The pharmakos phenomenon

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A thesis

presented to the

University of Western Sydney

in fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August, 2004

Acknowledgements

The seed for this work as a PhD thesis was sown in the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation in Uppsala in 1993 in conversation with Sven Hamrell. It is fitting that the final stages of the thesis were completed in Uppsala where the staff of the Foundation, and Karl-Eric Ericson, provided assistance in the copying and binding of the manuscript. Special thanks are due to Olle Nordberg, Executive Director, for wisdom at each hurdle and for a place to write and draw on Gotland. The ideas grew in the back of my mind during the many fascinating discussions with members of the International Dialogue on Health and Pharmaceuticals and I am grateful to each of them for lengthy conversations during 1999 and to colleagues in policy work in Australia for sharing their experiences and for their encouragement.

The process of image-making was shared at key moments with Anna Huenecke with whom I spent many happy hours in her studio experimenting with colour, texture and technique. Glenda Cloughley created opportunities to present the pharmakos as a dramatic story in collaboration with other artists. Elizabeth Cameron Dalman provided creative assistance to express in movement the dynamics of the pharmakos engagement, with Peter Cameron's exhilarating landscape paintings as backdrop.

There are many who gave me practical support and encouragement throughout the process. Kristos Nizamis, Stephanie Murray and Steve Shann read drafts and gave me valuable feedback. George Webeck proofread and corrected punctuation through many months with good humour. Special thanks are due to those who sat through the dark hours with me: Steve Shann, Jo Karmel, Peter Rafferty and Tony Henderson. I am grateful for my family's support: to David and Stephanie Murray for many discussions about the ideas; to Jock and Bronwyn Murray for good humoured calls to clarity; to Don and Wendy Murray and the Hodge's for listening, for places to stay and for IT help. The journey was shared in a special way with my mother Joan Murray, who was writing a PhD at the same time and a sympathetic fellow student in the good and bad times, and my daughter Emma who always understood what I was trying to say. I would not have managed to complete the work in any sense without the love and friendship of Helen and Ian Cathles - including the 31 days of the bushfire emergency when everything stopped.

I am grateful to the University of Western Sydney for the assistance of an Australian Postgraduate Award to undertake the work, and to staff and fellow students for exchanges of ideas. I will always treasure the lively teaching and intellectually stretching conversations with my supervisor, David Russell, and his patience and belief that it could be done.

Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

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Summary

The impetus for this thesis came from experience in the worlds of medicines, urgent and disturbing aspects of health, and people meeting to find ways through conflict and complex problems about them. The author facilitated policy making and dialogue between people from very different backgrounds, for a number of years. The thesis is an engagement with ambiguous and contradictory human reactions to stress while being-in-the-middle of threat and differences of many kinds. These trigger both scapegoating and an urge to mate. The phenomenon is embodied in the symbol and ritual of the pharmakos. The pharmakos ritual is ancient in human experience where in times of crisis, a human being was beaten with fig branches, and led throughout the community to receive the pollution prior to being killed or banished. It has been interpreted as the means of purifying a community of pollution - the scapegoat. There is something more to this phenomenon than purification and the scapegoat. The aim of the thesis is to engage with the phenomenon of the pharmakos, in order to bring back its symbolism and practice to conscious attention in dealing with many demanding situations today.

The pharmakos can be approached as a rich experience of moving through membranes between territories or states: of threat and anxiety where suspicion of pollution and causes of contagion must be eliminated; of previous catastrophe evoked in images, forms and associated feelings from memory (personal, cultural and archetypal); of curiosity and roaming in the underworld to observe the unknown close to the edge of life, death, discomfort and disorder, both psychologically and actually; of a psychological preparation of one's elements for mating, not knowing from where the elements to be mated with will come.

Such images are possible and encountered in a journey of the pharmakos through these states, undertaken in reverie of a kind practised by Gaston Bachelard. The study describes the phenomenon of the pharmakos through four perspectives (historical, psychological, neurological and biochemical) using data in literary, scientific and cultural texts. In the tradition of psychological phenomenology in general, and in the tradition of Les Todres in particular, it

will seek meaning in a "more than words can say" experience of the body. Thus the data from texts is amplified by the experiential encounter with the pharmakos held in the body of the author, and her lengthy experience of facilitating many dialogue and multi-stakeholder processes in health and medicines in Australia, developing countries and international settings.

The thesis demonstrates how the metaphors of the scapegoat and pollution (predominant in the historical perspective of the pharmakos) can be de-formed by imagination and penetrated to a closer point of contact between the experience within, and interaction with objects or people encountered in the world (in psychological, neurological and biochemical ways). This liberates a capacity for curiosity in the moment of greatest threat (the goat held within the scapegoat metaphor). It uncovers a thirst for creative fertilisation in a complex reality (akin to the biology of the fig held within the images of figs hung around the neck of the pharmakos, and the beating by fig branches in the ancient ritual) where opportunities are out-of-synch with one another, and one feels the discomfort and even horror of being scarred, pierced and betrayed by those who are different. Thus the thesis organises itself around the images of the scapegoat, the goat and the fig which were the visual images encountered in the journey of the pharmakos. The narrative follows these metaphors in the sequence in which they arose experientially, as the pharmakos sought gaps and crossed between them.

By attending to the pharmakos symbol, one can stare at what constitutes danger: at guilt in the air surrounding those attracting an accusation and exclusion; at the threat and emotion felt in the space between life and death, suffering and cure, the trauma of life as it is, and its infection in memory. New metaphors of the pharmakos bring an awareness of falling into oneself in the face of crisis, difference and destabilising change to make and reach for a connection of fertile elements. With inner and outer recognition of the work of the pharmakos, one can step into the middle of these dynamics within oneself and between people of great difference in values and experience in facilitating encounters with difference and change.

PROLOGUE

First Pharmakos Ritual

Imagine a town in rural Greece two and a half thousand years ago. The town is heavy with gloom. An epidemic is raging. The inhabitants are terror-stricken. The Archon calls for the pharmakos and the ritual that now must be enacted. [1]

A man or woman is selected – sometimes a man and a woman. They are dressed in white, freshly-spun cloth. They are fed special food at public expense – barley cakes, barley broth, cheese and figs.

A flute begins to play.

The beating begins. They are beaten seven times on the genitals with leeks and wild fig branches. They are encircled with branches.

The pharmakoi are led past every dwelling. People load the gloom and contagion onto them.

The music plays on.

The expelling of the pharmakoi is a solemn act. They are led outside the walls of the town. A pyre is made of the branches. The pharmakoi are burned. In some places they are thrown off a cliff into the sea.

This then is the pharmakos ritual. It eventually came to be carried out on a regular basis.

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[1] A long time ago, before there were cities, the ritual of the pharmakos existed. Only fragments of the earliest Greek written accounts remain. No other archaeological evidence exists. The ritual has been interpreted in various ways. *Pharmakos* is the singular, and *pharmakoi* is the plural of this Greek word. Its etymology is explained in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The pharmakos ritual is ancient in human experience. It has been said by classical scholars that the practice removed pollution and its contagious source from a community.[1] It was thus a means of purifying a community experiencing threat. In modern times the pharmakos phenomenon still appears in circumstances, major or minor, of conflict, crisis or destabilising change. A personal experience of the pharmakos arose in the author after a period of rest and reflection, following many years of working in the field of health and medicines as a facilitator, leader or organiser. There is something more to the pharmakos phenomenon than the removal of pollution and the cause of stress. The aim of the thesis is to describe a phenomenological engagement with the experience of the pharmakos from several perspectives, so that the observer may recapture the different aspects of its symbolism that may be attended to in demanding situations today.

The ritual is recounted in its basics as the Prologue to the thesis. It appeared to have become a regular and unsentimental practice in ancient times. The thesis explores the intriguing role played in this by the pharmakoi and the notion that they became conduits or porters to the edge - to the underworld - to the gap - of fragility.

The introduction gives, as background context, a brief account of the author's practical experience of work in health and medicines. It gives a brief account of the arising of the pharmakos phenomenon as image and feeling, and then introduces the manner of engaging with the phenomenon, and making meaning of it, together with the intellectual roots and method of the thesis. It sets out the manner in which the thesis narrative will unfold, the structure of the thesis, and the styles adopted for communicating different voices within the work.

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[1] Refer to Chapter Two for historical accounts of the pharmakos.

Background Contexts

The experiences that shaped the background to this thesis occurred in the course of work in public policy and social action on pharmaceuticals. The author was involved in developing national medicines policies in Australia,[2] the Philippines, Vietnam and Samoa, and advising the World Health Organization (WHO) in its process of developing guidelines to countries on national drug policies.[3] The aspect of this background experience relevant to the thesis was the engagement of all stakeholders in the process of policy-making and action. The difficulties in this process, given the tensions between the global, national and local influences in actions to improve access to and effective use of medicines[4], led the author to set up an International Dialogue on Health and

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[2] Murray, M.E. (1995). Australian national drug policies; facilitating or fragmenting health?. *Development Dialogue*, Vol. 1, pp. 148-92; Harvey, K.J. and Murray, M.E. (1995). Australian Medicinal drug policy. In H. Gardner (Ed.), *The Politics of health: The Australian experience*, Second Edition, (pp. 238-284). Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone; Murray, M.E. (1996). Involving all players in the research agenda. *From Trial Outcomes to Clinical Practice.* Symposium Proceedings (pp. 18-24). London: Drug & Therapeutics Bulletin. Murray Hodge, M.E. (1993) Australia focuses on the quality use of medicines: policy and action. *Essential Drugs Monitor,* Vol 15, pp. 12-13. Geneva: World Health Organization.

[3] World Health Organization. (2001). *How to develop and implement a national drug policy.* Second edition. Geneva: World Health Organization.

[4] The problems have been that up to half of the world's population does not have reliable access to needed medicines including the relatively few basic life-saving medicines; that millions of people need AIDS drugs for example, and do not have resources or earning power to purchase them; that research and development does not focus on the diseases affecting the poor who have no resources to buy future products; that the evidence of efficacy of medicines and belief in Western medicine drives the ethics of health, and finds little meeting place with the evidence, belief and reality of traditional medicine; that the understanding, motivations and expectations of people differ from health professionals, and communication is therefore difficult and often ineffective; that commitment by health professionals to adequate continuing education and to an independent "honest broker" stance in the midst of commercial pressures in health and medicines can be difficult; and so on. It has been the author's experience that these situations are accompanied by much anxiety, outrage, frustration and conflict. The author worked innovatively in assisting governments and communities to develop their pharmaceutical and health polices. This meant working with all the players involved in the problem: local and multinational industry; doctors; pharmacists; nurses; consumer and activist groups; media; researchers and policy makers. Within the Australian experience there were difficulties of communication, motivation and expectations. Similar sometimes more intense difficulties were experienced in other work around the world. For example, in aid projects between well-intentioned people from Western countries there was little preparation for the experience of providing aid and support to colleagues in other countries across less familiar cultural and social differences. It was also experienced within collaborative efforts of grassroots networks to understand and improve the situation.

Medicines and to assist in organizing several international projects[5] and grassroots collaborative action.[6]

There are some features of medicines themselves relevant to this experience. Medicines are concrete substances with properties which affect the body in many ways. Many work on the surfaces of cells and cause changes in their chemical environment. If this happens in all cells in a tissue, the result is a change in the function of the tissue, for example increased heart rate. Medicines are helpful at some doses and harmful at others. Some cause toxicity because the effect may be too exaggerated in modifying the existing condition of the body. People vary in their sensitivity to them. Medicines are manufactured, traded, prescribed, dispensed and consumed. Thus people give them a history. Medicines witness us in these transactions. They pass from one world of meaning and expertise to others where they are invested with very different knowledge and meaning. As commodities they globalise easily, being consequently both a needed therapy and an invasive disruption of traditional knowledge and relationships. Medicines use and change us as much as we use and change them. Thus they serve as ritual objects facilitating transitions from phase to phase and from health to illness and back.[7]

The interactions over medicines are complex and contested.[8] They have been one element of life through which civil society is developed,[9] and social

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[5] Dag Hammarskjold Foundation. (1995). Making National Drug Policies a Development Priority: A strategy paper and six country stories. *Development Dialogue Vol. 1.;* International Conference on Medicinal Drug Policies held in Sydney in October 1995. Proceedings published in *Australian Prescriber.* 1997 Vol 20, Suppl 1.; International Conference on Improving the Use of Medicines, 1997, http://www.who.int/medicines/organization/par/icium/summary.shtml

[6] The Peoples Health Assembly. http://www.phmovement.org

[7] Van der Geest, S., Whyte, S.R., Hardon, A. (1996). The anthropology of pharmaceuticals: A biographical approach. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 25: 155-78.

[8] Davis, P. (Ed.). (1996). *Contested Ground.* New York: Oxford University Press.

[9] Pravese Wasi. (1997). Closing inspirational address: beyond the medicinal drug and the new wisdom. In Proceedings of International Conference on national medicinal drug policies – the way forward. *Australian Prescriber,* Vol. 20, Suppl. 1, pp. 229-231; Editorial. (1995). Making National Drug Policies a Development Priority: A strategy paper and six country stories. *Development Dialogue Vol. 1. Uppsala:* Dag Hammarskjold Foundation.

transformation enacted.[10] Hence medicines are also an element through which power in democracy is analysed.[11] Medicines are issues over which patients, doctors and other health professionals negotiate care, self-reliance, rights and effective treatment. The experiences of people facing ill-health, trauma from social and political crisis, and from prolonged structural economic reform, from weakening of public health systems, and the experience of family and friends, all carry strong emotion and a desire to act.[12] There are differences in needs, values and traditions. Diverse ways of thinking about health, healing and medicines result in differences in knowledge, personal motivations and abilities. There are disparities in power, interests, responsibilities and resources.

Facilitating people coming together over concerns about health and medicines brings many of these dynamics into the meeting space. As a facilitator, the author experienced the space as crowded and cacophonous. Voices were spoken and unspoken. Emotions were visible and invisible. The private psychologies of people were present in the public space yet also none of its business. The differences of many kinds created a rich and complex soup that was sometimes difficult to swallow. There were two striking features. Firstly, the past seemed to be looking over the shoulder of each person and over the meeting space itself. Suspicion and assumptions in relation to past experience seemed always to be lurking. Secondly, the author was struck by the paradox that people in these situations appeared to treat each other as poisons and remedies (the conventional understanding of the double characteristic of a medicine). In the play out of disparities and differences in tackling the problems of literal medicines and poisons, the human dynamic mimicked the *thing* itself. It was an environment ripe for blame and demonising.

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[10] Robles, A., Mangahas, M., Coronel, S. and Gamalinda, E. (1992). *Prescription for change: National drug policies, social transformation and the media.* Manila: Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism/Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjold Foundation.

[11] Lofgren; H.& Boer, R. (2004). Pharmaceuticals in Australia: developments in regulation and governance. *Social Science and Medicine*, 58(12), 2397-2407; Ayres, I & Braithwaite, J. (1992). *Responsive regulation: Transcending the deregulation debate.* New York: Oxford University Press.

[12] People's Health Movement, May 2002. Voices of the Unheard: Testimonies from the People's Health Assembly December 2000, Dhaka, Bangladesh. http://www.phmovement.org/pubs/

The dynamics which increased the tension could be characterized in three ways. Firstly, people were meeting over serious business. Concern was for issues of life, death and suffering of human beings, and past events in relation to these marked by successes, failures, satisfaction or traumas. Secondly, there also lurked a sense of curiosity, fun and lightness accompanying a thirst for innovation, improvement and solution. There was almost a sense of collusion in wanting to provide a life free from pain and discomfort. Thirdly, there was often a sense of crisis – the situation is urgent for many. And there was a thirst for relief from the crisis. Hence the situation was complex, the search for *the cause* of the problem therefore hard to find, and probably beyond the ability of any one tradition to find. Usually what had brought people into a multi-stakeholder process is that solutions have not been satisfactorily found by working within one field, or applying one way of thinking across lots of activities. When successful grassroots approaches were developed by people they needed recognition, consideration and support by others.

As a facilitator, one is expected to be independent, yet knowledgeable about the field of medicines and health and able to find a way forward. One has to try hard. Yet one is never independent – with personal experiences of medicines and health and certain cultural formation and values always in the background. However, in feeling the cacophony, the author was instinctively working, to preserve the separateness of each voice, to avoid assumptions about their meaning and to avoid a *majority rules* or *mob* psychology.[13] There was a sense that there was something present more than the words were saying. The author felt a strong instinct that trusted that people would cross-fertilise if they could really get past reactive thinking, that trusted that people would assess for

[13] As a facilitator, leader or organizer, one learns many things - some from personal experience and some from the field of group process. For example, every group is different. Groups that become longstanding and have a specific goal, as in the Australian situation in policy-making on medicines, are different to creative, evolving, self-learning groups such as a dialogue group. There are many ideas and theories about human behaviour in groups. The author learnt useful techniques to manage negative energy, to take care that all participants were included and had a voice, to reveal the process and reflect it back to people, and support the group through hard and chaotic moments. Yet this does not adequately take account of the ethics that one is tussling with all the time in managing the suspicions and strong feelings between people and within oneself.

themselves whether there were real grounds not to trust another, and that trusted the ability of participants, including the facilitator, to stay open to unknown outcomes. The moments when people fall into an engagement that is beyond suspicion, beyond a forced search for creativity, yet also streetwise and aware of all the adverse possibilities, are moving and remarkable. These moments are not marked by niceness – there is often a scarring and an awakening on all sides. It both hurts and it brings a sense of satisfaction, energy and new insights.

Eventually, however, the stress of being-in-the-middle and the difficulty of the problems in health and medicines became too great and the author stopped to rest and get her own health back, to ponder why it was impossible to keep going, and what was demanded as expanded capacity of people in such situations.

The Arising of the Pharmakos Phenomenon

During this time of rest and reflection, the author gained many insights into the experience of being in the middle. One theme was the expression of pain and outrage associated with facing facts, past events in relation to situations, and meeting the human face of players in the drama. Being-in-the-middle meant that one was always feeling the misfit or mismatch between the assumptions made by people about one another and aware of these forming within oneself. This emotion had to *go* somewhere.[14]

[14] This was often in conflict with what I knew of each participant, having spent time with them in formal and informal ways, in having knowledge of many things in the personal and professional situations of people. This was gained either in a privileged position as a facilitator, simply as an interested person, or on aid projects for example, from having spent much time in the field seeing how colleagues worked and getting to know them and some of the people in their lives. However, I did not view it as my business to reveal or act on these personally in the space – but to create an environment where people could learn these things directly from one another. This meant spending time listening to people who found it difficult to cross into another's world, and trying to break down strong convictions based on suspicion of people they had not got to know. When one lost the inner capacity to manage these dynamics and became infected with outrage or blame about a situation, the situation was lost. In other circumstances, the sadness came from seeing the cultural process or negotiation needed to establish engagement of people with one another, but there was either not an opportunity or it was aggressively rejected, or I lacked the knowledge or courage to facilitate it.

Another theme was the strong and moving feeling of satisfaction from learning and being stimulated in encounters. Many of the initiatives had been successful in moving forward and producing continuing change and innovation. Yet feelings of scarring and being pierced by these experiences remained. The reflection thus provided insights into the courage and psychic limits of people, including herself, in meeting, opening to, and contemplating change. Staying open to meet difference in people and circumstances requires effort and adjustment, to deal with what seemed to be a sense of suspicion ever ready to arrive in the space.

Staying with the feelings and the images of these experiences provoked at first a strong need to make visual images. Thus painting and drawing produced many images. Later came a need for reflective reading in a search for understanding of what kind of experience it was and whether there was a symbol for it. The author read an account of the pharmakos by Walter Otto.[15] There was a jolt of recognition as the feelings associated with these personal experiences responded to the image of the pharmakos. This was a welcomed opening into a journey to discover more about this character both from others who had encountered it and, paradoxically, from within the author's own imagination.

The inner process of engagement with the pharmakos sparked a profound reverie. The pharmakos had appeared and the author stayed with it. Staying with an experience is a phenomenon in itself. The reverie had rich and varied tracks. It was akin to sitting in front of a fire for a long time. There was also a dark time when it seemed that the pharmakos had claimed and would never release her. In imagining deeply into the ritual of the ancients, many of the visual images made early in the process of withdrawal and reflection were revisited. The author was taken by the need to paint and draw again and again. Hand movements eventually turned into an image of the pharmakos as the inner territory of the phenomenon was walked. These images were redrawn and developed in many ways.

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[15] Otto, W. (1965). pp. 38-41.

On looking back, the author realised that there was a rhythm to this experience. Sometimes it was wholly creative, making images with hand and mind. At other times it was more reflective. The author became engrossed in reading about Greek culture and religion. The reading was an enquiry into the experience, looking for the kind of phenomenon it was, and what might be its intellectual pedigree.

Engagement with the Pharmakos Phenomenon

A phenomenological engagement with the pharmakos experience forms the substance of the thesis. As the engagement unfolded, it appeared to have two parts in dialogue with each other. One part was an inner engagement in a period of self-reflection that included the arising of the pharmakos and the early stages of engaging with it. The other part was an outer engagement through the experience of others who have had an encounter with the pharmakos in one or more of its aspects.

