

# What is a Jungian analyst dreaming when myth comes to mind? Thirdness as an aspect of the *anima media natura*

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*Abstract:* Listening analytically is not listening just to what is said but listening to what is just below the surface waiting to be said. This paper looks at Jung's insight into a 'third thing' being created intra-psychically and within the analytic encounter. Ogden's concept of an 'analytic third' is used to describe the clinical aspects of this thirdness. This paper explores: how the state of thirdness is created and accessed through use of reverie and associative dreaming; how the material emerging from it is used in a *from* or *about* manner; and the eventual fate of the third in a successful analysis by a reexamination of plates four and ten of the *Rosarium*. The focus is particularly on the awareness and possible meanings of mythological motifs appearing in the mind of the analyst while in session. Thirdness can be viewed as the interpersonal aspect of the *anima media natura* and functions in a way that informs us of permeability in and between individuals, while the operation of the *anima mundi* means that there is always an inseparability of the individual with the world.

*Keywords:* active imagination, analytic mindfulness, analytic third, *anima mundi*, associative dreaming, reverie, surrender

## Introduction

Listening analytically is not listening just to what is said but listening to what is just below the surface waiting to be said – or, as the alchemists so aptly phrased it, ‘the search for what not yet is’ (Petrus Bonus 1330). The royal road to apprehending this mercurial element is through the use of the imagination to inform one about the nature of the ‘third thing’ that is being co-created in the analytic situation. Ghent (1989), of the relational school, suggested that all analysts need to find and express their own ‘credo’ – an expression of his or her own beliefs about how therapy works. This is my ‘credo’ and orienting compass that guides me through the analytic day.

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We are always seeking to re-imagine the theory and practice of analytical psychology by putting forward newer ideas that assent to continuity while allowing revitalization of our understandings. This paper focuses on imagining the analytic encounter through Jung’s fundamental insight of a third thing being created in analysis. We will explore how the state of thirdness is created and accessed, how the material emerging from it is used and the eventual fate of the third in a successful analysis by a reexamination of the *Rosarium* plates. We will look particularly at the awareness and possible meanings of mythological motifs

appearing in the mind of the analyst while in session. We will also explore how thirdness can be viewed as the interpersonal aspect of the *anima media natura*.

### **Jung's view of thirdness**

Here is a well-known image with which you may be familiar (Fig. 1). It is comprised of two faces and a goblet-like space in between them. Or is it a white goblet on a black background? As we reflect on this image, it becomes immediately apparent that it is difficult if not impossible to focus on both images, both truths, simultaneously. Like looking at the interactive process of analysis – at one moment it falls into complementarities, at another one can see the ‘third space’ in-between the two. Trying to hold both is similar to the state of consciousness to which we aspire in analysis: to suppress nothing; to remain open to the paradox; to maintain the tension of opposites. It is this third space between the two that is the focus of this paper.



*Figure 1. Ambiguous figure — Rubin's Vase.*

Jung's earliest writings on the third emphasized an introverted and intra-psychic perspective. In the 'Transcendent Function' he stated his most notable and clearest expression of the third:

The confrontation of the two positions generates a tension charged with energy and creates a living, *third* thing – not a logical still birth in accordance with the principle *tertium non datur* [the third is not given], but a movement out of the suspension between opposites, a living birth that leads to a new level of being, a new situation. (Jung 1916, para. 189).

He postulated that this third thing was the creation of a new symbol that had the possibility of uniting the opposites. Later he begins to link it to imagination and typology: '*The third element, in which the opposites merge, is fantasy activity, which is creative and receptive at once.* This is a function Schiller calls the play instinct' (Jung 1921, para. 171, italics in original). Jung also referred to a 'higher third, as ... the creative fantasy that creates the goal' that can be reached by neither intellect or feeling alone (ibid., para. 85).

We could look at Jung's early theorizing on the nature of the third as actually a more inter-psychic rather than intra-psychic approach, as it involves a tension between two elements of psyche, whether unconscious versus conscious or thinking versus feeling. But even this being the case, he argued that the unconscious itself could best be understood and related to *as if* it were another person. Regarding active imagination he suggested:

It is exactly as if a dialogue were taking place between two human beings with equal rights, each of whom gives the other credit for a valid argument and considers it worthwhile to modify the conflicting standpoints by means of thorough comparison and discussion or else to distinguish them clearly from one another. (Jung 1916, para. 186)

So when Jung was being pressed to comment on the value of transference, the unconscious itself had already assumed aspects of the other. With an actual other in the room it was a natural conclusion that a third would also be created between two participants, an inter-personal approach. He described it in ‘The psychology of the transference’ as follows: ‘The elusive, deceptive, ever-changing content that possesses the patient like a demon flits about from patient to doctor and, as *the third party* in the alliance, continues its game.... Alchemists aptly personified it as the wily god of revelation, Hermes or Mercurius’ (Jung 1946, para. 384, italics added). He also said, ‘Psychological induction inevitably causes the two parties to get involved *in the transformation of the third* and to be themselves transformed in the process, and all the time the doctor’s knowledge, like a flickering lamp, is the one dim light in the darkness’ (ibid., para. 399, italics added).

