

## JUNG AND MARX

*Alchemy, Christianity, and the Work Against Nature*

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I have announced this lecture under the title Jung and Marx: Alchemy, Christianity, and the Work Against Nature. As what I have to say is rather strange, I think it will help us all if I start by explaining how these various ideas will be related to each other.

The central idea, round which the others are organised, is of the work against nature. I want to try to say something about the work against nature in which we all share. What I mean by this work will, I hope, emerge as my argument develops. It will emerge through my use of two words which are familiar but not easy to define: creator and virgin.

I shall not try to define what I mean by creator and virgin. I shall limit myself to try to describe a *space* between creator and virgin, for it is in this space that I believe the work against nature is being done. And it is in order to describe this space that I am bringing together the names of Jung and Marx.

To describe a space physically needs two movements of the imagination, one which expands and one which contracts: the two movements which Jung called extraversion and introversion. I shall be using the work of Marx to stimulate the extraverted movement of the imagination, and the work of Jung to stimulate the introverted.

Between the two, I hope we will become aware of the need for work of a very special kind. I shall be using some reflections on alchemy and on christianity to try to illuminate the nature of this work. I want to use alchemy, as Jung interpreted it in terms of psyche, as the way into a questioning of what christianity has done to the relation between man and nature. In asking this question I hope to convey some sense of what I mean by creator and virgin.

So my argument will develop in five stages. First, I want to introduce Jung's interest in alchemy. Then I shall give a brief exposition of one aspect of Marx's thought. This introduces the idea of man as involved in nature's coming-to-self-consciousness. I shall then define my own attitude to this idea of Marx's, as a transition to the other main line of my argument: what christianity has done to

man and nature. I conclude by saying the little that I can say about the work being done between creator and virgin.

Jung's work on alchemy is in the fullest sense of the word surprising. Some of you will be familiar with it. To others it may be unknown. So let me start by reading you three extracts from his autobiography, in which he describes how alchemy became one of the main interests of the last thirty years of his life.

I had very soon seen that analytical psychology coincided in a most curious way with alchemy. The experiences of the alchemists were, in a sense, my experiences, and their world was my world. This was, of course, a momentous discovery: I had stumbled upon the historical counterpart of my psychology of the unconscious. The possibility of a comparison with alchemy, and the uninterrupted intellectual chain back to Gnosticism, gave substance to my psychology.<sup>1</sup>

Since my aim was to demonstrate the full extent to which my psychology corresponded to alchemy - or vice-versa - I wanted to discover, side by side with the religious questions, what special problems of psychotherapy were treated in the work of the alchemists. The main problem of medical psychotherapy is the *transference*... I was able to demonstrate that alchemy, too, had something that corresponded to the transference, namely the concept of the *coniunctio* ...<sup>2</sup>

This investigation was rounded out by the *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, in which I once again took up the problem of the transference, but primarily followed my original intention of representing the whole range of alchemy as a kind of psychology of alchemy, or as an alchemical basis for depth psychology. In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* my psychology was at last given its place in reality and established upon its historic foundations.<sup>3</sup>

Now what Jung is saying here is really very odd indeed. It is so extraordinary that we may easily slide over it without feeling the surprise which we should. One of my aims this evening is to try to convey something of that sense of surprise.

What is this 'psychology of alchemy' which Jung has left behind him? My thesis is that it belongs in the world of extraversion as well as of introversion, and that its extraverted mode is expressed in the intercourse between man and nature which we call economics. I want to try to establish some links between psychology and economics, in the belief that Jung's psychology of alchemy contains resources of imagination, humour and will, which could help us deal with the economic problems of today and tomorrow. But to make this link between psychology, alchemy and economics, we need 'space' of an unusual kind.

Before I go on to define this space, I want to emphasise the provenance of the ideas I shall be expressing. They derive primarily from a series of my own dreams. The earliest in the series which I remember dated from 1948, when I was 22. The most recent was six years ago. The reading and thinking that lie behind these ideas originates in the need to understand dreams. What this says about the relevance of my argument for you, depends on what you make of your own dreaming. But I am sure that what I am saying this evening will mislead unless its provenance in dreams is borne in mind.

Marx's vision, or analysis, of man's intercourse with nature will be familiar to many of us here this evening. But for all its familiarity, it remains difficult. For the very brief exposition which I want to try now, I shall take as my way into his thought his analysis of the changing nature of money.

