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# INTRODUCTION

Before introducing this year's volume I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the death of Don Fredericksen. We in the Jungian Society for Scholarly Studies community have been deeply saddened by his passing. Don was a special friend to many and an irreplaceable community member. He hosted JSSS conferences three times at Cornell, acted as plenary speaker on more than one occasion, and served as secretary for a number of years. Always he inspired thinking anew. On a personal note, I knew Don only briefly but had the good fortune to enjoy his presentation and analysis of the movie *Walkabout* at the IAJS conference in Phoenix in 2014. Later in the conference we shared a glass of wine, some dancing, and a wonderful late-night conversation about Jung, the Jungian communities, consciousness and our love for our wives and families. We will truly miss Don.

In memory of Don we begin this year's Journal with a poem dedicated to him by Joel Weishaus, *Feeling for stones*.

This year editors are pleased to announce that the *Jungian Journal of Scholarly Studies* is again available on Kindle and other portable devices. As guest editor of this year's journal I have the pleasure of introducing the two essays included in this volume. The first is by Matthew Fike entitled, "Encountering the Anima in Africa: H. Rider Haggard's *She*." In this erudite paper Fike explores the role of Ayesha, one of the main characters in H. Rider Haggard's *She*, as a "classic anima figure." This book was one of Jung's favorite novels, and can be used to help us understand how anima projection can contribute to the individuation process. As Fike notes, "*She* depicts the perils of directly confronting the anima archetype and the collective unconscious."

The second paper in this volume is by Sukey Fontelieu and is entitled, "Metaphorical Use of Alchemy's Retort, *Prima Materia*, and the Philosopher's Stone in Psychotherapy." In this paper Fontelieu describes her personal experience with the usefulness of alchemical understandings of the "retort," "*prima materia*," and the "philosopher's stone" in being an effective psychotherapist. Fontelieu describes how both the alchemist and the psychotherapist aspire to a quality of presence that supports the transformative process.

Peter T. Dunlap  
Guest Editor

## **Feeling for Stones**

For Don Fredericksen

Joel Weishauss\*

Feeling for stones hidden beneath the earth,  
feeling for smooth shapes and feeling about  
with fingertips, sensing form, circumference,  
and some thing holding it down.

*Wu Tao-tzu painted on a palace wall  
a glorious landscape, with mountain,  
forest, clouds, birds, men, all things  
as in nature, a veritable world-picture.*

Stone's edge is finally felt and gripped.  
With one steady pull the earth gives up  
a different shape than thought.

*Then Wu Tao-tzu opened a door  
in the mountain and disappeared  
into his painting; and the painting, too,  
faded away.*

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\* From *Feels Like Home Again: Collected Poems*.  
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## Encountering the Anima in Africa: H. Rider Haggard's *She*

Matthew A. Fike, Ph.D.\*

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H. Rider Haggard's *She* was one of Jung's favorite novels and is frequently mentioned in *The Collected Works*. Although his view that *She* depicts an encounter with the anima is a critical commonplace, his reasons for considering Ayesha, the title character, to be a classic anima figure have not been sufficiently explored. This essay uses the anima's widely ranging nature—specifically, Jung's statements about the Kore and the stages of eroticism—to explain his interpretation and then to analyze Ayesha's effect on Ludwig Horace Holly, the main character and narrative voice. His African journey is one of failed individuation: after repressing his anima in England, Holly projects his anima onto Ayesha in Africa, experiencing compensation and *enantiodromia* (a swing from misogyny to anima possession). In this fashion, *She* depicts the perils of directly confronting the anima archetype and the collective unconscious.

In *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, C. G. Jung writes: "The anima . . . has not escaped the attentions of the poets. There are excellent descriptions of her, which at the same time tell us about the symbolic context in which the archetype is usually embedded. I give first place to Rider Haggard's novels *She*, *The Return of She* [*sic*], and *Wisdom's Daughter*" (*CW* 9i, par. 145). Similarly, in his "Foreword to Brunner," he notes, "The motif of the anima is developed in its purist and most naïve form in Rider Haggard. True to his name, he remained her faithful knight throughout his literary life and never wearied of his conversation with her." For Jung, "Rider Haggard is without doubt the classic exponent of the anima motif" (*CW* 18, par. 1,279–80). Jung's take on *She*, however, runs more deeply than these opening quotations suggest: it is one of the few literary texts on which he offers significant commentary, which makes the task in this essay partly metacritical. He mentions Haggard's fiction repeatedly in *The Collected Works*; in fact, as Sonu Shamdasani notices, there are more references to Haggard than to Shakespeare (144). Further discussion appears in *Analytical Psychology: Notes on the Seminar Given in 1925 by*

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## *Jungian Journal of Scholarly Studies 2*

*C. G. Jung and Visions: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1930–1934 by C. G. Jung.* Coincidentally, the 1925 seminar took place just months before his Bugishu Psychological Expedition set out for Africa. Not surprisingly, Blake W. Burleson, author of *Jung in Africa*, notes that *She* “was one of Jung’s favorite novels” (30).

Although Jung’s view that *She* depicts an encounter with the anima is a critical commonplace, his reasons for considering Ayesha (pronounced *ass-ah*), the *She* of the book’s title, to be an anima figure have not been sufficiently explored. The most helpful concepts for this purpose—the Kore and the stages of eroticism—have been virtually ignored.<sup>1</sup> The present essay, which uses these tools to examine Jung’s claim in connection with the anima’s effect on Ludwig Horace Holly, the main character and narrative voice, coalesces around the theme of Holly’s failed individuation. After showing that Ayesha closely matches Jung’s understanding of the anima, we will turn to her effect on Holly. In brief, he represses his anima in England and later projects it onto Ayesha in Africa, experiencing compensation and *enantiodromia* (a swing from inveterate misogyny to anima possession). Sadly, his encounter with Ayesha repeats the relational failure that he experienced a quarter century before: her preference for Leo, the emptier but more attractive vessel, over the erudite but ugly Holly reenacts the situation that sparked his initial repression. Insofar as Holly projects the anima and fails to achieve individuation, Haggard presents the African journey as a psychological encounter in the spirit of Jung’s famous statement: “The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it appears outside, as fate” (*CW* 9ii, par. 126).

### **The Tale**

Readers who are unfamiliar with *She* will benefit from the following plot summary.<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Horace Holly is paid a visit one night at his Cambridge University lodging by a dying acquaintance named Vincey, who asks him to become the guardian of his young son, Leo. After some discussion, Holly agrees. Vincey dies that night—an apparent suicide. Once the legal arrangements have been formalized, Holly welcomes the three-year-old boy into his home and begins receiving the promised financial support. As the years roll by, Leo, per Vincey’s instructions, learns Arabic, as does Holly in order to help his adopted son acquire fluency. The younger man earns a degree at Cambridge and then studies law until, on his twenty-fifth birthday, Holly opens the chest that Vincey left to mark his son’s coming of age. It contains artifacts, including a “scarab” or gem cut in the shape of a beetle.<sup>3</sup> Various documents suggest the existence of an immortal woman somewhere in southeastern Africa. In a letter, Vincey, whose name means avenger, instructs his son either to find and kill her or to

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put an end to the family obsession by destroying the assembled evidence. Leo enthusiastically vows to find her, and Holly agrees to accompany him on the journey.

Together with their long-time servant Job, they sail for present-day Mozambique where their ship goes down, all hands lost. Fortunately, their own smaller vessel carries the trio and their servant Mohammed safely to shore. In their journey inland up a river and through dangerous swamps, they are eventually aided by a native man named Billali and his people, the Amahagger (the people of the rocks). Leo accepts the advances of an Amahagger woman named Ustane, becoming in effect a married man. (Ustane is the reincarnation of Amenartus, the woman for whom Leo's ancient self, Kallikrates, had rejected Ayesha, the now-immortal woman described in Vincey's documents.<sup>4</sup> Holly had shared the same ancient lifetime as the philosopher Noot.)

Violence erupts when the Amahagger murder Mohammed by "hot-potting" him (jamming a red-hot pot over his head). In the ensuing fray, Holly and Leo fight for their lives, killing many natives. Billali stops the fight and vows to bring the assailants to Ayesha, She-who-must-be-obeyed, for justice. Leo contracts malaria along the way, but Billali leads Holly to believe that Ayesha can cure him. After a long journey, the expedition arrives at her ancient underground dwelling in Kôr where many embalmed corpses are present. The ancient woman is veiled in fabric wound around her entire body lest onlookers be overcome by her beauty, which is exactly what happens to Holly when she unveils during their first conversation, in which they discourse broadly on history. Later, Holly secretly observes her grief over the embalmed corpse of Kallikrates whom Ayesha murdered twenty-two centuries before when he rejected her for Amenartus.

After sentencing the Amahagger criminals to death by torture, curing Leo, and killing Ustane with a thought, Ayesha leads Holly, Leo, and Job through underground passageways and across a seemingly bottomless gulf to the womb of the Earth, a rocky chamber where She wants Leo to bathe in the Pillar of Life, which makes one as immortal as nature itself. When he hesitates, She steps into it in an attempt to demonstrate its benign nature. This time it causes her to age more than two thousand years in a few moments. The shock of her demise causes Job to die of a heart attack. Holly and Leo barely survive the jump back across the gulf (Job having dropped the long plank on which they earlier crossed). With Billali's help, father and adopted son make it through the swamps and return to England none the worse for wear but haunted by memories of Ayesha, whom they will meet again in reincarnated form in the sequel, *Ayesha: The Return of She*.