In the outer engagement, the pharmakos was traced through historical research, and found in surviving fragments from ancient Greek writers and interpreted by classical scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The author was drawn most strongly to those writers who had worked with original material – translating manuscripts, interpreting archaeological finds, or researching folk customs. These scholars were James Frazer, who created an enduring influential account of folk practices concerned with the paradox of the killing of the king in a comparative anthropological study, Jane Harrison, who belonged to what was known as the Cambridge ritualist school of philology, and Martin Nilsson, a Swedish historian of Greek religion.

The metaphors and associated images of the pharmakos unearthed in this historical research were three: a vessel to remove pollution; a means to refresh potency by beating; and the scapegoat. As a vessel to remove pollution, Jane Harrison described the pharmakos as a medicine made by the community itself to do its own cleaning - to purge itself. Similarly Nilsson described the

pharmakos as a sponge which is thrown away with its load of dirt after wiping clean a surface. As a beating administered to refresh waning potency, it was described by Frazer as refreshing the god Pan, who had failed to produce game for hunters or a vegetation deity in relation to crops. It was described by W.R.Paton, a scholar of ancient Greek words contemporary with Frazer and Harrison, as refreshing the potency of figs in particular. Lastly, all three scholars referred to the pharmakos as a scapegoat. This metaphor was taken up as a major interpretation much later by Rene Girard, a contemporary scholar of medieval history and literary criticism.

The primary intellectual tradition of this thesis is that of Gaston Bachelard. His phenomenology of imagination and his use of reverie allow images and metaphors to be followed close to their source. The engagement with the pharmakos follows the historical metaphors through reverie on the images they contain. The scapegoat metaphor has appeared to be the predominant or preferred metaphor of the pharmakos in culture. It was penetrated - or de-formed, or reached into - by Rene Girard to find a richer human reality symbolised in this word which carries the experience of banishment. Girard's penetration into many cultural texts, in myths and literature, found some key dynamics not immediately thought of in the use of the term. Firstly, he proposed the scapegoat as a mechanism that founds cultures and religion by repetitive processes of mimetic rivalry and violence, and he identified the stereotypes of persecution that are usually present in cultural accounts. Secondly, he showed how the scapegoat became distinguished from the pharmakos, and thus can be thought of as an aspect of the pharmakos phenomenon. The pharmakos is believed innocent by the community of the cause of the pollution in the banishment ritual but, as the scapegoat, is believed guilty by the crowd of causing a polluting crime that destabilises society and so is violently dealt with to restore calm and function. Thirdly, he shows how cultural texts can scapegoat of themselves and hide the mechanism of scape-goating and its founding violence.

The dynamics revealed by Girard provoked further reverie and reading. This process took seriously the innocence of the pharmakos, the elements of the original ritual, the visual images that arose in the process of self-reflection and a sharper attention to how texts tell their story. This then resulted in de-forming the scapegoat metaphor, leading to an exploration of the goat in Pan, the goat in the scapegoat and the potency in the fig. Experience of the fig and the goat is contained in many descriptions by writers in science and literature. The reverie of these was disciplined to penetrate beyond first impressions and involved imaginative stretching of associations. This helped move from the well-known to less well-known aspects of the pharmakos experience.

The less well-known aspects lie between the disturbing elements of experiences hurtful to the psyche in human experience, such as occur in major threat and the disturbing aspects of life bursting out in expression and generation of all kinds. Roaming between these and observing what is happening, is the intent of a reverie on the goat. Fertilisation, piercing and scarring, and mating elements which do not synchronise with each other, are features of the reverie on the fig. It is suggested that the dynamic transition between these, congruent with biochemical and neurological perspectives of how the human mind and body work in the micro level, is held symbolically in the pharmakos.

Intellectual Roots of the Thesis

The thesis borrows from many disciplines. The main intellectual ideas, however, lie in three bodies of knowledge. These, broadly described, are: metaphor, reverie and its penetration of experience; consciousness and image; and dialogue as psychological development.

Self-reflection through reverie, reading and visual image-making seemed characteristic of an inner life described by Gaston Bachelard in his study of imagination. The rhythm between inner and outer experience referred to above fits an observation of consciousness made by William James in his early work on psychology which influenced many later researchers in the field, including

Antonio Damasio. He described consciousness as a flow composed of substantive parts and transitive parts.[16]

The influence of Martin Buber in his ideas about finding the *I* in the *Thou* in encounters between humans, other life forms and the unknown, hovered in the background. Another question raised by Walter Otto in his account of the pharmakos ritual also remained in the background throughout the investigation: what were people in the presence of that led them to create such actions in the moment? Hence, the rhythm of the experience seemed also to relate to ideas about existential experience in the philosophical roots of phenomenology. Consciousness exists before boundaries are made by individual consciousness between object and subject. This aspect of human experience is not *developed* over lifetimes but is already there. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty thought of this as another dimension, or *being,* and there is a *crossing and dipping* between this dimension and the experience in and of the world. These ideas are important philosophical roots in phenomenology and will be referred to in Chapter 4.

The intellectual traditions of Gaston Bachelard on imagination and Antonio Damasio on consciousness have provided a basis for approaching, understanding and penetrating the experience of the pharmakos with its reverie and its signature images, the pharmakos, the fig and the goat. Gaston Bachelard, originally a philosopher of science, undertook a prolonged study of the phenomenon of imagination. He clearly articulated the relationship of the intellect, in scientific thought and practice, and the imagination. He advocated a rhythm of moving from one to the other in one's life.

Bachelard's ability to enter into the substance of the space between human beings and objects that profoundly engage the human psyche has strongly

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[16] James, William. (1890). p. 348. "Like a bird's flight, it seems to be of an alteration of flights and perchings. The rhythm of language expresses this, where every thought is expressed in a sentence, and every sentence closed by a period. The resting-places are usually occupied by sensorial imagination of some sort, whose peculiarity is that they can be held before the mind for an indefinite time, and contemplated without changing; the places of flight are filled with thoughts of relations, static or dynamic, that for the most parts obtain between the matters contemplated in the periods of comparative rest. Let us call the resting-places the 'substantive parts,' and the places of flight the 'transitive parts,' of the stream of thought."

influenced the approach to this work. His theory of imagination underlined its subjective nature, its ambiguity and its depth: life is directly communicated in the moment images emerge into words deep within the poet's soul. However, he warned that studying images required discipline. He called for an imagination – a reverie - that descended into the substance of the matter. He required that one not trust too quickly and easily the image or the metaphor. One needed an intention to penetrate the space between reality and the metaphor - into the place of their closest contact where an image seems to be in the process of materializing.

Antonio Damasio, a contemporary neuroscientist, has proposed a theory of consciousness based on recent research in neuroscience. He showed that the mind works in images. The mind displays a rich palette of images, not all conscious, to the body. The mind develops the capacity to narrate these as a story. This becomes the fleeting feeling of the self knowing that it is knowing. Human beings, in interacting with an object, are changed by it and the experience is stored in memory. This provided the basis for an assumption that the fig and the goat can be thought of as objects, with which human interaction has been enduring and continues in the cultural symbols of the fig leaf and the scapegoat. Therefore, a biochemical and neurological perspective in these aspects of the pharmakos can bring one closer to experience in material imagination. We have been changed by the goat and the fig and can be still. We form the scapegoat as an image and narrative inside us from images in memory, from troubling emotion in present experience of the world, and an existential feeling of exclusion when the human organism needs to make boundaries. Emotion is a preconscious sense of these in the body. Feeling is an evaluation of that emotion. Individual consciousness is feeling that and many other feelings.

Metaphor means to carry something over - to carry over aspects of one object to aspects of another.[17] It acts as a bridge between the familiar and the new, the known and the unknown. [18] Metaphors vividly transfer learning and

[17] Hawkes, T. (1972). p. 1.
[18] Ortony, A. (1975). pp. 45-53.

understanding from what is known to what is less known. They carry rich experience of a phenomenon in the body[19] upon aspects of realities of an object in the world. They are statements that include the topic of the metaphor (a person combining the characteristics of a poison and a remedy) in a category which is prototypical of that category (scapegoat). The vehicle of the metaphor (medicine, sponge, scapegoat) refers to an aspect of that category which is well recognised.[20] In this sense, the medicine metaphor may have become one of the metaphors we live by. The pharmakos as a topic is less well known. The scapegoat has transferred coherent chunks of perceptual, cognitive, emotional and experiential characteristics from itself to the pharmakos.[21] A new metaphor may create new realities as one starts to understand one's experience in terms of it, and to act in terms of it.[22] Or it may point to an older reality to reinforce it, thereby restating a total way of life afresh.[23]

The process of the thesis was oriented to finding a hidden crossing (or a new crossing) between the familiar and enduring aspects of human experience thrown up in the historical images of the pharmakos, and the unfamiliar or the unknown thrown up by the engaging with the pharmakos ritual. The intention was to find a crossing that would express something closer to the reality of the pharmakos as an embodiment of complex and enduring experience, and get a better fit between the metaphor and the reality of the experience. Having an intention of material imagination is to penetrate beyond the first impressions or forms of an image or metaphor, to capture and communicate more of the reality of rich and complex human experience it taps into.

The experience of the author in health and medicines had rich and ambiguous elements that were rubbing up against one another. The historical images and their interaction of associations seemed too thin, too undeveloped – although at first satisfying as a symbol of the painful nature of some of the elements. The

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[19] Hawkes uses a term "hurrying of material" that is evocative of this. Hawkes, T. (1972). p. 90.
[20] Glucksberg, S. & Keysar, B. (1990). pp. 3-18.
[21] Ortony, A. (1975). p. 53.
[22] Lakoff, G. Johnson, M. (1980). p. 145.
[23] Hawkes, T. (1972). p. 91.

scapegoat metaphor is compact and conveys something inexpressible, but when penetrated into its deeper, older roots as a mechanism in culture, its vividness dimmed. A hidden crossing, based on Bachelard's approach, might be found deeper in the gap under the existing metaphors and closer to the material contact between experience in the body and the object carrying the meaning (in this case, the scapegoat, the goat and the fig). Bachelard calls this deforming the formal or surface metaphors or images, and penetrating to a material imagination of the object. This may disturb enough to enable a better comprehension of something complex.

The feeling of disturbance makes the phenomenon psychological. "To think through an idea, it helps to study its appearances," said James Hillman in his study of power.[24] He differentiated the general idea of power into the bundles of ideas that constituted its appearances. He extended the idea. He disturbed his readers in their conception of power as he went along. This he described as a psychological approach – finding a way into the psyche that brings new life and new meanings.

There is much ambiguity in the varied aspects of the pharmakos, and a descent into these aspects links the enquiry to the notion of a psychological study in that the notion of descending is stopping consciously to attend to emotions, feelings and images. All the moods of the psyche, including fantasy and suffering, are taken together in Hillman's description of a psychological approach. It is a way through the psyche that proceeds via the soul and vice versa.[25]

This way of thinking fitted the author's personal and professional experience of the phenomenon of the pharmakos. This allowed some sense to be made of the varied aspects of the pharmakos encountered in the reverie. It allowed a search for a fertile way of viewing the troubling emotions of the public professional work and the private toll it took on the author. It opened a way of finding a deeper capacity to act in these in-between spaces.

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[24] Hillman, J. (1995). p. 10, p. 11.
[25] Hillman, J. (1972). pp. 9-10.

The notion of finding a deeper capacity links to the notion of psychological development through dialogue. The ideas of Mary Watkins were important in this sense. Mary Watkins proposed that psychological development was accomplished in growing the capacity to dialogue with one's internal invisible voices, or guests as she called them. Recognition that inner imaginal voices exist and are diverse stimulates an ability to listen and dialogue with them. In this way, internal correspondence with difference enabled its facility in the external world.

The pharmakos and the scapegoat appear to be profound and enduring realities in human experience. The author wanted to penetrate beyond the inherited fragments that hint at a developed ritual, to the experiences of a community of individuals in the moment that they acted out *something*. The overriding fascination was to know what was in the heart of the pharmakos and the community whilst they were engaged in the act. What was so near to them? What were they in dialogue with?[26]

Method of the Thesis

This investigation of the pharmakos is a phenomenological study. It is a psychological study in that it has sought depth in the meaning of the pharmakos phenomenon in the consciousness of different scholars and the author. Its aim is to describe experiences of the pharmakos and to arrive at a meaning that connects and integrates the varied consciousness of the phenomenon.

The method of the thesis is that of psychological phenomenology.[27] Method in psychological phenomenology is employed to produce a clear description of the engagement with a phenomenon. Data is gathered by preference from subjects who have experienced the phenomenon. The method enquires into the subjects' experienced meaning. This method required some adaptation to accomplish this

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[26] These were Walter Otto's questions and attitude to such phenomena.

[27] The term psychological phenomenology is used throughout the thesis for consistency. It includes philosophical, or existential, phenomenology and embraces all the key intellectual influences of phenomenology on the thesis: Bachelard, Hillman, Watkins and Buber.

study of the pharmakos phenomenon. Aspects of philosophical and psychological traditions in phenomenology were combined in that both self-reflection and the gathering of descriptions of others' engagement with aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon were used. The weight given to self-reflection was greater than in the method of conventional psychological phenomenology but it still used data from subjects and follows the general phenomenological method which seeks a dialogue between the *I* and the *we* descriptions of the experience. These issues and those outlined below are discussed in Chapter 4.

The thesis is a theoretical study in that there were no outright interviews per se with subjects who had engaged with the pharmakos. A valid alternative source of data is depictions of the experience from outside the research project itself from writers in literature or previous psychological or phenomenological investigators. Descriptions are then imaginatively transformed, seeking the point at which the essential psychological structure of the experience can be described. By iterative interrogations of these descriptions, the researcher arrives at a description of the psychological structure of the experience in the manner described by Donald Polkinghorne in his overview of p research methods applicable in phenomenological psychology.

There exists, then, as data for this work: the historical and mythic research on the pharmakos and some major cultural interpretations of it; research into the pharmakos in the territories of the scapegoat, the fig and the goat; and this author's reverie on the pharmakos, the fig and the goat. The historical writers, Frazer, Harrison and Nilsson, and the literary critic, Rene Girard, have been thought of as phenomenological investigators who encountered aspects of pharmakos material and redirected their awareness of their experience of this material to provide penetrating descriptions of the phenomenon through the intellectual perspectives of their disciplines.

The early personal engagement with the pharmakos by the author remains as background to the thesis, but the prolonged period of image-making, the development of refined images of the pharmakos and the evolution of them into

other aspects evocative of the experience remain as an invisible filter to the investigation of the pharmakos phenomenon through the experiences of others. Viewed from the perspective of psychological phenomenology, the revisiting of earlier images was a form of interrogation or interaction with previous descriptions of an experience (in this case in the form of a visual image).

This personal experience became more visible in the reveries on the goat and the fig, where self-reflection underpinned an understanding of the pharmakos. Critical to this understanding was to take as valid the appearances of images of the fig and goat in the visual image-making. Through dialogue with them they were recognised as carrying a structure of fertility important to the underlying consciousness being experienced. This was then put into interaction with different writers descriptions of figs and goats from biochemical and psychological perspectives. In Polkinghorne's view, these descriptions would be considered *naïve* descriptions of aspects of the pharmakos in that they have not been reflected on as an engagement with an aspect of the pharmakos. In Bachelard's view, these aspects of the pharmakos would be considered its most materialised symbolic form. The process of imaginative stretching to arrive at a psychological description still in keeping with meaning and experience is more important in this part of the thesis.[28]

In summary then, the method describes the phenomenology of an engagement with the pharmakos through four perspectives (historical, psychological, biochemical and neurological), using data in literary, scientific and cultural texts. Adapting techniques of Les Todres in particular, the thesis sought meaning in *a more than words can say* experience of the pharmakos. Todres, influenced by the existential philosophical roots of phenomenology, advocates that the researcher take care for the way people (in this case authors) search in their bodies for words to express experience. This attitude was taken in

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[28] The words of Schelling, quoted by Walter Otto at the beginning of his study on Dionysos, are relevant: "It is not a question here of how we must turn, twist, limit, or curtail the phenomenon so that it can still be explained, if need be, by principles which we once agreed not to exceed; but it is a question rather of the direction in which we must expand our ideas to come to terms with the phenomenon." Otto, W. (1965). p. 46.

approaching the texts used in this study and to the ritual - as people searching in their bodies to express an experience.

Narrative Flow and Structure of Thesis

The narrative of the thesis is rich in imagery and cultural symbolism. The thesis tells a story of the journey of the pharmakos into the unknown. It follows the work of the pharmakos on this journey as it carries the cultural and personal polluting business encountered by the community (or group of any kind) in the face of trouble - as the three historical metaphors imply.

The journey of the pharmakos passes beneath the surface of its role as a vehicle to remove pollution, and down into the more troubling territory of the scapegoat, where suspicion, guilt, crime and violence reign. With the help of the goat, the pharmakos finds a way through addictive, repetitive energies in this territory to a vantage point. Here a reconnoitre is made for a descent into an indistinct gap in the terrain below, where recognition of an older knowledge from experience of the pharmakos ritual can be sensed. This knowledge holds a meaning of the pharmakos that is expressed in the internal biology of the fig and the goat, and symbolised in the ritual objects of fig-cheese and the beating and bedecking of the pharmakos with figs. The terrain of the gap is shared between figs, goats and human beings in their micro biochemical natures. This gap is thought of as that sought by the pharmakos on behalf of the community as a "clearing at the centre of being"[29] in two senses: a clearing by breaking down elements of the polluting business, and a clearing as a space of being across which elements of life meet, mate, build up and express themselves. There is inner and outer recognition of this gap and the work done by the pharmakos in it.

Images of this gap or terrain are several. If metaphors carry meaning of rich experience in the body upon a familiar object in the world, to bring attention to an unfamiliar meaning, then they can be thought of as a bridge which crosses a

[29] Heidegger's term elaborated by Todres and explained in Chapter 4.

fascinating and partly explored terrain. The journey descends into the gap under the bridges of existing and familiar metaphors of the pharmakos to explore the terrain below. Hence the narrative is a story of a descent into the territory in the gap under the historical metaphors of the pharmakos to find hidden, or new, crossings. The meaning of the pharmakos can be carried across more closely to the *material* contact between experience in the body and the objects in the world.

The story follows the images and feelings in the order they presented themselves in the internal engagement with the pharmakos. Hence the thesis begins in Chapter 2 with accounts of the three main historical metaphors (a vessel removing pollution, a means of refreshing waning potency and the scapegoat) and unearths the original connections in philology, anthropology and archaeology. In the three following chapters, the intellectual and methodological roots of the thesis are introduced in more detail with some braiding of these ideas in Chapter 5, prior to a descent through the scapegoat territory.

The scapegoat chapter, Chapter 6, is positioned almost as an underground mezzanine level from which the descent into the territory of the goat (Chapter 7) and the fig (Chapter 8) can be attempted. The opening to this underworld territory was more visible from the scapegoat aspect of the pharmakos. To look at a phenomenon as powerful as the pharmakos, the most troubling experience of the pharmakos in human experience had to be entered. Doing so enabled the scapegoat image to be deformed sufficiently to feel the life and transforming power of the gap it has occupied, and to gain a greater understanding of the fertilising power of internal processes of consciousness. This was gained in a close material contact with the fig and the goat.

There are four main voices in the thesis. One of these is the personal voice of the author, relating in quotes in the first person, either experience from work in health and medicines, or relating direct experience of the pharmakos phenomenon. A second voice is of reverie, mainly on the fig and the goat, but

also as epigrams introducing each chapter. These were written from the heart by this author whilst still deeply immersed in the pharmakos experience. They create a narrative thread in their own way and are written in italics. The third voice is that of others experience of the pharmakos in one facet or another, presented as quotes from scholars in literary or scientific texts. The fourth voice is that of the thesis itself, written in the third person past tense, telling the story of the thesis, and relating its intellectual and methodological roots.

Two versions of the ritual of the pharmakos have been included. As a prologue to the thesis, the first was intended to communicate the basics of actions described in surviving written Greek fragments. The second ritual was written to show how the images and emotion of the practice have been influenced by the interpretations of the classical scholars of modern times, and to introduce Rene Girard's interpretation of the scapegoat. The intention was to create a gap to show how emotion fills and narrates the story so that it might feel familiar in one's experience.

The overarching metaphor of a gap – the gap into which the pharmakos vanished with its load of contagion – forms the connecting thread of the narrative. The moment of departure of the pharmakos has been viewed as a moment of falling into oneself. The thesis claims that consciousness opens in these moments through the folding, bending and psychological deforming within, that is preparing us for a meeting with the unknown. Awareness of falling into this state within, extends consciousness, and prepares one for a true meeting with another.