Up to about the year 1400 the economic life of Europe was essentially agricultural, concerned with the same kind of problems which we now associate with the so-called 'third world'. There were exceptions which in retrospect can seem very significant. But taken as a whole, economic activity constituted a closed circle between man and nature, with nothing left over.

Between 1400 and 1700 this closed circle broke open and began spiralling, both 'out' and 'in', to include within the economic process a wider and ever increasing number of commodities and desires. From 1700 onwards this spiral became more like an explosion, until today we have a situation in which on the one hand the whole system can be kept going only by the creation of new needs out of luxuries that were themselves unheard of a generation earlier, while on the other hand it is becoming more and more widely accepted that this stimulation of new needs is destroying an essential balance within the natural environment.

Within the closed system that prevailed - with significant exceptions - up to about 1400, money was essentially the medium of exchange, something to facilitate the barter of the market place. It served to lubricate a process of exchange whose driving energy was the natural cycle of agricultural seasons, supplemented by the skills and muscular energy of man. Since 1700, although it retains its old function of lubricating the economic system, money has *also* become the fuel which fires the engine which drives the whole system along. It is this change in the nature of money that Karl Marx described as the emergence of capitalism.

Marx is the prophet of this split in our experience of money. He lived and wrote at a time when the first industrial revolution had already transformed conditions of life in Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands, and was reaching out to alter the face of our planet more radically - in relation to the passage of time -

than in any previous revolution in the history of man. Marx insisted that something unprecedented was happening, and that the split in our experience of money, of which the power of capital was the outward and visible manifestation, was only one aspect of a much more pervasive and radical alteration in the whole balance between man and nature.

This unprecedented shift of balance between man and nature is today widely discussed in terms of ecology, in terms of relationship between man and his environment. It is therefore perhaps easier for us today to understand Marx if we listen to what he has to say with the contemporary arguments of ecologists in mind.

Marx was deeply impressed by the way in which this split between money as means of exchange, and money as self-generating capital, seemed at the same time both to make possible and also to justify the technological exploitation of the planet on which the industrial societies of Western Europe had embarked. He argued that the result of this interpenetration of the monetary and technological revolutions was altering the very quality of human life. All previous history had been that of men living in a world that was *given*. But now men were learning what it was to live in a world that was to an ever-increasing degree made *by* man, rather than given *to* man, in a world whose conditions were determined not by the gifts of nature, but by the manufactures of man. Marx's political economics studied the effects of this revolution on the social relations between human beings, but he emphasised again and again that to understand what was happening to personal development within this new technological and capitalist society, man must be aware of what is happening to the much more fundamental relation between the creativity of man and the material world of which man is part.

It is here that Marx touches the central idea with which I am concerned in placing his work alongside Jung's psychology of alchemy. He is defining a split, what he called an 'alienation', of a new kind: an alienation of man from nature, where nature is to be thought of both as man's own nature and also as the natural world in which man makes his living. The peculiar quality of this alienation emerges from his description of how money has succeeded in breaking the circle of man's intercourse with nature.

Money has its origin in the market place where we go to exchange what we have but don't need, for what we need but don't have. Money is the medium which facilitates this exchange, but in so doing it converts the immaterial process of exchange into a thing which can itself be exchanged for other things. It is as if when things are exchanged in the market place a new power is born, a power that breaks out of the circle of man's intercourse with nature. This power has no

existence in nature, yet manages to establish itself in its own right as existing over against both man and nature.

Marx believed that with the coming of the industrial revolution, and of the concurrent financial revolution that made money out of credit, this break in the circle of man's intercourse with nature became absolute, so that the circle fell apart into a polarisation. On the one hand, we see the emergence of capital as an apparently autonomous power, able to breed out of itself with no sense of obligation to the material exchange in which it had its origin. On the other hand, we see the emergence of wage labour, which is bought and sold in the market place like any other thing, and thus valued never for itself but always for something other than itself.

But Marx did not stop at this economic analysis. He gave it another dimension altogether. He argued that with this differentiation between capital and labour a truth becomes conscious that has never been conscious before. He argues that in the consciousness of wage labour as it confronts the power of capital, nature, which in itself is virgin, becomes aware for the first time what it means to be used for a purpose outside itself.

