

CHAPTER 7

MOVEMENTS FROM AND TOWARDS THE IMAGINAL

The psyche reveals herself in the form of images, for that is her experience. If we wish to befriend her, to love her, we must take great care in how we react to her, as her life speaks of itself to us. Our relation to the image, therefore, becomes all important.

When a friend tells us of an experience, how do we move in relation to it? How do we hope *others* will respond to *our* revealing of experiences? We do not want to be interrupted in our story; nor do we wish to be rushed. When our experience has moved us we are connected with it through the telling. It lives as we tell it, especially if the other person is receptive. If the other is not, we begin to say words but are no longer connected to them. The telling has become dead. We wish we had not begun.

Every detail has a place. We seldom find someone who allows us to tell it all out. The other feels a need to break in — to label, to judge, to advise. They wish to be helpful. But we want them to help us spin it all out. We desire them to question every point — not to bring it into question, but to make us elaborate on each element.

We want to repeat our important stories. We do so daily from within, dwelling with them; surrounding them with special spaces of time and emotion. We want to recapture them with another but sometimes the other person rushes to tell us what we might do about them. Then, at that moment, we are torn from our story and thrown into future time. We lose our connection to the experience. They may tell their own experiences which ours reminds them of. If the experiences are equated, the uniqueness of ours is lost. If they are drawn into their telling, we are either left alone with ours or pulled into theirs, out of ours. Sometimes the experiences seem to be echoes of a common theme. But this is rarer than is hoped

for. There is a tendency for people to think they understand what the other is talking about. They easily simplify it and can thereby equate it with their own or with concepts they have acquired. Comparisons fly. The subtle differences are lost. One loses the chance to see the other's experience more in terms of itself than in terms of oneself. This makes us keep seeing whatever it is we are already seeing, over and over. We hear something unknown in terms of something known and, in so doing, we learn nothing. Now, you may argue, we can only know in terms of the known. That is not as true as it sounds. An experience provides its own terms for its understanding. The more our friend elaborates on his or her story the more a structure becomes evident. If we have refrained from being absorbed in our means of structuring and interpreting, his or her structure strikes us. It has itself a context, a frame. It lends its own hints as to weight and significance.

If it is a difficult experience they are trying to tell us, we are often driven by our own anxieties to do something about it: to relieve them (i.e. to sever their connection with it and thereby ours) or to draw from the complexity a moral or conclusion, to become pragmatic — even if those were not the terms in which the other is speaking. We may take their experience from their hands, and put it to the light of day to examine just how it can be changed for the better. Where would they have to go? What could we do? We try to see how such a thing developed historically (even if that was not their concern) in order, perhaps, to see how it can be avoided in the future, and where the blame lies in the past. Perhaps we are the essence of friendliness and kindly deeds. But though the treatment is outlined, the progress assessed, the history completed and the goals insighted, that possibility (always lingering, always fragile) between two people is mercilessly killed, unknowingly, quietly.

What is it that our story wants? It keeps coming to the tip of our tongue. It rushes into empty spaces and flees from unhearing ears. It repeats itself, filling out each detail, trying to become real to us. It wants the other to dwell with it, to question, to ask for repetitions, to be made still by it. We rush in with some

insignificant fact to relieve the silence, as we secretly wish the other to bring us back — to say that the silence was not empty, that it was filled with our experience, that it was given a place, and that the span of time marked its reality. We want to “get it across” from this space, to that between, to the other. It seeks to move one, to be known, to establish itself. When the other ceases to offer hope or advice, when they listen to our tale for no ulterior motive of their own, when they are still and can yet be moved . . . then something happens. The experience we are recounting connects us. It lives with us. It is what at that one moment makes us live. It thereby becomes real in a new sense.

So it is between the image and myself. I can do a thousand things wrong in trying to listen to it. I run off into interpretations, amplifications, ramifications, ways to change, to compare, to cure, to care. And with each of these I risk losing the possibility between us. The imaginal’s experience itself is lost to me. I cannot sit still with it: refraining from gaining control over the situation, ceasing to impress it with my understanding and knowledge, becoming willing to stay with it even when it may begin to stink to my civilized nose.

