

James Hillman

Alchemical Blue and the Unio Mentalis

the soul

vanishes

the soul. vanishes, into the

shape of things

—ROBERT KELLY, "The Blue".

A chapter from a long study "Silver and the White Earth," the first part of which appeared in *Spring 1980* and the second in *Spring 1981: An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought*. A further piece and relevant to this is "Salt: An Essay in Alchemical Psychology" in *The Virgin in Myth, Literature and Society* (Joanne Stroud and Gail Thomas, eds.), forthcoming, Spring Publications, Summer 1981. Abbreviations are: *CW* : *Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, 20 volumes, Bollingen Series, Princeton University Press; *Paracelsus: The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings of Paracelsus*, 2 volumes, New Hyde Park: University Books, 1967; *HM: The Hermetic Museum . . . containing Twenty-two most celebrated Chemical Tracts (1678)*, 2 volumes, London: Watkins, 1953.

TRANSITIONS FROM BLACK TO WHITE sometimes go through a series of other colors,ⁱ notably darker blues, the blues of bruises, sobriety, puritan self-examination; the blues of slow jazzⁱⁱ. Silver's color was not only white but also blue. Ruland lists 27 kinds of blue-colored silver. Norton writes (*HM* II:45): "Silver may easily be converted into the colour of the lazulite, because... silver, produced by air, has a tendency to become assimilated to the color of the sky."ⁱⁱⁱ So strong is the association of blue with silver and whitening, that even when modern chemistry disputes alchemical testimony (deriving a blue pigment from

silver treated with salt, vinegar, etc.), it assumes the alchemists had some to-us-unknown physical justification for their claim.^{iv} Is not the claim based rather on fantasy, a sophic silver of a whitened imagination which *knows* that blue belongs to silvering, and therefore sees it?

The blue transit between black and white is like that.-sadness which emerges from despair as it proceeds towards reflection. Reflection here comes from or takes one into a blue distance, less a concentrated act that we do than something insinuating itself upon us as a cold, isolating inhibition. This vertical

withdrawal is also like an emptying out, the creation of a negative capability, or a profound listening — already an intimation of silver (*Spr.* '80, pp. 41-44, silver and sound).

These very experiences Goethe associates with blue^v:

...blue still brings a principle of darkness with it... As a hue it is powerful, but it is on the negative side, and in its highest purity is, as it were, a stimulating negation. . . a kind of contradiction between excitement and repose.

As the upper sky and mountains appear blue, so a blue surface seems

to recede from us.

... it draws us after it.

Blue gives us an impression of cold, and thus, again, reminds us of shade. We have before spoken of its affinity with black.

Rooms which are hung with pure blue, appear in some degree larger, but at the same time empty and cold.

...objects seen through a blue glass [are] gloomy and melancholy.

Sadness is not the whole of it. A turbulent dissolution of the nigredo can also show as blue movies, blue language, *l'amour bleu*, blue-beard, blue murder, and cyanotic body. When these sorts of pornographic, perverse, ghastly, or vicious animus/anima fantasies start up,^{vi} we can place them within the blue transition toward the albedo. Then we will look for bits of silver in the violence. There are patterns of self-recognition forming by means of horror and obscenity. The soul's

putrefactio is generating a new anima consciousness, a new psychic grounding that must include underworld experiences of the anima itself: her deathly and perverse affinities. The dark blue of the Madonna's robe bears many shadows, and these give her depths of understanding, just as the mind made on the moon has lived with Lilith so that its thought can never be naive, never cease to strike deep toward shadows.^{vii} Blue protects white from innocence.

The vertical direction, as Jung reaffirms (*CJV* 12, para.320), is traditionally associated with blue.^{viii} Ancient Greek words for blue signified the sea.^{ix} In Tertullian and Isadore of Seville, blue referred to both the sea and the sky,^x much as the Greek word (*bathun*) and the Latin (*altus*) connoted high and deep by one word. The vertical dimension as hierarchy continues in our speech as blue blood for nobility, blue ribbons, and the many mythological images of 'blue Gods': Kneph in Egypt and Odin's blue wrappings,^{xi} Jupiter and Juno,^{xii} Krishna and Vishnu, Christ in his earthly ministry like that blue Christ-man seen by Hildegard of Binge.^{xiii}