I want to stop there in my exposition of Marx's vision of the world he saw around him rather more than a hundred years ago. In selecting this one way into his comprehensive and detailed economic analysis, I am inevitably being unfair to his scholarship. But it is this seminal idea of nature coming, through man, to a new self-consciousness, which I want to place alongside Jung's psychology of alchemy. So let me repeat once again the formulation at which we have arrived: the thesis that in the consciousness of wage labour as it confronts the power of capital, nature, which in itself is virgin, becomes aware for the first time what it means to be used for a purpose outside itself.

I believe that this is the idea which gives Marxism as we know it today, a hundred years after the death of its founder, its dynamism and fascination. I believe it to be true that a new consciousness of what it means for nature to be used for a purpose outside itself is now lodged within man. And I believe that if we, as the one world which we are become, are to solve the economic problems confronting us, it is essential that we all play our part in trying to understand what this new consciousness means for our way of life.

But this belief does not make me a Marxist. It is not only that all my training and material interests make me conservative, with both a small and a large 'c'. Marx, it seems to me, gave to this essentially true insight a twist which has thrown it disastrously off centre. He introduced into his economic analysis messianic

expectations of which he was unconscious and he located this messianism in a new chosen people, the people he called the proletariat.

If we are to assimilate Marx's recognition of the new 'humanisation of society' into the great conservative and radical traditions of our society, we must learn to understand these messianic expectations. We have to ask how the judaeo-christian messianism which informs the whole body of Marxism affects our economic condition. And to do this I believe we must concern ourselves with man's masochism and sadism when face to face with 'that which in itself is virgin'.

How does Marx's vision relate to the long and confused history of judaeo-christian messianic psychology? I think most students of the history of ideas would agree that the answer lies in the philosophy of Hegel, and in the way Marx used and altered this philosophy. Certainly it was in Hegel's work that I found my first bridge from Marx to Jung, twenty-five years ago.

Jung has written of Hegel's philosophy:

The victory of Hegel over Kant dealt the gravest blow to reason and to the further development of the German and, ultimately, of the European mind, all the more dangerous as Hegel was a psychologist in disguise who projected great truths out of the subjective sphere into a cosmos he himself had created. <sup>4</sup>

I think much of Jung's psychology can be read as a translation of Hegel's philosophy into the experiences of ordinary men and women. In particular, I think this is true of Jung's interest as a psychologist, in the ways in which the modern psyche questions what is to become of the christian revelation. Hegel's philosophy has often been interpreted as an extension of christian theology. A recent study by Hans Kung, for instance, has the title: *God becoming man: an introduction to Hegel's theological thought as prolegomena to a future christology*. Though he makes no mention of Jung, Hans Kung develops ideas which are familiar to readers of Jung's essays on the psychological significance of the Trinity and the transformation symbolism of the Mass. These, and other, close connections between Jung's psychology and Hegel's philosophy will be much studied in the years to come.

One result of such study will be to place Marx's Hegelian heritage in a wider and - dare we say it? - more feminine context. Within this feminine world we can find the resources of imagination, humour and will with which to assimilate the masochism and sadism which Marx has done so much to stimulate in the modern psyche.



Marx's rejection of Hegel's idealism, and his conversion of that idealism into his own historical materialism, can be understood in terms of a future christology if we are so minded. But mediaeval alchemy foretold the work of both Hegel and Marx within a tradition which kept alive the memory of what christology had done to nature. Within this tradition we have descriptions of the spontaneous response of the human psyche to the 'alienation' described by Hegel and Marx. If we study Marx against this background we will, I believe, be better equipped to analyse how his messianic expectations can be related to our present economic predicament as nature begins to reassert her right to be what she is in herself.

Students of the history of ideas present alchemy either as a woefully unscientific precursor to modern chemistry, or as a more or less bogus attempt to find sudden wealth through the artificial production of gold, or as an esoteric, religious tradition that reached its culmination in Goethe's Faust. Jung recognizes all three of these interpretations as partially valid. Yet for him alchemy has to do with something more than any combination of these three traditions. The history of alchemy records how the human psyche has assumed, over centuries of trial and error, a peculiar obligation in respect to matter: the obligation to reconcile matter to the fact of christianity.