The longer one sits with the other and lets him or her spin their experience, the deeper it becomes — the more profound. The more we hinder the other’s connection to their story, the shallower it all becomes. Our feet finally touch bottom, as they did in the beginning. We scoop only a cup or two of water from their story and although we may come to know that, that was not the experience. Its dimensionality of depth, and its qualities of body are lost. We keep ourselves out of it. We take spoonfuls and carefully subject them to our own tests, supposing all the time that a relationship is developing.

With the image we create currents that keep drawing us back to shore, to what we already know. We think the image leads us there and thereby confirms our world. But this is not so. The currents that return us to the shallows of our familiar experience are of our own making. Keeping us from the depths, they kill the possibility of our relationship to the imaginal’s experience — images.

The image dwells in depth, in depths created by shadows and reflections, depths that can be dived into and treaded amongst. Depths cannot be made shallow without losing themselves. The ocean is poured into the pool. It is safer that way. One can stand up in it. One can see bottom all the time. Everything that moves here is within our control, within our view. Here the image, like a fish, can always be caught. One can use it as food for the continuation of the usual life. But if one wanted to know the natural life of the fish, one has lost all by just such a move. The shallows destroy the usual life of the fish in the ocean. Is the fish really even “fish” anymore?

When we experience an image in a dream or waking dream, we usually want to know what it means — how it is connected to our lives. It seems apparent that there is some relationship. We want to seize it and place it on a shelf easily viewed in our daily lives. Then we would be able to say, “This here, this one, is the same as that over there.”

When our friend tells us his story and we feel related to it, what we

do with that sense of relation is important. Sometimes it is a case of empathy and his or her experience resonates somewhere within us and we feel a kinship. Sometimes it suggests to us one of our experiences. We may see theirs in a new light or we may then think of their experience in terms of ours. If we do not equate them they may serve to highlight parts of each other, drawing us closer to what they mean.

Often with the image we are reminded of experiences we have had. But what makes us think this is the image’s purpose? Would we be presumptuous enough with our friend to think he had an experience he wishes to tell us about in order to remind us of our experiences? When we set to think about the experiences the image brings to mind, we may lose the image. We are pulled away from her. (Our friend is left in the dark while we go about our reminiscing.)

Now there is a way to let those experiences we remember, that we associate with the image, help us hear her better. But they

must be used to keep us coming back to the image. A student dreams that his mother goes to the chairman of his academic department to apologize for the young man's work. He is then on a high mountain and begins to lose control of his car, speeding downward. After the dream he begins to think about his mother's critical attitude toward him; how she sides with the forces he is having a hard time contending with. He begins on the objective-material level where images are equated with their concrete reality. The image of the mother, for example, is taken to be the actual biological mother. Jung understood that images also have a subjective level of significance (see Chapter 3). This means that the mother in the dream is not just the biological mother but is representing a part of the dreamer's personality. The image is not the same as the concrete embodied form. It is always more than and different from. If the dreamer realized this he would see that the image of the mother represents a psychic reality, perhaps an attitude, in him. He remembers when he saw his teacher the day before the dream and how he had belittled his plans. He thinks about this because he understands that the image is composed of day residue. But if the dreamer had thought that the day is likely to be composed of dream residue (i.e. that the real and the imaginal worlds are at least equal, that the imaginal does not only serve the day-world), then not only would he be free to see the image as being related to his self-deprecating attitude but he would see also that his self-deprecating attitude is a reflection of an imaginal movement, an imaginal reality. When he sees this he is less likely to only take part of the total dream image and get involved in thoughts of school, of his inability to succeed because of his own "inner" mother always turning him in. If the concrete events are as likely to reflect the imaginal movement as the other way around, then the dreamer would not leave the image as soon as he had found a material likeness to it within the day residue. He would realize he is not done with the image and would return to it and try to see more of what is happening there.