The transit from black to white via blue^{xiv} implies that blue always brings black with it. (Among African peoples, for instance, black includes blue;^{xv} whereas in the Jewish-Christian tradition blue belongs rather than white).^{xvi} Blue bears traces of the mortificatio into the whitening. What before was the stickiness of the black, like pitch or tar, unable to be rid of, turns into the traditionally blue virtues of constancy and fidelity. The same dark events feel different. The tortured and symptomatic aspect of mortification—flaying oneself, pulverizing old structures, decapitation of the headstrong will, the rat and rot in one's personal cellar—give way to depression. As even the darkest blue is not black, so even the deepest depression is not the mortificatio which means death of soul. The mortificatio is more driven, images locked compulsively in behavior, visibility zero, psyche trapped in the inertia and extension of matter. A mortificatio is a time of symptoms. These inexplicable, utterly materialized tortures of psyche in physis

are relieved, according to the procession of colors, by a movement toward depression, which can commence as a mournful regret even over the lost symptom: "It was better when it hurt physically—now I only cry." Blue misery. So, with the appearance of blue, feeling becomes more paramount and the paramount feeling is the mournful plaint (Rimbaud^{xvii} equates blue with vowel "O"; Kandinsky^{xviii} with the sounds of the flute, cello, double bass and organ). These laments hint of soul, of reflecting and distancing by imaginational expression. Here we can see more why archetypal psychology has stressed depression as the *via regia* in soulmaking.^{xix} The ascetic exercises that we call "symptoms" (and their "treatments"), the guilty despairs and remorse as the nigredo decays, reduce the old ego-personality, but this necessary reduction is only preparatory to the sense of soul which appears first in the blued imagination of depression.

Let us say, blue is produced by a collaboration between Saturn and Venus. According to Giacinto Gimma,^{xx} an eighteenth-century gemmologist, blue represents Venus, while the Goat, the Saturnian emblem of Capricorn, is blue's animal. Capricorn, you will recall, extends slowly from the depths to the heights; immense range and immense patience. Where blue brings to Venus a deeper melancholy, and to Saturn a magnanimity (another virtue of blue according to Gemma), it also slows the motion of whiteness, for **it** is the color of repose (Kandinsky). Thus blue is the retarding factor in the whitening. It is the element of depression, that raises deep doubts and high principles, wanting to settle things fundamentally and get them right in order to clarify them. This effect of blue on white can appear as feelings of service, labor, and disciplined observance of the rules, civil conformities like the blue cross, blue collar and blue uniforms, which figures of these feelings might carry. The effect can also appear in feelings of guilt and conscience.

There is indeed a "moral aspect of the whitening"^{xxi} — and I think this is precisely the effect of blue. The whitening implies neither a lessening of shadow nor

awareness about it. Rather, it means to me more space to carry its heights and depths, its full stature - The soul is whiter because the shadow is out of the repressed and aired in detailed conscious ways, the way blues give shadow-depth and precision of body in oil paintings, the way one drop of bluing makes the laundry whiter. The specific shading depends on the white-black proportion: "If the black exceeds the white by one degree, **it** exhibits a sky-blue color."^{xxii} The more black, the darker the blue; but even those celestial aspirations that race like a blue streak into the wild-blue yonder carry a modicum of darkness, a drop of putrefaction, a saving grace of depression in their hope. In fact, the saving grace of Mary's light blue may lie just in that 'one degree of blackness.'

I have myself understood the Jungian notion of blue as "the thinking function" to refer to blue's ancient association with the impersonal depths of sky and sea, the wisdom of Sophia, moral philosophy and truth. Images painted blue, says the pseudoDionysius, "show the hidden depth of their nature."^{xxiii} Blue is "darkness made visible."^{xxiv} This depth is a quality of mind, an invisible power that permeates all things, like air—and blue, said Alberti, in his great Renaissance work *On Painting*^{xxv} is the color of the element of air. When the darker blues appear in analysis, I gird myself, expecting that we are now in for the highs and deeps of animus and anima, or what Jungians sometimes call "the animus of the anima." (Did you know that a "blue-stocking" meant a learned lady, that "blueism" meant "the possession or affectation of learning in a woman," and that just plain "blue" once meant "fond of literature"?)^{xxvi} These deep blues are inflations with the impersonal, the hidden. They do not feel high, but come across rather as ponderous philosophical thought, judgments about right and wrong, and the

place of truth in analysis. What seems, and even is, so deep, however, is actually far off and away from matters at hand. What we are talking about “seems to recede from us” and “draws us after it” (Goethe) in the seductive manner of the anima.