## **Jung on the Anima**

*Why does Jung consider Ayesha to be a “classic” anima figure?*

In *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung associates the anima with wisdom, the historical aspect, “a superior knowledge of life’s laws,” and the quality of being outside of time (*CW* 9i, par. 64). All of these qualities directly characterize Ayesha; but in Norman Etherington’s words, “if Ayesha is meant to personify an unattainable dream of femininity, how are her less endearing traits to be explained?” (*Rider Haggard* 87). Jung’s comment in his 1925 seminar provides the seed of an answer: “Her [Ayesha’s] potency lies in large measure in the duality of her nature” (112). The anima is not only bipolar but multi-faceted, as Jung makes clear in his comments on the Kore and the stages of eroticism; both help to explain his sense that Ayesha is an anima figure.

The Kôr/Kore pun has been surprisingly overlooked in the criticism, though “Kôr” has been helpfully glossed, and a connection between Ayesha and the goddess has been noted. On the one hand, Showalter mentions “the core, Kôr, *coeur*, or heart of darkness which is a blank place on the map” (81); and Barri J. Gold says that Kôr represents “the very core of a giant female body” (314). Ayesha refers to the pillar of fire as “the very Fountain and Heart of Life” (257; ch. 15).<sup>5</sup> On the other, Pickrell states that Ayesha “presents all three faces of the goddess in one personage: the maiden, the matron, and the crone” (20). But no one, not even Jung himself, has put together *kore* (Gk., girl), Haggard’s Kôr, and the Kore. This nexus implies that Kôr is a fitting locale for Holly to do anima work with a female who represents all three facets of the Kore.<sup>6</sup> Ayesha is the virgin mother of her people, has lived for over twenty-two centuries, and through a devolutionary aging process in the pillar of fire becomes a shriveled old hag reminiscent of Gagool in *King Solomon’s Mines*.

Jung claims in “The Psychological Aspects of the Kore” that the Kore corresponds to “the *self* or *supraordinate personality* on the one hand, and the *anima* on the other” (*CW* 9i, par. 306; emphasis in the original; cf. par. 314–15). Although Ayesha, a stumbling block to male individuation, hardly represents the Self, the Kore-Ayesha-anima nexus is highly relevant in terms of bipolarity. The description in the following quotation would fit Ayesha almost perfectly if one substituted “murderer” for “whore.”

The anima is bipolar and can therefore appear positive one moment and negative the next; now young, now old; now mother, now maiden; now a good fairy, now a witch; now a saint, now a whore. Besides this ambivalence, the anima also has “occult” connections with “mysteries,” with the world of darkness in general, and for that reason she often has a religious tinge. Whenever she emerges with some degree of clarity, she always has a peculiar relationship to *time*: as a

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rule she is more or less immortal, because outside time. Writers who have tried their hand at this figure have never failed to stress the anima's peculiarity in this respect. I would refer to the classic description in Rider Haggard's *She*. (*CW* 9i, par. 356; emphasis in the original)<sup>7</sup>

In "Mind and Earth," however, Jung underestimates Ayesha's maternal aspect: "The most striking feature about the anima-type is that the maternal element is entirely lacking. She [anima] is the companion and friend in her favourable aspect[;] in her unfavourable aspect she is the courtesan. Often these types are described very accurately, with all their human and daemonic qualities, in fantastic romances, such as Rider Haggard's *She*" (*CW* 10, par. 75).

Part of Ayesha's maternal quality is her association with the anima via a connection between snake imagery and the life force. In a paragraph that ends with another reference to "the novels of Rider Haggard," Jung comments on the snake-anima connection. The snake's color, green, is "the life-colour"; and the anima is "the *archetype of life itself*" (emphasis in the original). Snake symbolism suggests that the anima not only has "the attribute of 'spirit'" but also "personifies the total unconscious" (*CW* 5, par. 678). In Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, Isis (the mother of Horus and a mother figure to her people) is associated with snakes (Cott 20); and since Ayesha is an anima figure and a priestess of Isis, a theriomorphic description makes good sense. She moves and hisses like a snake, has "a certain serpent-like grace" (153; ch. 13), and wears a double-headed "snaky belt" (260; ch. 26) around "her snaky zone" (211; ch. 20). In brief, Haggard's snake imagery signifies both the danger of this particular woman and an archetypal dimension, the maternal life force.

Whereas the Kore suggests the anima's bipolarity, the "stages of eroticism" (Mary, Eve, Helen, and Sophia) show the anima more properly as multi-faceted (*CW* 16, par. 61). Jung suggests that Eve is mother and that Mary represents religious feeling, an interpretation that Daryl Sharp echoes in his *Jung Lexicon* (20–21). The following is a reinterpretation of Jung's idea. He refers to the *stages* through which a male progresses with his anima: Mary, mother; Helen, girlfriend, mistress, whore; Eve, wife, murderer (Lewis 124); and Sophia, wisdom. Considered this way, the stages align nicely with Ayesha who is a mother or Isis figure to her people; a siren who incites masculine desire with her unearthly beauty; a prospective wife for Kallikrates whom she slew in ancient times and for Leo, to whom her kiss proves fatal in the sequel; and a source of wisdom (like Isis) as well as a living fount of knowledge regarding ancient history and nature's secrets.

Haggard's descriptions of Ayesha reinforce these connections, particularly with Sophia and Helen. Ayesha claims that her wisdom is ten times greater than Solomon's (149; ch. 8) and later strikes Holly as "more like an inspired Sibyl than a woman" (218; ch. 21). Although Holly is deeply learned, his wisdom is insignificant compared with hers, as his footnote makes clear: "Now the oldest man upon the earth was but a babe compared to Ayesha, and the wisest man upon the earth was not one-third as wise. And the fruit of her wisdom was this, that there was but one thing worth living for, and that was Love in its highest sense" (221n; ch. 21). Of course, She does not mean *agape*, and Helen-like associations give Ayesha's wisdom a dangerous edge: She considers herself more beautiful than Helen (149; ch. 8); radiates life like Aphrodite and beauty like Venus and Galatea (181, ch. 17; 212, ch. 20); and, as "a virgin goddess" like Diana, warns Holly that his own passion (*eros*) may end him, much as the hounds tore Acteon to pieces (154; ch. 13). Holly recognizes the threat by thinking of her as "this modern Circe" (157; ch. 14). Indeed, Ayesha has the potential to come between Holly and Leo, just as Circe separates Odysseus from his men. As Rebecca Stott observes, like the New Woman of Victorian England, Ayesha "will turn men into beasts, turn them against themselves and each other, infiltrate into and destroy the closed circle of the brotherhood" (*Fabrication* 117).

Ayesha's status as a dangerous woman and an Eve figure has not escaped the critics. Etherington believes that Haggard's women simultaneously suggest Eve and Satan (*Rider Haggard* 79). Evelyn J. Hinz calls her "a pagan Eve" (421), and Bruce Mazlish sees both Eve and Medusa in Ayesha's background (734). But more remains to be said about Ayesha's parallels to Eve. In the womb of the Earth, Ayesha stands naked "as Eve might have stood before Adam, clad in nothing but her abundant locks" (260; ch. 26), tempting Holly and Leo with knowledge and eternal life, for the fire combines the forbidden biblical trees' twin benefits, as Holly narrates.

I know that I felt as though all the varied genius of which the human intellect is capable had descended upon me. I could have spoken in blank verse of Shakespearian beauty, all sorts of great ideas flashed through my mind, it was as though the bonds of my flesh had been loosened and left the spirit free to soar to the empyrean of its native power. The sensations that poured in upon me are indescribable. I seemed to live more keenly, to reach to a higher joy, and sip the goblet of a subtler thought than ever it had been my lot to do before. I was another and most glorified self, and all the avenues of the Possible were for a space laid open to the footsteps of the Real. (257–58; ch. 25)

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In other words, Holly's temptation is to tap directly into the collective unconscious, the treasure trove of all human thought. The fire would enable him to keep his sanity and to have all the riches of human experience at his intellectual command—forever.

The anima as a Helen-like *femme fatale* is implied in Jung's statement that those "who have any psychological insight at all will know what Rider Haggard means by 'She-who-must-be-obeyed'" and that "they know at once the kind of woman who most readily embodies this mysterious factor [the anima]" (*CW* 7, par. 298).<sup>8</sup> Susan Rowland echoes this sentiment in stating that "Jung's erotic anima is dangerous when substantiated into fantasies of female deviousness and power" (17). Jung himself speaks of something like the *femme fatale* in "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship."

There are certain types of women who seem to be made by nature to attract anima projections; indeed one could almost speak of a definite "anima type." The so-called "sphinx-like" character is an indispensable part of their equipment, also an equivocallness, an intriguing elusiveness—not an indefinite blur that offers nothing, but an indefiniteness that seems full of promises, like the speaking silence of a Mona Lisa. A woman of this kind is both old and young, mother and daughter, of more than doubtful chastity, childlike, and yet endowed with a naïve cunning that is extremely disarming to men.

