisation of his work appears to replicate the way transference forms and becomes a mirror of it within the analytical conversation, and beyond. With transference phenomena nothing is finally finished, interests come and go, pursuit of intense detail can become imperative, new alchemical reaction is set off by unexpected triggers, and Jung’s work with his material seems to set it out, as it is, a partly conscious, and otherwise autonomous relationship to unconscious contents.

**The Components in the Research**

I consider three components in the research. The first is the essay, *The Psychology of the Transference*. Jung’s essay pervades my research. The second is my approach to understanding transference inside the dyad and outside of it. The approach comprises using Jung’s essay as a guide, supplemented by analytical conversation where I am generally analysand, and my experience of a series of analytical relationships. The third is my position as observer and documenter of my own subjective process. Usually the analysand is the person spoken about, the subject of case material and of theoretical demonstration. In this case I speak for
myself, in conversation with a professional other with whom I discover and attend to alchemical transference formations.

1: The Psychology of the Transference

While The Psychology of the Transference is a discrete work, it is also a related element in Jung’s collection of writings. Published within Volume 16 of his Collected Works, it runs from Paragraph 353 to 539. So the 1946 essay is a beginning and a continuation. While part of a larger whole, it contains thoughts Jung was beginning to think, thoughts he was re-thinking and thoughts that are the familiar substance of his life’s work. It is often grouped into a trio of Jung’s essays through which his study of alchemy, as precursor to psychology, culminates: Psychology and Alchemy (1944), The Psychology of the Transference (1946) and his last work, Mysterium Coniunctionis (1955).

Alchemy, for Jung, represented the most complete of the esoteric-wisdom-religious systems in that it is based in matter, admits good and evil, and requires the balanced participation of feminine and masculine principles. It works towards the mystic marriage, the symbolic union of hostile opposites. Alchemy is a mystic philosophy so it is experienced as well as thought. The adept seeks union with the absolute, an experience and realisation of the inter-connected fabric that holds all life, called in Jung’s system the unus mundus.

These ideas relating to beginning/continuing, forming/re-forming, are fundamental to Jung’s approach in this essay, and to my understanding of alchemical transference. The personality’s experience of deintegration and
synthesis, the alchemical formula of *solve et coagula*—dissolve and coagulate—underlies the *opus alchymicum*, the process by which opposites are reconciled and psychic integration achieved.

Jung’s essay falls into several sections. There is an *Introduction*, a lengthy speculative meander in ten unequal-sized parts. Jung introduces the alchemical *coniunctio oppositorum*, the marriage of opposites, and his rationale for the essay.

There is a section called “An Account of the Transference Phenomena Based on the Illustrations of the “Rosarium Philosophorum’”, hereafter called the *Account*. It is also in ten unequal-sized parts.

There are the woodcuts. Each part of the *Account* is a response to an alchemical woodcut. The woodcuts are the illustrations to a philosophical alchemical treatise published in Frankfurt in 1550, and called *Rosarium philosophorum*, the rosary of the philosophers. Jung recognised them as a depiction of the processes of the unconscious psyche. There are twenty woodcuts in the original set and Jung uses the first eleven, arranging them as if there were ten. The woodcuts are iconographically dense and sexually explicit. They constitute text within text, independent and integrated both, potentially living a separate life as meditative objects containing the concentrated images of distilled alchemical philosophy. They present the whole male and female body, or parts of it, in erotic exchange, in fusion or dismemberment, in the *solve et coagula* which transform them. Andrew Samuels writes that “The *coniunctio*, an important alchemical symbolic image of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman,
refers metaphorically to the deep and pervasive intermingling of the two personalities involved in therapy” (Samuels, 2006, p.186). The alchemists prayed, as well as worked, Jung tells us, because the work was demanding and often dangerous, and involved body, soul and spirit. Jung writes about transference with scant mention of body, but the Rosarium woodcuts make it central. So Jung’s essay is layered for the reader and rich with overt and covert material.

The various sections of the essay are preceded by epigraphs from sources spanning a couple of thousand years. Jung reaches widely into diverse cultural sources, through different languages and translations to find the apposite, momentary phrase. None seems gratuitous. Each appears like a tiny, pregnant detail of brief, associative intensity, experienced as remembered transference contents might be. Each is distinct and integrated.

There is a dedication, unique in his writing, in so far as I am aware: “To my wife”.

There is an Epilogue, of two very long paragraphs, which formally concludes the essay, and three more images from an alchemical manuscript, Mutus liber, written in 1677, “where the adept and his soror mystica are shown performing the opus” (Jung 1946, ¶539, footnote 1). The introduction, so late in the essay, of three new, previously unmentioned, dense images from the Mutus Liber, the book without words, the silent book, published a century or so on from the Rosarium, seems to associatively re-open the essay on transference and fire it up
imaginatively as a process without conclusion. As his essay ends it smoulders away, rather than dies, continuing the *solve et coagula*.

2: The research configuration.

Most of my understanding about transference phenomena, as they appear in the analytical dyad, and as I document them in this research, has been gained in my fourth and longest analytical relationship. In this relationship the lunar/solar facets of the soul seem to be most balanced and available. I experience this relationship as generally benign and therapeutic. In it, relational fields are created where I do not fear extinguishment, but rather experience the sense of going on being with a therapist able to maintain fluid responsiveness. The transference experience is affirmative and positive, the mating competent, clean, present and seemingly safe. By clean I somehow mean competent, able to conduct the work of analysis so that destructiveness is not the primary configuration. I do not fear that in the mating I will destroy the analyst or be destroyed by his blind spots. This is the way my transference forms. Unconscious material brings its own sometimes intense positive or negative affect, and this forms across the relational frame already secured. I do not believe that this is an idealising transference, but rather one where trust is present in relation to the work, and the professional base is suitable to my requirements. My probing unconscious is not only alarmed but is also contained so my urge to escape does not escalate—too often. In this relationship the attention to my unconscious contents is collaborative and sensitive, often flowing into the ontological poetry of being, essential experience, it seems to me, in the individuation process as I embody it. I have wondered if the
fit is so because of a mutual interest in alchemical transference and the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum*. I have also wondered how far my ability to use this relationship has been shaped by earlier encounters with different analytical minds and relationships, and the resilience created by cumulative transformations.

Prior to this relationship there were three others where my experience of transference and therapy were less benign and therapeutic. That there were three indicates that my experience of beginning and continuing, *solve et coagula*, has been extensive. All of these relationships are transference grist in that they reveal unconscious contents that require attention. All have contributed to the scope and depth of my experience of transference phenomena, and all have indicated where, in my mating with the analyst other, experience of death and life, destruction and creation are to be found. The negative experiences led me to ruminate on the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum* and on Jung’s essay, in that order of reliance. The woodcuts and Jung indicate that the experience of symbolic dismemberment, death, loss of soul can be survived and lead to increased conscious awareness in a changed body/self. Jung implies that transference formations entail inter and intra-psychic work. Prior to my fourth analytical relationship much of my work was intra-personal. This fact carries considerable information about the *solve et coagula* of my unconscious contents.

The four analytical relationships have differed in duration and offered at least four different kinds of gendered coupling. I have somehow used the whole series of couplings to learn about coupling as an idea, a theory, a relationship, and a geometric form. In order the Jungian analysts were female, male, female, male,
but were different as men and women. Two trained in Zurich, one in London, one in Australia. All are aged between 60 and 70 years, as am I, so maturation, individuation, professional range and scope might be inferred from these facts. Two were born in Australia, the others on two different continents. The first analytical relationship covered about 40 hours, the second 106, the third about 60 hours and the last 170 hours (continuing). The third supervised my clinical work before and after the period of analysis, for a period of about 150 hours (continuing).

My task is to write about my own experience of transference, through the lens of *The Psychology of the Transference*. I see myself as having a responsibility to protect the players in the analytical conversations, players confidentiality bound to protect me. My challenge has been to configure the research to demonstrate the complexities of alchemical transference in the relational field, and to protect participants from identification, unfair or unflattering exposure, or blame.

I planned initially to begin at the beginning, and to discuss my transference experience, in each relationship, in chronological order. I rejected this because players might be identified, and the linear geometry is in contrast to the circle, or circularity of the *Rosarium*. My final solution has been to amalgamate and de-identify conversations and sources, and to write, as Jung has, a response to each woodcut. In this way material organises thematically around crucial junctures in the revelation of unconscious contents or in the experience of individuation. The conversations documented in this research take place within the current analytical relationship. Here I resolve matters that may have drifted across from, or been left
unfinished in earlier therapeutic relationships, or that may be surfacing for the first
time. Either way they become elements in the current conversation, demonstrating
aspects of transference that currently demand attention, as they dissolve and
coagulate within my psyche and my relationships. The form of the conversations
is a literary device to represent the tone and subject matter of analytical sessions.
While I take notes during them, they are not recorded and transcribed verbatim.
The conversations represented here, therefore, are reconstituted, but based on
actual session contents.

3: My position as researcher

My research has been to read and apply the contents of The Psychology of
the Transference from two survey points. First, from that of an uninitiated
outsider, learning to think about alchemical transference as someone relatively
new to Jung, using the essay as a guide to understanding transference as an idea.
Second, I have worked from the perspective of analysand and analytical trainee
within the analytical conversation, using Jung’s essay as a guide to the often
intolerable experiences encountered there, in the difficult and demanding search
for the stone/self.

As a reader of Jung, I responded to his ideas. As soon as I crossed the
threshold of the analytical space, taking on the role of analysand, I was stunned by
the extent to which the work is felt and experienced, rather than thought and
abstracted. Clutching as my guide The Psychology of the Transference, I decided
that much was missing in the way that Jung wrote about psychology. I decided he
wrote too much from the solar perspective and neglected the lunar. The very matter and flesh and blood substance of transference seem to be absented. The emphasis appeared to fall on projected models and ideational dynamics treated as if they were real. The realities that were most immediate to me—how things feel, what happens to the body in this setting, how involved the felt aspects are in whatever is transacted—seemed to be being worked in the *Rosarium* images more than in Jung’s writing. Yet since both aspects were enclosed within the covers of his essay I understood that somehow what he wrote and what was happening for me were connected, that overt and covert material was in the essay, that *solve et coagula* was live.

After years of slow seepage between *Rosarium* and me, and some slow increase in my own mastery of the task, I began to see that the alchemists, Jung and I were all struggling with the same issues. We were trying to work out how to operate consciously, and with equanimity, across the continuous experience of being, also called body, soul and spirit. We were working with a story represented, it seemed, in different languages. The experiences of body, soul and spirit, the three singled out by alchemy, are to be perceived in their separate apprehensions, metaphorically and literally, and to be perceived in their unity. Body, soul and spirit are extremely complex categories to probe and appear to place the experiential range on the phylogenetic to ontogenetic spectrum, and to include layers of enculturation and experience of gender. Jung conjectures that they appear to constellate the inner world within the outer, the microcosm within macrocosm.
In Jung’s essay, then, there are the *Rosarium* woodcuts speaking as distilled and sophisticated images. There is Jung’s original speculative voice as he develops the base of experiential theory called analytical psychology. There are the complicated languages of symbols, numbers, potions, processes of the alchemists, and the quality of the intensity of their’s and Jung’s interests. I am in this mix, too, in body, soul and spirit, as the filtration device and mind through which the research has formed. It forms from my ability to relate to the languages and integrate them into my own speaking and writing.

I align my experience of analysis with the language of alchemy, with Jung’s insistence that the process depends on the union of opposites, and with the *Rosarium* images which present the work happening between masculine/solar and feminine/lunar aspects of self. Through this I have developed a keener sense of what was present and absent for me in Jung, in a series of analytical relationships, and in the way that I understand the phenomenon of the transference. That Jung envisions and represents the analytic encounter as thick with oppositional elements I have found troubling and enlivening, given that the action takes places within a framework with therapeutic intent.

As a consequence of my experience it looked to me that the masculine / feminine, sun / moon opposites which must be united have been talked about, traditionally, in a way that privileges cognitive over experiential language, sun over moon. Sun represents discrimination, distinction, clear cognition in the full light of the blazing sun. Moon represents relatedness, synthesis, interconnection and the soft whiteness of moon light. I could see that both were implicit and present in *The Psychology of*
the Transference, but that Jung perhaps struggled with thoughts he was thinking for the first time, particularly in relation to the feminine, especially when his primary task was discrimination, the construction of a phenomenology of the unconscious.

I made a decision, therefore, to take Jung’s material and work with it in relation to my own transference experience, in part a search for lunar qualities, ironically understood within a body of theory. Jung’s esse in anima phrase associatively intrudes itself. The research forms around cascading transferences. I contend that Jung formed a transference response to the alchemical material and presents his process. I have formed a transference relationship to his essay and present my process in relation to it, writing about transference by being in it.

The Overall Organisation of the Research

This first chapter introduces the research and its organisation. It is followed by fourteen chapters containing the research, ten of them in line with the Rosarium woodcuts, as a lunar-inspired critique of Jung’s essay as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference. The final chapter concludes the work.

Briefly, I begin by introducing the three sections of The Psychology of the Transference. I look at the complete set of Rosarium woodcuts wondering what has been lost or gained by Jung’s use of half. I examine the troubled history of transference and current thinking on it. I then re-orient to the experience of being in
analysis and write an interpretive response to each of the woodcuts that Jung has used. I end with observational conclusions.

Because I begin by looking at characteristics and sections of *The Psychology of the Transference*, it is not until Chapter 4 that I begin to write extensively on the nature of transference. I introduce it briefly in Chapter 2, but there is a delay in reaching a detailed consideration of it.

In the first four chapters, I write largely discursively, proceeding by reasoned argument more than intuition, about the contents of Jung’s essay and transference. They parallel my research process where I began as reader, only, of the material. From Chapter 4 onwards, I take on the role of analysand and trainee analyst, and write from those perspectives, which admit intuitive, felt, imaginative contents, along with the reasoned ones formed within the transference *solve et coagula*, the fixed and volatile elements of the analytical conversation.

**Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research**

I introduce the research, its rationale and organisation. The contents of each chapter are outlined, and the sequence in the development of ideas is set out.

**Chapter 2: Jung’s Essay, The Psychology of the Transference**

I examine all the parts of the text, with uneven emphasis, because some sections are further explored later. I work from the assumption that Jung formed a
transference to the material and writes about it. He indicates that the process must
be understood from the inside out, as well as from outside in, unconscious to
conscious, conscious to unconscious.

**Chapter 3: Jung and The Twenty Rosarium Philosophorum Woodcuts**

When Jung chose to use only one more than half of the original set of twenty,
interpretive aspects were lost and gained. I scan the available literature for
comparative opinions by writers on the complete set of *Rosarium* woodcuts,
convinced that the reader requires this knowledge, at least in passing.

**Chapter 4: Alchemical Transference**

I look at how transference might be thought about and briefly at its troubling
history. Jung’s notion of alchemical transference is not regressive only. It is a
means to nuance awareness and acceptance of self, other, and otherness initially in
the field dynamics of the analytical dyad, and in all relationships.

In the next ten chapters I shift locations, being sometimes subjectively in the
analytical conversation or the alchemical vessel, or otherwise objectively outside of
it, commenting on it, or sometimes lost between the two. I am exposed to
transference as experience, and as theory, relationship and geometry. I write about
the character of the transference relationship and its intra and inter-relational
elements, as I have experienced them. I use the *Rosarium* woodcuts and propose
personal interpretations that often differ from Jung’s and feature a stronger
representation of lunar forces.
Chapter 5: The Mercurial Fountain

This woodcut presents the alchemical world of fixed and volatile elements. Some commentators suggest that it depicts the flaw to be remedied, that the contents of the fountain are out of contact with the spirit. What is needed to transform body, soul and spirit or to make the analytical experience potentially a unitive one? What can it mean that the woodcut is un-peopled, yet the symbols of culture and philosophy are arrayed? Does the work to be done take place in some pre and/or post-symbolic realm through which human possibility is shaped so that the generative is also the continuation?

Chapter 6: King and Queen

The symbolic opposites reveal themselves, in their court clothes, their left-handed embrace suggesting the conduit for unconscious material. Is this a statement that the opposites present each hold the contents to complete the other? The image seems to have been constructed with an uninterrupted line, like a cosmic egg, a closed world containing all that it requires, including the blessing of the spirit/dove. Do the court clothes represent the frame, customs and culture of the analytical conversation? Are all the protective layers to shield the players from the powerful erotic energies that Jung writes about? Do the bodies beneath the garments contain their own texts?
Chapter 7: The Naked Truth

The royal pair, leaving their crowns on, shed their garments—and personas and layers of habit?—and in relationship, move toward deeper zones of the work. What does it mean to work naked, at least symbolically? Is this where the analytical pair begin to experience the nitty gritty, the abrasive, the tender and vulnerable? Is the apparent openness and equality between the pair a sham device because the analytical relationship is patently a-symmetrical?

Chapter 8: Immersion in the Bath

Maintaining the form of their relationship and the attention of the guiding spirit, the naked pair enters the hexagonal vessel where transformation will take place. Are there water-jets below the surface or piranhas or a trap-door? Is there a reason that the vessel appears so strongly built and shaped so? If water symbolises the unconscious, what psychological states might be expected as the bodies are lowered?

Chapter 9: The Conjunction

Jung rearranges the two conjunctions so that they appear side by side. Other writers are troubled by his action. In Figure 5, the walls of the hexagonal vessel have lost their definition and the couple, in sexual embrace, the upper figure male, seems to be submerged in the water where full sun and moon are also present, wide-eyed unsmiling. In Figure 5a the embracing couple has grown wings, the female has become the superior partner and the sun and moon have disappeared.
How is this immersion in the unconscious to be described psychologically? If this
is going on with both parties to the analytical conversation, is there cause for alarm
–since it is so overtly erotic and sexual–or is it all perfectly ordinary, merely
symbolic?

The next four images are related. All concern the hermaphrodite figure created
from the conjunction of 5, 5a, which is depicted in a water-filled sarcophagus for
the next four woodcuts. The water indicates unconscious forces, the figure appears
lifeless, the sarcophagus is both strongly built and precariously ready to topple, and
not quite fixed in its shape. The word ‘sarcophagus’ means flesh eater: what is
being devoured or reconstituted in this solve et coagula sequence of four? What is
the spiritual meaning that death, and its slow, transformative defeat, carries in the
psychological transference?

Chapter 10: Death

We have entered the nigredo, the “black blacker than black” of the alchemists
(Jung 1946, ¶33). The lifeless hermaphrodite lies in its watery grave, arms crossing
the body so that the male hand touches the female hip, the female hand has slipped
beneath the male thigh. Is the gesture of the hands a remnant of the cross-over
flower-holding gesture of Woodcuts 2,3,4? Here the male and female aspects have
merged into one body, but the hands reaching across the bodies suggest the
gathering is not complete, though the gesture is one of lassitude. In terms of the
phenomenology of the unconscious, does this image represent the overwhelming
surge of unconscious material that swamps the ego so that the drowning is a fore-
taste of death? Written above the still figure are the words *conceptio, putrefactio*. What is being conceived in this process of purefaction? What can be expected to grow from this rotting work?

Chapter 11: The Ascent of the Soul

*Animae extractio vel impregnatio* the image advises. Leaving the inert body a tiny male figure rises to the clouds. Mysteriously, the gendered representations of the hermaphrodite have changed sides, into a pattern they will hold for this and the next two transformations. Are we to understand that psychologically, deep, intractable structures are being called to adaptation? Does the *solve et coagula* invade the bones? Are we to understand that what is left behind in the unconscious/water contains the female energies not completely dead, but only marginally alive? The female hand, though, has risen from the water and found its way to the edge of the tomb while the male foot is braced against the edge and the watery bath has itself moved relative to the lower block of stone. If we apply this phenomenally to psychological processes being symbolically represented, it seems to refer to deep structural work and the agency of both sun and moon. If we wonder about it as experience, can it be endured? If the soul leaving the body is the final act of extinguishment, why does the image mention impregnatio? What are the oppositional elements working here?
Chapter 12: Purification

Ablutio vel mundificatio. Moisture pours from the clouds onto the hermaphrodite. Muscle tone—and increasing harmony?—is evident in the gesture of the hands where the male fingers curl into the female shape, the female fingers lie straight and stiff. Slightly pointed, protruding female toes / pseudopodia probe the narrow edge of the holding vessel. The vessel has assumed its most regular shape so far, has moved again on its pedestal, has sprouted an additional step, a deep stone layer, and has acquired more parallel lines and increased light and shadow. Are we witnessing significant psychological growth and structural integration? Do the raised head and enlivened facial expression indicate that new thinking is occurring, that psychological resilience and increased mastery of creation and destruction has been attained?

Chapter 13: The Return of the Soul

The male soul heads back towards the body. The hermaphrodite, arms still crossed, is now enclosed within the dimensions of the precariously angled sarcophagus, one of whose corners is amputated. Beside the tomb are two birds, one fledged and one bird buried in the earth except for its head. The male spirit returns from the clouds to enliven the feminine essence in the body and bring the hermaphrodite to life.

Chapter 14: The New Birth

Here is born the Empress of all honour. The product of the labours of bringing unconscious material to consciousness is revealed. The winged hermaphrodite is
triumphantly alive, balanced on the moon, beside the moon tree, and is somehow “monstrous” in Jung’s eyes. The lunar symbols attest to the attainment of feminine psychic attributes. No longer in the grasp of death, the Empress opens to the world, able to balance delicately above it. The initiation, for Jung’s purposes, is complete with Woodcut 10.

Chapter 15: To conclude

In *The Psychology of the Transference*, published after his own return from the dead, Jung offers his meditations on a set of alchemical woodcuts. These appear to have the power to show us the psychological contents of body, soul and spirit and their structures, processes, fixity and volatility.

I pick up the themes from the stated research objective and draw conclusions about how they have been treated. That is, I consider how Jung’s essay works as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of alchemical transference.

I conclude that persistence with his essay, over time, allows it to become a complex and inexhaustible guide on the subject of alchemical transference, on the imperative need to befriend the unconscious, and on the essential need to acknowledge one’s own solar and lunar facets of being.
Chapter 2

The Psychology of the Transference

To Begin

In Chapter 1, I wrote that *The Psychology of the Transference* might be seen as an example of Jung’s transference to his alchemical researches and to his clinical and personal experience, and as containing developmentally specific content for his own emergent thinking. It is possible, in his work, to identify thoughts he is beginning to think, thoughts continued from other places, thoughts to make the work consistent with other of his writings. These features become evident as he makes available for the reader’s examination the *solve et coagula*, the fixed and volatile shifts in the body of his thought about transference and alchemy.

This Chapter

In this chapter I examine *The Psychology of the Transference*. I look at its organisation and content generally, for what is revealed overtly and covertly about how Jung thinks about transference. I examine the sections, beginning with the epigraphs and dedication, then the other parts in the order they occur.
**Epigraphs and Dedication**

I enter into the detail of these aspects of Jung’s text, believing that they are significant, transient details in the essay on transference. In order of appearance, in the Bollingen Series XX, second edition of Jung’s essay, the epigraphs are these:

1. The first, on the page preceding the *Introduction*, is on the lower half of the page, right aligned, in this way:

   *Quaero non pono, nihil hic determino dictans*

   *Coniicio, conor, confero, tento, rogo. . . .*

   (I inquire, I do not assert; I do not here determine anything with final assurance; I conjecture, try, compare, attempt, ask. . . .)

   —Motto to Christian Knorr von Rosenroth, *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae*

2. The dedication, somewhat outside convention, is placed centrally on the same page, below Rosenroth’s motto. It is:

   **To my wife**
3. The third of the epigraphs falls between the INTRODUCTION title and the beginning of the text. Again right aligned, it states:

\[ \textit{Bellica pax, vulnus dulce, suave malum.} \]

(A warring peace, a sweet wound, a mild evil.)

\textit{JOHN GOWER, Confessio amantis, II, p. 35}

4. The final is on the page preceding the presentation of the \textit{Rosarium Philosophorum} woodcuts and the alchemical and psychological discussions which accompany them. Centrally positioned, on the top third of the page, it is:

\[ \textit{Invenit gratiam in deserto populus. . . .} \]

\textit{–JEREMIAS (VULGATE) 31 : 2}

The people . . . found grace in the desert . . .

\textit{–JEREMIAS (D.V.) 31 : 2}

Leaving aside the dedication, which I discuss separately, except to note, in passing, that it is the one overt acknowledgment of feminine contribution in the collection, we see that the epigraphs derive from different sources, traditions and times. Latin, arcane language, is a consistent though probably arbitrary element. It was still, in his time, an essential language for any scholar or doctor. We have excerpts from a writer on the Christian Kabala, a medieval English poet, and an Old Testament Prophet.
If we think about the epigraphs as demonstrations of transference that Jung has formed to this material we could say that transference attaches to resonant formations, found anywhere, that ‘speak’ to the seeking, subjective, intuitive mind. Jung finds words risen from unconscious to conscious in secular or sacred sources. He selects from what he calls the collective consciousness to find the right words to explicate an idea or intention that carries meaning in relation to *The Psychology of the Transference*, written in Switzerland in 1946, several centuries later than any of his chosen epigraphs. By the collective unconscious I take him to be referring to a designation that he has theoretically established. It is the non-personal part of the psyche, the source from which all conscious and unconscious contents emanate, “the matrix of the human mind and its inventions” (Jung 1946, ¶ 384).

That each of the three offers a Latin text and English translation perhaps also invites the reader to form some kind of relationship with the languages, the expressive forms, the translations, the meanings, the slippages, the inventions. I note that *The Psychology of the Transference* first appeared in English, in 1954, translated from its original German. The translation was extensively re-worked for the 1966, second edition. As it is employed in the analytical dyad, transference is conducted as a circling between languages and energies, mysteriously embodied in pre-thought, pre-verbal, cellular states, and words, dreams, images and intuitions. When we look at Jung’s use of these epigraphs, we move between two languages, both offered. Do the translations work? Might John Gower’s *Confessio amantis*, be ‘confessions of a lover’, ‘a lover confesses,’ or ‘confessions of one who loves’, for example, and what might be made more evident or hidden? I wonder, noting the principle, what I am blind to in the other translated epigraphs, how other scholars might choose the words
differently. Yet the ones offered are the ones that appear resonant for Jung, and if I resonate with them as well, or if I do not, I am already in some sort of alchemical mix.

I write this paragraph as a classically Jung-style one. It shows how associative thinking surrounds the experience of transference and shapes interpretation that ‘inquires, but does not assert . . . ’ Jung offers each epigraph in Latin and English. Only the Rosenroth text was Latin originally. The name, Rosenroth, may also carry a word play: Rosen as rose, and roth as a possible medieval spelling for red. Do we begin with a red rose who equips us with the attitude to take into the rose-garden, *Rosarium*? As symbol for the maze or labyrinth, the rose has found its way into many associative interpretations. These include, for example, the stained-glass Rose Window above the altar of the Cathedral at Chartres where, as a portrait of the medieval mind and its geometric orientation, it circles us back into alchemy. The circle is one of the primary geometries of Jungian transference and alchemy. For Jung it is the perfect form. A *Rosarium* could have been a maze constructed from rose bushes, or a gathering of philosophers. Rosary beads were once of rose wood, to carry the form of a prayer that circles. Jeremias has been translated from Hebrew with some Aramaic, via Greek, to Latin. John Gower, contemporary of Chaucer, used the English of his time, sprinkled with French and Latin ‘loans’. Perhaps there is a point of the device of moving texts through languages and it is the notion of circularity, of thought circling between inner and outer worlds. Language affects the *solve et coagula* of bodymind, experiencing body. To manage our psychological relationships we must evolve a mutual language. Arguably, therapy ceases to be therapeutic if doctor and patient do not speak the
same language or languages. That their language is fluent and subtle, and is drafted and re-worked, is assumed. It is desirable that he language also contains words or symbols, perhaps felt ones, for the subtle material of pre-worded states. What is the language of transference formations that are therapeutic and transformative? Perhaps all the languages transform, some through death, some through life.

My interest is in how the epigraphs demonstrate transference occurring. We witness Jung associatively circling through about twenty-six hundred years of history to choose his words, pulling them into the present to speak with him. We wonder about the purpose in his choice of words, translations. We notice evidence for Jungian transference as a phenomenon that extends beyond the consulting room, beyond the personal to collective consciousness and unconsciousness, and into to some kind of unitary world where transference is related to what we make of things. We see in his examples free association at work as a language form suited to the gathering of transient conscious or unconscious material, in contrast to the linear thinking that has other applicability, in other places.

*Jung’s dedication to his wife*

I am not aware of any other of Jung’s works dedicated to his wife. Why is it the case with *The Psychology of the Transference*? It is arguably developmentally specific and to do with the newly restored importance of Emma in Carl’s life. The references to her may be literal and personal: they may be husband to wife or man to woman; or archetypal and collective, king to queen, sun to moon. It is difficult for us to establish definitively. But in the immediate period before the essay of interest to
us was published, Jung’s life changed quite significantly. Gerhard Wehr, a biographer, writes:

One day in February 1944, at barely sixty-nine years of age, Jung was out for an extended hike, one of the regular walks he had been in the habit of taking since his return from India. Suddenly, a few kilometres away from home, he slipped on a patch of snow, falling and suffering a broken fibula. Luckily he was able with some effort to drag himself to the nearest house and call a taxi to take him to the doctor.

The treatment of the injury at the Hirslanden private hospital near Zurich required above all that the patient remain motionless. “At first Jung read his alchemistic books quite happily,” reported Barbara Hannah, “but soon his active body rebelled against inactivity, and about ten days after entering the hospital he had a very bad thrombosis of the heart and two others which went to his lungs. It was totally unexpected. Emma Jung was in town and was contacted with great difficulty. She stayed in the hospital with him—she was able to obtain a room in another wing but quite close—until he could go home. Jung was at death’s door and remained so for several weeks” (Wehr, 2001, p. 338).

Deirdre Bair, another biographer, continues:

Emma was with Jung constantly while he was in the hospital. Because the Hirslanden was private, she was able to rent a room on the corridor leading to the intensive-care unit where Jung was treated. From February until May, she never left the building, not even to make the short journey down the hill to her house, relying on her children and servants to bring her what she needed. Everything Emma did was based on love and concern for her husband’s well-being, but her actions caused rumor and tension. Like a modern-day Cerberus, she was the formidable guardian of Jung’s gate, and no information about his condition was dispensed unless she authorized it. As she was imbued with the social attitudes of her upper-class Swiss background, this meant no news at all, no bulletins of any sort. Rumors about his health flew throughout Zurich and were exaggerated with each telling. No visitors were permitted unless Emma approved, and for several months she allowed none but her children. Everyone who knew her agreed she had not one vicious, jealous, or vindictive bone in her body, but still, no one suffered more from Emma’s strictures than Toni Wolff (Bair, 2004, p. 501).
Antonia Wolff (1888 – 1953) was consistently important to Jung. Writing of Toni, in a 1911 letter to Freud, he presents her as “a new discovery . . ., a remarkable intellect with excellent feeling for philosophy and religion.” . . . love relationships developed that were not without problems for Jung’s marriage. . . Toni Wolff was for four decades Jung’s closest coworker, next to his wife. . . (Wehr, 2001, pp. 94-5).

Bair again takes up the story:

Jung’s illness struck the death knell for their long relationship, which had been imperiled since Toni refused to participate in the alchemical research. . . . In May, when Emma permitted visitors, von Franz [Jung’s alchemical co-researcher and translator] was one of the few whom she welcomed, hoping that Jung would become engaged with her findings, as indeed he was. As for Toni, whether intentionally or not, Emma saw to it that there was no place left for her by permitting only one brief visit several days before Jung was discharged.

By the time Jung went home, he was as dependent upon Emma as a small child upon his mother. . . . His visionary dreams of Emma began with their courtship and took him through the years of her steadfastness throughout their long marriage. Like his visions of the “hierosgamos,” he compared his dreams of Emma to “being confronted with [the same sort of] wholeness.” From that time on, he revered her for all that she had brought to his life, and he sanctified their marriage as “an indescribable whole” (Bair, 2004, p. 501).

The unusual placement of the dedication to Emma Jung, under Rosenroth’s statement, invites pause. Rosenroth implies that transference material never reaches resolution: meaning eternally forms and reforms. Do his words influence the dedication? Jung’s action towards his wife appears uncharacteristically public and tender. Is it an overdue recognition of her contribution to his work and life? Jung’s illness, which preceded the publication of The Psychology of the Transference, is of interest to us in relation to his and Emma’s relationship. It is also of interest because
during it, hovering between life and death, he experienced visionary states that he writes about in his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963, pp.320 - 329). Jung writes: “It is impossible to convey the beauty and intensity of emotion during these visions. They were the most tremendous things I have ever experienced.” And again: “There was a pneuma of inexpressible sanctity in the room, whose manifestation was the *mysterium coniunctionis*”(p. 326).

My speculation is that developmentally specific aspects of Jung’s life are reflected in *The Psychology of the Transference*. They can be seen to influence the dedication, underpinned by Jung’s relationship with his wife in all its literal and archetypal complexity. This period of his life, and the visions it produced, may have also increased his receptivity to and ability to write about the material of the woodcuts of the *Rosarium Philosophorum*. Marie-Louise von Franz comments on the way in which these events specifically influenced Jung.

At the time when Jung had finished the first draft of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, in 1944, he had a serious accident followed by the grave illness he describes in his memoirs. During this illness he experienced, on the threshold of death, the great visions of the coniunctio reported there. When I saw him again after his illness he said: “What I wrote in the *Mysterium* is true, I don’t need to alter the text. But I only now know how real these things are.”

Might it not be that St. Thomas Aquinas too, only experienced on his deathbed, when the Song of Songs flooded back into his memory, how real Wisdom and a union with her can be? (Von Franz,1964/2000, p. xiii).
Jung appears, in this period, to have been exposed, as experiencing, receptive, thinking subject, to a wide spectrum. It seems legitimate to theorise that his immersion in extreme and unfamiliar subjective states may well have influenced his responses to the objects of his world, including the alchemical ones. Von Franz’s mention of Wisdom, lunar embodiment of the original feminine, is also noteworthy.

Jung implies that the real knowledge he seeks lurks in quirky places and must be sought. It is most reliably, for him, found in alchemy which received his imaginative projections and fed his soul for over thirty years. David Tacey, in a paper delivered in *The Uses of Subjective Experience Conference*, where he compares the organisation of knowledge for and by universities generally, and the approach that Jung advocates and models, writes:

Jungian psychology is still far too scary to be able to be drawn into the centre of knowledge. What Jung does is disturbing to any system of secular knowledge. He deconstructs and relativises the human subject that seeks knowledge and enlightenment. Our seeking for knowledge is experienced as primary and secure, but for Jung it is secondary and uncertain. Prior to our seeking, there are forces at work in the psyche that seek us and invite us into a conversation. For Jung, our search for knowledge is impoverished and truncated if we fail to appreciate that there are forces that seek us. We are not only active subjects in a quest for knowledge, but passive objects of forces that hold sway over us, conditioning our minds and limiting what we can know (Tacey 2007:pp 3, 4).
Part 1: The Introduction of The Psychology of the Transference

I pause, briefly, to point out an inequity. I have just taken roughly half a chapter to present and examine the epigraphs of Jung’s essay. I will take the other half of the chapter to introduce the essay’s ten-part Introduction, and the ten-part Account of the Rosarium philosophorum, a patently unequal distribution of attention. My justification is that this is the only time I consider the epigraphs, and I examine the contents of the Introduction, and especially the Account, in the remainder of my study.

In the ten-part Introduction, Jung, taking an over-view, gathers a rationale that is rather disjointed but wide in its sweep, for his position in relation to alchemical transference. The sections vary in size, and in the way he engages with, and explores the detail of, the alchemical material. Sometimes transference is mentioned, sometimes not.


‘Transference’ used 11 times. Several key ideas are introduced. First: the coniunctio as the form of the mystic marriage, the union of opposites. Alchemy had always been a mystic philosophy. Second: that chemical elements are transmutable. Third: that transference alchemy changes both parties to the union. Fourth: that instinct and spirit energies express themselves in entangled, hierarchical ways, exemplified by four states of erotic phenomenology concerning the feminine: the biological, the aesthetic and romantic, the spiritualised, and the transcendent Sapientia.
Section 2: Paragraphs 362-365. Four Paragraphs, 0 footnotes.
‘Transference’ used twice. Jung notes that the transference is, in part, an instinctive process and that “it is often almost impossible to say what is “spirit” and what is “instinct.”” Its specific content, incest, carries the same confusion. He begins in this section to warn the doctor of the dangers in an inductive relationship “founded in mutual unconsciousness,” where the patient might activate the doctor’s latent unconscious contents. Knowledge that any patient might potentially do this means the doctor requires the “right attitude” to the professional relationship and does not hide behind a persona.

Section 3: Paragraphs 366-375. Nine paragraphs, four footnotes
‘Transference’ used 5 times. Jung refers briefly to the history of transference where it was defined as ‘rapport’, noting that it has always been a phenomenon where mutual influence was present, utilised or exploited, though not necessarily understood. He recommends a training analysis. The Freudian theory of incest is touched on. Jung notes the erotic charge present when the original family dynamics are reconstituted and reworked around the doctor. He writes of the oppositional dynamic between conscious and unconscious contents, its bearing on the developing personality, and the consequence of favouring one area over the other.

Section 4: Paragraphs 376-382. Seven paragraphs, 11 footnotes.
‘Transference’ used 4 times. Jung wonders about events, including dreams, marking the onset of transference which generally occurs outside of consciousness.
He outlines and interprets two dreams of a patient, a woman of sixty years, noting the dream symbols indicating “a collision of various opposites”. Onset may occur at the beginning of analysis or after some time. In the face of resistance the doctor must support the patient’s conscious attitude to ensure that that unconscious contents do not overwhelm.

**Section 5: Paragraphs 383-385. Three paragraphs, seven footnotes.**

‘Transference’ not used. Jung wonders how constellated unconscious contents affect the conscious doctor-patient relationship. Alchemical terms are used more: *inimicitia elementorum, prima materia, lapis philosophorum*. Projection is mentioned briefly “for as a rule the unconscious first appears in projected form.” Mercurius is introduced. He personifies the good and evil of the personal and collective unconscious and the flitting, unconscious energy and contents moving between doctor and patient. “The contents of the unconscious are indeed of the greatest importance, for the unconscious is after all the matrix of the human mind and its inventions” (¶ 384).

**Section 6: Paragraphs 386-391 Six paragraphs, four footnotes.**

‘Transference’ not used. “We have never really come to grips with it [the unconscious] and consequently it has remained in its original savage state” (¶ 388). Work with the psyche requires its own language and an attitude commensurate with its dangers. Jung begins to describe the inadequacies of the Church whose doctrine of the devil locates evil externally, where in truth it lies within each of us. Mercurius,
in contrast, is like the unconscious, the source of evil and good, including the philosophers’ son and Sapientia Dei. The formulated truths of the Christian Church represent, symbolically, the nature of psychic experience and reflect the outcomes of centuries of theological controversy.

Section 7: Paragraphs 392-396. Five paragraphs, three footnotes.

‘Transference’ not mentioned. Organised Christian religion has not adapted to the spirit of the time so fewer people are attracted to it. Consciousness, in the form of knowledge, has increased in line with ability to control the ego. Consciousness and unconsciousness have lost their equilibrium. Restoration of the balance between conscious and unconscious forces requires a religio—a “careful consideration” of ever-present unconscious forces which we neglect at our peril” (¶ 395). Problems of modern consciousness require appropriate approaches.

Section 8: Paragraphs 397-398. Two paragraphs, seven footnotes.

‘Transference’ not mentioned. “Europe . . . has set up a religious ideal of worldly power in opposition to the metaphysical ideal founded on love” (¶ 397). Religion provides the form but not the inner process to create an inwardly united human being. Man as microcosm “contains a supreme psychological truth” (¶ 39). Religion fails to turn disiunctio into coniunctio. Yet the alchemists also note this difficulty of making “one out of two.” The royal marriage is a symbol of the “supreme and ultimate union since it represents the magic-by-analogy which is supposed to bring the work to its final consummation and bind the opposites by love,” for “love is stronger than death”” (¶ 398).
Section 9: Paragraphs 399-400. Two paragraphs, three footnotes. ‘Transference’ not mentioned. In alchemy, Jung found “the same psychological phenomenology which can be observed in the analysis of unconscious processes” (¶ 399). He emphasises the mutuality of the work of transference: “psychological induction inevitably causes the two parties to get involved in the transformation of the third and to be themselves transformed in the process” (¶ 399). We learn that “Art requirit totum hominem,”—the art requires the whole man, and that “genuine participation is absolutely imperative.” Jung writes of the “self” state beyond the earlier ego, of numerous distillations, and that “the united personality” never loses its “essential duality.” Finally, he writes “the goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the opus” leading to the goal: “that is the goal of a lifetime.” Attainment means that “left and right are united,” “conscious and unconscious work in harmony” (¶ 400).

Section 10: Paragraph 401. One paragraph, 0 footnotes. ‘Transference’ not mentioned. A bridge forms to Jung’s next chapter through introduction of the pictures of the Rosarium Philosophourm. The coniunctio motif recurs: “The coniunctio oppositorum in the guise of Sol and Luna, the royal brother-sister or mother-son pair, occupies such an important place in alchemy that sometimes the entire process takes the form of the hierosgamos and its mystic consequences.”
Part 2: An Account of the Transference Phenomena Based on the Illustrations to the “Rosarium Philosophorum”

Jung introduces each woodcut of the *Rosarium Philosophorum* and the verse that accompanies it, with a commentary. The commentaries vary in size and content swings between alchemical, psychological, philosophical and reflective thought. We will move, in the chapters following, beyond this brief presentation to detailed examination of each.


Jung writes: “This picture goes straight to the heart of the alchemical symbolism, for it is an attempt to depict the mysterious basis of the *opus.* It is a quadratic quaternity characterized by the four stars in the four corners. These are the four elements. Above, in the centre, there is a fifth star which represents the fifth entity, the “One” derived from the four, the *quinta essentia*. (¶402).

He fathoms the mystery of the numbers, the geometry, the symbols, the process, and how to think about and talk about them. To write about them he uses alchemical language and concepts, but his intention of presenting a phenomenology of the unconscious can be seen as the organising principle.
2. **King and Queen**: Paragraphs 410–449. 39 paragraphs, 40 footnotes.

The opposites are presented in their heavy court clothes, their layers of convention and habit. Jung writes of the symbols—of the over-sized left-handed embrace, the conduit for the exchange of unconscious contents and energies. There are four competing energy sources: two conscious, two unconscious. The unconscious contra-sexual element of the male is the *anima*, and the unconscious contra-sexual element of the female is *animus*. He develops the *Marriage Quaternio* diagram to portray these four forces in the analytic dyad. He offers an Icelandic and a Russian fairytale to illustrate the principles at work.

3. **The Naked Truth**: Paragraphs 450–452. 3 paragraphs, 8 footnotes.

The opposites are more clearly visible, available for work, still held in a formation indicating mutual inter-dependence, for their “union in the spirit.” Jung notes: “the *opus* demands not only intellectual and technical ability . . . it is a moral as well as a psychological undertaking” (¶451). The shadow becomes visible and adds more layering into the potential union.
4. Immersion in the Bath: Paragraphs 453–456. 4 paragraphs, 24 footnotes

The bath containing the upwelling unconscious enters the picture. “This stinking water contains everything it needs.” “It is sufficient unto itself, like the Uroboros, the tail-eater, which is said to beget, kill, and devour itself. . . . the water is that which kills and vivifies. It is the aqua benedicta, the lustral water, wherein the birth of the new being is prepared” (¶454). The work to unite body, soul and spirit, held together by soul drawn from relationship, continues.

5. The Conjunction: Paragraphs 457–466. 10 paragraphs, 10 footnotes.

“The sea has closed over the king and queen, and they have gone back to the chaotic beginnings, the massa confusa” (¶457). The hexagonal stone fountain has dissolved.

The union in both cases is taking place in the water, the unconscious.

The first of these pictures, that Jung numbers 5, is in sequence. The second, that he numbers 5a, is number 11 in the Rosarium original.
5,5a cont.

“Our pictures of the coniunctio are to be understood in this sense: union on the biological level is a symbol of the unio oppositorum at its highest . . . so that the opus becomes an analogy of the natural process by means of which instinctive energy is transformed, at least in part, into symbolical activity” (¶ 460).


The blackness has set in, but this picture is both putrefactio and conceptio. Consciousness is extinguished. The figure remains in a watery grave, still trapped in the unconscious. “No new life can arise, the alchemists tell us, without the death of the old” (¶ 467). The work has not yet reached its goal, as the hermaphrodite figure, the symbol of the lapis, has not yet come to life. This state is like that of the buried seed that awakens to a new season.
In this picture, leaving the body, the masculine soul—one soul because the original two are united as one—returns to its heavenly source. The picture represents a collapse of ego-consciousness and may be the time when the patient becomes aware of the collective unconscious and psychic non-ego (¶476). It is an experience of “loss of soul”.

Jung quotes the *Rosarium*: “O blessed Nature, blessed are thy works, for that thou makest the imperfect to be perfect through the true putrefaction, which is dark and black. Afterwards thou makest new and multitudinous things to grow, causing with thy verdure the many colours to appear” (¶479).

The falling dew precedes the divine birth. Here the *nigredo* gives way to the whitening *albedo*. The falling dew is the gift of illumination and wisdom (¶ 484).

Jung writes about the need for feeling values to be present—the *practica* that balances the *theoria*, the apperception to balance the perception. Experience, the felt and erotic component, must complete the understanding.


The hermaphrodite is about to come back to life. In this section Jung writes at some length about the variety of alchemical symbols used in the interpretation of this process, seeing them as evidence of the alchemists’ struggles to represent image and experience, and of the variety of their unconscious sources.

“. . .they nevertheless performed the inestimable service of having constructed a phenomenology of the unconscious long before the advent of psychology. We, as heirs to these riches, do not find our heritage at all easy to enjoy” (¶ 497).

“Here is born the Empress of all honour/
The philosophers name her their daughter.”

This is the hermaphrodite resurrected, and completed as far as Jung is concerned. The wings symbolise the union of spirit with instinct. The picture abounds with lunar / feminine symbols: the moon tree, the moon on which the figure balances. Many examples of ‘unity’ are present. Jung comments on a poem, included in his text, which refers to the timeless nature of the unconscious. “The unconscious is thus the mother as well as the daughter, and the mother has given birth to her own mother (in creatum), and her son was her father” (¶ 529).

Part 3: In the three-paragraph Epilogue, Jung takes us full circle to construct a conclusion to his work. He writes:

To give any description of the transference phenomenon is a very difficult and delicate task, and I did not know how to set about it except by drawing upon the symbolism of the alchemical opus (Jung, 1946, ¶538).

My introduction provides an orientation to the content organisation of Jung’s 1946 essay, The Psychology of the Transference.
Chapter 3

Jung and the Twenty Woodcuts of the

Rosarium philosophorum

To Begin

As we know, when Jung presents his major essay on transference, *The Psychology of the Transference*, he builds it around the alchemical woodcuts called *Rosarium philosophorum*. We know there are, in the original, twenty woodcuts and that Jung uses only the first eleven, grouping them as if there were ten.