Out of this notion of thirdness comes Jung’s many statements about the mutuality of the analytic process, epitomized in this statement:

For two personalities to meet is like mixing two different chemical substances: if there is any combination at all, both are transformed. In any effective psychological treatment the doctor is bound to influence the patient; but this influence can only take place if the patient has a reciprocal influence on the doctor. You can exert no influence if you are not susceptible to influence. (Jung 1931, para. 163)

## **Psychoanalytic views of thirdness**

The relational and intersubjective schools focus on the clinical aspects of thirdness (see Baranger 1993; Benjamin 2004; Bollas, 1992; Green 2004; and

Ogden 1997, 1999, 2007). This paper integrates the work of Ogden and Benjamin into a Jungian model. Ogden states:

I use the term *analytic third* to refer to a third subject, unconsciously co-created by analyst and analysand, which seems to take on a life of its own in the interpersonal field between analyst and patient. This third subject stands in dialectical tension with the separate, individual subjectivities of analyst and analysand in such a way that the individual subjectivities and the third create, negate, and preserve one another. In an analytic relationship, the notion of individual subjectivity and the idea of a co-created third subject are devoid of meaning except in relation to one another, just as the idea of the conscious mind is meaningless except in relation to the unconscious. (Ogden 1999, p. 1)

This is a very precise definition and it is my preference to use this definition of analytic third to describe this third thing as it arises in analysis. Benjamin's (2004) theorizing sees the third as a process, function or relationship, rather than as a thing in itself. Colman (2007) and Kieffer (2007) relate this aspect of thirdness to emergence theory. For Benjamin the goal of analysis moves toward mutual recognition, with the analysand gradually becoming capable of recognizing his/her own subjectivity while acknowledging and taking seriously the subjectivity of others.

### **Thirdness in the *Rosarium***

I focus now on Plates 4 and 10 of the *Rosarium*, the alchemical series Jung (1946) used to explicate transference phenomena. Alchemical imagery has a unique way of capturing the interplay between interpersonal relatedness and imaginal, intra-psychic activity (Samuels 1985). But using the *Rosarium* series also allows a right-brain imagistic understanding of the analytic process – a graphic novel, or even *Manga*-like, version of relational individuation (Figure 2).

I see Plate 4 of the *Rosarium* (Figure 3) as portraying the establishment of a formal ‘analytic third’ – formal only in that we now have spent enough time with the patient to know their history, dreams and defining images more intimately and, therefore, have more to draw on. Benjamin (2004) reminds us that the third is never quite a static achievement; it is always collapsing and being repaired throughout analysis.

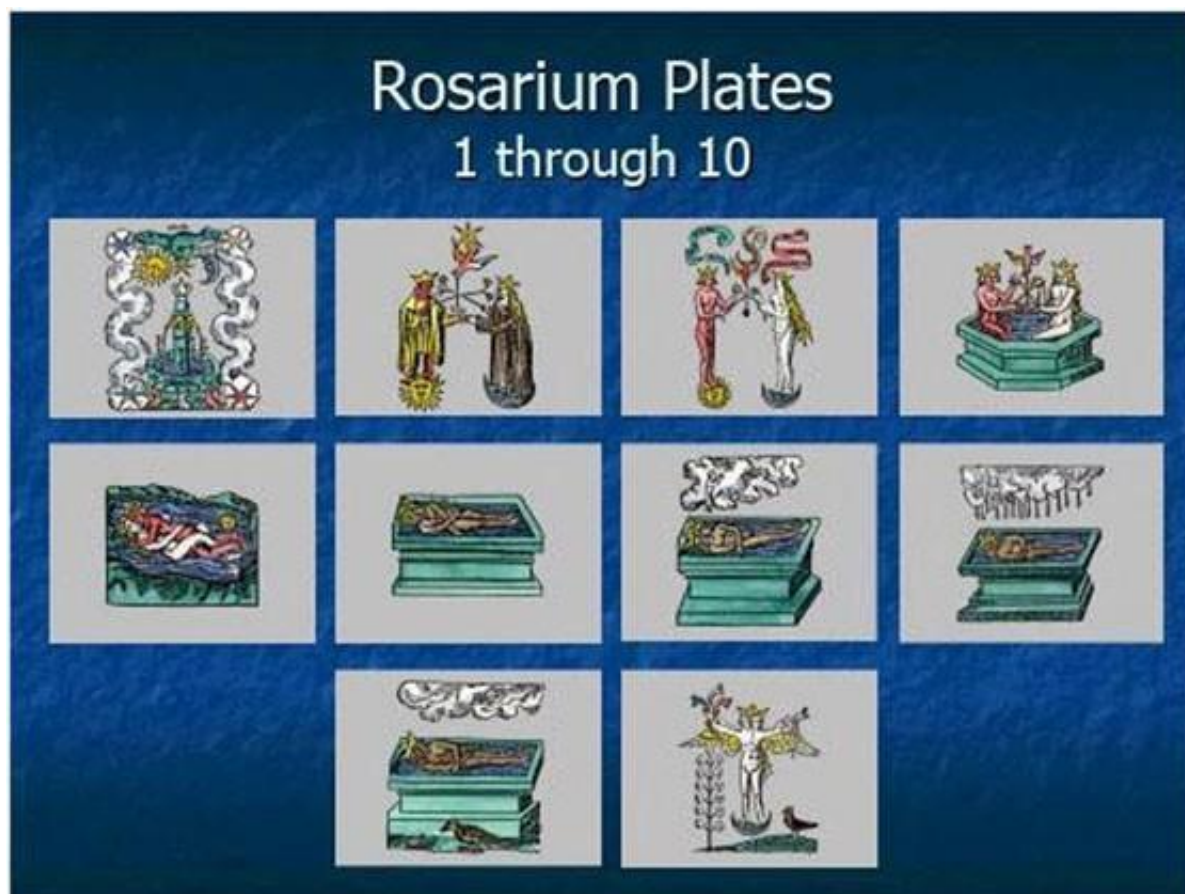


Figure 2. Coloured Rosarium plates, courtesy of Adam McLean, The Alchemy Website [http://www.alchemywebsite.com/prints\\_series\\_rosary.html](http://www.alchemywebsite.com/prints_series_rosary.html)