His footnote adds, "There are excellent descriptions of this type in H. Rider Haggard's *She*" (*CW* 17, par. 339 and n. 3). A Helen type is bad enough; but a woman like Ayesha, who appears multi-faceted to the male imagination, becomes the recipient, to some degree, of all four projected stages of eroticism. Such a woman is a cynosure who allows a man's imagination to latch on. Whatever his poison, his imagination finds some anchor for it in her persona. This process marks what Mazlish calls "the pubescent aspect of masculinity" in adult men (735), which views women as "everlastingly mysterious, dominating, immoral, terrifying, and fascinating, especially so in the Victorian period" (735).

Jung would underscore that the stages of eroticism depict man's experience of his inner feminine as it appears when projected on women. Like the Mona Lisa, a woman takes shape according to the machinery of the male psyche when he imagines her as he wishes. Like Galatea she springs to life as a reflection of a man's feminine ideal but has a separate identity apart from the wishes of the male projector. As such a female, Ayesha is devastatingly attractive, for She seems to embody the totality of the anima. Any man who has ever fallen in love with a waitress will agree that W. E. Henley

accurately sums up this projection process: “With Ayesha, the heroic Barmaid—the Waitress in Apotheosis—numbers of intelligent men are in love, as the author himself appears to be” (qtd. in Cohen 215).

Always present in male-female relationship is the possibility that the dynamics of the anima will overwhelm and consume the masculine—that the anima (or the unconscious in general) will swallow the masculine rather than becoming properly integrated into the Self. The threat is most pronounced when a man fixates on a woman who, in his mind’s eye, is a *femme fatale*. A woman like Ayesha—youthfully ancient, sweetly powerful, coldly alluring—is a fitting repository of male fear and desire because She invites projection so powerful and permanent that it leads to anima possession rather than to individuation through the anima work that Jung calls the “master-piece” (*CW* 9i, par. 61). Ayesha, a *femme fatale*, is his image of the anima because the most powerful figure of the projected anima leads to the most damaging psychological dysfunction. Such a woman disrupts the brotherhood of men (the shadow work or “apprentice-piece” that they are supposed to do first with each other), as when Holly “is rent by mad and furious jealousy” because Ayesha prefers Leo, the younger, more attractive man (212; ch. 20).

### **Holly, Projection, and Compensation**

*If Ayesha embodies the anima, what, then, is the psychology of anima projection in Holly’s case?*

To begin with, Holly, as the novel’s central character, is like the hub of a bicycle wheel, with projections radiating like spokes to all of the following: misogyny (Billali, Job); the wise old man (Billali); conventionality (Job); gentlemanly qualities (Leo); the intellect (Cambridge colleagues); instinct (the goose); savage rage (the Amahagger); and the anima (Ayesha, Ustane, Truth). Jung and his colleagues note many of these projections in their 1925 seminar. A more convincing theory of the psyche relates to his sense that “a compensatory relationship exists between persona and anima” (*CW* 7, par. 304). “The anima, being of feminine gender, is exclusively a figure that compensates the masculine consciousness” (*CW* 7, par. 328). Here is the model that he develops around a central core of ego/consciousness:

*External reality*  
Persona  
EGO  
Anima  
*The unconscious*

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The persona mediates between ego and the external world, just as the anima bridges ego and the unconscious. Persona and anima are in a compensatory relationship so that a man's "ideal persona is responsible for his anything but ideal anima" (*CW* 7, par. 310). A female-resistant persona yields a more powerful anima, which "likewise is a personality" (*CW* 7, par. 314). Jung might as well be describing Holly's misogyny in stating, "If the soul-image is not projected, a thoroughly morbid relation to the unconscious gradually develops" (*CW* 6, par. 811). Jung states, "If the persona is intellectual [like a Cambridge don's], the anima will quite certainly be sentimental," meaning subject to powerful anima projection (*CW* 6, par. 804).<sup>9</sup> Libido "gets dammed up and explodes in an outburst of affect" (*CW* 6, par. 808): Holly's powerful misogyny leads to powerful projection. In other words, it is the anima's job to remind him that he is not, at his core, a hater of women and that he is still capable of love and lust.

That Holly has emphasized his intellect and repressed his interest in women is beyond doubt. As Hinz states, Holly is Western culture's "intellectual offspring—a skeptical, individualistic, scientifically-oriented academic with a firm belief in the moral and political British constitution" (426). He is, however, an academic in the Socratic mode—learned but ugly. Women loathe his appearance, so he projects his anima on one who pretends to like him for mercenary purposes.

Women hated the sight of me. Only a week before I had heard one call me a "monster" when she thought I was out of hearing, and say that I had converted her to Darwin's theory. Once, indeed, a woman pretended to care for me, and I lavished all the pent-up affection of my nature upon her. Then money that was to have come to me went elsewhere, and she discarded me. I pleaded with her as I have never pleaded with any living creature before or since. (41; ch. 1)

From this devastating experience misogyny results, as the faux-editor notices:

I remember being rather amused because of the change in the expression of the elder man, whose name I discovered was Holly, when he saw the ladies advancing. He suddenly stopped short in his talk, cast a reproachful look at his companion [Leo], and, with an abrupt nod to myself, turned and marched off alone across the street. I heard afterwards that he was popularly supposed to be as much afraid of a woman as most people are of a mad dog, which accounted for his precipitate retreat. (36; introduction)

In believing that men and women shrink from him, Holly creates a cycle of repression and isolation. He even hires Job, a man servant, instead of a female nurse, lest a woman vie with him for Leo's affections (50; ch. 2).

Holly's libido (sexual and otherwise) is canalized into study and parenthood to the point that he considers himself invulnerable to female beauty. To Ayesha he demurs: "I fear not thy beauty. I have put my heart away from such vanities as woman's loveliness that passes like a flower" (152; ch. 13). As Jung understood, however, the more repression there is in the persona, the more strongly the anima compensates. When Ayesha unveils herself, Holly's anima pounces, much as the chthonic crocodile seizes the lion in the marshes. Now the scholar and inveterate woman-hater falls in love with someone on whom he projects his feminine ideal. In this respect, Jung is perhaps too general in his own comments on the novel's relation to the projection process.

Rider Haggard's *She* gives some indication of the curious world of ideas that underlies the anima projection. They are in essence spiritual contents, often in erotic disguise, obvious fragments of a primitive mythological mentality that consists of archetypes, and whose totality constitutes the collective unconscious. Accordingly, such a relationship is at bottom collective and not individual. (*CW* 17, par. 341)

The comment makes sense if one remembers Jung's emphasis on Haggard as an exemplar of the visionary mode, which means that the fictional material comes through a writer from the collective unconscious (*CW* 15, par. 157). In another remark better suited to Holly the character, Jung states that "a man, in his love choice, is strongly tempted to win the woman who best corresponds to his own unconscious femininity—a woman, in short, who can unhesitatingly receive the projection of his soul" (*CW* 7, par. 297). Here Andrew Libby's summary of Ayesha's qualities is instructive, for all of them are tailored to appeal to Holly: She "is an inquisitive intellectual, a learned philosopher, a talented chemist, a penetrating psychic, and on top of all that, a ravishing beauty" (9). Ayesha, who rivals Helen for loveliness, acknowledges his basic goodness despite his ugliness, and can discuss ancient history in multiple foreign languages, is a disappointed academic man's dream come true.

Numerous passages make it clear that, when Holly's anima surges forth in response to Ayesha unveiled, his psyche is in a state of anima possession. All that he once repressed becomes anchored in the ancient woman. He is attracted and horrified by her eyes' diabolically attractive force. He imagines that he will spend the rest of his life sick at heart now that She has set eyes on him. He is filled with passion and jealousy, worships her, and begs her to marry him. He and Leo, "like confirmed

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opium-eaters,” would not return to Cambridge in an instant even if they could (221; ch. 21). Imagining that her face will be before him always, he grows weary of a life filled with “the bitterness of unsatisfied love” and a broken heart (230; ch. 22). Such anima possession, Holly knows, is “a very bad state of mind for a man on the wrong side of middle age to fall into” (268; ch. 26). In other words, encountering Ayesha does not enable him to make progress in his relationship with the anima; Ayesha is a rather more compelling version of the greedy English woman who earlier rejected him. Leo too is possessed by the anima but against his will: he vows never to consider another woman, and Holly recognizes that they “both loved her now and for always, she was stamped and carven on our hearts, and no other woman could ever raze that splendid die” (267; ch. 26). For Leo, the possession is so severe that, unlike Odysseus who draws his sword and rushes at Circe, he cannot even draw his knife. He instead confesses to Ayesha, his wife Ustane’s murderer, “‘I am in thy power, and a very slave to thee’” (231; ch. 22).