CHAPTER 2

THE MYTH, RITUAL AND HISTORY OF THE PHARMAKOS

Fragments referring to the pharmakos remain from the earliest Greek writing. Modern scholars have imagined into these fragments from perspectives of anthropology, philology and archaeology. The images of this rediscovery associate the pharmakos with pollution. The pharmakos is a means, in its body, of purifying the community by removing contagion – the cause of impending doom. It also serves a pragmatic double purpose of killing the dying vegetation spirit so that it can come again fully vital in the following season.

The aim of this chapter is to lay out the foundations of modern scholarship on the pharmakos. It provides facts from the anthropology of James Frazer, and from the philology and archaeology of Jane Harrison and Martin Nilsson, giving some background to what motivated their research. The pharmakos played a small role in these researches – the larger context being the life, festivals and religion of ancient Greece. The facts of the pharmakos established by these scholars, together with their personalities and the cultural influences of their times at the turn of the twentieth century, have established the images associated with the pharmakos. These in turn have influenced interpretation of the pharmakos, especially in the English-speaking world. The works of these scholars and of Walter Burkert, a contemporary expert on Greek religion, have also helped to set out basic concepts of ritual, cult and the way Greeks thought about the gods and moral life.

In piecing evidence together, these scholars described not only worldly objects but also human experience, and attempted to give meaning to such experiences. They had an encounter with the pharmakos. Hence Frazer, Nilsson and Harrison have been regarded as phenomenological investigators of the pharmakos and their study of it in myth, ancient literature and history regarded as forms of

psychological phenomenology glimpsed from the particular aspects of archaeology, philology and anthropology.

The Scholarship of the Rite and Myth of the Pharmakos

There is no direct archaeology of the pharmakos ritual in surviving fragments of Greek literature, but scholars have been able to describe the festival in which the ritual was enacted, from the literature of later Greek writers.

The work of three eminent classical scholars, briefly introduced below, has been chosen to present what is known of the pharmakos rite and its context in the life of ancient Greece and the Mediterranean. They were contemporaries of one another, publishing their works mainly between 1900 and 1925. Harrison and Nilsson in particular, were influential in stimulating and responding to a revival of fascination with ancient Greek life. Each scholar has brought a different motivation, skill and emotion to the description of the phenomena of Greek religion and the pharmakos. Each elaborated a context, which began to deepen surface understandings. These differences, and the inferred meanings, provided rich inspiration to this author to enter directly into these phenomena through imagination and through recognizing parallels in everyday life.

Martin Nilsson was probably the most respected scholar of Greek history in his time,[1] his works still being regarded as indispensable standards in Greek religion.[2]

> I have been criticized for being one-sided. I come from an old line of peasants who occupied the same farm for two hundred years [in southern Sweden]. I still know something of how the people thought seventy years ago, before the full impact of the great transformation. I know something about the sanctity of bread. When I set about writing a history of Greek religion, I wanted to find out what it was in which the peasant on the

[1] His colleague Arthur Darby Nock described him as having "complete mastery of the ancient evidence, literary and monumental alike, a thorough familiarity with the landscape and the seasons of Greece and a natural feeling for folkways...." Darby Nock, A. In Nilsson, M. (1961). p. vi.

[2] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 2.

> farm, the shepherd on the mountains and the town-dweller believed. I thought then and I still think today that this too has its place in a history of Greek religion and Greek belief.[3]

Jane Harrison was to this author the most passionate scholar.[4] She seemed to express an irrepressible excitement in documenting the rites of Greek religion and breaking into them to show what was in the gloomy depths. She saw ritual as a neglected aspect of Greek religion. To her, what a people does in a religion is the safest clue to what it thinks.[5]

> This habit of viewing Greek religion exclusively through the medium of Greek literature has brought with it an initial and fundamental error in method – an error that in England, where scholarship is mainly literary, is likely to die hard. For literature Homer is the beginning, though every scholar is aware that he is nowise primitive; for theology, or – if we prefer so to call it – mythology, Homer presents not a starting point, but a culmination, a complete achievement, an almost mechanical accomplishment with scarcely a hint of *origines*, an accomplishment moreover, which is essentially literary rather than religious, sceptical and moribund already in its very perfection. The Olympians of Homer are no more primitive than his hexameters. Beneath this splendid surface lies a stratum of religions conceptions, ideas of evil, of purification, of atonement, ignored or suppressed by Homer, but reappearing in later poets and notably in Aeschylus. It is this substratum of religious conceptions, at once more primitive and more permanent, that I am concerned to investigate.[6]

James Frazer was probably the most influential scholar through his work *The Golden Bough*, published first in 1889. He collected descriptions of folk customs from all over the world into a comparative anthropology of human beliefs and actions that involved the paradoxical ritual killing of the king in yearly religious rites. He originally wanted to know why the priest-king in an old cult in ancient Italy (Diana at Aricia) was put to death every year.

> One of the questions I regard as crucial is that of the practice of putting kings to death either at the end of a fixed period or whenever their health and strength began to fail. I have gathered a wide body of evidence which points to the wide prevalence of such a

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[3] Burkert, W. (1985). p. vi – vii.
[4] Jane Harrison published several works on Greek Religion: *The Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, *The Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, *Themis*; *Ancient Art and Ritual*.
[5] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. vii.
[6] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. vii.

> custom and so I don't think it is any longer possible to regard the rule of succession to the priesthood of Diana at Aricia as exceptional – it exemplifies a widespread institution. [7]

He first thought that the solution would be relatively straightforward. But he stayed with the phenomenon for more than thirty years, his book eventually swelling to twelve volumes. His keen sense for ambiguity and his literary style created images of human behaviour that have influenced authors throughout the twentieth century.[8] As an Englishman he was influenced by his times where reports of *savage* peoples and their religions were flowing in from all parts of the colonial empire from ethnologist missionaries. Burkert, commenting on this attitude, said

> Whatever was alien was understood as primitive, as the 'not-yet' of a beginning which contrasted with the Englishman's own self-conscious progressiveness.[9]

Frazer was born five years before the publication of the *Origin of the Species*, so the formative period of his life was lived in an age of evolutionary thought which regarded the progressive development of mankind from savagery to civilization as axiomatic and similar among all races.[10]

> The cycle of the *Golden Bough*... 'depicts, in its sinuous outline, in its play of alternate light and shadow, the long evolution by which the thoughts and effort of man have passed through the successive stages of Magic, Religion and Science.'[11]

He assumed that in the stage of magic, the direct control of natural events by an appropriate spell or rite was psychologically simpler than the propitiation and conciliation of personal powers superior to man.[12] He came to regard the fear of

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[7] Frazer, J.G. (1922). pp. v-vii.
[8] Vickery has claimed that the *Golden Bough* has become one of the most influential books in the English language. In its recognition of human folly it "became central to twentieth-century literature because it was grounded in the essential realism of anthropological research, informed with the romance's quest of an ideal, and controlled by the irony in divine myth and human custom. Together these made it the distinctive archetype and hence matrix of that literature." Vickery, J.B. (1973). p. 3, p. 138.
[9] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 2.
[10] James, E.O. (1959). p. 273.
[11] James, E.O. (1959). p. 273.
[12] James, E.O. (1959). p. 273.

Images in Etymology

The scapegoat image has predominated in dictionary meanings of the *pharmakos* (accent on the last syllable). Liddell and Scott[22] have given the following:

> one sacrificed or executed as an atonement or purification for others, scapegoat; and since criminals were reserved for this fate, a general name of reproach.[23]

Nilsson has stated that *pharmakos* is the masculine form of *pharmakon.*[24] Liddell and Scott listed four groups of meanings for the word *pharmakon.*[25] The first and oldest group included *drug,* whether healing or noxious; a *healing remedy* or *medicine* – in Homer mostly applied outwardly; *poison*; and *lye* for laundering. Newer meanings have included a *cure for* or *remedy against*; a *dye, paint, colour*, and a *chemical reagent* used by tanners.

Based on sources from the Old Testament, the Biblical meanings given to the word *pharmakos* (with accents on the first two syllables), were *poisoner, sorcerer,* and *magician.* The *Critica Sacra – Observations on the Radices or Primitive Hebrew Words of the Old Testament*[26] translated *pharmakos* into the Latin as *Veneficus*

> which properly signifieth a Poysoner, Venficus, is commonly taken for a Sorcerer (Poysoning, Witchcraft, and Sorcerie being commonly reckoned for Sinnes of one kind in Scripture, and humane Authours) Deut.18.10.[27]

The pharmakon equivalent then, was inferred from a footnote to this entry as *Veneficium, Medicatio*, harmful medicament (Medicamentum venenum) "because some men were wont to go to Witches for help."

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[22] Liddell, H.G. & Scott, R. (1940). p. 1917.
[23] This sense has also been given in French. Chantraine's *Dictionaire Ethymologique de la Langue Greque* has defined pharmakos as a 'victim expiratoire'- a man who is expelled from a city to purify, to get rid of taint or stain or to prevent a natural catastrophe. Professor Phillipe Rousseau, personal communication, 1999.
[24] Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 27.
[25] Liddell & Scott. (1940). p. 1917.
[26] Leigh, Edward. (1650). p. 276.
[27] "That which is in the Hebrew in that place is mecashsheph, the Septuagint has *pharmakos*, the common Latine translating hath maleficus, others veneficus. In English it is commonly translated a Sorcerer. But by this Sorcerie is understood Poysoning (as Rev.9.21)." Leigh, E. (1650). p. 276.

So the pharmakos as a human being was a reviled person removing poison, but seen in a Biblical context, as a poisoner. The pharmakon as a drug was a remedy and a poison, a colouring agent and a cleaning agent. It was also a healing remedy mostly applied outwardly, the medicine *for* something and the remedy *against* something. A person has become the remedy and the poison, the healer and the poisoner.

The Ritual: Its elements and meanings

The fullest details of the "horrid" ceremony, as Harrison called it, were described by Tzetzes in AD 1150 from fragments of Hipponax a sixth century BC poet.

> 'The pharmakos was a purification of this sort of old. If a calamity overtook the city by the wrath of God, whether it were famine or pestilence or any other mischief, they led forth as though to a sacrifice the most unsightly of them all as a purification and a remedy to the suffering city. They set the sacrifice in the appointed place, and gave him cheese with their hands and a barley cake and figs, and seven times they smote him with leeks and wild figs and other wild plants. Finally they burnt him with fire with the wood of wild trees and scattered the ashes into the sea and to the winds, for a purification, as I said, of the suffering city.'[28]

Frazer's account of the same author was slightly different.

> When a city suffered from plague, famine, or other public calamity, an ugly or deformed person was chosen to take upon himself all the evils which afflicted the community. He was brought to a suitable place, where dried figs, a barley loaf and cheese were put into his hand. These he ate. Then he was beaten seven times upon his genital organs with squills and branches of the wild fig and other wild trees, while the flutes played a particular tune. Afterwards he was burned on a pyre built of wood of forest trees; and his ashes were cast into the sea.[29]

In ancient Marseilles, a similar ceremony was described by Frazer from an account by Servius:

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[28] Harrison, J.E. (1925). pp. 97-98.
[29] Frazer, J.G. (1913). p. 255.

> Whenever Marseilles, one of the busiest and most brilliant of Greek colonies, was ravaged by a plague, a man of the poorer classes used to offer himself as a scapegoat. For a whole year he was maintained at the public expense, being fed on choice and pure food. At the expiry of the year he was dressed in sacred garments, decked with holy branches, and led through the whole city, while prayers were uttered that all the evils of the people might fall on his head. He was then cast out of the city or stoned to death by the people outside of the walls.[30]

Harrison has documented fragments from other writers referring to the ceremony. Harpocration wrote:

> 'At Athens they led out two men to be purifications for the city; it was at the Thargelia, one was for the men and the other for the women.'[31]

Helladius wrote:

> 'this purification was of the nature of an atropaic ceremony to avert diseases, and (that) it took its rise from Androgeos the Cretan, when at Athens the Athenians suffered abnormally from a pestilential disease, and the custom obtained of constantly purifying the city by pharmakoi.'[32]

These have been the main fragments which document a story that has, ever since, fascinated and repulsed many, and stimulated many interpretations. The context of the ritual was set by the three authors in slightly different ways. All three scholars of this time, and Burkert in his recent summary of scholarship, interpreted the rite as purification. Nilsson emphasized it as a predeistic rite as part of the harvest festivals. Harrison emphasized the physicality of evil and the underworld or chthonic nature of such rites. Frazer emphasized its dual function of removing contagion and increasing fertility for the following year.

Harvest Festivals: Uncleanness was physical, infectious and injured crops

Nilsson stressed the context of the ceremony as the harvest festivals. The agrarian setting was important to his observation that the origin of the pharmakos was in predeistic times, and that older rites had persisted under newer forms of religion. He urged his readers to remember that ancient Greece

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[30] Frazer, J.G. (1913). p. 253.
[31] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 95-96.
[32] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 99.

was predominantly a country of peasants and herdsmen. Corn, wheat and barley with olives, figs, a little goat's cheese and wine were the staple foods. These were still the diet of the Greek peasant in Nilsson's own time. Meat was common only at festivals as part of a sacrifice.[33]

The harvest festival was called *Thylasia* and first fruits were offered to Demeter, who had been associated with the festival since ancient times. In Attica, a loaf made of the first fruits was called a *Thargelos,* and gave its name to the festival, *Thargelia.*[34] This festival was for Apollo, a later association, because the central rite, that of the pharmakos, was purification: the pharmakos was loaded with the sins and impurities of the people and then expelled or destroyed. Although first fruits were considered a thanks offering, Nilsson's penchant for penetrating to what he imagined as the origins of these customs, meant that he saw the custom as older than the gods. Nilsson believed in an impersonal mana as the most primitive form of religion.[35] He observed that mana or power was believed by most people to penetrate everything. It was its own cause, prior to and independent of gods and spirits.

> It is merely 'power' and whether it is good or evil depends on how it comes into contact with man. Man must beware of it and proceed cautiously – because if it can help, it can also harm.[36]

Therefore, rites that purify were needed and often carried out, for example, when the crops were ripening to protect them against evil influences or uncleanness. He viewed this as the most likely original purpose of leading around the pharmakos.[37] People of the time viewed uncleanness as an infection and a material substance that could be washed away. Nilsson illustrated this with two examples: the first book of the Iliad told of a great cleansing after the plague, and the offscourings were thrown into the sea; in the story of Asklepios, he was said to have "wiped away … disease, and inversely he pours all his

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[33] Nilsson, M. (1940). pp. 22-23.
[34] Nilsson, M. (1940). pp. 26-27.
[35] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 3.
[36] Nilsson, M. (1925). pp. 81-82.
[37] Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 27.

healing power into man by touching him with his 'gentle hand.'"[38] Nilsson's interpretation of the original pharmakos ritual reflected his observation that the pharmakos was the masculine form, or one could say the embodied form, of the pharmakon.[39] His description of the ritual's meaning established an enduring metaphor of the pharmakos:

> ...the inner meaning is a purification working of itself without the intervention of a god....When, like a sponge with which one dries a table, they have absorbed all the impurity, they are entirely destroyed so that this impurity shall be altogether removed with them; they are thrown away, burned, burned up, cast into the sea. And that is why this 'sacrifice', so called, need not, like others, be without blemish or defect'. A dog may be used, which was not otherwise sacrificed, or a condemned criminal. He was called *pharmakos*, 'remedy',... 'off-scouring', ... 'that which is wiped off'; this last word in particular clearly shows the meaning of the rite. We can understand how these words came to mean 'scum' and became the worst terms of abuse in the Greek language. A victim of this nature is a scapegoat on which all evil is loaded, but which, instead of being let loose and driven into the desert, is completely destroyed, together with its evil burden.[40]

The Pharmakos was a Medicine for the Community

Harrison agreed that the pharmakos was killed not as a vicarious sacrifice "but because he is so infected and tabooed that his life is a practical impossibility."[41] She also emphasized the ancient Greeks' conception of evil as physical and actual. It was contagious - it could be transferred. She observed that the scapegoat in the Old Testament carried away moral guilt which was thought of as highly contagious. In her view, the pharmakos is loaded with physical evil, and would have been regarded by the members of his community as an "infected horror."[42] Perhaps the educated might not believe this, but "know that the kindest thing is to put an end to a life that is worse than death."[43] She has also established enduring metaphors in her descriptions of the meaning of the rite:

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[38] Nilsson, M. (1925). p. 86.
[39] He linked this process of purification to the notion of a medicine noting that the word *pharmakos* is the masculine form of *pharmakon,* which means medicine Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 27.
[40] Nilsson, M. (1925). pp. 86-87.
[41] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 104.
[42] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 105.
[43] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 104.

> [The] ancient authors repeatedly insist [that it was] a purification. The essence of the ritual was not atonement...but riddance, the artificial making of ...a pollution, to get rid of all pollution. The notion, so foreign to our scientific habit of thought, so familiar to the ancients, was that evil of all kinds was a physical infection that could be caught and transferred; it was highly catching."[44]

Hence she regarded the beating of the pharmakos as of primary importance.

> It was a ceremonial affair done to the sound of the flute. Hescychius says, 'The song of the branches is a measure that they play on the flute when the pharmakoi are expelled, they being beaten with branches and fig sprigs. The pharmakos was actually called "he of the branches"'. It must have been a matter of very early observation that beating is expulsive.... rods made of special plants and trees were used, notably leeks and fig-trees. Plants with strong smells, and plants the eating of which is purgative, are naturally regarded as 'good medicine'; as expulsive of evil, and hence in a secondary way as promotive of good. [45]

She concluded that the pharmakos was a medicine that the community itself makes.

> The pharmakos of the Thargelia shows us a state of things in which man does not either tend or avert god or ghost, but seeks, by the 'medicine' he himself makes, to do, on his own account, his...'thorough cleaning'.[46]

Chthonic religion dealt with the gloomy, distressing phenomena of life

The Greeks themselves in classical times recognized two forms of ritual: Olympian and Chthonic. Harrison emphasized the distinction between the bright Olympian ceremonies to the gods of good things, and the gloomy rituals such as the pharmakos, to the gods of calamities and punishments.[47] The formula of Olympian ritual in 5th century BC Greece, the days of Homer, was *Do ut des*, I give that you may give. This involved an offering to the god to induce his

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[44] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 103.
[45] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 100.
[46] Harrison, J.E. (1925). pp. 108-109.
[47] Harrison quoted Isocrates thus: "Those of the gods who are the source to us of good things have the title of Olympians, those whose department is that of calamities and punishments have harsher titles; to the first class both private persons and states erect altars and temples, the second is not worshipped either with prayers or burnt-sacrifices, but in their case we perform ceremonies of riddance." Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 8.

favour. The worshipper shared the sacrificial banquet to which the god is bidden. This was service, a "tendance" with no element of fear.[48]

The Chthonic ritual was not so cheerful. It was a ceremony of riddance. "The sacrifice is a holocaust, it is *devoted*, made over entirely to the god, unshared by the worshipper, and its associations are gloomy."[49] There were three such festivals held in the spring, summer and autumn in particular, which focused on the rites of the "underlying substratum." These were the Anthesteria, Thargelia and Thesmophoria respectively.

Harrison called these rites of Aversion, ceremonies of riddance or sendings-away - the object of which was *Do ut abeas* (I give that you might stay away). These rites removed what seemed to be a constant sense of evil that affected people deeply. The religious content of the ritual was strongly felt, even though the means might seem primitive and magical to modern day readers.[50] In her view, the pharmakos was not a human sacrifice to a god but rather a "direct means of physical and moral purgation, with a view to the promotion and conservation of fertility."[51]

Thus, Harrison placed the pharmakos firmly in the underworld where the unwelcome and uncontrollable disturbances of life reside in the human psyche. Her imagery, in the descriptions below, communicated the possibility of psychological life in the religious feeling honoured in the paradoxical underworld.

She described the real religion of the people at that time as one of fear and deprecation. She regarded the ritual embodied in *do ut des* as barren of spiritual content, whereas the ritual embodied in *do ut abeas* recognized one great mystery of life, the existence of evil.[52] The beings worshipped were not rational, human, law-abiding gods, but vague, irrational, mainly malevolent *daimones,*

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[48] Harrison, J.E. (1925). pp. viii, 3.
[49] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. viii.
[50] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. ix.
[51] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. ix.
[52] Harrison, J E. (1925). p. xii.

spirit things, ghosts and bogeys and the like, not yet formulated and enclosed into god-head.[53] She noted that the Greeks used another word expressive of religion, which meant *fear of spirits*, *fear of spirit things* or *fear of the supernatural*.[54] In its most positive sense it meant a

> bracing confidence rather than a degrading fear. The more men are god-fearing, (spirit-fearing), the less do they fear man.[55]

Burkert interpreted the principle of reciprocity in dealings between humans and gods as a widely successful strategy.

> [It is] a postulate acted out to create a stable, sensible and acceptable world, gratifying both intellectually and morally and bridging the gap of annihilation...[56]

Thus, even gifts of aversion keep the god happy and away, and panic can be turned into controlled behaviour. The gods make a kind of cosmic sense which overcomes anxiety in the face of the evidence of catastrophe. In his view, this mimics homeostasis, a powerful biological urge which is a transient stability depending on a fair exchange.[57] But Harrison seemed to go further in seeing the pharmakos as beyond a rite of aversion. The Thargelia festival belonged to these rites of aversion but the pharmakos was a medicine made by the community's own hands for its own cleansing.