This is an extraordinary idea. It is so strange that on first encounter with it even sympathetic readers of Jung feel uneasy and prefer to avoid looking at it too closely. But for those who return to it and learn gradually to pay attention it proves itself unexpectedly effective. We find that we can read in the history of alchemy how christianity has damaged matter, and how the human psyche moves spontaneously to make good that damage.

This assessment of the place of alchemy in the history of ideas can be summarised from two points of view: firstly, by contrasting the alchemical work with the christian work of redemption; and secondly, by the hypothesis of a triangular relationship between alchemy, christianity and modern technology.

The contrast between the alchemical work and the christian atonement pervades all Jung's writing on alchemy. Two quotations must serve as illustrations. For those who know Jung's work, they will be familiar. For those who do not, taken thus out of context, they will sound very strange.

Comparing the alchemical transformation of matter with the christian Mass, he writes:

By pronouncing the consecrating words that bring about the transformation, the priest redeems the bread and wine from their elemental imperfection as created things. This idea is unchristian -it is alchemical. Whereas Catholicism emphasises the effectual presence of Christ, alchemy is interested in the fate and manifest redemption of the substances, for in them the divine soul lies captive and awaits the redemption that is granted to it at the moment of release. The captive soul then appears in the form of the 'Son of God'. For the alchemist, the one primarily in need of redemption is not man, but the deity who is lost and sleeping in matter ... Since it is not man but matter that must be redeemed, the spirit that manifests itself in the transformation is not the Son of Man but... the *filius macrocosmi*. Therefore, what comes out of the transformation is not Christ, but an ineffable material being named the "stone" ...<sup>5</sup>

The second quotation is from an essay on the sixteenth century physician and natural philosopher Paracelsus. In this, the different attitudes of alchemist and christian to the transformation of matter are related to the question of man's place in nature at the dawn of our modern scientific era.

Whereas in Christ god himself became man, the *filius-philosophorum* was extracted from matter by human art and, by means of the opus, made into a new light-bringer. In the former case the miracle of man's salvation is accomplished by God; in the latter, the salvation or transfiguration of the universe is brought about by the mind of man - "*Deo concedente*", as the authors never fail to add. In the one case man confesses "I under God", in the other he asserts "God under me". Man takes the place of the Creator. Medieval alchemy prepared the way for the greatest intervention in the divine world order that man has ever attempted: alchemy was the dawn of the scientific age, when the daemon of the scientific spirit compelled the forces of nature to serve man to an extent that has never been known before ... Here we find the true roots, the preparatory processes deep in the psyche, which unleashed the forces at work in the world today. Science and technology have indeed conquered the world, but whether the psyche has gained anything is another matter.<sup>6</sup>

On the one hand, we have the experience of man's salvation as accomplished by God. On the other, the transfiguration of the universe is brought about by the mind of man. Does the contrast, indeed the conflict, between these two works of redemption have anything to say about the dilemmas of our contemporary technology?

I believe it has. I believe Jung's studies in alchemy provide us with a crucial link in the history of ideas. It is a link between science, technology, economics on the one hand, and the christian doctrine of incarnation on the other, and it is organised round the christian failure to understand what christian faith has done to the relationship between man and matter.



The best way to present this hypothesis of a triangular relationship between alchemy, christianity and modern technology is to pose a familiar question from the history of science: why did the questioning of nature characteristic of the Greek intellect of the 4th century B.C. stop short of the experimental method which developed in the 16th and 17th centuries A.D.?

Various answers have been given to this question. One answer-or perhaps we should say one set of answers-derives from the fact of christianity: from the fact that over many centuries people believed this particular faith and practised these particular rites which we call christian. It is argued that the decisive change in man's relation to matter between, say, Aristotle and Newton, was the conversion of Europe to the belief.

- (1) that the creator of all Being had become man;
- (2) that when this man died, he had not remained dead, but had resurrected, and
- (3) that following this resurrection, his flesh and blood could by appropriate rites, be transformed into bread and wine which mankind could eat and drink.

According to this argument, the result of this conversion was a fundamental shift in the distribution of creative power within the universe. Something got into man which had not been there before. Over many centuries of disciplined intellectual effort the christian mind trained itself in asking questions which were inconceivable to the classical Greeks. These questions had to do with the dual nature of Christ as both God and man; with the nature of his mother who was both virgin and yet also in the fullest sense mother of a man; with how three can be one and one three and what this implies for the relation between person and substance; and, perhaps most crucial of all, with the nature of the change that took place in bread and wine in the Eucharist. Gradually, imperceptibly, questioning like this separated mind and matter in a way they had not been previously separated. A space opened up between mind and matter which was altogether and absolutely new in the history of mankind. Mind was seized of the very special 'objectivity' which separates creator and creature.