Possession suggests that *She* is the story of Holly’s encounter in Africa with what he has repressed in England—the feminine, his sexual libido, and the anima that links the ego and the unconscious. Now various details suggest additional compensation by the unconscious. Geography is the first piece of this process: Africa is depicted as a woman’s body. As Elaine Showalter points out, Holly’s dream of being buried alive relates to engulfment in the dreaded female body (86; Haggard 98, ch. 7). Jung would add that if the anima “is regarded as the feminine and chthonic part of the soul” (*CW* 9i, par. 119), then journeying into a geographical underworld is emblematic of encountering the inner feminine. More specifically, the setting of the climactic scene reflects the female reproductive system. In order to reach the core of the volcano, the company must traverse a bottomless chasm between a rocky spur and a quivering boulder, objects that Lindy Stiebel considers phallic and clitoral, respectively (86). Lest the reader miss the sexual implication, Holly describes the rocky outcropping as like “the spur upon the leg of a cock in shape” (244; ch. 24). The group then moves single file through a Tartarus-like “funnel” or “low and narrow” passage like a birth canal in order to arrive, in Ayesha’s words, at “‘the very womb of the Earth, wherein she doth conceive the Life that ye see brought forth in man and beast—ay, and in every tree and flower’” (256; ch. 25). In a perfect blending of masculine and feminine images, Holly and company now encounter the phallic pillar of fire in a feminine cavern. Thus, having eschewed women and sexuality in England, he penetrates the very heart of that particular darkness: the sexuality he once resisted now confronts him writ large in the geography of the African underworld. The trouble with these details of the landscape,



however, is that encountering externals does not mean that internals are engaged. Fearing death, Holly and Leo do not bathe in the pillar of fire but instead draw back from what it represents psychologically, an unfiltered encounter with the collective unconscious. Even so, they barely escape with their lives and their sanity. Africa does compensate for England, but it does so in the spirit of *enantiodromia*, a swing to an opposite alternative that does not engender a resolution/*coniunctio*.

The statue of Truth—a blindfolded and winged woman holding a torch and standing on the world, encountered earlier in the final journey—represents the same human reluctance to experience the deep unconscious without filters. Sandra M. Gilbert's sense that Truth represents "the contradictions between power (the torch) and powerlessness (the blindfold)" is largely beside the point (46). If the veil represents the barrier between the ego and the unconscious, casting aside the veil means encountering the unconscious without the mediating agency of the anima. That is why Ayesha's translation of the statue's inscription sounds a cautionary note.

*"Is there no man that will draw my veil and look upon my face, for it is very fair? Unto him who draws my veil shall I be, and peace will I give him, and sweet children of knowledge and good works.*

*"And a voice said, Though all those who seek after thee desire thee, behold, Virgin art thou, and Virgin shalt thou go till Time be done. No man is there born of woman who may draw thy veil and live, nor shall be. In death only can thy veil be drawn, oh Truth." (240, ch. 23; emphasis in the original)*

The inscription begins with a stated ideal—seeing the face of truth (achieving full individuation). But Truth will remain a virgin (is not procreative, has limits) because no man can draw back Truth's veil on this side of another veil, death. One cannot encounter the unfiltered unconscious and survive any more than one could survive a flight into the sun. Insanity would be the result, as it nearly is for Holly when Ayesha unveils. With both Truth and Ayesha, the veil's purpose is to keep consciousness out, just as the miles of quagmire, crocodiles, snakes, and mosquitoes exist to keep Europeans from penetrating the heart of Africa. The image of veiled Truth, then, builds on Ayesha's veil, anticipates the withdrawal of Holly and Leo from the womb of the Earth without bathing in the fire, and suggests that individuation (in this life at least) is a journey without an ultimate destination.

Critics have found varied significance in Ayesha's veil.<sup>10</sup> There is also a connection between the veil image and the Romantic quest poem. Showalter sounds an appropriate note—"above all, the quest romances are allegorized journeys into the self" (82). In addition, the obvious connection between Ayesha and John Keats's "La Belle

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Dame Sans Merci” has been discussed by critics such as Gilbert (43) and Robert O’Connor (43–44). Still unnoticed is a remarkable parallel to the veil image in Percy B. Shelley’s “Alastor; or the Spirit of Solitude” (1815), which provides a helpful gloss on the projection process in *She*. A poet traveling in a Coleridgean landscape complete with a volcano encounters “an Arab maiden” (line 129) who loves him deeply. The poet dreams, however, of “a veiled maid” whose “voice was like the voice of his own soul / Heard in the calm of thought” and who speaks to him of matters dear to his own heart (lines 151, 153–54).

Knowledge and truth and virtue were her theme  
And lofty hopes of divine liberty,  
Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy,  
Herself a poet. (lines 158–61)

She parts her lips in a sexually provocative way, and then the poet “Folded his frame in her dissolving arms” (line 187). The Wordsworthian narrator comments, “The spirit of sweet human love has sent / A vision to the sleep of him who spurned / Her choicest gifts” (lines 203–05). Now the poet tragically pursues the visionary maid in the physical world, ignoring “youthful maidens” who express interest (line 266). Eventually, he dies alone and unfulfilled.

In “Alastor,” the poet rejects a mortal woman like Ustane in order to seek a projection of his own anima like Ayesha—devastatingly beautiful but ultimately unattainable. In *She*, Holly and Leo, like the poet, are haunted by memories of a veiled maid whom they have lost. Inspired by Leo’s psychic dream, they pursue her again in the sequel. Whereas the unfulfilled quest kills the poet, achieving the object of the quest kills Leo when he fails to withstand her potent kiss. “Alastor” and *She* are both stories about the tragedy that ensues when love of an attainable woman is rejected or denied, and instead the anima is projected onto another. The moral, it seems, is to know oneself well enough to desire a partner whose presence facilitates individuation rather than deepening one’s disconnections with the world.

### Conclusion

This essay has argued that the anima’s multi-faceted nature is fundamental to Jung’s interpretation of Ayesha as an anima figure and that Holly succumbs, through compensation and *enantiodromia*, to anima addiction, which steers him away from individuation and *coniunctio*. Her power to enchant and overwhelm mortal men also lies in her being a unity of archetype and archetypal image. As an image, Ayesha is a

flesh-and-blood character with whom Holly and Leo can interact; but as an archetype She unveils a nonverbal realm capable of inducing possession and insanity. It is not necessarily, as Claudia Crawford argues, that “the unveiling of She, of woman herself, leads to the impossibility of language” and accounts for Holly’s failure to describe her adequately (86). That failure, expressed in statements such as “The man does not live whose pen could convey a sense of what I saw” (153; ch. 13) and She “surpasses my powers of description” (160; ch. 14), may bear little relationship to Ayesha-as-woman and much more to Ayesha-as-archetype. The description fails because anima transcends language: Holly cannot adequately capture the woman’s image in words because She represents what words can never capture. Describing the anima is as impossible for Holly as fully summing her up is for Haggard in his dozens of novels. Since anima cannot be circumscribed, characters must simply experience her. As Jung knew well, Haggard’s simple yarn proves to be a fitting vehicle for that encounter.

## Notes

1. Some sense of the anima and anima projection runs through much of the previous criticism, though usually minus the Jungian terminology. To begin with, the feminine informs the two major strands of criticism of *She*: the Victorian “New Woman” (Showalter 85; Heller 62–63, 86) and colonialism/imperialism (Libby 3–4; Stott, “Scaping”; Stiebel). For other studies of imperialism, see Brantlinger and Katz. The novel’s non-Jungian critics offer some relevant insights into the journey’s psychological implications (Hallock, par. 26; Mazlish), but Murphy’s Freudian approach has definite limitations (61). Haggard’s critics have mentioned the process of projecting a man’s ideal feminine image (Cohen 112–13; Ellis 117–18; Etherington, *Rider Haggard* 77, 87; Moss 28). Also, the psychological and the transpersonal are both present in *She* (Cohen 112). The novel is explored in a chapter of one Jungian doctoral dissertation (Kates) and in an extended explication by an acquaintance of Jung’s (Brunner). More recently, Ayesha has been related to the “Goddess archetype” and Haggard’s interest in such figures to his relationships with women so that writing *She* is a compensatory act (Pickrell 18, 24). In particular, Ayesha’s nickname, She-who-must-be-obeyed, reflects a rag doll by the same name, which Haggard’s nurse used to enforce his bedtime (Whelan, par. 3). Here Jung’s comment resonates meaningfully: “Those of my readers who know Rider Haggard’s description of ‘She-who-must-be-obeyed’ will surely recall the magical power of this personality. ‘She’ is a mana-personality, a being full of some occult and bewitching quality (*mana*), endowed with magical knowledge and power” (*CW* 7, par. 375; emphasis in the original). Jung did not know about the rag doll, but his projection-related description of Ayesha seems relevant to Haggard’s childhood experience. Finally, Ayesha is often considered to be a *femme fatale* (Gilbert 42; Hallock, par. 3; Libby 8; Rodgers 36; and Stott, “Scaping” 151 as well as *The Fabrication of the Late-Victorian Femme Fatale*, chapter 4). For *femme fatale*, see also note 8 below.
2. I used Andrew M. Stauffer’s edition of *She: A History of Adventure*. Another fine edition is Norman Etherington’s *The Annotated “She”: A Critical Edition of H. Rider Haggard’s Victorian Romance*.