It then strikes him that there is not only a critical, betraying mother but that as this mother speaks the dream ego loses control

and falls downward. As he goes through the day the dreamer could note the “residue of the dream” in his dayworld. Where does he feel this out-of-control feeling, this downwardness? If he kept this in mind he would feel close to the image as he felt himself filled with anxiety when he lapsed into his self-deprecating thoughts. He would learn to observe the fantasy beneath the emotion and the thought. Instead of only discovering the daily history reflected in the dream, one looks for the reflections of the imaginal within the day. In this way the relating of the day and the dream world does not lead always in the direction of the dayworld, but circles back and forth, never getting far from the experience of the imaginal. When he feels the “downwardness,” he could look around also for the apologetic mother. Where has she been lurking in his daydreams and thoughts? If he identifies with the dream ego then he experiences this mother as a victim would. Her energy is always pushed up against his. His car swerves. If he could loosen his identification with the dream ego, he could draw nearer to observing this “mother.” If he could accept that in an imaginal sense he is her as well as the car, the student son as well as the professor, he would gain new means of seeing how the image creates his daily world. He tells a friend whom he respects and wants to be respected by that another friend is not trustworthy. He works all day and yet a part of him thinks it is not enough. He becomes easily convinced and apologizes within. When he is not as identified with the role of the son he can see that the image of mother is related not only to the son but to the image of the car. By becoming the mother in fantasy, by assuming her nature, he can explore her interconnections with the other images, which are probably even further from his conscious view than those relations formed by the dream ego. When the image is seen metaphorically it has many sides and allusions. It cannot be reduced to one type of experience. It can never be equated, or dealt with sufficiently. One type of experience, however, can be used to get closer to an aspect of it, to an echo or a shadow of it. The mother’s relation to his talk with the professor, the image of mother related to the biological mother, the car and his emotion,

the inner car crashing tomorrow afternoon as he stands speaking, the anxiety of downwardness even as he tries to relax, the mother and the car, the apologies, the criticisms, the regrets, the disguised badgering: each are aspects. The drawing of lines of cause and effect can oversimplify the network of simultaneity, of directionalities and interconnections. Each experience, each relation, can deepen us into the reality of the image, its world. The metaphor becomes filled out. Always requiring more. No poem ever completed. No image quite reached. Always a little further out. Keep swimming. But each new depth sets up its own likenesses and its own shadows, its own revelations and obscurities.

When a friend tells us of a situation and we draw from it conclusions as to what step should be taken — or even if we feel that an action or a conclusion should be drawn at all — we depart from the context given to us. Images describe. They do not say to get a divorce, or go into analysis, or quit school. The total image states a situation. It *may* include cause and effect,¹ but it does not usually include dictums as to what one should do. Even if it does give a dictum one must realize first of all that the image's landscape is not the same as that of the "real" world. An obvious example is the following dream:

In the dream I am an analyst and a voice says to me that when analysis is not going right with a patient, I should take their bones and bury them deep within the earth.

Now, one does not think that one should actually do this in a concrete sense. And yet, if someone dreams that their analyst tells them they have to have a divorce in order to succeed in their analysis, the person is likely to begin thinking about divorce and

¹ I say "may" because one can look at the dream as a complete image in which no one part can be singled out as causing another. The end is just as necessary for the beginning, as the middle is for the end (Berry).

analytical progress in a very concrete sense. The image in itself does not necessarily mean that you should divorce because your inner or outer analyst said to, any more than one should set out to capture an analysand's bones because of a dream. In this example, as soon as one gets lost in contemplating actual divorce one falls out of relation to the image. One simplifies the image to a single event in the "real" world and forgets that in the imaginal there is a figure suggesting divorce. All the many dimensions of the image are lost as the movement in the imaginal is reduced to one actual divorce. Now this does not mean that one cannot contemplate one's divorce in a way that would help them understand the image, or the image in a way that would deepen their understanding of some of the dynamics of the divorce. The person who dreams of the burial of the analysand's bones as a way to deepen the connection to the analytical process can contemplate this act in great detail. He has the help, however, of realizing that he is engaging in a fantasy. If the woman realized the metaphorical side of her contemplations about divorce, they too could help her feel the imaginal reality from which the image sprang. When she loses this sense and deals with it simply as concrete decision and further questions whether her analyst really thinks that, the image's world is taken as simply another expression of our usual world. However, when she wonders about what her analyst thinks and also has an ear to this inner conversation as fantasy, the concrete and the imaginal are connected and reflected in each other through her wondering. She starts to discover how the imaginal is interweaved with the daily.