By remembering that the animus of the anima is a psychic spirit attempting to enlighten the soul by deepening or raising it into impersonal truths, I am better able to get through these analytical sessions. I realize, thanks to Goethe, that these deep blue conversations of “stimulating negation” (negative animus thoughts, negative anima judgments) have soul-searching intentions. A work of distancing and detaching (Goethe) is going on, an attempt at reflection that is still stained with the nigredo because it burrows too deep, pushes too hard, neglecting the immediate surfaces from which silver catches its light. Nonetheless, the “negatives” that so obsess reflection with dark intuitions and depressive ruminations are enlarging psychic space by emptying out the room (Goethe) of its former fixtures. As the soul tries to work its way out of darkness by means of philosophical effort, the whitening is taking place; the animus is in service of the anima. Even the negative mood and critique, my own withdrawal, that I feel during these exercises belong also to this blue way toward whitening. The nigredo ends neither with a bang nor a whimper, but passes imperceptibly into breath-soul (anima) with a sigh. It helps to remember an image from Rabbi ben Jochai told by Scholem.^{xxvii} The ascending flame is white, but right below as its very throne is a blue-black light whose nature is destructive. The blue-black flame draws stuff to it and consumes it as the whiteness flames steadily on. The destructive blue and the white belong in the same fire. As Scholem comments, by virtue of its very inhesion in the nigredo, the blue flame is able to consume the darkness it feeds upon..

The connotations that we have uncovered in this amplification indicate the importance of blue in the alchemical process. Were the white to come merely as

a clearing off, something essential would be missed. Something must incorporate into the albedo a resonance of, a fidelity to, what has happened and transmit the suffering with another shading: not as grinding pain, decay, and the memory of depression, but as *value*. Value, we recall, (*Spr.* '80, pp. 35-37) belongs to the phenomenology of silver. The sense of the value of psychic realities is not born merely from relief of black distress. The blue qualifies the white with worth in the ways we have mentioned and especially by its introduction of moral, intellectual and divine concerns, thereby bringing to the whitened mind a capacity for *evaluating* images, devotion to them, and a sense of their truth, rather than only reflection upon their play as fantasies. It is the blue which deepens the idea of reflection beyond the single notion of mirroring, to the further notions of pondering, considering, meditating.

The colors which herald white are spoken of as Iris and the rainbow, as many flowers, and mainly as the brilliance of the peacock's tail with its multiple eyes.^{xxviii} According to Paracelsus,^{xxix} the colors result from dryness acting on moisture. Believe it or not, there is more color in the alchemical desert than in the flood, in less emotion than in more. Drying releases the soul from personal subjectivism, and as the moisture recedes that vivacity once possessed by feeling can now pass over into imagination. Blue is singularly important here because it is the color of imagination *tout court*. I base this apodicticus not only on all we have been exploring: the blue mood which sponsors reverie, the blue sky which calls the mythic imagination to its farthest reaches, the blue of Mary who is the Western epitome of anima and her instigation of image-making, the blue rose of romance, a *pathos* which pines for the impossible *contra naturam* (and *pathos*, the flower, was a blue larkspur or delphinium placed on graves); I call also on Wallace Stevens' blue and Cezanne's blue as testimonies.

Blue “represents in [Stevens'] work the imagination . . . such as the romantic or the imaginative in contradistinction to the realistic.”^{xxx} And it was as well for

Stevens the color of intellectual stability and "reason." "Both the intellect and imagination are blue,"^{xxxix} just as Stevens' poetry presents that combination of thought and image so successfully.^{xxxii} The appearance of blue in the coloration process indicates that span of the spectrum where thought and image begin to coalesce, images provide the medium for thoughts while reflections take an imaginative turn away from the dark and confined frustration of the nigredo and toward the wider horizon of mind. The blue instrument moves soul from sounding its small lament to the great breath of Kandinsky's organ, its largo, the spacious march of philosophizing that can incorporate the hurts of one's history into a tragic sense of life.

As with Stevens, so with Cezanne,^{xxxiii} "When he was composing... only a visionary's or a poet's imaginative conception... could be of help to him. It was impossible for him to start out from an isolated real thing seen."^{xxxiv} He based his painting on "shadow paths and contours"^{xxxv} out of which 'real things' emerged as local high points. The imaginative conception, the visionary shadow, originates and supports the real thing seen in nature. "The deepest shadow colour in Cezanne's paintings, the one which supports the composition and is most appropriate for shadows, is *blue*."^{xxxvi} "Cezanne gave blue a new depth of meaning... by making it the foundation of his world of objects 'existing together.' For, when he used blue in this way, he transcended any special connotation which had attached to its former uses. Blue was now recognized as belonging to a deeper level of existence. It expressed the essence of things and their abiding, inherent permanence and placed them in a position of unattainable remoteness."^{xxxvii}

The blue foundation is the imaginal ground which allows the eye to see imaginatively, the event as image, creating at the same time a remoteness from real things (Cezanne), from the green of the actual world (Stevens), a remoteness felt in the nostalgia which blue brings. With blue comes both the

longing toward white and a sad acknowledgement that as whitening proceeds one both comes home and can't go home again.