It was this qualitatively new objectivity which made possible the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A thousand years of intricate and passionate reflection on the mysteries of christian faith and practice had separated mind from its original participation in nature. Within the space made by this separation man had room to experiment, and to sustain his experimenting, in a way that had never before been possible. He learned to enjoy putting nature to the torture.

This view of the origin of modern science is of course not universally accepted. This is not the occasion to take the argument further. What I want to do is to put it forward as an hypothesis, and draw attention to one consequence which would follow if this hypothesis were to be proved.

So let us assume that the objectivity of modern natural science, the 'space' which separates the mind of both the experimental and the applied scientist from the matter on which they work, derives from reflection on the central doctrines of christianity. If this were true, what would it mean for those of us-and that means now almost everybody in the world-who live off the technological fruits of natural science?

It would mean that we are all, christian and non-christian alike, living off a reflective act of which we are unconscious. But the reason for this unconsciousness would vary between those who think of themselves as christian and those who think of themselves as non-christian.

For the overwhelmingly non-christian world which has now taken possession of natural science it would mean that we are living off reflection on something which in varying ways we deny, or even despise or abhor. It would mean that if the act of which we are unconscious should insist on becoming conscious we would have to admit to a contradiction running through all our intercourse with matter: a contradiction by which we allow ourselves to enjoy the fruits of a distinctively christian separation between mind and matter, while refusing any obligation to the christian work of atonement.

For christians, it would mean that we are the guardians of a secret which we dare not acknowledge. Because if christianity has fathered and mothered the scientific revolution of the last three hundred years it has conspicuously failed to retain the faith of its own offspring which has, moreover, succeeded in doing what christianity wanted to do but failed to do: converting the world. So if this secret of which we are unconscious should presently insist on becoming conscious it would mean for christians that we would have to acknowledge that our faith has secreted out of its central moments of reflection a power greater than itself.

Now, always assuming that our thesis of the christian origin of modern science is true, we have here a situation whose danger every dynamic psychologist will recognise. There is an unconscious secret which is shared by two contrasting conscious attitudes. But although it is shared, its structure and dynamism is different in relation to each of the two conscious attitudes. The danger is that when the need to repress an unconscious content is shared with another person, but the reasons for this need differ, then fear of what is unconscious converts into fear of the other person. One kind of fear then feeds on another in preventing us

from even beginning to question the presence of such a secret. The failure of the other person to admit to its existence confirms me in the righteousness of my own denial, and simultaneously makes the other person the bearer of the guilt of my denial.

This kind of situation is familiar in family life. But in relation to the damage which christianity has done to matter, it is a situation with which our whole world is now having to familiarise itself.

Can the non-christian heirs to christian technology accept that christianity guards the secret of their power over nature? And can the christian guardians - both living and dead - accept that there is, and always has been, a dimension to their faith which only non-christians can understand?

It is here, I believe, that Jung's psychology of alchemy will prove relevant for our future. For Jung has rediscovered a world within which we can analyse what nature endured in those long centuries of evolving christian consciousness which gave birth to the experimental sciences of the last three hundred years. In this rediscovery, he has given us the 'content' of that secret which is now insisting on becoming conscious, a secret for which neither christianity nor technology can find room: the secret of what it means for nature, which in itself is virgin, to be used for a purpose outside itself.

What can be said about the content of this secret?

The alchemical 'opus' has its beginning in filth and dirt, and its end in gold. The beginning and the end are one. But between beginning and end, both separating and also linking them, is the work, the work against nature. What is the secret of this work that 'conjugates' filth and gold? It is a secret to which both economist and ecologist would like to have the key. But the key is costly: costly of *spirit*. And that is not the kind of payment which our contemporary economic theory comprehends.