Our friend tells us that her analyst suggests divorce. Do we decide it is right or wrong and tell her to go get the papers or talk to her husband? Or do we try to help her express how it feels to have this analyst say this thing in this setting? Although we may turn to contemplating divorce for ourselves, we realize that this is not what our friend is talking about. It may be that something in our friend's talk sparks us to think about it and we may even get really involved in the whole issue. But that in and of itself, has nothing to do with our understanding what our friend is trying to

say.

The image may move us to think about decisions and judgments, but in itself it is neither advising or moralizing. It may say, given this situation that happens. That may suggest to us a situation in our daily world. We may apply the dream to it saying “If I do this, that will happen.” But at that point we have left the image. We have forgotten it for the daily world and forgotten to hear if it spoke of something else. We may wish to use it in this way — a kind of learning from likenesses, from similar experiences. But let us not forget the friend in the corner and the fact that his or her experience is unique. No matter how similar the image is to a concrete happening, it is different from it.

We may come to know the image through specific daily instances. This appears fine because we respect the implication (the material, active extrapolation) more than the imaginal. But if we looked more closely we would see that when we are

regarding the dream from its implications, we realize the narrower selectivity within which we are operating. And this seems paradoxical for it feels (because of our greater conceptual development? because of our iconoclastic tradition?) as if the image were the more limited mode. The dream only says this or gives these particular images, while implications seem to extend in many directions. But by moving away from the image and into implication we forego the depth of the image — its limitless ambiguities, which can only partly be grasped as implications. So to expand upon the dream is also to narrow it — a further reason we wish never to stray too far from the source.

Berry, 1974:98

The image states a fact — but that fact is a psychological one. When compared to concrete facts it may appear foolish, nonsensical, or extraordinarily wise. Yet, even in the latter case, to reduce the metaphor to the material, the psychological to the

pragmatic, denies the imaginal its ontology.

Often when we consider a dream or waking dream we pick out one or two elements that strike us. There is a valuation process going on that we should be aware of. We should ask ourselves why we are considering this part and not that. We should watch quite carefully the direction our answers are indicating we are flowing to. What do we want out of those elements? What are we hoping for? Do they take us into thinking about a situation that happened, a relationship or a plan. Which image of ourselves that we wish to retain, do they fulfill? Do we want them to tell us what to do or not to do? How we really feel? Are they the dream images that struck the dream ego as much as the "I" (the waking ego) now studying them? How did the other dream figures respond to them? Were they pulled by them? Did they value them in the same ways as the waking ego does?

Now if these striking elements serve to pull us into the dream, into a relation with it, we are probably on the right track. But if we neglect the feeling tones and subtle interplay of all the images, we are taking a piece of the dream (as we might of anything else) in order to feed our usual self with it; wandering off from the imaginal (with more self-created justification) into our usual frame of consciousness and pursuits. When we take one element *out* (not when we get pulled *into* the dream by one element) we use the dream. We single out something that interests us and let the rest go down the drain to forgetfulness. We think we are "giving a lot of attention to our dreams," but we are not. We are giving a lot of attention to the part of ourselves who sucks the image for its own gain. The imaginal scene has an integrity. Each element is *absolutely* necessary for the total image. Each detail must be understood as the best possible way of conveying whatever the experience (imaginal experience) is that the image deals with. When we neglect elements and details of the image we forsake its experience and the structure it gives to it. We avoid learning how different the imaginal is from our usual world. When we single out one aspect we do not face the weave of ambiguity and elaboration that exists in the total imaginal scene. We make

something that is straightforward and commonsensical (to fit our desire for easy opinions and solutions) from something that is thick, full of pockets, curves and tunnels into itself.

You know times when a friend will single something out of your story because it fascinates him. He is absorbed into it and exaggerates it out of proportion to the way it feels for you. You want to move on and feel his attention not on what you are trying to convey but on something of his own. The slant and feeling of your story is lost. Sometimes, however, the person can be fascinated by your particular story in a way that makes them want to know everything around it that became important to you. They are drawn closer to your experience through their fascination with the particular. They do not want to impose values on it because they are so fascinated by the thing-in-itself that they want to know how it values.