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3. Although Jung does not comment on the scarab ring in *She*, the image would have resonated with him. In 1913, he had a vision that included the image of “a gigantic black scarab” (*MDR* 179). Similarly, in *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, he recounts the following experience: “A young woman I was treating had, at a critical moment, a dream in which she was given a golden scarab. While she was telling me this dream[, ] I sat with my back to the closed window. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, like a gentle tapping. I turned round and saw a flying insect knocking against the window-pane from the outside. I opened the window and caught the creature in the air as it flew in. It was the nearest analogy to a golden scarab one finds in our latitudes, a scarabaeid beetle, the common rose-chafer (*Cetonia aurata*), which contrary to its usual habits had evidently felt the urge to get into a dark room at this particular moment. I must admit that nothing like it ever happened to me before or since, and that the dream of the patient has remained unique in my experience” (*CW* 8, par. 843). As in this synchronicity, the scarab image suggests movement in the unconscious.
4. Regarding Ayesha’s name, Evelyn J. Hinz notes, “The Greek name for the cosmic order is ‘Aisa,’ the Persian ‘Asha’” (421).
5. The pillar of fire must have resonated powerfully with Jung because of a dream that he had had as a very young boy. “In the dream I went down into the hole in the earth and found something very different on a golden throne, something non-human and otherworldly [a giant phallus], which gazed fixedly upward and fed on human flesh” (*MDR* 14). Jung’s explication stresses the dream’s religious antecedents; however, a giant phallus within the earth is also a pairing of masculine and feminine images, much like Haggard’s pillar of fire in the womb of the earth.
6. Regarding the goddess’ tripartite nature, see Adam McLean’s *The Triple Goddess: An Exploration of the Archetypal Feminine*.
7. It appears that Haggard’s biographer, Morton Cohen, may have this passage in mind when he sums up “the traditional ideal qualities of womanhood” (113).
8. In the criticism, Ayesha is widely considered to be a *femme fatale*. Sandra M. Gilbert considers her “absolutely identical with the Byronic *femme fatale* who haunted nineteenth-century writers” (42); Hallock calls her Haggard’s “most famous fictional *femme fatale*” (par. 3); and Libby sees her as “a *femme fatale* motivated by a toxic combination of love, jealousy, and ambition who disrupts rational thinking, threatens male homosocial friendship, and endangers British political stability” (8). For Terrence Rodgers, Ayesha as *femme fatale* is “a magnetic figure of male longing but also fear, who threatens the integrity of empire, manliness and brotherhood” (36). For Stott, Africa itself is the *femme fatale*, “dangerously seductive, potentially violent, unpredictable, all knowing” (“Scaping” 151). See also Stott’s book, *The Fabrication of the Late-Victorian Femme Fatale*, chapter 4. In “Desire, Fascination and the Other: Some Thoughts on Jung’s Interest in Rider Haggard’s ‘She’ and on the Nature of Archetypes,” clinical psychologist Sue Austin uses a gender studies approach to compare Ayesha to another *femme*

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*fatal* about whom Jung had much to say—Salome. The article, however, does not do close reading of Jung’s statements about the novel or offer much analysis of the text itself.

9. Here is a related passage from “Mind and Earth” in *CW* 10, *Civilization in Transition*: “Self-control is a typically masculine ideal, to be achieved by the repression of feeling. Feeling is a specifically feminine virtue, and because a man in trying to attain his ideal of manhood represses all feminine traits—which are really part of him, just as masculine traits are part of a woman’s psychology—he also represses certain emotions as womanish weakness. In so doing he piles up effeminacy or sentimentality in the unconscious, and this, when it breaks out, betrays in him the existence of a feminine being. As we know, it is just the ‘he-men’ [or intellectual men] who are most at the mercy of their feminine feelings” (par. 79).
10. Gold, not very helpfully, remarks on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century figure of nature unveiling before science (313). Terrence Rogers sees the veil as an erotic invitation to the Oriental sexuality of harem girls (41, 44). Showalter, in an interpretation that Jung would scoff at, recalls Freud’s interpretation of looking at Medusa: fear of female sexual organs and castration anxiety (145). She also considers the veil to represent feminine chastity and modesty versus sexuality and exoticism (144–45).

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## **Metaphorical Use of Alchemy's Retort, *Prima Materia*, and the Philosopher's Stone in Psychotherapy**

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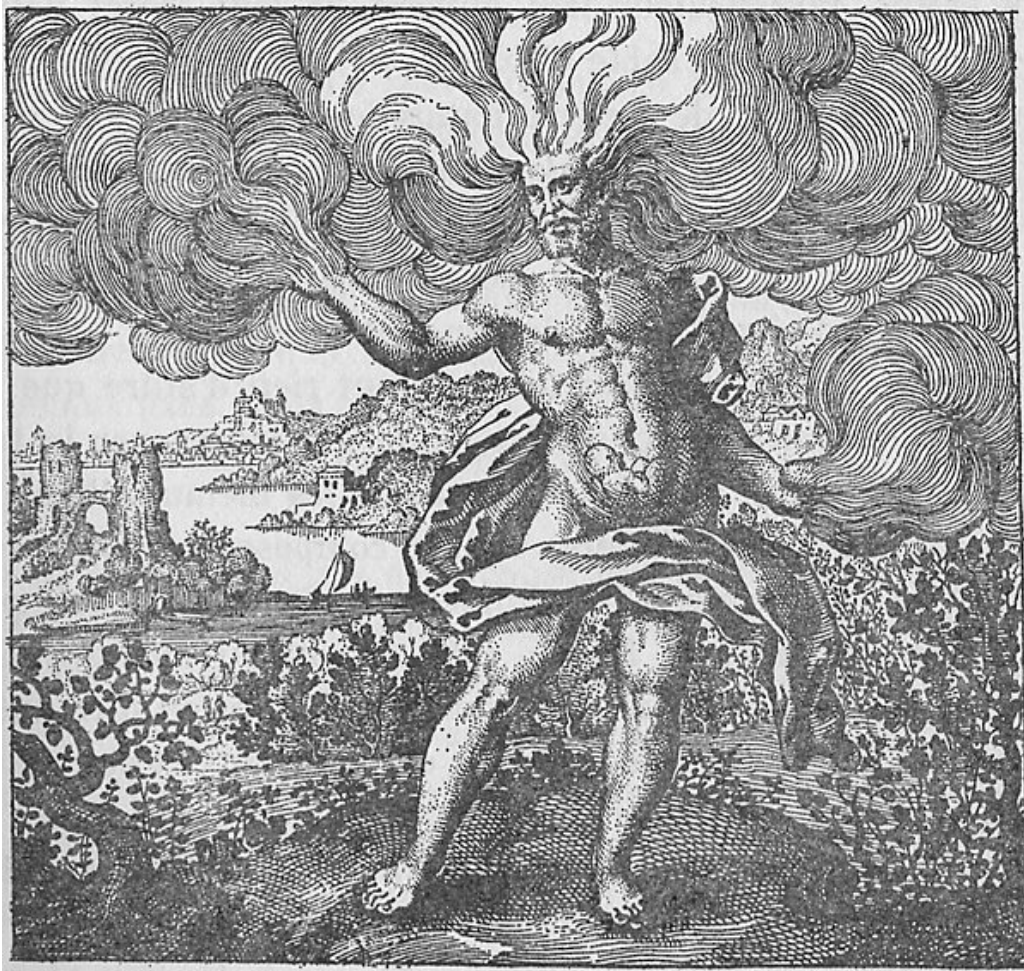
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This essay shares my experience of the usefulness of alchemical understandings of the retort, the *prima materia* (first matter), and the philosopher's stone in the practice of therapy. I discovered that these suppositions offer practical insights into how to be an effective clinician. The retort correlates with the therapist, the process of therapy, and eventually the client as container; the *prima materia* correlates with the unconscious material that the client brings to therapy; and the philosopher's stone correlates with the healing function of the psyche. The quality of the therapist's presence is likened to the qualities the alchemists aspired to live up to in themselves. I also found parallels between psychological transformation and the alchemical understandings of the structure of the retort as exemplified in the axiom "like cures like."

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“The wind father” (Emblem 1). All images are from Michael Maier’s *Atalanta fugiens* (1617—1618) and are in the public domain (retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, 2015).

## **Introduction**

The study of alchemy is vast; it was practiced for over 2,000 years and its roots trace in as disparate directions as Egypt, Greece, and China. In the West, alchemy survived, and thrived, into the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as Christianity’s heretical underbelly. As C. G. Jung put it, alchemy “is to this surface [Christianity] as the dream is to consciousness, and just as the dream compensates the conflicts of the conscious mind, so alchemy endeavours to fill in the gaps left open by the Christian tension of opposites” (1944/1980b, p. 23 [*CW* 12, para. 26]). As the alchemists played the counterpoint, their work was actually compensatory to orthodox Christian thinking in many ways—alchemy is a science and Christianity a religion that breathe in

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relationship to each other. But alchemy was also heretical to Christian dogma; for example, it did not privilege spirit over the natural world, or the masculine over the feminine.

This essay shares my experience of the usefulness of alchemical understandings of the retort, the *prima materia* (first matter), and the philosopher's stone in the practice of therapy. After my initial confusion concerning the alchemical meanings of these concepts, I discovered that each of these areas offer practical insights into how to be an effective clinician. The retort correlates with the therapist, the process of therapy, and eventually the client as container; the *prima materia* correlates with the unconscious material that the client brings to therapy; and the philosopher's stone correlates with the healing function of the psyche.<sup>1</sup> But before detailing my experiences of the therapeutic usefulness of these ideas, a very short history will draw upon some of Jung's research indicating how alchemical thinking is relevant to psychotherapy.

In general, the alchemists' quest was not to get rich by manufacturing gold; rather they were involved with the same search and used the same method, studying the natural world, which physicists engage in today. Both attempt to discover the nature of reality.

The alchemists theorized that everything is made of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water, and that these four are all variations of the one essential building block of the universe, ether. They believed that it was possible to transmute metals and baser, impure materials back to the one essence, ether, and, of course, that they would then be able to transmute anything into anything else, including gold. To do this the philosopher's stone was needed, so acquiring *this* was the elusive quest that went on for thousands of years (Edinger, 1994). This search rather than a disreputable greed for gold held the alchemists.