Once the black turns blue, darkness can be penetrated (unlike the nigredo which absorbs all insights back into itself, compounding the darkness with negative introspections). The shift to blue allows air so that the nigredo can meditate itself, imagine itself, recognize that this very shadow state expresses "the essence of things and their abiding, inherent permanence." Here is imaginal consciousness affirming its ground.

Cezanne wrote: "Blue gives other colours their vibration, so one must bring a certain amount of blue into a painting."^{xxxviii} From his perspective, blue would be the crucial color in the palette of the peacock because it transforms the other colors into possibilities of imagination, into psychological events, that come to life because of blue. Boehme writes, "Imagination of the great Mystery, where a wondrous essential Life is born" results from the colors.^{xxxix} The full flowering of imagination shows itself as the qualitative spread of colors so that imagining is a coloring process, and if not in literal colors, then as the qualitative differentiation of intensities and hues which is essential to the act of imagination.

When the colors shine in the peacock's tail so too do the eyes whereby they can be seen. Imaginative vision precedes the whiteness itself, otherwise the white earth cannot be perceived as the transfiguration of nature by imagination. For this new perception, the perception of colors too goes through transubstantiation into a mystical or painterly sense of them as substances, as the complexions on the faces of light which reveal the true quality of nature, its endlessly subtle and multiple intensities. Colors shift from being phenomena of light to phenomena themselves; or, light shifts to being the presentation of color and secondary to it so that the white earth is not sheer white in the literal sense but a field of flowers,^{xl} a peacock's tail, a coat of many colors.

The transubstantiation announced by the peacock reverses the history of

philosophy. The color visions of Newton and Locke, of Berkeley and Hume belong to the subjectivism of the nigredo and the mortification of nature. Color can now become a primary quality again, the thing itself as *phainoumenon* on display, the heart in the matter, prior to such abstractions as bulk, number, figure and motion. When color is, the world is as we see it—not merely green as naturalistic sense-perception believes, but green because of its blue shadow.^{xii} The world is as we see **it** in our dreams and poems, visions and paintings, a world that is truly a cosmos, cosmetically adorned, an aesthetic event for the senses because they have become instruments of imagining.

The *multi flores*, the myriad eyes in the tail, suggest that the colored vision is multiple vision. One must be able to see polychromatically, polymorphously, polytheistically before the terra alba appears. The movement from a monocentric universe to a cosmos of complex perspectives begins with blue since **it** “gives the other colours,” as Cezanne says, “their vibration.” Then the alchemical colors vanish and are replaced by a brilliant white lustre. Here one might be so dazzled by the new brilliance of mind as to take white literally, as if white meant only and literally one thing — whiteness — thereby forgetting the multiplicity which made the whiteness possible^{xiii} The multiplicity must already have been built into the mind as the vibrations, shadings and subtleties that are not only there in things but are there in the eyes of the mind by which things are seen as images. It is as if we enter the world without preconceptions, startled by the phenomena where everything is given and nothing taken for granted.

To experience in this manner is to recover innocence — hence the brilliant white lustre. Ruskin called it “the innocence of the eye,” “a sort of childish perception of these flat stains of colour, merely as such, without consciousness of what they signify.”^{xiiii} Attention shifts from the signification of perception to perception itself. We ask about qualities — What is there? in what way is **it** there? what is **it** doing there? (rather than how did **it** get there, why, and what

good is it?)

This excursion, these images, and the figures whom we have summoned — Cezanne, Stevens, Rilke, Zola, Kandinsky, Jung, Picasso, Marc—reveal to us something of the nature of the *unio mentalis*. Jung, expanding on Dorn, considers the unio mentalis to be the union of spirit and soul (logos and psyche), i.e., freeing soul from body, its integration with spirit, prior to further union with body (physis, physics, world, unus mundus). As a union of logos and psyche, the unio mentalis is psychology, the achievement of a psychological spirit - I am understanding the unio mentalis also as the albedo goal of the work, the activation of silver.