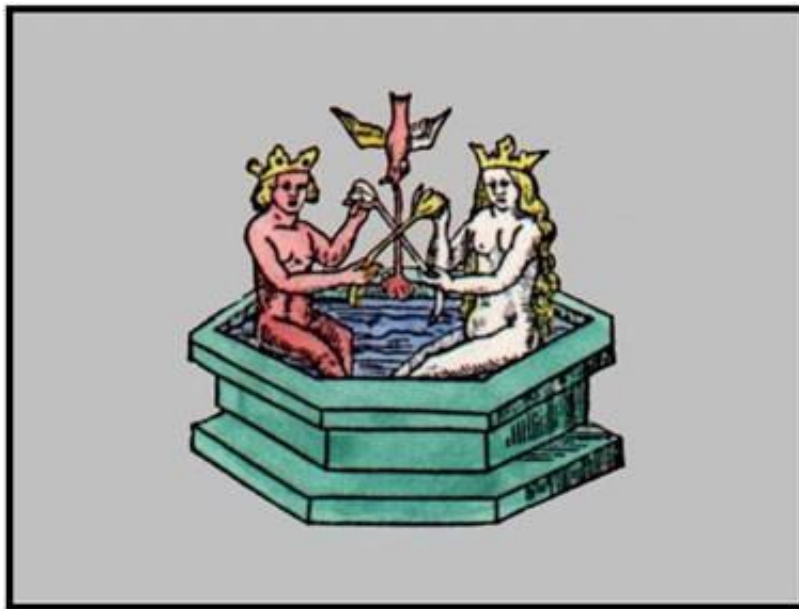


Figure 3. Plate 4: *Immersion in the Bath* (ibid.)

The six-sided star pictured in Plate 2 of the *Rosarium* and initially presiding over the encounter might be thought of as an image of the top-down energy of a self-organizing system that orders the dyad into a level of complexity beyond what normally could be understood by the complementarities of the individuals (Cambray 2006). That star can be thought of as an image of celestial, archetypal energies enveloping the relational aspects of the couple in the moment and over time. This notion of an over-riding organizing force tends to be neglected in interpersonal and intersubjective theories that focus purely on the subjectivities of the participants. By Plate 4 this energy descends into the communication system itself, symbolized by the six points of the branches bridging the two individuals. In Plate 4 this six-ness, representing the marriage of the elements, actually has reached the level of the container itself, as seen in the hexagonal shape of the bath: ‘For it is both the container and that which is



contained, in that it holds the contents worked upon, while, at the same time, it is also that which is worked on. It contains the process as well as being the process' (Newman 1981, p. 230).

The image of a dove appears from the second plate through to the fourth. The dove is the embodiment of an energy constellating through the bifurcating action of attraction, related to Aphrodite, and annunciation or assignment of a great task, as related to the Holy Ghost – one is held by attraction into a path of individuation (Edinger 1994). Note that Jung describes this function of the Holy Ghost as related to the *anima mundi* – 'The world-soul is a natural force which is responsible for all the phenomena of life and the psyche' (Jung 1954a, para. 393) – something larger is changing the path of one's life.

Our familiar quaternio diagram (Jacoby 1984) of all the possible conscious and unconscious connections between two individuals arose from this plate (Figure 4).

I am equating the analytic third to the unconscious-to-unconscious connection between the two individuals; by definition we cannot know the exact nature of this co-created interaction, but we can access indicators of what might be occurring. This area of unconsciousness could also be considered the 'relational unconscious' (Gerson 2004), as it wraps the relationship, infusing the expression and constriction of each partner's subjectivity and individual unconscious.

The half-submerged figures can be seen as relating to a state of consciousness with attentiveness to the outer, while also demonstrating a type of

ego receptivity (Cwik 1995) to what is emerging from the inner world and body. The state of mind of the analyst can be thought a type of *analytic mindfulness*, which observes what arises but also engages that material to yield some useful understanding of what is happening at the unconscious level. This engagement can be likened to a type of in-session active imagination with countertransference experiences (Cwik 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Schaverien 2007; Wiener 2009). Active imagination becomes the paradigm for a way of approaching and interacting with material arising from one's own unconscious while in session.