To use only half the series, or to stop in the middle seems, in many ways, inconsistent in an essay about transference process and individuation, and it raises questions. Perhaps Jung thought he had adequately registered the principle that the process of transference is one where projected contents are eventually reclaimed and integrated into the personality of the observing subject. The psychic architecture then forms a stable self, able to survive internal and external trauma. Yet because he has associated transference and individuation, and individuation implies a development as far as it can be taken, I wonder why, in *The Psychology of the Transference*, he cuts off the transference process at an earlier stage than the alchemists depict. The twentieth woodcut shows Christ resurrected. Perhaps he wanted to avoid Christian iconography and associate the process with a more personal experience of ‘God’ expressed by use of more ordinary and ancient sun/moon symbols. Perhaps he believed he had outlined, in sufficient detail, his principal argument and that the rest could be filled in by the reader, by way of the alchemical *multiplicatio*, extending and multiplying the basic understanding.
Maybe he reserved his speculations for inclusion in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, of which this 1946 essay was originally part. As Jung wrote from the perspective of the male experience of bringing the feminine components of the personality into expressive presence, maybe he implies that the reverse process might just follow a similar path that is so obvious it requires no comment, or perhaps it was an opposite stance difficult for him to articulate so he did not. His interest was in restoring attention to the archetypal feminine, so perhaps he wrote about what was most important to him, pausing where the “Empress” emerges. Perhaps he failed to grasp some of the nuances of the woodcuts. In the *Foreword* to the essay, he writes “... the psychology of alchemy here under review is almost virgin territory” (p. xi), so my last speculation appears pertinent, especially as we witness his searching hermeneutic engagement with alchemical interpretation.

Since my task has been to use *The Psychology of the Transference* as a guide to the experience, theories, relationship and geometries of transference, I have found myself assisted by what Jung has written, but also needing to go beyond Jung, and understand the whole series of the *Rosarium Philosophorum*. The alchemical processes, regarded across the sequence of all twenty woodcuts, clarify the work in regard to development of solar and lunar aspects of the personality and the links to individuation, so I develop them here.
This Chapter

In this chapter I will introduce the twenty woodcuts of the *Rosarium Philosophorum*. I will explore what might have been lost or gained by Jung’s decision to use only the first half. I suggest that knowing about the whole set might change the way in which Jung, alchemy, transference or individuation might be thought about. I look at his decision to relocate Figure 11 from the original series as 5a in his rearranged one, and wonder what he understood or did not understand when he did this.

On the next page I set out all twenty of the images, and beyond them, continue my discussion.

Please note: The Appendix contains two fold-outs:

1. All twenty Rosarium woodcuts
2. The Woodcuts used by Jung in *The Psychology of the Transference*.
Chapter 3: The twenty woodcuts of the Rosarium philosophorum

The twenty Woodcuts of the Rosarium philosophorum

1. The Mercurial Fountain
2. King and Queen
3. The Naked Truth
4. Immersion in the Bath
5. The Conjunction
6. Death
7. The Ascent of the Soul
8. Purification
9. The Return of the Soul
10. The New Birth
11. Fermentation
12. Illumination
13. Nourishment
14. Fixation
15. Multiplication
16. Reviving
17. Perfection
18. Mortification
19. Coronation
20. Resurrection
**Jung’s Refers to the Complete Rosarium philosophorum**

In the *Account*, the section of *The Psychology of the Transference* where Jung writes a commentary on each of the ten woodcuts, he makes a passing reference to the whole *Rosarium* series indicating that he knew of its existence. Close to the end of his chapter on *The Return of the Soul*, the comment is as follows:

Finally, I must point out that a certain concession to feminine psychology is also to be found in the *Rosarium*, in so far as the first series of pictures is followed by a second—less complete, but otherwise analogous—series, at the end of which there appears a masculine figure, the “emperor,” and not, as in the first, an “empress,” the “daughter of the philosophers.” The accentuation of the feminine element in the Rebis (Figure 10) is consistent with a predominantly male psychology, whereas the addition of an “emperor” in the second version is a concession to woman (or possibly to male consciousness) (Jung, 1946, ¶ 520).

These observations suggest that Jung may have been still grappling to understand the entire alchemical process. He hedges his interpretation towards the position that the first series of pictures is to develop feminine psychological attributes. In describing the second set as “a concession to woman (or possibly to male consciousness)”, he appears to disregard the overall sequence as a cumulative *human* development. The “concession to woman” phrase appears somewhat undeveloped and even patronising, but aligned to his attribution of particular characteristics along biological and gender lines.

A couple of paragraphs later he appears to return to the ideas of the above quoted paragraph, with its reference of what happens in the “soul”. I use Jung’s words here. “Soul” is a word he and alchemy use often. I originally chafed against much of his language, but I found that if I just let him speak his own language the words took on distinct value within the integrated whole that he establishes. I take
“soul” to be the opposite of “spirit”. “Soul” is also an aspect of “spirit” and how they operate in relation to each other is, for Jung, a ceaseless question. “Soul”, though, usually refers to experience of the depths of being, in the way that the soul music of Black America does. Andrew Samuels and colleagues, in their Critical Dictionary of Jungian terms, write that soul is “used by Jung (and analytical psychologists) instead of psyche especially when it is wished to underline movement at depth, emphasising plurality, variety and impenetrability of the psyche in contrast to any pattern, order or meaning discernible therein” (Samuels et. al., 2000, p.140). Jung writes:

It will be clear from this that the “soul” which accrues to ego-consciousness during the opus has a feminine character in the man and a masculine character in the woman. His anima wants to reconcile and unite; her animus tries to discern and discriminate. This strict antithesis is depicted in the alchemists’ Rebis, the symbol of transcendental unity, as a coincidence of opposites; but in conscious reality—once the conscious mind has been cleansed of unconscious impurities by the preceding mundificatio—it represents a conflict even though the conscious relations between the individuals may be quite harmonious. Even when the conscious mind does not identify itself with the inclinations of the unconscious, it still has to face them and somehow take account of them in order that they may play their part in the life of the individual, however difficult this may be (Jung 1946, ¶ 522).

This quote illustrates Jung’s contention that the “soul” which accrues during the alchemical opus is somehow related to the gendered biology of the person doing the work, and that the work produces, also, contra-sexual outcomes. As the paragraph continues, though, the development being written about becomes more generic, and biology more incidental. I find the second configuration easier to understand and accept than the first and wonder if it is closer to the original alchemical intention.
One View of the Alchemy of the Complete Rosarium philosophorum

I switch, now, to another writer on the Rosarium philosophorum, to test whether Jung’s way of understanding is his personally, or generally accepted. I have found Jung’s gendered biological theories in relation to alchemy, transference and individuation difficult to accept as I use his essay as a guide. My preference would be for process, worked by man or woman, according to what is required within the individual personality as it develops the characteristics it needs for completion.

Adam McLean runs The Alchemy Web Site. It is a treasure trove on which he makes available alchemical texts, imagery and articles, such as the entire text of the Rosary of the Philosophers. He has written A Commentary on the Rosarium Philosophorum. I have found McLean’s Commentary invaluable in its explanation of alchemical process free of biological pre-determinants.

In essence, he describes the first ten images as being concerned with the production of the White Stone, “the inner mastery of the lunar forces”, the second ten concerned with the production of the Red Stone, “the inner mastery of the solar forces in the soul”. His description of alchemical process, from a particular perspective, presented sequentially, stands in contrast to Jung’s. Jung’s is a mixture of shifting perspectives and subjects, including alchemy, psychology, religious speculation, transference theory, and is vaguely case referenced, experiential and personal. Jung’s purpose in writing is different from McLean’s and vastly more ambitious, but because I have found McLean’s Commentary to be clearer and simpler than Jung’s, I have better understood the alchemical processes depicted and Jung’s struggle with the alchemical material. Like Jung who declares his relative
position in relation to the material—inquiring, not asserting—McLean declares that his is one possible interpretation not exclusive of other valid ones. Others “look at the spiritual realities of the *Rosarium* series from a different perspective, and thus throw further light on the matter of the symbolism” (McLean 2008 p.1). I have taken these statements from both of them as licence to make my interpretations.

McLean describes his own *Commentary* as an amplification of Jung’s but notes: “. . . Jung’s interpretation is based upon seeing the illustrations as 10 stages, whereas as we have seen there are 20. Indeed, if we read again Jung’s analysis of the *Rosarium*, with a consciousness of the existence of the extended series of 20 illustrations, we will find a further level of integration of the masculine and feminine facets of the soul, which does not contradict Jung’s thesis, but amplifies and extends it” (McLean, 2008, p. 1).

“Jung, however, only shows us 11 of the 20 illustrations. Furthermore, he suggests that figures he labels 5 and 5a (*Rosarium* illustrations 5 and 11) are alternative visions of the same figure, whereas on examining the full series of 20 illustrations we find this untenable” (*ibid.*). McLean notes, of the two conjunctions of Jung’s 5 and 5a, the first intercourse has the man uppermost, and in the second the opposite is the case. “This point was not noticed by Jung in his commentary” (*op.cit.* p. 3). I have wondered if this positional reversal was indeed noticed by Jung and used to imply, in neat but covert shorthand, the process which has solar or lunar able to operate in superior or inferior, active or passive role, and whether the reversal is precisely what led him to juxtapose the two images and give them the same numbers.
McLean continues: “We interpret this series as a process for integration of the three facets of man—the Body, Soul and Spirit. In our present state of evolution these facets do not work together in harmony. . . . It is the task of alchemical transmutation to unite these facets in a new harmony, into a perfected state of being where Body, Soul and Spirit mutually interpenetrate and work together” (op.cit. p.2). This passage—not an unusual one in alchemical writings where the unity and balance between body, soul and spirit feature frequently—is one I read and clung to, somewhat, in relation to the Rosarium philosophorum. As Jung writes about transference, I have found it difficult to orient within the shifting weight he gives to these three components. Argument could be made that Jung has disappeared the body for the sake of soul and spirit, or for psyche and symbol. It remains, though, present and problematic in the woodcuts, as the fabric beneath all the speculation, the text beneath the text, and my preference is to argue it back into the originally intended alchemical, though not so overtly Jungian, balance.

McLean’s descriptions of the last few processes indicate their distinct developmental difference from the work of the first ten and shed light on Jung’s decision to stop at the “Empress” woodcut. McLean writes that by Illustration 17, “the alchemist has gained inner mastery over the lunar and solar currents of his soul, the feminine and masculine forces within his being, the yin and yang, the Ida and Pingala Nadi’s of Tantricism, and is no longer unconsciously moved and swayed by the external archetypes of King and Queen, but now bears these within his being as a conscious resource of the soul, energies that he can tap and use as he wills” (op.cit. p.4).
Of the final three illustrations, 18, 19, 20, McLean writes that these are concerned with incorporation of the inner Mercury, “the living and flowing energies of his soul, that we picture today as the unconscious, the mysterious, dark inner source of the soul forces” into the solar and lunar forces. With Illustration 20, “the alchemist is seen having achieved a kind of resurrection which is paralleled with that of Christ” (*ibid*). He has “returned with renewed energies in a resurrection body bearing the mystery of the upper trinity. This is the true transmutation” (*ibid*).

McLean’s *Commentary* is considerably smaller and simpler than Jung’s. He describes the work of the individual alchemist, working alone to identify and strengthen the lunar and solar facets of the soul, to unite them with the living inner Mercury, and then using the abilities created to survive the extinguishment of his ego, and the visit to the dark mysteries of the unconscious. In the way that Jung uses a particular vocabulary, so does McLean. Jung sites the transformation in the analytical setting, where two literal persons are present, each with unconscious contra-sexual elements. Jung’s essay is ambitious in its attempt to outline the phenomenology of the two person system, plus unconscious others, family members, present in the unconscious exchange of the transference. I have found, though, the complexities of *The Psychology of the Transference* disentangle somewhat if they are considered in relation to McLean’s *Commentary*. Additionally, Jung’s reliance on half of the *Rosarium* woodcuts concentrates, overlaps and complicates the system in a way that might be lessened if consideration were given to all twenty illustrations.
Other writers on the Rosarium philosophorum

Johannes Fabricius has written two articles of interest here. One (1973) concerns the alchemical “Proiectio”, the image of the risen Christ, portrayed in woodcut 20, and the way it might be interpreted as a symbol of the self. The other (1971) concerns the individuation process in the Rosarium philosophorum. I will examine the earlier one first.

In this article Fabricius compares two different twenty-image series of the woodcuts. One is the Frankfurt 1550 edition that Jung used. The other is from Johann Daniel Mylius’ condensed 1622 version of Rosarium philosophorum, for which ‘the Frankfurt Balthazar Schwan furnished him with engraved variants of the original woodcuts’ (1971 p.33). Fabricius considers that “Schwan’s amplification of the picture series of the Rosarium is of considerable value since his variations, associations and analogies remain within the context of the original” (1971 p. 46). Fabricius writes:

With his unique intuition Jung perceived that the structure of the opus alchymicum probably reflected the structure of the individuation process as did the structure of the transference. In spite of the boldness and genius of Jung’s joint attack on the opus alchymicum and the individuation process, his exploration of the picture series of the Rosarium philosophorum involved a distortion of it. Thus he interpreted the eleventh picture in conjunction with its fifth picture just as he interpreted the nineteenth picture in conjunction with its ninth picture. In my view it is better to take into account the whole series of the Rosary of the philosophers and observe its own order of sequence (1971 p.32).

Fabricius suggests two conclusions. One is that “we may regard the series as an imprint of the entire individuation process crystallised into this form through centuries of alchemical experience.” The second conclusion is that the
“psychodynamics of the Oedipus complex are the “fuel” of the individuation process” (1971 p. 45). Fabricius considers that the incest between various family members, brother sister, mother father, indicates that “a growing sublimation of the Oedipus complex” occurs within the individuation process. In the way that McLean does, Fabricius thinks that Jung’s use of woodcut 11 as 5a cannot be justified. “... the two symbolic images and actions belong in an entirely different context” (1971 p.46). Fabricius therefore amplifies Jung’s work, pictorially and in terms of formulation.

In his 1973 article the interest of Fabricius is in woodcut 20, which depicts a single figure, Christ resurrected, emerging from the open tomb “waving the banner of victory” (Fabricius 1973 p.47). His article is relevant to my supposition that The Psychology of the Transference is developmentally specific for Jung and also to my concerns that the body has been absented by him. Fabricius writes:

One of Jung’s important contributions to analytical psychology was his discovery of the unconscious complex of the self and his elucidation of the various symbols of the self: the hermaphrodite, the divine child, the magic stone, the conjoined sun and moon, the philosophical tree, mandala figures, etc. Strangely enough, Jung did not grasp that the image of the person himself, resurrected or transformed, is the most expressive symbol of the self. The reason for this is probably that the symbol was too near, too obvious, too easy to overlook. Since Jung discovered that many of the symbols of the self had been expressed by alchemical symbolism, we shall be justified in presenting the towering symbol of the self.

... This body, which is surrounded with the halo of sainthood, is described by the alchemists as being of a hard and transparent quality, clear as crystal and with a fiery, rubeous hue. A product of vitrification, the glassy body of the final rebirth presents the hotly desired body of incorruptibility and permanence which is capable of surviving death and, hence, in possession of the qualities of immortality (Fabricius 1973 p.47).
Fabricius writes that the proiectio covers out-of-body and similar experiences. He writes of Jung’s experience of the alchemical proiectio which occurred “in connection with his suffering of the trauma of death in March 1944” (p.54), and quotes extensively from Jung’s Memories, Dreams, Reflections of the visions that occurred then. Fabricius’ interest lies in his conviction of the fully conscious nature of these experiences. He quotes Jung writing of the experience: “It was not a product of imagination. The visions and experiences were utterly real; there was nothing subjective about them; they all had a quality of absolute objectivity” (MDR p. 275. Fabricius 1973, p.56). Fabricius continues: “Jung finally added that in his view the psychological state obtaining during his visions represented the state of ‘completed individuation’” (MDR p.276, Fabricius p.56).

The unified state represented by woodcut 20 is one “where conscious and unconscious mind are made one”:

In the marvels of the proiectio conscious and unconscious, ego and self, earth and heaven are conjoined in a unity. Weightless in a pure body of light, the alchemist wakes up to a universe having no opposite; incarnated in the body of the sun, the solified adept realizes the identity of the opposites, the ‘oppositelessness’ of the nirvana state (Fabricius 1973, p.56).

Fabricius, borrowing from Jung’s Mysterium Coniunctionis (pp.209-20) comments finally that Jung wrote about “the completed individuation process in terms of an ‘approximation’ and ‘modification’ of the conscious and unconscious positions within the psyche” (Fabricius 1973, p.57). I am drawn to Fabricius’ article because, without disappearing behind an ocean of alchemical symbols, it links body, mind and individuation. I understand alchemy is concerned to unify states of body, soul and spirit. It seems to me that the body–the literal and miraculous
communication device made of blood, bones, cells, brain acquired over millions of evolving years—is primary in the work, is the matter of it, yet so often it gets downplayed for the sake of discriminatory mind and its symbols. Not though, that this rather narrow function of the body in the universe is all that there is to it. Here, in Fabricius’ article, the literalness of body is central and symbolic, and it is naked, living, and in the very last of the woodcuts. Fabricius may well be correct in his interpretations of this ‘glorified body’ (corpus glorificationis) or ‘subtle body’ (corpus subtile) (ibid., p.47). I, though, cannot help but notice that these states, according to Fabricius’ examples, require a literal surviving of death. It is the resurrection that the woodcut celebrates, but the death, the bodymind’s deep adventure into its own autonomic processes, into the biological roots of consciousness and the brain’s own neurobiological language, is what is needed for the coniunctio oppositorum. One cannot be apprehended, it seems, without the other.

Jungian biographer Gerhard Wehr offers his version of the ill Jung whose visions inspired Fabrirus’ questions in relation to individuation. He also offers tacit support to my theory of the developmentally specific nature of Jung’s work at the time when The Psychology of the Transference appeared.

Wehr writes:

Jung closed out his seventh decade a man marked by serious illness. His full recovery took several months, and for a while very strict limits were imposed on his once-considerable physical capacities. For the time being he had to content himself with two hours of work daily at his desk. But this work he could not do without, for he was full of ideas and scientific and literary plans. It was as if the inner experiences of the previous weeks and months had opened up to him entirely new dimensions of spiritual reality. And there is no doubt about this. But what he had received when near death needed to be intellectually penetrated, scientifically organized, and above all existentially integrated (Wehr 2001 p.346).
It is tempting to think that *The Psychology of the Transference* assisted with these tasks and to wonder whether the material of it, which receives uneven focus, supports further my contention that Jung is working a transference to this material as he writes.

Nathan Schwartz-Salant, New York City Jungian analyst, has probably the strongest contemporary interest in the *Rosarium philosophorum* images. He uses them to write about field dynamics within the analytical dyad, particularly in relation to borderline states and the dynamics of projective identification. As I introduce his work I note my changed language and use of discriminating technical terms, adapting to accommodate my transference to his material. Schwartz-Salant has been a useful commentator for me. I have found, through him, my relative stance in relation to the way projective identification is talked about. I find myself not so much in disagreement with him, as wanting to work the states of projective identification not only from the discriminated, thought, masculine perspective, but equally from the feminine receptive one. I use these masculine/feminine terms not as gendered biological attributes but as characteristics posed, in line with the alchemical propositions, as opposites, and as characteristics to be developed in each analysand, regardless of whether the person is man or woman. I wonder about the embodiment of more relational connection and developmental sensitivity to material still to be empathically sensed via literal bodies and their resonant availability to each other. I have in mind a conversation conducted not only through discriminating words and symbols, but through the felt and relational limbic endowments and physiological connections that operate through the bodies present. I understand these felt, experiential connections as not necessarily interchangeable with the words of the
dyadic conversation, nor perhaps with the symbols beloved of the alchemists, although this is less clear.

There is evidence that the alchemical symbols carry body-mind references. Given the state of knowledge when they were created, and given that philosophical alchemy was, as Jung states, a mystical philosophy, the experiential element would seem to be central. The history of philosophical alchemy contains references to knowledge of the system of chakras and to rising kundalini or serpent energy. The Osiris myth is also a founding influence, concerned with rising serpent energy which, as I understand it, requires alignment with the propensities of the reptilian brain. It governs aspects of basic physiology, addictions and repetitions, so exploration of its functions can consciously redirect its energy for other life purposes. In the myth, Osiris, cut into small pieces by his brother, is reassembled by his sister/wife, Isis. This is also regarded as an early symbolic story of the contra-sexual components of the experiencing bodymind at work, seeking psychological growth, and a conscious gathering of passive and active components so that their presence in the personality is balanced and expressed.

But to return to Schwartz-Salant: he writes of the third space, the transference space, where his work, and the work of psychological alchemy, takes place.

... alchemical speculations addressed processes in the subtle body. Jung’s analogy to the subtle body was to the linking between the unconscious structures of anima and animus (rather than the conscious personalities of the two people). Yet, one must focus upon the locus of such processes, since it is clear that they do not take place either inside or outside of individuals. As Susan Deri has emphasized in her critique of D.W. Winnicott’s idea of transitional space (which is akin to the subtle body concept), transitional phenomena cannot be located either inside,
outside or even between people (Deri 1978). These phenomena apply to another dimension of existence, a third area whose processes can only be perceived by the eye of the imagination. Notions of location are, in fact, inadequate.

Generally speaking, the alchemists’ approach addressed processes in this third area. They called both this area and the process occurring therein Mercurius, whose transformation was the goal of the opus.

...Projective identification can initiate the process of gaining access to and transforming interactive relational fields. These fields are depicted by the couple in the Rosarium (Schwartz-Salant, 1989, p.101, 103).

I include here reference to two publications of Schwartz-Salant. The above one (1989) contains the whole set of Rosarium woodcuts, although they are not all discussed with the same attention. In the next (2005) publication, Schwartz-Salant writes extensively about all twenty woodcuts, often with reference to McLean and Fabricius, using sources additional to the ones I have quoted but suggesting the centrality of these writers. In commenting on their imagery he writes:

The series of twenty woodcuts of the most famous alchemical text, the Rosarium Philosophorum (1550), can be seen as a process of entering a field between two people, experiencing field dynamics, and working with the transformation of the field itself. The goal is the creation of both an inner-individual and an outer-conjoined field quality which perseveres through any mental, emotional, somatic, or environmental trauma by means of a mind-body union that is so subtle as to be a source of true, imaginal perception. While this kind of stability is clearly an unobtainable goal, nevertheless, it indicates the value-system of this body of thought, and it further implies that the issue is not reaching perfection but being on the path of transformation (Schwartz-Salant 2005, p. 157).

His list of “mental, emotional, somatic and environmental trauma” reflects what is implicit in Jung’s essay.
Schwartz-Salant comments on the first ten woodcuts as a group, then considers the following ten, through a psychological interpretation:

The first ten woodcuts of the *Rosarium* are well-suited to describing an interactive field since they continuously work with the image of a couple and with the tenth woodcut, the ‘Rebis’, . . . a hermaphrodite representing the union of opposites. The stage depicted by the completion of the first ten woodcuts is called the ‘Empress’ or the ‘White Stone,’ which represents the creation of a self-structure that unifies mind and body. Most significantly, the structural gains represented by the ‘White Stone’ are capable of persevering or being recovered amidst attacks of abandonment anxiety, panic and fear that an individual can feel as a psychic death. The Rebis can be an interactive, field quality between two people, or it can be an image of an internal self. The Rebis stands upon the moon representing the subtle body world—an indicator that this kind of embodied sight, an awareness of union states and their vicissitudes (in ensuing *nigredo* experiences)—now exists and will not be destroyed.

However, the alchemists recognize this creation to be ‘watery,’ not yet having the solidity characterized by the result of the next ten woodcuts, the *rubedo* phase. In the *albedo*, the field and a sense of self are often lost to awareness, especially under the impact of passion. The field can be recovered due to an essential element of faith achieved in the *albedo*, but in the *rubedo* the alchemist attempts to bring a kind of life and blood to the ‘stone’ that now has a deeper continuity and presence amidst emotion and body states.

. . . The stress upon making silver, the ‘White Stone,’ before gold is essential to the alchemical way, for unless body-awareness and the imaginal world of the subtle body are recovered, the spiritual path of the *rubedo* will only lead to more mind-body splitting.

The ten woodcuts of the *rubedo* do not lend themselves to a field interpretation as readily as the first ten, although several of them, especially the eleventh woodcut, ‘Fermentation’, . . . can be seen as representing possible field dynamics. The *rubedo* stage, however, goes beyond the relating and the imaginal seeing of lunar, feminine life and eventually regains the solar, spiritual vision that was a prerequisite.

. . . Generally, the *Rosarium*, in its *rubedo* state, consolidates a self that can live without fusing with others and which experiences a passion for linking—with others and with one’s self—that is not disowned from one day to the next in fear of engulfment or contamination (Schwartz-Salant 2005, p. 157 – 159).
I am struck and a little disturbed by Schwartz-Salant’s remark that the second ten of the woodcuts do not so readily “lend themselves to a field interpretation”. I would have thought that the structural integrity of the analyst’s personality would be present in the field, even if not fore-grounded, in order for the work to be transacted. In the a-symmetry of the analytical conversation, the analyst’s capacity to embody, or to make a field registration, of states other than the watery ones of the first ten woodcuts shapes the stability of the container. There is no doubt that the rubedo developmental sequence, the one Jung omits, is important in the Rosarium. It is complicated because, as Schwartz-Salant points out, the later stage “experiences a passion for linking” without “fear of engulfment or contamination”.

I am showing here, in the congruence of ideas between Schwartz-Salant and McLean, their agreement that the first ten woodcuts are concerned with the albedo whitening phase, the second ten with the rubedo reddening and the final work. I quote them both to suggest that by using only the first ten of the woodcuts, Jung makes his point in relation to transference, but does not extend it as far as the woodcuts, in relation to the individuation process, would support.

To support my own conjecture about the experiential value to the analysand of maturational states present in the analyst, I turn to Edward F. Edinger, Los Angeles Jungian analyst and interpreter of alchemical symbolism. He writes, of The Risen Christ, the filius philosophorum:

I understand this image . . . to refer to the creation of a psychic substance that has a nontemporal or eternal dimension to it, a kind of incorruptibility. It is an expression of the product of an ego that has experienced the process of individuation. This necessarily has a certain
hypothesised quality about it because it can’t be demonstrated in any
decisive, irrefutable way, but a great many images point to this idea and I
think it does no harm to state it explicitly. One can then entertain it and
see how it feels, see how the unconscious responds to having it stated so
explicitly (Edinger 1994, p.97).

Edinger’s treatment of Woodcut 20 seems to imply a useable accessibility, almost an
every-day quality, despite its place in the sequence. Since Jung makes clear that
individuation is more process than finally arrived-at product, perhaps the
individuation each of us achieves contains fleeting tastes or glimpses, but tastes or
glimpses none the less, of “the nontemporal or eternal dimension” central to this
woodcut.
Chapter 4

Alchemical Transference

To Begin

This chapter is on transference. Despite that The Psychology of the Transference is Jung’s major work on the subject, many sections of the 1946 essay of interest to us go by with no mention of transference and none of counter-transference.

My research task is to examine The Psychology of the Transference and how it works as a guide to the processes, experiences and geometries of transference. Jung addresses transference around the principle of resolution of opposites. These are symbolised as masculine/feminine, solar/lunar characteristics. They are also represented in the male and female human bodies of the woodcuts of the Rosarium philosophorum. The symbolic field Jung thus creates to discuss transference indicates the pluralism of psychic reality. Multiple understandings, arguably valid, seem to attach to the symbols and the way Jung interprets them. The principle, that as an aspect of psychological growth, opposites will learn to accommodate each other, is clear. What constitutes “opposite” is not necessarily clear at all, especially in a field created by male and female bodies which lose or find bits of themselves in each other, mating, in incestuous formations, to take from the other that which is necessary for completion. Contemporary biology now identifies the endless mutability of integrated systems. We are incorporated as dualities and opposites.
Through the transference keyhole and into Jung’s world

Transference and counter-transference, even if they are not discussed overtly, are present in the alchemical woodcuts, and therefore in the interactive field that Jung creates with the reader. The incestuous mating must happen, in order to move along in the *Rosarium* sequence, because the sequence, which does not get altered (much: Jung arbitrarily readjusts it), seems to be important. All of the mergers and separations that the woodcuts suggest may, in themselves, replicate the difficulty of extracting psyche from matter or matter from psyche, knowing that they may be, in the end, inseparable containers of each other. The *solve et coagula* across lapsable and intractable realms, across areas that can be changed and areas that refuse change, is revealed again, in the way Jung overtly and covertly works with alchemical transference. His representation of transference contains layer on associative layer. Jung’s writing, by “inquiring, not asserting, and not determining anything with final assurance” . . . may, in its replication of transference states, demand from the reader the increase in subtle recognition that transference phenomena require if they are to be apprehended.

Jung’s song is for two voices: one refrain is that consciousness is valuable, can always be increased and in itself holds a creative potency through which we can witness life unfolding. The other is that the unconscious, the primary relational matrix from which consciousness emanates, is limitless, is in part able to yield to phenomenal inquiry, and surrounds consciousness like the darkness that surrounds a lighted train moving through the night.
This Chapter

In this chapter I examine how, in his essay, Jung writes about transference. I wonder about what is overt / covert, what is stated, what is implied (and therefore equivocal, unresolved), and what else might be needed for a more complete picture of alchemical transference as depicted in *The Psychology of the Transference.*

Part of the difficulty in writing about alchemical transference extracted from *The Psychology of the Transference* is that Jung offers no definition of the process, no case material, only indirect clinical references. Jung’s work must therefore be supplemented by the thoughts of others.

Transference, Briefly

Transference is about unconscious material, held in the self, material that reveals itself in the presence of an other. It is about how the self is experienced in the other’s presence. The material of the personal unconscious is usually projected – that is, it is thrown by the subject onto the object, and attributed to the other, rather than the self. It then becomes possible to say, for example, “He keeps sticking his nose in,” rather than asking, “Am I a bit sensitive about collaboration?” or “She keeps mucking things up,” rather than “I am finding it hard to adapt to the way she works.” Painful affect, love and hate, creation and destruction, fear and loathing, blindness and ability to ‘see’ and much else,
might all be eventually acknowledged via projection onto the other, reclaimed by and for the self which grows in range and complexity through the process.

*The Psychology of the Transference* seems to indicate that there is much more to individuation than reclamation of projected contents. Reclamation, though, distinguishes the components that perform the work. It strengthens the ego, and leads to the formation of the structure Jung calls the self. Relationship between ego, self, and unconscious contents becomes increasingly subject to conscious awareness, revealing the distinct personality and the levels of awareness that exist between person and world. The individual aspect is crucial, because the life-form in the process of creation may follow identifiable stages, but the final product is of unique value.

*The Psychology of the Transference* symbolises the process. It begins with a sentence about the mystic marriage, the erotic relationship that draws “bodies” to the work of completing the self. Jung links transference with the *coniunctio oppositorum*, the hostile opposites, and the process of individuation. The work contains intra and inter – psychic components. The individuals concerned grow through their relationship, and separately. The relational aspects of the work are emphasised because clinical transference manifests in relationship where ‘therapy’ is practised, but transference applies in the wider world beyond the dyad. The making of Philosopher’s Stone and self, the alchemical and Jungian
equivalents, is a skilled and enigmatic business envisioned through a projected symbolic geometry and worked through body, soul and spirit.

Jung, in another essay first published in 1940 and in English in 1963, thinks about symbols derived from the continuum that is body, soul and spirit and is the ground of the genesis, transformation and transcendence of the alchemy that has entered his discourse in *The Psychology of the Transference*.

The symbols of the self arise in the depths of the body and they express its materiality every bit as much as the structure of the perceiving consciousness. The symbol is thus a living body, *corpus et anima*; hence the “child” is such an apt formula for the symbol. The uniqueness of the psyche can never enter wholly into reality, it can only be realized approximately, though it still remains the absolute basis of all consciousness. The deeper “layers” of the psyche lose their individual uniqueness as they retreat farther and farther into darkness. “Lower down,” that is to say as they approach the autonomous functional systems, they become increasingly collective until they are universalized and extinguished in the body’s materiality, i.e., in chemical substances. The body’s carbon is simply carbon. Hence “at bottom” the psyche is simply “world.” In this sense I hold Kerenyi to be absolutely right when he says that in the symbol the *world itself* is speaking. The more archaic and “deeper,” that is the more *physiological*, the symbol is, the more collective and universal, the more “material” it is. The more abstract, differentiated, and specific it is, and the more its nature approximates to conscious uniqueness and individuality, the more it sloughs off its universal character. Having finally attained full consciousness, it runs the risk of becoming a mere allegory which nowhere oversteps the bounds of conscious comprehension, and is then exposed to all sorts of attempts at rationalistic and therefore inadequate explanation (Jung 1963, ¶ 291).
Noting the Plurality in Jung’s Alchemical Transference

What transference is, is not made explicit, or is taken for granted, or is demonstrated rather than defined, or is implied, or is left unresolved in *The Psychology of the Transference*. These are all important, arguably organisational or allegorical ways of thinking about it, especially in an essay that has been thought about, re-translated, re-edited and had a new foreword added to the extent that this one has. Contents formed, half formed, possibly formed, or ideas Jung is beginning to think, thinking clearly, or just beginning to intuit, find congruence with the watery medium of the *Rosarium* images and the *solve et coagula* of the work.

Sally Kester, Zurich trained, Perth based Jungian analyst, expresses frustration about the lack of transference specifics in *The Psychology of the Transference*. She goes on to describe the healing transformative power of archetypal material Jung is dealing with, considering all twenty of the images, but begins with her frustration.

. . . ‘The Psychology of the Transference’, . . . proves my point that Jung is maddening. For in his actual commentary he seldom mentions the word ‘transference’, and never the term ‘countertransference’; nor does he give a single case example, nor even an abstract description of the typical dynamics of the consulting room in relation to his material. Instead he gives a commentary on a selection—half in fact—from a series of twenty woodcuts done in the mid-sixteenth century to an earlier text, the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, the ‘Rosary’ or ‘Rose-garden of the Philosophers’, which is one of the major surviving texts of alchemy. ‘Philosophers’ in this context means ‘philosophical alchemists’, those whose pursuit was summarised in the quotation from the alchemist Senior, which the *Rosarium* uses: ‘Aurum nostrum non est aurum vulgi’, (CW 12, par 40; CW 16 par 418) ‘Our gold is not the vulgar gold, that is, the metal gold’, transmuted from base metals, but the ‘philosophical gold’, the inner gold of transformation in the soul (Kester 2007, p.1).
The indirectness, mystery and plurality inherent in transference is concentrated in the woodcuts, but they are only part of the essay’s texts, one of its languages. The *Rosarium* symbols are of man and woman, sometimes clothed, sometimes naked, sometimes half-present or half-missing, sometimes represented only by bits, sometimes with the addition of wings or other symbols. The masculine/feminine bodies symbolise complex factors. The stark, freeze-framed images may indicate intra-psychic states, or the field states of relationship, or absence of relatedness. Perhaps they are to inspire: They were conceived in a Frankfurt where the random, heavy-handed social cleansing of the 1486 *Malleus Malificarum* (Hammer of Witches) had been replaced by the combative righteousness of the Reformation and Counter Reformation. Jung describes alchemy as an undercurrent to the Christianity visible on the surface. Conditions existed for the primitive seeming, ambiguous *Rosarium* images to be enigmatic, anonymous, and defiantly insistent on the equal representation of masculine and feminine facets in alchemical transformation, the creation of gold that is not the vulgar gold. In the history of alchemy the symbolic use of gendered opposites was established long before this time. McLean notes:

The *Rosarium* as a text is not a work of the kind of spiritual alchemy we find later in the sixteenth century in the output of Mylius, Maier, Fludd, and the Rosicrucian alchemists. It does not deal directly with the spiritual principles of alchemy and state these as a coherent philosophy in the text, but rather this spiritual alchemy is incorporated into the series of illustrations. It was only later in the sixteenth century and particularly during the Rosicrucian period, that alchemists felt free to express the profound truths of their spiritual philosophy in the form of words. Until that time, in the alchemical tradition the spiritual principles were still only expressed in symbols (McLean 2008, p.1).
Jung invests in the symbols of the *Rosarium* a plurality of meanings. He introduces a series of configurations to which the symbols relate. These are:

- The primary pattern of the alchemist, working alone.

- The two-person analytical conversation.

- The two person-X-two interaction of the marriage quaternio which involves conscious and unconscious content, and “a curious counter-crossing of the sexes” (Jung 1946 ¶ 421). He proposes an unconscious feminine/anima opposite in the male, a masculine /animus opposite in the female, counter-balancing conscious direction, resulting in four points from which energy rises.

- Jung’s identification of particular behaviours as evidence of animus in a woman, or anima in a man.

- Jung’s identification of particular behaviours as evidence of animus or anima contents with a neutral or generic value, without direct attribution to a man or a woman.

- Jung’s own acknowledgment of the interpretive difficulties in alchemical material.
The *Rosarium* woodcuts (eleven called ten of the twenty), originally to carry the iconography of the unconscious processes of the individual alchemist, interpreted by Jung to symbolise the analytic two.

In line with the *solve et coagula*, all these configurations indicate a plurality of interpretive orientations, and orientations that might be applied, and flickering instability in the conceptual and interactive field. In Section 1 of the *Introduction* Jung introduces Freud’s idea of transference as a replication of infantile dynamics played out on the person of the doctor as “new editions of old conflicts” (Jung 1946 ¶358, footnote 14). He credits Freud with the term “transference”. He also credits Freud with the discovery of the “counter-transference” (Jung 1946 ¶358, footnote 16), the only time in the essay, I believe, that the term is mentioned, despite its symbolised pervasiveness in the woodcuts. He distinguishes his own transference approach from Freud’s. “In Freudian technique the doctor tries to ward off the transference as much as possible” (Jung 1946 ¶358) where Jung’s way is to mix the substances of the analytic two “so that both are altered” (*ibid*). Jung also uses the term “incest” in relation to the specific content of the transference (Jung 1946 ¶362) and also in relation to the family that the analytic pair enters through the transference, both parties bringing family structures and systems that shape transference forms and compensations, fluidly, fixedly, alchemically.
There are many dimensions and shifts in scale beyond the personalistic for us to notice in relation to his demonstration of how transference works. Transference communicates its existence in words, pictures, and our own unconscious, imaginative responses as we move between the text forms, noticing what is said and what is not said, what we can recognise and what eludes us. Any interpretation of Jung’s essay requires the reader to look at it, subjectively and objectively reference it, and to decide what it there, what is not and what is in between what must be added or subtracted so meaning results. The essay, like transference, is richly equivocal, and able to accept multiple, complex projections.

Marie-Louise von Franz, Jung’s collaborative partner in alchemical investigation for close to forty years, draws attention to the parallel:

. . . the alchemists, in observing and experiencing their symbols and in their written descriptions, worked without any conscious religious or scientific program, so that their conclusions are spontaneous, uncorrected impressions of the unconscious with very little conscious interference, in contrast to other symbolic material which has always been revised. Therefore it is very gratifying to discover that certain products of the unconscious in modern people who, with a natural kind of scientific attitude, a minimum of prejudice, and an attitude of inner withdrawal, observe what comes up without drawing hasty speculative conclusions–with results, however, which are very similar. The unprogrammed approach, so to speak, is common to both alchemy and analytical psychology (Von Franz, 1980, p.40).
Transference, Alchemy, Individuation

In the 1946 essay, Jung probes again the psychology of religion, using alchemical studies, a secularised and individualised form and Christianity’s undercurrent, to project his thoughts onto an enlarged screen to escape his ‘egocentric prison’. I would argue that in this essay, Jung links transference with individuation, wondering how far the experience of it might be taken phenomenally. Andrew Samuels asks the obvious question:

Why choose alchemy, of all things, as the root metaphor for the healing process of psychotherapy? Why did he make his most important book on the transference take the form of an elaborated and expansive commentary on a sixteenth-century alchemical tract, the *Rosarium Philosophorum*?

Jung thought that alchemy, if regarded metaphorically, was a precursor of the modern study of the unconscious and therapeutic concern for the transformation of personality (Samuels 2006, p.186).

I wonder if Jung regards alchemy as more than metaphor. It is, arguably, a more embodied, fluid management approach to harmonise body, soul and spirit into an integrated system than the religious alternatives or other psychological systems, so he incorporates into his thinking, increasing analytical psychology’s dimensions.

Comments cited previously by Wehr indicate that who Jung was at this time of his life, in body, soul and spirit terms, is a relevant factor to consider in relation to his writing. Jung had a second serious heart attack in November, 1946. We see a Jung struggling to ‘existentially integrate’ his experiences of ‘new dimensions of spiritual reality.’ Jung also appears to be determined to add, consciously, his newly
experienced self to his pre-existing self structures, like a new wing on the old house, or like an incarnation of the myths where the old king dies, to be replaced by a newer version. Alchemical transference and individuation may be the ideas that are elastic or durable enough as projected models, for this purpose. If we remember Kester’s complaint that there is no case material present, no clinical detail, it is a complaint that stands absolutely at one level, but at another becomes one I query. What is present is Jung’s own transference to material in body, soul and spirit, to alchemy for its object value as guide to his enhanced spiritual reality, and to the *Rosarium philosophorum* as vehicle to carry provocative ideas that require exploration, formally into his discourse. Transference is process, and his own is the case under examination.

I am speculating that *The Psychology of the Transference* may be treated as Jung’s study of the process in himself. It offers us material being ‘intellectually penetrated, scientifically organised’ (Jung stays in the guise of analytical psychologist but it is a loose garment – he made it himself) and ‘existentially integrated’ as Jung wonders what individuation and transference mean in his own case. He writes about what is happening, but so indirectly that many layers of it become almost invisible, perhaps because they can be barely seen by him.

Because I believe Jung expands the relationship between transference and individuation, I will introduce that concept. Esther Harding, another analyst to take up the task of ‘translating’ Jung to followers, explains:
The term individuation means becoming whole and therefore implies the necessity of reconciling the conscious and the unconscious parts of the psyche. In practice the process involves two steps. The first is that of searching out and recognizing all the scattered parts of the psyche and bringing them together; the second is that of amalgamating and co-ordinating them, together with the energies that inhere in them, so that they will make a meaningful whole – a cosmos, not a chaos. These two processes naturally go on simultaneously in actual life (Harding 1973, pp. 310-311).

She writes about phenomenal layers encountered in the psyche, as exploration moves from personal unconscious and shadow, to collective unconscious elements lying “nearest to the conscious psyche and personified as anima and animus”.

The deeper layers of the unconscious are represented by other archetypal figures, which appear from time to time in dreams and play their ambiguous role in myth and religion. . . problems connected with the remote and inaccessible regions of the collective unconscious become more and more indefinable and abstruse the farther we go, till our baffled understanding halts before impenetrable darkness. About this part of the problem, therefore, we can say only that it consists in achieving a satisfactory relation to the nonpersonal energy of the unconscious, the source of life itself, which is manifested in or expressed by the archetypes, and that some transformation of this energy is accomplished by the work done on the psyche during the quest for individuation.

When the shadow and the soul figure (anima or animus) are progressively assimilated by an individual in the course of his psychological development, an increase in the range and intensity of his consciousness is achieved, for a certain portion of the unconscious has been redeemed and added to that part of the psyche presided over by the ego (op.cit., pp. 312-313).

Jung seems to be increasing the range and intensity of his consciousness, after being dunked in regions inaccessible. He writes as if the drive to record his thoughts is sustaining, and as if the struggle to be human is to bear one’s burdens.
and make a life of it all, using what happens as primary data / *prima materia*.

Returning to him, in Autumn 1945, we find a change of mind:

> Although I originally agreed with Freud that the importance of the transference could hardly be overestimated, increasing experience has forced me to realize that its importance is relative. The transference is like those medicines which are a panacea for one and pure poison for another. In one case its appearance denotes a change for the better, in another it is a hindrance and an aggravation, if not a change for the worse, and in a third it is relatively unimportant. Generally speaking, however, it is a critical phenomenon of varying shades of meaning and its absence is as significant as its presence (Jung, 1946, p.ix).

Jung distinguishes his views from Freud’s, attesting the relative value of transference as a possible but not obligatory configuration of the analytical relationship. Joseph Schwartz offers a larger but concise summary of the relative positions:

Jung’s approach to the transference was far more circumspect than that of Freud because the contents of the unconscious for Jung contained potentially overpowering past experiences from the entire history of the human race. In this vision Jung attained a model of psychotic processes, long an interest of his, in which consciousness dissolves leaving the individual helpless in the face of a chaotic battering from his or her unconscious. That Jung should arrive at such a model where Freud did not may be related to a psychotic break Jung experienced in childhood, making him sensitive to the existence of terrifyingly chaotic mental states (Winnicott, 1964). Jung distinguished sharply between Freud’s concept of the transference – a set of feeling states occurring in the analytic dialogue, and his own ideas of transference phenomena, which expressed the far more complex and problematic collective unconscious, the psychological reality of archetypal images that is mixed in with individual psychology (Jung 1946).
Through the transference keyhole and into Jung’s world

. . . In Freud’s most developed model the unconscious is not a noun – a storage tank of repressed material – but an adjective describing the most general and important property of mental processes. In Freud’s psychology, it is not simply that some mental processes are unconscious but that mental processes ‘are in themselves unconscious’ (Freud 1915b).

. . . Jung, on the other hand, saw the unconscious not as an adjective but as a noun. The unconscious in Jung’s psychology was not simply a repository for repressed material but a repository for (unconscious) memories of the entire human race (Schwartz 1999, pp. 135-137).

Other Jungian Writers on Transference

I will now engage with some other writers on transference, beginning with one exception, a much-quoted passage of Jung’s:

The enormous importance that Freud attached to the transference phenomenon became clear to me at our first personal meeting in 1907. After a conversation lasting many hours there came a pause. Suddenly he asked me out of the blue, “And what do you think about the transference?” I replied with the deepest conviction that it was the alpha and omega of the analytical method, whereupon he said, “Then you have grasped the main thing” (Jung 1946 ¶ 358).

This, to me, is quite an extraordinary passage of writing, rendering overt the timeless, past and future character of transference material. First, Jung quotes a forty-year-old conversation word for word to demonstrate that transference phenomena continue to work themselves into new relationships in the psyche, seemingly never finally integrated. It is hard to read the alpha and omega, beginning and end phrase without remembering by association that Christ—in Jung’s world symbol of psychic completeness or individuation, and subject of
Woodcut 20 – was referring to himself as beginning and end. They seem unconsciously prescient here, Jung dipping into his Christian metaphors in his first conversation with the Jewish doctor, who assures Jung he grasps his meaning. There is a meta-conversation occurring and multiple interpretive layers forming, for later recognition and sharing. I wonder if Jung notes his ‘deepest conviction’ as belonging to the ‘uncomplicated personal relationship’ arrow of the quaternio, or sardonically, ironically. Does he, as he writes, pause with wonder at the timelessly apposite quality of unconscious phenomena, offered here as live transference data, then and now, in Jung as case study?

Harriet Gordon Machtiger might see this conversation in transference countertransference terms. Capturing the fluid, timelessness quality of them as phenomena, she writes:

Although it is true that the actual term countertransference was originally introduced by Freud in 1910, it was Jung who, though rarely using the term in his writing, managed to incorporate its meaning actively within the context of analysis (Machtiger 1995, p. 211).

I believe my conclusion about their conversation as transference and countertransference is supported by her statements, following. She captures something applicable to the mental shifts, the dormant potency in the original exchange, and solve et coagula across a forty year interval.
Countertransference and transference projections are not composed of old contents alone, but also include contents that have yet to be evoked. The point where they meet is in the interstitial area of a shared experience. As mentioned earlier, the archetypal aspects of the countertransference-transference have their roots in the shared unconscious relationship between analyst and patient, in what Jung has called “participation mystique” and Winnicott has termed metaphorical space or potential space (1953), an intermediate space between fantasy and reality. This shared experience facilitates the activation of the transcendent function and results in an opportunity for healing and growth on the part of both patient and analyst. The transcendent function furthers the process of individuation by creating a transition from one attitude to another, or one stage of development to another, by the utilization of symbols (Machtiger 1995 p. 214).