They were confident that the ancients must have had the stone and that the secrets to reproduce it were encoded in the Bible, and/or passed down by the Egyptian Hermes Trismegistus in his writings (1994). Hermes Trismegistus is himself one of the "shimmering symbols" (Jung, 1942/1967, p. 162 [*CW* 13, para. 199]) of alchemy. He was said to have been the source of the wisdom in the *Hermetica* and was sometimes referred to as a prophet, but he was most often thought of as a god who was both the Greek Hermes and the Egyptian Thoth (Jung, 1944/1980a). Was he a god or was he a man? Logos-based boundaries seem to dissolve into one another in alchemy's misty depths.

The alchemists, or philosopher-scientists, as they referred to themselves, worked in isolation; their notes and pictorial emblems contain little concrete information, thus rendering their experiments unrepeatable; and from the earliest times their secret language gave explanations that are figurative, symbolic, metaphorical, and

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paradoxical (Jung, 1944/1980c). For example, the retort, like everything alchemical, suffers from and is enriched by a surfeit of names. Besides being called a retort, it is most commonly referred to as the vessel, the *vas*, and the alembic.

Jung spent thirty years studying, researching, and writing about alchemy. Three volumes of his collected works as well as many other essays, such as “The Psychology of the Transference” (1946/1977), a study of psychological transference using the alchemical drawings from the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, are devoted to analyzing the symbolic nature of the alchemists’ quests and to deciphering a psychological understanding of their language (1944/1980a-c, 1946/1977, 1963/1970, 1957/1967). He seemed gripped by a fascination with the material that equals that of the alchemists themselves. What galvanized him was that the alchemists, while exploring the natural world, were *projecting their own inner world* into their experiments.

The real nature of matter was unknown to the alchemist: he knew it only in hints. In seeking to explore it he projected the unconscious into the darkness of matter in order to illuminate it. In order to explain the mystery of matter he projected yet another mystery—his own unknown psychic background—into what was to be explained: *Obscurum per obscurius, ignotum per ignotius!* [the obscure through the obscure, the unknown through the unknown] This procedure was not, of course, intentional; it was an involuntary occurrence. (Jung, 1944/1980c, pp. 244—245 [*CW* 12, para. 345])

Since the projections were not personal material about their own lives, Jung deduced that they came from the collective, archetypal layers of the unconscious. The alchemists experienced their projections as properties of the matter they were trying to understand. So, although they did discover many facts about matter through experimentation, what interested Jung was that the stages, operations,<sup>2</sup> and constructs they identified are actually filled with psychological truths. As Jung detected, alchemy has everything to do with a psychology that considers the unconscious. They conceptualized constructs for *how* to proceed in a search for the truth, and, in so doing, left behind a trail, so to speak, of Psyche’s invisible footsteps. Three concepts of the alchemists that have deepened my clinical practice are the retort, *prima materia*, and the philosopher’s stone.

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Michael Maier, "Alchemist following the goddess Pomona's footsteps" (Emblem 42).

### The Retort

The alchemist's retort is an apt metaphor for the therapist, the therapy room, and eventually for a client's ability to work his or her own material independently. A consulting room is a hermetically sealed container, thanks to the confidential nature of the work. Here the psyche of the client is held in the enclosed *temenos* (sanctuary) of the relationship with the therapist. The need for confidentiality cannot be underestimated. It is actually a profound and sacred agreement that a therapist makes with clients. To get loose lips is the equivalent of leaving the oven door open when one is baking bread—the oven never gets up to temperature so the bread will never rise.

The atmosphere in the therapy room, where secrets are revealed and then turned over, circumambulated, agonized over, until they can be finally understood and even celebrated, needs to feel warm and safe if it is to be a balm for the wounds of the client.

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Confidentiality seals the retort, and I attempt, with empathy, to warm the relationship, as the alchemists describe, to the temperature of a brooding hen's belly (Hannah, 1973).

The alchemist filled the retort and sealed it, fired up his oven (or hers—there were women alchemists too), and observed the results as the experiment cooked.

Within the alchemical laboratory was a distilled kind of magic atmosphere. An electric quality prevailed between the retort and the artifex [alchemist] and surrounded them both, such as exists sometimes between two people who are alone together and in love. Then there is a co-mingling between the worker and his medium, an identity or participation; and out of that mystic union both are changed. It is not the bright clear eye, but a half-consciousness where all is muted as in moonlight, half in shadow, half in light, where the viewer and the thing viewed mingle together. (Kreinheder, 1975, p. 138)

They were attempting to capture the spirit within the *prima materia* by sealing it within the retort. When I close the symbolic door of confidentiality in therapy, I am aspiring to set up an experiment in integrity and trust that can facilitate the client's capacity to self-reflect and bring awareness to the wound. Within the hermetically sealed retort of the consulting room, once a secret has been spoken, the next step is for me to bring attention to the client's capacity for self-reflection. These are the conditions within which the client can begin to transform the newly revealed secrets and the inner wounds they hide.

These conditions are also working in me and on me as I chew on things, tell the truth as best I can, and analyze my part in the work. My client and I are both cooked in this process. For example, does this particular client bother me? Why is that? What can I learn from this? I strive to be transparent to myself while also softening my gaze to better understand what underlies my client's story. I can work my mistakes and not take it personally when I can remember that the beauty in the work is that there is no end to the learning.

The construct of the retort is a metaphor not only for the consulting room but is also a psychological profile for a depth psychotherapist. Besides being a hermetically sealed container, the retort was made of smooth, transparent glass, round or womblike in shape, and able to sustain heat (S. Zarrow, personal communication, February 27, 2003).

Transparency was considered crucial for the retort, for if the practitioner could not see through the walls there was no way to know when to turn the heat up or down, and so how to control the operation. Too much or too little heat would require the alchemist

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to begin again. The work was not abandoned, it was begun again. I love this. Often I miss a client's unconscious cue that it is the right time to go deeper (turn the heat up), or I get so enthused that I get out ahead of my client, suddenly I am leading, leaping from one insight to another (the heat is up too high!). I do not have to "walk on my knees for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting" (Oliver, 1986, p. 14); I just need to push the restart button and go back to mirroring until things heat back up to a temperature where the client feels safe to reveal herself.

The alchemists observed the precipitation (they called it the dew) that formed on the walls of the vessel (Edinger, 1994). They determined whether to turn the heat up or down based on how much dew had formed. My client will show me what to do in the same way; when she starts to really feel what she is talking about, the dew is forming. Of course, one person's emotional intensity may be seen in a reddening just above the throat, which for this person is a sign of near combustion, while for another a good cry is just a quick warm up. This is a relationship, so I approach it carefully, only taking small risks, always trying to maintain a respectful regard for my client's suffering. I try to see when to turn up the heat by observing the intensity of the emotions and gauge when to make an intervention that will go deeper into this piece of the story based on the dew, the emotional body of the client. If my client is starting to drown in the feelings, I know it is time to lighten it up, cool things down.

The alchemists wrote of how the walls of the retort were smooth so that the dew would be able to descend easily, so the moisture could unite with the *prima materia* (Edinger, 1994). Once the client is immersed in experiencing unresolved feelings, it is possible we can make the descent smoothly and reach the *prima materia*. The moist descent can clean a wound that has long festered because now there is a better chance of not bumping into defenses. Once we are in the depths, the client can begin to remember, to reflect, and then, gradually, to digest and integrate lost parts into conscious awareness. This is an essential factor in soul-making, as archetypal psychologist James Hillman (1975) calls psychotherapy. The client begins the work of remembering past traumas and giving voice to feelings that had been inexpressible in metaphorical language, which, as Hillman said, turns events into experiences (p. x).

The alchemists also made the glass walls able to handle high temperatures so that the retort would be strong and durable. As a therapist, I need to be strong and durable when a client clings to his surface story (again), when a client bunjee jumps into the depths at five minutes to the hour (again), and sometimes I need to be really durable if my client projects his or her shadow onto me. In such a case a negative transference has value because the client may require heartbreaking amounts of proof of my trustworthiness, my fortitude, and my integrity before feeling safe. Of course, the task is to *aspire* to embody this level of strength and durability.

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Three operations are required to make glass durable: blowing, annealing, and tempering (S. Zarrow, personal communication, February 27, 2003). First the glass is blown. The shape is created out of air, with breath (in Greek the word for breath and spirit is the same, *pneuma*). *Pneuma* creates the womb-like shape. The spirit in the bottle, Psyche in the room, the transformative agent, is invoked through shape. Multiple meanings float in these images and we can infuse our work with the inspiration this kind of language opens up in us.

Then glass is annealed, which means that it is gradually reheated and cooled, slowly, without great temperature changes, patiently over and over again until the minor stresses that would cause it to break have been removed. Similarly, as the wounds are revealed, made conscious in increments, the client strengthens nearly imperceptibly, gradually becoming able to handle greater or deeper or more ambiguous problems, gradually smoothing out the defensive blocks that cause eruptions, cracks in the vessel. The client and I circle around the problems, spiralling really, as new ways of seeing things are realized. All the small “aha” moments of therapy anneal the retort *within the client*, and for some this is as far as they are inclined to go. They got what they came for, and they feel better.