Transferring Blame

The fearing of man and the phenomena of aggression and vengeance have been enduring human experiences. For this reason, Harrison's description of the Dipolia festival, in which the Athenians sacrificed to Zeus Polieus on the Acropolis, has been included. Her comments on it stressed the terror that people felt of the "spirits' vengeance." Harrison provided some glimpses of the manner in which responsibility for a pollution, an *ayos*, even a necessary one for religious purposes, was moved away from the person enacting it and placed eventually onto a thing. Ritual was seen to mimic a sense of abomination of

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[53] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 7.
[54] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 4.
[55] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 7.
[56] Burkert, W. (1998). p. 154.
[57] Burkert, W. (1998). p. 155.

killing large animals and perhaps, by inference, human beings. The following description was quoted by Harrison from classical sources and has been included, although lengthy, because its imagery evoked present day experiences and the dynamics of blaming associated with scapegoating – a natural human reaction to avoid responsibility hurtful to the psyche.

> 'Barley mixed with wheat, or cakes made of them, was laid upon the bronze altar of Zeus Polieus, on the Acropolis. Oxen were driven around the altar, and the ox which went up to the altar and ate the offering on it was sacrificed. The axe and knife with which the beast was slain had been previously wetted with water, brought by maidens called 'water carriers." The weapons were then sharpened and handed to the butchers, one of whom felled the ox with the axe and another cut its throat with the knife. As soon as he had felled the ox, the former threw the axe from him and fled, and the man who had cut the beast's throat apparently imitated his example. Meantime the ox was skinned and all present partook of its flesh. Then the hide was stuffed with straw and sewed up, and next the stuffed animal was set on its feet and yoked to a plough as if it were ploughing. A trial then took place in an ancient law court, presided over by the king (as he was called), to determine who had murdered the ox. The maidens who had brought the water accused the men who had sharpened the axe and knife, the men who had sharpened the axe and knife blamed the men who had handed these implements to the butchers, the men who had handed these implements to the butchers blamed the butchers and the butchers blamed the axe and knife, which were accordingly found guilty and condemned and cast into the sea.'[58]

The pharmakos was a human version of the medicinal *thing*. It is curious that the function of the pharmakos was not literally transferred onto the concrete medicine. The human being retained the function. The pollution had to be transferred, but it seemed only from humans to another human. It seemed not to be an abomination to kill the pharmakos. There is ambiguity in the nature of the concrete medicine as remedy and poison. Is it there in the human version?

The Ambiguous Pharmakos: Killing and renewing the vegetation spirit

Frazer also set the context of the pharmakos ritual as part of the customs of publicly expelling the accumulated evils of a village, town or country. He

[58] Harrison, J. E. (1925). pp. 111-112.

clustered together apparently similar practices around the world. His main observations were that the custom has combined two pre-existing customs:

> it has been customary to kill the human or animal god in order to save his divine life from being weakened by the inroads of age... it has been customary to have a general expulsion of evils and sins once a year. If it occurred to people to combine these two customs, the result would be the employment of a dying god as a scapegoat. He was killed, not originally to take away sin, to save divine life from the degeneracy of old age. [So might they have thought to] lay upon him the burden of their sufferings and sins [for transport] to the unknown world beyond the grave? [59]

Frazer saw an ambiguity, but he leaves it there as an association by juxtaposition. Frazer also stressed the importance of the beating in the ritual, but his interpretation was that the pharmakos was the spirit of vegetation. He noted that squills were believed to have magical power in averting evil influences. People hung them at their doors. He cited the example of the whipping of the god Pan by hunters when they come home empty-handed from the hunt which "must have meant not to punish the god, but to purify him from the harmful influences which were impeding him in the exercise of his divine functions as a god who should supply the hunter with game."[60]

Therefore he concluded that beating the pharmakos on the genital organs "must have been to release his reproductive energies from any malignant agency."[61] As the ceremony was an early harvest festival, he associated the pharmakos "as a representative of the creative and fertilizing god of vegetation."[62] A failure in the crops would have been attributed to failure in the generative power of the god.

He similarly interpreted the significance of figs in the ritual. The pharmakos was not a representation of the spirit of vegetation in general, but specifically of fig-trees. He was convinced by the work of W. R. Paton, whose work has been referred to later in the thesis, that the timing of the festival, its harvest

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[59] Frazer, J.G. (1913). pp. 227-228.
[60] Frazer, J.G. (1913). pp. 255-256.
[61] Frazer, J.G. (1913). p. 256.
[62] Frazer, J.G. (1913). p. 256.

associations and elements of the ritual seemed to relate to the ancient practice by Greek farmers of cross-fertilising figs. This process was called caprification. The black wild figs, or male figs, are collected and laid over the branches of the white domestic female fig.

Frazer's concluding description of the pharmakos, based on Paton's interpretation, also created enduring metaphors:

> [The] beating being administered to the generative organs of the victims by fresh green plants and branches is most naturally explained as a charm to increase the reproductive energies of the men or women by communicating to them the fruitfulness of the plants and branches, or by ridding them of maleficent influences....
>
> If these considerations are just, we must apparently conclude that while the human victims at the Thargelia certainly appear in later classical times to have figured chiefly as public scapegoats, who carried away with them the sins, misfortunes, and sorrows of the whole people, at an earlier time they may have been looked on as embodiments of vegetation, perhaps of the corn but particularly of fig-trees; and that the beating which they received and the death which they died were intended primarily to brace and refresh the powers of vegetation then beginning to droop and languish under the torrid heat of the Greek summer.[63]

Frazer has then in this way firmly established the pharmakos image as both the scapegoat and a vehicle of fertility. He described the scapegoat as a visible and tangible vehicle to convey invisible and intangible evils away.[64] He embodied these in the human pharmakos.

Psychological Life in the Chthonic World

The descriptions by these scholars of Greek religion were not only of archaeological objects, but also of human experience. They attempted to give meaning to such experiences and the pharmakos phenomenon within them. The remainder of this chapter has been devoted to describing meanings, polarities and paradoxes that the scholars saw in the ritual and theology of Greek religion

[63] Frazer, J.G. (1913). pp. 272-273.
[64] Frazer, J.G. (1913). p. 226.

and the basic concepts of cult and ritual,[65] and the way the Greeks thought about the gods and moral life. They penetrated beyond surface layers, each with a different consciousness. This entering into depth, into the underworld, into hidden areas was important in establishing a psychological approach to the pharmakos phenomenon.

The context of Greek religion in the story of the pharmakos was important in the thesis, as the consciousness of the Greeks has played an important part in the development of Western consciousness. What was unique about this consciousness? It was not the opposition between the Olympian and Chthonic realms. Sky gods and subterranean gods existed in many ancient traditions as a fundamental religious structure independent of specific Greek civilization.[66]

> What is unique about the Greek tradition is the radical and thoroughgoing way in which the opposition between the realm of the gods and the realm of the dead was worked out. The gods are the immortals…A god bewailed as dead…is always felt to be foreign….The Olympian gods and the dead have nothing to do with one another; the gods hate the house of Hades and keep well away.[67]

This developed later into a conscious theology, which Burkert explained as a "polarity in which one pole cannot exist without the other and in which each pole only receives its full meaning from the other."[68] But the reality of myth and ritual[69] richly mixed Olympian and Chthonic. Harrison had a feel for this. She articulated the sense that real spiritual development came from the chthonic realm. The reality of this realm is less covered over by literary forms and a

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[65] Cult is understood as all the actions flowing from religious experience. Ritual is only one act of cultus. Otto, W. (1965). p.4. (Translators note).
[66] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 201.
[67] Burkert, W. (1985). pp. 201–202.
[68] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 202.
[69] "Ritual and myth are the two forms in which Greek religion presents itself to the historian of religion. There are no founding figures, no documents of revelation, no organization of priests and no monastic orders. The religion finds legitimation as tradition by proving itself a formative force of continuity from generation to generation. Ritual, in its outward aspect, is a program of demonstrative acts to be performed in set sequence and often at a set place in time – sacred in so far as every omission or deviation arouses deep anxiety and calls forth sanctions. As communication and social imprinting, ritual establishes and secures the solidarity of the closed group; in this function it has doubtless accompanied the forms of human community since the earliest of times." Burkert, W. (1985). p. 8.

bright theology. This is the realm of death, spilled kindred blood and the human experience of its chill and gloom in vengeance and fear.

Harrison was often scathing in her writing about the way in which older rituals are taken over by Olympians. She appeared to have done this to ensure that the older origins are taken seriously. The three festivals, referred to above as Chthonic were originally associated with Demeter, but came to be celebrated in honour of various Olympians: the Diasia came to honour Zeus; the Thargelia, Apollo; and the Anthesteria, Dionysos.

Harrison believed that the chthonic realm, with its obscure rituals of purification and of sympathetic magic, provided the symbols of a new mysticism.

> It is these rites of purification belonging to the lower stratum, primitive and barbarous, even repulsive as they often are, that furnished ultimately the material of which 'mysteries' were made – mysteries which … when informed by the new spirit of the religions of Dionysos and Orpheus, lent to Greece its deepest and most enduring religious impulse.[70]

In the depth of the gloomy substratum, Orphism found a new life in experiencing ecstatic union with the Divine through the physical eating of the god, and the symbolism of the rite of the Sacred Marriage and the Sacred Birth in the Eleusinian Mysteries.[71] The fig was sacred, according to some, in the ancient origin of Eleusis.

In the rich mix of cult in everyday life, Harrison noted that many of the gods had two faces. It was not simply that there were two separated realms, but that one face overlaid an earlier rite. For example Zeus had a chthonic face. In this realm he was known as Zeus Meilichios, an angry ghost who avenged kindred blood, and his rituals were held in an atmosphere of "chilly gloom." Before Zeus of *Meilichios*, however, there were sanctuaries of the *Meilichians*. There were no temples, only graves and altars. Sacrifice was at nighttime and one must consume the flesh on the spot before the sun is up.[72] The cult also involved a magical fleece – the fleece perhaps of the victim. The ritual was a kind of

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[70] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 29.
[71] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. xii.
[72] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 16.

exorcism to get rid of the guilt of spilt kindred blood. There seemed to be awareness that the madness caused by the spilling of communal blood in an "internecine fray" must be purified.[73] This purification, according to Harrison, was one in which the whole vessel is thrown away

> 'The Greeks thought such pollutions were purified by being "sent away."...these purifications they carried out of houses after the customary incantations and they cast them forth in the streets with averted faces and returned without looking backwards...'[74]

Zeus in his underworld aspect is Zeus Meilichios or Zeus Hades. He is the divinity of purification in his gentler side, but also "the other euphemistic face of *Maimaktes*, he who rages eager, panting and thirsty for blood."[75] Harrison's comment that the more that man fears gods the less he fears man, takes on added meaning here.

It was also Burkert's view that the Olympian gods "could not represent the all-embracing richness of reality; religion was not confined to the cult of the gods, but included relations with the dead and the heroes."[76] But he presented a different reflection on the spilling of kindred blood in his survey of scholarship that took into account developments in archaeology, philology and anthropology since Harrison's time.

The heroes killed, avenged, wounded and protected. The heroes lived this part of life, and memory of this was buried with them and accessed in the rites. The body of the hero was worshipped in private cults with shrines in private courtyards. An important figure born in this realm and who moved easily

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[73] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 23.
[74] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 25.
[75] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 17. Harrison argued that Zeus, who is represented as a snake in this form, was not just a divinity with a double face, but that "the cult of an Olympian Zeus has overlaid the cult of a being called Meilichios, a being who was figured as a snake, who was a sort of Ploutos, but who had also some of the characteristics of an Erinys..." Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 28.
[76] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 203.

between the gods and the dead was Asklepios, the blameless physician and son of Apollo.[77]

Later in Athens, when the expulsion of the pharmakoi became associated with Apollo, Harpocration quoted Istros as saying "'that the Pharmakos was a proper name and that Pharmakos stole sacred *phialae* belonging to Apollo and was taken and stoned by the men with Achilles and that the ceremonies done at Thargelia are mimetic representations of these things.'"[78]

The presence of Apollo in the harvest rite of the pharmakos may have had a deeper significance than just the taking over of an older rite by an Olympian god. According to Burkert, there was a deeper psychological sense, Apollo represented the beginning of a conscious internal human development – an internal awareness of hard things.

Apollo seemed to be a humble god in this respect. He experienced and acted out all sides of the gloom of infectious violence including the consequences. He developed an internal limit, which might be another name for the rational mind, an internal development that was aware of the limitless violence and trauma associated with infectious vengeance or fear.[79]

Burkert's description of this aspect of Apollo established some important images and ideas. Apollo was worshipped as a god of healing, but not as a magician god in the sense of giving immediate efficacy. In fact he was the opposite of magical. He was a god of purifications and cryptic oracles:

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[77] For further information see Kerenyi, C. (1959). The location of the healing tradition in the chthonic world is important to the psychology of the pharmakos – but one which emphasized the wounding healer rather than the wounded healer. This aspect is not taken up in this thesis.

[78] Harrison, J.E. (1925). p. 102.

[79] Two examples from the Iliad have illustrated this. "In the last book of the Iliad, when Achilles is unable to come to terms with the death of Patroclus and continues to violate Hector's corpse, Apollo protests as the advocate of purity: 'He disfigures the dumb earth in his fury…The Moirai gave men a heart that can endure.' Man is able to make an end with things and to start afresh in awareness of his own limited term.'" Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148. "In the *Iliad* where Poseidon and Apollo meet in the battle of the gods, Apollo refuses to take up the challenge: 'Shaker of the earth, you could not say I was sound of mind if I were to go to war with you for the sake of pitiful mortals who now like leaves break forth full of fire, feeding on the fruits of the earth, and then waste away, heartless'". Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148.

> With disease and bane, *nosos* in the widest sense, being interpreted as pollution, the bane is not personified, but objectified; knowledge and personal responsibility come into play: the person must discover the action which has brought about the pollution and must eliminate the *miasma* through renewed action. This, of course requires super-human knowledge: the god of purifications must also be an oracle god – however much the function of oracles later extends beyond the domain of cultic prescriptions.'[80] ...It is indirect and veiled revelation which belongs especially to Apollo; for this reason he is called *Loxias*, the Oblique; the obscure utterances of a medium possessed by the god are formulated in verses which are often intentionally ambiguous and indeterminate; often the just interpretation emerges only the second or third time as a result of painful experience.[81]

Apollo's worship was one of imparting wisdom in matters of bloodshed and its infectiousness. The cultic oracles from Delphi began to establish a universal morality that overrode tradition and group interests. "It was Delphi that confirmed and inculcated the sense that murder demands atonement and at the same time that it is possible to overcome the catastrophe through expiation."[82] And in myth, Apollo himself is made subject to this law by being banished to seek purification twice after killing first the Cyclopes and then the Python. The ultimate warning then developed from this experience. In the sixth century, the temple at Delphi was engraved with sayings. Two of these express the spirit of Apollo well – a combination of wisdom and morality: *nothing in excess* and *know yourself. Know yourself* was not intended in a psychological sense or an existential philosophical sense "but in an anthropological sense: know that you are not a god. An ethic of the human emerges, but it is closer to pessimism than to a programme for human progress."[83] The god can turn away but perhaps humans cannot.

The image of Apollo's bow and lyre encapsulates his rich, paradoxical character.

> Apollo's bows signify pestilence – he is the god of healing and the god of plague: 'night-like he comes to send the plague, the arrows clatter across his shoulders, and the string of his bow clangs terribly. Animals and men are felled until at last the god is appeased. But

[80] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 147.
[81] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148.
[82] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148.
[83] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148.

> on Mount Olympus in the company of the gods, Apollo himself plays the 'all beautiful phorminx', the stringed instrument, and the Muses sing alternatively with beautiful voices'. The plague god is at the same time master of the healing hymn.[84] Heraclitus articulated the unity of the bow and lyre as "a fitting together turned back on itself" meaning "that which is drawn apart becomes one with itself."[85]

Perhaps the pharmakos was closer to an image of this type – in-between states such as these. Burkert pointed out that the chthonic world was not only the place of terror of destruction, but also where food, and hence life, grows from the depths of the earth. Demeter was said to make death lose its terror and she, as corn mother, was known as "*Chthonia* in whose care the dead too are hidden."[86] As Harrison showed, the *Thargelia* was originally associated with Demeter. Thus, for the purpose of the thesis, it can be said that the pharmakos rite and myth associates Apollo and moral awareness with Demeter, the means of finding life in the death-like darkness.

Burkert's image of an exchange with invisible beings across a gap of annihilation was an important image for the thesis, as is his analogy with the internal process of homeostasis, and the means by which the human psyche establishes stability. Burkert concluded, however, that humans, even surrounded by their own familiar technology, will not easily accept that this exchange, which reaches out to the non-obvious, is a self-created projection to make sense of immense anxiety about disaster.[87]

As a phenomenon, reaching out to the non-obvious in the face of disaster, is deeply seated.

Conclusion

In this chapter the pharmakos rite and its myth have been established as a tale belonging to the underworld. The historical images of the pharmakos have been unearthed from the work of classical scholars in the modern era. Almost

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[84] Burkert, W. (1985). pp. 145-146.
[85] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 146.
[86] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 200.
[87] Burkert, W. (1998). p. 179.

universally, scholars and etymological sources equated the pharmakos with the scapegoat which purifies pollution of the community. Community experience of pollution and purification has been carried in metaphors with various images and associations. For Nilsson, the meaning is conveyed in the image of a sponge which is thrown completely away with its load of dirt, having wiped a surface clean. *Pharmakos* was one of the worst terms of abuse in the Greek language.

For Harrison the meaning is conveyed in the image of a medicine which a community makes of itself to do its own cleansing. The pollution is transferred onto a person, a member of the community, but not further onto a *thing*. There is something that stays essentially human in the dynamic.

For Frazer the meaning is conveyed more ambiguously. Pollution acts as a malignancy on the reproductive energies of a god – in this case a vegetation spirit of figs in particular. He described the scapegoat as a visible and tangible vehicle to remove invisible and intangible evils. Yet this belies the physicality of evil that the other historians said the Greeks felt. It was experienced as real and infectious. It had to be removed and the vessel carrying it had also to be thrown away.

The roots of this ritual, as interpreted by these classical phenomenologists, are rich and hidden in the chthonic realm of religion, where the gods of disaster belong, with diamones, evil spirits, heroes and the spirits of the dead. Harrison spoke of rites in this realm as those of Aversion, a sort of reciprocity where the god stays away with his load of trouble. Burkert proposed this force as originating in a biological need to create stability in the psyche, in the same way that the body maintains homeostasis.

It was from this realm that intense new spiritual life grew in Greece, especially through the Orphic religion and the Eleusinian rites, which celebrated life, birth and death and generation. The fig is associated with these rites and will be further explored in Chapter 8.

The metaphor of the pharmakos, its associations with pollution, purification and refreshing of waning potency, and the images of a cleaning implement, medicine and scapegoat, lie deep within human experience, and rest within the psyche. The thesis follows these images in cultural memory and imagination to a place closer to their rich and hidden source, by following the journey of the pharmakos.

Coming back to Walter Otto's question: if one passes beneath the utilitarian logic of the elements, in feeling out the significance of this ceremony, what is present in these moments that requires the attention and the engagement of every community member?[88] Where are they sending the pharmakos? The pharmakos is let go with his load. Something is being let go. Or perhaps the pharmakos is being led out in this ceremony.[89] Where is the crowd leading him or her? There is something non-obvious in this practice, not only in the load transferred, but also present in the meeting between the pharmakos and the community members. The pharmakos appears to be undertaking a kind of encounter that the community could not bear to think of – that the sensitive human psyche could not survive facing. There is something in the elements of the ritual which needs to be taken seriously to follow this possibility. The place to look, following the passion of Jane Harrison, is in the chthonic underworld, where the journey of the pharmakos and the non-obvious must be taken seriously. Through imagining this journey, the thesis has attempted to penetrate into the vehicle and its load, into the experience of the community and into the heart of the pharmakos as it departs to find its life again.

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[88] Otto, bemoaning the fact that scholars use a utilitarian filter in look back at early religious practices, used the term cultus as follows: "If, then, the cults are not utilitarian in nature but are, instead, mighty creations, called into life by the divine afflatus of a god who reveals himself; if the myths are no old wives' tales but witnesses of this same encounter with the Sublime; if then, it is valid to acknowledge primal phenomena and to do justice to great realities…knowledge can come to us only from the reality of the world itself." Otto, W. (1965). p. 46.

[89] Otto, W. (1965). p. 39.

CHAPTER 3

REVERIE ON THE PHARMAKOS: A BACHELARDIAN APPROACH

The pharmakos phenomenon can live again through reverie. Images of the pharmakos remain within us. Imagination touches the source of images and sees their continuous creation. These speak to us. They enliven us deeply and substantially and beget more images. They are the dialogue between the mind and the body. Development of a person and a culture is the capacity to commune with the invisible voices of images deep within.