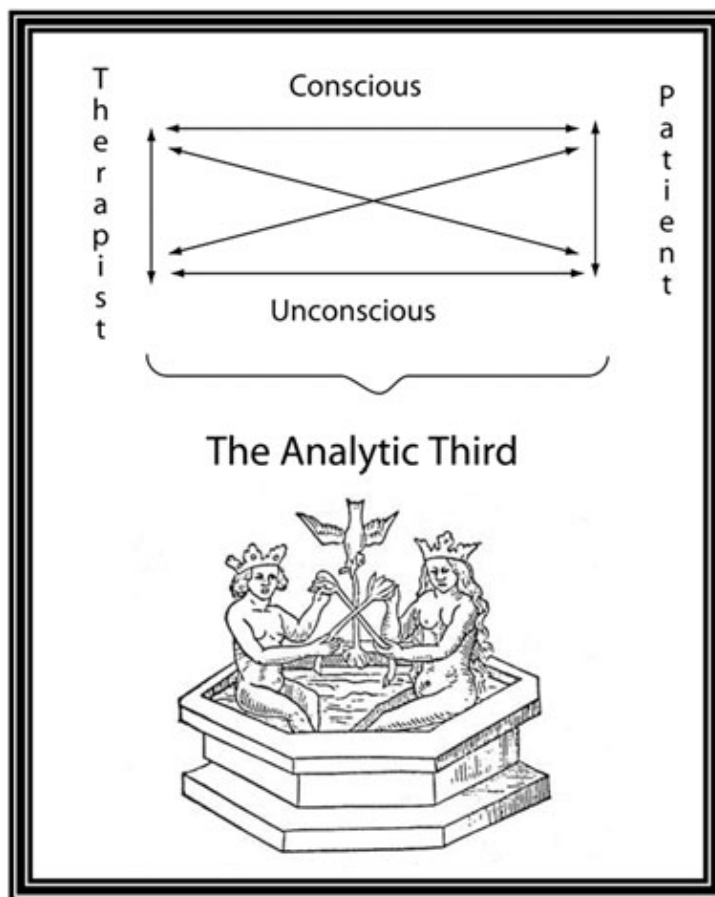


Figure 4. The third as reflected in quaternio diagram and Plate 4 of the *Rosarium*

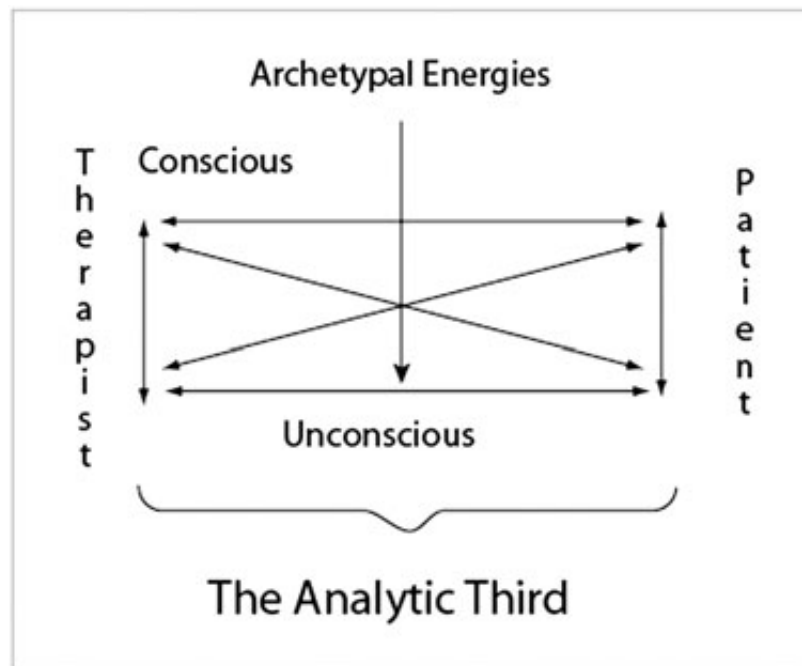
Ogden (2007) preferred to use the metaphor of dreaming to describe this state: if the patient is unable to dream his emotional experience that individual cannot change, grow or become anything other than who he has been. The analyst is then thought of as needing to dream the undreamt and undreamable dreams of the analysand. Ogden used reverie to enter this state; it is comprised of mundane, unobtrusive thoughts, feelings, fantasies, ruminations, daydreams and bodily sensations that usually feel utterly disconnected from what the patient is saying and doing at the moment (Ogden 1997). Dreaming, as described by Ogden, draws on Bion's notion that both reverie and dreaming were thought to be alpha functions used in metabolizing raw beta sense impressions (Bion 1962).

I (Cwik 2011) have suggested we view the inner experiences coming into the mind of the analyst on a continuum from: traditional Ogden-like reverie; to more general material, i.e. images, books, movies, feelings; into more organized forms like myth and fairytale; and finally to more active cognition like theoretical formulations. To differentiate common reverie from more organized forms of mental activity where the association to the ongoing process can be more easily identified, I used the term 'associative dreaming'. While most psychoanalysts speak *from* this material (Ogden 1999), we could also speak *about* it directly with individuals who are considered capable of having and being responsive to symbolic activity – those that maintain some capacity to 'dream', as Ogden would say.

For the purpose of this paper, I am particularly focusing on when some form of myth enters the mind of the analyst. This type of 'mythological reverie',

or associative dream, is not all that uncommon amongst Jungian analysts, as most training institutes have numerous classes on mythology and fairytales. Myth becomes a type of diagnostic manual potentially illuminating the patterns of behaviour in which the analysand is caught. Speaking at the *about* level when myth comes to mind during a session is considered amplification. But just because a myth comes to mind does not mean we have to say it to the analysand.

Drawing our attention to the fourth plate we might notice that one particular pole has been left out of our familiar diagram – the one descending from above depicting the influence of archetypal and/or synchronistic energies. A more comprehensive diagram might look something like this (Figure 5):