The nature of this achievement can be garnered from the accounts of those we have summoned. They suggest that the alchemical unio mentalis is the interpenetration of thought and image,^{xiv} of perceived world and imaginal world, a state of mind no longer concerned with distinctions between things and thought, appearance and reality, or between the spirit that develops theory and the soul that builds fantasy. We have colored this unio mentalis ‘blue,’ because the blue we have been encountering transfigures appearances into imaginal realities and imagines thought itself in a new way. Blue is preparatory to and incorporated in the white, indicating that the white becomes earth, that is, fixed and real, when the eye becomes blue, that is, able to see through thoughts as imaginative forms and images as the ground of reality.

Alchemy expresses this condition as the caelum or “blue tincture” (CW 14, para.703) which is a heavenly firmament, the celestial substance that is the color of “ciel” (p. 478, n77) or “color of air” (paras .691-92), a quintessencia that is curiously concocted, according to Dorn, from an underworld experience (703) that is also called “wine” (681-83). We cannot now go into the psychological importance of wine nor its vernacular relationship with blue drunkenness, blue noses, and blue laws. We can, however, remember Heraclitus’ saying that

Dionysos and Hades are one, so that the mystery of the unio mentalis has an echo of a Dionysian mystery. Of the consciousness brought by this mystery we know what Dodds, Otto, and Kerényi have told us—nature comes alive; the God's presence permeates communal existence as a somber shadow that gives a joyous vibration to all things, or as Goethe described blue, "a kind of contradiction between excitement and repose." The unio mentalis implies a divine drunkenness^{xlv} that does not exclude what the normal nigredo mind considers pathological. I cannot call Dionysos directly 'blue' despite the fact that his hair and eyes, in the Homeric Hymn (7.5, **15**) to him, are *kyaneos*. He sees with the blue eye and to see him our eye must be colored in the same way. I can, however, connect this Lord of Souls and Wine with Kessler's summary above of Cezanne's blue: that "depth of meaning," that "deeper level of existence" which both holds the world communally as "existing together" and yet "in a position of unattainable remoteness."

When myths say Gods have blue hair or blue bodies, they have. The Gods live in a blue place of metaphor, and they are described less with naturalistic language than with poetic 'distortion.' Mythical talk must be full of hyperbole; the Gods live in the highs and deeps. To depict them rightly we need the expressionist's palette, not the impressionist's. Precisely this shift into mythical perception occurs with the unio mentalis: we now *imagine* the nature of reality, and dark-blue becomes the right color to express Dionysos' hair, because it is the natural, reasonable hue for the hair of this God in this Hymn, a most realistic depiction.

Although the caelum here, as unio mentalis and quintessence, is a late stage, it is sometimes (Paracelsus, Figulus) said to be the prerequisite for all alchemical operations whatsoever. The mind from the beginning must be based in the blue firmament, like the lazuli stone and sapphire throne of mysticism, the azure heaven of Boehme, *philosophia*. The blue firmament is an image of

cosmological reason; it is a mythical place that gives metaphorical support to metaphysical thinking. It is the presentation of metaphysics in image form.^{xlvi} These upper vaults of stone confirm the solidity of invisible thought in a mythical manner and they show the mythical foundations of thought; they allow, even command, a philosophy that reaches to just such cosmological heights and depths, the full extension and glory of imagination as philosophy, philosophy as imagination, in the terra alba of the imaginal as described by Corbin.

If the caelum must be present to begin with, then to do alchemy one must be confirmed in imaginal durabilities, transcending mere psychological perspectives and metaphorical implications. The metaphorical twist that the adjective blue gives in the immense variety of its uses in vernacular speech, removing ordinary things from their ordinary sense, is only the beginning of the epistrophic return of all things to their imaginal ground. The mind itself must be drenched in blue, cosmological.

Alchemy begins before we enter the mine, the forge, or laboratory. It begins in the blue vault, the seas, in the mind's thinking in images, imagining ideationally, speculatively, silveredly, in words that are both images and ideas, in words that turn things into flashing ideas and ideas into little things that crawl, the blue power of the word itself, which locates this consciousness in the throat of the visuddha cakra (*Spr.* '80, p. 420 whose dominant color is a smoky-purple-blue).

The caelum, then, is a condition of mind. Envision **it** as a night-sky filled with the airy bodies of the Gods, those astrological constellations which are at once beasts and geometry and which participate in all things of the world as their imaginal ground. The caelum does not of course take place in your head, in your mind, but your mind moves in the caelum, touches the constellations, the thick and hairy skull opens to let in more light, their light, making possible a new idea of order, a cosmological imagination whose thought accounts for the cosmos in

the forms of images.