The aim of this chapter is to position the work within the tradition of psychological phenomenology, specifically the ideas of Gaston Bachelard. It was designed to bring the reader immediately into the world of experience and reverie. "A true image – an image really imagined – contains a truth about human reality."[1] This was Bachelard's key idea - that imagination is life. This idea has been illustrated in the chapter with examples from his study of fire. The recent ideas of Antonio Damasio on the neuroscience of images in the mind have been introduced to complement Bachelard's insights concretely. A link is also made to ideas of Mary Watkins and James Hillman: that human development is growing the capacity to listen and dialogue with one's invisible voices. Finally, it has been shown why Bachelard's approach, complemented by Hillman, Damasio and Watkins, was chosen for dealing with the rich material of the pharmakos. It was through reverie that the pharmakos, lost to culture, could be accessed.

Experience and Reverie

> I sank into the experience of the pharmakos - I was *with* it – I *was* it at times. I drew, painted and sculpted whatever images emerged for three years or more. I saw a simple and arresting image emerge from the others. As I worked with this, an image of the pharmakos

[1] Gaudin, C. in Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxviii.

> came. It came from observing the movement of my hands and refining it until the movement itself became a simple and strong image. I kept this image in mind: giving it shape, volume and colour at some moments; taking it to its elemental parts at others. It kept metamorphosing. It became, for a time, associated with violent and destructive images. It became a comforter, a sewer of shrouds, a piercer of bodies and of armour..... I saw it as a being that dissolves its own substance and builds new protein from the broken down parts. My experience of the pharmakos had these kinds of qualities and dynamics.[2]

What tradition has spoken about these kinds of experience?

> Great images communicate with one another, bolster one another, and melt into one another, growing together in *magnificence*....Poetry here is a hearth, and images fuel which must be constantly replenished if imagination should sustain its peak.[3]

Thus Bachelard expressed the essence of imagination and its intimate life-sharing within the body of the poet. For him, imagination is fiery. Images do not need to be analyzed to work. They are natural. They express the experience of the world in the moment - its mystery, banality and trauma. Image is a primary material, a 'fuel,' and is sufficient in itself to sustain life. In the moment an image emerges, the passionate energy of life is consumed and born anew. Imagination is life.

The aspects of Bachelard's thinking important for the thesis were three. First, an image should be penetrated beyond its first impressions; second, in penetrating to the depth of images, human beings plumb their own depths; and third, images are ambiguous. Thus, for Bachelard, imagination was psychological and, if one listened carefully, the contradictory moods and voices could be heard speaking. In this manner, the images of the pharmakos, lying deep in human experience, may be heard again.

Bachelard's discovery and passion for imagination

Gaston Bachelard was Professor of the Philosophy of Science at the Sorbonne in France. Born in 1884, he was studying to become an engineer when the First World War broke out. He began teaching physics and chemistry after the war

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[2] A series of 30 images from this work has been selected and presented in Appendix 1.
[3] Bachelard, G. (1990). pp. 59-60.

and became interested in philosophy, in which discipline he received a doctorate in 1927.[4] He loved science and understood its epistemology as an expression of man, and contributed to it in many writings.[5] As he got older, he became increasingly taken by the phenomenon of imagination or in his words – reverie.

Writing on the poetics of fire as an old man, in notes assembled and published posthumously by his daughter, he reflected on his twenty years' work on imagination, and revealed more of himself and his attitude than did many of his earlier works. He began his study of imagination with the assumption that literary images could be studied simply, much in the way that scientific ideas were studied.

> But today, after so much work, my herbarium of images and commentaries filling some two thousand pages, I wish I had all of my books to write over. It seems to me that I should know better now how to express the reverberation of spoken images in the depths of the speaking soul, better now how to describe the links between new images and those with ancient roots in the human psyche. I should be able perhaps to put my finger more precisely on those moments when speech, today as always, creates something specifically human. In juxtaposing images and regrouping similar ones, I should respect better the privileged status of what is incomparable… Poetry is language freed from itself.[6]
>
> How healthful it is for the psyche to spend long months faithful to a single image, faithful to water or to the reveries of bird flight! Although I am an old man now, my own muscles weak, how good it felt – an almost muscular sensation – to collect poetic images of smithing and the forge![7]

This reflection of Bachelard provided two important links to this study of the pharmakos. First, it was clearly a tradition for exploring images with ancient roots in human experience. Second, it echoed the sense of satisfaction felt by this author in prolonged image-making of the pharmakos, and its rich internal dialogues.

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[4] Gaudin, C in Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxxi.
[5] *Le Nouvel esprit scientifique in* 1934 and *La Formation de l'esprit scientifique* in 1938.
[6] Bachelard, G. (1990). pp. 4-5.
[7] Bachelard, G. (1990). p. 9.

The Significance of Reverie

What did Bachelard mean by reverie? He spoke of needing solitude in the midst of his interaction with people whilst teaching and researching the philosophy of science; "the solitude of reverie, of my own reveries.... these reveries became working reveries in me....reverie works one's inner being....the reverie of a poet can bring one inner calm."[8]

He made a distinction between dream and reverie. What was important for him was the connection of reverie to consciousness. A reverie was more or less centred on one object. A dream "may forget its original path as it hastens along," but reverie worked in a star pattern: "it returns to its center to shoot out new beams."[9] He disagreed with psychologists who saw reverie as confused dreams without structure – "a bit of nocturnal matter left behind in the brightness of day."[10]

> Reverie is too normal a spiritual phenomenon – and too useful, as well, to psychic balance – to be treated as a derivative of the dream, to be classified without discussion among the onieric phenomena. In short, it is appropriate, in determining the essence of reverie, to return to reverie itself. And it is precisely through phenomenology that the distinction between dream and reverie can be clarified, since a possible intervention of consciousness provides a decisive sign.[11]

In reverie, one did not lose contact with oneself and with reality that, he felt, happened in nocturnal dreams. He also used *imagination* and *reverie* interchangeably, thus imagination is a conscious phenomenon.

Bachelard penetrated the inner workings of imagination. He burrowed into its dynamics. His thesis was that imagination should be treated as a fundamental psychic value. One would not therefore look at images as illustrations of written

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[8] Bachelard, G. (1990). p. 9.
[9] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 14.
[10] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *La poetique de la reverie.* pp. 69-71.
[11] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *La poetique de la reverie.* pp. 69-71.

thoughts. Images *were* thoughts – they were the expression of being. In this way images prepared the dynamics of internal moral life.[12]

> Some might insist on speaking of symbol, allegory, metaphor, and ask the philosopher to designate moral lessons before images. But if images were not an integral part of moral thought, they would not have such life, such continuity. ...If my thesis is well-founded, we ought to be able to discover a double perspective of height and of depth in actions that truly engage one's entire being.[13]

The view taken in the thesis is that the actions of the pharmakos ritual and the scapegoat process have profoundly engaged the being of culture in history. In present times, when crisis or fundamental change is in the air, the images that live of that experience can be attended to in contemplating difficult situations, moral or otherwise.

Finding One's Elements

For Bachelard, reverie tapped into the correspondence between image and material substance.

> The imagination of misfortune and death finds in the matter of water a particularly powerful and natural material image. ...When a reverie or dream is thus absorbed into a substance, the entire being receives a strange permanence from it. The dream falls asleep, becomes stabilized. It tends to participate in the slow and monotonous life of an *element.* Now that its *element* has been found, all its images will be based on it. It becomes material.[14]

In this way, he looked for metaphor, where the troubling being of life in oneself and the material being deep in the image, meet. For images of force and movement he did the same. For example, in his study of the Phoenix, he pondered the type of bird that would be appropriate to the fire image.

> River dreamers may be reminded here of tales of *rarae aves*, rare birds, but these lack blood enough to face the rigors of a poetics of fire. For me to better validate the case that I

[12] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'air et les songes*. p. 51.
[13] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'air et les songes*. pp. 52-53.
[14] Bachelard, G. (1983). The Charon Complex. pp. 89-90.

> have made thus far concerning my personal Phoenix, one would have to have seen eagles, vultures, condors, these and all the other bolt-bearing birds capable of rending the sky.[15]

The consciousness of this author, engaged in the experience of the pharmakos, imagined into the heart of the pharmakos and into two substantial images which always remained there- the fig and the goat. The images that took hold in pondering the fragments of the pharmakos ritual were the beating of the genitals with fig branches, and a human being as a remover of contamination. These images, and those of the fig leaf and the scapegoat, gradually became materialized into the beings of the fig and the goat. The images of Western culture, the fig-leaf covering human nakedness and the goat as a burden-carrier or *scape* goat, began to break up, revealing an inheritance of something more than their literal form and story. The reverie followed the enduring correspondence of human experience with the fig and the goat in life and death, in impulses to creation and destruction, in fertile and sterile responses to the way life plays out in tragedy, and uplifting moments of the human spirit. Thus the pharmakos, the fig and the goat became the Bachelardian *elements* in this study.

How would Bachelard have treated these images? He would have firstly advised a healthy distrust of first impressions about them.

In relation to the goat as an animal figure, he would have advised a reverie that went to the heart of animal movement. He showed what he meant by this in his work *Lautréamont*. Lautréamont was a French author who wrote the *Chants de Maldoror* and who claimed to have used his genius to depict the delights of cruelty. Bachelard saw the book as a bestiary of 185 animals.[16] Bachelard set out to find how the vital actions of the different animals achieved the author's claim.

As external, seen images, they did not metamorphose. They did not penetrate into the heart of animal movement.

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[15] Bachelard, G. (1990). p. 36.
[16] Bachelard, G. (1987). p. 39.

> Maldoror spurs on a charger, arouses a dog's anger, but...the dog's muzzle does not multiply and activate the triple violence of a Cerberus. Neither horse nor dog bears any mark of the teratological power which characterizes the author's imagination.[17]

Lautreamont failed to depict the delights of cruelty because he started with ready-made cruelty summed up in a traditional animal. He thus diluted it. "One will not receive this impression of dilution if...one restores to cruelty its multiplicity, and disperses it over all the functions of inventive aggression."[18]

In relation to the fig, Bachelard might have advised an intimate imagination of its vegetative and material forces. "In the depths of matter there grows an obscure vegetation; in the night of matter black flowers blossom. They already have their velvet and the formula of their scent."[19] Thus might the fig provide a direct reading of generation.

Conscious intention then, was required in imagination. One's intent needed to work at several levels: the formal, the dynamic and the material. This *doctrine*, as Bachelard called it, was used to help frame an argument of the thesis that culture has imagined the pharmakos only at the formal and dynamic levels of imagination. Thus it has been preoccupied with its form as vessel of purification, and its force as the scapegoat.

> The examples phenomenologists give do not show to great enough advantage the degrees of tension in intentionality; they remain too "formal," too intellectual. Principles of intensive and material evaluation are lacking, then, in a doctrine of objectivation that objectifies forms and not forces. There must be at once a formal intention, a dynamic intention, and a material intention so that an object can be understood in its force, resistance, and matter – that is completely.[20]

Through a psychological phenomenology, the tense material life lying in the depth of the pharmakos has been awakened, and linked through its form as a purifier and its force as a scapegoat to the fig and the goat.

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[17] Bachelard, G. (1987). pp. 38-39.
[18] Bachelard, G. (1987). p. 39.
[19] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'Eau et les reves*. p. 11.
[20] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 159.

Images Bring Life

Bachelard demonstrated how life in an image was communicated to the reader who had not participated in the author's personal experience. A feeling was evoked in the reader. Bachelard referred to this as communion through brief, isolated, rapid actions.[21]

> The poet does not confer the past of his image upon me, and yet his image immediately takes root in me. The communicability of an unusual image is a fact of great ontological significance... Images excite us – afterwards- but they are not the phenomena of an excitement....[It is] the poetic act itself, the sudden image, the flare-up of being in the imagination....[22]

Bachelard loved the image as written. The poetic image brought life to its writer and reader. It was direct. "The reader willing to imagine receives an imaginative impulse from a poet who lives to imagine."[23] "The poet speaks on the threshold of being."[24] Images in this realm may bring the generation of new life and the horror of destruction and catastrophe. Although Bachelard was primarily interested in poetry, the thesis has taken his orientation to other texts. Bachelard has been acknowledged for his ability to let a text astonish and provoke, and to stay in touch with the "live mystery of the poem."[25] This orientation was taken to the images of the pharmakos and the texts (although not poetry) used in the thesis.

Illustrations from Bachelard's Imagination of Fire

Bachelard followed the objects of his reveries with both extreme freedom and penetrating focus. For example, he was fascinated with fire. Fire, like the elements water, air and earth, has had an irresistible force, and unlike the others, has resisted conceptualization.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Bachelard was struck by the inability of scientists of his day to explain in objective terms what fire was.

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[21] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *The Poetics of space.* p. 73.
[22] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *The Poetics of space.* p. 73.
[23] Bachelard, G. (1990). p. 8.
[24] Bachelard, G (1987). Extract from *The Poetics of space.* p. 72.
[25] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xviii.

Penetrating into the epistemology of science, he followed the thinking of alchemists and early chemists and biologists. The images and metaphors they used in explanation of such phenomena were tautological and vague, much as were modern attempts.[26]

Fire induced the subjective pensive mode of man, loaded with values and feelings as he imagined the world. He showed that reveries such as these have taken up the same "primitive themes" over and again, operating as they would have in "primitive minds" in spite of scientific findings and systematic thought.[27] He concluded that our hunger for images is as basic as our yearning for objective knowledge thus suggesting that poetry and science might have a common source.[28]

> But the reverie by the fireside has axes that are more philosophical. Fire is for the man who is contemplating it an example of sudden change or development and an example of a circumstantial development. Less monotonous and less abstract than flowing water, even more quick to grow and to change than the young bird we watch everyday in its nest in the bushes, fire suggests the desire to change, to speed up the passage of time, to bring all of life to its conclusion, to its hereafter. In these circumstances the reverie becomes truly fascinating and dramatic; it magnifies the human destiny; it links the small to the great, the hearth to the volcano, the life of a log to the life of a world. The fascinated individual hears *the call of the funeral pyre*. For him destruction is more than a change, it is a renewal.[29]

And perhaps observers of the pharmakos ritual imagined renewal in the funeral pyre of destruction, literal and metaphorical.

In Bachelard's view, scientists' imaginations came into play at the limit of scientific knowledge. He drew on the history of the chemistry of fire to provide examples of the power of reverie to twist and defeat thought.[30] The image of hidden fire distorted experimental chemistry for a long time. The image arose in attempts to explain the process of digestion.

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[26] Educated people and eminent scientists, when asked what fire was, "unconsciously repeated the most ancient and fanciful philosophical theories." Bachelard G. (1964). pp. 2-3.
[27] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 4.
[28] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p xxvi.
[29] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 16.
[30] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 59.

> ... this inner, covered, preserved, possessed heat resulting from a well-digested meal leads men unconsciously to postulate the existence of a hidden and invisible fire in the interior of matter, or, as the alchemists would say, in the belly of the metal.[31]

Thus the special word *calorism* was born to correspond to the

> materializations of a soul or to the animation of matter; it is transitional between matter and life. It is the mute awareness of the material assimilation performed by digestion, of the animalization of the inanimate.[32]

Thus the myth of digestion helped understand the meaning and the force of two alchemical sayings: "Fire is an element which is active at the centre of each thing;" and this spoken by mercury itself - "I am all fire within; fire serves as my food, and it is my life."[33] The metaphors of interior, belly and centre showed that it is not objective properties but psychological values that are being dealt with.[34] Perhaps one can ideal with the historical images of the pharmakos in a similar way.

> We are inclined to excuse all these naïve beliefs, because we now interpret them only in their metaphorical translation. We forget that they corresponded to psychological realities. Now it often happens that metaphors have not completely lost their *reality*, their *concreteness*....What gives us a just measure of the errors concerning fire is the fact that they are still, perhaps more than any other type of error, attached to concrete affirmations, to unquestioned inner experiences.[35]

Thus, Bachelard sought the territory between the metaphor and the reality.

> The *dreaming man* seated before his fireplace is the man concerned with inner depths, a man in the process of development. Or perhaps it would be better to say that fire gives the man concerned with inner depths the lesson of an inner essence which is in a process of development: the flame comes forth from the heart of the burning branches. [36]

He saw that reverie both creates and limits us "for it is reverie which delineates the furthest confines of our mind."[37] In his last work on fire, more than twenty

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[31] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 75.
[32] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 75.
[33] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 75.
[34] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 75.
[35] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 70.
[36] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 56.
[37] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 110.

years later, "all distance taken to the spectacle of fire had been abolished."[38] He opened to its pure intensity. This can be felt in the following excerpt from his chapter on the Phoenix.

> The Phoenix is the sum total of its poetic expressions, a play of multiple correspondences: fire, balm, song, life, birth, and death. It is nest and infinite space. It has two sources of heat, the nest and the sun. Heat of song and heat of space, all combine to set the bird aflame: the arousing, masculine fire of songs that awaken; the cradling, feminine warmth of spices that put to sleep. The hermaphrodism of great images here once again reveals itself, transposed into a much more subtle, hence much truer form. ...In turning to ash the Phoenix both feels and knows that it will soon be fire. ...That which is reborn and sleeps and is reborn creates a rhythm which is rendered doubly salutary through poetic treatment. The phoenix, a creature born of the mighty contradiction between life and death, is sympathetic to all contradictory beauty. Its image helps us to legitimate the contradictions to be found in passion. This is why the Phoenix time and time again, without the help of ancient myth, is born again in poetry. The Phoenix is an archetype of every age, inherent in the experience of fire; for we will never know for certain whether fire derives its meaning from images of external reality, or its power from the fires of the human heart.[39]

For Bachelard, a brilliant image was ambiguous – it communed at once with the core life-preserving dynamics in the body and the poetics of the mind. It was dialectical.

> 'if the image becomes psychically active only through metaphors which *decompose*, if it creates a truly new psychism only by the most elaborate transformation, in the region of the metaphor of metaphor, then the enormous poetic production of fire images becomes understandable. We have indeed tried to show that fire is, among the makers of images the one that is most dialecticized. It alone is *subject and object.* ... It is impossible to escape this dialectic: to be aware that one is burning is to grow cold; to feel an intensity is to diminish it; it is necessary to be an intensity without realizing it. Such is the bitter law of man's activity.[40]

And so in this way can the scapegoat image be de-formed to make it more psychically active in an in-between space in the mind and body, and to feel more acutely the experience of it.

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[38] Bachelard, S. In Bachelard, G. (1990). p. xiii.
[39] Bachelard, G. (1990). pp. 62-64.
[40] Bachelard, G. (1964). pp. 111-112.

Modern Neuroscience has complemented Bachelard's insights concretely

Recent findings in neuroscience have provided clues to how the mind works, and showed how insightful Bachelard was in his study of imagination. These findings have made the appeal of reverie as an approach to this study more convincing.

Antonio Damasio, a contemporary neuroscientist, has explained how the mind works in images – how they are its currency.[41] The *mind* that we experience he has described as a set of neural processes which use the body as its frame of reference. "Our most refined thoughts and best actions, our greatest joys and deepest sorrows use the body as a yardstick."[42] Damasio summed up current knowledge in the following way:

> Images come from the activity of brains within living organisms that are interacting with internal and external environments whether they be physical, biological or social.[43] There is still a mystery as to *how* images emerge from neural patterns. They depend on and arise from neural patterns but they are not the same as these. [44] Images are not just visual. They include 'tokens' from all the senses and somatic body sensations. They are not just static either. They include sound images of music or wind and the somatic senses associated with mental problem solving. For example, Einstein coined the term 'muscular images' to describe his experience of this. Images show properties of all kinds: concrete and abstract; feelings and relationships, whether spatial, temporal or logical. Thought denotes a flow of images which turn out to be logically related whether 'sequences are concurrent, convergent, divergent or superimposed.[45]

Hence Bachelard's sense that images are integral to moral thought was accurate and he, like Einstein, used the term *muscular images*. Bachelard's commitment to the subjectivity of conscious images is confirmed by Damasio.

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[41] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 319.
[42] Damasio, A. (1994). p. xvi.
[43] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 322.
[44] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 322.
[45] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 318.

> Not all images are made conscious. Neural patterns which remain non-conscious can only be accessed by third-person means such as a trace from technology. Conscious images however can only be accessed in a first-person perspective.[46]

Bachelard's sense of reverie specified the *intervention of consciousness*. Damasio described consciousness thus:

> Consciousness begins when brains acquire the [simple] power...of telling a story without words, the story that there is life ticking away in an organism, and that the states of the living organism, within body bounds, are continuously being altered by encounters with objects or events in its environment, or, for that matter, by thoughts and by internal adjustments of the life process. Consciousness emerges when this primordial story – the story of an object causally changing the state of the body – can be told using the universal nonverbal vocabulary of body signals. The apparent self emerges as a feeling of a feeling.[47]

He declared that none of the marvellous achievements of the human mind was the direct cause of consciousness. It had to be present, but the mind, as well, was in a display to the body. This is the consequence of a nervous system that has a vast memory, which can categorise and code the entire spectrum of knowledge in language which has "an enhanced ability to hold knowledge in mental display and manipulate it intelligently."[48]

Consciousness was a feeling.[49] Feelings were the fundamental mediator between the body and the world, and at the base of descriptions of the human soul or spirit.