One must try to keep the image in its context. One can try to see what emotion the image conveys, not just the emotion evoked in one afterwards. We should give the image freedom to pick among our emotions the one(s) it most naturally evokes. Some people consciously try to be the same with each image, as if bowing to some rule of objectivity. Others think too much about how they should or consciously want to react to an imaginal experience. Each misses the opportunity to learn about the image by the way it evokes in one to be with it. One can be politely curious and find out only one side of an image, over and over. If the image is malicious, one can continue to be a smiling (but frightened) victim. At some point an impulse to rage or to ignore may arise from deep within —not as a conscious strategy— but as a reaction that is related to the quality of the image, not just the ego notions of how one should be.

It is important that we do not subject the image to a judge's hearing. "Should this character have done that?" "If I [that is the dream ego to which he is falsely equating himself] had reacted in this other way it would have turned out better." Such inquisitions, self-recriminations and value judgments are imposed on the image by the ego. The image's reality, however, is that each part did as it

must do. Each was necessary to express the situation of the psyche. Try to take the image as a given and as completed, rather than a play which you, as ego, must rework and finish. The dream may be dreamed onwards, but hopefully it is the imagination which is given the freedom to elaborate on its own expression. In this way the imaginal context of the dream or waking dream is more closely preserved.

One must also take care that the telling of the image (to oneself or to another) does not alter it. One can try to keep from translating the image into words (when it did not express itself verbally) by attempting to re-enter the image in the medium it used (seeing, moving, feeling). In telling about the image one often “gives an irreversible direction and forces the dream into a definite pattern” (Berry, 1974:99) that was not present as the image first appeared. What was in experience beautifully ambiguous becomes “one thing rather than another” (*ibid*). The idea of progression that we superimpose onto the image encourages both us and the analyst to say that each portion is the result of what came before. This lends itself to the assumptions of those who wish to take the image as a prescription, or as a key to the causation of symptoms. The ego’s tendency to see in terms of cause and effect too often loses the non-progressive and simultaneous aspects of many images. The necessity of the end for the nature of the beginning is overlooked.

Unfortunately part of what we use to remove the image from its own earth are the very tools and methods that were created for and guaranteed to protect it. Those of us who are students of psychology have become heirs to a potential arsenal of ways to kill the image. We allow our psychological language to mislead us in direction. Instead of the language we use drawing us closer to the experiences it attempts to describe, we too often use it to lead us the other way — away from direct experience of an image, towards a concept. Often a concept is created when an individual is struck by what seems like many variations or repetitions of a single theme. The concept serves to draw attention to this and to propose something of the nature of the phenomenon that stands out to

that particular observer. The concept is a symbolic way of encompassing a collection of experiences. In itself it is not identical to any single experience within the group. It is more stereotypic in nature. If we have an experience and compare it to a concept, several things can happen. We can say, “Oh that was my anima talking” and we then think not of the experience but of whatever constructs the word “anima” symbolizes for us. Once we compare, we often too easily equate, and the “anima” (which was Jung’s word) the concept, becomes what we are left with.

Our images become standardized according to the common code, and we enter into “processes of individuation,” “strengthening the ego,” “getting in touch with the shadow,” “integrating” our thises and our thats. But none of these may be true to the process happening in the psyche — our psyche. It is true that each of these words has experience behind them, but for us they hold none unless we use them in relation to our experience and in order to keep referring us deeper into it. The concept can help us recognize certain movements within the imaginal, but then it is the movements themselves which should become important — not which psychological word they are. We can go to analysis, be students and teachers of psychology, researchers of the psyche, and by manipulating the symbols of our chosen systems we can somehow escape the direct experience of psyche or whatever “that” was which gave rise to psychology. There is a great danger in this — for it happens to us slowly as we grow up and learn. It attacks us quite subtly, but from all sides. It is more deadly to those who would seemingly be most exempt. Sadly we end up using psychology to gain distance from the experience of psyche, but it is not at all obvious to us. We continue defending our good intentions, but only with our bad practice.