That we have had to go to figures like Stevens and Cezanne for more understanding of the coloring process tells us not only about the psychology of the *unio mentalis*; we are told also who are the alchemists in our time. The poets and painters, and the figures in us who are poets and painters, are those struggling with the continuing alchemical problem: the transubstantiation of the material perspective into soul through *ars*, Artifex now artisan. The alchemical laboratory is in their work with words^{xlvii} and paints, and psychology continues its tradition of learning from alchemy by learning from them.^{xlviii} They tell us one further thing about the white earth: if the imaginal ground is first perceived by artistic method, then the very nature of this earth must be aesthetic—the way is the goal. We come to the white ground when our way of doing psychology is aesthetic. An aesthetic psychology, a psychology whose muse is *anima* is already hesitantly moving, surely moving, in that white place.

Blue Notes

ⁱ Cf. Norton's *Ordinal* (HM 11:38—39). "Physicians have discovered nineteen colours intermediate between white and black in urine.... Magnesia (a term for white) throws out a mild, pure splendour in the subtle stage of our Art; and here we behold all colours that ever were seen by the mortal eye — a hundred colours, and certainly a good many more than have been observed in urine; and in all those colours our Stone must be found in all its successive stages. In the ordering of your practical experiments. and in conceiving the different parts of the work in your own mind, you must have as many phases, or stages, as there are colours."

ⁱⁱ For a rich, curious phenomenology of blue, see William Gaas, *On Being Blue*, Boston: Godine, 1976.

ⁱⁱⁱ The assimilation of silver (white) to the color of the sky compares with this paradox from Wittgenstein: "In a picture in which a piece of white paper gets its lightness from

the blue sky, the sky is lighter than the white paper. And yet in another sense blue is the darker and white the lighter colour." *Remarks on Co/our*, 1,2. University of California Press, 1978.

^{iv} Cf. Dorothy Wyckoff's note to her edition of Albertus Magnus' *Book of Minerals*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1967, pp. 192—93.

^v *Goethe's Co/or Theory*, Rupprecht Matthei and Herb Aach, eds., New York: van Nostrand Reinhold, 1971, p. 170 (p. 310 of the Eastlake translation).

^{vi} Cf. Gass for the weird and sexual blues, especially. On the cyanotic aspect of the blue, see Jung's remarks on Picasso's blue period (*CW* 15, para.210) which Jung compares with a *Nekyia* to the realm of Hades: "...we enter the underworld. The world of objects is death-struck, as the horrifying masterpiece of the syphilitic, tubercular, adolescent prostitute makes plain."

^{vii} Cf. Jung, *CW* 12, para 322: "And how can man reach fulfillment if the Queen does not intercede for his black soul? She understands the darkness This passage follows Jung's discussion of "blue."

^{viii} Cf. J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, London: Routledge, 1962, p. 52.

^{ix} Th. Thass-Thienemann, *The Interpretation of language*, New York: Aronson,

^x Dronke, p. 67. On the (light) blue sky, see Bachelard's chapter "Le ciel bleu," in his *L'air et les songes*, Paris: Corn, 1943. The underworld as an airy place, and blue, appears in the Navaho cosmology. The next to the deepest (red) world is blue, inhabited by blue birds. Gladys A. Reichard, *Navaho Religion*, Bollingen-Pantheon, 1950, 1:15.

^{xi} Harold Bayley, *The Lost Language of Symbolism*, London: Benn, 1912, I;78—79.

Bayley derives 'blue' from words for 'truth'—a curious example of archetypal fantasy displayed as etymology.

^{xii} Cirlot, p. 51.

^{xiii} Dronke, p. 98 (*Scivias* II, 2). Despite its 'virtuousness' blue was not a canonical color (Like violet, white, green, black). Does blue carry an indelible etymological taint?

Kyanos cognate with Skr. *cunya* “empty, vacant, vain,” *cuna-m* “absence, want”; Latin, *cavus* “hollow” (p. 100). *Caerulus* (Lan. dark-blue sky) is cognate (via Skr. *Cyama*) with dark, vanish, leave, be left (p. 99), *Livid* (Lat. blue) belongs to a group of words meaning slipping away, shrinking, vanishing, flowing (p. 98). *Blue* (Germanic) itself belongs to “a large class of color-names... meaning... marked, rubbed, smeared,” stained and colored in the sense of ‘discolored’ (p. 73). Page numbers refer to Francis A. Wood, *Color-Names and their Congeners* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1902). Compare to these etymologies of blue this digest of Goethe’s evaluation: “[blue] stands on the negative side of the polarity of colours where deprivation, shadow, darkness, weakness, cold, distance, an attraction to and affinity with alkalis are to be found.” Kurt Badt, *The Art of Cézanne*, Univ. California Press, 1965, P. 59.