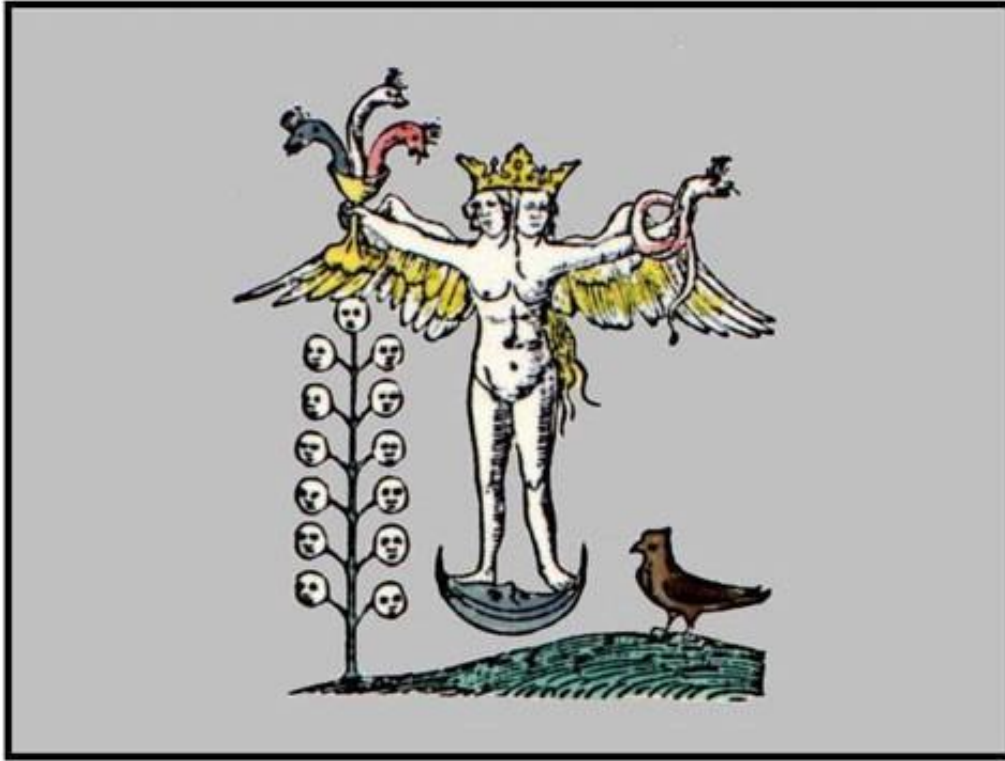


*Figure 5. Revised quaternio diagram demonstrating presence of archetypal energies*

Cambray (2001), in an article entitled ‘Enactments and Amplification’, suggests that the impulse to amplify is itself an indication of emergent phenomenon arising out of the analytic third. Given the new diagram noted above, I am suggesting that when myth comes to mind the analyst may be dreaming the form of the archetypal energies enveloping and shaping the relationship. As Cambray stated, we are ‘in’ myth, not that the myth somehow belongs only to the analysand. This not only is often enacted in spontaneous moments during an analysis, but is also the shape the analysis will take over time. The art of Jungian analysis is when to speak directly *about* the myth and when to speak *from* the affective foundations of the myth using language comprehensible to the particular analysand. Fordham (1957) thought that speaking from the *about* level when myth was present tended to bring in extraneous intellectual material obscuring the nature of the transference. Plates 5 to 9 in the series (Figure 2) can be thought of as moving from a fully interpenetrating analytic third, through the death and mourning of that experience, to a final internalization of thirdness into intra-psychic structure. I have come to see that process as what Stark (2006) would call the dying of ‘relentless hope’ that there exists a real person who can meet all of our needs exactly when we need them – in perfect thirdness. Schwartz-Salant (1995) noted that if indeed the *Rosarium* is a template for the pattern of powerful relationships, then union states and the death of structure are always encountered in succession. This loss and mourning can be seen as the soul realigning with a new set of archetypal energies and returning to bring forth a

rebirth. As Jung stated, ‘The ‘soul’ which is reunited with the body is the One born of the two, the *vinculum* common to both. It is therefore the very essence of relationship’ (1946, para. 504).

The tenth and final plate of the *Rosarium* (Figure 6) can be imagined as the formation of this new internal structure resulting from the successful grieving of the actual relationship. Although very rich in symbolism, we will focus on the opposites having been reconciled into a merged new image – the two have become a totally new One. Though Jung in his day thought it a monstrosity – ‘the monster is a hideous abortion and a perversion of nature’ (1946, para. 533) – today we might wonder whether this hermaphroditic symbol is closer to consciousness, as gender itself is undergoing a thirdness process. Firmly standing on the lunar symbol, this emblem demonstrates a certain objective stance rooted in reflectiveness and stability – an observing or objective ego. We might imagine that it holds a capacity to regulate the body, attune to others, balance emotions, be flexible, extinguish or modify fear, utilize insight, empathize with others and have a moral compass – all components of an affect-regulated and potentially balanced psyche (Kornfield & Siegel 2010). I want to focus on the image of the three snakes in the goblet held in the right hand and the one snake in the left. This tension portrayed between the one and the three might be best amplified by Benjamin’s work on thirdness.



*Figure 6. Plate 10 of the Rosarium: The New Birth, courtesy of Adam McLean, The Alchemy Website.*

[http://www.alchemywebsite.com/prints\\_series\\_rosary.html](http://www.alchemywebsite.com/prints_series_rosary.html)

Using an interesting terminology, Benjamin (2004, pp. 13-18) discusses the dynamics of thirdness through what she calls ‘the one in the third’ and ‘the third in the one’, which can be understood as an additional amplification of the tenth plate. For her, true thirdness requires affective resonance or union and indicates a capacity for accommodation to a mutually created set of expectations and a certain rhythmicity of attuning to the other – she called this ‘the one in the third’. This aspect of thirdness emphasizes that one person in the dyad empathizes and accommodates to the other and may even sacrifice their own needs so that the



oneness can be experienced and be reparative for the other. The ‘third in the one’, on the other hand, is the ability to have internal awareness and to sustain the tension of difference between my needs and yours while still being attuned to and caring for you. This occurs when the limits of the analyst have been reached and it may signify that the ‘relentless hope’ mentioned above by Stark has to begin to be mourned. The ‘one in the third’ and ‘third in the one’ must be held in balance for analysis to proceed satisfactorily. This may best be understood in the clinical situation.