Our ways to deal with images, themselves symbolic, have been denied their own metaphorical aspects, their own ability and necessity to point beyond. That which promised connection to soul betrays it. The common metaphors end up leading to entrapment, monotony, sterility. The hours of analysis may pass and one fights the realization that one is unmoved; that when the light goes out

one feels the same things and the same about them. One has gained no further access to inner life.

What makes us get involved in, get thinking and talking about, our “animuses” our “inferiority complexes,” our “tricksters,” our “transferences,” and our “libidinal flows?” When you hear a person speaking this language do you not try to find out *what* they are talking about, i.e. what experience moved them? One often finds that a very complex image, full of shades and depth, has struck them. They then dilute it through the language of psychology. It becomes an “anima experience” and every man has an anima. So one can talk about it as if it were a cup of coffee in the morning (after all, everyone has one, right?) If, however, it strikes the individual that this commonality of imagery points to the fact that his experience is one that is central to the psyche he may take more care with it.

If the word takes one away from the image and allows what appears to be the image to be GRASPED and controlled and talked about, then what has been grasped is not the image but the concept. It is the usual ego who is grasping so frantically. Not being able to dwell with the image, it climbs up and over the edge into its own terrain. Now if we took the word or concept and with it hunted for the images, and having once found some, dwelled with them, then the concept would be used by the ego to get us into touch with the imaginal. It would help us swim out, and once we were there we would be moved by the depths’ own current.

Magicians have the trick of dropping the rabbit in the hat and then pulling it out again (von Franz, 1970:XII-17). We do not see them drop it in and so we are amazed what wonders come from the hat. At least magicians know that they are pulling out what they are dropping in. We drop in our psychological language and theory and come up with what confirms it because we often come up with what we put in but do not know it. We decide the dream image tells us about yesterday or tomorrow and we relate the images to yesterday and they tell us something about it. But we may as well take that same image and compare it to anything whatsoever and, with some skill, we can get it to tell us something

about it. In this way we keep finding out what we already know.

We also reduce the imaginal to the conceptual, and in so doing keep out of relation to what we do not yet fully know. One must be so careful. Most of the time those of us adept in psychology kill the image before we have hardly awakened. We think we are remembering our dream and keeping in touch with it as the dawn light comes. But before dawn the image is already on the operating table and we are performing a hundred tasks of labeling, sorting, equating, trimming, transplanting. We have removed the seemingly unnecessary and tossed it aside in the empty lot of forgetfulness (only to have it multiply and reappear more vigorously). We have rearranged what seemed only like disorder, hoping that now the image will work better, will be clearer to our view. (We are too sleepy to know what notion of order we compared it to.) We begin to transplant amplifications and interpretations, concepts and conclusions for what is naturally given. What creatures are still alive run from the surgeon's light and knife back beneath the rocks, hidden from our view — safe in their moist darkness.

People neglect images so much that when we seemingly remember ours and put an interpretation to them, we feel proud. However, we must at many points refrain from interpreting. I do not mean that we should let the dream and the waking dream entirely alone; that we should willfully be the ones to chase them under the rocks. We should, however, refrain from a finalistic and reductionistic type of interpretation in order to remain in connection with them. There is a saying “traddure e tradire,” “to translate is to betray.” How many times do we think we know by the time breakfast is finished what a dream image meant. Or, as we begin a waking dream, how frequently are we continuously classifying what occurs in our catalogues of psychological experience? We tell the dream figures we know what they are saying — that they needn't go on. We betray them with our sweet understandings. We pocket the theory which we applied to the image and leave for work thinking we have done justice to the image. We come to understand, for instance, that we are dealing

with our shadow, but the specificity of exactly what our psyche is imagining may be lost. In order to learn about the imaginal we must not allow ourselves to rest with what little theory we have. If we can keep returning to the image and experiencing it anew, we will be able to see for ourselves just where a concept aptly describes or sadly misleads. We will not end up resting for years with a concept like “animus,” that does little to describe the actual experience of the masculine in the female psyche. Nor will we trim our imaginal experience to fit the concept, discarding the contradictory and the unique as superfluous and irrelevant.