> By and large, a feeling is that momentary 'view' of a part of that body landscape. It has a specific content – the state of the body. ...Because of the sense of that body landscape is juxtaposed in time to the perception or recollection of something else that is not part of the body – a face, a melody, an aroma – feelings end up being 'qualifiers to that something else. ... the [feeling] state, positive or negative, is accompanied and rounded up by a

[46] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 318.
[47] Damasio, A. (2000). pp. 30-31.
[48] Damasio, A. (2000). pp. 310-311.
[49] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 26.

> corresponding thinking mode…In this perspective, feelings are the sensors for the match or lack thereof between nature and circumstance.[50]

Bachelard's sense of material imagination seemed in acute touch with the human material in us. He could feel the "animalization of the inanimate " as he described images of digestion.[51]

Bachelard seemed to have the capacity to slow down, as it were, to match nature. He described the dream which falls asleep, stabilizes and "tends to participate in the slow and monotonous life of an element."[52] It was as if he wandered close to the realm wherein the mind develops short cuts to aid survival.

Damasio claimed that this capacity might have been a very adaptive distraction to enable human beings to concentrate resources on problems in the outside world and their solution.

> Sometimes we use our minds to hide a part of our beings from another part of our beings….Yet this skewing of perspective relative to what is available in our minds has a cost. It tends to prevent us from sensing the possible origin and nature of what we call self.[53]

Damasio's view was that a person comes to know that images exist and are being formed in the individual who forms them – the self.[54] He has described his concept of the mind body as cooperation between the proto-self, core consciousness and extended consciousness. The proto-self is biological, constantly in touch with the physical state of the organism, and "preconscious."[55] Core consciousness is what relates an account of the

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[50] *Nature* represents the sum of inherited attributes and individually acquired attributes, consciously and unconsciously acquired, through interaction with environment. Damasio, A. (1994). p. xv.
[51] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 75.
[52] Bachelard, G. (1983). The Charon Complex. pp. 89-90.
[53] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 29.
[54] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 24.
[55] "The proto-self is a coherent collection of neural patterns which map, moment by moment, the state of the physical structure of the organism in its many dimensions." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 154.

interaction between the organism and an external object or event.[56] Finally, extended consciousness provides qualities that are often described as uniquely human.

> Extended consciousness is the capacity to be aware of a large compass of entities and event, i.e., the ability to generate a sense of individual perspective, ownership, and agency, over a larger compass of knowledge than that surveyed in core consciousness. The sense of autobiographical self to which this larger compass of knowledge is attributed includes unique biographical information.[57]

One can think of all levels of imagination which Bachelard described (formal, dynamic and material), as fitting this neuroscientific understanding, each level bringing us closer to a meeting with the body. Bachelard's view was that material imagination came closest to the gap between the body and the mind.

> Our essential being rises and falls, brightens and darkens, never at rest and never stable, living always in a state of tension. Fire is never still. It lives on even as it sleeps. Our experience of fire is always a matter of heightened existence. Images of fire, for the dreamer, or the thinker, constitute a school of intensity. Yet, thanks to these images of imagined intensity, one is spared the too-sudden brutality of intensity as experienced in the flesh.[58]

The image carried through the thesis was that of the mind gazing on the body. It displays to the body and it listens or gazes as the body speaks back in material level images. Thus they are in dialogue.

Reverie is Dialogue

> The agitation set off in me by descriptions from various fields of the scapegoat, goats and figs raised the volume of many other voices and images of the pharmakos.

Thus there was contact and exchange between the image and reality.

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[56] It is "the generation of the imaged nonverbal account of the object-organism relationship – which is the source of the sense of self in the act of knowing –and the enhancement of the images of an object." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 169.

[57] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 198.

[58] Bachelard, G. (1990). p. xii quoted in the preface by Suzanne Bachelard.

Mary Watkins' work was helpful in this regard. She created a conceptual space for imaginal dialogues.[59] She included in these "private speech, play, imaginary companions, dreams, fantasy, prayer, the writing of novels and plays, the reading of literature, the viewing of drama.....and thought itself" so that she could acknowledge their presence and their diversity, their enduring nature and many forms.[60] She disagreed with the notion that human development, in a traditional psychological sense, passes through a *phase* of imaginal dialogue, being understood as something which changes with age. In this view, imaginal dialogue becomes either communication with *actual* others or abstract thought. Watkins took a different approach: human development was the ability to consciously enter into imaginal dialogue which builds capacity for the dramatic and the imaginative. These were the senses which portray possible different futures.[61] Imaginal dialogues were both inward and outward in direction. They did not exist separate from the rest of our lives.

> Dialogue is the method for [the] hosting, penetration, and holding of difference.[62]

This was connected in the author's mind with Bachelard's perception that inner development occurred as a result of reverie – "the fire gives the man concerned with inner depths the lesson of an inner essence which is in a process of development."[63] One may think of having a conscious feeling for this development.

The author combined Bachelard's and Watkins' approach to development as imaginal dialogue. The intention was to let texts from different traditions speak to one another, to listen acutely to the voiceless scapegoat complex, and to address and be addressed by the fig and the goat. In this way development was seen to extend consciousness – to extend fertility.

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[59] She coins the world *imaginal* to break the association of imaginary with the unreal. The idea of the imaginary can be difficult to embrace in a world occupied with the literal meaning of the material world. Watkins, M. (2000). pp. 4, 8.
[60] Watkins, M. (2000). p. 5.
[61] Watkins, M. (2000). p. 5.
[62] Watkins, M. (2000). p. 190.
[63] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 56.

Martin Buber articulated something of what is possible in the moment of such a meeting. In contemplating a tree, he said one can see it as a picture, feel its movement, classify it as a species, and understand within it the laws of physics.

> But it can also happen, if will and grace are joined, that as I contemplate the tree I am drawn into a relation, and the tree ceases to be an It, The power of exclusiveness has seized me...
>
> The tree is no impression, no play of my imagination, no aspect of a mood; it confronts me bodily and has to deal with me as I must be dealt with – only differently.
>
> One should not try to dilute the meaning of the relation: relation is reciprocity.[64]

There is an exchange and we are changed by the interaction.

Reverie is Psychological

For Bachelard there were two particular qualities of imagination which underscore it as a psychic phenomenon of life. Firstly, it seeks depth.

> Dreaming depth, we dream *our* depth. Dreaming of the secret power of substances, we dream of our secret being. But the greatest secrets of our being are hidden from ourselves, they are hidden in our depths.[65]

Secondly, it meant entering into contradictions.

> ...There are profound and durable ambivalences inherent in the fundamental matters which material imagination draws upon. This psychological property is so constant that we can formulate its converse as a basic law of imagination: *a matter to which the imagination cannot give twofold life cannot play the psychological role of a fundamental substance.*[66]

In these two *laws*, Bachelard expressed the essential qualities of a psychological approach: depth and ambiguity. The first contact with an image was subject to the same *error* in the way that science might question an object. Images were loaded with false values and assumptions. Hence Bachelard insisted on intention in phenomenology. One had to penetrate under the first contact with

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[64] Buber, M. (1970). p. 58.
[65] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *La Terre et les reveries du repos.* p. 54.
[66] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'Eau et les reves.* pp. 82-83.

an image – under what Bachelard called the formal imagination of an object - to find and communicate its life.[67]

Bachelard was influenced by the great psychological thinkers of his time. His idea to psychoanalyse the elements, fire, water, air and earth, was audacious. He both criticized and used the concept of psychoanalysis. He could *rectify* explanations of images based on first intuitions by referring to the unconscious. But after his first work on fire he no longer used the term. He became more attuned to the notion of archetype which enabled him to seize on the "specific originality of the symbol without reducing it to its causes."[68] "When Bachelard used any psychoanalytical concept, he limited his investigation to the present life of images; he disregarded the historical and anthropological background of archetypes and attempted instead an '*archeology of the human soul.* "'[69]

Important here for the thesis was that Bachelard did not withdraw to the distance of conceptual analysis. He stayed with the image. Bachelard did not want to risk destroying the image by giving it a conceptual rigidity – he did not want to "explain the flower by the fertilizer."[70] Neither did he seek the organic sources of imagination. Using the images of a botanical graft, he sought human beings by what they write, above the graft "where a culture has left its traces on nature."[71]

He has been criticized for inspiring imitators to type images simplistically and to engage in superficial psychological ramblings. This may result from a cursory or piecemeal approach to his works.[72] There was depth and discipline in Bachelard's reveries. The writer's intention was to avoid the trap of psychological rambling by trying to follow Bachelard's courage to resist the seduction of the image to stay only on its surface. Drawing on many fields of

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[67] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 5.
[68] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *The Poetics of space*. p. 71.
[69] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxxviii. Original emphasis.
[70] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *The Poetics of space*. p. 74.
[71] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). pp. xxxix-xl.
[72] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xvii.

CHAPTER 4

PHENOMENOLOGY: METHODS AND PHILOSOPHY

Phenomenology is a method for studying and communicating experience. It requires care and respect for the manner in which a person and a culture search within - in the body - for the words to express the experience of phenomena. The thesis uses the voices in literary, scientific and cultural texts from many fields to look into the contradictory processes of fragility, fertility and impulsion to remove contagion present in aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon.

The aim of this chapter is to place the thesis within the discipline of phenomenology. A psychological approach to phenomenology, its descriptive method and the manner in which it has been adapted for this study, are outlined. Data concerning experience of the pharmakos phenomenon were sought from writers in a broad range of literature. The validity of the sources and their treatment is given. In this discipline, language and experience are viewed as created in the body. A particular approach to aesthetic phenomenological description that has influenced the approach to the texts used as data in this work is outlined. It stresses that the researcher take care to listen to how people search in themselves to find language to express experience. Some key philosophical roots which have shaped this existential approach are given. The relationship of Gaston Bachelard's phenomenology of imagination to the general field of phenomenology is discussed.

Phenomenology

> The pharmakos appeared and I entered into the experience – into the phenomenon.

A phenomenon has been described as an event or fact that appears or is perceived by one of the senses or by the mind. Its cause or explanation is

usually in question.[1] Psychologically, it has been described as an internal experience of which one is aware.[2] Experience is something in the processes of consciousness as a result of human awareness being open to the world.[3] Phenomenology has been the means by which one studies experience. Its aim is to allow the researcher and the reader access to deeper insights into the meaning made of experience. Based in traditions of both philosophy and psychology, the field is broad and has a variety of approaches. This study is predominantly a study in psychological phenomenology.

Phenomenological Investigation of the Pharmakos and Sources of Data

The experience being investigated is an engagement with the pharmakos phenomenon. To reiterate, the context out of which the phenomenon arose was experiences of being-in-the-middle of people meeting together, bringing differences of many kinds, emotion and a sense of crisis, about complex and unsatisfactory situations in health and medicines.

This investigation is broadly phenomenological. "Phenomenological research holds that the unique characteristics of consciousness require a distinct kind of science" using data gathering methods designed specially to arrive at general descriptions of particular aspects of experience.[4] Its methods are used as general guidelines by researchers. In experience, events appear as meaningful and experience is meaningfully ordered but its structure and order are hard to describe.[5] It is useful to attempt such a description because it helps to understand how a meaning structure operates among us and creates a meaningfully shared world.[6] The focus of attention is on the subject's

[1] The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. (1993). p. 2184.
[2] Reber, A.S. and E. (Eds.). (2001). p. 33.
[3] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 42.
[4] "phenomenological psychologists hold that the general description of consciousness developed by phenomenological philosophers provides a [firm] base from which to develop research designs to study consciousness and its flow of experiences." Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 44.
[5] "In experience, events appear as meaningful – both the appearance of worldly objects and happenings and our own thoughts and feelings." Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 45.
[6] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 47.

experienced meaning rather than overt actions or behaviour.[7] Thus it differs from mainstream psychology. Phenomenological investigation can be described simply as the producing of "clear, precise, and systematic descriptions of the meaning that constitutes the activity of consciousness" of a particular aspect of human experience.[8] In this case the aim is to produce a description of the meaning experienced in engagement with the pharmakos.

The approach taken in the thesis combined a philosophical phenomenology with a psychological phenomenology.[9] This meant using both self–reflection and descriptions of an engagement by others with aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon. Some issues on self-reflection are discussed before proceeding to discuss data gathered from others.

There are features of consciousness that influence the methods and procedures used in phenomenology. Consciousness is an activity, "a fleeting trace", it can't be held – it is like a mirror. It is always filled with contents and integrated into an ensemble of perceptions, memories and images. Access to this is a problem, and data are several times removed from the actual flow of experience. Reflecting, therefore, effects a change in awareness of the researcher on her own experience or the subjects on their experience.[10] In this study, self-reflection (or self report) is more heavily weighted than in a conventional method of phenomenological psychology. The other important point is that one can only have direct awareness of one's own consciousness, and therefore care has to be taken by the researcher in interpreting reports from others' descriptions. Therefore, one must make it obvious how one interacts with and

[7] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 44.
[8] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 45.
[9] "A primary difference between phenomenological philosophy and phenomenological psychology is the use of other persons as the primary source of original naïve descriptions of an experience." Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p 47.
[10] "The initial nonreflective, direct engagement with the flow of experience (the object of study) is replaced by the self's relocation to a point of observation that is removed from experience" and "the report of what was witnessed requires that the observation of experience be described in a language. Thus the verbal or written report is not a duplication of what was seen; it is a culturally conventional system of signs that indicates or points towards the prereflective reality." Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). pp. 45-46.

transforms the data when identifying elements and themes in descriptions.[11] The author has made this clearer by making self-reflection of the experience more obvious than it might be in other studies.

Self-reflection is a philosophical tradition within phenomenology. In this work, it was important in two ways: first, the engagement with the phenomenon by this author involved a powerful visual image-making process, and this was essential in engagement with the pharmakos, to its description and to making meaning of it;[12] second, as the inner dimension is critical to experience and to making meaning of it, so too is awareness of the *inner* in the moment of working as a facilitator in the world.[13]

Data gathering for this study, however, was wider than the "researchers' personal self-reflection on the incidents of the topic that they have experienced."[14] It included the experiences of others "who have had or who are having the experience under investigation."[15] The usual procedure in phenomenological psychology is to collect data from people through open-ended interview. It tries to glean from examples collected by interview "an accurate essential description of their contents and the particular structural relationship that coheres the elements into a unified experience."[16] This is regarded as a report of the experience as it actually appears in the person's consciousness. The subjects one would invite into a phenomenological study

[11] Leslie Todres was helpful in this regard and his work is discussed in a later section in this chapter on aesthetic phenomenological description.
[12] A sketch of the process itself is given in Appendix 1, with a selection of images created in this process, but remains as background to the thesis narrative per se.
[13] Once *infected* by the emotion in the room and any *blaming* tide of feeling, the process is lost. Yet one feels these things as a human being having personal experience of health and medicines events and memories. The internal tension caused by this is demanding. There are some revisualised personal statements from the experience of facilitating itself in the Introduction to the thesis which were unreflected through the pharmakos phenomenon. The author was remembering what she experienced before the phenomenon arrived.
[14] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p.46.
[15] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p.46.
[16] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). pp. 50-51.

then would have to have had, or be experiencing the phenomenon, and be able to be articulate about it.[17]

The investigation in this thesis is of an engagement with the pharmakos phenomenon. It was precipitated in the researcher by experience over a number of years in facilitating in the area of health and medicines. But the arrival of the phenomenon did not occur until removal from that situation. There are a large number of people who were involved in those processes – but none that subsequently engaged with the pharmakos phenomenon per se.[18]

An alternative source of descriptions of experience is to use "depictions of the experience from outside the context of the research project itself - for example, by novelists, poets, painters, choreographers, and by previous psychological and phenomenological investigators."[19] Polkinghorne legitimises the use of literary and historical texts as the data of a phenomenological study. Texts such as these enable a variety of descriptions of human experience situated in different in historical, geographical and scientific settings and can provide deeply penetrating descriptions.[20] These are usually combined with interview data. In this thesis this was not the case, and hence it remains a theoretical study, where texts from many disciplines have been placed into dialogue, and interviewed through reverie to understand the elements of the experience that give psychological meaning in particular contexts or situations.[21]

The thesis used data from subjects that were outside the initial context of experience - namely writers who have engaged with the pharmakos phenomenon in different ways. It is assumed that these writers have redirected their awareness towards their own experiencing in the process of research and

[17] For example ability to sense and express their inner feelings and emotions and the organic experiences that accompany the feelings, to express themselves linguistically relatively easily, ability to report what was going on within themselves. Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). pp. 47-48.
[18] The author sat and conversed in an open-ended way with several colleagues who were in these processes to collect their insights and personal feelings about the process in order to check her own feelings. This enabled her to describe some of the dynamics better – but not to collect a description of an engagement with the pharmakos.
[19] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 46.
[20] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 50.
[21] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 51.

writing. Hence it is assumed that Jane Harrison, James Frazer and Martin Nilsson are at the same time writers and phenomenological investigators who have reflected on the phenomenon in their engagement with the artefacts and written fragments of earlier peoples' engagement with the pharmakos.[22] It is assumed that Rene Girard is primarily a phenomenological investigator in his approach to the scapegoat phenomenon.

Included in data gathered from outside the context, are descriptions of others' experience of the fig and the goat. These are aspects of the pharmakos in the material realm. Hence, these can be thought of as descriptions of the experiencing of the goat and the fig through a biological perspective - biochemical and neurological, in particular. These have then been used - interrogated or interpreted - to develop a description, and elicit meaning of the more hidden, less accessible aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon that is embodied in the metaphor or image of the fig and the goat. Bachelard's phenomenological understanding of reverie was important in this process. Included also are some creative writers who provided sensitive and rich descriptions of these aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon.[23] These include for example, the description by Malaysian novelist K.S. Maniam of the sacrifice of a goat in Chapter 7, and the descriptions of the fig and the pharmakos in Chapter 8, by the poet M.C. Cronin, and songwriter Istvan Anhalt.

There are problems in the eclectic mixing of methods that need to be acknowledged. The problem with self-reflection is that one must avoid solipsism.[24] The psychological approach to a phenomenological study differs from a philosophical approach in that it deliberately focuses on other subjects, because it seeks meaning and contents of experience not from within but between persons.[25] Hence dialogic phenomenology searches for what *we* rather

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[22] These writers have engaged with the phenomenon and arrived at particular metaphors of the experience. Their perspective is historical and philological. This can be thought of as a reflection that has changed the awareness of the subject relocated to a point of observations that is removed from the experience. Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 46.

[23] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 50.

[24] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 47.

[25] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989) citing Strasser, S. p. 47.

than *I* experience.[26] This avoids solipsism and subjective bias. Yet the *within* experience is critical to the context and experience of facilitating meetings of people. Having a description or an awareness of what is happening within the person-in-the-middle seems important and helpful in the moment of facilitating.

> Self-reflection was a relevant part of the essential structure of the phenomenon as I experienced it because I developed a penetrating understanding of the pharmakos in visual images and now I have a series of images which portray an inner process.[27]

The *between* experience is important to understanding how the pharmakos experience operates in culture (and groups of people in the original context in a meeting space) and creates a shared experienced world. Hence this study relies on writers who have experienced aspects of the phenomenon and self-report of the author. This makes it a theoretical study from the strict point of view of phenomenological psychology in that the author has not gathered data from people experiencing the phenomenon in the context of health and medicines. An empirical phenomenological study could be conducted in that context in future.

A further methodological caution needs to be acknowledged, concerning the use of literary descriptions. They require considerable interpretation to gain access to the depth of understanding they offer.[28] This has been attempted seriously and is implicit in the narrative flow and structure of the thesis conceived of as descending into the gap that the metaphors or descriptions are trying to cross. Todres' approach has been adapted to be an active means of attempting this interpretation with care and sensitivity.

Aesthetic Dimensions of Phenomenological Description

The intention in this section is to relate the methods of phenomenology to concern for images *within*. The images, emotion and ritual of the pharmakos

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[26] "The full attributes of a meaning structure, requires an understanding of how it operates among us and creates a meaningfully shared experiential world". Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p 47.

[27] See Appendix 1.

[28] "Literary descriptions, however, often contain sophisticated metaphors and images requiring considerable interpretation if the researcher is to gain access to the depth of understanding they offer." Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 50.

live in the body and being of those who have engaged with the phenomenon, and in culture in its heritage and memory in some manner. The manner in which these experiences speak from these bodies has to be respected. Thinkers in the existential philosophical roots of phenomenology speak of ideas helpful in this regard and a contemporary existential phenomenologist, Leslie Todres, has drawn on these traditions to propose an approach to qualitative data that respects these dimensions. The approach to the study was shaped by linking Todres' ideas with those of Bachelard and Damasio.