Aldo Carotenuto might recognize their conversation as a different expressive form of transference. He attends to different components in the alchemy.

Transference is an essential part of therapy, both because it recreates the model of an emotional event particular to each patient, in an ideal setting, and because it is only by living out an emotional storm that the patient in analysis—and incidentally, also anyone outside the setting—finally sheds his masks and disguises and discovers himself. It is above all in transference love that the patient reveals himself for what he is and not for what he would like to be or thinks he is (which is what occurs in any case when one falls in love). It is at this point only that the analyst truly knows his patient because it is only by falling in love that an individual’s true face is revealed, indicating the correct course of a human affair (Carotenuto 1991 p.113).

Love, transference love, hovers at the edge of The Psychology of the Transference, as another theme that does not expressly receive development by Jung but is present. The human figures of the woodcuts are lovers, love—as well as hate, fragment, destroy. The words “love,” “sexual” and “erotic” are used by Jung as he writes. That Freud’s and Jung’s relationship might ultimately have assisted the revelation of their true faces could only be hinted at, all those years later. Biographer
Ronald Hayman, writing of Jung in the late 1940s, as Jung was ascertaining what he could realistically sustain work wise, makes an observation that may be relevant. He writes (it is around April, 1947) about Jung’s work with John Layard, who arrived to continue work begun before the war.

His [Jung’s] reputation had gone on growing as his stamina and patience dwindled, while his early homosexual trauma still made it harder for him to accept a strong transference from a man than from a woman. Layard was one of those who suffered from this resistance to transference.

Yielding to persuasion from Emma, Jung finally agreed to see the desperate Englishman every day for ten days on condition they had no psychological discussion. They sat in deck chairs, and so far as Layard could remember afterwards, Jung did nothing but praise himself and attack Freud. Before they had met ten times, Jung announced: ‘This is the last time I shall see you’ (Hayman, 2001. p.393).

Hayman’s speculation here adds some undeveloped data to identify possible additional developmental specifics being worked in Jung.

Nathan Schwartz-Salant, in this sweeping, summarising moment which gathers post-Jungian contributions about transference and countertransference, writes:

Our understanding of the complexities of transference and countertransference dynamics becomes clearer as contributions about their underlying processes, rooted in early infant-mother conflicts, pour in from numerous clinicians with various points of view. We have come a long way since Breuer fled from his patient’s sexual fantasies; we have come through a period when the countertransference was thought to be a regrettable failing and into a new domain, in more recent years, where we are becoming more comfortable with the transference / countertransference process as a mode of transferring information. An analyst’s reactions are now, in many quarters, looked to for objective information about the patient, and the patient’s communications and
dreams are recognized as indicating accurate perceptions of the analyst and the state of the analytical process. . . . Our knowledge seems to be mounting, and bridges are more easily crossed between different schools of thought. The existence of archetypal elements in the transference is now less obscure, and as Kleinian contributions are assimilated by the psychoanalytic community, we can imagine closer ties forming between Jungian and non-Jungian approaches . . . (Schwartz-Salant 1995 p.3).

Jean Kirsch offers another broad-based description to suggest that within Jungian circles transference and countertransference are understood to carry a range of meanings:

Transference is a term with a wide spectrum of meaning in Jungian analysis, ranging from a classical psychoanalytic usage to an open-ended and generic usage that is uniquely Jung’s. This may confuse a newcomer, for the word will be employed narrowly to mean the projection of infantile material upon the analyst and also generally to encompass the whole analytic situation, including its archetypal dimension. Between these poles lies an area of common usage slanting towards the latter, signifying the transformative union that may occur in the unconscious between patient and analyst. It also includes what is formally known as countertransference. Some authors say transference-countertransference when indicating this kind of dual usage, but often in Jungian parlance “the transference” is used loosely and inclusively (Kirsch, 1995, p. 170).

The many possible ways of thinking about transference that Kirsch reflects are part of Jung’s legacy. *The Psychology of the Transference*, a demonstration of growth of individual consciousness and value of individual process has resulted in a training, for analysts, directed to individuation. This results in a pluralism of possibilities around the loosely present core Jung provides in *The Psychology of the Transference*, and the expectation of multiple understandings of transference.


**To Conclude**

From reading *The Psychology of the Transference* for how he writes about transference, it is evident that for Jung it sometimes is the crux of long-term work, sometimes is of relative value, sometimes it is poison, sometimes it barely registers. From reading for how he demonstrates transference occurring in himself as he does his ‘existential integration’, it becomes a different sort of study in how transference, inseparable from individuation, works, in the mature personality. Transference reiterates Jung’s determination to allow psychology to include pathology and madness, life and death, without the restriction of a normalising discourse. It is unpredictable and meandering. He makes clear that transference occurs in the analytical dyad where its energies may be experienced or re-experienced in microcosm, and elsewhere. In the dyad, however, through access to the mind of the analyst observing its phenomenology, and through shared states of inter-subjectively, its contents become more overt, and the possibility that compulsion might be transformed to choice becomes more realistic. In his 1946 essay transference seems to be related to his personal, ongoing struggle to be human irrespective of what befalls, and to shed light on the nature of our minds. The refrain is that consciousness is invaluable. Like the Ariadne thread, you hold it to enter the heart of unconscious matter, and come back again. But the unconscious holds the greater treasure and mystery, and may never be fully known unless ways can be found to inhabit it.
Chapter 5

The Mercurial Fountain

We are the metals’ first nature and only source
The highest tincture of the Art is made through us
No fountain and no water has my like
I make both rich and poor both whole and sick.
For healthful can I be and poisonous.

To Begin

In the next ten chapters I will write responses, based on my experience of and thoughts about transference, to each of the images of the Rosarium philosophorum. In the way that I maintain that Jung, in The Psychology of the Transference, provides for the reader’s consideration his own transference to the images and the alchemical material, I will do the same. I also replicate his struggle with alchemy. I will not pursue the hermeneutics of it as he did, but rather use it selectively, associatively, as metaphor for the plurality of psychic reality. In the more than sixty years since Jung wrote, theoretical speculation has grown on the nature of alchemical transference. I will therefore bring into the discussion other writers contemporary with Jung, post-Jungian writers, and those outside the Jungian field whom I have read in my work to understand Jung’s essay and apply it, in relation to my own transference phenomena.
This Chapter

I will write from the perspective of what I have found to be present and absent, overt and covert in Jung’s treatment of The Mercurial Fountain as I use, as a guide to my experience of transference, The Psychology of the Transference. I will draw attention to its languages. I will explore the symbols of The Mercurial Fountain in relation to my own transference responses, extending the themes of solar and lunar developmental tasks and the solve et coagula.

The Mercurial Fountain

The Mercurial Fountain is, in my opinion, a universe, an entire cosmology, bursting with cultural forms, loaded with symbols to be read as discrete and part of a unified whole. It is one of the Rosarium woodcuts whose design includes a frame, and one of two where words and labels are design elements. It contains a circle inside a square. It has a reticular process whereby water falls, is collected, rises to fall again as it consumes itself to make itself. It is populated by life forms and the order and knowledge that the human mind imposes, yet is unpeopled.

I understand The Mercurial Fountain symbols to represent the universe, the world and the individual—as the pre-ordained order that already exists, the continuity into which each of us is born, and the place where new realisations will be generated. The symbolic neo-natal quality of new realisations lead to the Fountain also being called the uterus (Jung 1946, ¶ 402). I am supported in this contention by the text of the Rosarium Philosophorum.
Therefore, by knowing the natural roots you shall the better make
your work of them. Because I cannot any other way express or
explain our stone, nor form it by any other name, it is manifest by
that which went before, that our stone is compounded of four
elements, both rich and poor have it, and it is found in every place,
it is likened to all things and is also compounded of body, soul and
spirit and it is altered from nature into nature even to the last degree
of perfection (Rosarium Philosophorum Para 3, Part 1, p. 2).

Jung writes about the Fountain, thinking alchemically.

This picture goes straight to the heart of alchemical symbolism, for
it is an attempt to depict the mysterious basis of the opus. It is a
quadratic quaternity characterized by the four stars in the four
corners. These are the four elements. Above, in the centre, there is
a fifth star which represents the fifth entity, the “one” derived from
the four, the quinta essentia. The basin below is the vas
Hermeticum, where the transformation takes place (Jung 1946, ¶
402).

Jung in the Water of the Fountain

I am using The Psychology of the Transference as a guide to the experience,
theories, relationships and geometries of transference. I contend that while Jung’s
writing on The Mercurial Fountain reflects his personal transference to the
material, it may be important to remember that Jung was never himself analysed.

He worked, using the alchemical material as the other mind. John Beebe writes:

According to Jung’s own account, ‘Aside from Theodore Flournoy
[William James] was the only outstanding mind with whom I could
construct an uncomplicated conversation’ (Taylor 1980, p.161) and
that conversation, according to a 1958 letter Jung wrote to Kurt Wolff,
the editor of Pantheon books, lasted ‘a little over an hour’ (ibid. 1980
p.160). It must not have been hard for Jung, on the basis of the other
experiences he was having at the time–with Freud, Sabina Spielrein,
Toni Wolff, Johann Honegger, and Emma Jung–to feel confirmed in
his earlier intuition, dating at least from his doctoral dissertation of
1902, that the psyche is autonomous and that its complexity lives a
life of its own (Beebe, 1994, p.22).
I think it is possible to see in alchemy and Jung’s projections his own early material being worked. I wonder whether the super-detail he pursues in relation to alchemical symbols becomes a transference language he applies to contain some of his own unconscious contents and feelings. It enables him to symbolically manipulate his early forms of intercourse, his own neonatal states, bubbling in his own *Mercurial Fountain* at the time of his writing. I gave a brief sample of it earlier in this chapter and offer another now.

This structure reveals the tetrameria (fourfold nature) of the transforming process, already known to the Greeks. It begins with the four separate elements, the state of chaos, and ascends by degrees to the three manifestations of Mercurius in the inorganic, organic, and spiritual worlds; and, after attaining the form of Sol and Luna (i.e., the precious metals gold and silver, but also the radiance of the gods who can overcome the strife of the elements by love), it culminates in one and indivisible (incorruptible, ethereal, eternal) nature of the *anima*, the *quinta essentia*, *aqua permanens*, tincture, or *lapis philosophorum*. This progression from the number 4 to 3 to 2 to 1 is the “axiom of Maria,” which runs in various forms through the whole of alchemy like a *leitmotiv* (Jung 1946 ¶ 404).

Mara Sidoli, child and adult analyst, trained at the Society of Analytical Psychology in London. Her book, *When the Body Speaks*, “applies Jungian concepts and theories to infant development to demonstrate how archetypal imagery formed in early life can permanently affect a person’s psychology” (Sidoli 2000, back cover). Sidoli explains:

> There are circumstances in which the flow of communication and emotional exchange between mother and baby are disturbed for a variety of reasons, such as the baby’s fragility, or the mother’s insensitivity, or external events such as traumas, premature separations, illnesses, or death. In these cases, those areas of emotional experiences often remain unnamed because the baby has no words for them.
. . . One might say that, for instance, in the case of Jung, when the maternal “reverie” failed to perform the transformation for the baby, the beta elements remained raw and primitive and manifested themselves as disturbing, unintegrated “crazy parts” in an otherwise functioning psyche. These (psychotic) beta elements are often not verbalizable and manifest themselves in somatic form as well as in uncontainable affects and grandiose fantasies. In Jungian terms, we may say that these primitive elements—which he called “psychoid”—have remained in asymbolic, unnamed form (Sidoli, 2000, p.52).

Jung, in intense mode, dissolving and sorting himself in the alchemical detail, is familiar in *The Psychology of the Transference*. This process he demonstrates may be an essential one in everyone’s transference work. This intense focus on following a detail is a pattern within his recognisable style, and a consistent element in transference formations the observer may notice. Sidoli’s comments give this characteristic a speculative psychological value, making it into a factor that may be picked up in the countertransference. The countertransference—the embodied response of the analyst to the transference of the analysand—is another covert aspect of Jung’s essay, but the woodcuts carry it as a fluid idea.

**Other Writers on The Mercurial Fountain**

I will present several writers whose orientations to the fountain differ considerably. Some enter the alchemical interpretation and of those who do, what each sees is in some way unique. Some interpret the woodcut as containing material related to the analytical relationship. Some engage briefly, some probe the detail. I offer both approaches to indicate the range of precedents for projective interpretation. With both approaches, one is able to witness projections
moving from the unconscious mind of the observer onto the dense iconography of
the fountain. Transference contents reveal themselves initially through projected
material. The *Rosarium* woodcuts are able to accept complex projections, as these
contrasting excerpts will demonstrate.

A brief aside: In Marie-Louise von Franz’s lecture series, later published in
*Alchemy*, an audience member asks a question which she answers.

**Question:** Can you relate without projection?

**Dr. von Franz:** I don’t think so. Philosophically speaking, you
cannot relate without projection, but there is a subjective
feeling status in which you sometimes feel that your
projection fits, and that there is no need to change it, and
another status in which you feel uneasy, thinking that it
ought to be corrected. But no projection is ever corrected
without such a feeling of uneasiness (von Franz 1980, p.35).

I now return to other writers on *The Mercurial Fountain*, beginning with
Jungian analyst Jean Kirsch who practices analytical psychology in Palo Alto,
California. She describes the fountain with little entanglement in its symbolic
forms.

The first picture shows us the Mercurial fountain surrounded by the
sun, moon and stars—a symbolic representation of the theory and
practice of alchemy. Jung informs us that the alchemist’s actual
knowledge of matter is not reflected by this arcane symbolism, from
which he draws the conclusion that the alchemist is telling us in these
pictures about his projections into the work. He reminds us of
Goethe’s *Faust* in which the alchemist “discovers that what he has
projected into his retort is his own darkness, his unredeemed state, his
passion, his struggles to reach the goal. i.e., to become what he really
is” (ibid., par. 407). Hence, the stage is set for an allegorical
representation of the individuation process (Kirsch 1995 p.173).
Christopher Perry is a Training Analyst of the Society of Analytical Psychology and of the British Association of Psychotherapists. He offers a fuller description, noting the Fountain’s oppositional elements and potential dangers as he develops it as a metaphor for the analytical relationship.

In Picture 1, the “Mercurial Fountain,” we see a fountain fed from below and above—the conscious and unconscious aspects of the relationship between analyst and patient, who in terms of analysis, are relatively impersonal. Both may think of each other as virginal, dangerous, and life-giving. Both are embarking on an unknown journey, and both have their resistances. The two parties can be transformed by Mercurius, the tricky one, he who abides at the threshold (of change); but there is a warning of which all analysts will take note in their assessment:

No fountain and no water has my like
I make both rich and poor men whole or sick
For deadly can I be and poisonous.

The fountain, the source, can therefore be the wellspring of psychic life, but Jung also likens it to the *foetus spagyricus* ("alchemical foetus"): i.e., in developmental terms, to a neonatal state from which a new insight will grow. In this first woodcut we also see the masculine and feminine portrayed as sun and moon, leitmotifs which permeate the series. This has often caused confusion, particularly in cases where the analyst and patient are of the same sex. We cannot take Jung concretely here. Rather we are left to explicate for ourselves the complexities arising from the admixture of different biological and psychological contra-sexual combinations, as well as different attitude and function types. We, like him, have to struggle with the greatest possible confusion. Hetero/homo-sexual feelings, impulses and phantasies need to blossom: i.e. to be symbolized so as to be lived through (Perry 198 p.149).

Perry draws attention to a neo-natal state, from which insights that form in the *Fountain* are generated through opposite forces becoming part of each other, particularly contra-sexual ones. I respond to his mention of “biological and psychological contra-sexual combinations” where felt and thought dimensions
Through the transference keyhole and into Jung’s world

reference the alchemical body, soul, spirit ones and where phylogenetic states provide the material for ontogenic transformations.

Edward Edinger, a deceased Los Angeles Jungian analyst, enters the alchemical discourse, following Jung, translating the same material of alchemical language and symbolism using different language and energy from Jung’s. He sees in *The Mercurial Fountain* that the “picture represents both the *prima materia* and the *ultima materia*. It’s really outside the sequence. It belongs just as much at the end as at the beginning; it’s alpha and omega, representing both ends of the process” (Edinger 1994 p.40).

I accept his statement that ‘it’s really outside the sequence’ as one of confirmation because in my mind I order the *Rosarium* woodcuts in rose shape, with the *Fountain* at the centre. Jung’s presentation of them in linear sequence, pages apart from each other, is arguably a distortion of their relational language, their geometry of the rose, and becomes another necessary re-arrangement that as reader, my imagination makes. To my mind the *Fountain* at the centre is the source of energy and matter for every transformation, the symbol of renewal, and the container for whatever is developed. It is the timeless matrix that is the unconscious, the uterus, the tomb; and the sarcophagus, the flesh eater, from which the old form rises to be born again, to die, to be born again.

Edinger, as I do, sees a world and a genesis story in the symbols. He does not, though, mention the six planets which are also metals (plus seventh Mercury
Mercurius) present as diamonds around the fountain, from where they amplify historical symbols, arrayed as elements of medieval and earlier cosmologies.

There’s a reference to an ancient idea that the four elements first derived from two vapors. Initially there were two vapors – a smoky vapor and a watery vapor. The smoky vapor divided into two, becoming earth and air, and the watery vapor divided into two, fire and water. You can see that the two vapors spit out by the serpent then generate four six-pointed stars, one in each of the corners. Those signify the four elements: earth, air, fire, water. There is a fifth star in the center which signifies the quintessence or fifth entity, created by the unification of the four elements. And then on either side are the sun and moon (ibid).

In contrast, Nathan Schwartz-Salant shifts the emotional climate, the transference response in relation to the vapours, when he writes:

In alchemical tradition, the square that encloses the picture is an image of the hostile engagement of the opposites, leading to a state of chaos, an initial Oneness. When the analyst experiences this level of chaos he or she suffers a very disordering state. For it is common that the field induction from psychotic areas intrudes into the analyst’s awareness and has a fracturing effect upon his or her attention (Schwartz-Salant 2005, p.104).

Edinger and Schwartz-Salant demonstrate the plurality of projected interpretation that the fountain attracts and which co-exists in Jungian discourse. This passage occurs a little further into Edinger’s commentary:

. . . the images are cosmic (stars, sun and moon), inorganic (represented by the four elements and the vapors) and reptilian. This is what the foundation of the human psyche is. . . there’s nothing human about it. It isn’t even mammalian; it doesn’t even have the degree of connection with us that warm blood would give (Edinger 1994 p.42).
I am not sure whether the passage just quoted is Edinger’s opinion or established alchemical interpretation. But I seize on his direct reference to the biological here. Aware that my own transference material is often felt like tidal waves within, I search in the alchemical material for clues about how the alchemists write about and understand the literal body as they go about unifying the body, soul, spirit continuum of being. I seek confirmation of my intuition that alchemy intuitively anticipates ideas it has taken several centuries of research to confirm, often in other disciplines evolved since, concerning the structural and functional ground of feeling and thinking, of consciousness and unconsciousness within bodymind. The feet that stand on the earth and hold the fountain may be reptilian, may be cloven hooves or lion’s paws. A lion comes in later to eat the sun. The bifidus fire-breathing dragon is eel like, but has an animal, rodent-like, not reptilian, face. The words “animal, vegetable, mineral” are written, twice. I am not in agreement with Edinger, however, that any of the symbols are beyond human experience or substance, even the stars and the planets. Alchemy was always a mystic philosophy where the adept sought union with the ground of being. I suspect that if the alchemist could align the body, soul, spirit continuum, all of creation could be embodied. Transference states could be recognised as developmental language, neo-natal or spiritual states seeking to be named.

Arthur Versluis writes to assure that the work of alchemy involves the body directly.

The alchemists assure the seeker continually – pointing, as it were, directly to the sense of the matter – that the Work must take place within one vessel and is but one operation. . . . In addition, as if to confirm the obvious place of the transmutation, all references to the
Principles are in the possessive: it is always our Water, our Sulphur, our Salt, and not the elements the vulgar know by that name. In other words, the vase which contains the Orphic egg (the aludel in which transmutation takes place) is none other than within our own body, and the principles are nowhere if not within us – as are the very constellations, as Elias Ashmole pointed out in his *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (Versluis 1986, p.113).

Esther Harding, who trained with Jung and set up her analytical practice in New York, suggests a similar role for the body:

The hermetic vessel is oneself. In it the many pieces of psychic stuff scattered throughout one’s world must be collected and fused into one, so making a new creation. In it must occur the union of the opposites called by the alchemists the *coniunctio* or marriage. It is also the secret chamber of the miraculous transformation that will make the “precious gold” out of common metal, or, as it is also said, change the cheap and ignoble stone of nature into the “noble stone” of the philosophers. Some of the later alchemistic philosophers seem almost to have recognized that their opus was in reality performed on themselves. In the *Aureum vellus*, published in 1598, this is stated in practically so many words:

Study what thou art,
Wherof thou art a part,
What thou knowest of this art,
This is really what thou art.
All that is without thee,
Also is within,
Thus wrote Trismosin (Harding, 1973, p. 433).

Moving forward five or so centuries from *Rosarium* to present, to exemplify my suspicion of contemporary decoding of alchemical anticipations, we meet Antonio Damasio’s neurological research. The spirit of his work is sympathetic to alchemy. He is interested in how different areas of brain, developed at different times during our evolutionary history, operate separately and together, and how soma and psyche cooperate as aspects of body/soul/spirit, in the making of
consciousness. He substitutes empirical science and its language for alchemical intuition, to wonder about the same experiential states and organisational forms speculatively present in the iconographic strata of *The Mercurial Fountain*.

Further, I propose that human reason depends on several brain systems, working in concert across many levels of neuronal organisation, rather than on a single brain center. Both “high-level” and “low-level” brain regions, from the prefrontal cortices to the hypothalamus and brain stem, cooperate in the making of reason.

The lower levels in the neural edifice of reason are the same ones that regulate the processing of emotions and feelings, along with the body functions necessary for an organism’s survival. In turn, these lower levels maintain direct and mutual relationships with virtually every bodily organ, thus placing the body directly within the chain of operations that generate the highest reaches of reasoning, decision making, and, by extension, social behavior and creativity. Emotion, feeling and biological regulation all play a role in human reasoning. The lowly orders of our organism are in the loop of high reason (Damasio 2000 p.xiii).

Is Damasio’s loop anticipated in the symbolic water looping through the *Fountain*? Both attempt to understand human reasoning, how body and brain interact, how body, soul and spirit cooperate with each other. Both are working on how the processes might be symbolised, brought into thought and language as captured images of the inner world. And for a moment I would like to loop back to ancient Egypt, where alchemy has its origins, to the story of Isis and Osiris, sister brother, husband / wife, lunar / solar opposites. In their story Osiris is killed by his brother, his body parts scattered, and these are re-gathered by Isis and he is reassembled, his body made whole. It is a story of death and renewal. Von Franz. in *Alchemy* (1980) refers to this ancient story as the archetypal one on which many alchemical transformations, the *Rosarium philosophorum*, for example, are based. It is a symbolic story of death, dismemberment, transformation and
resurrection. I mention Isis and Osiris in passing because in their story, among the oldest in our tribe, the mystery of the biological base of psychological awareness, called body, soul, spirit in alchemy, or individuation by Jung, is being probed. From another angle, Damasio can be seen to do similar work and his work can be legitimately included in the many possible ways to regard the contents of the Fountain.

**Two Contrasting Views on the Fountain**

The two following writers on *The Mercurial Fountain* show the contrast in interpretation possible. Schwartz-Salant uses the *Rosarium philosophorum* woodcuts to demonstrate characteristics which appear in the inter-relational field which forms between analyst and analysand as states in the borderline personality which manifest as “distance and fusion exist simultaneously” (Schwartz-Salant 1989 p.112). He enters the alchemy, as I have noted previously, with more informed attentiveness than any other contemporary Jungian analyst. I quote his work to construct a contrasting position (with von Franz, to follow).

To summarize: in this picture we find a variety of ideas concerning the *opus*: primary is the imagery of the fumes of *Binarius* (the devil) - the dyadic form of Mercurius. The fumes are also known by the alchemists as the *massa confusa* or *prima materia*; they are hostile elements representing incompatible states ruled by splitting. These elements mix with the “lower waters” to create the confusing mixture of qualities of splitting and fusion states that we frequently meet in borderline conditions. The soul is represented here in a split “upper” and “lower” form, characterizing a mind-body, or spirit-matter split. If this woodcut were to represent a fully individuated psyche, the upper and lower parts of the woodcut would link at the apex of the Fountain (corresponding in tantric symbolism to the heart chakra). This woodcut depicts, instead, a different kind of connection: upper and lower spheres are related through the fumes (Schwartz-Salant 1989, p.112).
Schwartz-Salant, in his mention of tantric and chakra associations, supports my contention that body systems integrating with psychological ones are present in the alchemical symbolism.

Von Franz, like Schwartz-Salant, is interested in the third thing in therapy, the neonate born out of the two. In this contrasting interpretation she regards “the coniunctio as fountain, symbol for the meaningful flow of life” (von Franz, 1980, p.175). She, like Edinger, recognises in the symbol of the *Fountain* both *prima* and *ultima* states, and evidence of *coniunctio*, transference and individuation.

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

It is a very great paradox that liquid—the unformed water of life—and the stone— the most solid and dead thing—are, according to the alchemists, one and the same thing. That refers to those two aspects of the realization of the Self: something firm is born, beyond the ups and downs of life, and at the same time is born something very living which takes part in the flow of life, without the inhibitions or restrictions of consciousness (ibid p. 174).

These comments of von Franz, with reference to being in the flow of life ‘without the inhibitions or restrictions of consciousness’ touch on three things. First, they indicate a balance between solar and lunar forces, not necessarily present in some of the other writers’ comments where the *disiunctio* rather than
coniunctio is projected onto the Fountain’s symbols. Second, they draw attention to the shift in the relative value of ego and self, the capacity to fluidly embody each. Flow continues, and the universe turns in its course. Third, Von Franz is describing what Jung called the psychoid area, the zone of being / experience where coming into and falling out of being is experienced in an experiential state where chaos or creation are found. In a different symbolisation it may be the reverie state that exists between infant and care-giver. It might be the un-peopled autistic nothingness where we veg out, or the inner-space that holds the waking dream, or T.S. Eliot’s “still point of the turning world” (Eliot, 1974, p.191).

Von Franz’s comments also touch on “flow”, so crucial in transference, as an embodied process. It may be to do with the warm blood of mammals. It may be to do with the empathic qualities of the limbic areas of brain. In the attempts to grasp how the unity of body, soul and spirit are interconnected phenomenally, as “consciousness” is made via projection that is felt and thought, the literalness of the body’s processes, its materia, fascinated the alchemists. Transference is embodied: it is often felt in the body before it is thought. Countertransference depends on somatic responsiveness to the states of the experiencing other. Empathic states create webs of connection, so essential if the neonate is to be delivered and received, whether the neonate is newly born or is, in a therapeutic conversation, the expressive forms of a self as yet unborn. States described as projective identification or merger or participation mystique are not only destructive but also its opposite, allowing the co-created field to be present and sensed in developmentally specific ways. The energy of the primal matrix is in the Fountain. Optimal connection and disconnection are possible there.
Personal Transference to the Mercurial Fountain

In this next section I introduce a clinical conversation. Its purpose is to draw attention to current Jungian training occurring in Australia and New Zealand where infant observation, literal neonate study, is compulsory. This element is not necessarily present in all Jungian training. Awareness of infant, pre-symbolic states is consciously being developed to aid transference awareness and the way projected material may be developmentally valued.

In *The Mercurial Fountain*, each of the triple-fountain’s three spouts pours forth a distinct substance: *lac virginis*, *acetum fontis*, and *aqua vitae*. McLean describes these as:“ – the Virgin’s Milk (the feminine receptive lunar forces in the soul), the Spring of Vinegar (the masculine sharp, penetrating solar forces in the soul) and the Aqua Vitae, the water of life (the inner source of soul energies) (McLean, 2008, p.2).

Analytical Conversation 1

October 2008

She says: I had a sudden *Mercurial Fountain* insight in our Infant Observation meeting this week. We beheld a two week old infant sensing her mother’s milk, finding her way to it. The supervising Kleinian described the feeding as “the first intercourse”, this congress between nipple and mouth. We all involuntarily paused while that weighty phrase sank in.
As an intercourse, a *coniunctio*, we were witnessing two persons, two subjectivities, mating and unmating carefully, softly, in this first intercourse, two substances shaping and being shaped by each other. I was struck by how early and immediately in the life of the baby the *coniunctio / disiunctio* is seen, how pre-conscious, conscious and unconscious emergent/inner/outer worlds interact.

And I was struck by the space around the two – a pregnant sort of space for reverie, murmurings and the occasional complaint or lusty cry when something is misread or hurts.

Jung and the alchemists speak of neonatal states and the *Fountain* graphics convey them. Each beginning generates *materia* that might become a pattern within the plastic the neural, fleshy field that the baby is, or might allow a reworking of stuff the adult thought was set hard. Each receptive or penetrating act influences the life form as baby enters family, and family enters it, or as the analyst becomes active or passive in the life of the analysand.

He says: Three spouts, three substances entering the *Fountain*. Who’s who at any given moment gets swept away as they all dissolve in the dish then go back to being themselves, their changing selves. The process seems to need solar and lunar influences, three spouts spouting, sun, moon stars and smoke, three-toed feet, two headed monster and a strong bath, and entire laboratory that doubled as oratory where prayers were offered for the work.
She says: What each baby finds in the fountain is influenced by its caregivers and the baby’s own incipient self. What each analysand finds in the analyst will be influenced by how they’ve both drunk from the spouts and swum in the fountain.

He says: You seem to want to dissolve beginnings and endings into each other, then take them apart again. We could probably say that a steady diet of vinegar might be a bit corrosive; that virgin’s milk might be a bit incomplete although I think in some stories it has magical potency and maybe feeds unicorns, that *aqua vitae* might be too rich or rarefied by itself—for example. Transference is always live and dangerous.

She says: Dangerous. When you’re a naïve beginner seeking therapy that thought may not be able to be thought, you know. Perhaps it comes later. You realise that each pairing will create a different alchemy with at least some potential corrosion. You get the parent / the analyst you get and you begin the work, for better or worse, using or losing or finding what’s in you and the other. Jung probably says this in *The Psychology of the Transference*—not in so many words, of course, but the woodcuts sure scream it.
To Conclude

I have sought in this chapter to introduce The Mercurial Fountain and show different ways of thinking about it, extant in Jungian circles. I have demonstrated that the very personal nature of the psyche of each person will bring different languages and projections onto the way the Fountain is regarded and how it contributes to an understanding of transference processes. My personal interpretation is that its contents depict a coniunctio, a balanced but far from static state of flow where, with death as its counterweight, creation begins anew, ceaselessly. It is an analytical relationship where solar and lunar energies co-exist so that neonatal states can be born and endured. The Fountain symbolises the cooperative relationship that must exist between body, soul and spirit for the making of consciousness, and the different influences that will unbalance and disjunct it so the solve et coagula can continue.

I will conclude with two quotes, one which refers to the circular shape, the geometry of The Mercurial Fountain, one which refers to Jung’s choice of alchemy to understand transference.

The first one refers again to the contents of the Fountain as prima and ultima materia, and also to the state of being which contains the balance point or state of temporary integration which will de-integrate so the foetus spagyricus might form.

Circle, sphere and round are all aspects of the Self-contained, which is without beginning and end; in its preworldly perfection it is prior to any process, eternal, for in its roundness there is no before and no after, no time: and there is no above and no below, no space. All this can only come with the coming of light, of consciousness, which is
not yet present; now all is under sway of the unmanifest godhead, whose symbol is therefore the circle.

... 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 and the world is once more at rest (Neumann 1993, p.8).

The second quotation concerns beginnings and endings still, and the spread of material that alchemy implicitly brings to the work of transference. It restates Jung’s idea that transference occurs within the person, between persons, and between person and world.

The alchemists were fired with the beginnings of the modern spirit of inquiry, yet, as investigators of the nature of matter they were still half asleep. So, in their zeal to investigate those newly opened vistas, they projected their fantasies and dream images into matter. In effect, they dreamed a vast collective dream using chemical operations and materials as imagery and subject matter for that dream. Alchemy is that great collective dream and what makes it so important for us is that it’s the dream of our ancestors. The alchemists were rooted in the Western psyche which we’ve inherited, so their imagery, their fantasy, their dream, is our fantasy and our dream (Edinger op.cit., p.9).
Chapter 6

King and Queen

“Mark well, in the art of our magisterium nothing is concealed by the philosophers except the secret of the art which may not be revealed to all and sundry. For were that to happen, that man would be accursed; he would incur the wrath of God and perish of the apoplexy. Wherefore all error in the art arises because men do not begin with the proper substance, and for this reason you should employ venerable Nature, because from her and through her and in her is our art born and in naught else: and so our magisterium is the work of Nature and not of the worker.”

(Jung, quoting the *Rosarium philosophorum*, 1946, ¶ 411).

To Begin

Jung writes his largest, a forty paragraph response, ¶ 410–449, to *King and Queen*. This image represents the opposites emerging. King and Queen appear, dressed in their formal finery (though the King has bare feet)—their court clothes and crowns, their habits perhaps, and conventional attitudes. The sun nature attached to the masculine, the moon to the feminine, suggest many possible ways of linking to form a coniunctio, a union, a presentation of opposites.

In this chapter Jung develops his idea that there are really two couples to influence each other in the analytical conversation, a conscious one and an unconscious one. He develops a diagram, the marriage quaternio, to represent the
energies he sees present in the layered cross-over motif—of king and queen, sun and moon—a motif which carries through the next eight woodcuts. The quaternio is important because it is the basis of his conception of this as two-person, relational work, in contrast to the traditional dynamic of the alchemist working alone. It also introduces the crossing over conscious and unconscious contents, suggesting a relational field. He attaches to it his contra-sexual interpretation: that the masculine contains an unconscious feminine quality called anima; that the feminine contains an unconscious masculine quality called animus. Jung finds similar dynamics and precedents in an Icelandic and a Russian fairy tale.

This Chapter

This chapter has two focuses. One is the King and Queen woodcut, and what Jung and others write about it. The other is the diagram called the “marriage quaternio” and the implications this has for the recognition and expression of solar and lunar energies within the analytical conversation.

The marriage quaternio diagram is very alive in Jungian discourse and I will give it attention. The fairy tales attract only passing interest. The marriage quaternio—a depiction worth a thousand words, perhaps—is Jung’s prototypical representation of the conversation between male analyst and female analysand and locates the animus and anima energies. Post-Jungian thought is less comfortable with the anima/animus distribution in man or woman, preferring to think of them as unconscious energies without biological determinants. So I will look at several
re-workings of the quaternio, noting that the language used for the processes it represents has become increasingly aware of gender sensitivities.

**King and Queen**

Jung begins:

> The *arcanum artis*, or *coniunctio Solis et Lunae* as supreme union of hostile opposites, was not shown in our first picture; but now it is illustrated in considerable detail, as its importance derives, in a series of pictures. King and Queen, bridegroom and bride, approach one another for the purpose of betrothal or marriage (Jung, 1946, p. 410).

In this woodcut the opposites are revealed, are separate but not disconnected, are symbolised and embodied, and link in several ways. Jung notes its relationship to the first woodcut: “So once again we have an abbreviated recapitulation of the *opus*, i.e., of its deeper meaning as shown in the first picture (Jung 1946, ¶ 411).

Edinger also refers this woodcut to the one before:

> In the first picture we had a representation of the original unity, and now that unity has been split in two. The king and queen face each other. There’s a confrontation, and that confrontation takes place under the motivation of a third thing, the dove. So in comparison to Picture 1, this represents a separation corresponding to the original act of creation that separated light from darkness. That’s a very frequent theme of creation myths. In the beginning there was just a confused composite mixture of things and then a divine intervention caused a division, separating the earth from the sky. In this case it’s the sun from the moon (Edinger, 1994, p.44).

Christopher Perry writes about *King and Queen* in a way that introduces the idea of incest, of family states being re-played between analyst and analysand. Each in the dyad seeks in the other parts missing in the self, and the idea of
corrosiveness between the two is represented. He writes of the pair who fall “in love”, but without symmetry. This lack of balanimpliesce is not, I believe, implied in the woodcut as I read it, though he that a less than perfect field will be created by the analytic couple as a working rule.

In Picture 2 we are introduced to the protagonist and antagonist of the narrative: the king and queen, who are now more clearly related to sun and moon, brother and sister. They are in touch, but in a sinister (lighthanded) way, a pathway often associated with the unconscious, and, hence, with the beginnings of projective/ introjective identification . . . I am referring to the dangers of boundarylessness, and the point at which the relationship can take off into lofty spirituality or the enactment of incest. Guarding against these dual dangers is the figure of the dove, that creature which returned to Noah with evidence that the flooding of the unconscious was now over.

Here the mundus imaginalis (a “world of images”) is constellated (Samuels, 1989), where the tension between actual and symbolic incest is held, worked through, and transformed. Analyst and patient fall “in love” with each other; but there is no symmetry. In the analyst is evoked the image of the child-within-the-patient, who has therapeutic needs. The patient is put into a more difficult position because s/he is beginning to know about the analyst’s deficits. And it is these, when insisted upon by the patient, that help the analyst review and reflect upon mistakes (Perry, op.cit., p.149).

The idea of “hostile opposites” seems to have broad agreement in the way post-Jungians perceive the contents of King and Queen. Both Edinger and Perry appear to absorb its tonality into their thinking. As I look at the King and Queen woodcut, intent on using it as a guide to the experience, theories, relationship, and geometries of transference, I wonder if this is a solar, a logos rather than eros assumption, and where the compensating lunar one might be found.

As I observe King and Queen it appears to be constructed from an unbroken line, the only one of the woodcuts with this characteristic. Each part of it is integrated into the whole suggesting that the process is impossible without all of
the parts–sun, moon, man, woman, clothes, crowns, flowering branches, dove and quintessential star. Were a line to be drawn from the star point, around the figures, sun and moon and rejoined to the star, an egg shape would be produced. I find myself therefore drawn to the unity represented in this possible cosmic egg, wondering if the hostility is more clearly manifest later in the series, or if something other than hostility might be identified. This woodcut appears to be the world again, its contents arrayed, before it flies apart, but not unpeopled like Woodcut 1, and colonised, this time, by youthful adult humans.

Erich Neumann writes:

One symbol of the original perfection is the circle. Allied to it are the sphere, the egg, and the rotundum – the “round” of alchemy. It is Plato’s round that was there in the beginning:

. . . The round is the egg, the philosophical World Egg, the nucleus of the beginning, the germ from which, as humanity teaches everywhere, the world arises (Neumann1993 p.8).

The circle and egg, symbols of unity present in Woodcuts 1 and 2, may imply that each of these woodcuts might work as a starting point or end point for transformative process. I have wondered about King and Queen as symbol for the analytical frame, holding the customs and formalities that organise the transaction analyst and analysand perform together.

Jean Kirsch is not so focused on the hostile opposites as she writes about King and Queen. Her attention is to do with how solar and lunar energies might emerge in the analytical conversation.
Regarding this picture Jung gives us his detailed account of the transference relationship, using as a prototype the situation of a male analyst and female patient; because the figures represent projections of unconscious contents he identifies the Queen as the male analyst’s unconscious contrasexual component, the anima archetype, and the King as a representation of the female patient’s animus. He draws a complicated comparison to cross-cousin marriages in an effort to amplify the significance of the crossed branches and clasped hands depicted in the alchemical picture and connect them with the phenomenon of incest as it arises in the analytic situation. This elaborate quadration is his way of saying that in any analytic situation there are two couples present, one conscious in the here and now and the other unconscious, unbounded by the limitations of time and space. It was his way of achieving objective distance from the powerful forces of erotic and incestuous longing that may arise naturally in the intimacy of analysis.

How did Jung view the phenomenon of incest? In short, he saw it both as a regressive urge to recreate within the analytic setting the romance of childhood, and, within this regression, he recognised a deeper longing, a forward movement toward integration of the personality:

> Incest symbolises union with one’s own being, it means individuation or becoming a self, and, because this is so vitally important, it exerts an unholy fascination—not, perhaps, as a crude reality, but certainly as a psychic process controlled by the unconscious, a fact well known to anybody who is familiar with [psychopathology] 1946, 419) (Kirsch, 1995, pp.173,4).

The *King and Queen* woodcut, I would contend, implies that for the opposing two to align body, soul and spirit, both are equally required for the work. Contents will pass more easily if the two (the two halves of one in the original alchemical understanding but split by Jung to represent the analytic two) understand their incestuous relationship, and the fundamental sameness of the drive each shares for completion. The image suggests that material will pass at many levels: through the conduit of the left hands (unconsciously), by careful positioning of wands (consciously), and that by the intercession of the dove or Holy Spirit (spiritually), under the guiding essential star (matter they are not aware of yet?).
The parallel that seems to apply to the analytical conversation is that the conscious and unconscious contents of body, soul, spirit of both will be supplied by, taken and used by each.

**The Marriage Quaternio**

The marriage quaternio is the diagrammatic pattern of energies at work in unconscious transference. I begin with Jung’s original, look at some adaptations and re-workings of it by other writers who have found that it functions as prototype which accepts variations, and discuss its application. I also demonstrate, in this comparative examination, the wide ranging interpretations that fit under the “Jungian” banner, indicating that “Jungian” covers a wide spectrum of thinking and discourse.

In relation to the *King and Queen* woodcut, Jung warns of danger. From the woodcuts we understand that analysis is an erotic field, a love story that becomes a “marriage”. The material met is “half spiritual, half sexual” (Jung 1946, ¶414). Jung indicates that the alchemical/analytical couple find themselves in a dynamic field of their own creation and interpretation, where familiar external reference points are questioned, perhaps surrendered. The *coniunctio* is always incestuous (Jung 1946, ¶415), yet the pair’s closed-couple world contains, potentially, all that union and transformation requires. The disproportionately large conduit of the left-handed embrace, for the sending and receiving of unconscious material, is balanced by the Holy Ghost in the role of dove/spirit working with the partners. An examination of the marriage quaternio lets us, therefore, probe Jung writing on
transference in relation to conscious and unconscious energies of the royal couple, every couple, *King and Queen*.

**Jung’s Marriage Quaternio: the Original**

The marriage quaternio diagram and idea indicates the possible exchanges of contents and energies between and within the participants, across conscious and unconscious zones. In Jung’s proposed consciousness to unconsciousness strata, anima and animus mark the edges of personal consciousness, to overlap with collective unconsciousness in territory experienced as trans-personal. Jung writes:

> ‘The fact that, for reasons which can be proved empirically, king and queen play cross roles and represent the unconscious contra-sexual side of the adept and his soror leads to a painful complication which by no means simplifies the problem of transference. . . . The pattern of relationship is simple enough, but, when it comes to detailed description in any given case, it is extremely difficult to make out from which angle the relationship is being described and what aspect we are describing. The pattern is as follows:

![Marriage Quaternio Diagram]

The direction of the arrows indicates the pull from masculine to feminine and *vice versa*, and from the unconscious of one person to the conscious of the other, thus denoting a positive transference relationship. The following relationships have therefore to be distinguished, although in certain cases they can all merge into each other, and naturally lead to the greatest possible confusion:
(a) An uncomplicated personal relationship.

(b) A relationship of the man to his anima and of the woman to her animus.

(c) A relationship of anima to animus and *vice versa*.

(d) A relationship of the woman’s animus to the man (which happens when the woman is identical with her animus), and of the man’s anima to the woman (which happens when the man is identical with his anima).

In describing the transference problem with the help of this series of illustrations, I have not always kept these different possibilities apart; for in real life they are invariably mixed up and it would have put an intolerable strain on the explanation had I attempted a rigidly schematic exposition. Thus the king and queen each display every conceivable shade of meaning from the superhuman to the subhuman, sometimes appearing as a transcendental figure, sometimes hiding in the figure of the adept’ (Jung 1946 ¶ 423 – 424).

Jung’s statements that in the “transference problem” “in real life” these different possibilities are “invariably mixed up” are followed by his preference for writing about the mix, rather than the “rigidly schematic exposition”, leaving no doubt that analyst and analysand are inseparably influenced and influencing. For someone using *The Psychology of the Transference* to understand the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference, the perspective of the real life mix is essential and is offered in the text. However, the schematic exposition helps, too. If a schema is worth a thousand words, this one renders the cross-sexual energies and influences into an operational framework with a clarity that pages of discussion on the union between king, queen and Holy Ghost, or “Mercurius *triplex nomine* converted into three figures” (Jung 1946, ¶ 416) conveys differently.
Other Writers on the Marriage Quaternio

In this section I am interested in other writers’ adaptations of Jung’s marriage quaternio diagram and their rationale. I begin it by consulting *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis* by Andrew Samuels, et al. They label the conscious and unconscious areas for analyst and patient, call the analytic relationship “treatment alliance” and omit the troublesome anima and animus.

Archetypal transference has two meanings. First, those transference projections which are not based on the personal, outer-world experience of the patient. For example, on the basis of unconscious fantasy the analyst may be seen as a magical healer or a threatening devil and this image will have a force greater than a derivation from ordinary experience would provide.

The second aspect of archetypal transference refers to the generally expectable events of analysis, to what the enterprise itself does to the relationship of analyst and patient. The pattern can be illustrated in schematic form, adapted from a diagram of Jung’s (CW 16, para 422).

The double-headed arrows indicate a two-way communication and relatedness. (1) refers to the treatment alliance. (2) reflects the fact that, in analysis, the analyst both draws on his own unconscious for an understanding of the patient and also encounters whatever it is that has made him a wounded healer. His own analysis will have made its impact here. (3) represents the patient’s initial stage of awareness of his problems, interrupted by his resistance and his devotion to his persona. (4) and (5) indicate the impact of the analytical relationship upon the unconscious life of each to some kind of confrontation with the possibility of personal change. (6) proposes a direct communication between the unconscious of the analyst and that of the patient. This last hypothesis underpins various ideas about countertransference. Jung found that in alchemy he had found a pertinent and potent metaphor for this aspect of archetypal transference (Samuels, et al, 2000 p.20).
This mixture of definition and comment develops Jung’s model, rewording problematic aspects, writing about it with different qualities in the language. For example, (1) as ‘treatment alliance’ is more mutual and accurate than Jung’s “uncomplicated personal relationship” which seems highly improbable between analyst and patient balanced at the edge of tumultuous erotic energies or a watery field with power to engulf them. Jung’s cross-gendered aspects are replaced by (5)“some kind of confrontation with the possibility of personal change”, an arguably more satisfactory and fluid way to think about possibility of change within each and between the pair.

Elsewhere, Samuels (2006) develops another version. He writes: “Jung presented his ideas on the synthesis of the relational and internal dimensions of therapy in the form of a diagram and many Jungian analysts, including myself, have refined his diagram” (Samuels 2006, p.189).

Samuels’ reproduction of this drawing is done with barely visible lines, and with line 6 distanced, indicating thereby field energies rather than hard-set paths.
He continues:

Arrow 1 indicates the conscious connection between therapist and client, where we can see the treatment alliance and the social linkages that make therapy possible. I think that Jung’s insistence that analysis be carried out face-to-face, whether taken literally or more metaphorically as a kind of humane principle, means this arrow is much more important than at first seems to be the case. . . .

Arrows 2 and 3 refer to transference projections from the unconscious of therapist and client onto the consciously perceived figure of the other. The therapist projects his or her wounded parts onto the client. The client projects his or her healthy/healer parts onto the therapist. These benign projections seem to me to be the way that therapist and client come to recognize each other qua therapist and client. Without these projections, there would not be the heightening of relational tension that makes the therapeutic encounter in some difficult to define way different from an ordinary relationship (Samuels 2006, p.189).