## **Clinical material**

### ***Fred***

I had seen Fred earlier in an analysis that lasted for 15 years. A colleague who specialized in working with torture victims had referred him. He called himself ‘white trash’, and as a child lived in a chaotic household of physical abuse, shaming and even shootings. He demonstrated aspects of Kalsched’s (1996) self-care system, but the predominant energy of this six-foot-tall man was that of the hero archetype (Campbell 2008): he was an anaesthesiologist, pilot, men’s group leader and, once when confronting a spider phobia, purchased a tarantula to roam over his naked body. He, like no other patient, constellated my own trauma history and body memories, even though our traumas were not at all similar. I often wondered if my own envy of his heroic attributes made me hesitant to analyze them as defences against the chaotic madness of his

childhood experience. The third as enacted between us entailed my being fearful and afraid to show him my fear, as he would think me weak.

This dynamic came to the fore when I felt I had to confront his crazed movements around the office in various emotional and often rageful states. The ‘one in the third’ had allowed me stay in rhythm with and accept his anger but finally the ‘third in the one’ became more prominent as I had to express my own needs to protect myself. After having an associative dream of the ‘bull in the china shop’ and working with it internally, I noted the presence of powerful instincts and I realized that I could be hurt accidentally. I finally told him that his behaviour was frightening me. He immediately calmed down and assured me that he would/could not hurt me. We named the enactment we were in but in my relief I missed that the fear I was experiencing might also be reflecting his own inner persecution and terror. I realized that my trauma was being evoked because I unconsciously thought that being heroic was a way out of my own trauma. I soon became aware through our work together that this, sadly, was not the case. We ended the analysis when he was able to marry, and we noted that he probably would not do well with the aging process due to remnants of the heroic process.

Fred re-entered analysis five years later when he was having sexual difficulties and turning 60. We picked up as though he had never left and he proceeded to have the following dream:

I’m outside somewhere and it is the evening. There are two large similar structures maybe 20 feet tall and roundish shape, like two halves of something with a little space between them – reminded me of two cerebral hemispheres. I work my way in between the two halves and with difficulty take a copper band and find a way to hook the two things together and work my way back out – it was in the bag and couldn’t be undone.

My contribution to the co-creation of this image was that I was working on this paper using the right-brain imagery noted earlier. My reverie at the time was of this conference and the anxiety of presenting. Engaging the reverie, I spoke to him *from* the experience, saying that perhaps we both were needing to make inner-wholeness connections to confront our fears through striving for more love and caring for ourselves (the copper related to the metal associated with Aphrodite). In the next session he was extremely agitated, knelt down before me, said that I would be safe and proceeded to express rage at a level I had never experienced: he pounded the walls and door and screamed, yelled and cursed – but this time clearly giving voice and action to the persecutor/protector that attacked him on a daily basis. I was better able to stay in the one in the third, especially because of his assurance at the beginning, although at one point he came right up to my face and I could see the demonic, seething energy in his eyes. As we discussed the session afterwards, he did not remember our encounter of years ago but felt that something inside had changed, permanently.

### ***Thomas***

Thomas was a lawyer who did *pro bono* work for the wrongly accused and was very successful at it. He worked tirelessly and wrote volumes in their defense leading to the release of a number of incarcerated individuals. He came to analysis after trying hypnotherapy to free himself of near debilitating phobias: claustrophobia, fear of heights and a fear of cataract surgery – because the surgeon would see the evilness in his eyes, their being ‘the window to the soul.’

His childhood memories were of a terrifying father who shamed him mercilessly, particularly when he was sick. When ill, he would be locked in his room or even a closet – so as not to ‘infect’ the rest of the family. Here is another man who demonstrated Kalsched’s (1996) self-care system to an extreme degree and attempted to repair himself through his work.

One day he talked about how literally paralyzed he felt while walking through an atrium ‘in the shadow of’ one of Chicago’s tallest buildings. During this session I *dreamt* the Hephaestus myth (Graves 1955), thinking him the crippled craftsman who wrote and created beautiful and moving arguments yet was so impaired by his anxieties. Thinking that speaking at the *about* level and sharing the myth with him would take us far afield from the affect, I actively engaged the myth. What came to mind was the image of the child with braces and crutches from a *March of Dimes* poster – an organization dedicated to those children who had caught polio. This image emerged from our mutual history but a more powerful co-created element was that at the time I was facing a major life decision and felt stuck and paralyzed myself. Kohut (1977, p. 109) describes certain dreams as being ‘self-state dreams’ in that they capture the patient’s current inner world in concise imagery. I think this associative dream could be considered a type of ‘third-state’ dream, reflecting the current state of our analytic third. I spoke at the *about* level and shared the image with Thomas. He immediately responded, saying that it gave some shape to his somatic experience – a naming of something that was just trying to be said in the moment, an undreamt dream. He left the session and later was watching a sports game when

a commercial came on for – the *March of Dimes* – which was highly unusual in present day. The next day, while walking through the atrium, he began to experience the body paralysis: he spontaneously tightened his leg muscles and when he released the tension he imagined that he was that crippled child and felt the braces breaking from his legs. He walked unimpeded through the atrium for the first time in his life. As he said this, the solution to my personal problem became clearer and I also was able to move forward in my life. The synchronicity of the image coming to him from the outer world was an archetypal activation motivating him, and me, to a co- created solution of our mutual problems.