> The personal experience I had of the pharmakos produced images within me – they appeared in drawing, paint and sculpture to begin with. They were associated with much feeling. One may say that this was the experience of the phenomenon arising. This then is an experiential phenomenon. The images and the voices that arise as a result of this approach can be thought of as lying within one's body (or the body of culture) which might be searched for if one were interviewed – or if culture were interviewed- and asked to speak about such experiences. What I did then was to use the ways of thinking of Damasio and Bachelard in particular to enable me to access the phenomenon via images and imagination to be able to describe it and investigate others' images or metaphors.

Todres has advocated methods in phenomenology that listen carefully for and respect the means by which people search in the body for the words that will express as closely as possible the experience that lies in the body. Todres is respecting the fact that bodily participation in the experience involves *something more than words can say*. This means the body is intimate to such understanding, and this kind of "bodily-informed sense-making adds a dimension to the ways we have access to and present truth."[29]

> This sense is also present to me in the processes of dialogue that I describe. The space is highly charged – often conflicted and full of unheard and unseen elements contributed from the private psyche of individuals present. I feel all these dimensions in my body and am tuning in my mind to recognise what my body is experiencing.

Before discussing Todres' ideas in more detail, some relevant points about the philosophical origins of the field are given.

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[29] Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 283, pp. 284-285.

Philosophically, phenomenology was committed from its beginning to freedom from preconceived ideas. All beliefs were suspended. The experiences themselves remained.[30] Husserl and Heidegger have been foundational thinkers in this tradition. Edmund Husserl was deeply interested in the distinction between the conscious states in which something is merely *meant* and those in which it is concretely *present*.[31] "The stimulus for investigation must start, not with philosophies, but with issues and problems."[32] Todres described his concerns as "a potential self-deception in human thought; of how the boundaries and structures of thought could lead to a replacement of what the thought was referring to."[33] Husserl's motto became *back to the things themselves.* Given that consciousness and the objects of consciousness are intimately connected, before one is aware of self and other, he questioned to what extent one could suspend preconceptions when faced with any phenomenon without losing the essence of connectedness.[34]

Heidegger thought consciousness or presence was more fundamental and prior to individual consciousness. "Consciousness is not centred in a self, as if the self was a container or a thing."[35] He was fascinated with the metaphysical distinction between *Being* and *being*.[36] He wanted to describe how a person knows he or she is knowing. What concerned Heidegger was not the distinction so much, but whatever it was that "opens up this distinction in each and every metaphysical epoch....*Being* is thought as some kind of ground or cause of *beings*". There is something that cuts the *being* and *Being* apart and, in an "Event of Appropriation", sends *Being* to thought.[37] Being-in-the-world comes first, subjectivity is a modification of this.[38] In the work of Husserl and

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[30] Farber, M. (1989). p. 233.
[31] He expressed his wish to discover "a priori principles governing mind, phenomenal nature, law, society, ethics, religion etc. which should never go beyond what appears to consciousness." Findlay, J.N. (1989). p. 144.
[32] Caputo, J.D. (1982). p. 18. Heidegger quoting Husserl.
[33] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.
[34] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.
[35] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.
[36] His desire was "to affirm reality while at the same time giving an account of the subjective life in which reality is reached." Caputo, J.D. (1982). p. 24.
[37] Caputo, J.D. (1982). p. 3.
[38] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.

Heidegger, the gap between *being* and *thinking* has been open. This is important to the narrative of the thesis. The ways *being* and *thinking* are connected has a quality that is not dualistic. They meet and co-exist and one can tune into this.

> This is what is happening in the background dialogue between the images I created and the phenomenological investigation of the pharmakos.

Merleau-Ponty proposed the body as the important frame of reference for phenomenology. He emphasized that perception is only possible because human bodies participate in the order and unity of existence. For him, *the lived body* was not a mere object among objects, but an expressive subject which reveals itself through everyday human perceptions, gestures and symbols. [39] He used the term *inter-twining* to indicate a fundamental intimacy between the visible and invisible dimensions of being.[40]

Todres' main concern has been the self and its qualities of Being-in-the-World.[41] The clear identification and respect for an internal gap has seemed to inspire his approach to qualitative research. Importantly for this thesis was his idea that Being-in-the-World "involves a 'clearing' or 'openness,' which is the 'space' for distinctive contexts" such as language, culture etc., to occur. There are two things occurring together: "the openness, intimacy and continuity of Being; and the changing boundaries of the many ways that Being occurs and the many ways we define ourselves."[42]

In an attitude that is similar to Mary Watkins, Todres has not focused on development as a process of how changes in self-definition occur and are logically tracked as one *develops*. Rather, his interest has been in "an ontological openness at the centre of identity which is always functioning" whether one is aware of it or not. At any time in life, "the basic openness can

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[39] Kearney, R. (1989). pp. 199-200.
[40] Todres described this as depth of the lived body being able to carry closeness and distance, intimacy and separation. Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.
[41] "...the self is continuous with and disappears into a ground or order of life [which includes the contexts of language, culture, developmental structures and physiological constraints and freedoms. These interpenetrate.]...this order of life gives the self its qualities and these are the qualities of Being-in-the-World." Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.
[42] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 229.

shine through" and be experienced in different ways. It is not a particular form of experience, but rather "the quality of consciousness when it is not specialized to focus on boundary making. It is what is already the case before thinking."[43] His research methods are based on this. The link in the thesis to his orientation was twofold. Firstly, he has described the intuition felt by the writer whilst in the grip of the pharmakos – to be open and be opened, rather than to contain. He gave a marvellous description of entering the underworld as "facing the present blocks to openness" where the opening is not described by its content but "rather as a quality of presence."[44] Secondly, his work on qualitative research methods influenced the approach to the texts used in this study.

The particular techniques that Todres developed in qualitative research involve the body's access to "more than words can say."[45] His approach involves care for: informants' voices; the human phenomena being expressed; how the writer's and researcher's voice reveals, conceals and co-creates; and the reader as part of the ongoing conversation of understanding. [46] In this view, there is more intricacy in the body of experience than any interpretation can convey. Hence, responsiveness is not just logical meaning, but also the process in which languaging and embodying "cross and dip."[47] When a person, in conversation, is satisfyingly communicating an experience, the person is focusing productively – the words are showing what is coming from the person's contact with the experience.[48] This, Todres called the "freedom of the unique human occasion."[49] Todres has expressed a deep-felt concern for ways to communicate in research that remember this. He has striven to retain the richness and texture of individual experiences while also formulating a level of description that

[43] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 230. Based on ideas of Aron Antonovsky.
[44] Todres, L.A. (2000). p. 233. Based on these ideas, the engagement with a phenomenon has two strong coexisting qualities – being in the openness or clearing is a *non-separative being-here* and being in the selective or boundary making mode is *specialised engagement*.
[45] Todres' approach was also influenced by the philosophy of E.T.Gendlin - that language is buried in the body. Our bodily participation in life has provided a grounded quality to understanding – a shared reference point for language that *works*. Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 283.
[46] Todres, L.A. (2002). p 3.
[47] Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 289. Quoting E.T. Gendlin.
[48] Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 292.
[49] Todres, L.A. (2002). p. 14.

applies generally and typically to the phenomenon of interest.[50] For him, this tension must be palpable.

The method of this thesis has taken account of his concerns. The data used in the thesis were not collections of individual interviews or conversations. Hence the specific methods of Todres[51] and of another important innovator in the field, Amadeo Giorgi,[52] have not been used in the specific ways they recommend. But their ideas guided the approach to the many texts which constitute the data for this study, namely, to respect the ways the authors searched in themselves to access experience in the body, and to preserve the uniqueness of the voice of the individual who wrote the text. This was demanding, as the thesis covers the fields of Classics, Greek Religion, anthropology, animal husbandry, fibre science, literature and history. An attempt was made to preserve the freshness and the voice of each text and author, respectful of the intellectual tradition from which they come. The qualities of voice were very different, depending on whether the author was a conceptual thinker, a botanist, a mythologist or a farmer. The differences, nuances and outright conflicts were not camouflaged. Following Watkins, the voices and stories of authors drawn from a wide range of texts, were placed in a dialogue with one another, providing richness, texture and mood.

Other attitudes of Todres, such as trustworthiness, authenticity and faithfulness to the source have been kept in mind in working with the texts. Todres has viewed these as attitudes that produce "a bodily-responsive knowing we can move towards together."[53] This author's own experience of the pharmakos guided the selection and imaginative treatment of the texts. In selecting texts, this author looked for life in the texts in relation to the preoccupation with the pharmakos, and attempted to preserve the integrity and context of the work. Once the passages of work were selected, they were read carefully, and listened

[50] Todres, L.A. (1998). pp. 121-122.
[51] Todres, L.A. (2002). pp. 1-16.
[52] Giorgi, A. (1985). pp. 8-22.
[53] Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 298.

to with two minds: to the intellectual argument – the life in the work – and to the feeling the author communicates – the life in the author.

There have been several ways in which scholars have made sense of the pharmakos. The writer has hoped to contribute another sense of the pharmakos which "stretches our notions of truth to include both an inner and outer dimension – knowing by being and knowing by sharing."[54]

In summary the sources of data in the thesis are:

- Depictions of the experience of the pharmakos by others outside the context. These include
    - Writers as phenomenological investigators of the pharmakos: namely, Harrison, Nilsson and Frazer and their images; and Girard as an investigator of experience of the pharmakos as scapegoat in culture. These provide, in different ways, penetrating descriptions in culture reflected through the personal consciousness of the writers. This is how they made meaning of it and chose metaphors.
    - Writers as providers of *naïve* descriptions of experience of goats and figs which provided some data from others' experience of the hidden aspects of the pharmakos, not really brought into awareness in existing descriptions of the pharmakos.
- Self-reflection on personal engagement with the pharmakos phenomenon. Data from this experience are introduced into the thesis in:
    - personal descriptions of experiences of the phenomenon – a few of these are included and bracketed from the thesis narrative by presenting them as quotes using the first person;
    - An account of being a facilitator in a context where events, feelings and experiences set up the conditions for the phenomenon which arose

[54] Todres, L.A. (1999). pp. 297 – 298.

more clearly on withdrawal from the specific context. It was present and arising but not understood;

- Reverie on the main images or metaphors of the pharmakos as an active voice in the body of thesis, mainly in Chapter 7 and 8, and as a reflective voice in epigrams at beginning of each chapter.

Transformation of Phenomenological Descriptions

In phenomenological method, the psychological meaning in the interview material from subjects is refined step by step, and the data transformed by what is called *imaginative variation*. Polkinghorne describes this as

> a type of mental experimentation in which the researcher intentionally alters, through imagination, various aspects of the experience, either subtracting from or adding to the proposed transformation. The point of free variation is to imaginatively stretch the proposed transformation to the edges until it no longer describes the experience underlying the subject's naïve description.[55]

The method of analysis is relatively specific in phenomenological psychology. Here one can see the steps undertaken by the researcher in interrogating the descriptions given by subjects, and the imaginative variations used to arrive at the structure of the experience. They are in this sense reproducible by other workers. In a philosophical approach and also in the use of depictions of experience from writers, the steps in transforming the data by imaginative variation are not as clearly presented as the step-by-step method advocated or articulated by Polkinghorne. This is also less clear in the mixed method used in in the thesis. Clarity therefore is a challenge. What actually happened deep in the process of self-reflection was this:

> I did the transformation firstly by visual images. I interrogated my own experience in this way. Consciousness, or the mind in the body works this way and I deliberately turned to that rather than a psychotherapeutic frame for interrogation where it felt impossible to contain the elements of the experience. Reliably and intensely, I returned to visual images through drawing and painting in a rhythmical, and almost systematic way, after periods of

[55] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). p. 55.

> reading, before arriving at the goat and the fig as images carrying a structure of fertility important to the underlying consciousness being experienced. Visual images cross from the known to the unknown and carry many diverse elements and tensions. I also then engaged in a Bachelardian type of reverie about the fig and the goat based on reading scientific and creative writers on fig and goat. The key thing about the visual images is that they reflect a William James sort of consciousness – alternatively transitive and substantive. In this process, before I ever moved out of historical reading (perspective), I reworked the paintings made in the early engagement with the pharmakos over and over, until I arrived at an essential figure of the pharmakos and a series of images that show its dynamic power – "that which moves between states and breaks down and builds up." I have images of this within the pharmakos figure and I have images of its mating and fertility lying under a particular covered area of the figure. This is how I know what the essential structure is.[56]

Philosophical self-reflection and collection of experience from others, as writers, have occurred in this manner. It does not fit a neat methodology of phenomenological psychology. It is a broader phenomenological study and eclectic in its sources and processes of imaginative variation.

The manner in which the method of the thesis limits the stretching of the imaginative transformation of the experience, is to leave present in the text the original words of the literature, which has been thought of as talking back to this author. It acts as a discipline to limit imaginative flights of fancy that might lose too much connection with the original description. Thus as in some techniques where a transformed description is read back to the informant, here the quotes in the text of the thesis act like the tethering rope of a boat to the shore. The boat responds to the tide, current and wind even wildly, but the rope suddenly pulls up tight when fully extended. So in this way a discipline works between the grounded images in descriptions of horticultural, physiological or other descriptions, and the psychological penetration of the current. This is the manner in which the testing of imaginative variation is achieved. The reader can always feel the pull of the shore, even if the rope is a long one.

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[56] See Appendix 1.

The accounts of various authors have taken up different aspects of the pharmakos phenomenon. The perspective of the crowd, or the community, came alive for this author in accounts of the scapegoat. The classical scholars painted an enigmatic account of the lives and festivals of ordinary people, in which this ritual was enacted regularly and in times of crisis. All accounts are marked by an attempt to penetrate beyond surface layers. Each layer was seen as a real psychological encounter – each revealing something different about the pharmakos in human experience.[57] The author tried to get close to a meaning of the pharmakos that takes into account the reality of human experience in the scapegoat, and use it to arrive at a deeper psychological dynamic which could be understood. The informants in this aspect of the study can be thought of as the fig and the goat, with which the author is in conversation.

> I have reflected on the descriptions and mechanisms described by authors, and have then imagined deeply into the phenomenon, moving wherever life sprang forth in the process. This followed the tradition of Bachelard, and it also blends in the ideas of Damasio. It keeps an eye on the bodily expressions of culture and individuals, and looks for the dialogue between the rich mind and body processes which destroy and create in internal psychological and biological experience, as well as in public cultural experience.

Bachelard's Phenomenology: Reverie as transformation

The images and metaphors contained in these descriptions have been treated in a Bachelardian way, penetrating into their deeper structure. Reverie is a way of triggering another sense in the deeper psychological structure of the experience. It is the process of imaginative variation used to transform descriptions of experience. Bachelard's material intention in imagination penetrating into images is another way of finding Polkinghorne's "accurate essential description of their contents and the particular structural relationship that coheres the elements into a unified experience."[58] It is in this way that the thesis takes a deep psychological approach, using material images with a neuroscientific flavour constantly just detectable.

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[57] These layers are thought of as corresponding to descriptions of imagination in levels, adopted by Bachelard.
[58] Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). pp. 50-51.

In this, the thesis has gone closer to the material world than has been recommended by scholars of the traditions in which the approach to the thesis are based, notably Hillman, Todres, and Bachelard himself. The freedom and sensitivity advocated by Bachelard pushed imaginative contact closer to neurological and biochemical materializations. The intent here has been not to provide a literal explanation – but to propose a psychological image of extending consciousness in the face of situations which trouble the human psyche and remain sources of insurmountable anxiety.

The examination of Bachelard's phenomenology in the light of Todres' concerns, raised the paradox of discipline and freedom. Bachelard shared Todres' care for the place in us where image springs to life. "Anyone who devotes his entire mind to the concept and his whole soul to the image is well aware that concepts and images develop along two divergent lines of spiritual life."[59] Science, he showed, is a discontinuous ruptured development in which what was once taken for knowledge undergoes repeated re-evaluation and re-interpretation.[60] Thus he "forces philosophy to analyze the mythology that either contaminates, accompanies or supports the progression of thought toward truth."[61] His entrance into the concrete world of the material as a metaphor in human expression was his manner of breaking open the mythology. He was alive to the contact between the object and the person. Bachelard influenced other thinkers in this way. For example, Jacques Derrida, a contemporary philosopher, credited Bachelard with cracking the surface of philosophy by looking at the "dispersion of meaning through metaphors."[62]

Bachelard's deep understanding both of scientific method and the poetic or imaginative method drew awareness to the errors of first intuition – a too fast falling for the metaphor. He showed how they can conflict, confuse and hide our deepest realms from ourselves. He has consciously moved between the

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[59] Bachelard, G. (1987). The polarity of imagination and reason. Extract from La poetique de la reverie. pp. 5-6.
[60] Peters, R.S. (1989). p. 37.
[61] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. x.
[62] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. x. quoting Derrida.

different modes of thought and experience of these two traditions, to articulate how the scientist gazing at the unknown is experiencing, and how the poet gazing into the unknown is experiencing. The "fascination exerted by the object *distorts inductions*."[63] He followed the image to its substance to gaze on the correspondence between the object and the person. Bachelard had a capacity in this for a total opening of thought. [64]

Bachelard applied the same attitude to his own thinking in his study of non-rational, artistically creative thought. In reflecting on his earlier works on imagination, Bachelard felt them to be too rationalistically "stiff." He then became freer in his method.

> In a word, the phenomenological approach is a description of the immediate relationship of phenomena with a particular consciousness; it allows Bachelard to renew his warnings against the temptation to study images as *things*. Images are *"lived," "experienced," "re-imagined"* in an act of consciousness which restores at once their timelessness and their newness. [65]

Yet he retained discipline as Gaudin recognized.

> Throughout his work he developed the paradox that the primitiveness of poetic consciousness is not immediately given. It can only be a conquest. The Bachelardian reverie, far from being a complacent drifting of the self, is a discipline acquired through long hours of reading and writing, and through a constant practice of "surveillance de soi." Images reveal nothing to the lazy dreamer.[66]

His method had a double connotation. It had " the rigor of a system and the indeterminacy carried by its Greek root *hodos* (way); it mixes personal discovery and conceptual construction."[67] His method shifted throughout his works. He was criticized for what seemed like inconsistency. But Bachelard was aware of a danger – that method can kill the life in the phenomenon which itself brings so much life.

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[63] Bachelard, G. (1964). p. 5.
[64] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xvi.
[65] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). pp. xl-xli.
[66] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxviii.
[67] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxi.

> as a way of approaching things, of initiating a discourse,...[one] must be guided by principles, but these principles have a tendency to become frozen into a system divorced from its "formation," thereby paralyzing discovery..... "In the reign of thought, imprudence is a method."[68]

There were two different aesthetic problems in Bachelard's discipline: to find a relation in images, and freedom to be surprised by it.[69]

In aesthetic description of the pharmakos phenomenon, an attitude has been taken that combines Todres' care for the way voice searches within to express experience, and Bachelard's discipline in finding relations between images and freedom to be surprised as a result. Todres has worked towards descriptions which affirm the validity of the experience (being-in-the-world) in its own right. Like Bachelard, he has been working in the intriguing gap where "knowledge is not just reasoned but recognized, and this involves an aesthetic dimension in which the intimacy of bodily responsiveness is implicated."[70] It was possible to think of culture in the same way as searching in its body, and using the scapegoat to express an experience. This attitude has been taken to the pharmakos ritual – a bodily responsiveness to something recognized between us. Many images in the final chapter of the thesis were imagined in a deeply material way. True images – ones imagined deeply - reveal a human reality.

In summary, method in this thesis is, after the event, to discover the realism and inner logic of the pharmakos phenomenon. This thesis studied the consciousness of various scholars and authors, including the writer, interacting with the pharmakos phenomenon. Self-reflection played a stronger part in the approach than it does in conventional approaches to psychological phenomenology. The emotive images, metaphors and interpretations of the

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[68] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xxi.

[69] "On the one hand, images are more related than they seem to be; they possess an organic coherence, and criticism can be the objective study of this coherence. On the other hand, each image is a sudden and surprising event, and Bachelard wants to elucidate the conditions of its *reverberations* in the subjectivity of the reader. In fact, the requirement of objectivity never excludes sympathy; it demands mainly that images be studied in their significant unity and not as decorative fantasies covering a reality different from them." Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. 31.

[70] Todres, L.A. (1999). p. 288.

pharmakos produced by scholars have been explored phenomenologically. An attempt was made to actively engage images, ideas and feelings from many fields, by opening through the natural process of imagination in reverie. This was used as the main method of imaginative variation of descriptions of the pharmakos. The goal of this method was to release the life in the pharmakos by entering the gap between the metaphor and reality to find the ambiguous, agitated life therein. The meaning that has presented itself in the experience of authors is different, and each different aspect has been presented and worked with imaginatively, to arrive at the description of an underlying theme or psychological meaning.