That therapist projects wounded parts onto the client, and client projects healthy parts onto therapist seems somehow a reverse, asymmetrical process. It seems to be the opposite of what might be expected, which is that the health of the therapist meets the un-health of the client. Maybe it is this very exchange that Jung refers to as incest, mediated by a paradoxical, potentially liberating role reversal, but it does also suggest why the work of transference is regarded as dangerous, to both participants. Samuels continues

But what happens in arrows 2 and 3 rests to a great extent on what happens in arrows 4 and 5. Arrow 4 signifies the therapist’s connection to her personal wounds. . . . Arrow 5 is intended to refer to the client’s gradual understanding of his or her potential to be other than a client. The client needs to get in touch, over time, with his or her healthy/healer parts, not only to be able to project them onto the therapist as part of an idealising transference . . .

Arrow 6 indicates the underlying unconscious connections between therapist and client; this is the level of relationship whose existence makes the idea that countertransference is usable in the client’s service possible in the first place (Samuels 2006 p.190).
Samuels manages here to signify mutual influence—“therapeutic alliance” and “social linkages” while avoiding mention of anima and animus, and introducing, in the spirit of Jung’s therapeutic intentions, the ideas of woundedness and healing.

Of the writing of others on the quaternio that I examine, François Martin-Vallas (2008) offers the most revolutionary re-work of Jung’s original. The symbols Martin-Vallas uses represent the alchemical squaring of the circle, the adaptation from a less perfect to a more perfect form, a motif present, most visibly, in The Mercurial Fountain, and implicit in the philosophers’ rose.

In his article he is interested in the containers that form within the transference field and how they are present already in the marriage quaternio. Martin-Vallas wonders whether the four poles of the quaternio might be thought about in terms of intensities, with different levels of glow according to where material in the conversation is activated.

In relation to these proposed containers he develops, in several stages, a diagram to represent them. The central square “represents the quaternio’s containing function.” The empty centre is also the metaphorical representation of the ultimate goal of incest, a return to “a longing for the stillness and profound peace of all-knowing non-existence” (p. 44). The circle “stands for the cross-projections” because “transference and countertransference unite to provide one of the containers of the transference.” Additionally, “the two vectors of projection can cross and together interweave a genuine cross-projective container” (pp. 49, 50). Finally, the outer square represents the setting where the analysis occurs.
This series of double-walled containers for transference counter-transference energies derives from Martin-Vallas’ attempts to explain and enrich Jung’s ideas in *The Psychology of the Transference*. I have found that his ideas translate, re-think and complement Jung. Martin-Vallas also probes Jung’s meaning on incest.

Christopher Perry, as he adapts the marriage *quaternio*, recognises Jung’s use of “transference as a dynamic with its own in-built propulsion toward individuation” (Perry 1998 p.147). Perry writes:

It was in an alchemical text, *Rosarium Philosophorum*, that Jung found a visual amplification of transference, individuation and the unfolding of the dialectic between the unconscious of the analyst and that of the patient. Jung’s commentary on the text and the ten woodcuts is extremely complex and difficult, drawing as it does on alchemy, mythology, anthropology, etc. I shall attempt to condense it. Before doing so, I shall briefly examine Jung’s diagram, which I have modified for the sake of simplicity. The diagram depicts what Jung calls the “counter-crossing transference relationships . . . the marriage *quaternio*” (CW 16, p.222) (Perry 1998 p.147).
Perry continues:

Line 1 refers to the conscious real relationship between analyst and patient and represents the therapeutic alliance. Line 2 is the unconscious relationship, which is characterised by projective and introjective identification. Line 3 is the analyst’s relationship with his/her unconscious, an internal communication channel that should, because of the training analysis and experience, be less blocked than that of the patient, represented by line 4. Line 5 signifies that patient’s need for the analyst’s ego, and a channel for the patient’s projection; and the analyst’s conscious attempt to understand the unconscious of the patient. Line 6 is the analyst’s line for projection onto the patient, and the patient’s conscious access to the unconscious of the analyst.

In the woodcuts of the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, Jung saw illustrated a love story, the incestuous relationship between king and queen, brother and sister, conscious and unconscious, masculine and feminine. For Jung, the woodcuts illustrated developments within and beyond the transference of the individuation process. It is perhaps no accident that he chose the *Rosarium* to elucidate his thesis, since it is one of the few alchemical texts in which projection is made onto another person rather than onto chemical substances alone (Perry 1998 pp. 147-148).

Perry, as Jung does, recognises the potential complications in the transference field and associates transference and individuation, setting his *quaternio* as dynamic within wider dynamic, world within world. His Line 2 factors projective / introjective identification, alerting us to potential difficulties, colonisation,
danger between the two who create the transformative field. He adds the external
world, marks conscious and unconscious levels, and somewhat ambiguously, “the
analyst’s training body”. Is this as the trained body the analyst uses in the
transference, or the professional body with which the analyst trained, or both?

Mario Jacoby also adapts Jung’s diagram. He uses the scheme to introduce
analysis, transference and countertransference. Under a heading *The Jungian
Method*, he writes:

The following diagram shows the complexity of what is going on
psychologically between two persons in the analytic relationship. It is a
variation of Jung’s drawing in “The Psychology of the Transference,”
inspired by what he calls the marriage quaternio, which he used to
illustrate the various relationships between a man and a woman or patient
and analyst. For my purposes I have slightly altered his drawing, so that
it can serve as a model for all kinds of transference configurations
between analysts and patients of the same sex or of opposite sex (Jacoby
1984, p.25).

Jacoby switches sides with the protagonists and distances the players from the cross
currents.

This model is useful in describing what typically happens in a deep
analysis. The patient (P) comes for consultation to the analyst (A). P has
certain difficulties or symptoms and wants to be free of them, wants to be
cured. The analyst might tell him that psychotherapy depends mainly on
mutual cooperation between P and A, in contrast to somatic medicine where chemotherapy works by itself or where one has to endure an operation passively. P has to pay a good deal of money for the analysis, and one would assume that he wants to do his best to help the treatment. If both feel it would be worthwhile to give psychotherapy a try, P and A agree to cooperate and form a conscious relationship to discuss P’s difficulties (line a) (Jacoby 1984, p.26).

Jacoby continues, posing scenarios and questions using Jung’s model, capturing the mutual relationship and alchemical combination between P and A. He touches on risk factors, fears, negative and positive possibilities, noting that these can arise in either party, and that although Jung’s demand for a training analysis may lessen danger of A’s unconscious projection of his/her content onto P, the possibility remains. He significantly also adds “common unconscious” (p.28), that deep area where psyche and biology overlap as area of somatic registration for experience not yet thought, and possible source, Jung speculates, of all knowledge (Jacoby 1984, pp.25-9).

Craig San Roque’s re-formulation of the marriage quaternio activates patient’s and analyst’s own gender orientations as elements within their relational field and potential transferential one. His formulation, using Jung’s original, occurs through working a detailed amplification of the line that Jung describes as “(a) An uncomplicated personal relationship”, and the relationship instantly ceases to seem uncomplicated. The conscious and unconscious lines (a and c) assume closer mutual definition. He manages to convey the multitudinous possibilities present even in “conscious line a”, suggesting the relativity of conscious / unconscious dimensions and the fluid character of their forms.
In his amplification of the gender elements, San Roque poses Adept / Soror pairs such as these:

- Male analyst
- Male analyst
- Male analyst x female partner
- Male analyst x male partner
- Male analyst x female, male partners
- Male analyst x no partner
- Male analyst x female porn preference
- Male analyst x female, partner
- Male analyst x cyber space partners

- Male patient
- Female patient
- Male patient x female partner
- Male patient x male partner
- Female patient x female partners
- Male patient x no partner
- Male patient x female, male partners
- Male patient, x male porn addiction, no partner
- Male patient x no partner, never partnering

Source: Craig San Roque presentation to ANZSJA trainees, training residential Canberra, May 4 –6 May, 2007.

San Roque also sets the *quaternio* in the personal dimension, employing the diagram as the geometry of transference / counter-transference where conscious and unconscious elements interact in a form of basic alchemy, partly thought, partly felt and intuited. This applies the diagram in that change of scale, from the universal to the personal or vice versa, in the way of Jungian psychology. For example
In this visible operation, applied directly to one’s own life, the diagram becomes a meditative device, used in the way the *Rosarium* woodcuts were used. It becomes a more fluid form of directed thinking populated by personal content, directed only in so far as the markers offer possible fixed points, or the imaginative possibilities are recognised.

The user works the elements in different formulations, feeling and wondering into Joseph’s b line, or personal b line, sensing how consciousness and unconsciousness manifests in this pairing, in this symbolic marriage. In this way the centralised patterns within the mystery or labyrinth re-configure into something akin to a rose, a *rosarium*, a centralised pattern of mystical Islam, or a mandala. The process facilitates movement between the increasingly aware detail of personal experience against an unconscious background, expressed via the geometric intensities of the *quaternio* through dimensions personal and universal.

**IN CONCLUSION**

Schwartz-Salant comments briefly on Jung’s 1946 project.
It should be emphasized that he used the accompanying set of woodcuts and associated commentaries in an extraordinary way. With few notable exceptions (the *Mutos Liber* is one), the alchemical tradition rarely specified two people working together; certainly there was little explicit concern for mutual processes. The alchemical tradition, like tantrism, with which the imagery of the *Rosarium* has important similitude, was primarily concerned with the union of opposites within the individual; interpersonal interactions would have been, at best, a tool along this path. Yet Jung envisioned the *Rosarium* woodcuts as a series of images representing the unconscious process between two people; this represented a great stroke of genius (Schwartz-Salant 1989, p.101).

Jung’s undertaking and challenge was, though, enormous. How do you venture into the inner world, the body perhaps, and construct for the systems and energies raging, oozing, seeping and operating there, a phenomenology which has some reflection of material reality? Jung makes it clear that he required alchemy as a launch pad for his ideas. The *marriage quaternio* diagram is like an extended aside, within the longest section within his essay, that concentrates his thinking about the *King and Queen* woodcut.

What Jung does complicates. He takes the pictures that were intended to show the opposites in one, to show the forces operating between two. He then uses the terms *anima* / *animus* as the distinct unconscious energies that may be found in man or woman, creating a solution that is potentially another problem. In the original alchemical formulation, anima and animus were located within the one. Jung often allocates them along gender lines in a way that many of his readers recognise as unsatisfactory, although tentatively useful, as labels for energies that may be present, may require a specific nomenclature. We have seen some post-
Jungian writers engage with the marriage quaternio by removing the anima / animus designations.

In using *King and Queen*, Jung offers someone attempting to use *The Psychology of the Transference* as a guide to the experience, theories, relationship and geometries of transference an object lesson in the difficulties inherent in formulating the nosology, the systematic classification, of unconscious processes, contents and energies.

His choice, in relation to the *quaternio*, to avoid “a rigidly schematic exposition” for factors that “in real life are invariably mixed up” seems consistent with the watery, fluid nature of many of the *Rosarium* images. Martin-Vallas’ notion of intensities of energy moving between concentrations, or Perry’s wish to write the external world into the diagram, or San Roque’s questioning of the relative states even of consciousness, or Samuel’s use of careful, inclusive language, attest to the live, unsettled nature of the discourse, where live alchemical fluids in active bodies work beyond the architectural principles of Jung’s diagram. To switch back to the language of the *quaternio*, the working towards a transference phenomenology continues, through layers of infinite subtlety, between Eros/Anima and Logos/Animus, in their most solid and fluid guises, and between selves and world.
Chapter 7

The Naked Truth

Jung writes: The text to this picture (Fig. 3) is, with few alterations, a quotation from the “Tractatus aureus.” It runs: “He who would be initiated into this art and secret wisdom must put away the vice of arrogance, must be devout, righteous, deep-witted, humane towards his fellows, of a cheerful countenance and a happy disposition, and respectful withal. Likewise he must be an observer of the eternal secrets that are revealed to him. My son, above all I admonish thee to fear God who seeth what manner of man thou art [in quo dispositionis tuae visus est] and in whom is help for the solitary, whosoever he may be [adiuvatio cuiuslibet sequestrati]” (Jung 1946, ¶ 450).

To Begin

In stark contrast to the previous lengthy section, this one contains three paragraphs. Jung offers no explanation as to why his attention is focused on one woodcut rather than another, or why one receives or warrants a smaller or larger response.

I have indicated that I consider that The Psychology of the Transference might be viewed as Jung’s transference to the material, at least in part, and that he makes his own process available for the reader to examine. I have also written that there
are overt and covert contents in the 1946 essay, as well as thoughts Jung is beginning to think, thoughts developing and thoughts that recognisably belong to his body of work.

What is potentially surprising here, to my mind, is what is not said. Some other commentators respond associatively to the nakedness of the participants and write about the dangers of sexual energies, and literal sexual acting-out that may follow from the influence of the erotic charge or of “love” between the two in the analytical space. Jung writes that this woodcut calls for assimilation of the shadow. He remains philosophical about and distant from the topic. Nothing betrays, except perhaps the measured elaboration of his observations on the need to assimilate shadow contents, that earlier in his life it had been for him a topic more consuming than circumspect, integrated now into his later life as he writes on the transference. What is covert in his writing though may be overt in the woodcut, symbolically or literally.

This Chapter

I will examine Jung writing about The Naked Truth, and other interpretations, comparing them, particularly in relation to overt and covert interpretation of the symbolic content of this woodcut.
Jung Writes About The Naked Truth

We learn the contents of the banners. Sol says, “O Luna, let me be thy husband,” and Luna, “O Sol, I must submit to thee.” The dove bears the inscription: “Spiritus est qui unificat” (Jung 1946, ¶ 451). Jung wonders about the incest present, and whether the love between brother and sister Sol and Luna might mean earthly or spiritual love, deciding it is “a union in the spirit” (Jung 1946 ¶ 451). I wonder if this is a conclusion of old Jung, and not one that he might have made earlier in his life. He supports his conclusion, engaging the alchemical interpretation with detailed attention, showing the reader the mental processing that resolves the contents for him.

Instead, Luna’s left hand and Sol’s right hand now hold the branches (from which spring the flores Mercurii, corresponding to the three pipes of the fountain), while Luna’s right and Sol’s left hand are touching the flowers. The left-handed relationship is no more: the two hands of both are connected to the “uniting symbol.” This too has been changed: there are only three flowers instead of five, it is no longer an ogdoad but a hexad, a six-rayed figure. The double quaternity has thus been replaced by a double triad. This simplification is evidently the result of the fact that two elements have each paired off, presumably with their opposites, for according to alchemical theory each element contains its opposite “within” it. Affinity, in the form of a “loving” approach, has already achieved a partial union of the elements, so that now only one pair of opposites remains: masculine-feminine or agens-patients, as indicated by the inscription. In accordance with the axiom of Maria, the elementary quaternity has become the active triad, and this will lead to the coniunctio of the two (Jung 1946 ¶ 451).

This, as essence of Jung in The Psychology of the Transference, is obscure. It reflects his ability to interpret alchemical symbolism, to decode numbers and geometry, and his determination to write about transference as if it were interchangeable with alchemy. He may be saying here that the alchemists understood this and had a language for it, and that he can understand it if he
speaks it in alchemese. In doing that the relationship he has with the reader de-couples and the reader must translate him—or go to other writers who have either done the translation or confidently project their own interpretation over Jung and the woodcut. The understanding of transference occurs by responding with a necessary personal one triggered by an unconscious disiunctio.

This second quote, in language easier to couple with, addresses the psychology of the woodcut.

Psychologically we can say that the situation has thrown off the conventional husk and developed into a stark encounter with reality, with no false veils or adornments of any kind. Man stands forth as he really is and shows what was hidden under the mask of conventional adaptation: the shadow. This is now raised to consciousness and integrated with the ego, which means a move in the direction of wholeness. Wholeness is not so much perfection as completeness. Assimilation of the shadow gives man a body, so to speak; the animal sphere of instinct, as well as the primitive or archaic psyche, emerge into the zone of consciousness and can no longer be repressed by fictions and illusions. In this way man becomes for himself the difficult problem he really is. He must always remain conscious of the fact that he is such a problem if he wants to develop at all. . . The man who recognizes his shadow knows very well that he is not harmless, for it brings the archaic psyche, the whole world of the archetypes, into direct contact with the conscious mind and saturates it with archaic influences (Jung 1946 ¶452).

The Jung writing here, with arguably indirect allusion to his own early alchemical experiences of transference phenomena, integrates his observations. They stand in contrast to biographer Frank McLynn’s portrait of Jung, near the time of his “alpha and omega” remark to Freud, struggling to understand transference, before alchemy contained his projections.
In a speculative passage about the reasons for the alliance between Freud and Jung, McLynn writes:

The third reason for this early alliance between the two men is that Jung badly wanted advice from Freud on the increasing problem of ‘transference to the doctor’ – increasing in part because of his undoubted physical attraction in the eyes of his female analysands. In late 1905 there was a serious transference problem with a patient who fantasized an *alter ego* known as ‘Miss L’ (this was not Sabina Spielrein). The patient had a ‘crush’ on Jung, which was actually a transference from an overdeveloped relationship with her mother. Jung dealt with this by pointing out that he was already married. Predictably, the woman responded to this brush-off by breaking off the treatment and complained that Jung had tried to make ‘morally dangerous’ conversation with her. Jung was perplexed, since the woman could find no therapeutic rapport with him, only a sexual one.

. . . Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Jung felt that he was getting into deep waters with Sabina Spielrein and needed guidance from a master pilot (McLynn 1996, pp.94-5).

Deirdre Bair, biographer, comments on the relationships, around 1914, “of those who participated in the formulation of analytical psychology in its early years” (Bair 2004, p.260).

No boundaries had yet been defined; there were no rules, no standards of behavior. Therapists were often teachers, friends or lovers of their patients; socializing and entertainment often existed in tandem with therapeutic treatment; massive egos frequently collided, as theoreticians sought dominance for pet theories and sometimes even pet analysands. It was a heady time, with everything new and in flux for those involved in trying to make order and sense of the new mind doctors and talking cures. Zurich may have been “the container, neatly sealed off and protected from all the turmoil,” but everyone felt so modern, and it was, indeed, a grand time to be alive (ibid., p.260).

These were the backgrounds to the experience that Jung has distilled as he writes about transference, linking it to alchemy in 1946. Some personal and
collective sources have been filtered out, but their influence seems still to linger on in the soup of the Fountain whose symbolic spouts or watery matter flows across from picture to picture. The stark irregularity of naked humans, conjoined or preparing to be, in a story of the psychology of the transference, given its troubled history of boundary incursions, seems to require Jung’s comments. That the bodies are symbols only of psychological process seems to neglect something of their substance and materiality, and of their contribution, as the live, experiencing containers of the work, and the perceptive ground on which, and through which, the work was originally done and continues to be done.

Writing in 1985, Andrew Samuels speculates that:

In order for psychological transformation to result from psychological interaction, that interaction must acquire and radiate something of an erotic nature. The interpersonal coniunctio inspires and ignites the internal coniunctio. The term eros includes such states as arousal, excitement, passion, love, and that most sexual of all experiences, frustration. There is always a level at which eros is a presence in analysis and psychological change in the patient implies and requires an erotic involvement on the part of the analyst, though not a physical enactment of this undeniably real experience (Samuels 1985, p.207).

**Pausing to Consider The Naked Truth**

I have wondered, in relation to “the feminine receptive lunar forces” whether many people who enter analysis do so because they have received too much, have failed to receive enough, or are overwhelmed by what they have received of the world or of their own unconscious contents, in the form of inner or outer trauma. Analysis becomes then the sorting through that which has been received and is stored in bodymind. An analytical task is to render the contents relatively
conscious, so they can be acted on, and identification changed to reflection. This
is achieved through the application of the solar opposite without the destruction of
Luna, in the marriage of Luna who receives, with Sol who discriminates.

In transference terms it requires consent to a therapeutic alliance, a gripping
onto the branches, whether one has seen the other positively or negatively, in love
or in hate nor despair. Sol and Luna appear to be willing to unite and their banners
announce the intention, but this agreement cannot to be taken for granted between
the pair in an actual analysis, despite conscious appearances and the fact that they
are sitting together, ostensibly working. The apparent symmetry of Sol and Luna
in *The Naked Truth* can be seen as an ideal freeze-frame of a potential and
desirable alignment, or of one that fails to form. Symmetry in the analytical
conversation can be achieved only through the fluid flow of alchemical states of
receiving and acting on, otherwise one or other of the opposites will be over or
under represented. Keeping the balance this picture represents requires constant
attention and a formulaic approach is impossible.

Many things can upset the balance implied in *The Naked Truth* and the work
between adept and soror. There is the hope that the analyst’s preparation for the
work and own analysis will make him/her aware of any poisonous emanations
passing from the analyst into the transference and that they will be controlled. The
analysand, less familiar with the customs and the transactional language to be
found there, will be the soror, the partner who is being taught and the one whose
unconscious contents are presumed to be more diffuse and lunar in quality, less
discriminated, solar and controlled. None the less each will, in his or her body,
sense something about the situation and if it is not positive, it may conjur the fear that something awful this way comes. One or other of the apperceptive bodies may decide that “I cannot accept you into my being so I will protect myself”. In the alchemical mix this creates no one is sure where to locate the material or whether it belongs to self or other, so that receiving and being acted on both occur and the symmetry is lost.

An equal partnership is maintained by the transference pair if, between the two embodied minds, whatever material comes up can be regarded consciously together, and neither resisted nor passively ingested. The moment attention is focused, and the pair looks at the contents collaboratively in alchemical mood, the balance is kept. The pair operates as sister/brother, King/Queen, husband/wife, and the marriage proceeds. But will proceed according to the propensity in the couple for making, un-making, re-making of psyche.

**Other Writers Describe The Naked Truth**

Adam McLean writes of the images within a one-person alchemist, so that Sol and Luna become facets of one personality. Jung, on the other hand, presents them as the analytical couple, adding an additional interpretive layer where inter-personal as well as intra-personal chemistry must be considered. McLean writes that where Woodcut 2 personified the solar and lunar forces, in this one “the two participating forces or archetypes in the soul (Jung called these Animus and Anima) can for the first time see each other clearly” (McLean 2008, p.2). “At this stage their gesture changes and they grasp each other’s proffered branch” . . . “The two archetypal
facets of the soul are here proffering to each other, in the form of flowers, an aspect of their forces” (ibid).

Edinger refers to *The Naked Truth* as Stripped for Action. He writes about symbols being exchanged between the first three woodcuts. For example, that this one features writing and each of the figures is making a statement, whereas in *The Mercurial Fountain* the writing is disembodied. He notes that the star of Woodcut 2 has disappeared but that we “now have a six-pointed figure held between the two figures and the dove” (Edinger 1994 p.50). This means that “a transpersonal or cosmic dimension has now been constellated in the relationship between Sol and Luna” (ibid, p.51). Within the individual, “the opposites have been constellated and consciously engaged.” There is a mutual commitment to pursuing the relationship. “Psychological intimacy is beginning and the third thing, the transpersonal star, is constellated between them; it will live itself out in some way or other, for good or for ill” (ibid, p.53). Considered as a collective process, “the opposing factions have revealed their open enmity . . . and the prospect of war is escalating” (ibid p.53).

The talk of opposing factions, escalating war, enmity, seems, to me, an over-representation of the Solar opposite, even though “psychological intimacy is beginning”. Mark Saban, Oxford and London based Jungian analyst writes, unfortunately without precisely citing his sources, but touching on the matter of the enmity-laden opposites, or the *Fountain’s* triple spouts re-capitulated in the *flores Mercurii*:
The Rosarium says, “In alchemy there is a certain noble substance. . . . in the beginning thereof there is wretchedness with vinegar, but in the end joy and gladness.” In the Philosophia Maturata we find this: “And thus thou hast the blood of the green lyon, called the Secret Water, and most sharp Vinegar, by which all Bodies may be reduced to their first Matter.” Jung says, “Acetum Fontis is a powerful corrosive water that dissolves all created things and at the same time leads to the most durable of all products, the mysterious lapis.” This aspect of the mercurial water is to do with dissolving, penetrating, breaking down. If we are to differentiate the killing, destructive side of Mercurius from the healthy life-giving side, this is where we find it. At the beginning of the work there must be a reduction to the prima materia, there must be a state of chaos or nothing can start. The parallel in analysis is the early stage in which the structures of differentiation that we have developed over years start to be dissolved. It is invariably experienced negatively, as a painful loss of bearings. The structures which we have erected laboriously around our personality are being dismantled, and not surprisingly this feels like hell (Saban 2008, p.6).

Importantly, Saban touches here on the dissolution of “structures of differentiation developed over years”, presumably so that more flow, and more plastic ways of creating order might be arrived at. The endless demand for fluid response, informed conclusion and for mature recognition of the moral complexity in the judgements applied to good and evil are attended to by Jung in relation to the qualities personified by the alchemical Mercurius:

But what is “good” and what is “evil”? The unconscious is not just evil by nature, it is also the source of the highest good: not only dark but also light, not only bestial, semi-human, and demonic but superhuman, spiritual, and, in the classical sense of the word, “divine.” The Mercurius who personifies the unconscious is essentially “duplex,” paradoxically dualistic by nature, fiend, monster, beast, and at the same time panacea, “the philosophers’ son,” sapientia Dei, and donum Spiritus Sancti (Jung 1946, ¶ 389).

Perry writes that The Naked Truth symbolizes both analyst and patient denuded of their personae. . . . Shadow elements from both parties creep in, and Sol and Luna grasp each other indirectly through and across the two branches. . .
Analyst and patient are cornered at one time or another; essentially this is the beginning of total honesty in trying to discover, acknowledge, and work towards forgiveness (a long-term aim) of the shortcomings that both parties bring to the analytic quest, and towards self-forgiveness.

Picture 3 is a challenge to both parties to continue through the process of mutual transformation, watched over and impregnated by the dove, the Holy Spirit which unifies . . . The union must therefore be symbolic rather than actual despite the passionate intensity of the affect between the two parties (Perry 1998, p.150).

Jean Kirsch moves the discourse away from war, cornering, hell, to “a mutual affinity”.

In psychotherapy this stage corresponds roughly to the development of sufficient trust, based on a mutual affinity and loving acceptance of one another, for the patient to “undress,” to expose the natural truths lying behind the persona. Anyone who has ever endured the process will show especially kind consideration toward any other engaged in this self-exposure, and also will reserve a shrewd regard for the determined power of this “dark upwelling” (Kirsch 1995, p.174).

Mario Jacoby and Nathan Schwartz-Salant write about erotic love in analysis. Jacoby uses three of the *Rosarium* woodcuts, including *The Naked Truth* to illustrate a chapter he calls “Erotic Love in Analysis”. This is a gesture of balance towards Jung who warns against the forces of Eros, but who otherwise enters into little detail on the matter, despite personal exposure to and recognition of the realities. Jacoby writes about licit and illicit forms love might take there, covering several options, including all the passion of transference love. He indicates that love may arise in analyst or analysand, that some successful marriages have arisen out of the analytic situation, but that “analysis and a concrete love relationship do not go together” and lists reasons why, including social, moral and ethical
Through the transference keyhole and into Jung’s world

constraints (Jacoby 1984, p.105). He contends that physical love and analytical love are different in nature, with reference to *The Naked Truth*.

In the third drawing of the series... where the king and queen are naked for the first time, we find some written words connected to the dove: *Spiritus est qui unificat*, “it is the spirit which unites.” There is also another version, which reads *Spiritus est qui vivicat*, “it is the spirit which brings to life.” Jung gives still another amplification for the dove: the dove of Noah carrying a twig from the olive tree as a sign that the Flood is over and there is peace again between God and man (ibid, pp. 107-8).

The images indicate the literal, spiritual and symbolic nature of the marriage between analyst and analysand. Jacoby writes with direct bearing on how transference phenomena may be perceived.

Now, in terms of our symbolic picture, the analyst is in the service of the dove, the potential wholeness of the patient. The infantile shortcomings, needs and dependencies belong to it and have to be accepted. Of course the analyst is interested in stimulating the patient’s capacity eventually to work them through; but often they just have to be lived with and contained as part of the transference for a certain time. One has to encourage all feelings in order to set a limit to them later on. They may have to be sacrificed sooner or later—but not repressed—in order for the personality to grow. In my experience, if patients can see their transference-love as a painful but potentially creative suffering—the fire which transforms the *prima materia* in the alchemical vessel—the process can take a deeply worthwhile course. It constellates the dove in the analytic marriage, and the encounter can be astonishingly creative (ibid, pp.110 – 111).

Perhaps Jacoby’s conclusion equates to what Jung refers to earlier, where he writes that this is “a union in the spirit”. I find Jacoby’s way of representing it more descriptive of the purposive nature of the relationship.
Nathan Schwartz-Salant writes about the destructive nature of sexual acting-out in the transference/countertransference process and that understanding, not repression, is needed to comprehend it.

But I want to know why it happens, and why it often seems to both analyst and analysand in the moment to be so true, in distinction to so false, an act. Is it merely a self-serving delusion, a Satanic trick of spiritual deceit? Or is it a kind of blundering after something elusive and hard to attain, a goal and purpose that have not been adequately addressed by Jungians? The latter is my belief. The elusive goal can be thought of as a substance that Jung called kinship libido and that I will refer to as communitas following Victor Turner’s (1974) analysis of liminal rites. This paper is about communitas and the central role the archetypal transference has in its release through the coniunctio—that image of the union of opposites that Jung found to be the structural form underlying the transference (Schwartz-Salant 1995, pp.2-3).

I find this idea of Schwartz-Salant’s, that of kinship libido and communitas, engaging. I have wondered if it is a synonym for the lunar/eros relatedness that to my mind seems missing from transference / countertransference considerations, linked to individuation, and requiring the union of body, soul and spirit. I do not feel comfortable about appropriating Schwartz-Salant’s term communitas as the missing facet of my thinking about how lunar consciousness is expressed or not expressed. I note with interest that the communitas energy or drive or experience is seen by him to be at the root of the transference as Jung presents it, and as underlying sexual acting-out in analysis.
She says: I’ve been in the *Rosarium*, in *The Naked Truth*. It’s the picture where the analytic two remove their clothes. I’ve been reading various commentaries on it and many commentators see it as an opening of hostilities, a time when the fighting starts. We don’t seem to fight much, and I come back here again and again without sensing any hostility, and not aware that we skirt around issues or avoid what might be painful.

He says: Maybe in this couple I’m like this. You don’t know what I’m like with anyone else. Maybe I’m totally different.

She says: I imagine you have to be different with everyone you talk to. I think there are other explanations, though, to do with who you are, how you work, your training, what you understand analysis to be, where you’re quirky, your experience, who you are in your own life–I mean knowledge to do with wives and daughters and the light of the moon as well as the sun. I still haven’t satisfactorily answered my question of what it means to be a Jungian analyst. The more I ask it and read for answers the more I become aware of how different each one is, how different the practice and the coupling is.
It seems to me that this therapy is therapeutic for me because you are fluid in the way you embody solar and lunar qualities. You have a theoretical, practical and intuitive base that respects my developmental and infant states present in the field we create and you don’t need to harm them, or me. I can be safe here, without fear, and still get the work done.

He says: Finding the words for it all is always part of the task. This is not the only analytical conversation you’ve been in. You know plenty about _acetum fontis_. You know its paradox and how valuable its presence might prove to be in the long run. There are things other people could discover in you, or you discover in yourself through other people, that I’m unlikely to find. Perhaps everyone needs several analysts, different couplings.

She says: I suppose I’ve taken the _Rosarium_ woodcuts to indicate that solar and lunar forces must both be present, and the solar ones seem to be over represented in many of the interpretations of _The Naked Truth_. I have wondered what this means, in practice, because I know there are endless analytical couples around the world, many people helped by analysis. I suspect that the lunar facets of the work are under-represented in Jung and many of the commentators I read. Their interest is in the logos/solar, not the eros/lunar—they’re seeking to understand rather than to relate, to experience. I think you unite body, soul and spirit through
Through the transference keyhole and into Jung’s world

experience in bodymind, and if it’s in you or in me, one of us can
apprehend it alchemically. If the couple minds it without
embodying it, though, they may not get the full picture.

He says: Are you starting to talk like the *Rosarium* that has put on flesh?

She says: O God. Has it transferred itself to me?

**Thinking About Transference and The Naked Truth**

When I look at *The Naked Truth* I behold King and Queen, brother/sister,
husband/wife, Sol and Luna, analyst and analysand, present as equals, mediated by
the dove. Two elements of the iconographic text take on importance for me: one is
the banners, the others is the cascading threes. I will consider each of these in
relation to how I understand transference experience, theories, relationship and
geometries from the information within this picture, referenced against the
writings of Jung and others.

Sol’s banner says, in German: O Luna, let me be thy husband.
Luna’s banner says, in German: O Sol, I must submit to thee.
Dove’s banner says, from Latin: *Spiritus est qui unificat-*
It is the spirit which unites.
Some versions offer, from Latin: *Spiritus est qui vivicat -*
It is the spirit which brings to life.
Jung translates Sol’s and Luna’s banners, leaving the dove’s in Latin. If we are to comprehend the uniting spirit, the third beyond the opposites, as a phenomenon of transference, it may require that we think in a different mode or language. Maybe it was it an oversight or he thought the translation unnecessary, or did not notice, or was too tired, or just let it form as is. The picture that Jung uses could be translated for the second meaning, the “u” and “v” in the Latin script containing ambiguity. Is this an important detail, or one that just slips by? The languages are symbolic, for Jung, of the vernacular day to day, and the obsolescent, archaic, archetypal energies represented.

I take, as the over-arching geometry in Jung’s version of the *Rosarium philosophorum*, the fact that it ends with the tenth woodcut, the Empress of All Honour. If we take McLean’s version of the work with the first ten, it ends with the White Stone, the mastery of the lunar forces of the soul (McLean 2008, p. 2). Either way, the end point contains, in both versions, some consciously constructed version of the feminine facets of the soul, relative to the masculine facets of the soul, when the two categories are understood to represent the universe of opposites. How does this align with the alchemical project to harmonise body, soul and spirit, and the analytical one of individuation? The writing on the banners may contain the answer to this question.

I am going to explore the possible meanings in what Sol and Luna indicate to each other through their banners, making an interpretation consistent with Jung’s over-arching geometry. Before I do that, though, I will deal with the cascading threes. There are many of them: three banners; Sol, Luna, dove; man, woman,
bird; and the *flores Mercurii* which, Jung writes, corresponds to the three pipes of the fountain; the three blooms (which may be roses) and three crossing stems. The three may symbolise the alchemical body, soul and spirit, but there is no way of knowing which is which in this seemingly sparse, elemental picture which none the less refers to pictures before and after itself. The three may represent the third in Maria’s Axiom, the alchemical formula of interest to Jung. Maria Prophetissa was a famous early alchemist whose axiom states: “One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the one as the fourth.” The third represents the greater than the sum of the two, the third which might be produced by the marriage of Sol and Luna.

If we associatively organise the data we have from the first three woodcuts, plus Jung’s speculations, we have a schema something like this:
To Conclude

When Sol says, “O Luna, let me be thy husband,” it might be interpreted as an invitation to add the characteristics grouped around Sol, to add *acetum fontis* to that which already exists. It applies logos and order to the passive eros already present but not discriminated, so that Sol unites with the opposite principle without becoming lost in it. It may also be Sol’s request for release from an ordered existence where regulation is the only expressive form, for some dilution of the vinegar, for some shade, shadow, against the unremitting heat and light of the sun. It adds the *solve* to the *coagula*. This process will take place whether the analysand is male or female, and whether the analyst is man or woman, as Sol and Luna cling to the thorny plants blossoming between them.

When Luna says, “O Sol, I must submit to thee,” this may be interpreted as taking the material which already exists, the *lac virginis*, and applying to it logos and order. This would form the base of the balancing therapeutic content so that Luna becomes less diffuse, uniting with the opposite principle and knowing herself in the process so that culture balances nature. It also represents taking the inconstant waxing and waning of the moon into the marriage as a complementary principle to the fixity of the logos. This is the *solve et coagula*. This process will take place whether the analysand is male or female, and whether the analyst is man or woman as Sol and Luna cling to the thorny plants blossoming between them.

When the dove says, “It is the spirit which unites,” or “It is the spirit which brings to life” it, the Aqua Vitae from earlier in the series, is the force which generates and maintains life. If Aqua Vitae dove is present, its opposite, poison
and toxicity, is thereby implied. All material to be transformed must have
circulation through the water of life, or the water of life must circulate through it,
although it may be more or less than alive before this happens, or after the water
has moved away. The presence of death is magnified in the woodcuts where the
work is done in the sarcophagus, and in Freud’s attention to Eros and Thanatos.
The Aqua Vitae dynamic facet which encompasses movement between all three
and is neither the virgin’s milk nor the fount of vinegar but a third substance,
already present in all of them if it can be identified, is to be drawn upon for life
enhancing transformation to occur.
Chapter 8

Immersion in the Bath

What is said of the lapis is also said of the water: “This stinking water contains everything it needs.” It is sufficient unto itself, like the Uroboros, the tail-eater, which is said to beget, kill and devour itself. Aqua est, quae occidit et vivificat—the water is that which kills and vivifies. It is the aqua benedicta, the lustral water, wherein the birth of the new being is prepared. As the text to the picture explains: “Our stone is to be extracted from the nature of the two bodies.”

To Begin

This is another relatively short, four-paragraph section and Jung considers “a new motif”, the bath. “In a sense this takes us back to the first picture of the Mercurial Fountain, which represents the “upwelling.” The liquid is Mercurius, not only of the three but of the “thousand” names. He stands for the mysterious psychic substance that nowadays we would call unconscious psyche” (Jung 1946, ¶453).

This picture is interpreted by Jung to mean that the analytic pair is now subject to the influence of the contents of the upwelling water, as well as the influence of the spirit. McLean (2008) considers that the water of the first ten woodcuts symbolises that the work is not fixed, is unstable, requires many
processes. Here the two have the fountain rising around them or have descended into the watery bath, and the water is a constant symbol for several more woodcuts.

Jung’s language continues to be non-linear, associative and meandering but assumes the opposite state as well to develop some points. There seem to be themes introduced or hinted at, but they are not clear, are tangled in each other and interdependent. It is important to note the historical context in relation to transference. For Freud it had been the thing to be avoided—sit behind the patient, do not get tangled in the patient’s material. In *The Psychology of the Transference* Jung clearly indicates that the material of doctor and patient will mix, and out of the mixture will come the third, the thing that neither could grasp before. Both will be changed as a consequence. They need each other to unravel material unique to each coupling. Each holds something related to the completion of the other. The bath is the baptismal font, and new life will begin here for both. Jung indicates that there is something in the nature of the transference relationship itself that heals human beings, indirectly alluding to love. This ‘something’ had been potentially discredited in the earlier work of Mesmer and Charcot who arguably exploited their ‘rapport’ with female patients, and Jung, here, wonders about it again, obliquely. He is also beginning to allude to the contents of transference becoming a source of information for the doctor in relation to the patient, and vice versa. This is difficult material to write about phenomenally. How does the analyst learn to accurately perceive his/her own and the other’s bodymind and not confuse them with his/her own imagination or fantasy projection?
Jung’s themes are prescient. He wrestles with ideas of transference and countertransference, projective and introjective identification, and borderline states and field dynamics of the analytic conversation, themes whose untangling and development has fallen to post-Jungian thinkers.

Jung introduces several themes, none of them clearly or distinctly. The bath water becomes symbolic of a “night sea journey” (¶ 455) implying deep, demanding work. Aspects contain their opposites—stinking/lustral water—or plural dimensions: for example, corpus, anima and spiritus are One (¶ 454). Relationship is required for this work, yet is dangerous: “If no bond of love exists they have no soul” (¶ 454). “The unrelated human being lacks wholeness” . . . “Wholeness is a combination of I and You” (ibid). Yet engulfment may occur from “the rising up of the fiery, chthonic Mercurius, presumably the sexual libido which engulfs the pair” (¶ 455), and there is mention of “the sexual fantasies which colour the transference” (¶ 456).

Within all this richness is a passing reference to “psyche as a half bodily, half spiritual substance, an anima media natura, as the alchemists call it . . .” (¶ 454). This idea, important to how Jung writes about transference, is developed in another essay, whose first version was published in 1946, *On the Nature of the Psyche*. The idea concerns the psychoid unconscious, that area of overlap between body and spirit, or matter and energy, or body and psyche, or the liminal processes of bodymind. In the psychoid unconscious, matter, energy, image, symbolic representation, come to life or flicker out, to be broken down
and reformed, and this area is significant in the way alchemy and Jung think about transference.

This Chapter

In this chapter I will explore what Jung writes and implies, add the contributions of others, and trace the development of some of the key ideas that Jung alludes to here but develops in other places, sometimes in *The Psychology of the Transference*, sometimes elsewhere. My interest is to discover how the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference are represented through this woodcut and the interpretations associatively linked to it.

Other Writers on Immersion in the Bath

I will begin with part of Christopher Perry’s comments on this woodcut. His comments seem informed by sustained interest in them, and reflection in practice.

The alchemists were, in part, in revolt against the sexual asceticism of the Christian Middle Ages. They seem to have known about the age-old longing of lovers to immerse naked with one another in water—to fuse. And so, in Picture 4, “Immersion in the Bath,” the couple sit rather demurely, still joined together symbolically. Sol looks quite relaxed (a false position for the analyst) and Luna looks shyly towards her partner’s genital area. The ends of both wands are limp, but the potentially erotic nature of the *coniunctio* (“union”) is immanent. And it is generally thought that the water in the bath represents the unconscious—a state of fusion, known nowadays as projective identification (Perry 1998 p. 150).
Warnings seem to be contained in Perry’s comments—about Sol/analyst looking relaxed, perhaps about the direction of Luna’s gaze, although the able phallus will prove to be as important as the nurturing breast.

Edinger notes that the couple “have begun a state of mutual solutio”. As they dissolve in the solution they identify and remove the impurities from each other. His comments touch on the structural components of the psyche undergoing the processes depicted in the image:

Solutio is a major alchemical image and it is likewise extremely important psychologically . . . . Solutio is an image of descent into the unconscious that has the effect of dissolving the solid, ordered structure of the ego. For the alchemist, the solutio meant the return of undifferentiated matter to its original undifferentiated state, to the *prima materia*. Water was thought of as the womb, and to enter the water, the solutio, was to return to the womb for rebirth (Edinger 1994, p.54).

There seem to be “big asks” in what Edinger writes. The experience of the solutio, “dissolving the solid, ordered structure of the ego” might lead to the regressed states that the re-entry to the womb suggests. These states may well be pre-human and pre-symbolic, in line with the animal, vegetable and mineral categories of *The Mercurial Fountain* and contain raw, unmediated emotion such as anger, frustration, despair, as well as autistic states of discontinuity and death. Jeffrey Raff writes of the solutio:

This melting of one body into another often takes place in the *solutio*, the alchemical process in which the body becomes liquid in order to make for a deeper union (Raff 2003, p.87).
Based on the assumption that where there is life there is mind, these states and experiences will be felt and apprehended by bodymind if consciousness is to be developed. The task of integrating them, in conscious form, into the personality, requires some response by the structures of ego and self if the unconscious contents are not to overwhelm or if they are to overwhelm and assume, in time, a new order. The willingness to have them form, autonomously, so that they may be experienced as subtle, transient registrations that perhaps have no names is also part of the task. Jung, elsewhere, describes the range of embodied experience that might open in the night sea journey.

Just as a man has a body which is no different in principle from that of an animal, so also his psychology has a whole series of lower storeys in which the spectres from humanity’s past epochs still dwell, then the animal souls from the age of Pithecanthropus and the hominids, then the “psyche” of the cold-blooded saurians, and, deepest down of all, the transcendental mystery and paradox of the sympathetic and parasympathetic psychoid systems (Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, ¶ 279).

Jung’s insistence on collective elements in the psyche means that the experiencing human might find him/herself experiencing any of the dimensions contained in millions of years of bodymind evolution. The exploration of these is assisted by the reliable therapeutic alliance, and desirably the analyst whose training analysis has made these states familiar, or at least alive within the theoretical base. The *Rosarium* woodcuts suggest that a psychological journey is being undertaken and that the states can be survived, transformed and transcended, or made ordinary so that in the shape of the rose they may be encountered with equanimity, just another petal in the formation.
Murray Stein writes:

Jung’s ambition from very early on was to participate in the creation of a general psychology that would map the psyche from its highest to its lowest dimensions, its closest to its farthest reaches, truly a map of the soul (Stein 2007, p.87).

**Symbols in Immersion in the Bath**

In the picture we see the naked couple, seated in the bath with the water rising, still holding their crossed branches arranged to receive the influence of each other and of the dove which represents the spirit, or the involvement of the reptilian brain in the changes being worked. If we look closely at the branches they are in a different relationship to each other than in Woodcut 3. In Woodcut 3, Luna’s is to the front, Sol’s to the back and the dove’s between so each is touched by the dove’s wand. In Woodcut 4, Sol’s is to the front, Luna’s behind his, and the dove’s behind both. Only Luna’s wand is directly touched by the dove’s, in reference, perhaps, to this as work to produce the White Stone, the lunar facets of the soul, or to the necessity of lunar influence in this work, at this stage. As well, the stems have lost their thorns and become swollen, tumescent, and all the flowers are open, including a blossom on the dove’s head. Cross-fertilization seems unavoidable. The crowns and the distribution of jewels in them have also changed.

That the water is present, is upwelling, symbolises the rising influence, for better and worse, of unconscious contents. The symbolic water indicates that the two may be dissolved here, their unconscious contents flood each other, and who
owns which bits of material may become the work within the transference, and difficult to sort out.

The hexagonal bath takes on a potential symbolic role. Its stony solidity is a new motif. *The Mercurial Fountain* was suspended above the ground by the amputated paws of lion or lizard-uroboros; the figures in Woodcuts 2 and 3 float in space. The figures in Woodcut 4 are contained in a solid, grounded hexagonal bath with plinth, body and rim, more threes, to contain the work of body, soul, spirit. The hexagon, as a six-sided figure, can be thought of as composed of two triangles, dissolved and re-formed, bringing the sun and moon motif, present and distinct in all the woodcuts up till now, into the field. Originally, the triangle with apex pointing up was used as a symbol for male, the triangle with apex pointing down as symbol for female. The stone bath and water juxtaposed may indicate the possibility of manifesting the stone, or the self, in one or other of its guises, if only *solve et coagula* is sufficient.

Marie-Louise von Franz informs us:

> It is a very great paradox that liquid—the unformed water of life—and the stone—the most solid and dead thing—are, according to the alchemists, one and the same thing. That refers to those two aspects of the realization of the Self: something firm is born, beyond the ups and downs of life, and at the same time is born something very living which takes part in the flow of life, without the inhibitions or restrictions of consciousness (von Franz, 1980 p.174).

The paradox, the requirement to recognise that each seemingly discrete symbol can be seen to contain also its opposite, exemplifying the idea of the incipient *coniunctio*, is essential in relation to this woodcut. This magical, mercurial, alchemical thinking gives *The Psychology of the Transference* a
problematic aspect as a guide to transference. It may not seem practical, but if we look for the opposite, it imposes an uninterrupted meta consideration on the transference process. The woodcuts themselves, as fixed points, perhaps liberate Jung’s response so it can form fluidly, associatively, in the fixed form of essay conventions and discrete sections.