^{xiv} The black-white mixture in blue appears in an old British expression “blue skin” who was a “person begotten on a black woman by a white man.” One of the “blue squadron” meant “a lick of the tar brush.” *Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit and Pickpocket Eloquence*, London: C. Chappel, 1811.

^{xv} Dominique Zahan, “Colour Symbolism in Black Africa,” in *Color Symbolism, op. cit.*, p. 56.

^{xvi} The blue/white association is not only in Marian symbolism, since blue plays an especially spiritual role in Jewish mystical and cult symbolism, cf. Gershom Scholem, “Farben und ihre Symbolik in der Judischen Ueberlieferung und Mystik,” *Eranos*
^{xvii} Rimbaud’s sonnet “Voyelles” where blue equals ‘0,’ Omega.

^{xviii} Will Grohmann, *Wassily Kandinsky*, N.Y.: Harry Abrams, nd.p.89.

^{xix} “The blue-clothed” is a current Persian way of naming Sufis for which “various explanations have been given.” (H. Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*, Boulder: Shanibala, 1978, p. 157, n121). Supposedly, blue dress is “appropriate to those who are still in the first stages of the mystic life.” Dark blue clothing is worn when “the lower psyche (nigredo) has been overcome, as though one were in mourning for it.”

^{xx} G.F. Kunz, *The Curious Lore of Precious Stones*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1913, p.31, quoted from *Della storia naturale delle Gemme*, Napoli. 1730, 1;131—37. A century earlier (1611) Cesare Ripa lists in his painter’s dictionary (*Iconologia*) these figures who should be robed in blue: Astrology, Goodness, Poetry. Steadfastness and also Inconstancy (Picasso’s blue prostitute?, or at least the shadow side of the fidelity. truth-constancy construct.)

^{xxi} M.-L. von Franz, *Aurora Consurgens*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1966, 243.

^{xxii} Dronkc, p. 76.

^{xxiii} Dronke, p. 66.

^{xxiv} Cirlot, p. 51.

^{xxv} Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, Yale Univ. paperbound, 1966, p. 50. To an earlier mind, the ‘airiness’ of blue could be physically demonstrated by the fact that blue paint is a most fugitive color, fading fast because it had no native pigment, only unwieldy crushed lapis lazuli brought from the Oxus region of Central Asia. On the history and technology of blue paint, see Badt, *op. cit.*, pp. 62, 79.

^{xxvi} These references can be found in T.L.O. Davies, *A Supplementary English Diccionary*, London: Bell, 1881, pp. 68—69.

^{xxvii} Scholem, pp. 45—7.

^{xxviii} “Then take silver, well purged from all metals.. . then seal up the oil of *Lutta* ... and set it in a *Balneo* to putrefy until it show all colours, and at last come to be crystalline white.” “The Bosom Book of Sir George Ripley” in *Collectanea Chemica*, london: Stuart & Watkins, 1963, p. 137. Paracelsus, 1:83, “When the regimen of the fire is moderated, the matter is by degrees moved to blackness. Afterwards, when the dryness begins to act upon the humidity, various flowers of different colours simultaneously rise in the glass, just as they appear in the tail of the peacock, and such as no one has ever seen before. ... Afterwards, those colours disappear, and the matter at length begins to

grow white..." Cf. Jung, *CW* 14, paras. 388, 391—92, and passim in Index, Volume 20:

"peacock," *cauda pavonis*, etc.

^{xxix} *ibid.*

^{xxx} Edward Kessler, *Images of Wallace Stevens*, Rutgers Univ. Press, 1972, p. 198 (cited from Hi Simons).

^{xxxii} *ibid.*, p.203; "The Man with the Blue Guitar," Stevens' most overt use of blue as symbol, is in the poet's own words a work of 'pure imagination.' The color is perhaps best characterized as a symbol for speculative thought, or simply for the mind" (p.196).

^{xxxiii} "The poet, in order to fulfill himself, must accomplish a poetry that satisfies both the reason and the imagination." Wallace Stevens, *The Necessary Angel*, N.Y.: Knopf-Vintage, 1951, p. 42.

^{xxxiiii} "Cezanne is mentioned far more frequently in the critical prose of Stevens than is any other modern painter." James Baird, *The Dome and the Rock*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1968, p. 84. See pp. 82—93 on their likeness; although Baird emphasizes their common concern with structure, I am stressing their common regard for blue and its implications for their imaginal view of their work.

^{xxxv} Kurt Badt, *The Art of Cezanne*, Univ. California Press, 1965, P. 56.

^{xxxvi} *ibid.*, Chapter "Shadow-paths and Contours."