Alchemy studies the intercourse between man and matter at a level which we have forgotten, though it was still accessible up to about the eighteenth century, that is to say up to the technological and economic revolution whose first fruits were witnessed by Marx. This intercourse is of a kind that seemed grossly material to the christian consciousness of its day, but which nevertheless presupposes that matter is *ensouled*. The materialism of alchemy was never of that kind which exalts the life of the intellect over against the deadness of matter. For the alchemist, matter is alive, and the intercourse of man with matter was not that of the experimental scientist who puts nature to the torture, but of the

worker who mixes his labour with the stuff which is essential to existence. This quality in the work of the alchemist is reminiscent of the language of Marx.

But for the alchemist, unlike Marx, this mixing of labour with matter involved something which he was willing to call spirit. In his analysis of what went on between himself and matter he was prepared to recognise the presence of an agent that was neither 'I' nor 'it', an agent necessary to the intercourse between I and it, which nevertheless eluded all attempts to grasp it in terms of I and it. Through the presence of this agent he came to describe a work which modern materialism rejects as grotesque, as absolutely repugnant to common sense.

At the risk of serious over-simplification, we can distinguish four levels in this work. At the first, we are asked to accept that matter is not dead, but alive. Then we are asked to credit that this aliveness of matter is like the intercourse between male and female. At a yet deeper level, alchemy then confronts us with something even more awkward to our understanding: the life of matter is not only compounded of a dialectic like human sexuality, but this dialectic wants to convert an unintentional *incest* into the celebration of a deliberate *marriage*. And finally, we are asked to believe that in making this conversion from incest into marriage, matter has need of a personal, human intervention.

Has this kind of hocus-pocus anything whatsoever to do with the economic problems of our world? If it has, I think the link is to be found in the word sacrifice.

Economic theory, and particularly economic argument, recognises the need for sacrifice to be made. But there is no relation between our economic and our psychological experiences of sacrifice. What we understand by sacrifice is something much weaker, much less effective and integrated, than in many other cultures. We don't really believe that the sacrifices we are asked to make will work *on* the material world. Instead, we suspect that they will in some way be used against us by some agent or power which we cannot define, but are quite able to project on to each other.

This split between our economic and psychological experience of sacrifice is the central problem to which I am addressing myself this evening. I believe it originates in our failure to remember the particular sacrifice which sustains our technological culture, a sacrifice which is made between creator and virgin. Alchemy is the necessary link between psychology and economics because it remembers this sacrifice.

It remembers it on two levels: first, as pre- and non-christian; secondly, as radically altered by the fact of christianity.

Outside christianity, alchemy reminds us that our bodies cannot take matter for granted. The alchemist realises that matter exists by virtue of a work in which our bodies share, and that our enjoyment of matter-what economists call wealth - depends on our attitude to that work. If we are afraid of that work, then our enjoyment of matter remains enclosed within an incestuous circle which collapses the essential distinction between maker and made. But if we can learn to enter into that work, to do it knowingly, then our enjoyment of matter opens into the deliberate celebration of the difference between maker and made; a celebration which we can think of as analogous to human marriage.

But the advent of christianity introduces a new twist into the relation between body and matter. The faith that the *maker* of all that is has deliberately chosen to be part of what is *made*, and that the particular part chosen was the body of man, secretes as it were into the relationship between man and the rest of nature a new potentiality: the potentiality that man could appropriate to himself the unique, and terrible, 'objectivity' of the maker in the face of that which is made. This potentiality christianity further encouraged by ordaining that mankind should, first, eat and drink the flesh and blood of the maker, and then use mind to reflect on what this ingestion did to the relation between person and substance.

That was the new situation in which the post-christian alchemist found himself. On the underside of the long centuries during which the faithful celebrated the sacrifice of the Eucharist, a new question was arising between man and matter. If the christian were free to appropriate to himself the 'objectivity' of the maker in the face of that which is made, would he also take on himself the corresponding obligation: the obligation to remember the 'understanding' between creator and virgin on which all making depends?

Jung argues that the alchemists of the late middle ages and renaissance were trying to keep this memory alive, but that the science and technology of the last three hundred years have not only suppressed it, but fed on that suppression. This suppression gives to the relationship between modern man and nature its special quality of masochism. Jung's psychology of alchemy offers us an opportunity to analyse this masochism, to undo the suppression at its root, to begin the work of remembering so that we can build again on an understanding of which christianity and its offspring have made us forgetful.

As an example, we can think of the urgent need to relate our sexuality to our food supply. At the recent world food conference in Rome, we heard the Pope agree with the representatives of state Marxism in arguing that the need to control the level of population was being exaggerated by those who already enjoy technological wealth, as a new kind of warfare against those who do not.