Our concepts of the imaginal and our attempts to amplify images with myth and folklore can be creatively used as education about the imaginal, as long as we do not discard our own direct experiences of images. Amplification can teach us how to imagine from the specific to the general and back again. By leading us among the members of a family of images we can gain familiarity with their ways and importance. Amplification, by using images to learn about images, allows us to draw closer to the imaginal without leaving it. Interpretations, on the other hand, can transplant us to an intellectual system or to a judgmental code, or cause a reduction to the non-psychological. Often when we begin to make an interpretation, we do so in order to draw ourselves away from the imaginal and onto commoner shores. If we could be aware of the point at which we begin to interpret, we could see whether, at that point, we did not have a choice. Sometimes it is just as the image begins to move us towards it that we turn to other terms. Just as we are aware of the image, as in a waking dream, we must also be aware of our reactions towards it. If we could keep an ear to the images within the interpretations, within the systems we are using, we could use the interpretation almost like amplificatory material, helping us maintain the imaginal’s own directionality (from material to immaterial). The specific image should not be forgotten in favor of any amplificatory or interpretative material. That a figure is like Demeter must help us to understand the figure first of all— not mislead us to thinking only of Demeter.

We should be careful that our notion of “psychic integration” does not justify our ego’s attempts to consume the image as the bird would the spider. “Psychic integration” can be used as a process of pulling everything into the area of the ego and having once converted it into words and interpretations, the ego then swallows it all and becomes seemingly larger. Integration between the ego and the image may be seen more as a system of fine silk threads that pull both into connection and relation without destruction, without losing the nature of the image. In this sense interpretation is not a reductive process, but more an attempt to pull into relation gently and through the dimension of time. Our associations to the image then do not lead us away but rather form the threads that bind our consciousness of the imaginal more closely to the real, the real to the imaginal. Interpretation in this way does not destroy and betray the image. It tries to aid the metaphor in continually placing the material and the imaginal side-by-side, with their own natures retained. By keeping both elements of the metaphor together, the interpretation allows for the material to be seen in relation to the imaginal background that couples it.

Some dreams in and of themselves make a statement with one group of images and then with another, and yet another. Series of dreams or fantasies (those that deal with a common element) do this also. Each set of images brings us into connection with different aspects. When we allow the dream to be imagined on —as in the case of a waking dream or a meditation upon a dream —we allow the images to multiply and develop further within our view. Each one can add to our empathy with the original and with the piece of the imaginal from which they arise.

Think of a poem or a piece of music that you read or hear over and over again. As the poem moves to be the tawny cat, the room behind the store, that feeling as dusk draws the shade down, as it changes location and emotion, you travel with it. Its images transform you as they pile one upon the other. You exist in the present moment with the experience of all that has come before. Layer upon layer, the larger image comes into being within you. It

comes not just on its own —as a single set of words on paper —but rather as the poem streams through you, it collects likenesses among the other images of your soul. It draws to it cast out memoria, landscapes (actual and imaginal), emotions. It ferrets out your hopes and your fears. All this it pulls through you separating out some as the image becomes more specific, drawing more along as it widens. The poem pulls you into its world through your own world. Each image amplifies itself naturally so as to be closer to your sensitivities. You may interpret as a way of hearing the poem.

Your associations may lead you into your realm of knowledge and theory. Yet even here you can be aware of the images within the specific knowings you desire to draw the poetic image to.

Each time you hear it a bit differently. You see it from images within yourself. You not only hear it differently, but it causes you to hear other things differently. The poetic image creates perceptions, modalities of perceiving. You see not only different things, but things differently (Raines, 1967:113). It is not really, as one usually thinks of it, solely a matter of your creating sense out of the poem. For as you set out on such a fantastic endeavor, it is steadily creating the you who is endeavoring. It is drawing you into its landscapes and adding not only to your experiences but to your ways of experiencing.

The poem can be used to teach one to be a poet (Bachelard, 1963:16) in the same way that the dream can be used to enable one to dream (not just to passively receive a dream but to voluntarily enter into imagining). In both, the giving of oneself to an image teaches the art of imagining. The poem and the dream lead us into the sites of reverie. If we develop our observing consciousness we can follow the reverie as closely as the written poem.