If we associatively organise the data we have from the first three woodcuts, plus Jung’s speculations, and add the fourth, it would expand to include the opposites inherent in all categories. Associatively, the model containing the positive and negative form might become, for demonstration sake, something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sol</th>
<th>Desiccation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acetum Fontis</td>
<td>Over definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious anima / caricatured fem</td>
<td>interference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active principle</td>
<td>demystification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos</td>
<td>intrusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Luna</th>
<th>inconstancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virgin’s Milk</td>
<td>fertility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious animus / caricatured male</td>
<td>inaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive ground</td>
<td>intrusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>fusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>indiscrimateness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personal Transference Contents and Immersion in the Bath**

I offer the following conversation to demonstrate the shifting values that might apply to transference contents. I seek to illustrate that material that had, at one time, one particular meaning can, with time and reflection, take on an opposite one. I am trying also to illustrate that unconscious contents that rise like the water of the fountain can re-configure, can be inspired by the dove of feathers and scale, or can
be removed from compulsion to choice as ego and self become more resilient components in the work.

Interpreted on the one hand as a harmless bath and on the other as the perilous encroachment of the “sea,” the earth-spirit Mercurius in his watery form now begins to attack the royal pair from below, just as he had previously descended from above in the shape of the dove (Jung 1946 ¶ 453).

Analytical Conversation 3         February 2006

He says: Could you describe how it seemed to you.

She says: I would ring the bell. I would hear him respond, moving heavily, noisily and quickly through the house, slamming doors, causing creaks and movement in the floor. For some reason I would feel it like an onslaught and want to run. I didn’t think, “My, what a big, bounding, animal you are!” or “The way you move through the house has nothing to do with me.” I always wondered why he was rough, forceful. Then the door would slide open, he would greet me with a smile, and usher me in.

He says: You seem to be in quite different modes already. He’s a big, noisy, thundering smiling animal, you’re outside it all, perceiving it but not of it, or caught in some unconscious aspect of it before it starts.
She says I could feel it rather than say it. I know it now as transference, as my unconscious response, my self presenting its formations for me to behold. I am able to think it, and find words for it, but then I was only able to feel it.

I would go into the room and he would always have, by his chair, a steaming cup of smokey black tea that perfumed the air. He told me about the tea, what its name was, how he came by it, who had bought it for him. I got annoyed that it was not shared. And I felt ashamed that I was annoyed–I could see that it was petty, and it was his precious tea–but I felt disregarded by his preparation of tea for himself, and not for me. I perceived myself as not of equal value in the space. I was the paying customer, stinking pathetic suppliant. He assumed superior rights on his turf, made himself at home. But I felt I was in a ceremony of hospitality from which the guest was excluded, but I wasn’t a guest, just a paying customer, in a professional relationship, nothing else. I would get tangled in trying to work out how he regarded it, and how I regarded it. I would try to think the two sides, and feel my own deeply, and disregard what I felt because it seemed stupid for a woman of my age to be close to tears because someone wants to drink a cup of tea in front of me while I attempt intimate exposure of my soul.
He says: But it isn’t a ceremony of mutuality, and you are in a fairly agitated state. Are you working this out inside yourself or did you speak about it?

She says: I spoke, eventually, after it had happened many times. It was the habitual start to every session, the frame, really. I told him that I felt excluded. He got exasperated and said quite abruptly something like, “You don’t need tea for the little time you’re here.”

I just shut-up then, let the conversation go. It seemed too difficult to pursue. It seemed to want energy that I couldn’t summon or it was pointless to summon. What was the heart of something for me had zero currency for him, and he was such a big, gambolling creature. I think I went quiet and he left me within myself. I felt stupid and stranded, like a disappointed little kid ready to cry in the presence of a punitive father, a little have-not in an Oedipal moment. And furious that I was so upset by something so small on the scale of things. And curious about why it was all happening in this way. I think I must have smiled at him then and changed the topic to something of interest to him thinking, “He’s the analyst. I must be doing this all wrong.”

He says: It’s all a bit of a tangle of subject object, inner outer, reality and fantasy. How do you regard it now?
She says: I think of it as a valuable teaching about transference, particularly about intra-psychic processing. In his presence I was able to incarnate bits of unconscious self. I wasn’t, though, able to present them for mutual examination. There was something in the alchemy that meant my stuff had to sink into the soup, be kept within me, even though it was brought into being because of the mutuality. My Luna could not endure the presence of his big bright Sol. But I began to understand how different layers of self, with unresolved felt states, can co-exist under the conversation that is running on the surface.

I could feel the process long before I could work out how to speak it. We were in the bath together, holding the shape of the conversation but as separate people in non-intimacy. At the same time we were a mating couple somehow exchanging or refusing bits of self or bits of each other, unable to get the unconscious exchange materially and mutually into the conversation.

He says: Is that the lot, then?

She says: No. I want to use it to understand Lunar consciousness. I who stood at the door waiting was not able to be impervious to the noises and energy in the house, not able to be acted on by them without reacting, without defending. If my Lunar consciousness had been adequately fixed, I might have just let it all flow,
without getting myself caught in it, without attaching meaning to it in the way I did. Do you think that’s what Lunar consciousness is?

**Formulation of Structure and Process**

As he struggles with the phenomenology of all of these opposites and pluralities, as psychology and transference, Jung begins to develop the idea of the psyche as a half bodily, half spiritual substance. “Thus the underlying idea of the psyche proves it to be a half bodily, half spiritual substance, an *anima media natura*, as the alchemists call it, an hermaphroditic being capable of uniting the opposites, but who is never complete in the individual unless related to another individual” (Jung 1946 ¶453). This is one of the many places in *The Psychology of the Transference* where Jung thinks about the relationship between body and spirit, archetype and instinct.

Jeffrey Raff, a writer on alchemy and Zurich trained Jungian analyst working in Colorado, writes of the psychoidal zone or experience where “spirit becomes body and body becomes spirit” (Raff 2000, pp. xvi-ii). He traces a connection between psychoid and alchemy to the Sufi mystical tradition where he observes their concern with “how spiritual and material bodies interact in the alchemical work” where inner and visionary experiential states are met (Raff 2000, p. xvi).

The Sufi alchemists understood that the matter on which they operated was not purely physical in nature, but belonged more to the world of Paradise. Although the union of the physical and the spiritual is a theme found in alchemy of all periods, the Sufis were the most
explicit in expressing the otherworldly nature of their experience. When body becomes spirit and spirit becomes body, we enter a new realm of experience that I call the psychoid . . . it is noteworthy that the Sufis developed this notion centuries ago (Raff 2000, pp xvi-ii).

It is difficult to know whether the half-bodily, half-spiritual ontological state is to be considered as structure or process or both or something else, given that it depends on bodymind for its recognition and existence. It is the point at which, for the alchemists, matter would change from solid to liquid, or would sublime. In embodied form, as experienced, it is where matter and energy seem to overlap to manifest as one and/or the other, and unity with all creation seems possible. I introduce an explanation of the psychoid unconscious written by Giles Clark. I have chosen this one because it represents the opposite to Jung in its careful spelling out and precision, and is concerned specifically with transformation of material of psyche/soma.

In 1946, Jung put forward a hypothesis of a ‘psychoid’ level or quality of the unconscious psyche. He wrote: ‘Since psyche and matter are contained in one and same world, and moreover are in continuous contact with one another and ultimately rest on irrepresentable, transcendental factors, it is not only possible but fairly probable even that psyche and matter are two different aspects of one and the same thing’ (Jung 1947, para 418). He returned to this dual aspect idea again several times, and in Mysterium Coniunctionis he wrote that ‘deepest down of all, [is] the paradox of the sympathetic and parasympathetic psychoid processes’ (Jung 1955-6, para 279).

In my title I have used the expression ‘psychoid substance.’ Since the meaning of ‘substance’ is not axiomatic, and since I am using it idiosyncratically in a way that is connected to my use of the word ‘psychoid’, I need to say that by substance I do not mean either an essence or a thing, or not only. I am using the word ‘substance’ in a Spinozist/neo-Spinozist metaphysical sense, by which I mean the idea of a fundamental unity (not union) underlying two ‘attributes’ of (=attitudes to, aspect or experience of) that basic unity—which is here ‘the psychoid.’ The two ‘attributes are psyche/soma, or psychic/somatic. But more psychologically, I understand this psychoid
substance as being dynamic (substantiating) and having to do with the
making of internal and interpersonal relations (consubstantiating).
(Finally, I think it might be useful to render ‘the psychoid’ as an
adjective or adverb: a consubstantiating psychoid energy, which is
experienced psychoidally (psychosomatically) inside and between us—
perhaps most evidently in psychotic experience and relations.)

I am suggesting that the psychoid has to do, not only with an
individual, intrapsychic level of life, but also with an area of
experience where bodily sensations are symbolic, sometimes
represented through very primitive sensations, proto-symbol and
psychosomatic metacommunications which are felt both inside us and
also simultaneously around us in relationships (for example, in
experiences of participation mystique, through projective
identification, extractive introjections [Bollas 1987b] and in other
processes of personal and interpersonal psychic contamination and
infection which are also somatically affective). These experiences
painfully unite us in a field we unconsciously make together, arising
out of an as yet unmet need to share in something underdeveloped and
uncoordinated (Clark 2001, pp.103-4).

Clark’s assignment of the psychoid as having to do with inter and intra-
psychic awareness where bodily sensations are symbolic is, for me, the
extraction of materiality from Jung’s inference. It gives structure to the process
of transference in the realms of the pre-symbolic as we, the two in the bath,
attempt to share “something underdeveloped and uncoordinated”. Clark’s
capture in words, and the Rosarium woodcuts, give form to what Jung implies.
Jung’s drawing of this subject matter into the psychological discourse widens it.

Before I leave my discussion of the psychoid, I will add one more
perspective, from Murray Stein, where he also appears influenced by Jung’s On
the Nature of the Psyche. Stein writes:
The psychoid boundary defines the gray area between the potentially knowable and the totally unknowable—the potentially controllable and the wholly uncontrollable—aspects of human functioning. This is not a sharp boundary but rather an area of transformation. The psychoid thresholds show an effect that Jung calls “psychization”: nonpsychic information becomes psychized, passing from the unknowable into the unknown (the unconscious psyche) and then moving toward the known (ego-consciousness). The human psychic apparatus, in short, shows a capacity to psychize material from the somatic and spiritual poles of nonpsychic reality (Stein 2000, p.98).

**Considering the Opposites in the Transference**

Since my research task is to establish how well Jung’s 1946 essay, *The Psychology of the Transference*, can be used as a guide to the experience, theories, relationship and geometries of transference, I will attend to that task, in relation to *Immersion in the Bath*.

In *Immersion in the Bath* we have the symbolic depiction of input from all directions: above, below, across, within, without, between. We have Jung using the alchemical metaphor and its knowledge base to write about transference phenomenally, with a mixture his own and alchemy’s languages and concepts. Both systems rely on the dynamism of opposites. We meet opposites which contain each other, and pluralities which resolve into singularities. On all of these Andrew Samuels comments:

For Jung, bipolarity is of the essence; it is a necessary condition for psychic energy and for a life lived at a level other than that of blind instinctuality. Opposites are required for the definition of any entity or process—one end of the spectrum helps to define the other, to give us a conception of it. And sometimes the conflict is such that we ‘suffer’ the opposites. Jung suggests that it is fruitless to search for the primary member of a pair of opposites—they are truly linked and cannot be separated; they involve each other. The General Index to
Jung’s *Collected Works* (CW 20) contains a list of pairs of linked opposites which repays contemplation, for it demonstrates the basic part played by oppositionalism in Jung’s psychological theories and in his way of thinking generally. For example: ego/self, conscious/unconscious, personal/collective, extraversion/introversion, rational/irrational, Eros/Logos, image/instinct. In fact, virtually all of Jung’s major ideas are expressed in a manner involving opposites (Samuels, 1999, p.92).

As he writes about the opposites in relation to *Immersion in the Bath*, Jung seems more focused on the area where, to borrow from Samuels, “they involve each other.” So the water is stinking/lustral. Mercurius is water/dove. We have the harmless bath and “the perilous encroachment of the “sea” ” (Jung 1946 ¶453).

Elizabeth Urban writes about opposites and their place in relation to ego and self and the process of individuation which Jung places centrally within the transference:

One of the most important of Jung’s concepts is that of the self. Although he used the term in a number of different ways, the one that predominates is Jung’s definition of the self as the totality of the personality: mind and body, conscious and unconscious, ego and archetypes (Jung, 1971). As a phenomenon, the self is characterized by totality and wholeness, and is the source of meaning. Functionally it is an organizer and integrator, bringing together and structuring the inner world. Because the self is the totality of the personality, it contains or, rather, transcends opposites.

For Jung, meaning and the pressure to become whole are the motivating drives behind development. From his work with adults in mid-life, he conceived development as a process, termed ‘individuation’, in which the individual becomes more deeply and truly himself. Individuation is ongoing; one individuates but is never individuated. Technically, it is a process by which the ego, the centre of perception, time and again confronts conflicting and opposite forces, say between good and evil, or being dependent and being separate. The consequence of the conflict between opposites is—and
here is Jung’s optimism (Fordham, 1985a)—a new resolution, symbol or insight arising in the ego. Individuation thus involves the ego and a pair of opposites, and this triangulation is a cornerstone in Jungian understanding (Urban, 1996, pp. 64-5).

An oppositional problem for an analyst in the analytical conversation, immersed in the bath, is how to use apperceptive bodymind as a reliable instrument in relation to the work of therapy. In the *Clinical Conversation* earlier in this chapter, I presented myself as confused and overwhelmed by my upwelling unconscious contents. It is, however, possible to experience the upwelling without being completely dissolved by it, though some dissolution is inevitable. Jung writes: “The immersion in the “sea” signifies the *solutio*—“dissolution” in the physical sense of the word and at the same time, according to Dorn, the solution to the problem” (Jung 1946 ¶ 454).

**To Conclude**

I have suggested that each of the *Rosarium philosophorum* woodcuts represents a freeze-frame depiction of potential states of being which contain their opposites. In each case the alchemy may receive too much Sol or too much Luna influence. Too much Sol leads to rigidity/`coagula`, too much Luna to dissolution/`solve`. It is possible to learn, however, to become familiar with these states of being that the woodcuts render static, so that conscious movement towards or away from them, towards `solve` or `coagula`, can be discerned and allowed or disallowed. This is not the same as making the practice of analysis formulaic. It is rather the practical and theoretical acceptance of the fixed and volatile principles, the `solve et coagula`, into the heart of the work where soma
and psyche (to borrow from Clark, above) consubstantiate each other in the
*mixtum compositum* of the transference dyad. The autonomy of the transference
process can be inhabited by soma/psyche and made less autonomous. In order
for that to happen, the coagula aspects, as particular structures of the personality,
must be available for use. These structural aspects are especially contained in
Jung’s ideas of ego, non-ego and self. These are the ‘structures’ which support
the ‘processes’ so that the dissolution might be known and used, but not
necessarily as destruction.
O Luna, folded in my sweet embrace/
Be you as strong as I, as fair of face.
O Sol, brightest of all lights known to men/
And yet you need me, as the cock the hen.

Here Sol is again included
And is circumpassed
With the Mercury of the Philosophers.
(Excerpt from text of Rosarium Philosophorum. Not included by Jung).

Chapter 9
The Conjunction

To Begin

My task has been to take The Psychology of the Transference and to apply it critically to Jung’s alchemical transference, primarily clinically, but also beyond the clinical setting because in the essay Jung says it is present in both places. To do that I have been examining what Jung has written, working my way through the text woodcut by woodcut, and drawing on my experience in the analytical dyad and beyond.

Where I have trouble with his essay is in its covert aspects and seeming omissions. This is old Jung writing. Subjects of interest to him earlier in his life are subsumed, or rendered sub-rosa in the text, and abstracted. This is the case with his interest in the more overt relationship between biology and psychology. I
have needed to flesh out neurological and developmental features in the body-
mind participating in the alchemy and to add consideration of infantile
psychological phases. The Conjunction 5a, with the addition of wings to its
iconography, demands it particularly. The wings have been loaded symbols for
me, and I have wondered whether the dove, from the earlier woodcuts, is a double
symbol. They seem to ask for re-instatement of the consubstantiating body-mind
(to borrow further from Giles Clark) to the discourse.

The wings symbolise a paradox. They indicate the higher order organisation of
psychological contents that Jung refers to as individuation, as a winged angel
might. They also indicate regression to the reptilian area of brain, which organises
feathered, scaled experience—and basic life functions, heart-rate, compulsions,
blind repetitions, habitual patterned ways of working that lie beneath our more
conscious functions. I attend to these also because the next four woodcuts (number
6 is called Death) iconographically represent, in their labyrinthine way, regressed
or psychoidal states underpinning higher-order psychological organisation, arrived
at, paraoxically, through regression.

I make this detour because I am unable to understand transference and
countertransference adequately to support my own clinical application of them
using Jung alone. There are too many empty conceptual spaces, for me, if I work
solely with Jung’s material. The detour is briefly into neurological explanation,
and subsequently into developmental psychology. As a trainee Jungian analyst
within ANZSJA, a requirement is a one-year infant observation. In response to this
observational setting, and to the influence of Jungian analysts whose own training
has included integration of this material, I have been exposed to ways of thinking and speaking about infant developmental states as recognisable features in the regressed states of adults in transference-countertransference dynamics. This is not necessarily the way Jung writes about them. I find this thinking essential to my own clinical practice, and to my transference to Jung’s essay under review.

My detour leads back to Jung, who in *The Psychology of the Transference*, offers a cosmology of transference and a contribution to the poetry of being that I have not found in other theorists. But in order to circle back to Jung and utilise him more fully, the detour, to gather supplementation from other theorists, is necessary.

*This Chapter*

I examine Jung’s writing on the *coniunctio* and interpretations of the symbolism of the two non-sequential images, Rosarium woodcuts 5 and 5a, both called, by Jung *The Conjunction*. Woodcut 5a was originally number 11 and called *Fermentatio, Fermentation*.

I introduce material to support a neurological thread in relation to admission of regressed material which is also concerned with higher order development, in line with Jung’s ongoing concern with instinct-spirit, and psychoidal energies.
Orientation to The Conjunction 5, 5a

In this chapter’s ten paragraphs we meet the long-awaited conjunction—not once, but twice. He only minimally develops the connection between the conjunction and transference, although some practical and theoretical observations are made. This seems strange. Throughout the essay the coniunctio, the marriage of opposites, the fruitful intercourse, the union of like and unlike, seem to be the long-awaited goal. When we finally reach the woodcuts called The Conjunction 5, and The Conjunction 5a, I experience a pale sense of anti-climax and non-engagement. Other writers we meet shortly are not disappointed. Earlier in The Psychology of the Transference, Jung’s enthusiasm for the centrality of the coniunctio, which expresses the unio mystica, the archetype of the union of opposites (Jung 1946, ¶354), led me to anticipate that he would have much to say about The Conjunction.

That he has represented The Conjunction with two images is upsetting to some commentators who see that he has interrupted the alchemical process. They wonder if he misunderstood it. I wonder if it reflects where his thinking is up to as he writes. The images may carry meanings where words fail. Jeffrey Raff makes original contribution to the demystification of Jung’s application of alchemy. Raff is particularly interested in how Sufi alchemy affected European thought and Jung, particularly via Gerhard Dorn, whom he calls Gerald Dorn. (Dorn (c.1530–1584), Belgian physician, theologian and early psychologist, worked in Frankfurt (where the Rosarium originated) at the time it was published). Raff identifies, through these sources, three stages of the coniunctio. Dorn is his inspiration as he writes:
. . . here I need only point out that his delineation of the alchemical opus emphasizes three major plateaus. Each is characterized as the creation of a union that produces the stone at differing levels of perfection. Most importantly, each has associated with it certain psychological experiences. Jung discussed the first two unions that produced the philosopher’s stone in is monumental work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, but he only touched on the third union. I propose to discuss the nature of the third union in some detail. In order to do so, I have to present two controversial ideas, that of the psychoid world and the center of that world, which I call the self of the psychoid.

. . . Each level of union in Dorn’s formulation may be understood as the crystallisation of a new center of the psyche, a center Jung termed the self. The first stage unites the conscious and the unconscious; the second makes this union permanent; the third unites the self already created with a center that transcends the human psyche, a center that one might call Divine.

. . . The first two centres are psychic, but the last is psychoidal, in that it creates a center that is in part transpsychic (Raff 2000, pp. xxiv –v).

Raff proposes a sequence of phases in the development of the coniunctio. Jung does not write about it with this clarity. Jung seems to recognise its value as an over-arching organisational idea, but is, in 1946, perhaps just beginning to come to terms with it, developing it in *Mysterium Coniunctio*, published nine years later.

Jung, by placing the two conjunctions together has disrupted the alchemists’ sequence which he otherwise observes. The pictures themselves, however, carry the psychological exploration forward, particularly when the two representations of the conjunction are juxtaposed and neither is particularly contaminated by commentary and requires imaginative response.
Personal Transference Contents and The Conjunction

In the following conversation I attempt to understand what the conjunction is, unsure that I have understood the idea in Jung’s presentation of it in *The Psychology of the Transference*.

Analytical Conversation 4          October 2008

She says: So if I smash into you in anger and trigger your anger in response and merge or mate with it, we are in a *coniunctio*.

He says: I think so. I think unconsciousness in both of us must be present. It’s possible for both of us to be unconscious about it, or for both of us to be vaguely conscious of it niggling away underneath but some of the contents must be unconscious. Unconsciousness carries the greater weight so your anger meets mine and mine meets yours and they have sex together and create unpredictable outcomes that the conscious bits of us behold in amazement.

She says: So if I don’t lose faith and leave, we feel it all and try to speak it into consciousness. And if I fall into you in love and you love me in return we are in a different manifestation of the *coniunctio*.
He says: This one’s sort of the same and different. It’s all meant to be symbolic, but it’s quite difficult to have a therapeutic relationship at all without love. Theoretically you ought to be able to love the therapist as much as you need, safely, and if the relationship is to be therapeutic I, as therapist, reciprocate and we slowly together disengage ourselves from whatever it is we have constellated.

She says: I think there are three significant forms of conjunction and I have a terrible suspicion that they co-exist. There’s one that you’re suddenly in when you clash in anger or merge in love or fuse in hatred. Or it’s the work you bury yourself in or the project that swallows you up or the song you just have to write or the action you are compelled to take. As you merge with whatever unconscious contents are activated, with whatever the drive or energy is, you dredge up something of your own depths and you know your own self and own potential being in a new way.

He says: This may be what Jung is talking about where the personal unconscious bridges to the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is the great original and future matrix that underpins everything, the source of all.
She says: I think the second form is the overarching one. It’s like your personal version of the hero story. You venture into your own depths, come back reborn and with an enhanced sense of your own possibilities and the mirror of them in the world. And all the incremental conjunctions you encounter and work through build on this.

He says: Perhaps you’re starting to talk about ego and self: ego as the persistent aspect of you as observer that begins to apperceive itself in relation to trans-personal experiences of your being. You experience yourself, experience your encounters with unconscious contents, become more familiar with how the systems work and how to get back to a workable state for yourself.

She says: I wonder about a third form of conjunction. It’s the configuration of energies present as we speak. In this couple it feels different from my other analytical couplings—perhaps because it is the fourth and I’ve been worked over a bit. But, I feel that you are open and available to me. The continuum of your being, seemingly undefended, is available for my use. I mate with it, I suppose, across the continuum of my being, in so far as I am able, or dare. Perhaps it’s the stuff of subtle body, though I’m not exactly sure what that is. It seems that the missing bits of me, whose existence I don’t know about, but can
maybe sense–might be consubstantiated through you, because you are diffuse enough for my diffuseness and I can exist in your presence rather than be smashed by it. It’s as if the discontinuous, interrupted bits of me–unconscious components of my potential being or self–begin to pass from less conscious to more conscious, because of the continuum you represent, onto which they are projected and with which they mate before they come home. That’s got to be a form of conjunction, hasn’t it?

He says: I think so. But every coniunctio has to the power to bring forth something required to complete psychic development, towards higher organisation of the psyche. Your coniunctio may be of sadness, love, anger, pain, rejoicing–but it all goes into the all of the all, theoretically–and you work on, and each conjunction has a place in the next conjunction. I think it can be experienced as a big or small event, or series of cumulative events. It might also be experienced as a big structural conjunction. Jung and the alchemists may allude to that which may come about dramatically, like Jung’s illness, or that which is present as a consequence of growing through all this work, steadily performing the opus, staying with the work. Is that all clear?
Analytical Psychology and Geometry of The Conjunction 5 and 5a

The Conjunction symbolises the most complete joining of the figures, the representation of them when they are most open to each other. In the preceding solutio, the bodies became liquid so that they could unite more intimately. The product of a conjunction cannot be foreseen. Jung makes it clear, earlier in his essay, that many conjunctions occur.

The doctor must go to the limits of his subjective possibilities, otherwise the patient will be unable to follow suit. Arbitrary limits are no use, only real ones. . . . Just as alchemy has a great many different procedures, ranging from the sevenfold to the thousandfold distillation, or from the “work of one day” to “the errant quest” lasting for decades, so the tensions between the psychic pairs of opposites ease off only gradually; and, like the alchemical end-product, which always betrays its essential duality, the united personality will never quite lose the painful sense of innate discord. Complete redemption from the sufferings of this world is and must remain an illusion. . . . The goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the opus which leads to the goal: that is the goal of a lifetime. In its attainment “left and right” are united, and conscious and unconscious work in harmony (Jung, 1946, ¶ 400).

Jung begins this chapter, on the conjunction, with a description that indicates the unconscious nature of the coniunctio:

The sea has closed over the king and queen, and they have gone back to the chaotic beginnings, the massa confusa. Physis has wrapped the “man of light” in a passionate embrace. As the text says: “Then Beya [the maternal sea] rose up over Gabricus and enclosed him in her womb, so that nothing more of him was to be seen. And she embraced Gabricus with so much love that she absorbed him completely into her own nature, and dissolved him into atoms” (Jung 1946 ¶ 457).

This leaves little doubt that the solutio is part of the coniunctio, and the conjunction is absorption and dissolution of unconscious material so it can be re-formed, re-born. Its erotic quality is also unmissable but uncommented on by Jung.
Does its presence in the text suggest that love, or symbolic sex, is inherent, but unworded in work with transference material? This may well be the case, but remains unwritten in 1946.

A little later in his writing on *The Conjunction* Jung summarises the sequence of changes leading up to the *coniunctio*. I include it because it deals with the paradox of regression/development, and implies that the *coniunctio* contains intention and perhaps some consciousness.

... at this juncture ... the partners have themselves become symbolic. At first each represented two elements; then each of them united into one (integration of the shadow); and finally the two together with the third become a whole ... Sol and Luna themselves become spirit. The real meaning, therefore, is Goethe’s “higher copulation,” a union in unconscious identity, which could be compared with the primitive, initial state of chaos, the *massa confusa*, or rather with the state of *participation mystique* where heterogeneous factors merge in an unconscious relationship. The *coniunctio* differs from this as a mechanism but because it is by nature never an initial state: it is always the product of a process of the goal of an endeavour (Jung, 1946, ¶ 462).

The idea passed over here by Jung is an important one: “the partners have themselves become symbolic... Sol and Luna themselves become spirit.” It restates the Eucharist principle, that the bread and wine are the blood of Christ, matter is also spirit. He appears to be again probing the mystery of instinct-spirit, soma-psyche, soma-spirit, body, soul, spirit. His statement suggests that an aspect of *coniunctio* is to bring spirit to life in body, to render body inspirted. He suggests only. Nothing is unequivocal.
Jung offers a couple more definitions of the *coniunctio*—not in his chapter called *The Conjunction* but in the next one, *Death*. They are pertinent here, so I include them because they comment on the relative mix of conscious and unconscious material present.

... there is in the *coniunctio* a union of two figures, one representing the daytime principle, i.e., lucid consciousness, the other nocturnal light, the unconscious. Because the latter cannot be seen directly, it is always projected; for, unlike the shadow, it does not belong to the ego but is collective. For this reason it is felt to be something alien to us, and we suspect it of belonging to the particular person with whom we have emotional ties (Jung 1946 ¶ 469).

Within the same paragraph, he continues:

Nor does the *coniunctio* take place with the personal partner; it is a royal game played out between the active, masculine side of the woman (the animus) and the passive, feminine side of the man (the anima). Although the two figures are always tempting the ego to identify with them, a real understanding even on the personal level is possible only if the identification is refused (Jung 1946 ¶ 469).

**Other Writers on The Conjunction**

*The coniunctio* is among a number of general alchemical terms used by Jung that Andrew Samuels explains.

*The coniunctio*. This refers to the mating in the *vas* of disparate elements (what we would today call chemical combination). In alchemy, the base elements to be combined are conceived of as opposites, the combination leading the alchemist to the production of gold. These elements are often represented anthropomorphically by male and female. The fact that humans are used to represent chemical elements showed to Jung that, far from being a strictly chemical investigation, alchemy was concerned with creative fantasy and thus with unconscious projections. In analysis the *coniunctio*, the union of
opposites, symbolises: (a) The interaction of the analyst and that of his analytical ‘opposite’, the patient. (b) The differentiation and integration into his ego of conflicted and warring elements in the patient’s psyche. (c) The interpretation and integration of conscious and unconscious parts of the patient’s psyche (Samuels 1999, p.179).

Samuels suggests that each of the persons in the mating couple is contributing opposite elements, slowly accumulated, as projected material is re-possessed, re-integrated.

Edinger (1994 p. 62) reminds that this all occurs invisibly, in the chaos of the unconscious of the pair. He seems, however, to significantly de-emphasise the bodies, orderly and conventionally functional in their conscious union, and so blatant that Jung comments on them:

As to the frank eroticism of the pictures, I must remind the reader that they were drawn for medieval eyes and that consequently they have a symbolic rather than a pornographic meaning. . . . Our pictures of the coniunctio are to be understood in this sense: union on a biological level is a symbol of the unio oppositorum at its highest. This means that the union of opposites in the royal art is just as real as coitus in the common acceptation of the word, so that the opus becomes an analogy of the natural process by means of which instinctive energy is transformed, at least in part, into symbolical activity. The creation of such analogies frees instinct and the biological sphere as a whole from the pressure of unconscious contents. Absence of symbolism, however, overloads the sphere of instinct (Jung 1946 ¶ 460).

Jung continues here to insist that the bodies have only a symbolic value. His determination, a couple of paragraphs back, to insist that the body becomes insinipitated, is not balanced by the opposite which would give the body back its instinct, somatic entity and materiality.
Christopher Perry examines Jung’s writing on *The Conjunction*, and sees the following:

Any thought that Picture 5, the “Coniunctio Sive Coitus” (“Love-making or sex”) is an invitation to sexual enactment is dispelled by Picture 5a, in which the incestuous couple are seen with wings despite the fact that the water refers “to the boiling solution in which the two substances unite”(CW 16, p. 250). The tension between spirit and instinct is held throughout the series, although it takes different forms. Notice also that the left hand reappears, Sol’s tentatively exploring Luna’s breast, and Luna’s travelling toward her lover’s penis. Whilst he looks at her, she is looking out, beyond the couple. For what? I wonder, and Jung answers:

> let no day pass without remembering that everything still has to be learned (CW 16, p. 255).

What Jung says exactly portrays the states of mind of a couple who are deeply in love and (I would add in the therapeutic relationship) in hate. The honeymoon of idealization is at an end; the frustration of the longing to be connected is at its height. Analyst and patient seethe under the guise of fermentation: a loving, loathing concoction that leads to a temporary state of death (Perry,1998, pp. 151-2).

Perry makes an interpretation here that agrees with Jung’s. I see Picture 5a differently. Perry and Jung both appear not to have noticed that in picture 5a, the pair have changed position. Luna, she of the long flowing hair, is now the superior figure. It is not Sol’s hand tentatively exploring Luna’s breast but Luna’s left hand gesturing towards Sol. It is not “Luna’s hand that travels toward her lover’s penis” but Sol’s own. These gestures presumably indicate increased self-sufficiency in each of the figures and fixity of each half so that each is a more complete entity separately, and more distinct or complete as a unit within the pair. As well, their change of position seems to indicate adaptability of role–that either superior or inferior, active or passive position might be attempted, even if not yet comfortably
occupied. It must be remembered that 5a is Woodcut 11 in the original series, and its symbols carry the cumulative developmental story that Jung interrupts. Picture 5a is also called *Fermentatio*. The fermentation occurred so the newly re-assembled body could pause and strengthen. The gestures may refer to each part united in a more fixed arrangement before another *coniunctio* is undertaken, because that is what follows.

**Re-gathering Body, Soul and Spirit Within the Transference**

In *Conjunction 5*, the invincible-seeming stone bath from Woodcut 4 has dissolved away, its formal hexagonal geometry replaced by random natural forms, themselves eroded. The setting is natural, but nature must be transformed say the alchemists. Gerhard Dorn, quoted earlier by Raff, is credited with saying: “Transform yourself into living philosophical stones.” The human stone is now a body that has been made the substance of the work, not only the *vas* in which it happens, although it remains that, too. Applied to transference it may indicate that all psychic material gets drawn into its processes eventually, to transform.

The iconographic content of *The Conjunction 5a*, triggered a requirement to read beyond Jung’s essay to recover some of his implicit ideas. The triggering devices are the couple’s watery environment and wings. The water, as well as symbolising the unconscious, symbolises states of beginning containing the germ of possibility, in-utero or in fluid evolution, a paradoxical regression-development in species terms with a return to greater human awareness. It harks back to *The Mercurial Fountain* with the legs of lion or lizard. The wings, things of feather and of scale,
borrowed from fish, reptile bird and angel, coexist with the smooth-skinned, crowned human animals mating under water.

Jung, in earlier writings, is concerned with the ontological states inherent in regression, states that span the biological/cultural/psychological evolutionary history stored in bodymind, as the *Rosarium philosophorum* woodcuts do. Woodcut 5a implies the biology of psychology, and the psychology of biology. These themes, with a succinct definition of the collective unconscious, is in an earlier Jung’s mind here:

. . . the collective unconscious is in no sense an obscure corner of the mind, but the mighty deposit of ancestral experience accumulated over millions of years, the echo of prehistoric happenings to which each century adds an infinitesimally small amount of variation and differentiation. Because the collective unconscious is, in the last analysis, a deposit of world-processes embedded in the structure of the brain and the sympathetic nervous system, it constitutes in its totality a sort of timeless and eternal world-image which counterbalances our conscious, momentary picture of the world. . . . That the world has an inside as well as an outside, that it is not only outwardly visible but acts upon us in a timeless present, from the deepest and apparently most subjective recesses of the psyche—Is I hold to be an insight which, even though it be in ancient wisdom, deserves to be evaluated as a new factor in building a Weltanschauung (Jung 1928, ¶ 729).

Another illustration, from an earlier Jung, of the “where there is life there is mind” principle, covert in the 1946 essay, is evident here in his 1932 lecture on Kundalini Yoga:

Now this third center, the center of emotions, is localized in the *plexus solaris*, or the center of the abdomen. I have told you that my first discovery about the Kundalini yoga was that these cakras really are concerned with what are called psychical localizations. This center then would be the first psychical location that is within our conscious psychical experience. . . . there is a certain category of psychical
events that take place in the stomach. Therefore one says, “Something weighs on my stomach.” And if one is very angry, one gets jaundice; if one is afraid, one has diarrhea; or if in a particularly obstinate mood, one is constipated. You see, that shows what psychical localization means (Jung 1933/1999, p.34).

Damasio expresses Jung’s connections within a different language and aesthetic:

To discover that particular feeling depends on activity in a number of specific brain systems interacting with a number of body organs does not diminish the status of that feeling as a human phenomenon. Neither anguish nor the elation that love or art can bring about are devalued by understanding some of the myriad biological processes that make them what they are. Precisely the opposite should be true: Our sense of wonder should increase before the intricate mechanisms that make such magic possible. Feelings form the base for what humans have described for millennia as the human soul or spirit (Damasio 2000, p. xvi).

*Rosarium philosophorum*, integral to Jung’s 1946 essay, can be seen as a recapitulation of the mythical death and rebirth story of Isis and Osiris, as Edinger and von Franz note. Osiris is killed by his angry brother Seth who cuts up and scatters the body parts which are re-gathered by the sister-wife of Osiris, Isis, who returns them to life. It is a story from ancient Egypt, the birthplace of alchemy. Speculation also exists (e.g. Houston 1995) that symbolic re-enactments of this story were based on an implicit knowledge of the three major neurological divisions of the brain, and the chakra system aligned with body’s glandular placement. In a derivative mixture similar to the one that Jung assembles, they rely on applied biology, psychology, philosophy and religious experience. Studies of these systems of Eastern thought, recognised by Jung as accounts of development of states of higher consciousness, transformational experience and individuation, occupied Jung earlier in his life and are the under-pinnings of his thought in *The Psychology of the Transference*. 
Given the foregoing, it seems reasonable to interpret the feather and scale as links by association to the brain’s three neurological organisational areas intuitively recognised by alchemy and Jung. This link lets me begin to think about transference in a manner related to biological and psychological development, to states of psychological organisation and to their neurological underpinnings. These systems are at work in transference and countertransference and in the unconscious re-working of what Jung calls family incest, those habitual family relational patterns revealed as neurological patterns and unconscious transference dynamics.

Neuroscientist Paul MacLean is credited with the modern revival and exploration of three brain systems linked with evolutionary phases. He coined the term “triune brain” to describe

his discernment of a striking similarity between the three neural systems in our head and the brain structures of the three major animal groups of evolution: reptilian, old mammalian, and new mammalian. For more than half a century he and his staff traced these parallels and showed how each of our neural systems carries within it the blueprint of potential intelligences, abilities, and capacities developed during each of these evolutionary epochs (Pearce 2004, p.23).

I conjecture, as implicit in Jung, the requirement to align these “intelligences, abilities and capacities” so that the personality is not a house divided. Transference contents become data to evaluate for this purpose. Pearce continues his description in a way that explains the disunity underlying the alchemical desire for alignment of body, soul and spirit, for “open-ended potential”.

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In concert with this, Jung writes: “Man’s instincts are not all harmoniously arranged, they are perpetually jostling each other out of the way. The ancients were optimistic enough to see this struggle not as a chaotic muddle but as aspiring to some higher order” (Jung 1946 ¶ 469).

Pearce explains the triune brain’s system of integration:

Nature never abandons a system that works but instead builds new, enlarged and more efficient systems upon the old. She seems to have created each new evolutionary brain to correct problems in an older system or to expand its possibilities. To the three inherited neural blueprints we add the contents of life’s ever-changing environments from which arises our extraordinary adaptability. The striking differences among the three neural structures of our brain make this heritage both a blessing and a curse, however. When integrated, these three systems offer us and open-ended potential, an ability to rise and go beyond all constraint or limitation. But when that integration fails, our mind is a house divided against itself, our behavior a paradoxical civil war—and we become our own worst enemy (Pearce 2004, p.23).

Pearce also notes that the complete four-fold brain includes the prefrontal cortex. It is very recent in that “only about 40,000 years have passed since our prefrontal lobes appeared in their present size and with their current significance” (ibid, p.40).

The reptilian structure, the oldest and deepest part of the brain arrived at for management of cold-blooded creatures, is estimated to have evolved over five-hundred million years ago. The paleomammalian structure, the limbic brain, between three and two-hundred million years old, makes us nurturing, warm-blooded creatures and controls our emotional reactions, particularly “feeding, fighting, fleeing and sexual reproduction” (Ornstein and Thompson 1984, p.28).
The neo-cortex, “the verbal intellectual brain,” is concerned with language and thinking, and the ability to stand outside and regard ourselves (Pearce 2004, p.26).

Our three brains develop in utero as a nested hierarchy in the order of their appearance in evolutionary history: The reptilian brain begins its functions in the first trimester of gestation, the old mammalian in the second, and the neocortex, or human brain, in the third. Nature’s newest addition, our prefrontal cortex (prefrontal lobes), makes its major debut after birth (Pearce 2004, p26).

To Conclude

I have made this cursory introduction to the organisational characteristics that form an alignment with different areas of brain function for three reasons. One, they are missing in Jung’s writing of The Psychology of the Transference – they are implicit, but some of my observations derive from research post-dating him. None the less the relationship between biological and psychological bodymind is being explored by both of us. Second, they add another possibility to the way that transference phenomena might be interpreted in a language different from the one that Jung uses. One of the difficulties with The Psychology of the Transference is the extent to which it is reliant on alchemy and its language, so that other ways of considering the phenomena are absent. Third, each possible coniunctio layer is mediated by a relational style that has implications for regarding the coniunctio and therapeutic therapy. The coniunctio, where Beya dissolves Gabricus into atoms, symbolises a state where the solve et coagula applies across the spectrum of being, so that even the most primitive organisational components might be re-formed in the chemical bath. The limbic areas of the brain require relational chemistry, so the problem of love or hate, or of life-affirming or life-extinguishing
erotic energies, require attention if the mating is to be successful and the tranference to resolve. If relative consciousness is present in the fountain become marriage bath become *aqua benedicta*, the manner in which the two affect or infect the stinking, pristine water requires conscious attention to the projections and introjections it, and each of them, holds.
Chapter 10

Death

Here King and Queen are lying dead/
In great distress the soul is sped.

To Begin

The coniunctio, it appears, drains the life-force from the figures. They spend a period in suspended animation, continuing to experience and give structure and order to deeper layers of being, before being able to return to life. The transference relationship seems to be in a holding pattern. The work towards individuation continues in areas that were previously unconscious and maybe still are. The work feels death-like. The picture is headed conceptio and putrefactio, suggesting that the substance that is rotting will feed new beginnings.

Jung begins his chapter thus:

Vas hermeticum, fountain, and sea have here become sarcophagus and tomb. King and queen are dead and have melted into a single being with two heads. The feast of life is followed by the funeral threnody. Just as Gabricus dies after becoming united with his sister, and the son-lover always comes to an early end after consummating the hierosgamos with the mother-goddess of the Near East, so, after the coniunctio oppositorum, deathlike stillness reigns. When the opposites unite, all energy ceases: there is no more flow. The waterfall has plunged to its full depth in that torrent of nuptial joy and longing; now
only a stagnant pool remains, without wave or current. So at least it appears, looked at from the outside. As the legend tells us, the picture represents the *putrefactio*, the corruption, the decay of a once living creature. Yet the picture is also entitled “Conceptio.” The text says: “Corruptio unius generatio est alterius”—the corruption of one is the generation of the other, an indication that this death is an interim stage to be followed by a new life. No new life can arise, says the alchemists, without the death of the old. They liken the art to the work of the sower, who buries the grain in the earth: it dies only to waken to new life (Jung 1946, ¶467).

**This Chapter**

I will probe what death means materially and symbolically to alchemy and Jung. I will investigate what its symbolic value might be in a therapeutic relationship where transference countertransference phenomena provide information about what is currently formed and forming, and what has been present and absent in the original facilitative matrix shaping psychological development. These transference phenomena reveal what has been called into being and given life, and what has not been and so is not enlivened, or what has been destroyed by traumatic impingement, leaving damage to the psyche. The damage might be viewed through Jung’s lens and seen as the self organising its *prima materia* as it strives to individuate, or through a developmental lens where structural and functional components are seen as over-represented or not available. Death and lifelessness, as well as life in differing intensities, all jostle on the continuum of being and all may present for attention as transference phenomena.
**Jung Writes about Death**

Jung speculates that the death depicted may be the “tacit punishment for the sin of incest,” for “the wages of sin is death.”

Thus the descent that began in the marriage-bath has touched rock bottom: death, darkness and sin. For the adept, however, the hopeful side of things is shown in the anticipated appearance of the hermaphrodite, though the psychological meaning of this is at first obscure (ibid ¶ 468).

What Jung means by the punishment of “incest” is difficult for me to identify. Perhaps he refers to the distress felt when the projections onto the key care-giver are withdrawn and the subjective experience of lack and loss, discontinuity and unsupportedness register, like states of death, and the meaning which had given the personality structure, dissolves. Liliane Frey-Rohn, a contemporary of Jung’s, might have been contemplating the sixth woodcut of the *Rosarium* as she imaginatively dialogues with Jung:

Jung’s premise that the unconscious aim of the incest image was not a desire to co-habit, but a longing for rebirth of one’s own nature through contact with the maternal soil, could be considered a revaluation of all values. The finding that this wish was fundamentally a search for one’s self and not just a decline into the infantile period—as Freud had assumed—was one of the most impressive aspects of Jung’s psychology (Frey-Rohn 1990, p. 176).

Frey-Rohn quotes Jung:

I have suggested that it is not just a relapse into infantilism, but a genuine attempt to get at something necessary . . . We find that he [the patient] is seeking something entirely different, something that Freud only appreciates negatively; the universal feeling of childhood innocence, the sense of security, of protection, of reciprocated love, of trust, of faith—a thing that has many names (Frey-Rohn 1990, p. 176 quoting Jung (1929), *Some Aspects of Modern Psychotherapy* p.32).
Frey-Rohn continues:

With such an approach Jung left unchanged the quality of the incest image as something unknown, just as the mother’s womb sheltered an abundance of possibilities. Jung deserves great credit for attributing to the regressive process the potential of a renewal of the personality from the depth of the psyche—even though there was always the danger of coming to an impasse. He even saw that this regressive movement was often the only possible bridge toward establishing a living relationship to creative forces and also to the treasure of experiences accumulated in the psyche over centuries (Frey-Rohn 1990, p.176).

And quotes Jung once more

Wisdom dwells in the depths, the wisdom of the mother; being one with her means being granted a vision of deeper things, of the primordial images and primitive forces which underlie all life and are its nourishing, sustaining, creative matrix (Frey-Rohn 1990, p. 176, quoting Jung, Symbols of Transformation p.413).

The mother being talked about by Jung in the Frey-Rohn quotes is both the personal and the archetypal one. If incest is talked about in a less metaphorical way, it refers to the personality formed in a particular family system where members create the facilitating environment shaping psychological development. Each family member is part of the overall unit, and unconsciously takes on incestuous roles to survive by supporting or denying the family climate. In the longing for re-birth, or the pursuit of the wholeness of the self, or in the therapeutic conversation, these areas are unpacked and the present and absent Sol and Luna facets experienced and contemplated.
All of this relates to the kind of transference phenomena which might be present. The analytical work re-constitutes the original family dynamics and expectations, projected onto the person of the analyst, and seen as contents present or absent in him/her, until the projections may be re-assumed by the person who has originated them. The death, the rock-bottom to which Jung refers, may be associated with the awareness of who one indeed is, and how the original self, constituted either around what Jung calls vice or virtue, is only a half that must gather and integrate opposites in the pursuit of wholeness. “This endeavour gradually leads to knowledge of one’s partner and to self-knowledge, and so to the distinction between what one really is and what is projected into one, or what one imagines oneself to be” (ibid, ¶ 471). Too much Sol, not enough Luna, too much Luna, not enough Sol in the original alchemy will be re-experienced again in the analytical transference where it might receive attention which compensates the original dynamic.

The whole question of how continuity and discontinuity of subjective states of self and being operate is being asked in relation to Woodcut 6. The value, too, of negative experiences, of death in this case–of deep depression, of loss, of non-being and madness–is being explored. Jung and alchemy examine death’s forms and processes in the adult personality. Later theorists have paid attention to the psychology of infancy where the same project, the establishment of a sense of self, is occurring initially and life’s streaming and its disruption is survived and not survived. The early childhood theorists’ interest in the developing child has recognisable applicability in adult psychological experiences which recapitulate early experiences, primal loss and lack, within the neurological complexity and
sensibility of the feeling, thinking adult. The ability to behold the infant in the adult personality is a parallel task the transference-oriented therapist performs.

As I learn about how to interpret transference countertransference phenomena I consult theoreticians not available to Jung. My preference and training is to enhance Jung’s speculations on the adult psyche, with data drawn from infant studies to add developmental subtleties to the way I regard transference phenomena. Studies which reveal typical age/phase-associated behaviours, thinking, emotional reactions or organisational abilities affect the way in which the standing in two worlds—the adult one and the infant one—might be mediated by the therapist, with Sol- logical and Luna-relational awareness. Infant neurological studies might also imply a normalising discourse, the opposite expressive form from Jung’s concerns with fully-lived individuality. The speculative thinking, however, on self structure, wherever on the life-span it occurs, adds additional dimensions to supplement Jung’s particular orientation as it might be applied to transference countertransference.