## ***Judy***

I began my relationship with Judy as a supervisor. As we repeatedly encountered difficulties with her countertransference reactions with sexually abused patients, her own trauma became silhouetted in the work. She eventually decided to enter analysis with me with an understanding that she needed to experience a working-through of her own trauma history before she could be of use to her patients. She remembered one static image from age five of performing oral sex on her older brother in the family bathroom. The myth of Persephone (Graves 1955) came to mind – the naive maiden who is pulled down into the underworld by Hades, although in her situation there was no remembered overt force but perhaps more one of seduction. The little girl was seeking something from her brother, just not what she received (Ferenczi 1951). I never mentioned

the myth to her. While I was working on the section of this paper related to the ‘third in the one’ and the ‘one in the third’, she dreamed:

I am in a room and at a window where there is a fish caught between the screen and the window with a fishing lure in its mouth that it is spitting out. Across the room there is another window in which there are three fishes. They all seem to be dying unless I can save them in time.

She associated the spitting out of the lure to the childhood trauma of the oral sex. But the ‘lure’ aspect also brought us directly into our relationship in which she unconsciously felt that I had ‘lured’ her into analysis, thus recapitulating aspects of her relationship with her brother. She was having difficulties in her relationship with her husband and was reluctant to say anything – her ‘third in the one’ needing to come forth, but our clinical ‘one in the third’ was impeding her, and it all threatening to die. In this situation I believe the analytic third utilized my own imaginal language in an attempt to communicate what was just below the surface trying to be said. Again, the immediate co-created elements, which I brought into the encounter, seemed apparent.

### **Thirddness as an aspect of the *anima media natura***

There is no doubt that Jung held the practice of analytical psychology and especially work in and with the transference (Wiener 2009) to be of the utmost importance, as best reflected in his statement:

So, when the psychotherapist has to struggle with difficult transference problems, he can at least take comfort in these reflections. He is not just working for this particular patient ... but for himself as well and his own

soul.... Small and invisible as this contribution may be, it is yet an *opus magnum*, for it is accomplished in a sphere but lately visited by the numen, where the whole weight of mankind's problems has settled. The ultimate questions of psychotherapy are not a private matter – they represent a supreme responsibility. (Jung 1946, para. 449)

Clearly Jung connected analytic work not just with changes and transformation of the two participants but also with changes to collective consciousness. Here we already see that he was expanding the impact of analytic work to realms clearly beyond the immediacy of the analysis itself.

But more importantly to the theme of this paper, analysis may be one of only a few places where every thing that happens once the vessel is sealed is drawn into and seen as informing the analytic third. This interconnectedness of all things brings us right into an experience of the *anima media natura* – the notion that the medium itself in which we operate is indeed a real space and carrier of meaning, affect and depth – the container is both that which is contained and that which is worked on.

In his philosophical book, *Anima Mundi: The Rise of the World Soul ... Examined in the Perspective of the Relation of the Finite with the Infinite*, Vassanyi states:

The *function* of the soul of world is to recognize the identity and difference, the proper place and function of each individual substance in relation to the things that come to be, *and* that are, respectively, eternal and unchangeable. It carries on a constant internal inaudible discourse inside itself as it imperceptibly moves around itself and comes into contact with every single thing, dissoluble or partless that constitutes the universe. (Vassanyi 2007, p. 2)

As we have seen, it is this 'identity and difference' that is the hallmark of the dynamics of the analytic third and the relational unconscious – what belongs



to whom and, more importantly, what is being said about us, who and where we are, where do we need to go and by what archetypal form are we being carried in the process? The analytic third functions in a way that informs us that there is a permeability in and between individuals, while the operation of the *anima mundi* means that there is always an inseparability of the individual with the world.

The microcosm of analytic space reflects the macrocosm of world: so as above, so as below. So, if we wanted to envisage a right-brain approach to our discussion while also locating it in deeper religious tradition we might look to the image of 'Indra's Net' (de Barry and Bloom 1999). It is an extraordinary metaphor for a vision of the interrelationship of all things without their necessarily being blended into one homogeneous entity.

Indra's Net (Figure 7) is made up of jewels that are faceted and reflect each other successively with their images permeating each other over and over again. Within each single jewel are contained the unbounded repetition and profusion of the images of all the other jewels. If you sit in one jewel you are sitting simultaneously in all of them.

This image from an ancient tradition glimpses a quite holographic vision of the universe. Thirdness might prove to be a 'fractal attractor' operating through archetypal forms. Fractals repeat themselves at different scales of observation underlying chaotic dynamics (Van Eenwyk 1997). One might imagine that all consulting rooms that honour the knowledge that all things are related to the one thing are linked by an imaginal *viniculum*, invisible linking fibres. This *pneuma* forms a vast network of pathways by which information and experience can be

carried and potentially influence one another. This is one way to imagine the *anima media natura*.



*Figure 7. Indra's Net. (public domain)*

But lest we get too carried away with our celestial theoretical reveries, we should be reminded of Jung's (1954b, para. 335) statement that 'one does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious'. Here, pondering the infinite possibilities of the world soul really does

not take us any closer to the experience of immediate difficulties inherent in finite interactions with the other. Or as Hillman stated:

Let us imagine the *anima mundi* neither above the world encircling it as a divine and remote emanation of spirit, a world of powers, archetypes and principles transcendent to things, nor within the material world as its unifying panpsychic life-principle. Rather let us imagine the *anima mundi* as that particular soul-spark, that seminal image, which offers itself through each thing in its visible form. Then *anima mundi* indicates the animated possibilities presented by each event as it is, its sensuous presentation as a face bespeaking its interior image – in short, its availability to imagination, its presence as a *psychic* reality. (Hillman 1982, p. 77)

I am reminded of a clinical interaction with the patient discussed earlier who suffered from the severe phobias. While he was discussing his consuming experience of actually becoming smaller and smaller when in proximity to large towering buildings, I had an associative dream about a 1950's movie entitled *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957) – particularly its ending. Through certain mishaps common to many themes and fears of that period, and common to us both, the main character begins to shrink uncontrollably. He has to face challenges with ordinary things, such as the house cat and a spider, that become demonic and threaten to destroy him. Then he finally realizes that he will eventually shrink until he reaches the atomic level. By finally moving through his ever-present fears and anxieties, he concluded that he would still matter in the universe because, to God, 'there is no zero'.