Images demand that we develop the facility to inhabit new sites, in new terms all the time. Each image in itself and in the variety of amplifications that it evokes in us continuously changes, showing ever greater depth and variety. It teaches one to lose the ego fantasy of permanence and continuity. Within the dream, the poem, one can be all figures, all landscapes, all emotions. Indeed to

grow closer to them, one must assume their universe.

As we move within images foreign to our ego we experience reverberations within ourselves. The “otherness” we had perceived in the image becomes familiar — not only in the moment that we entertain it, but arising from the past. It pulls things from us that show our participation, though often largely unconscious, in it. As we imagine, we learn to recognize not only the possibility, but also the actuality, of a consciousness with a polymorphous nature. The fact that the past has been created by just such an assumption and possession of us by various images becomes more undeniable.

As we move from encountering each image with our usual “I-ness,” to entering each image and allowing it to structure our perception and movement, a new realm is opened. For now we are able to encounter the relation between images — not merely from the viewpoint of one observer (one ego, one “I”), but from within the perspective of other images as well.

We have spoken about remaining in the context of the imaginal either by using associations and interpretations in a circular direction (not only out of the image to the interpretation, but from the interpretation back to the image) or by taking interpretations and other associations in an imaginal way also (searching for the images they enclose). To assume different images, however, we must learn more specifically to deepen ourselves into *the context of the individual image*. By spending time with it, trying to feel it, to slip into it, we can try to note where and how it lives. How does it spend a day? What is its sense of time? (Some people say that the imagination is “timeless.” It would be more accurate to say that it contains many different senses of time.) When one imagines oneself into a cow, one discovers a sense of time quite unlike that of a bird or a Princeton professor. By attuning oneself, to that alone, one feels viscerally a quality of energy that possesses one periodically. Each image and system of images has its own sense(s) of time, its own emphasis or ignorance of past, present and future. It accomplishes actions or moves through duration “in its own time.” The ego identifies with

clocktime and ignores its experience that does not verify this as real time (experienced time). Images are free to move to their own sense of time and timing. The Little Prince learned that to draw closer to his rose he must “waste” time. He must surrender time as he knows it to be.

We do not always have only to sit with closed eyes, moving around in our heads, to draw closer to an image. We can put it in our pocket and carry it with us throughout days and nights. We can assume, for instance, its “timing” (Lopez-Pedraza) as we move in the world. With it in our pocket we are more apt to recognize when the way we are moving corresponds to the image. By holding the image near we can do the same with its ways of perceiving other things, its thinking and feeling.

Entering into the context of an image is easier, the more developed the image has been allowed to become. Recurring dreams and images with the same theme, or encompassing the same figure or emotion, can be compiled.² **1** By watching the development of and the elaborations on this part of the imaginal, by listening to the multiple ways it describes itself, the things it includes and touches, we can more easily enter its mood and landscape, imagining ourselves (in one form or another) amongst it all. Psychological facts and experiences (those of the psyche) can be more clearly seen. Repeating the images over and over again, allowing them to expand (visually, mentally, in painting, writing, movement), to set in our consciousness their non-linear history, enables us to begin to grasp and feel them. The emergence of figures, where they go, with whom and in what way they deal, unravels. The different places of the imaginal begin to stand out. The possibility of an archetypal topography begins to emerge. One

² For the purpose of compiling descriptions of the imaginal from images themselves, a journal of waking dream and dream experiences is invaluable. An image journal true to the nature of the images would most likely not be straight prose. The image demands shape, color and poetry to approximate it. Pictures, for instance, can place all the parts of the image together in a way unlike usual words.

comes to have an idea of where archetypes can be located in relation to each other (Casey, 1974). We give the imagination a chance to reveal to our consciousness the arrangement in depth of its interior space. The autonomy of the imaginal, the fact that it has an independent order and a continuousness, become evident when series of images are examined. The seemingly random nature of images, that strikes the beginning rememberer of dreams as he initially begins the practice, dissolves with time.

Waking dreams make us familiar with the imaginal. This familiarity allows us to recognize the activity of the psyche in our daily lives. We learn to feel when we are inhabiting a certain image and reacting to another. The unspoken metaphors of our living are revealed in just this way – not for just their material aspect, nor just their symbolic, but rather as the co-creation of the physical and imaginal qualities of our lives.