Jung works from the adult personality to identify meaning and continuity for the individual in the context of a life lived. He seeks to find, in the re-living and making good of unconscious lacks and losses, that they function as entry points to a personal and collective unconscious, to biological and spiritual transformation. Theorists contemporary with, and since Jung, have begun at the beginning to identify how systems concerned with infant self-organisation, form. Allan Schore, for example, is interested in human neurological functional and structural development. He has studied the way in which affect regulation is created when
the alchemical bath equates to the emotional climate/affect regulation-inducing chemistry present between infant and primary care-giver. Schore introduces his work:

The understanding of early development is one of the fundamental objectives of science. The beginnings of living systems set the stage for every aspect of an organism’s internal and external functioning throughout the lifespan. It is often not appreciated that an individual’s genetic inheritance which encodes the unvarying sequence of development is only partially expressed at birth. Genetic systems that program the evolution of biological and psychological structures continue to be activated at very high rates over the stages of infancy, and this progress is significantly influenced by factors in the postnatal environment. Of special importance are the incipient interactions the infant has with the most important object in the early environment—the primary caregiver. Events that occur during infancy, especially transactions with the social environment, are indelibly imprinted into the structures that are maturing in the first years of life. The child’s first relationship, the one with the mother, acts as a template, as it permanently molds the individual’s capacities to enter into all later emotional relationships. These early experiences shape the development of a unique personality, its adaptive capacities as well as its vulnerabilities to and resistances against particular forms of future pathologies. Indeed, they profoundly influence the emergent organization of an integrated system that is both stable and adaptable, and thereby the formation of the self (Schore 1994, p.3).

Jung moves, later in the Death chapter, to write that the crossed branches, become crossed arms in this woodcut, refer to the crucifixion each of us endures as we uncover that which crucifies us. “Whichever course one takes, nature will be mortified and must suffer, even to the death; for the merely natural man must die in part during his own lifetime. The Christian symbol of the crucifix is therefore a prototype and an “eternal” truth” (Jung 1946, ¶ 469). The alchemists advise that the artifex is the servant of the work, “but nature brings the work to fruition” (Jung 1946, ¶ 471). Jung’s language, in contrast to Schore’s, for example, is metaphorical, laden with Christian symbolism, associative, but it does
not represent the only way to language and think about the phenomena being considered.

Jung pays particular attention to the crossed branches/crossed arms as evidence of the contra-sexual forces at work unconsciously—which he designates as the anima of the man, the animus of the woman. He describes the process of development as it affects the male personality, and the sequence of ego to self growth that leads to the individuation inherent in the transference.

Translated into the language of psychology, the mythologem runs as follows: the union of the conscious mind or ego-personality with the unconscious personified as anima produces a new personality compounded of both . . . Not that the new personality is a third thing midway between conscious and unconscious, it is both together. Since it transcends consciousness it can no longer be called “ego” but must be given the name of “self.” . . . The self too is both ego and non-ego, subjective and objective, individual and collective. It is the “uniting symbol” which epitomizes the total union of opposites. . . . in accordance with its paradoxical nature, it can only be expressed by means of symbols. . . . Hence, properly understood, the self is not a doctrine or theory but an image born of nature’s own workings, a natural symbol far removed from all conscious intention (ibid, ¶ 474).

Another of the infant theorists, Donald Winnicott, speculates about the self in different language from Jung’s. I consult his thinking about the introjection and metabolism of experience, to rethink Jung’s way of working, concerned with the material body beneath the abstracted symbols Jung seems to prefer in 1946.

The True Self comes from the aliveness of the body tissues and the working of body-functions, including the heart’s action and breathing. It is closely linked with the idea of the Primary Process, and is, at the beginning, essentially not reactive to external stimuli, but primary. There is but little point in formulating a True Self idea except for the purpose of trying to understand the False Self, because it does no more than collect together the details of the experience of aliveness (Winnicott, 2003, p.148).
Other Writers Consider Death

Christopher Perry offers a response that appears to fit itself into Jung’s conceptions, adding experience drawn from his own work.

. . . The *vas mirabile* has become a sort of sarcophagus, a word which means “flesh-devouring,” a projection of the death-dealing aspects of the Great Mother, and an image conjured up to us by the coffin. The flow of the Mercurial Fountain of Picture 1 is at a standstill. And yet, the picture’s title suggests conception through rotting—putrefaction. This is the darkest time, the time of despair, disillusionment, envious attacks; the time when Eros and Superego are at daggers drawn, and there seems no way forward. This, in alchemical treatises, is called the *nigredo*, the blackening. One has to have faith in the regenerative capacities of compost through long periods of apparent inertia, inactivity, and, most importantly, despair. Faith in the process, faith in the relationship, the analyst’s faith in method/technique have to be counterbalanced, to my mind, at this stage by an absorption into total doubt, which, clinically, is usually enunciated by the patient as abandonment or psychotic relating, the latter of which is sometimes of the analyst’s making. There occurs empathic failing, which ultimately can be therapeutic; but its therapeutic efficacy rests upon the analyst’s persistent self-analysis, aided by the patient’s cues (Perry 1998, p. 153).

Perry describes here a barren, despairing climate between analyst and analysand. This state is also described as confrontation with the shadow, the shadow being the part of the self that has been unknown. He seems to suggest that death-dealing may well balance the life-giving exchanges in the analytic dyad, and that they may emanate from either person. That faith is so strongly recommended echoes the alchemists’ *Deo concedente*, integral to their labour. I find myself made uncomfortable by the description, wondering if greater attention to developmental cues or attuned empathic relationship rather than cognitive distinction might assist the integration of unconscious material in this phase and involve less risk for the patient. I wonder if Luna relatedness could be seen as absent, and the dearth of eros redressed to oppose the over-represented logos.
Edinger writes:

Things have become radically simplified! There is a mortuary slab with a united dead body on it, and that’s all there is. I would remind you that this follows the picture I consider to be the revelation of the mystery. From that way of looking at it, it shows the effect of witnessing what happened in Picture 5. It literally strikes one dead.

. . . [coniunctio and conceptio] represent a consequence of seeing into the dynamism of the opposites. Once you really see how that works, you are knocked out by it, so to speak. You’re suddenly ejected from the life process that has kept you going, and the shock has the effect of a kind of psychological death. Once you see behind the operation of the opposites, you’re not their victim any more but at the same time you lose connection with the energy that propelled you through life (Edinger 1994, p.68).

I wonder if one is knocked out by the knowledge or by the energies present. If the coniunctio is a positive one, a joining in understanding, say, the relief might be cathartic. If the coniunctio is a negative one, the sudden shift of energy from conscious to unconscious process might stun, paralyse. My experience of the opposites involves relief to have found the tenacious applicability of the model, with the unwelcome awareness of the thousands of opposites that might require attention now, and then again later, and later still. My experience is more awareness of the vulnerability and autonomy of embodied unconscious—as an area of being that has knowledge, and acts, quarantining energy for example, independently of me as conscious entity. This leaves me to experience the inner dislocation as a psychological death and ego dissolution.

Edinger questions whether Woodcut 6 any longer supports Jung’s contention that this is a relationship concerning two people. He decides it does not, and I am inclined to agree, at least in part. The hermaphrodite in the tomb appears to
represent the oppositional facets of one person, and the intra-psychic adjustments occurring, post coniunctio, as its effects lead to change. Yet one person is a symbolic way to concentrate the internal working that would otherwise be jointly experienced, representing experience that has arisen because of the two.

Schwartz-Salant’s thoughts on this woodcut are ones that resonate. He writes that ‘The sixth woodcut of the Rosarium, ‘Coffin of Putrefying Conception,’ depicts the regal couple, Sol and Luna, as dead, having melted into a single being with two heads” (Schwartz-Salant 2005, p. 176). He continues:

In effect, the unconscious dyad is dead: the marriage bed has turned into a coffin of ‘putrefying conception,’ indicating how death is believed to be a source of new life for the interactive field. The event is also named ‘conception or putrefaction,’ reflecting the alchemist’s insight into the enigmatic and paradoxical nature of the ‘black’ transformation process: a building up by building down, a putrefying movement of creation. ‘The corruption of one is the generation of the other,’ says the Rosarium. ‘When you see your matter going black, rejoice: for that is the beginning of the work’ (Fabricius 1976, 102). The ‘building up and building down’ is a good image for ways that the opposites of life and death find harmony in the transformation process. At the outset of the work, these opposites, as states within the field of the double-headed serpent, were totally opposed to and annihilating of each other (ibid, pp. 177-8).

Schwartz-Salant continues, here, to be concerned with the interactive field, implying this as an inter-personal state rather than primarily an intra-personal one. He notes the two heads, in support of the twoness. Certainly the two are bound within a single crown of thorns, caught perhaps in some intractable world view, or, on the other hand, about to be freed by the thoughts that they will begin to think together as they work to escape this deadening trap. His “building up and building
down” is a useful metaphor suggestive of the general *solve et coa luga*, the re-structuring and re-arrangement the state of death entails.

Jeffrey Raff writes of death so that both the symbolic and literal aspects can be perceived. His reference to the first and second *conjunctio* has relevance because Jung has pulled both pictures together so we see how differently they are represented. When we revert to the original *Rosarium* sequence we see that for four woodcuts, death intervenes between the 5, and 5a depictions.

As should be clear by now, there is never a movement to a new stage of individuation without the death of the previous one. The change from the first *conjunctio* to the second is no exception, and the death experience at this level of the work is very disconcerting and unpleasant. Indeed, so daunting is the prospect of having to sacrifice what has been gained, some individuals will stop their growth at this point rather than lose what they have already achieved.

The experience of the first level is an intense and meaningful experience. People who have gained this level are aware of the self in their lives, and use that awareness to cultivate a vital and engaging way of life.

. . . Sometimes the individual can get away with the refusal to take the next step, and sometimes the pressure from the self is so great that he or she has not choice but to take it. The point is that because so much has already been gained, the sacrifice is almost overwhelming. Yet without such a sacrifice, one never reaches the next level.

The self, too, undergoes a death experience. Although I cannot fathom how it might experience such an event, its apparent death is even more distressing to the ego. This stage of the work might well correspond to the second dark night of the soul, about which St. John of the Cross wrote. He described the torment of a very advanced soul, when God suddenly seems to disappear. Keep in mind that the self, or God, is a felt presence and not just a concept for someone at this level who tastes the self, knows it personally, and feels it in their consciousness with a great deal of joy. For all that to be taken away is almost more than one can bear. The tension and *mortificatio* occasioned by the ongoing evolution to the second *conjunctio* is thus a very difficult and taxing experience (Raff 2000, pp. 127-130).
The way that Raff writes about the *coniunctio* leaves no doubt that the symbolic and experiential death aspect is an inevitable consequence of it. The implication is that the adept who desires the *coniunctio* must also learn to live, or at least survive, the death. The *coniunctio* takes place within, in response to forces within and without. It is the adept’s task to develop the personality so that it is fixed, stable and indestructable. This, however, is another form of death that leaves it stranded at one end of the *solve et coagula* opposites. The other requirement is for it to suffer its own instability and destruction, for within the *coniunctio* these are equally valuable and necessary if Sol and Luna are both to be served. Life and death coexist within the fixed and the volatile. Sol may be present in the fixity of the stone coffin, Luna in the watery grave. Death as symbol is a destroyer and a creator. If acknowledged within the natural order and embraced as an aspect of the *coniunctio*, it is integral to life.

Israel Regardie makes direct statements about the place of death in alchemy.

. . . it is with this rigidity of consciousness, with this inflexible crystallized condition of mind that Alchemy, like modern Psychotherapy, proposes to deal, and, moreover, eradicate. . . . The crystallization of the field of consciousness, with its consequent narrowing of the possibilities of experience, produces a species of living death. The alchemists proposed to kill death. Their object, by the psychological method of interpretation, was to disintegrate this inflexibility of mind. This process they call the dissolution or putrefaction. Consciousness is broken down into its component parts. From this apparently amorphous and homogeneous resultant, it was their intention to reassemble the fundamental elements of consciousness on an entirely new and healthy basis. . . . Consciousness is to be vivified utterly and is not separated from the Unconscious by a sharp and unnatural cleavage or partition from the other levels of the psyche. Thus the contents of the one part, by a reversal of values and functions, have full access of entry into the other, and vice versa (Regardie 1970 p.18).
The killing of death is a stunning phrase. One imagines it might only be done by the penetration of lived consciousness into the mystery. Life must be re-instated there at the dark heart. Death is not only a polarised position, but a form to be mated with, drawn into recognition and relationship in the pristine, stinking, soupy coniunctio. It is necessary to inhabit death so that it is not a neglected polar opposite from life, so unnatural cleavages and partitions are not set up. The fullness of life cannot be experienced in the absence of death. Transference formations will summon births and inevitable deaths, and death so that re-birth can follow.

**A Pause for Comment**

I interpret *Death* as a primary experience to be incorporated into the resolution of opposites contained in the *coniunctio*. Jeffrey Raff writes: “Only when the opposites die to their previous forms can a true union be created” (Raff 2000, p.168). The mystery continues, however, because death and life continue their forming, and reforming, and the end is not so much reached as held in an idea in which flow continues. In this first ten of the *Rosarium philosophorum* woodcuts we are engaged with the production of the white stone, the receptive, feminine, yin aspects of being, as opposed to the facets of soul developed in woodcuts 11 to 20, where the red stone, the active, masculine, yang characteristics are developed. The 1–10 is the phase of the passive learnings, of learning to receive, to accept, to incorporate more of world into self so the reflection of microcosm as macrocosm becomes visible from the inside out, subjectively forms. Woodcut 20 contains
Christ resurrected, returned from the dead, the triumph of the active phase continuing the tradition of many cultures, and told in the Egyptian story of Osiris.

Erich Neumann, in a chapter that he calls *Transformation, or Osiris*, writes: “The story of Osiris is the first self-delineation of this process of personality transformation, whose counterpart is the visible emergence of the spiritual principle from the natural or biological principle” (Neumann 1993 p.221). That Jung was concerned with the “emergence of the spiritual principle from the natural or biological principle” is clear: he wrestles repeatedly with the question of what is body, what spirit, or what is soma, what psyche. That he saw the two principles as related is undoubted. He writes:

For anyone acquainted with religious phenomenology it is an open secret that although physical and spiritual passion are deadly enemies, that are nevertheless brothers-in-arms, for which reason it often needs the merest touch to convert one into the other. Both are real, and together they form a pair of opposites, which is one of the most fruitful sources of psychic energy. There is no point in deriving one from the other in order to give primacy to one of them. Even if we know only one at first, and do not notice the other until much later, that does not prove that the other was not there all the time. Hot cannot be derived from cold, nor high from low. An opposition either exists in its binary form or it does not exist at all, and a being without opposites is completely unthinkable, as it would be impossible to establish its existence (Jung 1946(b) ¶ 414).

The subjective experience of death, extinguishment, non-being, the “dying to previous forms”, is featured in woodcuts 6–9 and the exploration of this, as the *mortificatio*, depicted. We may still have, here depicted, the original great sea, over which the spirit of the waters originally hovered (Regardie 1970, p. 196). Creation is being wrought. And the body is not lifeless but in almost suspended animation in the 6-9 series: the angle of the heads shifts, arms reposition, hands
and feet move, a soul-child leaves, rain or dew falls, a soul-child returns. There is a slow stirring towards the new life being almost invisibly generated within. What is death and what is life is not entirely distinct. This symbolic representation, though, has a literal, experiential dimension in the necessity to consciously accept, receive, the experience of death in the coniunctio so that it is lived and known by the subject. It becomes, as much as is possible, a conscious experience incorporated into the personal psychological coniunctio so that with effort, one lives one’s death rather than being lived by it. The experience of extinguishment or non-being is inescapable, but not necessarily a permanent state, the woodcuts indicate. Eventually, we might also accept the depiction as a freeze-frame of a state that might be apprehended as relatively ordinary, to be met and used repeatedly in the adaptive repertoire of analysand, analyst, or person in the world.

The centrality of the coniunctio as an organising principle, in which opposites are resolved and accumulated and experientially held, is present from the beginning of the 1946 essay. Jung’s opening sentence in The Psychology of the Transference is

The fact that the idea of the mystic marriage plays such an important part in alchemy is not surprising when we remember that the term most frequently employed for it, coniunctio, referred in the first place to what we call chemical combination, and that the substances or “bodies” to be combined were drawn together by what we would call affinity (Jung 1946, ¶ 353).

In the first section of the Introduction, we find a description of it as archetypal and organising principle:
The *coniunctio* is an *a priori* image that occupies a prominent place in the history of man’s mental development (Jung 1946, ¶ 355).

The *coniunctio* contains opposites. That means love and hate, man and woman as the chosen *Rosarium* symbols, or life and death. These co-exist, mate with each other, shape each other. They produce, in the developmental schema, not chaotic forms only but forms held in a conscious matrix so that consciousness grows, opposites harmonise, and the unconscious which generates them sits comfortably within the process, able to make its contribution without being a source of fear.

I suggested earlier that who Jung is as he writes the 1946 essay is significant. David Rosen, in *The Tao of Jung*, writes about Jung at this time. Rosen implies a *coniunctio* containing all of Jung’s oppositional and competing life energies, where his heart attack becomes a “soul / spirit attack” derived from events in his public and personal life. The illness becomes ultimately transforming. Rosen also quotes Jung in relation to acceptance, to receiving. Rosen is concerned with how we outgrow our problems. He finds answer, prophetically, in Jung who recommends “*wu wei* (action through non-action) . . . let things happen” (Rosen 1996, p.117).

Rosen records an Osiris-like experience, or a shamanic “wounded healer” one.

In this individuating attack on Jung’s own heart and primal spirit, Jung found that “to experience defeat is also to experience victory.” The victory Jung claimed was rebirth of his heart and spirit. Jung now saw the world differently. As Barbara Hanna records:

There was also a vision or experience—not mentioned in *Memories*—which he described to Emma Jung and myself very
vividly . . . he felt that his body had been dismembered and cut up into small pieces. Then, over quite a long period, it was slowly collected and put together again with the greatest care. This is a very interesting parallel to the wide-spread primitive rituals that were experienced by the shamans. [Jung said] that he had been obliged to do most of or all the reassembling himself (Rosen 1996, pp.119-120).

This supports, again, my contention that who Jung is, as he writes the 1946 essay, influences its contents. The old man back from the dead is so visibly alive in it.

To Conclude

I offer this as evidence of the transformative value to alchemist Jung of near-death experience, and for it as matter for incorporation into consciousness and the way transference and transformation are understood. I have consistently suggested that in The Psychology of the Transference Jung offers his own transference to the material he considers, and that his process, his attempt to existentially integrate his personal experience, is an aspect of the text. That Jung actively lived this as an opposite for incorporation into the fullness of his own self is also evident in a comment on Jung’s approaching death, from biographer Gerhard Wehr. He quotes Ruth Bailey who nursed Jung, writing about the last few days of his life. She records:

“During the last two days he lived in a far-away world and saw wonderful and magnificent things there, of that I am sure. He smiled often and was happy. When we sat on the terrace for the last time, he spoke of an enchanting dream he had had; he said: ‘Now I know the truth down to a very little bit that is still missing. When I know this too, then I will have died’ (Wehr 2001, p.453)."
Chapter 11

The Ascent of the Soul

To Begin

The paradox continues. In some ways it appears that matters grow worse for the lifeless figure in the tomb as the soul leaves the body in the way it is said to do when death is final. At the same time the woodcut has a double title—animae extractio vel impregnatio, which suggests that as well as the soul being extracted, an impregnation is occurring. We are to understand that in this costly process, that takes the players back to their beginnings and forward into a greater life, substances are being lost and substances are being gained.

As well, a miracle occurs. Jung seems not to notice, but the figures have changed sides: Luna—again, she of the long hair—has moved from the uppermost figure in woodcut 6 to the lower figure in woodcut 7. Is this in reference to the production of the white stone, the Luna receptiveness that is developing in woodcuts 1 to 10, so that Luna has taken her place as the foundational entity she always was? Is the water in which the opposites lie the generative water of all beginnings, symbol of the primordial and archetypal mother, nurturing and loving,
devouring and death-dealing, in this womb tomb? And no matter that the soul leaves the body, the body is active on its own behalf, and exploratory. Sol’s fingertips protrude over the tomb. Luna’s foot is lifted out of the water, stretching onto the stony end of the tomb or levering off from it, like an animal tendril, a feeler, something with agency in this flesh-eating container. A perch or support has appeared under the one crown for two heads. A depth marker has appeared above Sol’s forearm, indicating that the water has fallen in comparison to Woodcut 6. The exploring hand and foot, the subsiding water, the couple that has swapped sides suggest that despite or because of the soul heading for the heavens, mastery is also being acquired, death is not absolute. The passive/active hermaphrodite, receiving knowledge of death and entombment, is alive in it, alive to it, and far from extinguished. There are changes also to the tomb. On the plinth and container, there are nine divisions in Woodcut 6, seven in Woodcut 7. In woodcut 7 the sections are also more clearly evident, the perspective and tomb rotated so the stone also has life. Seven is the original number of planets and metals introduced in *The Mercurial Fountain*, so the all-gendered Mercurius/unconscious who assumes all forms and wanders between worlds, is present, working, in the world that is the hermaphrodite.

**This Chapter**

In this chapter it is possible to discern Jung writing in two guises. In one, he writes of the psychological process in Woodcut 7, *The Ascent of the Soul*, as therapist to patient, concerned for management of potentially overwhelming unconscious contents and emergence of psychotic and schizophrenic states, or the
experience of madness. In the second guise he规格ulates more widely, wondering what paradoxical alchemical gold lies in the experience of these as ontological states, if they are not “cured” but treated as initiations into wider aspects of being. He indicates that the task of unravelling this phenomenally leaves us in mystery. He suggests that the ground of being that the initiate begins to know, in these regressive states, is Sapientia Dei, the relational feminine aspect of God, present from the beginning.

I examine Jung’s interpretation and the paradoxes revealed. Since he makes no direct mention of transference in relation to this woodcut, I compensate in a speculative way.

**Orienting to This Chapter**

Jung notices that something formerly reliable is lost, in this chapter where transference rates no mention. He interprets the picture as if the hermaphrodite is still the couple in the transference relationship, rather than the alchemist, singular, working an individual project. The two heads support his stance. I find the couple metaphor less workable now there are only two-half-persons-making-one present. He begins the chapter in this way:

This picture carries the putrefactio a stage further. Out of the decay the soul mounts up to heaven. Only one soul departs from the two, for the two have indeed become one. This brings out the nature of the soul as a vinculum or ligamentum: it is a function of relationship. As in real death, the soul departs from the body and returns to its heavenly source. The One born of the two represents the metamorphosis of both, though it is not yet fully developed and is still a “conception” only. Yet, contrary to the usual meaning of conception, the soul does
not come down to animate the body, but leaves the body and mounts heavenwards. The “soul” evidently represents the idea of unity which has still to become a concrete fact and is at present only a potentiality. The idea of a wholeness made up of sponsus and sponsa has its correlate in the *rotundus globus coelestis* (Jung 1946, ¶ 475).

Jung continues the interpretation here at the level of the alchemical metaphor and in relation to how all this might feel, be experienced. The pair become sponsus and sponsa, and as such, working partners. He writes about the picture psychologically as a “dark state of disorientation” “analogous to the schizophrenic state” when “psychoses may become acute, i.e., when the patient becomes aware of the collective unconscious and the psychic non-ego” (ibid, ¶ 476). He notes that “this collapse and disorientation of consciousness may last a considerable time” and is a “soulless condition” where the patient feels “the full force of autoerotic affects and fantasies” (ibid, ¶ 476). It is clear that he regards this is a dangerous, dark, fragmented time for analysand and analyst. The regression unto death is felt. The freeze-frame of *coniunctio* that Woodcut 7 is, depicts unformed beginnings and unpredictable endings, and primitive pre-symbolic states and transcendent awareness, all beheld from a position of acceptance which has no desire to act or defend, but to behold and experience. It is a state something akin, perhaps, to this one:

Those masterful images because complete  
Grew in pure mind, but out of what began?  
A mound of refuse or the sweepings of a street,  
Old kettles, old bottles, and a broken can,  
Old iron, old bones, old rags, that raving slut  
Who keeps the till. Now that my ladder’s gone,  
I must lie down where all the ladders start,  
In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.

Jung’s interpretation of *The Ascent of the Soul*

Jung leaves no doubt that for the patient in this state, conditions are dire but also potentially hold alchemical treasure. He writes of the value of strengthening the conscious mind so the patient can stand outside the confusion. He indicates that the conscious mind may, at any moment, be submerged by unconscious contents. The corpse we see is “destined to decay” and the alchemical processes speak of cutting the bodies up into tiny pieces, mortifying the parts, converting them into the stone (ibid, ¶ 478). The references to bodies in tiny pieces seem to indicate endless regressions until the ego is absorbed by the unconscious and the foundation of being encountered, as yet another living out of the story of Osiris.

The tempting assumption is that Jung knows much more than he writes here. Stanton Marlan, Jungian analyst working in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, quotes a letter to Father Victor White from December 1946, sometime after Jung had a second heart attack. It attests to Jung’s own dismembering initiations. Integration of them into the conscious personality prepares the subject to embody the continuum of being from disembodied spirituality to fragmentation of self and death, to wander between the worlds and return, with material, all insubstantial, to think and write about.

It is a mightily lonely thing, when you are stripped of everything in the presence of God. One’s wholeness is tested mercilessly. . . . I had to climb out of that mess and I am now whole again. Yesterday I had a marvellous dream: One bluish diamond, like a star high in heaven, reflected in a round quiet pool heaven above, heaven below. The *imago Dei* in the darkness of the earth, that is myself. This dream meant a great consolation. I am no more a black and endless sea of misery and suffering but a certain amount thereof contained in a divine vessel (Marlan 2005, p.208).
How body becomes a divine vessel might be an alternative heading for Woodcut 7. I have stated my contention that *The Psychology of the Transference* contains Jung’s transference to the material he writes about. Perhaps it is too soon after breaking his foot and heart attacks to think the material beyond the state he offers. It seems that the Jung who is writing is writing for himself as much as anyone and the transference to the alchemical material engaged in passing is part of a larger personal and archetypal process so he and the woodcuts share the narrative. In support of my contention, Groesbeck writes: “Barbara Hanna describes this as the period when he made his greatest step in the process of individuation.” He quotes her further in relation to Jung’s experience during his illness and hospitalisation: “Barbara Hannah said that is was during this time that he actually underwent a shamanic dismemberment and experienced himself as a fish, returning to the level of his animal unconscious” (Groesbeck 1989, p. 272).

There is a body of investigation within Jungian thought which draws on shamanic studies. The shamanistic traditions contain initiation, privation, suffering, transcendence. They also present shamanism as a vocational designation for people with particular psychological characteristics such a propensity for visions and trances, or for wandering into and returning from territories that Jung would call the collective unconscious and that other psychologies might describe as psychotic pathological core states, or madness. Jung is more prone to non-pathologising, and to acceptance and investigation of the range of human experience in the work towards “wholeness.” All of these investigations prepare the analytical couple to survive states that might come to life as transference phenomena, created in the work they do together, or brought,
as a consequence of trauma, for healing there. The woodcut also includes whatever is symbolised here in the human range, as an asset in the pursuit of alchemical gold.

Craig San Roque alludes to something of preparation for these states in his *Notes*:

Shamanic practice mostly involves an apprentice passing through a training process. There are forms of training in all known traditional healing/indigenous practices. There are of course charlatan showmen practitioners and various forms of histrionic or borderline personalities who claim such skills. There may even be developmental childhood basic faults, as John Merchant suggests in his paper, which direct a person to assume the role of the liminal healer or sorcerer. There are Basic Faults or developmental faults which any psychotherapist among us in our group may find in ourselves. This needs attention. The fact that I may have holes in my psyche, schisms in development, psychic illnesses in the family, trauma systems in the trans-generational line or dissociations in consciousness and so forth–does not preclude me from undergoing an analysis and a training procedure which eventually makes good use of these assets. Finely tuned and firmly handled the shamanic illness is useful–naively handled such states become toxic impingements on the reality of the other (San Roque 2008, p.2).

This suggests that the therapist’s psychic foundational arrangement is what is taken to the work of therapy. There it is applied as body-mind aware of toxic and non-toxic impingements, or of the experience of the soul ascending, knowing what precedes it and what follows.

*The Light that Shines in the Darkness*

With some of the earlier woodcuts, Jung wrote about anima/animus processes, associatively adding Eros and Logos to the dynamic balance being established between masculine/feminine, Sol/Luna facets. All are pairings concerned with expressions of particular contra-sexual, hermaphrodite energies. In his writing
about Woodcut 7, he picks up the idea of the *Sapientia Dei*, introduced in the first section of his *Introduction*. I think it is important enough to notice and comment about. Groesbeck, relying on Barbara Hanna again, writes: “More specifically, when Jung wrote his treatise on the transference, he said that at the heart of the transference lay the need for Eros in the archetype of the *coniunctio* (Hannah 10, pp. 279-280, quoted by Groesbeck, 1989, p. 273). I have understood Eros here as the relatedness that balances the opposite discriminatory Logos. I think that in *The Ascent of the Soul*, the relatedness is expressed through *Sapientia Dei*, the cosmological principle present before any discrimination occurs, that Jung specifically writes back into the section.

I think that in his attempt to write phenomenally about what is happening when the body lies lifeless and the soul leaves, he has in mind that primordial dark state associated with the feminine relatedness principle present from the beginning, told of in creation stories and familiar in alchemy. Jung’s journey to *Sapientia Dei* is a circuitous one to retrace.

He begins (¶ 479) to consider the outcome of the first level of *coniunctio*. He describes how the strengthened conscious attitude “... integrates the unconscious, and gradually there comes into being a higher point of view where both conscious and unconscious are represented” (Jung 1946 ¶ 479). For the experience of *Sapientia Dei*, the unconscious must be available. He compares this to the flooding of the Nile which “increases the fertility of the land” (ibid). This flooding runs parallel to the unconscious flooding within psychosis and schizophrenia, bringing experience to swamp the personality if the ego is absorbed, or enrich the
personality if the experience does not overwhelm but can be thought and felt, eventually salvaged. He quotes from the *Rosarium*. This is the translation in English, with autonomous Nature–Mother Nature?–personified, beatified:

> O blessed Nature, blessed are thy works, for that thou makest the imperfect to be perfect through the true putrefaction, which is dark and black. Afterwards thou makest new and multitudinous things to grow, causing with thy verdure the many colours to appear (ibid).

He wonders why the *nigredo*, “reminiscent of death and the grave” should also be the “supremely positive state” of mystics such as St John of Cross. St John writes of the dark night of the soul “in which the invisible—and therefore dark—radiance of God comes to pierce and purify the soul” (ibid). He notes the value of this experience to mystics, and alchemy as a form of mysticism. He continues:

> The appearance of the colours in the alchemical vessel, the so-called *cauda pavonis*, denotes the spring, the renewal of life–*post tenebras lux*. The text continues: “This blackness is called earth.” The Mercurius in whom the sun drowns is an earth-spirit, a *Deus terrenus*, as the alchemists say, or the *Sapientia Dei* which took on body and substance in the creature by creating it. The unconscious is the spirit of chthonic nature and contains the archetypal images of the *Sapientia Dei*. But the intellect of modern civilized man has strayed too far in the world of consciousness, so that it received a violent shock when it suddenly beheld the face of its mother, the earth (ibid, ¶ 480).

*Sapientia Dei*

Jung has brought us to *Sapientia Dei*, the wisdom of God, as the feminine counterpart to God. She appears, in the way he writes, to be also the presence of god of the dark night of the soul, the light of the dark sun, the opposite of Sol by day. His emphasis, for *The Ascent of the Soul*, falls on *Sapientia Dei* as the mother, the earth. Who is she, and what does she symbolise?
Von Franz writes of *Sapientia Dei* in *Aurora Consurgens*, the text on the problem of opposites in alchemy attributed to Thomas Aquinas. In the *Foreword* to her text she observes:

Jung’s idea of a potential *unus mundus* seems to me a modern scientific formulation of the archetypal image of *Sapientia Dei*, with, however, the incalculable difference that the *unus mundus* is a concept derived from pure empiricism, whereas that of *Sapientia Dei* is purely metaphysical. Nevertheless, the gulf between the two might, in my opinion, actually have been bridged when, at the end of his life, St. Thomas experienced how the *Sapientia Dei*, which till then had existed for him only as a metaphysical concept in his mind, suddenly revealed its overwhelming psychic reality (von Franz 2000, pp. xii-iii).

I will treat von Franz’s supposition as persuasive, and *Sapientia Dei* as the *unus mundus* which, if it is an “overwhelming psychic reality” will be experienced. *Sapientia* is the deepest source of life renewing itself. *Sapientia* was often presented symbolically as cloud, or water. The water here is in, above the figures and below: in the amniotic water that holds the bodies, in their cellular processes, in the cloud the homunculus rises to for blessing. Jung advises that the homunculus symbol created in the darkest time rises to the heaven, analogous to the Second Coming of Christ, the Anthropos, the *filius regius*, “the undivided and hermaphroditic First Man” (Jung 1946 ¶ 481).

*Sapientia* is personified in Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon (von Franz 2000 p.155). I present her here, from Chapter 8 of Proverbs, as the companion from the beginning, in language that lets her be apprehended.

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.
Ages ago I was set up, at the first, 
before the beginning of the earth. 
When there were no depths I was brought forth, 
when there were no springs abounding with water. 
Before the mountains had been shaped, 
before the hills, I was brought forth; 
before he had made the earth with its fields, 
or the first of the dust of the world. 
When he established the heavens, 
I was there, 
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, 
when he made firm the skies above, 
when he established the fountains of the deep, 
when he assigned to the sea its limit, 
so that the waters might not transgress his command, 
when he marked out the foundations of the earth, 
then I was beside him, like a master workman; 
and I was daily his delight, 
rejoicing before him always, 
rejoicing in his inhabited world 
and delighting in the sons of men. 

(Matthews 1991, pp.99-100)

In this excerpt *Sapientia* is the fusion before discrimination occurred, the life being lived before life knew itself. It seems that Jung has something like this principle in mind as the psychic experience which requires integration after a heart attack, death, and return, or to survive the initiation of Woodcut 7 where she is present as womb and tomb. To return to von Franz on Sapientia:

She was also considered the *archetypus mundus*, “that archetypal world after whose likeness this sensible world was made,” and through which God becomes conscious of himself. *Sapientia Dei* is thus the sum of archetypal images in the mind of God. . . .

In modern psychology she would be interpreted as a feminine personification of the collective unconscious (von Franz 2000, pp.155-6).
To return to the concern of Jung’s material as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference, Sylvia Brinton Perera seems to refer to a contemporary version of *Sapientia Dei* as absent ground:

What I have seen and experienced in myself and other women who are successful daughters of the collective, often unmothered daughters of the animus and the patriarchy, is that we suffer a basic fault (Michael Balint’s term). We do not have an adequate sense of our own ground nor connection to our own embodied strength and needs adequate to provide us with a resilient feminine, balanced yin-yang, processual ego. There is a fault in the basic levels of our personality—a deep split, maintained by loyalty to superego ideals that no longer function to enhance life, a loyalty that keeps the ego alienated from reality, in a regressed, inflated, Self-identified mode. Thus we need to undergo a “controlled regression” into the borderland-underworld levels of the dark goddess—back to ourselves before we had the form we know, back to the magic and archaic levels of consciousness and to the transpersonal passions and rages which both blast and nurture us there; back to the body-mind, and the preverbal tomb-womb states, searching back to the deep feminine, the “dual mother” Jung writes about (Perera 1981, pp.56-7).

Edinger goes to Plato to find a passage that might apply to Jung’s life work. It reflects an aspect of Jung’s curiosity implicitly expressed in *The Psychology of the Transference*. The passage that Edinger quotes is this:

True philosophers make dying their profession, and . . . to them of all men death is least alarming . . . If they are thoroughly dissatisfied with the body, and long to have their souls independent of it [that states in a nutshell the first stage of the coniunctio], when this happens would it not be entirely unreasonable to be frightened and distressed? Would they not naturally be glad to set out for the place where there is a prospect of attaining the object of their lifelong desire—which is wisdom—and of escaping from an unwelcome association? (Edinger 1994, p.79, quoting Plato, *Phaedra*, 67c-68b, in *The Collected Dialogues*).

Death symbolic and literal, a little at a time or in large doses, is central to *The Ascent of the Soul*, but not so overtly to Jung’s commentary in *The Psychology of the Transference*.
Personal Transference Contents and The Ascent of the Soul

The following excerpt from an analytical conversation provides an indication of how matter related to Woodcut 7 might be present in the analytical dyad.

Analytical conversation 5  June 2007

She says: It’s one of those mornings when I’m sitting here with my feet stuck out into the space and my soul left town. I’m just here with an empty body.

He says: Ah. I know just how to go there and can do it instantly if I let myself. The Rosarium’s useful for depicting or meditating on states of non-being, gathering up non-bits, surviving in deep space and non-space–don’t you find?

She says: I do find. I like to imagine that each picture is but a petal in the rose, so I don’t get too caught in any of the depictions but some of the states are gravid. I think the mastery in the Rosarium is something along those lines, moving along it as if it were a continuum or more a circle, a rose. But it’s the experience of the state I’m in that’s most interesting, I suppose. I could tell you the tale that produced it–but it’s sort of beside the point. What I would really like is for you to indicate that you know about this and de-code it with me as psychological experience.
He says: I suspect that most of us come into therapy and need being attuned to so that these energy-taking states can be wondered about by two minds. There’s something about holding feeling and reason together that leads to awareness of how things begin, where life comes in, how it might be degenerated or reclaimed if it gets lost. Working this way we participate in each other’s thoughts. Frail things can be apprehended, heavy things endured.

She says: In our infant obs we’ve been watching an eight week old baby opening and closing its mouth, getting its tongue ready to feed or to vocalise, to experiment with sounds. And I’ve just read something about Jung experiencing the fish within himself. I imagined a fish caught in the sunlight in a shallow pond of dirty soupy water, opening and closing its mouth, struggling to breathe, trapped and drowning. The literal and metaphorical merge into some form of imaginal continuity.

He says: You seem to be speculating about embodied, no-bodied, dis-bodied and un-bodied states, and asking of all of them am I you, are you me? All of this goes on as the self forms and uniforms. All of it is in the *Rosarium.*
Other Writers on The Ascent of the Soul

I begin with Edinger. Although he does not mention transference either, it is easier to see, in his writing, the way that this stage is created in relationship and the direct role of projection and dissolution of projection. He writes:

This is a representation of the age-old image of the soul separating from the body at the moment of death. . . . Psychologically it corresponds, . . . to what happens when any sizeable identification or projection breaks down. A piece of the psyche separates from the concrete, corporeal container. . . . as long as we have pieces of our psyche deposited, like bank deposits actually, in various objects or activities or people in our outside environment–. . . then there’s a free flow of life, a kind of breathing between ourselves and those parts of our exteriorized psyche. Life goes on; one is interested and alive and things flow.

Now if any of those containers of one’s psyche dies, one goes through a grief reaction because a piece of one’s self dies at the same time. A kind of separation is required. One has to take back that piece of one’s own psyche from the person who has died, otherwise it will pull us into the grave too.

The same thing can happen when a person or object dies for us psychologically–it doesn’t have to be a literal death. There’s a psychological death when the projection that has been carried for us drops off. A piece of on-going life we were used to has disappeared, and we are in fact dead until that missing piece of our psyche is recovered (Edinger 1994, pp.75-6).

Jean Kirsch writes of the quality of relationship required to support the analysand through this phase of Woodcut 7. Her recommendations embody Sol and Luna awareness:

In this stage of analysis Jung often used educative methods, amplifying dream and fantasy material to rouse the patient’s understanding, which he saw in this circumstance as lifesaving. The force of Jung’s personality alone must have carried many analysands over this abyss. Relationship, a loving, steady extension of concern, still couched in a relentlessly analytical attitude on the part of the analyst, is the soul of the work at this phase. The “lesion of the ego” is
serious. Old structures that upheld an earlier sense of identity must give way for a new psychological orientation (Kirsch 1995, p.177).

Kirsch reiterates Jung’s concern for the seriousness of this phase, when the “lesion of the ego” is present. She also emphasises qualities in the analyst which affect the outcomes of the work.

In contrast, Christopher Perry is less clear about resolving the paradox, but more definite about naming the possible psychotic disintegration and fragmentation.

Picture 7, not surprisingly, is a paradox. The, “Ascent of the Soul” is juxtaposed with being impregnated. The longed-for deathly state of fusion veils the realization that projective identification leads inevitably to loss of soul, not ego-lessness but a loss of I-Thou, Ego-Self, conscious-unconscious relatedness. There are one body, two heads, and a homunculus up in the clouds. This may lead either to a continuation along the path of individuation or to psychotic disintegration / dissociation / splitting. The vas mirabile has been swiveled slightly to the left, and its right extremities are shaded—at a deeply unconscious level. We can think of this as denial of difference—and the projection of hope and separation, split off into an analytic child—such as an idea or a Messianic interpretation (Perry 1998, p.153).

For Perry, splits and strandings are the stuff of picture 7. The positives in the paradox are not developed.

Nathan Schwartz-Salant describes the field qualities of the transference countertransference. The value of the analyst’s capacity to conduct the pair through these labyrinthine states is implicit and ambiguous in this description of the alchemy they create.
Jung likens the seventh woodcut to a schizophrenic dissociation (1954, 16:paragraph 476). This woodcut represents a field quality that is most difficult to deal with without violating the wisdom of the aphorism to create ‘like from like.’ In such violations the analyst often takes the lead in creating the monstrosity of a delusional transference and unworkable psychotic field. Knowledge and experience with the nature of the opposites in a mad sector, and especially with the bizarre quality of their fusion or the double binds they infuse in the field, are essential for dealing with this stage of the Rosarium. However, one can experience such states as both a *prima materia* and as associated to a *coniunctio* . . . The *Rosarium* thus insists that a great mystery is at work during this most difficult of stages. For now the soul, the agent of linking and psychic reality, is being renewed, even while the field experience itself is barely tolerable (Schwartz-Salant 2005, p.179).

It is not entirely clear to me what Schwartz-Salant is communicating here but it seems to be difficult and dangerous work. Is he asking the analyst not to create like from like, and not to make the psychotic field even more unworkable, or the opposite? He does, though, indicate how fluidly incestuous the transference field may become, and how important articulation of the processes depicted in Woodcut 7 is for alchemy and analysis.

*To Conclude*

This chapter of Jung’s indicates why he insisted on a training analysis for would-be analytical psychologists. This chapter suggests that the practicing therapist must not be a stranger to the extremes of his own being, nor to working with these in relationship. If his chapter is to be used as guide to the experience, theories, relationship and geometries of transference, part of its value lies in Jung’s persistence in the face of this work. He acknowledges the work’s limitations as theory.
The psychological interpretation of this process leads into regions of inner experience which defy our powers of scientific description, however unprejudiced or even ruthless we may be. At this point, unpalatable as it may be to the scientific temperament, the idea of mystery forces itself upon the mind of the inquirer, not as a cloak for ignorance but as an admission of his inability to translate what he knows into the everyday speech of the intellect. I must therefore content myself with a bare mention of the archetype which is inwardly experienced at this stage, namely the birth of the “divine child” or—in the language of the mystics, the inner man (Jung 1946, ¶ 482).

I do not think that paragraph 482 indicates that Jung has given up. It reiterates the base in embodied and minded experience of what he seeks to capture phenomenally, and the difficulty in moving from somatising body to symbol. It may also be asking why, for some people, the experience of personal fragmentation, psychosis, schizophrenia, and madness, is mind expanding, while for others it is debilitating pathology. He suggests that for each it might also be both, at least transiently.
Chapter 12

Purification (sub-titled Mundificatio)

Here falls the heavenly dew, to lave/
The soiled black body in the grave.

To Begin

“Purification” begins with an indication that the alchemical process moves apace. Jung writes:

The falling dew is a portent of the divine birth now at hand. *Ros Gedeonis* (Gideon’s dew) is a synonym for the *aqua permanens*, hence for Mercurius. A quotation from Senior at this point in the *Rosarium* text says: “Maria says again: ‘But the water I have spoken of is a king descending from heaven, and the earth’s humidity absorbs it, and the water of heaven is retained with the water of the earth, and the water of the earth honours that water with its lowliness and its sand, and water consorts with water and water will hold fast to water and Albira is whitened with Astuna’” (Jung 1946, ¶ 483).

The mating of substances from all the known worlds, of the king of heaven with earth’s humidity, continues so that the ultimate harmony of body soul and spirit can be achieved. The water of three derivations, that mixes yet knows itself from the other waters, suggests that the structures of the personality are becoming more resilient and reliable, able to de-
integrate and re-integrate, to overcome discontinuity with continuity. The layers of heaven, earth, and earth’s lowliness, are united but know their distinctness within the unity as the spouts of the original *Fountain* do, also.

The sub-title, *Mundificatio*, the making of the world, suggests that the world that is made is able to use the falling dew, not be dissolved by it.

**This Chapter**

I wonder, with the assistance of other commentators, what *Purification*, the title of Jung’s chapter means for someone seeking to use *The Psychology of the Transference* as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference. The sub-title of this woodcut is *mundificatio*, the making of the world. This woodcut appears to carry the meaning that the dew falling on the inert body alerts it to its own individuality and purpose, the world it constitutes within the world it lives. From the inside out, the experiencing subject begins to apprehend the uniqueness of its own self and life-force. In transference terms, the unconscious energies which held the imagination in the inner world begin to free the suspended life-force for action.

**The Mundificatio and the Research**

My research has been to examine *The Psychology of the Transference* as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of
transference and to discover where it seems to work, where it requires supplementation.

Jung, writing about the four woodcuts related to death—Numbers 6, 7, 8 and 9—offers some advice on the handling of the states they symbolise, as they manifest in the psychology of the patient. His relentless pursuit, though, is to create a phenomenology of the unconscious, including psychosis, schizophrenia, death and resurrection. This is in order that when these are met by the therapist in his/her own life and work, or by the therapist in the analytic dyad, the therapist is equipped to be one with the patient in these ways of experiencing, but not to dissolve in the task and become unrecoverable. Jung does not reach the end point on these tasks in any detail, but he hints, indicates and implies. Assisted by the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum* he wanders, arguably, from pre-womb to tomb, through the Valley of the Shadow, and out the other side, ready to go around again, or pause in any of the freeze frames. He becomes sufficiently familiar or adept with at least the idea of the processes or experiences that they become, as it were, petals in a rose. The rose is a metaphor for the geometry of completion, the symbol which makes the idea visible, the outer projection of the inner organisation, the shape to contain the all of the all.

Since all of this speculation is enclosed within the covers of his major work on transference, some connection to the phenomenon of transference can legitimately be presumed. Yet whole chapters go by with no mention of transference. For someone like me, who assumed I could read this essay and learn what Jung thought about transference, the work becomes frustrating but exhilarating. For
each of Jung’s chapters, I make the assumption that it is about transference, whether or not the word rates a mention. If I work from that proposition, my task then becomes one where I try to work out what Jung was indicating, in that chapter, about transference, even if its mention has slipped by.

The question I am left with, is how do I connect this pre-occupation with death and resurrection to transference and its inseparable concomitant, individuation? The answer, Jung indicates, lies in the theory of opposites. Alchemy indicates that the *solve et coagula* proposition is to be applied. I apply of both of these ideas.