Some stay for the final stage, the tempering of the glass. Tempering involves reheating until the glass is so hot that it softens and is near to collapse, and then it is blasted with cold air or plunged into a vat filled with oil. This makes it virtually unbreakable, like a car’s windshield. For some clients such high heat is called for in the work. These clients suffer an experience that nearly breaks them, such as the loss of a child, and they have no choice but to live through a nearly unendurable time in their lives. The dreams and their life stories will indicate if the hot fires of an initiatory experience are to be. This is not mine to decide. My job is to listen; Psyche’s job is to lead.

### **The *Prima Materia***

The alchemist’s first problem was to find the *prima materia*. “This matter lies before the eyes of all; everybody sees it, touches it, lives it, but knows it not. It is glorious and vile. Precious and of no account, and is found everywhere” (Waite, 1893/1991, p. 13). The alchemists said that the *prima materia* was unnameable and also gave it many metaphorical names: quicksilver, shadow, water of life, poison, dragon, and countless more (Edinger, 1994). In the client it is the undifferentiated, contaminated opposites in a state of chaos (Jung 1944/1980c). It can be named as a state all are in, but for each person the state is different.

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The alchemists began their experiments in transformation by placing the *prima materia* in the retort and performing a series of operations on it. The operations, such as *solutio*, which dissolves a solid into a liquid, were used with the idea that they would purify the *prima materia*. This was the first stage (the *nigredo* or blackening) in a progression of stages leading to the *hierosgamos*, the divine or inner marriage (Edinger, 1994). Essentially, the *prima materia* needed to be refined enough to be able to amalgamate, or meld, with the philosopher's stone.

My experience is that my client's *prima materia* is so chaotic when the work begins that he cannot make much sense of it. One way to see where Psyche is leading is, paradoxically, to observe what psychological symptoms are currently erupting, what archetypes are active in the client. The undifferentiated hurt feelings, anger, traumatic reactions, fears, depressed moods, restlessness—all the symptoms of therapy—first need to be sorted, like Psyche's seeds in the tale of Psyche and Eros (Apuleius, 1915/1958). And like Psyche in Apuleius's tale from late antiquity, the ants, the instinctive antennae of a therapist, aid by feeling for the way to start separating out the symptoms into patterns. Chaos is a place in which it is easy to get lost, but when not alone in it the client begins to see that there is some order in the internal chaos, some "method in the madness." The task of sorting leads to Psyche's eventual reunion with Eros and is the first step toward the celebration of the divine marriage within the client. This first stage cannot be avoided because, as the alchemists' observed in nature, there is a basic law that like cures like and that until the impurities are cleansed the *prima materia* cannot meld with the philosopher's stone. They are too dissimilar.

It is my job to observe the chaos in the client. Like an alchemist, I carefully place my client's inscrutable symptoms in the vessel built of empathy, confidentiality, and my durability, apply heat (interventions), and then wait patiently for clarity as the confused mixture of stories slowly begins to soften up, dissolve, or cook down to nothing but ashes. The problems that are blocking the client, the places he or she is stuck and defended have been despised or rejected up until now, probably by the client as much as by others. If I were to go straight at it, saying something along the lines of "Research shows if you do more this and quit doing that you will feel better so you really should do these things as soon as possible"—transformation is probably going to be superficial at best. But if clients can endure the heat, and if I can remain devoted to their own undiscovered inner life, the process starts to dissolve the defenses, and the first light of healing dawns.

An alchemical operation such as *solutio*, offers an opportunity to soften, moisturize, make the problem, the *prima materia*, less blocked by concrete thinking and more emotionally congruent with life. As a result clients slowly begin to see who or what is on the other side of their defenses with some modicum of empathy so that



the defenses become more porous, a little less solid. The client moves into what alchemy called the second stage, the whitening, or *albedo*. This process is consolidated, not by my brilliant interventions, but by my stumbling about as I keep one eye on the goal and one on slowing things down to a speed that can constellate that sublime state in which change feels possible. As the opposites begin to clarify, the client's moral dilemmas show themselves to be resolvable after all, not with logic but through a step-by-step process that refuses to be reduced to formulas.

The alchemists believed that their states of mind influenced their experiments (Jung, 1944/1980a). The observer affects that which is observed. This shattering truth predated the quantum physics paradigm by quite a few years! Because the alchemists considered their states of mind affected the outcome of their experiments, they wrote extensively about refining their character. They dedicated themselves to being patient, humble, and loving toward the work (D. Cordic, personal communication, March 6, 2003). I cannot think of a better combination of qualities for a therapist.

I learn patience by waiting to see if my clients can put their feelings into their own words; I gain empathy by feeling what it is like to be them; and I gain humility by quietly starting over again when the client returns the next week and all that seemed to have been revealed has fallen back into the unconscious. Like the alchemists' initial operations, my job begins with purifying, or cleansing, and sorting the *prima materia*, then I wait to see what happens. If nothing much happens I have to be patient and start again, now knowing to use either a little more or a little less heat in my interventions. If the client leaves feeling drained or saturated and does not remember a thing, the heat was too high and the experiment failed. I attempt to be content with as tiny a bit of *prima materia* as this particular person can assimilate in one sitting, since the goal is for the client to retain some insight at the end of the hour.

The alchemists specified filling only one quarter of the vessel with the *prima materia*; the rest was to be air. I think of this as one quarter of the therapy hour spent in descent into one layer or another of the unconscious, while the other three-quarters of the hour is filled with empathic listening, breathing, and feeling with clients. The rest is time for surrounding them with the feeling of being connected, time for trusting the fragile relationships among vulnerability and wisdom and inner growth (D. Cordic, personal communication, March 6, 2003).

### **The Philosopher's Stone**

If these conditions are met, the philosopher's stone just may be constellated in the work. Other names for the stone help to amplify its meanings: the hermaphrodite, philosopher's gold, golden glass, *aqua permanens* (eternal water), *ignis noster* (our

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fire), the red tincture or the white tincture, the dove, the chaste Queen of Sheba willing to give herself to King Solomon alone. The list of what the alchemists named it actually goes on and on. It is as if they loved naming it, loved trying to touch its truth with words. It is as if they loved it.

The *prima materia* hides the philosopher's stone, contains it, and *is* it. The alchemists said that the mystery is here, hidden only by our inability to see it. It is not that hard to stay in the *temenos* at first; what is hard, in my experience, is to endure. As previously stated, the alchemists understood that the observer's state of mind affects the experiment. This, to me, is the secret of the philosopher's stone. It emerges, in part, due to the sacrifice of the therapist's ego. "The secret is that only that which can destroy itself is truly alive" (Jung 1944/1980a, p. 74 [*CW* 12, para. 93]). When I can handle the tension of not knowing, of ambiguous sessions, of caring for the unloved, rejected, and forgotten parts of my client and myself, and then humbly let it be all about the client, I am in accord with some of the truth of the Emerald Tablet handed down by Hermes Trismegistus, which said:

What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of one thing. ... Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the dense, gently, with great ingenuity. (as cited in Edinger, 1994, p. 231)

Once the *prima materia* has been sufficiently cooked, the operation of *separatio* is activated—the opposites first separate out and then reunite, now in a purified form. What is base becomes noble. What lacked integrity can now stand strong even in the face of opposition, rejection, or indifference. The opposites within us are able to co-mingle and as previously mentioned Kreinheder observed "out of that mystic union both are changed" (1975, p. 178). Psyche and Eros are reunited and give birth to a baby girl named Pleasure.

Perhaps the moment of reunion is entirely an inner experience for the client. Another way the alchemists talked about this final stage is as a *coniunctio* or chymical marriage. This, then, is the inner marriage between the opposites. Be they the human and the divine, the masculine and the feminine, or psyche and soma, all express wholeness as the goal. The alchemists talk of this initiatory process as the squaring of the circle. The chaotic unity was broken down into the four elements (earth, air, fire, water) in the square and now can combine in a higher unity, like a perfect circle, transformed by being immersed in the retort and alloyed with the philosopher's stone. The final stage, the *rubedo*, the reddening has arrived.

The principles of the alchemists have proved to be a touchstone in my work. When I am able to create an atmosphere that constellates the healing function in the psyche of

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a client, I am a participant in an ongoing experiment carried on for thousands of years—the erratically paced development of consciousness. I have stressed the quality of the therapist’s presence as the alchemists stressed that of themselves. In the retort of the consulting room the axiom of “like cures like” can be enacted when both client and therapist are fully present and fully vulnerable. Drawing upon the alchemical concepts of the retort, *prima materia*, and the philosopher’s stone, I have learned to be still, feel what needs attention in my consulting room, and serve as a witness when the eternal presence of Psyche gradually comes into focus.



Michael Maier, “A Pregnant Alchemist” (Emblem 22).

### Notes

1. At times in this paper psyche is capitalized. This is when “psyche” is personified as an archetypal presence. When psyche, as in “the psyche,” is not capitalized it is used in the sense of

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an ongoing presense that is neither wholly internal nor wholly external and that witnesses and participates with our subjective sense of self like moonlight on water.

2. Alchemists called their experiments different kinds of operations. They classified them by the kind of transformation they were trying to achieve with names such as *olutio*, *mortificatio*, or, *coniunctio*.