Thirddness represents a type of psychological intimacy with an other; we might even consider thirddness as one facet of the archetype of intimacy – one

that illuminates the dynamics of the relational unconscious noted earlier. Jung's insight here was that:

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. The unrelated human being lacks wholeness, for he can achieve wholeness only through the soul, and the soul cannot exist without its other side, which is always found in a 'You'. (Jung 1946, para. 454)

Ghent (1990, p.108) suggests 'an underlying theme in human nature is a quality of liberation and expansion of the self as a corollary to the letting down of defensive barriers'. He hypothesizes that a passionate longing for surrender is a basic human desire – not, as typically understood, a defeat but a letting go. Only in this way might we find true otherness in the other rather than 'nothing but' our projections of what we need or fear them to be. Benjamin (2004, p. 8) expressed the notion that it is precisely the third to which we must surrender: 'Surrender refers us to recognition – being able to sustain connectedness to the other's mind while accepting his separateness and difference. Surrender implies freedom from any intent to control or coerce'. Doi (1989) discussed a similar notion using the Japanese word *amae*. What distinguishes *amae* from the ordinary meanings of love, and relates it to surrender, is that it presupposes a passive stance toward one's partner, as it invariably involves a kind of dependence on a receptive partner for fulfillment.

The psychological problem has been that this need often falls into its more pathological counterparts – compliance, submission or outright sadomasochism – as seen in the case material presented earlier. Schwartz- Salant (1998, p. 222)

states, 'Finding ... this *third area* between the two partners requires the surrendering of ego control and the establishment of trust in a mutual process that is both frightening and exhilarating'. Thirdness transcends individual subjectivities and becomes a space unto itself. To reach such a space, Benjamin (2004) argues that the responsibility for feelings of shame, inadequacy and guilt aroused by falling into enactments usually must be borne – by the analyst. Only in this way may the empathic connection adequately be restored. I think of this as a required ethical attitude if one is going to work and live from a thirdness model. Benjamin (2004, p. 34) asserts that clinical practice might require moral values that insist on the acceptance of 'uncertainty, humility, and compassion that form the basis of a democratic or egalitarian view of psychoanalytic process'.

I am suggesting that in the singularity of this finite moment of surrender the *anima mundi*, world soul, can be experienced in a deeply profound and meaningful way, carrying its own numinosity. Earlier, we saw that Jung suggested we approach the unconscious as *other* when attempting to encounter and engage it; here, the other actually functions exactly as the unconscious by providing us with both positive and negative compensatory material necessary for our own individuation.

## **Conclusion**

As the alchemist Maria Prophetissa expounded: 'One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the one as the fourth' (Jung 1953, para. 26). We have discussed the role of thirdness at length, but what about that *fourth* waiting to be born as the One from the third? I (Cwik 2011) have suggested



that we could think of the contents emerging from the third as micro-activations of the transcendent function resulting in new images, thoughts, feelings and body sensations.



*Figure 8. Guiding function of the anima mundi. (Image from the Rider Waite Tarot deck)*

The analyst then uses these to speak *from* and *about* them to the patient. This is the transcendent function of everyday analytic life rather than the 'big' creation

of a new and grand uniting symbol as can happen in formal active imaginations or profound numinous experiences. These could be thought of as ‘lesser’ fourths, just slightly moving the analytic couple forward into the next moment and providing a sort of analytic compass for the work. But what of the larger arc that even brought these two particular individuals together in the first place?

Ulanov (2007) addresses this issue in her paper, ‘The third in the shadow of the fourth’. She suggests that the fourth is something prompting and yet arising out of the third and is the result of more than the individual subjectivities of the participants – it bridges to trans-psychic reality. She writes:

The fourth that sponsors the generative third leads back to the mundane, to our livingness in the world. The fourth, however shadowy, engineers our living in the third. The fourth gets in directly through what each of us leaves out, through what the analytical couple leaves out – the wild animal, the formless pleroma, the God who wants to step over into visible life. (Ulanov 2007, p. 594)

This larger view is imaged in the ‘World’ card from the Tarot (Figure 8). We see the *anima mundi* accenting our numerical sequence of the one to the four. One is represented by her figure and larger circle, two by the right and left wands or scrolls she is holding, three in the shape of the scarf and four by the position of her body and the four fixed signs of the zodiac represented at the corners. *Anima mundi* means that there is always an inseparability of the individual with the world, it truly is ‘the motor of the heavens’ (Jung 1959, para. 212). Our ultimate goal is not just to realize the soul of the world but also actually to create it by giving out soul into the world. As Benjamin (2005, p. 189) states, ‘The sense of one’s own wholeness is enhanced, not diminished, by the sense of unity with other living beings’. Jung says, ‘In the deepest sense we all dream *not out of*



*ourselves* but out of what lies *between us and the other*' (1973, p. 172, italics added). Then our analytic mindfulness begins to be a natural way of being in the world that engages all experience both inner and outer – truly to live and embrace the symbolic life through thirdness.

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