For those of us who are persuaded of the real dangers of the population explosion, it seems as if catholic and communist hierarchies share a common interest in hunger. There is no area of world argument in which we have more need of cross-fertilisation between psychology and economics if we are to be saved from the self destructive cycle of sadomasochism.

Alchemy describes the economics of sexuality and hunger in a way which the christianity and Marxism we heard speak at Rome do not understand. It is an economy which depends on using our enjoyment of sex to discriminate between two kinds of hunger. On the one hand, there is hunger which can be satisfied within a biological cycle of production and consumption. On the other, there is hunger which can only be satisfied by the very special kind of 'making' which goes on between creator and virgin, a making which precedes the very possibility of production and consumption. The alchemical work hinges on the distinction between these two kinds of hunger.

We must incorporate this distinction into our economic theory and practice. But if the psychology of alchemy is to be trusted, this will require a change of which both christian and Marxist hierarchies seem to be deeply afraid. Economics will have to bring an altogether new kind of gravity to the study of what goes on between male and female. The business which men and women have with one another must become a primary centre round which we organise our understanding of wealth and its enjoyment. Instead of being a peripheral interest, the exchanges between male and female must be allowed to find their true weight at the very centre of the economic process, and from that centre to generate the metaphors and models we need to balance the economy between man and nature.

Such a shift in the centre of economic gravity would not save us from controversy and the need for difficult and painful choices. On the contrary, it would open up new areas for argument and persuasion. But it would enable us better to define the choices that matter if we are to balance sexuality and food within our technological civilisation. So let me conclude with an example of such choice, the example with which all I have said this evening has been concerned: the choice as to who sacrifices what to whom when creator and virgin come face to face.

On the one hand, we have the christian experience of Mary's 'be it unto me according to thy word', which opened the way for the maker into the body of the made. Eighteen hundred years later the new breed of experimental scientists and colonisers assumed the same acquiescence in the body of the material world which they believed themselves entitled to explore. We have lived on the fruits of that assumption. We are beginning to realise the debt that may have to be paid



should that assumption be called into question.

The alchemists could not make that assumption. They remembered a different scene, a scene which is becoming familiar to us once again as the third world insists on making its presence felt. The scene is described in a text which Jung quotes in his essay on 'The Visions of Zosimos'.

Isis the Prophetess to her son Horus: My child, you should go forth to battle against the faithless Typhon for the sake of your father's kingdom, while I retire to Egypt's city of the sacred art, where I sojourned for a while. According to the circumstances of the time and the necessary consequences of the movement of the spheres, it came to pass that a certain one among the angels, dwelling in the first firmament, watched me from above and wished to have intercourse with me. Quickly he determined to bring this about. I did not yield, as I wished to inquire into the preparation of the gold and silver. But when I demanded it of him, he told me he was not permitted to speak of it, on account of the supreme importance of the mysteries: but on the following day an angel, Amnael, greater than he, would come, and he could give me the solution to the problem. He also spoke of the sign of this angel - he bore it on his head and would show me a small, unpitched vessel filled with a translucent water. He would tell me the truth. On the following day, as the sun was crossing the mid-point of its course, Amnael appeared, who was greater than the first angel, and, seized with the same desire, he did not hesitate, but hastened to where I was. But I was no less determined to inquire into the matter.<sup>7</sup>

And Jung goes on to comment that she did not yield, and the angel revealed the secret.

There is a world of difference between the responses of Mary and of Isis. If psychology and economics are to join in providing the resources our technological civilisation needs, we must make room for this world. Between these two understandings of how creator and virgin can behave toward one another we have the human space within which we can explore our choices as to who sacrifices what to whom. This is the space we need if we are to respond freely to the economic predicament of mankind as nature - 'our' nature, yet not ours - begins to reassert her right to be as she is in herself. And it is in this space, so I believe, that Jung's psychology of alchemy will prove itself.

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<sup>1</sup> C.G. Jung, *Memories Dreams Reflections*, Vintage Books, New York, 1963, p.205.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.211-213.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.221.

<sup>4</sup> C.G. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p.169, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1960.

<sup>5</sup> C.G. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, para. 420, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1953.

<sup>6</sup> C.G. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, para. 163, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1967.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 99.