Transference is concerned with the resolution of opposites emanating from unconscious aspects of self. The opposite comes to attention via an other on whom it is projected. I say, “I hate you,” and it becomes a means for me to behold and experience the extent of the hatred alive within me. Transference of self onto other, via projection, followed by reclamation of the projection becomes a way to gather in all the bits of self which would otherwise be invested in those we love or hate. Transference is concerned with removing, from the other, contents that belong in the self, in a process that ultimately gathers the world into the self, so that self and world exist in a state of porous reflective interchange. Jung offers a statement about this, though he indicates it is superficial:

> “Heaven above
Heaven below
Stars above
Stars Below
All that is above
Also is below
Grasp this
And rejoice.”  (Jung 1946 ¶ 384).
The unity associated with world making is not to be confused with a state of unconscious merger, although merger is often its first phase as unconscious mating is sensed of material that seeks life. The relatively conscious ego, in a fluid relationship with personal and collective unconscious, mediates the freer-flow of contents between the parts, noting that the work never ends. The *Rosarium* portrays this process as fruitful, painful intercourse. If the *Rosarium* stages are worked through and mastery attained, conscious recognition that I am that, and that is me, leads to a more complete manifestation of self, and a fuller tolerance for world.

In relation to the *solve et coagula*, the alchemical dissolve and coagulate, the extension to the formula is: “let the fixed become volatile, and the volatile fixed.” This formula moves away from philosophical and abstracted language to the often painful experience that projection and its withdrawal, transacted in relationship, entails. The *solve et coagula* requires learning to be fluid where one was fixed and inflexible. The learning to be fixed—to hold ground where one always gave in—is the opposite task, reflected more in the second ten *Rosarium* pictures. The formula alludes to the embodied nature, the felt aspects that accompany all the alchemical tasks. Self structures are subject to the *solve et coagula*: flesh and blood become mortified, putrefied and reborn as neural pathways are re-worked, feelings are felt, water borne chemicals course through body and individual cells are altered, pain, anguish, failure and success known. Symbolic body parts may be lost or gained in destructive or devouring or creative sex; compression and extinction are lived, death is tasted, birth follows, as the *Rosarium* woodcuts indicate. It is essential to understand that transference is a lived, felt and thought exchange, and that what is felt must be survived and integrated, re-thought, and these actions enhance the self
which is represented as the symbol containing the resolved opposites as the object of all the work, the substantial and insubstantial thing transacted in mortal medium.

**Woodcut 8: Purification**

In this woodcut, as with all of them, multiple realities are present symbolically. It is therefore possible to write: this woodcut depicts life beginning to flow again in the patient who has suffered a psychotic or schizophrenic episode. Baptismal waters fall on the stilled hermaphrodite which is about to return to a new life. This woodcut depicts a less deep phase of ontological experience than shown in Woodcuts 6 and 7. This woodcut depicts a state where death and life establish a new balance. This woodcut depicts agency returning to the personality which has been paralysed by an upsurge of unconscious contents. This woodcut portrays the ego’s return to functionality, indicating that unconscious energies are now being balanced by conscious ones. This dew represents the life essence of the individual who will now understand what matters most to him/her and will create his/her true world (*mundificatio*) around this knowledge. Gideon’s dew falls on the hermaphrodite which will now rise, having heard the word of God and received a personal sign from him. This is just another phase in the sequence of learning to consciously live and die, and to survive in their chaotic and painful psychological states as they succeed and inter-penetrate each other. The dew indicates that this figure about to return to life is now self-sustaining. Jung ended the previous chapter with a reference to the birth of the “divine child”, the inner man, and the dew marks the emergence of this vitalising process within the personality. The falling dew in this woodcut associatively links this picture to Gideon as a symbol
of resolution and purpose, as a man prepared to live the distinct responsibilities of his own unique, anointed-by-God life.

**Jung Writes about Purification**

With this paragraph Jung ends his section on *Purification*. It summarises the sequence in which purification is the third of four processes related to death and rebirth. He writes:

After the ascent of the soul, with the body left behind in the darkness of death, there now comes an enatiodromia: the *nigredo* gives way to the *albedo*. The black or unconscious state that resulted from the union of opposites reaches the nadir and a change sets in. The falling dew signals resuscitation and a new light: the ever deeper descent into the unconscious suddenly becomes illuminated from above. For, when the soul vanished at death, it was not lost: in that other world it formed the living counterpole to the state of death in this world. Its reappearance from above is already indicated by the dewy moisture. This dewiness partakes of the nature of the psyche... while on the other hand dew is synonymous with the *aqua permanens*, the *aqua sapientiae*, which in turn signifies illumination through the realization of meaning. The preceding union of opposites has brought light, as always, out of the darkness of the night, and by this light it will be possible to see what the real meaning of the union was (Jung 1946, ¶ 493).

This sounds rather like Jung confirming again for himself that the way in which mystical experience in body and spirit involves different manifestations—which may be manifestations of the same substance anyway—is mysterious. The mixing and separating of water with water becomes a parallel alchemical explanation for the change effected in body, soul and spirit that enables the resting, tomb-dwelling hermaphrodite to incorporate into its being the falling dew and to be refreshed by it. It is a description of structural change which supports the capacity for new
thinking and for increasingly subtle apperception. It could be seen to be present in the nuancing that occurs in the analytical conversation and the subtlety of the transference phenomena perceived by body, soul and spirit.

Others Write about Purification

Edward Edinger explains the Gideon reference as he works to interpret and amplify Jung as well as to make a distinct contribution. He explains that Gideon’s dew was a sign from God that He agreed to a pact with Gideon. Edinger also quotes from Jung in *Mysterium Coniunctionis* where Jung refers to the “dew or sap of life secreted by Luna” (*Mysterium*, ¶155). Jung writes that “‘Gideon’s dew’ is a sign of divine intervention, it is the moisture that heralds the return of the soul” (Jung 1946, ¶ 487).

Edinger writes:

You remember that the soul has been separated from the body and now, in its separated state, the body undergoes the process of purification.

I would also remind you that we should think of the body symbolically as representing a psychological entity—not the concrete literal body. It refers rather to the ego; the ego is the body of the psyche, you might say. And so what’s taking place now is a purification of that dead ego by the dew, the divine dew, that’s falling on it. It refers to the fact that the ego is to be purified from contamination with the unconscious (Edinger 1994, p.86).
Edinger is able to seamlessly weave psychological structures and alchemical concepts, in echo of Jung. Christopher Perry, in contrast, not concerned with Gideon, writes a more personal response:

Picture 8 is subtitled “Mundificatio” (the “making of the world”)—a profound allusion to the primal scene. We could call it “coming back to earth,” but this is a process which is beyond and outside the conscious egos of both participants. What was black now slowly becomes white; the nigredo of despair and loss of soul are now followed by the falling of the heavenly dew, which prepares the soil of the analytical relationship for the return of soul, transformed. To get in touch with this process bodily, take a walk through the mist, and dwell in the sensation of being soaked to the skin without immediate realization.

The feet of the couple have been transferred from the extreme left of the vas (its sinister, dark side) to a more centrally positioned place. The legs are in a position to open equilaterally; and whilst Luna continues to look outside and beyond the vas, Sol looks up at the falling dew, the divine, the numinous. At this stage, the analyst relies even more on the powers of Logos (interpretation) and Agapaic Eros (compassion). The two were never disjointed, but they can now be put together in a statement from the analyst which conveys an understanding of the need to suffer through relinquished enchantment, with its deepest joys, sadesses, and intense frustrations.

I take much from Perry’s comments. Chiefly I am pleased by the idiosyncratic nature of his response, and reassured that within Jungian discourse his personal transference has currency, that there is no agreed way to approach Jung’s and the alchemists’ material here. He sees in this woodcut “a profound allusion to the primal scene”. I am not sure what to make of this, although I do not find it an interpretation that appears out of place. It is more surprising to notice that none of the commentators equate this falling dew with baptism. Do we associatively link Perry’s comments with fecundation, fertilization, with lovers available to each
other, as each half of the hermaphrodite? Do we understand that death has been replaced by responsiveness and that giving as well as receiving can occur? I also find Perry’s language captivating, particularly the phrase “to suffer through relinquished enchantment.” It reconnects the woodcut directly with a particular transference experience that suggests exquisite suffering, and paradoxical affirmation in suffering where death might be met as life, before falling rain washes in a new season.

Working out of another myth, not concerned with Gideon but with the return of the waters, Sylvia Perera presents the turning point in a clinical example. The waters here are a mix of the literal and the symbolic, embodied and thought. She writes:

Like the flow of libidinous affect, these waters carry us back into life after a deathlike depression. One woman expressed her experience of this return:

I will not hold myself in. I will let flow, let rip, be obnoxious. I’ll let my reactions out. And so what. Take it or leave it. [She paused] Just saying that lets something change. I can feel a flowing with. All those needs and jealousy. Feels so strange, like breathing deeply. It might be a cure for my dead, dry place . . . And also, such waters never stop as long as there’s life in me. There’s no end to piss and spit (Perera 1981 p.68).

It seems that the various waters released here might flow, for once, chiefly through the spout labelled *acetum fontis*.

Involving woodcuts 6, 7 and 8 in the application of archetypal transference and value of regression, Jean Kirsch writes:
When complexes have a strong influence in the patient’s psychology, i.e., when unmet personal needs limit creativity and relatedness, this level of transformation can only happen when there is the quality of surrender to the influence of the analyst that we identify as regressive. It is this stage of analysis which Jung saw metaphorically represented in the *Rosarium philosophorum* as *Death, Ascent of the Soul*, and *Purification*, pictures six, seven and eight.

The archetypal transference seeks revivification, desires new spirit and courage to be breathed into parts of the personality that lie fallow under repetitive and distorting patterns of perception and response. Analysis is then experienced not as a regression but as an awakening, sustained and guided as much by the analyst’s knowledge of the larger archetypal energies that are at work as by his or her grounding in a personal identity. The transformative process is at once an analysis and a synthesis, reflective and prospective. Neither operation can be neglected, and both depend upon the analyst’s capacity for empathic inspiration and intelligent kindness (Kirsch 1995, p.199).

Two aspects of what Kirsch writes attract my attention. One is her belief that the transformative process is “analysis and synthesis, reflective and prospective”. She describes, with the first pair, a process reminiscent of *solve et coagula*, of dissolving and rearranging personal material, shifting its values and meanings. With the second pair time appears to become more plastic, less fixed, expansive perhaps in both directions, and connection to fluid states of birth and death, forming, un-forming, reforming, appears implicit.

The second aspect to attract my attention is in the phrase “empathic inspiration and intelligent kindness” and how it sits with “unmet personal needs which limit creativity and relatedness.” I wonder whether the regression which eventually turns into awakening, is facilitated in the therapeutic context because of the empathic connection, the echoing emotional connectivity which operates body-mind to body-mind to replicate the earliest relationship of infant and with a
benign, attuned, carer setting up the same alchemy which facilitates many beginnings. Luna relatedness is actively present, as well as Sol’s discrimination.

One question waiting beneath all of this asks “Can growth and revitalisation occur if there is no mirroring?” If Sapientia Dei is to function as mother and earth within the transference, she must be incarnated. If there is no echo of the analysand’s embodied transference content, can the content be transformed and brought to consciousness in the transference? The answer would appear to be that if the material is treated only at the abstracted level, it will be apprehended as an idea, but not necessarily embodied so that the alchemical task of aligning body, soul and spirit has not been accomplished. If, in the alchemical coupling, a Luna presence is embodied, and a felt, accepting and mirroring resonance present in the transferential field, the alchemical transformation is likely to be experienced as healing alignment.

Schwartz-Salant is especially concerned with qualities in the interactive transference field. He writes:

The eighth, ninth and tenth woodcuts of the Rosarium represent a qualitative transformation of the interactive field in which it is not only re-animated but also its structure is changed into one in which negative fusion states, to a considerable degree, are no longer so problematic. This state still requires the rubedo stage for its fulfilment, but in the nigredo considerable gains are made.

The suffering of the nigredo is finally relieved in the eighth woodcut, “Falling Dew”... by the philosophical dew or ‘philosophical humidity... falling as clear as a tear’ (Fabricius 1976, 112). The dew is also said to have a miraculous effect, not only to cleanse but also to fertilize the hermaphroditic corpse, leading to an incipient pregnancy (Schwartz-Salant 2005, pp.179-180).
All of the writers I have consulted on Woodcut 8, *Purification*, note the value of the falling dew, tears, rain, or fertilising fluid, as a symbol that a renewing phase has been reached.

**Jung’s alchemical speculations on the Purification**

I will examine, briefly, Jung’s interests in the remainder of his commentary on this woodcut. Jung develops, in his *Purification* chapter, two focuses of interest to which I will give some attention. One is the symbolic value of water (already touched on), and the other is the quality of the awareness being subjectively experienced as the dew falls, and which of the psychological functions are being called into being in the symbolism of this woodcut.

I will look first at the water. In paragraph 485 Jung points out that “as a symbol of wisdom and spirit it can be traced back to the Samaritan woman at the well.” In a footnote Jung uses the words that Christ said to her.

“. . . Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jung 1946, ¶ 485, Footnote 10).

These words describe what is occurring in Woodcut 8 where some recognition of truth, personal and archetypal, has been attained. Truth appears to equate with a realisation of personal meaning, an awakening to individual purpose within an eternal framework. Jung then quotes from a sermon of Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, “a contemporary of our alchemists”. Nicholas’s sermon is symbolised around a
well. “But in the Word of God, which dwells in the depths of the living well of Christ’s humanity, there is a fountain for the refreshment of the spirit” (Jung 1946, ¶ 485). Nicholas describes three successively deeper wells which may be drunk from only by those who have earned the right. “In this deepest well is the source of wisdom, which brings bliss and immortality . . . The living well bears the source of its own life, and calls the thirsty to the waters of salvation that they may be refreshed with the water of saving wisdom” (Jung 1946, ¶ 485). Has this been offered by Jung because it parallels the three coniunctio levels, each of them causing in the personality a structural change which supports the integration of some growth of experiential knowledge? Jung quotes a third commentator, Cusanus, who writes similarly.

Edinger draws attention to Jung writing further about dew in Mysterium Coniunctionis. The passage that Edinger quotes, where Jung writes about Luna as the giver of moisture, ends thus:

As the water of ablution, the dew falls from heaven, purifies the body, and makes it ready to receive the soul; in other words, it brings about the albedo, the white state of innocence, which like the moon and bride awaits the bridegroom (Edinger, 1994, p. 85 quoting Jung CW 14 ¶ 155).

That Luna should be the source of the dew is interesting. All discussion of the masculine and feminine components of the work has ceased at an overt level, but none the less continues to run covertly and in the woodcuts.

It appears important to Jung that he tracks down precedents to his own interpretation. But the interpretations, Jung’s and others’, are frustrating to
someone attempting to use *The Psychology of the Transference* as a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference. The symbolic language conveys the sense of change and spiritual growth that occurs when the deepest sources of self and creativity become available for use and development. Jung and alchemy continue to develop their phenomenology, with Jung speaking most frequently in their language. Except on a metaphorical level, the language and conceptualisation are not especially helpful to someone seeking to grasp the psychology, and not necessarily through the spirituality, although Jung would insist one cannot exist in the absence of the other. The ideas of change and growth are communicated. The concepts are over-arching ones, their basis is indirect Jung-filtered case material. All mention of the analytical relationship has ceased, as development occurring deep within the initiate receives speculative attention.

Jung draws attention to the *Purification* geometry as a circular one although this may be redundant. The work of alchemy took place in a sealed container where the evaporative water rose in one form, condensed on the surface of the flask and dripped down again into the body. A closed circle or a mandala formation is present here, and wells and depths carry the symbolisation in the direction being explored. The symbolisation is *Purification* as a closed state where spirit, and material, unconscious body are explored and contained.

As he writes Jung also wonders which of the psychological functions are being called into being in the symbolism of this woodcut. There is an alchemical admonition to throw the books away at this point, indicating that the change wrought here is not purely intellectual, is autonomous and experiential.
The alchemists seem to have perceived the danger that the work and its realization may get stuck in one of the conscious functions. . . . We might say that the practica corresponds to pure perception, and that this must be supplemented by apperception. But this second stage still does not bring complete realization. What is still lacking is heart or feeling, which imparts an abiding value to anything we have understood. The books must therefore be “destroyed” lest thinking impair feeling and thus hinder the return of the soul (Jung 1946, ¶ 488).

The alchemists thought that the opus demanded not only laboratory work, the reading of books, meditation, and patience, but also love (Jung 1946, ¶ 490).

Jung writes of the necessity for “feeling values” then contends that realisation through feeling is not the final or fourth stage. . The first is theoria, intellectual understanding; the second is practica, perception, which must be supplemented by apperception. The third is the heart or feeling which must be added. The fourth is intuition, the anticipation of the lapis.

Intuition gives outlook and insight; it revels in the garden of magical possibilities as if they were real. . . . This keystone rounds off the work into an experience of the totality of the individual (Jung 1946, ¶ 492).

**Transference Contents and Purification**

The following analytical conversation contains material being awakened, responding to the falling dew in the closed container. It reflects the circularity of consciousness through body and spirit, as re-valuing and change occur.
Analytical Conversation 6  
October 2008

She says: I had breakfast with our friend on Saturday. She was very late, and came in breathless, looking pale of face and extremely bright of cheek. She said, “I think I’ve got the pneumonia back. I’ve got a script here and I’ll get some medicine later to feel better.” I was transported momentarily to *La Boheme*—languorous defeat, tubercular spottings, fainting and fading, all deadly serious. So I took, trying not to snatch, the script, raced off to the pharmacy and got it filled immediately, so she had the antibiotics ten minutes later. She’s easy, indifferent about it. I get fearful and need to act.

He says: Maybe she’s so used to illness so she does the descent and ascent without too much fuss. Maybe she’s diffident, ambivalent about body or it’s only partly visible to her so that the feelings that panic you are diffuse ones in her, not sharpened into alarm. Maybe they’re so familiar that they’re in her ordinary range. It’s just in you the alarm bells clang. Maybe your help was required and she’s not very practiced at asking.

She says: Maybe so, because after we’d consumed our breakfasts she got talking about comfort food which she has needed of late because she has been unwell, really, since New Zealand. She cooks childhood food, chicken soup. She adds angel’s tresses, however—such a glorious image for noodles. She told me about the farm where she lived. She talked about big strong people—uncles all over
six feet tall, women who pitched in. She talked about the winters and storing potatoes and root vegetables in sand in the cellar. She talked about meat—about cows and pigs, slaughtering, curing, smoking, drying assorted bits of pig and making sausages. No one went to the shops. They were self-sufficient. They made liverwurst. She talked about making wine and schnapps, and the fruit trees they had. She described lemon trees and plums, pears, apricots. I said, “The same ones you have in your garden here.” And she stopped and smiled, and blushed, sort of abashed, as if she’d been observed at some secret pleasure. We both laughed and touched.

He says: Her life seems like something from a much earlier, dim far away time. She speaks and stretches into things that no longer are and yet have to be held in mind for the work of now. They are the beginnings being structured into the present so that the continuity of it all as narrative holds its shape and fills out.

She says: I imagined it coming out of smoke-stained darkness. We walked around shining a light on bits of it. But I who received it became suffused with some sense of completion and joy, undoubtedly as did she. I think she’s teaching me about Woodcut 9, Purification, and even Woodcut 10, The New Birth. I think she has continuous bits now instead of absences. It’s something shamanistic, treasure recovered from the depths. Her body seems so compromised, and is, in many ways, but is also sensitive to the alchemy of broken,
endangered things that somehow rise again, float on, living. We went into the cellar together and admired the nutrient stuff that was there, hidden in the sand, and we came out and went on. But in my bodymind I knew that this was a moment when many parts of her life coalesced, in a way I have not known before, and it was all quietly going on as both of us had breakfast. It was a new season, life stirring itself.

*To Conclude*

Jung concludes this section by indicating that in this operation light has been brought out of the darkness. I will conclude my chapter with a quotation from M. Esther Harding whom I have introduced previously. She, like Marie-Louise von Franz and Liliane Frey-Rohn, wrote expositions of Jung’s psychology, attempting to make it more available to a wider audience. I have chosen this quotation partly for its language which is more directly psychological and goal-oriented than Jung’s, and partly because it appears to describe, quite closely, the process in Woodcut 8 which heralds the birth of the “inner man”.

When a man has caught the cold-blooded, snakelike forces of the unconscious in his vessel, that is to say, in his own psyche, and has heated them through willed introversion, or, as the Buddhists say, through tapas or meditation, and they thus have been transformed by the well-directed processes of the great work, the very nature of his instinctive reactions undergoes a change. He is no longer impelled to speak or act self-centredly, or to take revenge for his personal sufferings, or to snatch everything of value for himself, or to sweep relentlessly out of his way all beings whose interests conflict with his own.
When such a change has taken place, even in small measure, within an individual who perhaps for years has consciously striven to live by decent standards that he has all too often failed to maintain . . . life loses many of its complications, for now it is only necessary to act naturally for all to go well.

. . . The experience of such a change comes to most searchers after wholeness in small measure only, yet ever and anon a further installment of the libido becomes accessible to the process by which it can be transformed (Harding 1973, p.467).

Harding’s description does not have the lofty over-lay of Jung’s, but alludes to the distinctive, cumulative changes in the personality symbolised by this woodcut. Jung’s is the less restricted narrative, but his requires supplementation to be most fully available.
Chapter 13
The Return of the Soul

Here is the soul descending from on high/
To quick the corpse we strove to purify.

To Begin

The section Jung writes to accompany this woodcut, The Return of the Soul, is proportionally a large one although his comments directly related to this woodcut are few. He pulls together ideas that refer to Woodcuts 6, 7, 8, 9. Now that each of them has been introduced, remarks are made about them individually and in relation to each other. He continues his dialectic between alchemy and analytical psychology. He offers, in this chapter, psychological explanations that I, have seized on, determined to apply The Psychology of the Transference to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference.
This Chapter

In this chapter I respond critically to what Jung has written. I offer my own interpretation of what is suggested here to balance and articulate some arguably missing components in what Jung provides in this essay, his main work on transference.

Jung on The Return of the Soul

Jung begins the section with an interpretation of The Return of the Soul. We are located immediately in the alchemical discourse and the narrative is carried by symbols whose value is largely unknown and undoubtedly ambiguous. If a reader wants to learn about transference from The Psychology of the Transference, this, Jung indicates, is the language of his engagement. This is the section’s opening paragraph.

Here the reconciler, the soul, dives down from heaven to breathe life into the dead body. The two birds at the bottom left of the picture represent the allegorical winged and wingless dragons in the form of fledged and unfledged birds. This is one of the many synonyms for the double nature of Mercurius who is both a chthonic and a pneumatic being. The presence of this divided pair of opposites means that although the hermaphrodite appears to be united and is on the point of coming alive, the conflict between them is by no means finally resolved and has not yet disappeared: it is relegated to the “left” and to the “bottom” of the picture, i.e., banished to the sphere of the unconscious. The fact that these still unintegrated opposites are represented theriomorphically (and not anthropomorphically as before) bears out this supposition (Jung 1946, ¶ 494).

It is apparent that for Jung, establishing the phenomenology of the unconscious works most fluently if it is filtered through the concepts of alchemy. The reader, though, at this point in the essay, is initiated into this way of thinking so it almost
passes unnoticed. Jung’s seeing the birds as winged and wingless dragons is an associative leap but often, as alchemical texts reveal, this part of the process is symbolised by these beasts which manifest in the firmly-stoppered alchemical flask. The stoppered flask is both the body in which the reaction occurs, and the psyche with sufficiently able ego and self to experience and think the process, and body and psyche are each an aspect of other. Mercurius as a chthonic and a pneumatic being, he of earth and ether, refers us to Jung’s endless preoccupation with the inter-generative complexities of instinct and spirit. The ongoing conflict in the pair revives the idea of the “hostile opposites” we met earlier, symbolised as Sol/Luna, primary components in a closed system based on the dynamic exchange of energies. This seems to be embodied psycho-dynamic psychology.

Jung continues for several paragraphs where he forms associations around a text from the *Rosarium* in relation to this picture. The text is “Despise not the ash, for it is the diadem of thy heart” (Jung 1946, ¶ 495). The ash, he informs us, refers to the dead body, and the diadem and coronation he interprets by consulting several alchemical sources. “Again and again we note that the alchemist proceeds like the unconscious in the choice of his symbols: every idea finds both a positive and a negative expression” (Jung 1946, ¶ 496). This finding of a positive and a negative expression in every idea is like a practice form of *coniunctio*, an invitation to reflect on rather than identify with, or to choose rather than be compulsively attracted, or to recognise that the archetype being expressed may take many forms, including opposite ones. A little later, as he writes about the alchemists’ confusing use of symbols, he observes:
The less respect they showed for the bowed shoulders of the sweating reader, the greater was their debt . . . to the unconscious, for it is just the infinite variety of their images and paradoxes that points to a psychological fact of prime importance: the indefiniteness of the archetype with its multitude of meanings, all presenting different facets of a single, simple truth (Jung 1946, ¶ 497).

Jung’s next statement establishes without doubt that he found, in alchemy, a phenomenology of the unconscious. It seems that all the time he is thinking in alchemical language, he is gathering ideas that he cannot, or does not wish to, capture in other speculative language. His dialectic with alchemy is product and process. Like instinct/spirit, body/psyche, alchemy/analytical psychology is another bi-polar pair whose tensions and energies shape each other in the hermetically sealed container where reconciliation of opposites occurs.

. . . they nevertheless performed the inestimable service of having constructed a phenomenology of the unconscious long before the advent of psychology. We, as heirs to these riches, do not find our heritage at all easy to enjoy. Yet we can comfort ourselves with the reflection that the old masters were equally at a loss to understand one another, or that they did so only with difficulty (Jung 1946, ¶ 497).

These passages indicate what Jung made of alchemy and was able to take from it. He has already told us that he could not do the work of *The Psychology of the Transference* without it, but statements such as he has just made assist the reader to see what he saw. The reasons for his delving are not always so clear and often suggest, rather, that alchemy provided for him a tension-holding container in which to examine his own transference projections, sort them out, and sometimes translate them to the language of analytical psychology. He notes the change, that the mystery once sought in alchemical substances is now sought in the psyche (ibid).
Other Writers on The Return of the Soul

I will begin with Christopher Perry because he notices, in contrast to Jung, the jubilant aspects of this woodcut.

“Animae jubilatio” means “the joy of the soul.” It is the title above Picture 9, which is also called “The Return of the Soul.” Analysts tend to be more familiar in the early stages of analysis with pain, suffering, and sorrow than with joy. But it is this very feeling that accompanies the patient’s gradual process of self-discovery that had as its origins the feeling of tentative enjoyment of immersing in the bath:

Yet, although the power of the unconscious is feared as something sinister, this feeling is only partially justified by the facts, since we also know that the unconscious is capable of producing beneficial effects. The kind of effect it will have depends to a large extent on the attitude of the conscious mind. (CW 16, p.293 [¶ 501]. (Perry 1998, p.154).

Perry’s mention of the joy of the soul balances Jung’s interests.

Edinger (1994), as he usually does, makes Jung more understandable. He disagrees with Jung’s interpretation of the birds. To Edinger, they are an echo of the process occurring above, and the buried bird is about to be born, released from its imprisonment, in the way the body is.

Edinger also groups *Rosarium* woodcuts 6,7,8 and 9, showing the death, separation, ascent and return of the soul, indicating that they illustrate the three stages of the *coniunctio* discussed by Jung in *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (Edinger 1994, p.77). As a user of *The Psychology of the Transference*, unscrambling the mystery of the *coniunctio*, or at least having a sense of what it meant to Jung, has been important. That the *coniunctio* takes place in three stages, and that each is called a *coniunctio* becomes evident more through Jung’s commentators than Jung
in the 1946 essay, but perhaps it is an understanding that he develops later.

*Mysterium Coniunctionis* was not published for another nine years after that. In an earlier chapter, I offered Jeffrey Raff’s definitions of the three stages of the coniunctio. Edinger explains in a similar way, drawing, as Raff did, on the writings of alchemist Gerhard Dorn, and also, it seems, von Franz. Ediger argues that the stages must be grasped to understand the contents of woodcuts 6, 7, 8, 9.

Edinger writes:

The first stage involves the union of soul and spirit which takes place simultaneously with the separation of body and soul. It’s a twofold operation in which the soul separates from the body and in the process of that separation unites with the spirit. This stage is given the Latin term *unio mentalis*. That simply means mental union, but let’s use the Latin to indicate that we’re talking about the technical first stage of the coniunctio: the union of soul and spirit.

In the second stage of the coniunctio, the *unio mentalis*—that entity which combines soul and spirit—reunites with the body; that’s the second stage of the coniunctio.

In the third stage, that spirit-soul-body unity combines with the *unus mundus*. Or let’s say it unites with the world and thereby brings what Jung calls the *unus mundus*, which just means “one world” (Edinger, 1994, p.77).

He quotes Jung:

In order to bring about the subsequent reunion, the mind . . . must be separated from the body – which is equivalent to a “voluntary death” – for only separated things can unite . . . [This involves a] discrimination and dissolution of the “composite,” the composite state being one in which the affectivity of the body has a disturbing influence on the rationality of the mind. The aim of this separation was to free the mind from the influence of the “bodily appetites and the heart’s affections,” and to establish a spiritual position which is supra ordinate to the turbulent sphere of the body. This leads at first to a dissociation of the personality and a violation of the merely natural man (Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, ¶ 617f.).
Edinger continues:

What that means is that in the vital first stage of the coniunctio, the dissociation between the spiritual pole of the psyche and the bodily pole must be complete. . . . When that’s been brought about, one is immune from being possessed by the “bodily affections”. . . .

Then the second stage takes on importance—reuniting the unio mentalis with the body. That means that everything that one had to dissociate from at the previous stage has to be reincorporated at a new level of consciousness. You have to do everything you did before, let the same energies back in, but they are altogether different because they’re accompanied by consciousness. In effect those energies and their sources have undergone a death and rebirth. They’ve been regenerated. First they’ve been killed and then they’ve been reborn.

The third stage of the coniunctio, called the union with the unus mundus, . . . I think it’s beyond our power to describe . . . because it signifies a union with the totality that probably belongs only, in a really full sense, with the experience of death (Edinger 1994, pp. 77-79).

A Shift in Jung’s Language

I have indicated that as he writes about The Return of the Soul, Jung pulls together observations about the sequence extending through Woodcuts 6,7,8,9, and that I have found this valuable, particularly that aspects of it are written as psychology, not necessarily alchemy. This is an example:

The alchemist’s failure to distinguish between corpus and spiritus is in our case assisted by the assumption that, owing to the preceding mortificatio and sublimatio, the body has taken on “quintessential” or spiritual form and consequently, as a corpus mundum (pure substance), it is not so very different from spirit. It may shelter spirit or even draw it down to itself. All these ideas lead one to conclude that not only the coniunctio but the reanimation of the “body” is an altogether transmundane event, a process occurring in the psychic non-ego. This would explain why the process is so easily projected, for if it were of a personal nature its liability to projection would be considerably reduced, because it could then be made conscious without too much difficulty (Jung 1946, ¶ 499).
Jung writing here seems to translate the alchemical processes and to relate them, by mention of projection, to unconscious transference, even though transference itself does not rate specific mention. He continues:

Although the process is essentially transcendental, the projection brings it down to reality by violently affecting the conscious and personal psyche. The result is an inflation, and it then becomes clear that the coniunctio is a hierosgamos of the gods and not a mere love-affair between mortals (Jung 1946, ¶ 500).

This I regard as Jung’s psychological language, and I relate to it as he makes reference to transference.

Paragraphs 501, 502, and 503 contain clear descriptions and speculations on the nature of the unconscious, and the processes which have occurred following the coniunctio, and represented in Woodcuts 6,7,8,9. The paragraphs contain after the event descriptions, with a lucidity which throws light on the sequence and relationships of the earlier processes, and especially on them psychologically. Now each of the woodcuts has been met individually, they can be considered as a sequence. I include some samples of Jung in this expressive mode to demonstrate it. Its contents also resolve matters left open when some of the earlier woodcuts were actually met. This is an important follow-up because the woodcuts, when they were introduced, were explained and not explained.

Further reference to them via additional alchemical writers who use different symbols and do not necessarily understand each other, increases a reader’s awareness that this process has untold expressive forms. The expressive form which holds the truth of the individual is the one particular to him or her. The
implicit application for transference phenomena met in the analytic dyad and beyond it is that these forms will be as various as the people who speak of them and the situations that produce them. They will not fit any pre-ordained rules or formulas, although some agreement about the process might be established.

They [the pictures] deal with the after effects of the fusion of opposites, which have involved the conscious personality in their union. The extreme consequence of this is the dissolution of the ego in the unconscious, a state resembling death. It results from the more or less complete identification of the ego with unconscious factors, or, as we would say, from contamination. This is what the alchemists experienced as *immunditia*, pollution. They saw it as the defilement of something transcendent by the gross and opaque body which had for that reason to undergo sublimation. But the body, psychologically speaking, is the expression of our individual and conscious existence, which, we then feel, is in danger of being swamped or poisoned by the unconscious. We therefore try to separate the ego-consciousness from the unconscious and free it from that perilous embrace (Jung 1945, ¶ 501).

Hence the *mundificatio*–purification–is an attempt to discriminate the mixture, to sort out the *coincidentia oppositorum* in which the individual has been caught (Jung 1945, ¶ 502).

If all of *The Psychology of the Transference* were written in this style, its clarity would be enhanced although its mystery would be depleted and the level of work required of the reader would change. Jung goes on, in ¶ 502, to write about the unique and eternal/collective truths that the process touches on, and of the value of ego-consciousness in work with unconscious contents.

If it is absorbed by the unconscious to such an extent that the latter alone has the power of decision, then the ego is stifled, and there is no longer any medium in which the unconscious could be integrated and in which the work of realization could take place. The separation of the empirical ego from the “eternal” and universal man is therefore of vital importance. . . (Jung 1945, ¶ 502).
The process of differentiating the ego from the unconscious, then, has its equivalent in the *mundificatio*, and, just as this is the necessary condition for the return of the soul to the body, so the body is necessary if the unconscious is not to have destructive effects on the ego-consciousness, for it is the body that gives bounds to the personality. The unconscious can be integrated only if the ego holds its ground (Jung 1945, ¶ 503).

These descriptions of what he believes is happening psychologically ground and affirm, and mention body and psyche. They contrast the alchemical descriptions where agreement and shared understanding is beside the point—the point being the alchemist’s experience and ability to interpret for himself, in recognition of the process told in his own symbols.

Jung then goes on to write about the understanding of psychological differentiation as “impossible without a human partner” (ibid). “Insight into one’s mistakes” is not adequate to establish the differentiation which must be seen by an other, in relationship. “The “soul” which is reunited with the body is the One born of the two, the *vinculum* common to both” (Jung 1946, ¶ 504). Ann Bedford Ulanov elaborates this idea somewhat, suggesting why this is so.

The recognition of otherness depends on a number of convictions: the certainty of the presence of someone or something both different from and the same as yourself. In those moments when we recognize great likeness and great difference, we increase enormously our understanding of ourself and of the other. . . Psychologically we must have a sense of the other in order to have a sense of self. Perception of otherness is indispensable for differentiation of the ego from the unconscious, of interior experience from outer reality, of a sense of our own personal identity from another person’s reality. At the very minimum, the recognition of otherness defines where the “I” ends and the “other” begins. At a higher level, perception of the other affords the possibility of relationship as opposed to unconscious fusion of one person with another (Ulanov 1981, p.94).
Anima and Animus Return to the Conversation

In ¶ 504, Jung writes about the anima, both the soul and the contra-sexual component in a man, a concept which received considerable attention earlier in his essay, and returns, here, to the discussion. He clarifies the effects of the anima expressed as a component of the collective unconscious, and as a force mediated by the ego, writing:

But if, as the result of a long and thorough analysis and the withdrawal of projections, the ego has been successfully separated from the unconscious, the anima will gradually cease to act as an autonomous personality and will become a function of relationship between conscious and unconscious. So long as she is projected she leads to all sorts of illusions about people and things and thus to endless complications (Jung 1945, ¶ 504).

He then goes on to state that “Alchemy was, as a philosophy, mainly a masculine preoccupation and in consequence of this its formulations are for the most part masculine in character” (Jung 1945, ¶ 505). He introduces the female alchemists of whom he is aware, concerned that their psychology is under-represented. Jung quotes at large (eleven paragraphs) from a letter written by English theologian and alchemist John Pordage, to his soror mystica Jane Leade, for its “contribution to the role of feminine psychology in alchemy”. I will sample roughly one paragraph of Pordage’s document, citing its reference to the similar processes we have witnessed in Woodcuts 6, 7, 8, 9, and not necessarily noticing any difference in quality from other alchemical writing. Jung sees the difference in the symbols Pordage selects.

You must not despise this blackness, or black colour, but persevere in it in patience, in suffering, and in silence, until its forty days of temptation are over, until the days of its tribulations are completed,
when the seed of life shall waken to life, shall rise up, sublimate or glorify itself, transform itself into whiteness, purify and sanctify itself, give itself the redness, in other words, transfigure and fix its shape. When the work is brought thus far, it is an easy work: for the learned philosophers have said that the making of the stone is then woman’s work and child’s play. Therefore, if the human will is given over and left, and becomes patient and still and as a dead nothing, the Tincture will do and effect everything in us and for us, if we can keep out thoughts, movements, and imaginations still, or can leave off and rest.

. . . there is great danger, and the Tincture of life can easily be spoiled and the fruit wasted in the womb, when it is thus surrounded on all sides and assailed by so many devils and so many tempting essences. But if it can withstand and overcome this fiery trial and sore temptation, and win the victory: then you will see the beginning of its resurrection from hell, death and the mortal grave, appearing first in the quality of Venus; . . .

. . . there is still another danger that the work of the stone may yet miscarry. Therefore the artist must wait until he sees the Tincture covered over with its other colour, as with the whitest white, which he may expect to see after long patience and stillness . . . illustrious Luna imparts a beautiful white to the Tincture . . . And thus is the darkness transformed into light, and death into life. And this brilliant whiteness awakens joy and hope in the heart of the artist, that the work has gone well and fallen out so happily. For now the white colour reveals to the enlightened eye of the soul cleanliness, innocence, holiness, simplicity, heavenly-mindedness, and righteousness, and with these the Tincture is henceforth clothed over and over as with a garment (Jung 1946, quoting Pordage, ¶ 512, 13, 14).

Jung wonders about Pordage’s contribution, with its “hymn-like myth of love, virgin, mother and child” (ibid, ¶ 518). Concerned that we have no example of the symbols a woman’s unconscious would produce for these stories, he suggests “it would not be gentle Venus, but fiery Mars, not Sophia but Hecate, Demeter and Persephone”. . . (ibid, ¶ 518). Perhaps he is correct: his speculations are consistent with his contrasexual theories generally. By way of example of Jung’s contention, I look to Sylvia Perera, writing from a woman’s perspective in relation to initiation mysteries. She develops her thinking around the myth of Sumerian Goddess of Heaven and Earth, Inanna-Ishtar. In this passage, Inanna returns from
her own transformation (an alternate version of *The Return of the Soul*) to find her consort, Dumuzi, “unconcerned for her plight”. Some of the symbols that Jung speculates about appear here, in this mythical exchange.

On him Inanna vents her hatred and vengance—the demonism of the returned goddess. On him she “fastened the eye of death, spoke the word against him, the word of wrath. . . .” In the world of light she repeats the actions of her dark sister, fully embodying in herself the underworld, death-dealing aspects of the goddess.

. . . He meets her reality with his own separate and secure reality. He faces her down as an equal, does not placate. She does not have to care. She can cut through the unequal goddess-mortal, queen-servant, parent-child bondings; she can find the space in which to test him and to embody more of herself in the conscious world. From him she gains the profound respect of confrontation.

This suggests one of the ways in which transpersonal energies need a human partner—here not as a mirroring voice but as an equal dignity.

. . . Often enough, in the modern world, a close family member or a therapist is chosen to bear the eruption of untamed energies when an initiate returns reborn, and initially demonic, from the underworld.

. . . This part of the myth points up the psychological problems of women identified with culture’s perverted ideal of mushy, self-abnegating relatedness as a means of gaining validation. They let their own needs be turned aside when they are seen as motherly or commiserated with. They lose true relatedness to allow themselves to merge, but such merging is simply a way of avoiding confrontation. It keeps a woman’s strength, which she needs to foster her individual integrity, in the underworld. But the complex of individual identity does not lose its energy. The strength in it refluxes, and the woman goes back into depression in a recurrent cycle. Or it seeks on until it finds someone who can adequately meet it, who can stand and receive the passionate energy of the complex and ground it—by feeling respect for the energy itself and the woman’s necessity to embody it (Perera 1981, pp.82-3).

Perera appears to be writing about the woman who replaces her animus with a real and gravid ego/self of her own. “The return of Inanna from the underworld
was at first demonic . . . yet finally, as I read it, engendered a new model of equal and comradely relationship between woman and man” (ibid, p. 15).

Continuing these remarks about anima and animus expressions, Jung then embarks on a paragraph that I find difficult within *The Psychology of the Transference*.

Finally, I must point out that a certain concession to feminine psychology is also to be found in the *Rosarium*, in so far as the first series of pictures is followed by a second—less complete, but otherwise analogous—series, at the end of which there appears a masculine figure, the “emperor,” and not, as in the first, an “empress,” the “daughter of the philosophers.” The accentuation of the feminine element in the Rebis (Fig 10) is consistent with a predominantly male psychology, whereas the addition of an “emperor” in the second version is a concession to woman (or possibly to male consciousness) (Jung 1946, ¶ 520).

This suggests a momentary confusion in Jung or offers a glimpse of how far his thinking had, and had not developed in relation to interpreting the woodcuts. He appears to be either interpreting them as two sets of ten, or preferring not to acknowledge the whole twenty as a sequential development. He seems to have lost the sense of the whole *Rosarium philosophorum* as a meditation on the cultivation of Lunar and Sol facets of the personality and the expression of the three levels of coniunctio.

Jung cites historical evidence to support his contention that alchemy was written largely by men and therefore captures a male psychology. I cannot help but wonder, though, if their work is an attempt to redress the Sol / Lunar expressive imbalance at a time (1550) when the need for such a balance must have
been evident to the alchemists whose third stage of coniunctio process was unus mundus, one world consciously created. He insists that alchemical change cannot be understood except in relationship, and that the alchemist had a soror mystica, a literal or imagined contra-sexual partner and influence. Balance and redress would surely require the feminine to be included symbolically and materially. And the Rosarium woodcuts are about men and women having sex: with each half of themselves, and with each other, assumedly wondering how to partake of the activity, literally and symbolically, in its most complete form, so that it includes all that they might be, and all of life and death.

Jungian analyst Ann Belford Ulanov consciously writes to redress the gender imbalance Jung has complained of as he identifies alchemy as a male pursuit. Where many feminists and female Jungians despair, she writes to the positive and creative contribution of Jung:

Jung’s notion of the whole person as contrasexual is a radical twentieth-century image. It steers us clear of sex-role stereotypes where we must be exclusively male or female, pressured from within and without to squeeze ourselves to fit some abstraction called the feminine or the masculine, or take the consequences of guilt and ostracism if we fail to conform. Contrasexuality squarely faces the fact of concrete sexual identity. We are born into male or female bodies which shape our psychological perceptions of self and world. A parent of the same sex initiates different psychological dynamics in our development from those that come from a relationship with a parent of the opposite sex. Our sexual identity as men or women comprises a central part of our personality and cannot simply be ignored. It must be lived by us in a personal way, neither lacquered over according to abstract prescription nor simply avoided because we are afraid of the enormous work involved.

Contrasexuality emphasizes a paradox in gaining a secure sexual identity. In coming to terms with the unconscious archetypal contrasexual factor in ourselves—what Jung calls the anima men and
the animus in women—we become all the more a person of specific and workable sexual identity. We become more, not less, our own woman when we integrate the masculine components of our identity (Ulanov 1981, p.116-7).

**A Personal Transference Reflection on The Return of the Soul**

Associatively, I find the axiom of Maria Prophetissa, early alchemist, alive here, in relation to this woodcut. In Paragraph 404, as he writes about *The Mercurial Fountain*, Jung mentions the axiom that runs “through the whole of alchemy, like a *leitmotiv*”. The axiom is: “One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the one as the fourth”. Edinger offers an alternative version to account for the upward and downward progressions of the first and second halves of life. “One becomes two, two becomes three, three becomes four; four becomes three, three becomes two, two becomes one. Down and back up again, from unity down to fourfold multiplicity and then back, in steps, up to unity” (Edinger 1994, p.43). In paragraph 404 Jung, too, writes about it as a cascading sequence, from the “fourfold nature” of the transforming process which becomes the three manifestations of Mercurius, the two of Sol and Luna, and eventually the indivisible one.

I recognise that in *The Return of the Soul* the axiom of Maria is energetically present, the numerical transitions implicit. The woodcut suggests that despite the changes wrought, some aspects of our being always remain shrouded in the unconscious, stay unenlivened in the body, hidden in the earth. The work to unite body soul and spirit has reached the point of placing all potential players on the stage. I take the players to be represented in the
cascading threes: spirit, body soul; feathered and scaled, relational, and thinking brain; pre-symbolic, symbolic and transcendent realms. While in touch and not in touch with each other, each of these sets of three is in its place, poised, aware perhaps of how each differs, how each contributes distinctively to the overall economy. Although cascading sets of three symbols are apparent here, the iconography also suggests that contemplation of the four is relevant. Jung’s system of typology with dominant, auxiliary, tertiary and inferior functions is associatively represented. Symbolic domains active here are earth, water, air, with the heat and fire of the process implicit, as is the darkness about to produce the light, the re-birth to follow the death, the child to renew the adult, the adult to heal the child. Soul, body, spirit, can be seen though the spirit is fertilised in a fourth domain, and the deepest layers are not yet drawn from the earth. Each part of the work occupies its separate layer, and each is an integral aspect of the whole. Psychologically, it appears that the layers of the personality have been identified so that their energies might be managed and re-combined without only destruction. It is also arguable that this picture intuitively pre-empts notions of the triune brain where reptilian, limbic and cortical functions are identified to form the basis of more conscious adaptiveness where the dominance of one is not at the expense of others, and the role of each is given value.

To Conclude

This chapter of Jung’s, on The Return of the Soul, is one where many ends, of subjects introduced earlier in his essay, are tied off. The subject matter, his idea of
what transference might be, continues to be complex, a tangled formation of energies of body, soul and spirit if we take the alchemical formulation. If we take his formulation, the oppositional pairs reign: as psyche-soma, spirit-instinct, anima-animus energies. In this chapter all of them are invited back on stage. Woodcut 9 indicates that at this point they can be recognised in their separateness, as well as understood in their combinations, at least part of the time, but never fully.
Chapter 14

The New Birth

Here is born the Empress of all honour/
The philosophers name her their daughter.
She multiplies/ bears children ever again/
They are incorruptibly pure and without stain.

To Begin

We find that the soul has returned and the figure enlivened, poised on the crescent moon, able to rise above the earth on wings while holding live snakes aloft in a chalice. Jung has nominated Woodcut 10, *The New Birth*, the Empress of all honour, as the final one in his exposition. He knows, as I do, that there is another series of ten and that we are, in actuality, stopping halfway. In his commentary on *The New Birth*, he refers to an opposite number process in the second set, but generally the extended series stays out of the discussion. He is concerned more with interpretation of the Rebis figure/ triumphant hermaphrodite that he refers to as “monstrous”. The symbolic value of the process is depicted.
There is also a two-paragraph Epilogue where he formally gathers up the threads of his essay, closing off with perceptive and specific reference to transference, the subject that has not been mentioned for many sections. He also introduces, in the Epilogue, new material in the form of three pictures from the Mutus Liber, the book without words. In a substantial footnote he draws attention to the “adept and his soror mystica . . . performing the opus”. He notes that the psychic character of the portrayal has increased, in this later text from 1677.