^{xxxvii} *ibid.*, p. 56. The blue of Cézanne drew particular comment from both Zola and Rilke — no mean imaginers themselves. Badt. pp. 56— 58.

^{xxxviii} *ibid.*, p. 82.

^{xxxix} *ibid.*, p. 57. Compare Kessler's remark on Stevens' blue as "that human faculty which attempts to unify the disparate colors in external nature." The Blue Rider group in Germany is another instance of a union of thinking and imagination. "... blue was both Kandinsky's and Marc's favorite color ..." "We thought up the name (Der Blaue Reiter) while sitting at a cafe table... Both of us were fond of blue things, Marc of blue horses, and I of blue riders." (Kandinsky's own account, 1930) in Grohmann, *op. cit.*, p. 78. The

mystical inwardness in the depiction of 'nature,' 'the dislike for 'green,' and the metaphysical reflection they brought to imagining all accord with the 'blue' tradition.

^{xl} In the same passage of Boehme (*Mysterium pansophicum*, quoted by Jung, *CW* 9 i, para. 580), we find that first there comes a "bright-blue," then various other color analogies to it and then "it is like blue in green, yet each still has its brightness, and shines." The problem of Stevens, blue vs. green, is also noted by Boehme, who can see them as joined yet retaining their difference.

^{xli} The many flowers appear in Corbin's white earth. He speaks of this "sacred botany" which gives whitened consciousness a sensuous reality and particular content (rather than a mere snow field or white light). The flowers are an appearance in our Western context of the anima as Flora, the flowering of the imagination as rooted living forms. Corbin says: "the flowers play the part of the materia prima for alchemical meditation. This means mentally reconstituting Paradise, keeping company with heavenly beings" (*Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1977, pp. 31—32). Von Franz gives a variety of splendid passages on the many flowers (*Aurora Consurgens*, pp. 391—95, referring to Jung), which she interprets as "components of our psychic totality, the self" and "indicate a blossoming of psychic relationship" as "human relationships" (p. 395). The reduction of the flowers to "our" passes by the very material she has assembled, where she states, "In Greek alchemy flowers and blossoms are an image for spirits or souls" (p. 392). It is "the heavenly beings"—the imaginal figures—with whom the psychic relationship now occurs. We are witness to *their* blossoming and we are their gardeners.

^{xlii} Perhaps the persisting fantasy that the ancients and primitives did not know 'blue' as we do belongs to the archetypal phenomenology of paradise, of the golden age and happy savage, where blue need not be identified as a separate experience apart from 'the green world' — no remoteness, no nostalgia, no depression, no pathology. Nature and

Imagination indistinguishable. For Stevens, the blue-green conflict comes out a tie. His work shows 163 mentions of each word (Kessler, *op. cit.*, p. 185).

^{xlii} Cf. *CW* 14, para. 388 for an example of forgetting the multiplicity. Jung writes: “The ‘omnes colores’ are frequently mentioned in the texts as indicating something like totality. They all unite in the *a/be do*, which for many alchemists was the climax of the work. The first part was completed when the various components separated out from the *chaos* of the *massa confusa* were brought back again to unite in the albedo and ‘all become one.’ Morally this means that the original state of psychic disunity, the inner chaos of conflicting part-souls which Origen likens to herds of animals, becomes the ‘vir unus,’ the unified man.” This interpretation identifies totality with unity, whereas totality can also mean all as all (each and every). Moreover, Jung’s moral interpretation not only sees the many as “disunity” and *chaos*, but places man above animal. Jung does give, however, other passages contrary to his own view, for instance, Khunrath (para. 392): “At the hour of conjunction the blackness and the raven’s head and all the colours in the world will appear...”

^{xliii} Quoted from E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, Princeton Univ. Press (Bollingen Series), 1961, p. 296.

^{xliv} William Gass, *On Being Blue*, *op. cit.*, is just such an example of a philosopher working his thought in images.

^{xlv} Cf. David L. Miller, *Christs*, Pt. II, N.Y.: Seabury, 1981.

^{xlvi} For one more example of image and thought combined in blue, see the “Vision of the World Clock” (*CW* 12, para. 307; *CW* 11, paras. 112ff).

^{xlvii} Cf. *Spr.* ‘80, p. 48, n.32 on works by Severson and Kugler on the laboratory of *language* for the transformation of matter.

^{xlviii} John Constable, the British landscapist, quoted this sentence as if his motto (or an alchemical motto): “The whole object and difficulty of the art (indeed of all the fine arts) is to *unite imagination with nature*.” Gombrich, *op. cit.*, p. 386.