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# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## **Announcing the 2016 JSSS Conference**

### **Earth/Psyche: Foregrounding the Earth's Relations to Psyche**

Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico, La Fonda Hotel

Dates: Sunday evening, June 26<sup>th</sup> through the evening of Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### **Call for Proposals:**

In his essay “Mind and Earth” in which he theorizes about “mind,” Jung offers a vision of earth that claims that earth must be transcended for consciousness, yet implies in his vision of connected levels and in his premise of “everything” being “alive,” that earth is in a deep way connected to mind. He writes:

[In the psyche] everything is alive, and our upper storey, consciousness, is continually influenced by its living and active foundations. Like the building, it is sustained and supported by them. And just as the building rises freely above the earth, so our consciousness stands as if above the earth in space, with a wide prospect before it. But the deeper we descend into the house the narrower the horizon becomes, and the more we find ourselves in the darkness, till finally we reach the naked bed-rock, and with it that prehistoric time when reindeer hunters fought for a bare and wretched existence against the elemental forces of wild nature. The men of that age were still in full possession of their animal instincts, without which life would have been impossible. The free sway of instinct is not compatible with a strongly developed consciousness. . . . Phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically we have grown up out of the dark confines of the earth. . . .”  
(*CW* 10 par.55)

This formulation roots mind in earth, but places consciousness, the exciting possession of evolved humans, clearly above it. Still, Jung maintained a commitment to including earth in his understanding of psyche. This commitment appears in his writings on alchemy, the feminine, the psychoid, and most resonantly in his late-life writings about synchronicity. These essays, like the thrust of his work, attempt to persuade others of the existence and functioning of psyche. In that sense, Jung assumes earth in the background of his interpretations.

For example, in the famous scarab episode, his emphasis is upon the transformative effect of the synchronicity upon his overly-rational patient who is discussing the golden scarab in her dream as a beetle arrives beating at the window. Jung uses the beetle to shock his client into acknowledging a psychic dimension beyond her reason. Jung’s interpretation of the coincidence of the dream scarab and the beetle at the window is that “the scarab dream is a conscious representation arising from an unconscious, already existing image of the situation that will occur on the following day, i.e., the recounting of the dream and

the appearance of the rose-chafer” (CW 8, par. 857). This interpretation supports his thesis that psyche objectively exists, contains knowledge, and is not bound by the ordinary experience of space and time.

An unintended consequence of Jung’s purpose of persuading readers of the objective existence of psyche is a relegation of earth to the level of the assumed. In his interpretation of the scarab coincidence, for example, Jung assumes that the earth is bound to behave in a particular way at a particular time—the beetle beating at the window—and that psyche can therefore know this event is going to occur and can provide a dream whose recounting will coincide with that event. When he considers the beetle itself, he focuses on its symbolic dimension that relates it to a sun-god myth. He writes, “The scarab is a classic example of a rebirth symbol. The ancient Egyptian Book of What Is In the Netherworld describes how the dead sun-god changes himself at the tenth station into Khepri, the scarab, and then, at the twelfth station, mounts the barge which carries the rejuvenated sun-god into the morning sky” (CW 8, par. 845). This emphasis does not address the earth-based phenomenon of the scarab who receives this symbolic projection because it rolls earth between its front legs and eventually from that earth issue baby scarabs. The possibility that the earth is unaccountably responding through the appearance of the beetle at the window is not entertained. Jung commented on the reciprocal relations of earth and psyche by claiming they are unknowable: “[on the point of] whether the psychic energy process exists independently of, or is included in, the physical process—in my view we know practically nothing about this” (CW 8, par. 33). Yet his collaborative work with Pauli demonstrates his desire to find connections between physical and psychological phenomena. By focusing on the subatomic level of earth, Jung rarely gave attention to the macroscopic dimensions, the very ones human activity currently threatens. Jung, himself, died the year before the first major alarm concerning our earth was sounded through the publication of the findings of the Club of Rome in Donella Meadows’ *Limits to Growth*. He thus was not able to respond to the book’s warning of the destructive effects of human behavior upon the ability of the earth to continue to generate and sustain life cycles. As Jung took for granted the existence of the beetle and did not explore what might have occurred if his patient had been posed with the role of the earth in the synchronicity, modern humans typically take for granted the earth’s stable existence and provision of life’s needs. It falls to post-Jungians to focus on earth/psyche relations with an emphasis upon the role of earth.

“Nature” and “matter,” two concepts that Jungians have richly addressed, are not earth. They are abstractions that can be considered without consideration of the earth/human relationship. Human progressive destruction of earth’s life-giving and life-renewing capacities (earth’s oceans, ozone layer, topsoil, air, forests, grasslands, wetlands, rainforests, potable water, and interdependent life communities) has continued irrationally even after repeated and ever-more-insistent scientific warnings and alarming evidence of planetary degradations. This self-destructive behavior which has the characteristics of an addiction calls for psychological explanation.

The priest Thomas Berry, a cultural historian, maintains in *The Dream of the Earth* that humans are guided by myths, and that we currently suffer from addiction to a myth of industrial and technological wonderworld. He argues that this myth needs to be replaced by a new myth of creation, one based on scientific thinking about the birth of the universe, a creation story that for the first time could be shared by all humankind. He predicts that as the scientific story acquires mythic power, it could replace our self-destructive addiction to the myth of wonderworld that underlies human blindness to our destruction of the ground for all life. He perceives humanity and all our works as an expression and unfolding of the earth



and the earth as an unfolding of the universe, an idea with intriguing similarities to one that Joseph Cambay expresses in the Afterword to *Synchronicity: Nature and Psyche in an Interconnected Universe*:

[Jung's] intuitions about principles of psychic ordering and organizing involved in acts of creation in time, to be placed on an equivalent footing with space, time, and causality, have truly radical significance. . . . In the light of modern cosmology I have come to see this insight as identifying the organizing principle that is at the origins of the appearance of space, time, light, and matter, and in fact is behind every major originary event in our world. I believe this is what Jung was pointing to with his use of the term *psychoid*; it refers to the capacity or propensity for organization that emerged out of the hypothesized singularity (from which came the Big Bang), the origin point of our universe. The self-organization implicit in the psychoid is thereby linked to synchronicity; **in consequence the psychoid would hold the principle that has allowed the emergence of everything, including the mind and soul** [emphasis added]. (109)

Cambay does not include specific mention of the earth in this vision of the interconnectedness of all being in the universe; Berry focuses on earth in his. He sees human cultures as earth unfolding into imaginations of language, music, architecture, art, society, economies, history, and philosophy—in other words, all fruits of human consciousness. He claims that the earth is an unused Archimedean point for evaluating human activities: “we have in the earth an extra-human referent for all human affairs, a controlling referent that is a universal concern for every human activity. Whether in Asia or America or the South Sea islands, the earth is the larger context of survival. All human professions, institutions, and activities must be integral with the earth as the primary self-nourishing, self-governing and self-fulfilling community” (88).

**Jung ascribes creative power to the unconscious. Berry ascribes it to the earth. This conference seeks to explore connections between the creative forces of earth and those of the creative unconscious. Possible areas of inquiry include:**

- 1) The relations of earth to image and thus to psyche;
- 2) Exploration of Jung's writings about the relations of psyche and earth, such as his development of his concept of “psychoid”; or limitations of his vision of the earth in his elaboration of the hero myth;
- 3) Identifying repetitions of earth structures in psychic functioning (e.g.: A. self-organizing processes, as in Hogensen's theories using fractals; B. artistic use of the Fibonacci sequence);
- 4) Exploring the metaphor of earth as archetypal alchemist;
- 5) Identifying historical instances of specific earth manifestations leading to the creative unconscious producing art (e.g., running animals leading to cave paintings);
- 6) Effects of cosmological narratives and myths on relations between human cultures and earth (e.g.: A. Christian attitudes toward earth and spirit; B. revisiting Jung's God-dropping-a-turd-on-the-church dream in terms of earth/psyche relations and of Jung's unconscious relation to earth);

- 7) Reconceptions of how to educate, including reconceiving curricula, in order to bring to consciousness relations of earth and psyche;
- 8) Revisioning identity-formation processes to bring to consciousness biological identity in the earth's biosphere and in one's bioregion as more fundamental than national, ethnic, etc. identities;
- 9) Implications for psychic health of conceiving the human species as one of a community of interdependent earth-generated species (e.g. examining the denials involved in anthropomorphism);
- 10) Approaches to addressing psychological sources of human activities that endanger the earth's life-giving and life-renewing capacities;
- 11) Literature and art that contribute to gaining awareness of earth-human relations;
- 12) Implications for clinical work of acknowledging earth-psyche relations (e.g. treating borderland personalities as described by Jerome Bernstein);
- 13) Psychological exploration of any aspect of Santa Fe and its environs as a case study of human/earth relationships.

This list is intended only as suggested entry points into the conference theme. Presentations that illuminate the relations between earth and psyche from whatever entry point are welcome. Presentations that challenge the premise that earth has generated living communities, life cycles, humans and our cultures are also welcome.

The Program committee invites submissions for research papers (single, joint or multi-authored, round tables, panels (general theme with 3+ presenters, workshops (experiential only), poster sessions, and creative practice. We invite you to submit a proposal (350 words maximum, complete with an abstract (50 words) and biographical note (25-50 words) by Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 through the JSSS website: [www.jungiansociety.org](http://www.jungiansociety.org). We will review your submission and notify you by Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Note: the committee may exercise its prerogative to reallocate presentation formats other than those originally requested. Please check the JSSS website for unfolding information about the host site and conference.