This Chapter

In this chapter I consider Jung’s commentary and the tenth and, as Jung defines the series, final woodcut, as well as the Epilogue. I notice that the Jung who writes here touches deftly on several themes which are registered but not lingered over. He writes, at last, for example, on sexuality. The overt and covert development continues, with themes written and left unwritten, suggestions which might be a hint and a denial, or might be an invitations to increasingly subtle maturational organisation.

Orienting to The New Birth

No specific mention is made of transference processes in relation to The New Birth, so once again I take the opportunity to form a personal transference to the contents and construct personal meaning from them, guided by Jung’s symbolic interpretation of the woodcut. The picture indicates that life is back
and energy available for conscious use, that a balanced position has been reached, that dark forces of wing and scale have been incorporated into the conscious personality, alive with agency. That the Rebis is naked suggests that the work remains unfinished, though a land-mark has been reached. If I look at the picture that follows this one–it is the one Jung has called 5a, the original number 11–I see that the hermaphrodite goes from this moment of triumph into the next coniunctio, the next encounter with opposing forces requiring synthesis, mating again under deeper water. I therefore understand this to be, in freeze-frame, a state of balance where mastery of the receptive lunar forces, the felt depths, have been successfully gained, their contents integrated, and where the level of personal organisation and agency is relatively stable. I deduce “relatively stable” from the figure which, although open and extended, is naked and exposed, precarious, vulnerable. I see that it is not until Woodcut 17 that clothes return and I associate them with a readiness to move from inner focus, to outer world.

Jung has given up his attempt to write about this as a picture depicting inter-psychic states, although a therapeutic relationship and transference in this mode may not be unusual. It will be present when either or both parties are able to incorporate, into the receptive transference they form and the symbols of their conscious work, contents mediated by the reptilian brain and somatising body. These may include complusions, mindless repetitions, thoughtless identifications, contents where the possibility of choice has not seemed possible. It may hold components of unitive spiritual experience, and release of
primary, life-affirming energy. I have found Jean Houston useful for her allusions to expressive forms of this level of brain functioning. She writes:

The spine and the brain are the repositories of what is most ancient and most future about us–hundreds of millions of years have their messages coded there. As a spiritual model for the process, we may look to the words of the great medieval mystic Meister Eckhart, who wrote, “When the higher flows into the lower, it transforms the nature of the lower into that of the higher” (Houston 1995, pp.259-60).

I am aware that Houston is not writing as a neurologist here, but her allusions are at a level of intensity usable for me as I unpack my transference to Jung’s writing. I have found similar allusion to the graphics of The New Birth in the poetry of the Osiris myth, in a translation not available to Jung. The translation is by Normandi Ellis, who writes to suggests a stability in the symbols:

I rise above the crescent moon to the seven stars, beyond the history of men, beyond numbers and words that bind us. From the earth I rise like a falcon of gold released from a blue egg. I fly above and below the great worlds. I take the shape of a young boy working. In my belly I carry the seed that becomes me. Praise the corn that rots and the sedge that rises. Praise the emerald heart of earth. Praise the coming and going of creatures, the constancy of the world and the word. . . . This is what I was born to: to live, to love, to know, to change and embrace the infinite. I shall not forget my becoming (Ellis 1988, p.150).

I have found that the integration of the contents of Jung’s essay The Psychology of the Transference has been assisted by whatever is conveyed in this poetic form, as well as by pursuit of the hermeneutics of alchemy through Jung.
**Jung’s Interpretation of The New Birth**

Jung is interested in the numerology of alchemy. The number symbols hold secrets about the nature of underlying patterns and the mind of God. In his first paragraph, which follows, we see him de-coding this symbolic area, as well as establishing religious parallels with Christianity and Christ as symbol, and revisiting some of the themes presented early in his essay, in the *Introduction*.

Our last picture is the tenth in the series, and this is certainly no accident, for the denarius is supposed to be the perfect number. We have shown that the axiom of Maria consists of 4, 3, 2, 1; the sum of these numbers is 10, which stands for unity on a higher level. The unarius represents unity in the form of the *res simplex*, i.e., God as *auctor rerum*, while the denarius is the result of the completed work. Hence the real meaning of the denarius is the Son of God. Although the alchemists call it the *filius philosophorum*, they use it as a Christ-symbol and at the same time employ the symbolic qualities of the ecclesiastical Christ-figure to characterize their Rebis. It is probably correct to say that the medieval Rebis had these Christian characteristics, but for the Hermaphroditus of Arabic and Greek sources we must conjecture a partly pagan tradition. The Church symbolism of *sponsus* and *sponsa* leads to the mystic union of the two, i.e., to the *anima Christi* which lives in the *corpus mysticum* of the Church. This unity underlies the idea of Christ’s androgyny, which medieval alchemy exploited for its own ends. The much older figure of the Hermaphroditus, whose outward aspect probably derives from a Cyprian *Venus barbata*, encountered in the Eastern Church the already extant idea of an androgynous Christ, which is no doubt connected with the Platonic conception of the bisexual first man, for Christ is ultimately the Anthropos (Jung 1946, ¶ 525).

Jung is wondering here about how to interpret the Rebis, the Empress, who balances on the moon. He looks for precedents and associatively links traditions, establishing continuity between the androgynous Christ, the bisexual first man, and the Anthropos which might be thought of as a container of humanity’s spiritual essence. The point he makes is that the symbol, derived from the collective unconscious, recurs, changing its expressive form but remaining the representation of a persistent idea.
The persistent idea is of completion, of unity, of enlivened and extended workability held within an expanded framework which incorporates the dark and primitive levels of perception held in the materiality of the body, as well as the most advanced capacity for abstract thinking. The Empress is able to take her feminine expressive energy, fused with the masculine aspects of herself, and use the new consciousness in a balanced way. The Lunar symbols indicate that this is the completion of the process to fix the feminine facets. That the water has disappeared indicates that their quality is now reliably available, is less volatile. Adam McLean’s comments refer to *The Return of the Soul* and to *The New Birth*:

[Re Woodcut 9] New life returns to the feminine lunar element of the soul, which having been through this inner death process, this descent into the primal darkness of the unconscious, has gained a kind of victory over the death forces working in the unstructured soul forces.

Thus the soul gains a mastery over the lunar element within its being. This is the inner experience of the White Stone, the inner foundation in the soul for consciousness of the potentialities working in the lunar-feminine element which lies within us all, and is pictured in the last illustration from this seven-fold development, number 10, which shows us the hermaphrodite of the soul now reborn from its tomb, winged (indicating its spiritual development), and standing upon the crescent of the Moon (signifying mastery of the lunar forces) which is further emphasized by the appearance of the Moon Tree (McLean 1998, p.4).

McLean indicates that the process could be occurring in a person of either gender, working to establish the Lunar facets.

I will continue for two more of Jung’s sentences, because they encapsulate a distinct characteristic of the powers that accrue to, and the organisational abilities inherent in, embodiment of the Rebis, the Empress.
The denarius forms the *totius operis summa*, the culminating point of the work beyond which it is impossible to go except by means of the *multiplicatio*. For, although the denarius represents a higher stage of unity, it is also a multiple of 1 and can therefore be multiplied to infinity . . . hence also the assumption that the tincture replenishes itself and that the work need only be completed once and for all time. But since the *multiplicatio* is only an attribute of the denarius, 100 is no different and not better than 10 (Jung 1946, ¶526).

This *multiplicatio* idea contains a terse economy. It suggests that once the internalised ability to organise self in relation to world is established in line with the symbols of *The New Birth*, the process repeats, or can be summoned. Jung quotes, in this section, a long poem printed in the *Rosarium* presenting the same *multiplicatio* ideas. It is symbolised by interchangeable identities—mother, maid, son, lover, father: reminiscent, perhaps of the multiple faces that hang on the moon tree. This is a small excerpt:

For unblest was my body when I first began.
And never did I become a mother/
Until the time when I was born another.

. . . Then it was that I first knew my son/
And we two came together as one.
There I was made pregnant by him and gave birth
Upon a barren stretch of earth.
I became a mother yet remained a maid/
And my nature was established.
Therefore my son was also my father/
As God ordained in accordance with nature.
I bore the mother who gave me birth
Through me she was born again on earth.

(Anon. Quoted in Jung 1946, ¶528).
**Personal Transference Contents and The New Birth**

While *The New Birth* is the culmination of the sequence of processes depicted in all ten woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum*, it is also the *multiplicatio*, the fundamental state returned to, circled away from, and grown on each return. It is both an organisational reference point, and once the organisation is established, a repetition which grows in scope.

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**Clinical Conversation 6**

He says: It must feel good to be getting to the end of your writing, to have gotten to the bottom of things with the *Rosarium*.

She says: I don’t really think the *Rosarium* has a bottom. If it has a bottom it’s because I haven’t learnt enough about depth. You just keep falling till you find yourself in China, then you roll back again to the antipodes because its their turn to be the opposite and you already have the tunnel dug. But the tunnel is really an inexhaustible Aladdin’s cave. Its wonders never cease.

He says: All right. Maybe you’re at the end of a period of mystery. You’re about to emerge from an intense conversation in the laboratory of the thesis, held in the container of the *Rosarium*. You’ve worked to find the words for, the poetics for, whatever it is you’ve seen in the *Rosarium* mirror after you’ve projected your life into it and pulled it out transformed. You have worked
it, been worked by it. You have spent and gathered yourself in there. You have something to say, and like Jung did, you knowingly guard it rather than naively blather.

She says: I don’t know that I’ve learnt or experienced anything new. I’ve acquired a framework, a system, a language to hold it all together. I have as many questions as I ever did. I wonder if alchemy is a form of mind-body attunement where you bring on line–bring to somatic and intellectual consciousness–bits of yourself that might otherwise run autonomously. And once you’ve got them tuned in they yield to you everything ancient and knowing encoded in them and they grow you, somehow project you forward and back within your own complexity.

He says: Jung’s version of alchemy asks for connectivity of mind, of world, of layers of brain and live material of body. I think the tension of the opposites, the somatic and the thought, and the capacity to have it all surviving in the pleasure of the coniunctio, require a form of magical thinking that is not naïve or polar but is disciplined and poetic simultaneously. Maybe you need all that water in the woodcuts to develop the fluidity of mind which lets you have one foot in sixteenth century alchemy and one foot in twenty-first century psycho-neurology. You have to keep passing your perceptions between the opposites across the whole
continuum of being so the felt and the thought are consciously present and the old and the new inform each other.

She says: It is much easier to do with the poetic licence. And then you reach the Rebis which Jung found monstrous. I can’t quite grasp why. It’s gathered up the functions of its lizard brain and furled its magnificent feathered wings, and balances in all its natural and transformed beauty. I suppose Jung does not like that it’s still in relative darkness, but it is the darkness of the moon, and it is somehow exquisite. It’s not self-generating. It borrows sun to light itself up. Something in its primitive qualities seems to upset him. If he wants intellectual as well as this instinctual development, he has to admit the next ten woodcuts but he stops with the Empress. And the point of the Empress is to let you learn about the dark, to take you there first, to see.

**Jung Completing Some Unfinished Business**

Throughout *The Psychology of the Transference*, I have wondered about the *coniunctio oppositorum* that Jung sets up in his choice of the *Rosarium* woodcuts, with their undisguised sexual content, and his opposing choice to not address sexuality as a frequent, generative phenomenon of transference, of which he has experience. This is his major work on transference, and the history and mythology of transference contains many stories of boundary violations of a sexual nature, or enactments of love, between analyst and analysand. I have wondered why he sets
up his essay so that the troublesome elements are centre-stage, in the contents of the *Rosarium*, and are not addressed. Jung’s history reveals this as an area of personal exposure, difficulty and learning. So it is with some interest that I find him, at last, writing about sexuality in relation to the figure in Woodcut 10.

In the early, heady days when he and Freud were articulating the new science of mind, actions towards female clients who were also friends and lovers, appear irresponsible and unforgivable, although the personal and professional parameters took time and experience to work out. It is only towards the end of this essay that he offers redress, in such a round about way that it might be missed. I wonder if I am alert to what he writes as a function of my maturity beholding Jung in his maturity, since I have declared many times my transference to *The Psychology of the Transference*, and therefore the porosity that exists between it and me. In essence, he notes the potential confusion in the instinctual and archetypal value of sexuality.

Jung is upset by the Rebis as a symbol, writing:

> Here I will say only a few words about the remarkable fact that the fervently desired goal of the alchemist’s endeavours should be conceived under so monstrous and horrific an image. . . . the monster is a hideous abortion and a perversion of nature (Jung 1946, ¶ 533).

Somewhat later he indicates: “I have never come across the hermaphrodite as a personification of the goal, but more as a symbol of the initial state, expressing an identity with the anima or animus” (Jung 1946, ¶ 535). I think that the thing he is worried about, the identity with the anima (since the process is the perfection of
the feminine facets, the Empress) is actually portrayed in Woodcut 10. Processes depicting higher order experience and thinking are present in the woodcuts 11-20, but Jung has chosen to omit them. He experiences a certain frustration with the symbolised limits of the Rebis.

Reverting to the earlier part of his exposition, he writes:

>The *Tabula smaragdina* hints, rather, that the alchemical mystery is a “lower” equivalent of the higher mysteries, a sacrament not of the paternal “mind” but of maternal “matter” (*Jung* 1946, ¶ 533).

This appears to place the work of the tenth woodcut’s symbolism back within the production of the maternal dark, mysterious, internal, damp, facets of the soul, including their materiality. He continues: “These dark origins do much to explain the misshapen hermaphrodite, but they do not explain everything” (ibid), going on to write of this interpretation as a product of the “immaturity of the alchemist’s mind”, not equipped “for the difficulties of the task” (ibid). Jung is concerned that the alchemist did not understand chemistry, nor the psychology of projections and the nature of the unconscious. This begs the question of whether or not he describes himself here, years before as a younger alchemist, who did not understand the chemistry of relationship, of sexuality in the transference, nor the nature of projection and the unconscious, until he had experienced them all. From his experience he was equipped to understand and integrate more completely the issues around the body and spirit of sexuality, its energies, its literal and symbolic value. That Jung might be using alchemy as the opposite pole as he writes here, establishing through it the tension he needs in order to write at all, is a tempting speculation. He continues:
Had the alchemists understood the psychological aspects of their work, they would have been in a position to free their “uniting symbol” from the grip of instinctive sexuality where, for better or worse, mere nature, unsupported by the critical intellect, was bound to leave it. Nature could say no more than that the combination of supreme opposites was a hybrid thing (Jung 1946, ¶ 533).

He indicates that sexuality was conceptualised in this manner until Freud, at the end of the nineteenth century, “dug up the problem again” (ibid). “The union of the opposites had been lying there for centuries in its sexual form “but had to wait till “sexuality” could be included in a scientific conversation”. The contents nurtured by the alchemists then became “elevated to a sort of religious dogma” (ibid).

The natural archetypes that underlie the mythologems of incest, the hierosgamos, the divine child, etc., blossomed forth—in the age of science–into the theory of infantile sexuality, perversions, and incest, while the coniunctio was rediscovered in the transference neurosis (Jung 1946, ¶ 533).

The sexualism of the hermaphrodite symbol completely overpowered consciousness and gave rise to an attitude of mind which is just as unsavoury as the old hybrid symbolism (Jung 1946, ¶ 534).

He writes that sexualism denotes unconscious identity of ego with unconscious figures. The more attention is given to the sexual aspect, the less the archetypal content is noted. This seems again to reject the stage that has been reached in Woodcut 10, a stage that is somatic and biological, but also containing the intellectual content he prefers. He writes of the sexual aspect as one among many pairs of opposites, and the one that “deludes our judgment” (ibid). He winds up his discussion with reference to the need to withdraw projections:
. . . unless we prefer to be made fools of by our illusions, we shall, by carefully analysing every fascination, extract from it a portion of our own personality, like a quintessence, and slowly come to recognize that we meet ourselves time and again in a thousand disguises on the path of life (Jung 1946, ¶ 534).

This poetic reference is again to the multiplicatio and its value, once the structural and process to work it have been set up, as they are in the Rebis. The importance of relationship is again stated. Jung moves then to write about other images of the alchemical goal, including mandala, circle, quaternity. All of these abstractions, as organisational structures or geometries, might be systematically developed within the complete Rosarium process, or might spontaneously generate, to be noticed and incorporated, out of the unconscious at any point in the sequence.

The Epilogue

The Epilogue comprises two large paragraphs, one largish footnote and three images from an entirely new alchemical text, Mutus Liber. So in this formal ending, Jung introduces substantial new material, as well as picking up his original argument. This presentation of additional material is a device I like. It works like a final summary of the essential principle that the process of transference is without cease, that the symbols for it change, the contents are inexhaustible. I also like that he has chosen Mutus Liber because so much of the transferential exchange appears to lie beyond words, in experience, even though words are frequently the symbols that mediate it. The Mutus Liber’s exchange seems to be experiential as well as intellectual, and to exist in a language spoken by an angel’s trumpet, as in the first of the illustrations.
Jung begins the *Epilogue* with a statement of barely plausible modesty which none the less affirms the centrality of the transference process:

To give any description of the transference phenomenon is a very difficult and delicate task, and I did not know how to set about it except by drawing upon the symbolism of the alchemical *opus*. The *theoria* of alchemy, as I think I have shown, is for the most part a projection of unconscious contents, of those archetypal forms which are characteristic of all pure fantasy-products, such as are to be met with in myths and fairy-tales, or in the dreams, visions, and the delusional systems of individual men and women. The important part played in the history of alchemy by the hierosgamos and the mystical marriage, and also by the *coniunctio*, corresponds to the central significance of the transference in psychotherapy on the one hand and in the field of normal human relationships on the other (Jung 1946, ¶ 538).

His specific comments on transference are these:

The problems connected with the transference are so complicated and so various that I lack the categories necessary for a systematic account (Jung 1946, ¶ 538).

The series of pictures that served as our Ariadne thread is one of many, so that we could easily set up several working models which would display the process of transference each in a different light (ibid). [*Mutus Liber* shows the process in a different light by emphasising the relationship and the shared tasks of *soror* and *adept*, and what Jung calls the psychic character of the work].

The transference phenomenon is without doubt one of the most important syndromes in the process of individuation; its wealth of meanings goes far beyond personal likes and dislikes (Jung 1956, ¶ 539).

Jung agrees with the alchemists who were vague about the sequence of stages, “despite all agreement in principle as to the basic facts” (Jung 1946, ¶ 538). The transference phenomenon reminds us “of those higher human relationships which
are so painfully absent in our present social order, or rather disorder” (ibid). “What our world lacks is the *psychic connection*” (Jung 1946, ¶ 538).

**To Conclude**

Jung indicates that he has written his essay, *The Psychology of the Transference*, because the phenomenon is connected with individuation, the process of becoming an individual self, and to “higher human relationships”. An essential psychological project, it is a gesture towards producing the opposite of the “mass-man” who is “a mere particle that has forgotten what it is to be human and has lost its soul” (Jung 1946, ¶ 539). This is both an elitist and worthy rationale, probably related to the old Jung who writes in 1946, post war, post stroke, with nothing to lose.

It seems to me that to the end of *The Psychology of the Transference*, Jung creates, for the reader, or for this reader at least, an interactive field where transference phenomena form. Its contents are covert and overt, may be present or absent, may point back or forward, may invite an interaction, may repulse, may offer awareness which is pre-personal, personal, or trans-personal. The coherence and momentum in the essay are often carried by the woodcuts, although Jung indicates that their sequence of states is, in line with his clinical experience, in no way arbitrary, although it does allude to the basic facts. These, presumably, are to do with the transference phenomenon, contained within a bodymind, within a world. Bodymind contains one set of possibilities and limitations, world another, yet each is an aspect of the whole. The basic facts, presumably, are also to do with the transference phenomenon, contained within a circle of growth and change that
begins with projection, and is the ceaseless process by which the contents of inner
and outer worlds re-arrange themselves, via relationship and relatedness, inter-
psychically and intra-psychically.

As a symbol, the moon-tree, wearing its collection of masks, situated on the
figure’s right, may symbolise the development Jung requires. It is a conscious
symbol, above ground, seven pairs and perhaps Mercurius, seven metals, seven
planets, indicating that the cosmos is present, in yet another guise, and that the
solve et coagula process has not stood still. If we probe the hermeneutics of the
moon tree, we find many interpretations, in many ancient cultures. I am drawn to
one suggested by M. Esther Harding (1990), who also wonders if the sacred moon-
tree, covered with fruits, is remembered in the Christmas tree. Harding explores the
moon-tree as a symbol of the passion and death of the god, sacrificed for the
fertility of the mother/woman/earth, which we may have just witnessed in the
woodcuts where the male spirit leaves the body, rises to the clouds, and returns to
fertilize the feminine husk in the sarcophagus. Harding’s research reveals the
moon-tree to symbolise, among other things, the tree of life and death. This
interpretation fits well here, as a coniunctio in this developmental phase.

This thesis has been an application of Jung’s essay, The Psychology of the
Transference, inside the analytical setting and outside of it as well. It has assumed
the existence of transference, as process and idea. The research records my
intellectual and experiential relationship with Jung’s essay as I establish my own
internalised guide to the psychology of the transference. I have witnessed, in an
essay which opens with von Rosenroth’s motto - I inquire, I do not assert...
conjecture, try, compare, attempt, ask . . Jung trying again and again to demonstrate that while the process of transference might be seen to unfold along predictable lines, its content is personal, although its symbols might sometimes take on a recognisable sequence and language.
Chapter 15
To Conclude

To Begin

In this study I have shared an examination showing that Jung’s essay, *The Psychology of the Transference*, constitutes a guide to the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of alchemical transference. I have shown that it is a blend of present and absent content, is daringly original, is somewhat dated and obscure, and is adequate for the reader determined to understand Jungian alchemical transference. I have demonstrated that the essay also offers intriguing intellectual content related to Jung’s desire to construct a phenomenology to explain the most fragile and barely formed, as well as the most mature and complex features of transference-facilitated psychological development. The desired “endings” circle endlessly through the source of “beginnings”, each making the other in a process which never reaches exhaustion.

After introducing Jung’s essay, the woodcuts, and the idea of alchemical transference, I have, in the preceding ten chapters, considered each of the *Rosarium philosophorum* woodcuts and Jung’s essay in terms of theories, experience, relationships and geometries of transference. I have engaged with Jung’s essay and drawn on the opinions of other writers to support my views or offer additional interpretations.
This Chapter

In this chapter I present concluding remarks about Jung’s treatment of the experience, theories, relationships and geometries of transference in The Psychology of the Transference.

I make some remarks about Jung’s essay overall, before drawing conclusions about each of the categories in which I have been most interested.

The Psychology of the Transference

It is possible to conclude that The Psychology of the Transference is one of Jung’s essays with something for everyone. For someone looking for “typical” Jung, it contains the usual mix of highly personal, idiosyncratic, thoughtful, interpretive, clinical, and revisited themes of religion, psychology, teleology, with scholarly references, in this case generally to alchemy. It is also typical in that it is Jung writing for himself as much as an audience, using what he writes to organise and record his thoughts. His writing seems to become a discipline with which he contains, along with his original creative endowment, his madness, drivenness, repetition, fragmentation, disorganisation. He writes about the coniunctio oppositorum, the union formed by the opposites. He shows opposites working as he opposes himself to alchemy, setting up a tension with it, extracting from it the scaffolding and sophisticated inspiration he needs to write about phenomenal psychology related to transference, and processes and products in which alchemy and he share an interest.
I am able to conclude from it, as well, that it is Jung openly, shamelessly himself, for better or worse. There is a positive aspect of this for me in that he lives his principles, demonstrates his theories in his life and writing. His interest in alchemy is arguably unusual, obscure, dated, and professionally dangerous, but he endows it, as object, with a seriousness that demands it be taken seriously. For those who follow him into it, it is a useful metaphor and secular demonstration of religion, and another means to enter the mind of Jung.

It is safe to conclude that *The Psychology of the Transference* is rich with equivocation. I do not think that this is to mislead, but rather to invite the reader to recognise that the idea of “transference” as Jung presents it is never quite finalised, never settled once and for all, but always alive and re-forming. He indicates that the material he is dealing with is difficult for him to engage, so we meet thoughts he is beginning to think as well as established ones. Transference response is neither formulaic nor predictable, and Jung is determined to register these characteristics as fact. Jung organises his thinking in the essay around the idea of the *coniunctio oppositorum*, the resolution and harmonisation of opposites in a psyche developed and aware, supported by structures he calls ego and self, able to contain seemingly irreconcilable disjunctive energies and thoughts. The *coniunctio* is a model, a projection of how the most developed, working “self” might be conceptualised. The energies of instinct and spirit push the boundaries of the self, influence the psychoidal states where energy and matter overlap, shape the self’s conceptions, structures and processes because, according to Jung, each person/expression of life attempts to live the fullness of its being. The projected material transferred to the other is seen for what it is and taken back into the self,
enlarging it. The developing self increases its structure, scope and resilience to consciously incorporate contents emanating from collective and personal unconscious and conscious experience. That which is “not me” eventually diminishes and disappears.

I have concluded that the essay records Jung’s own transference formations to alchemy and his own personal, embodied experience which he is attempting to think about. I have shown that in his essay whole sections go by with no mention of transference. No definition of what is being discussed is provided, apparently no case material is offered. Yet what is present is rich and able to be extracted from the meandering, associative texts whose contents operate on several simultaneously present levels. This late-life essay, and who Jung is as he writes contributes to its shape and content. It is his major work on transference so the subject, mentioned or not, is central and inherent, and he is his own case study, however indirectly and hidden within abstracted speculation.

I conclude finally that because the essay gathers around the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum*, Jung’s text takes on additional layers. Contents not discussed specifically by him enter the essay through the woodcuts. The woodcuts, studiously dense in their iconography, call forth, in the reader, imagined and thoughtful responses, adding necessary content, particularly related to gender and sexuality, that Jung is unable or unwilling to write about but which must be present if the topic of transference is to be adequately addressed.
Personal Transference Contents

This excerpt from a recent analytical conversation contains my attempt to depict a coniunctio alive and forming, and to indicate the experience and knowledge that might derive from a meditation on the woodcuts of Rosarium philosophorum, embedded in Jung’s exposition. It demonstrates the conclusions about transference and Jung that might form for a reader determined to apply The Psychology of the Transference as a guide. I describe the conversation as containing a coniunctio because in it, neither person/side is refusing the other, and each is working to produce a psychic meta geometry, a third, formed from the two, which contains the ones. It is a formation that might not take shape in my embodied mind, apart from the presence of the other. It is a formation that might not take shape in the embodied mind of the other, apart from my influence.

Analytical Conversation 7 December 2008

He says: So are you going to shackle yourself to a singular Jungian dynamic, to the male female, or brother sister alchemical incest forms or are you planning to consider other primary metaphors?

She says: I take the contra-sexual forms as given—you know, beneath, before, there, inescapable, always, in their potential. And yes, I consider other primary metaphors. I like that notion of opposite energies grappling in whatever pairs occupy attention for now. Because I’m old I’m pulled more to the exploration of life and death that Jung presents here: how they work, how they are felt and thought
in different levels of brain and cells, how renewal might operate
within and across the span that makes up a life. He and the alchemists
are interested in the body-mind continuum. They want to know which
bit yields what, how it operates, what the limits are, how you get it all
to work optimally. They also ask how to tap into its fullness, whether
it heals when it’s broken, and what broken bits and the experience of
wholeness offer to a system closed on itself, living, uniquely, within
its own skin and simultaneously spread widely into the world.

This has been its big gift to me–that it sets out to organise the growth
and change, inner and outer, systematically, into a phenomenology. I
have been given a possible model that accepts and holds all the data. I
use it when I find myself in transference and counter-transference
states, or when I’m musing on them later. It offers a system, a
geometry, a process, a way to think about and behold my body, brain,
world and mind at work as ideas, awareness, thoughts, experiences are
born and die. Perhaps most especially I’ve learnt that the births and
deaths never completely trail off. I’ve been enchanted to learn that it is
so different in different couplings.

He says: Seems you’ve come to think of *The Psychology of the
Transference* and the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum*, in a
quite rich and lively way in the time you’ve been working with them.
She says: I’ve needed more than Jung and the woodcuts to understand them at all. I’ve needed life till now, four analysts, other Jungians I read and who train me, much reading, much thought, many conversations such as this. But I’ve used the essay and the woodcuts as a framework to pull everything together. They held up when all else failed. And very peculiar my transference to *The Psychology of the Transference* seems to be, for me at this age, here in this dry country of eucalypt trees, with this bit of ancient esoterica stretching back through many languages to Europe and the Sufis to Egypt. To extract the woodcuts’ data I’ve also needed current thought to filter it through: object theorists, relational theorists, developmental and neurological theorists, alchemy, and a particular attitude of exploration without cease.

He says: So you bring it back to alchemy and other people, and say that X, for example, is adept at somatic formulations, and Y is adept at archetypal formulations, Z is adept at psychoid formulations, or A is adept at formulations which involve the relationship of infant and breast or beholding the child in the adult. And you decide this from your own resonant primary formulations from your lizard brain, your stomach brain, your limbic connections and your cortex.

She says: And without my grandiosity, I hope. How can you do this work if you don’t take your resonant and resonating bodymind into the conversation? Surely that’s what the woodcuts shout. The
unconscious is located in each body, in all bodies and in the worlds they create. You need a body of theory to organise what you feel and think. If transference and counter-transference are to work as information gathering devices, you need to embody and think the work, and it’s all done in the one apperceiving vessel, which must be able to dissolve into other apperceptive vessels, or have them dissolve into it. I have realised that therapy works best for me when it’s embodied and reflectively felt, as well as thought. And I as therapist operate out of that mode. I may grow into other ways of working, I don’t know yet.

He says: Perhaps the history of the way brain-levels have been learnt about by Jung and alchemy is in *The Psychology of the Transference*. Shamanic practitioners preceded alchemy but gathered up the discourse of feeling and broken bits. The ones that I’ve experienced work with the imagery of somatic states. Diagnostic statements are made in terms of physicality, encapsulation of felt bodily sensations. Alchemy and Jung add additional layers, pulled in from western, eastern and Sufi traditions, layering up the intellectual nuance. Their formulations became more complex and require neo-cortical language, but the neo-cortex can only come into play at a certain point in the circuit. It has to include your reptile, your mammalian relatedness, and the intuitive states which tell you you’ve got it all in alignment. You, though, as therapist, need all of them to operate anywhere on the circuit, as required by the other.
She says: Circuits go round, maybe even in circles. Maybe that's the point where the symbols cut in—the ones that Jung says indicate completion. He lists the square, the mandala, the circle—specially the closed form of the circle, and the uroboros wearing its scales and crown, consuming itself to create itself. Beholding these shapes as a cortical function is different from just feeling that they're right, though that’s part of it. Which probably takes us back to primitive beginnings and symbolic geometries, paths that circumambulate the altar, and mazes and labyrinths, and maybe roses and rosary beads and rose windows and the *rosaria* where the philosophers gather with their *sorors mystica*, to work.

*Transference Experience and The Psychology of the Transference*

I have written of the blend of present and absent content in Jung’s essay, and this applies particularly to the way he treats the experience of transference. I noted that the surprise to me in the work of analysis is the extent to which it is experienced. Jung’s descriptions of it are in abstracted language. His interest is in proposed psychic processes and structures such as the ego, the self and the relationship between the two. Unconscious contents, however, reside in the body, in the substance and materiality of it, in memory, ease and dis-ease and cellular process, stored in the form of energy more or less accessible for the *solve et coagula* of the alchemical processes Jung uses to explain its storage and retrieval. As transference energies manifest in the analytical conversation they are felt. They are often felt long
before they can be thought and given words, a principle that Jung demonstrates but
does not state directly.

I have written that the Jung who writes *The Psychology of the Transference* has
returned, as his biography *Memories, Dreams Reflections* attests, from experiences
embodied and spiritual that were the greatest of his life. Despite that he is attempting
to existentially integrate these experiences, his language remains the language of his
body of thought, analytical psychology. He integrates his new material into his
existing theoretical framework and language suggesting both the value he applies to
his thoughts so far, and perhaps the challenge for him in thinking in new ways about
what has happened. The *Rosarium* woodcuts, an inspired and daringly original
choice, depict the embodied struggle to feel, think and organise one’s experience.
These are components Jung’s text in *The Psychology of the Transference* and can be
seen to carry and articulate experiential aspects he struggles to bring into words.

Yet placing the woodcuts in the text at all indicates something of the
experience that might be expected in the analytical transaction as transference
phenomena carry unconscious contents into live projected form in relationship. It is a
“no holds barred” action that is not explained overtly. The woodcuts suggest that it is
not possible to ignore the experience of rapport and relationship, or of disconnection
and failure of relationship that might be experienced. The woodcuts imply that the
rapport required from the analyst might fall anywhere on the human continuum of
being and experiencing of self and non-self, might require unusual forms of
relational incest, might include discomfort, maiming, loss, intrusion, death, rebirth
and states for which words might not be found. The woodcuts demand that the reader
draw the conclusion that transference experience requires from the analyst a willingness to be available for ordinary, different and difficult connections. These ideas are also experiences, are difficult to capture, but Jung, alchemy and the woodcuts offer clues. The woodcuts are sequential, developmental, increasingly intimate, undeniably relational, implying that contra-sexual, or at least oppositorum relationships are imperative to accomplish the transformations they depict. They declare, up-front, that there may be dragons that already dwell within the pair, in the territory to be explored within the analytical process and require the reader to conclude that the work cannot be done from a position of safety.

**Supervisory conversation 1 October 2008**

One says: I was talking to our friend about his paper. He has run into difficulties with its publication in England. It’s about shamanism, wounded-healer, using your madness and psychosis as perceptive tools and it’s not what everyone wants to hear about. Shamanism and healing seem to come often from the deficits in us, from the parts of us not constrained by discourses in narrative perfection or social acceptability.

Other says: I suppose it asks a question about whether this work produces someone entirely sane or someone who knows enough about madness not to inflict it blindly on the other or on the world. It’s quite removed from the normative processes where the doctor therapist knows best and doesn’t get tangled in the alchemy. It
seems important, though, to understand that the dragons have to be poked.

One says: But essential to see that there are different dragons, many monsters, many strengths, many wounds. Dragons are different for different minds. There’s an entire universe of dragons and wars and strategies. You meet others like yourself, who show you who you are and are not, in the activity, so you gather yourself as you go. Analytical product and process are never completely separate from each other, and never reach an end. Through your relationships you get reminded about other monsters and other strengths and other ways of dealing. It seems wasteful, unfruitful, to close off from what the work asks.

Transference theories in The Psychology of the Transference

Jung makes some mention of transference as theory. He acknowledges Freud as the first to recognise, name and describe the phenomena of transference and of counter-transference. He distinguishes his approach from Freud’s. Where for Freud transference was a replay of infantile dynamics, for Jung it was that too, but was also an attempt to move the self into a more developed expression. Where for Freud the transference was initially to be avoided, Jung thought that doctor and patient would mix the unconscious and conscious material each contained, and each would change the other. Jung’s description of it in this way gives transference a centrality in the analytical process. In order for the doctor to manage himself/herself in the face of
this requirement to be dissolved and reformed by transference contents, Jung insisted on a training analysis for those who wished to work as analytical psychologists. Beyond these provisos, however, the inevitable conclusion is that The Psychology of the Transference does not constitute a systematic and logical presentation of the theory and practice of transference in the analytical space.

Jung’s essay does, however, through its contents and in the demonstration of Jung’s mind engaging the psychology and phenomenology of the transference, imply a great deal about transference theoretically, particularly in terms of Jung’s own theories. Transference, as he posits it, is a phenomenon with collective and personal, embodied and abstracted dimensions. He insists, too, that it is not confined to the analytical exchange but is an every-day component of all relationships, notably those with a level of intimacy. Because Jung’s transference is collective and personal and is never ultimately resolved, he theoretically establishes it as microcosm within macrocosm, personal world within non-personal world. Built around the resumption into the self of contents that were originally projected onto an other, it proposes a self with personal and trans-personal dimensions, a self that achieves the alchemical task of alignment of body, soul and spirit.

I conclude, from many readings, that The Psychology of the Transference is an articulation of inner and outer change but not a systematic theory about transference and how it operates. At the same time, the images of the Rosarium philosophorum, because they are sequential and numbered, suggest an ordered unfolding to the process, although Jung writes that this is in no way arbitrary. His thesis is about making a connection with the unconscious through image, dream, active imagination,
symbolism and relationship, and about comprehending their alchemy more or less consciously, within the continuum that is bodymind.

_Transference Relationships in The Psychology of the Transference_

It can be concluded that Jung, without specifying, indicates that several relationships are important in the assimilation of transference contents. The two major ones are inter-psychic and between people, and intra-psychic and confined to the workings within each participant. Inter-psychic relationships are present between self and other, between analyst and patient, between person and world. Intra-psychic relationships are less easy to define and describe and Jung does not attempt to do this, but rather presents the idea as an inevitable one. The intra-psychic work of transference comes about as the individual experiences and assimilates awareness of personal psychic states which may also be archetypal and trans-personal, transacted in cells, bones, brain, mind.

Jung warns that the transference relationship requires the whole man, and, one assumes, the whole woman, although this is not indicated in his dated usage of these terms. That relationship with the other is specified at all is unusual in Jung and indicates a shift in the assumptions related to the a-symmetry and power distribution in the work of analysis. Jung’s written emphasis was on intellectual engagement with one’s own psyche and the woodcuts work best as an application of that, despite his insistence that they depict a two-person process. His suggestion, it appears, becomes increasingly unsustainable as the process they depict unfolds, although as a guiding idea it is workable. None the less he is able to use alchemy to assist his construction
of a phenomenology of the unconscious, demonstrated through the transference forms encountered in relationship.

Jung was never analysed, never submitted to the process. That the relationship between doctor and patient takes on importance suggests a change in him. He had not concerned himself with fostering the inner life of anyone else, or, arguably, with being the container for someone else’s process. The analysand was basically responsible for his/her own development, with Jung as interpreter of the ways of the unconscious. His suggestions here about the therapeutic relationship are implicit, not clearly formulated. He states explicitly that the two participants in the analytical work mix alchemically when transference forms. He states that both are altered. He tends towards some rudimentary idea of the analytical frame—the agreement in which the work is transacted—but the 1946 version of the frame was still determined by the idiosyncratic preferences of the doctor, more than by articulated professional customs and ethical practices.

He is breaking some ground here with attention to how the relating is done, which person’s state of mind is privileged, what it means to be a doctor or a patient, what the symmetry and asymmetry of the analytical exchange entails. The mysticism he encounters in alchemy specifies the individual self as the site for the work, conducted in conscious relationship with projected contents. Perhaps he is aware of what this acceptance of the projections of others and consideration of analysis as genuine two-person work might require of his autonomy, and begins to explore it, suggest it for others. Soon after this, however, heretires from work with patients to write, in the final period of his life, among other publications, Mysterium.
Conjunctionis. It no longer questions that relationship, inter-psychic practice, is more important than intra-psychic exploration and individuation. Paradoxically, though, the purpose of individual development is to function relationally in a way that is mindful, mature, circling individual capacities back into the collective fountain. Maybe his thoughts, recorded and published, draw readers into relationship so the mind of the writer continues to influence and circulate, beyond the death of the person who wrote.

Alchemy is the source of a sustaining relationship for Jung. As shaper and organiser of Jung’s content, it feeds into several conclusions. First, as a metaphor of the analytical process I find its combination of solve et coagula useful. Second, its discipline, sequence, level of involvement, goal, subtlety, repetitions, warnings, disappointments create a parallel framework for comparing the work of analysis and arriving at appropriate expectations. Third, I find the Rosarium philosophorum woodcuts brave and strange and primitive and marvellous. That they surfaced in 1550s Frankfurt, when witch persecutions, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Inquisition, war and secular rivalries all raged, seems to make them a singular statement for balanced reason and equal participation of male and female citizenry, and the facets of their souls. That this might be a retrospective projection does not stop me from making it, aware of their primitive sophistication, their innocent complexity, their value in being kept alive. That Jung picks them up four centuries later, in the midst of similar destruction, is pregnant coincidence to which he makes no reference. Fourth, I find his devoted hermeneutics, in relation to alchemy, wonderfully reassuring. That he should so painstakingly gather the opinions of many earnest students who look at very similar alchemical material and come to so many
different conclusions is, to my mind, an affirmation and celebration of individual effort in all its fruitful and non-fruitful cumulative expressions. That each effort is potentially as valuable as the other, whether or not it agrees with what has gone before, restates something about the serious madness of living.

I have also drawn some conclusions in relation to Jung concerning the body in alchemy. Because transference is largely felt and experienced as well as having a thought component, I became convinced that Jung and alchemy must have both been striving to write about the felt aspects, how to survive them and weigh this process symbolically, as religious traditions do. Jung contended that both of them were concerned with projection and its reclamation. When projected material is reclaimed, the process is felt, experienced, often intensely and destructively, sometimes intensely and creatively as new possibilities dawn. The task of alchemy and Jung seems to be associated with using the instrumentation of the human body-brain, with its millions of years of stored possibilities and livable potential, optimally, and in deference to its curious poetics. I sought confirmation of this in Jung, in *The Psychology of the Transference*, and did and did not find it. I therefore sought and found confirmation of it in other alchemical texts, and among other Jungian writers. It was important to me that I objectively verify at least its major themes, in order to sort what my own mind had found and what it had created.

*Transference Geometries in The Psychology of the Transference*

Geometric orientation feeds into several conclusions in relation to Jung’s essay. Again it is not explicitly discussed by Jung, but is arguably present in the
orientation each member of the analytic pair takes in relation to the other. The attraction and repulsion, love and hate that each manufactures as an aspect of transference response affects the distribution in space, the closeness and distance, and availability / non-availability of parts and wholes of each for the other.

Jung offers the woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum* to show the possible states and spatial orientations that can occur between the doctor and patient working in the analytical conversation. He treats the male and female in the woodcut as one member of a pair, even when only halves of each are present. To Jung’s mind this is not over-loading the pictures with imposed meaning, nor the imposition of an impossible dynamic of incest forms. Rather, it represents the range of states that might be experienced, might be characteristic of the therapeutic relationship. It demonstrates positions in relation to the other that might be occupied, including the possibility of being fully present or fully absent, and any partly present or partly absent state in between those positions.

Jung implies that transference geometry, as orientation to self and other, can include full conscious presence and simultaneous occupation of the *coniunctio*, or intra-psychic absence in a nigredo form that might equate with depression and death. It might also equate with absence in autistic form in states of aliveness that appear pre-human, pre-symbolic, where awareness is yet to form. It might equate with overweening presence which has the effect of extinguishing the other, or psychoidal states where energy and matter merge with each other to bring into being something not previously known or felt or imagined. Whole self, bits of self, whole other, bits
Transference geometries may also form in different areas of the pair. One may be caught up with archetypal energies; the other may be distant and stranded a pole apart from this. Both may be caught up in archetypal energies where the relativity of each to other is experienced and perceived through the orientating energies present. Alternatively, resistances and naïve compliance may become evident within the phenomena of transference and the power dynamics felt consciously and unconsciously.

A daring aspect of Jung’s essay related to geometry is present in the woodcuts’ indication that the changes produced are in themselves unpredictable, isolating. Jung writes of the figure in Woodcut 10 as monstrous. The image of the end product, swinging on the moon clutching fistsful of snakes and clad only in the feathers of a giant bird, constitutes an invitation to singularity, at the very least. That madness and mayhem, pain and peculiarity are also in the transcendent mix, and are present in its highest expression, is easy to deduce. Sol may have a grin of sorts on his face, but the faces on the moon-tree, like unhappy, disembodied infants, are unsmiling, grim, above a barren earth. I would conclude that, although the woodcuts depict work that looks difficult for humans, they are not malevolent in what they communicate. They tell an ambiguous story of triumph, which is probably how the story always is. The moon-tree geometry suggests, more clearly than any symbol so far encountered, the inherent contradictory pluralities of ways that one’s own being is experienced inter and intra psychically.
A final matter to draw conclusion about is where love fits in all of this, as a geometrical orientation theoretically and practically. My conclusion is that this is another question Jung is feeling his way towards and cannot quite answer. It is inherent in the woodcuts where love, love-making, sex, sexual creativeness, sexual destructiveness are visually present and not discussed. I have pointed out that the essay’s dedication is “To my Wife”. That real relationship may facilitate a shift of experience and change the way unconscious contents are thought about, and might be the healing component within the way that transference formations are managed, is both present as suggestion, and awkwardly distanced. Following is an excerpt where love is coming alive in Jung’s thinking because he has met it in alchemy and in his own life. It is an emergent phenomenon, it is present, and is not, partly thought, partly still forming, held in mystery:

We can therefore understand why the *nuptiae chymicae*, the royal marriage, occupies such an important place in alchemy as a symbol of the supreme and ultimate union, since it represents the magic-by-analogy which is supposed to bring the work to its final consummation and bind the opposites by love, for “love is stronger than death” (Jung 1946, ¶ 398).

We are able to conclude that this statement is present in *The Psychology of the Transference*. Where it fits within analytical psychological practice as it addresses the phenomena of transference and the geometries of analytical relationship, is less clear.
**To Conclude**

Finally, I must conclude that transference is associated, in *The Psychology of the Transference*, with transcendent geometries such as the *coniunctio*, the *hierosgamos*, and the *coniunctio oppositorum*. These associations, worded in these ways, are uniquely Jung’s contribution to the theory of transference. He does not recognise these unions of opposites only in the form of this overarching geometry, but it is what he wishes most to explore and articulate. He does not neglect the early experiences and replays of infantile dynamics that reconstitute as transference phenomena, but they are not where his emphasis lies. His emphasis rather lies in the circling that occurs between the most consciously developed parts of the self, attached to a resilient ego which can increasingly reflectively explore the less developed, more unconscious aspects of the self, circling through one to the other. This is a unique emphasis and demonstration of the mature personality building itself, and utilising transference, with its concomitant withdrawal of projection, to mirror inner and outer worlds. In the process, both worlds are built on more conscious principles, to the benefit of all of us, he argues. Jung lets us know that their importance, and his desire to identify the phenomenology of these processes led him to write *The Psychology of the Transference*. 
References


Saban, M. *Alchemy and Jungian Psychology*. Retrieved October 22, 2008. from [http://www.marksaban.co.uk/Alchemy.htm](http://www.marksaban.co.uk/Alchemy.htm)


Bibliography

**Body mind relationships**


**Psychology**


Religion, alchemy, mysticism, spirituality


**Transference, Self, Analytical Psychology**


Appendices

Appendix 1
Ethics approval

This research has been approved by the University of Western Sydney’s Human Research Ethics Committee.

Chair: Associate Professor Christine Halse.

Project Title: Through the Transference Keyhole and Into Jung’s World.

Protocol Number: HREC 08/34.
Appendix 2: The twenty Woodcuts of the *Rosarium philosophorum*

1. The Mercurial Fountain
2. King and Queen
3. The Naked Truth
4. Immersion in the Bath
5. The Conjunction
6. Death
7. The Ascent of the Soul
8. Purification
9. The Return of the Soul
10. The New Birth
11. Fermentation
12. Illumination
13. Nourishment
14. Fixation
15. Multiplication
16. Reviving
17. Perfection
18. Mortification
19. Coronation
20. Resurrection
**Appendix 3: The woodcuts Jung uses in *The Psychology of the Transference***

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