CHAPTER 5

PREPARING TO ENTER SCAPEGOAT TERRITORY

In its aspect as a vessel of purification, the pharmakos enables a community, an individual or a culture to remove its sense of pollution. In its aspect as the scapegoat, it enables the avoidance of responsibility hurtful to the psyche. There is a hidden aspect lying in the roots of its origins - a growing and fertile mechanism of consciousness. The richness in these aspects can be glimpsed through several traditions of knowledge that provide historical, psychological, neurological and biochemical perspectives. The journey enters into these aspects looking for crossings to reach closer to the life in each.

The aim of this chapter is to link the historical context and descriptions of the pharmakos, the force of the scapegoat in modern life, and the ideas of Bachelard and Damasio. These ideas are woven together more closely. The emotion lurking behind the images of pollution is taken seriously and the ground prepared for a penetration into the scapegoat which survives as the predominant metaphor of the pharmakos.

The scapegoat as the surviving metaphor of the pharmakos

The pharmakos as a symbol is lost to culture yet the scapegoat lives everywhere. The scapegoat has emotions, thinking and acting out. In modern life, it is a phenomenon of small and large groups in public and private life – in families, professions, business, organizations and local communities. A cameo of experiences in some of these settings in present times is provided in Appendix 2. It also provides some insights into the effects of scapegoating on peoples' lives, including the inner psychological impact in people who are identified with the scapegoat complex, and its extreme form when literally acted out through atrocities within communities and nations.

It has been proposed by Douglas, from a review of many studies and his own extensive experience with groups, that the main driving force of scapegoating in

human relations is a basic urge to avoid hurtful responsibility – or in other words, to escape from the pressures of being held responsible for bad feelings and events.[1] Scapegoating has been a feature of all types of groups, and appears in relation to major or minor issues in peoples' working or private lives. It has been a strong feature of dynamics within organizations when groups are confronted with complex and difficult change. Scapegoating has inner and outer dimensions. It is social and psychological in nature, and physical, when acted out literally. Perhaps something so ubiquitous is advantageous somehow.

Douglas proposed that as a social behaviour, scapegoating maintains a group by relieving tension and this is poured onto a member of the group who is different in some way. This may even be because the scapegoat is doing something that scapegoaters themselves would like to have done but felt unable to break a prohibition. Hence scapegoats also give vicarious pleasure in some way.

Scapegoating has been most effective and devastating when it also meets the scapegoat's needs. Some people develop personality structures in response to scapegoating, and personal strategies to deal with it, from early experiences in the family. Some people have identified with the scapegoat as a psychological complex to such an extent that they feel the evil of the world to be their fault.

It seems to be unresolvable. Douglas's experience was that although it may be possible to understand how and when it happens, it has been difficult to get groups to understand this while it is happening. Managing the situation usually involved trading off benefits to the organization (maintaining the group), against the costs to the individual being scapegoated. A sociological study of cases within professional, medical, and legal organizations concluded that the scapegoat, once banished, appears never to come back.[2] In psychological work, Perera, a Jungian analyst, observed that healing is slow in scapegoat - identified

[1] See Appendix 2 and Douglas, T. (1995). p. 82.
[2] See Appendix 2 and Daniel, A. (1998). pp. 156-157.

people who usually have a life-long engagement with understanding its meaning in their lives.[3]

People who have experienced intense and prolonged demonisation and violence take many years, and find many ways, to understand their experiences and build new lives. Some people, for example some Sinti and Romani writers,[4] have been able to communicate powerfully what it is like to be treated as non-human, and their desire that no one else be exposed to such an experience. It may be humanly impossible to confront the horror of atrocities committed by members of one's own community against one's family. Renos Papadopoulos, who has worked with refugees from such situations, observed that refugees may build and maintain new communities around stories of survival and resilience, that move them away from being helpless victims, to create new stability.[5] Political action for rights and an accepted place in one's society are other responses.

Descriptions of the scapegoat complex in everyday life seemed, to this author, to indicate a circular, repetitive or addictive nature. The complex has form and force and it is as if its acting out *re-forms* and *re-inforces* its energy. Once triggered in a group or society, it has the propensity to create ongoing trauma in the victims and perpetrators, which lasts far into the future in human suffering and tales about that suffering and its cause. Ordinary people are as capable of scapegoating and acting out the consequences, as they are of being the scapegoat and experiencing the full impact of its force. The scapegoat seems to be the starting place for understanding better the pharmakos phenomenon in modern life.

> When I created a pharmakos drama around a sculpture of the pharmakos and an imaginative tale of the ritual, it was the scapegoat that most people in the audience associated with the experience.

Why does the scapegoat as a metaphor so profoundly endure as *the* interpretation of the pharmakos? It appears that the scapegoat is one of the

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[3] See Appendix 2 and Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 100.
[4] The Sinti and Romani people are Europeans of gypsy origin. See Appendix 2.
[5] See Appendix 2 and Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 8.

fundamental metaphors of life. We live with it in all aspects of life. The transferring of blame seems to be accepted as one of the most universal forms of group experience, and therefore inevitable and likely to be repeated and bring consequences. Douglas concluded that it is likely to continue as long as human beings are frustrated and are raised to a state of tension "by factors they see all too clearly or by factors which have no discernible source."[6]

A cluster of historical images of the pharmakos

The images of pollution and contagion and its removal have remained static for centuries, and have been reinforced in the foundations of modern scholarship on the pharmakos. These images cluster around the un-mixing of the contaminating material from within, and its process of separation from oneself and from the community, in order that it may be detached, wiped off by a sponge, or destroyed by a medicine as a physical cleansing or disinfection. Bachelard is helpful in distinguishing this cluster of images of pollution from their utilitarian associations in order to imagine into their force and material nature. In so doing, the automatic association of a primitive idea as a useful idea can be broken, and the natural images examined in more detail.[7]

> It is from their natural seed nourished by the strength of the material elements, that images multiply and cluster.[8]

The concern is not with the form of the image, as a sponge, medicine or scapegoat, but to understand the power causing images to multiply and cluster in this cohesive way. Bachelard would follow them to their deeper source, to understand what the images are expressing that is fundamental to human experience and creative expression. One might think of the image of pollution as contemplation on a troubling and disturbing presence in life, which produces groups of images. In this way, pollution becomes an element of materializing imagination. To find the unity or influence that gives these images order and

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[6] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 202.
[7] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 73.
[8] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 85.

organization, one must give time for the imagination to work upon its matter. In this regard Bachelard would look for

> ...the profound and lasting ambivalences ...which allow endless transpositions.....in an engagement of the whole soul in a dual participation of desire and fear, a participation of good and evil, a peaceful participation of black and white.[9]

The intent of reverie on the images of the pharmakos is to find the influences giving them order, organization and symbol. Bachelard's concern for intention in imagination was introduced in Chapter 3. He conceived three levels of intention - formal, dynamic and material - and observed that there is a sense of unity when all three are present. Without all three, material imagination is unsatisfied. Formal imagination, or the interplay of images in their surface form, is insufficient for drawing together the rich and contradictory aspects of an element – "it lacks life because it lacks substance."[10] James Joyce, the Irish novelist, also observed something similar in relation to aesthetic satisfaction. He felt beauty was only apprehended when all three of *his* conditions were present: simple cognition (or perception); recognition; and satisfaction.[11] The thesis has extended the experiences and ideas of these two gifted authors beyond the realm of aesthetic beauty, into the realm of the troubling experience of man under threat in body and culture.

> They provided a guide to finding a more satisfying relationship to the symbol of the pharmakos, beyond the historical images of the pharmakos and the interaction of their associations, which felt too thin in relation to my personal experience in the world of health and medicines.

Emotion underlying the clusters of images

The pharmakos is a powerful phenomenon. The historical descriptions provide a cluster of images and associations as a starting point for penetrating more deeply into the phenomenon. A pervading sense of pollution, when epidemics, failure of crops or other catastrophic events occurred, had to be expelled. The

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[9] Bachelard, G. (1983). pp. 11-12.
[10] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 16.
[11] Joyce, J. (1959). p. 148.

scapegoat removed intangible evil. The spilling of blood was pollution, and must be expiated. The ridding of pollution from waning potency increased generative power. The descriptions of these images imply that they carry strong emotion in the sending away of bad things. The power of the emotion was indicated paradoxically by the fact that both Nilsson and Harrison stressed that there was no service of a god involved. The whole load and its vehicle were entirely banished. There were no gifts, and hence no reciprocity. They stressed that it was not a sacrifice, but purification. The writers' imagery became more alive in finding a metaphor to convey this – the sponge and the medicine – and a double meaning in the association with fertility, by killing the waning potency of a god. The scapegoat metaphor, used by all these writers, carries all these associations.

The force of the scapegoat, which both carries and triggers strong emotion in culture, can be thought of as an example of dynamic imagination.[12] Bachelard first used the term dynamic imagination when contemplating descriptions of violent water. He sensed that the violence of the water, in the poetic images he studied, was expressing the aggressiveness of man in his encounter with the world.[13] Bachelard elaborated his notion of provocation.

> We do not come to know the world all at once, with a paced, passive, quiet knowledge.... Defense reflexes that truly bear the human stamp, that man acquires, conditions, and holds ready, are acts that defend while attacking. They are constantly dynamized by a will-to-

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[12] The term, dynamic imagination, needs clarifying. Bachelard is not always clear in his terminology, but is clear in his application of the term. Here it is the movement or force of an image – something intrinsic in its content. Gaudin helped clarify what Bachelard meant by the process of materialization: "...he asserts the fundamentally dynamic nature of imagination, but he also indicates the possibility of a more restricted definition: imagination, when occupied with movements and forces rather than with matter, is dynamic by virtue of its content." Gaudin points out that in his work *Lautreamont* and in his books on the elements he identifies one of the two components as dominant in the family of images - material or dynamic. In aerial images, movement is more important than matter, as air is a poor substance. With water most of the images are material – but images of turbulent water are dynamic. Gaudin C. in Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xlvii.

[13] "As soon as we give dynamic psychology its true role, as soon as we begin to distinguish – as I have tried to do by considering the composition of water and earth – every matter in accordance with the human labor it induces or demands, we shall not be long in understanding that *reality* can never be well founded in men's eyes until human activity is sufficiently and intelligently aggressive. Then all the objects in the world receive their true *coefficient of adversity*." Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 159.

> attack. They are a response to insult and not to a sensation. And let no mistake be made: the adversary who does the insulting is not necessarily a man, for things also question us. On the other hand, in his audacious experimenting, man brutalizes the real.[14]

In this sense then, the scapegoat is an image of the force and movement of fright and hostility in culture.

Is it so impossible to penetrate the scapegoat force? Destructiveness is a common and disturbingly ordinary part of life.[15] Destructiveness as natural catastrophe or man-made catastrophe is associated with the pharmakos. The signal for a descent into the underworld was given in Chapter 2. The pharmakos ritual belonged to the group of rites that gave birth to new psychological and spiritual life amongst the gloom and fear of the shunned aspects of life. The fundamental importance of rite and myth was established, and the distinction made between what people do and what people tell. Finding a path to the material imagination of the pharmakos must pass through scapegoat territory. The force of the scapegoat, within its circular energy, can be approached by following the inclination of the classical phenomenologists to take the older origins seriously, to take social, psychic and biological forces in religion similarly seriously, and to undertake a descent into the chthonic world.

The association of the Olympian gods with the festival where the rite was enacted, revealed ambiguous and complex emotions. There are darker faces of the familiar Olympians gods. Zeus had a face associated with enraged blood-spilling vengeance. The presence of Demeter in the environment associated these images more deeply with finding life in death, deep in the origins of the rite. Demeter not only takes care of the fertility of the crops but also is entrusted with the dead. The presence of Apollo in the environment of the pharmakos associated these images in another way, in that one must struggle to find the action needed to undo the consequence of previous actions – these seemed to involve, in particular, murder, vengeance and its consequences for individuals.

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[14] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 160.
[15] Papadopoulos, R. (1998). pp. 462-463.

This was seen as an almost superhuman task and beyond mortals. Divine guidance was needed.

Apollo, who came later to the festival, actively embodies ambiguity – he brought plagues and he healed them. He committed acts of violence and he had to suffer the consequences of his acts. He had to expiate them, and came to make choices about invitations to join in more bloodshed. He seemed to have seen the limitless playing out of such infectious violence of man against man. He, in his god–like way, finds the source of the pollution. He eliminates the miasma though renewed action. But Apollo is also the *God of Afar*.[16] There is pessimism about human affairs. Burkert's view was that in awareness of the misery of human experience, being mindful of Apollo is an inspiration to something higher: "recognition of the limit signifies that the limited portion is not all."[17] But this provides no easy solution, one must penetrate paradox and oblique wisdom.

Provisioned with the images of the pharmakos and the rich context of myth and cult in ancient Greece, the journey of the pharmakos can continue carrying with it an uncertain hope: in the face of threat of disease - the hope of its healing; in the threat of bloodshed by human aggression - the hope of its limit. The search is for a clue as to whether there is something else in the pharmakos phenomenon that has been masked by the strength the scapegoat in ordinary everyday life, now and in history.

That images of the pharmakos have remained static, and meanings given to it utilitarian, may represent one powerful feature of the mind in the service of survival in the face of trouble. Damasio's thinking allows one to think about the human body as a delicate organism with a unique intelligence. It has a consciousness that knows its situation in the world and its feelings. It remembers complexly its experience in the world, and of culture before it. It

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[16] Human beings know themselves in their distance from the god. He "turns away from all mankind, pious and impious, pure and impure alike." Burkert, W. (1985). p. 148. Walter Otto coined the term *God of Afar*.
[17] Burkert, W. (1985). p. 149.

imagines, and changes, and creates from these memories. This can be as painful to the individual and culture, just as much as it is a source of joy. It is the price of knowing.

Damasio proposes that consciousness has been evolutionarily oriented to survival of the organism by focussing attention on the outside environment.

> ...a device capable of maximizing the effective manipulation of images in the service of the interests of a particular organism would have given enormous advantages to the organism that possessed the device and would probably have prevailed in evolution. Consciousness is precisely such a device.[18]

Perhaps this describes more closely the level of creativity operating in the scapegoat in the service of survival. Taking the right action in a complex environment

> can be greatly improved by purposeful preview and manipulation of images in mind and optimal planning. Consciousness allowed the connection of the two disparate aspects of the process – inner life regulation and image making (images which represent the things and events inside and outside the organism).[19]

Frazer, reflecting on his studies and the experiences of his political times, described civilized man as a thin veneer over savage man.[20] This image and Burkert's concept of the importance of biology in the religious nature of humans, can be seen in a neurological perspective, where one might think of the *primitive* or *savage* man, as images of the homeostatic mechanisms within that are automatically seeking survival of the body in the face of threat.

Emotion is an integral part of this. Taking a neurological perspective, the *right action* of the scapegoater would be based on the evaluation of an emotion – a reaction of the body to a perceived outside threat triggered by or associated with the scapegoat. It is Damasio's view that emotions serve as a high-level component of life regulation, sandwiched between a basic survival kit of homoeostasis and the devices of high reason. They are "poised to avoid the loss

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[18] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 24.
[19] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 24.
[20] Vickery, J.B. (1973). p. 13.

of integrity that is a harbinger of death or death itself, as well as to endorse a source of energy, shelter or sex."[21]

> Consciousness allows feelings to be known and thus promotes the impact of emotion internally, allows emotion to impact the thought process through the agency of feeling.[22]

Hence feelings evaluate emotions and this serves survival as does consciousness. Perception is impossible without emotion. So the historical images can be viewed as a reminder that survival is paramount and as a reflection of the inner biological processes involved. The scapegoat provides the opportunity to relieve the tension of a threat hurtful to the psyche, interpreted as a threat to the body directly. This appears to have been advantageous.

The survival enacted in scapegoating may be a manner of shortcutting the mental display, or the mental narrative, to the body. The urge to stay alive is not unique to humans, but humans are keenly aware of it, thanks to consciousness.[23]

> Eventually the management of life also requires a means of responding not just with actions carried out by muscles, but also with images capable of depicting the internal states of the organism, entities, actions, and relationships.[24]

Extended consciousness allows adaptation to a changing environment.It allows one to factor in things beyond the immediate automatic response of the proto-self – the homeostatic milieu – and to be able to protect that milieu by imaginative responses to the world.

But distinguishing the interplay of images that is telling a story, and both reacting to and stimulating emotion in the body, is a challenge for extended consciousness. The pharmakos is not defined wholly by either the complete banishment of pollution, nor the advantage of the scapegoat in relieving the suffering of the sensitive human psyche.

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[21] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 54.
[22] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 56.
[23] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 137.
[24] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 140.

> In my body in a process as facilitator, I felt strong emotion in holding the many images of serious problems described by people and the attribution they gave them. Not to join in an urge to relieve it through scapegoating is difficult, painful and confusing. The belief that there was more to the process than this, helped.

Something else is alive under the scapegoat – under its power in memory that evokes suspicion and repeats and relives. This is where Bachelard is helpful.

Freedom from immediate and remembered images and experiences in culture

Imagination is capable of changing and deforming immediate images and freeing us from them. This is the other sense in which Bachelard used the term *dynamic imagination* and it is at once broader and more profound. In his view, we voyage on the dynamics of imagination. More than this, and particularly lively for the pharmakos, is that the accompanying emotion does not come from the object, in this case the pharmakos, scapegoat, fig or goat. Nor does it come from the scenes evoked by a narrator, in this case culture through its myths and texts.

> Fright is born and reborn ceaselessly in the *subject.*[25]
>
> The navigator has not confronted his reader with a *frightening situation.* He has stirred the fundamental dynamic imagination. The writer has directly *induced* the nightmare of falling in the reader's soul. He rediscovers a primal sort of nausea that is related to a type of reverie deeply engraved in our inner nature!
>
> The dream is not a product of conscious life, it is the fundamental subjective state.
>
> Images can no longer be explained by their objective *traits* but by their subjective *meanings.*

Bachelard called this way of thinking a sort of "Copernican revolution of the imagination" which places

> Dream before reality
>
> Nightmare before tragedy

[25] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from L'Air et les songes. p. 14. Bachelard is referring to the work of Edgar Allan Poe.

> Fright before the monster
>
> Nausea before the fall
>
> In short, the imagination is sufficiently vivid in the subject to impose its visions, its terrors, its sorrows. If dream is a reminiscence, it is the reminiscence of a state preceding life, of a state of *dead* life, a kind of mourning before happiness. We might go one step further and put the image not only before thought, before narrative, but also before any emotion[26]

The pharmakos and its scapegoat complex can be seen in this way to engage primal imagination and emotion.

> A sort of nobility of spirit is associated with poetic fright; this nobility of the sorrowing spirit reveals a nature so primordial that it forever guarantees first place to the imagination. It is the imagination itself which thinks and which suffers. It is the imagination which acts and which is discharged into the poem. The notion of symbol is too intellectual. The notion of poetic experience is too experimental. Random thought and experience are no longer sufficient to penetrate the primal imagination. Hugo Von Hofmannsthal writes: *"You cannot find intellectual or even emotional terms with which to release the spirit of just such impulses as these; here is an image which sets it free."* The dynamic imagination is a primary reality.[27]

The connection of imagination with emotion and feeling, including the basic emotions of survival and core biological function, was penetratingly captured here by Bachelard. The intention of penetrating more deeply into the scapegoat force, is to search for images which release impulses such as these.

Bachelard worked in the space where words form. He wanted to know man above the graft on biology, where language and culture operate. Damasio worked on the other side of this space – on the non-verbal side – where images are the currency, and only some become language. But Bachelard communicated the hint of a direct and greater life behind language – especially poetic language and the poetry of images experienced directly. He thus made it

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[26] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'Air et les songes.* p. 14.

[27] Bachelard, G. (1987). Extract from *L'Air et les songes.* p. 14-15. 'On a theme as slight as *falling*, Edgar Allan Poe succeeds in providing, by means of a few objective images, enough substance for the fundamental dream to make the fall *last.* To understand Poe's imagination, it is necessary to live this *assimilation* of external images by the movement of *inner falling*, and to remember that this fall is already akin to fainting, akin to death. The reader can then feel such empathy that upon closing the book he still keeps the impression of not having *come back up.*'

possible to sense the gap in which images and language are formed, looking towards their source. Bachelard said it was the imagination itself which "thinks and suffers." Damasio threw light on this, showing that feelings extend emotions into a basic form of narrative. [28]

> The simple process of feeling gives the organism *incentives* to heed the results of emoting (suffering begins with feelings, although it is enhanced by knowing and the same can be said for joy)[29]

Damasio described consciousness as "a feeling that accompanies the making of any kind of image – visual, auditory, tactile, visceral – within the living organism."[30]

> It is intriguing to think that the constancy of the internal milieu is essential to maintain life *and* that it might be a blueprint and anchor for what will eventually become a self in the mind.[31]

The sense of self emerges as "a feeling of a feeling."[32] Beyond this science has not gone. Damasio cannot say yet what feelings are made of nor what they are the perceptions of.[33] Bachelard described the material depth of imagination as experiencing "a metaphor of a metaphor."[34] Bachelard and Damasio together, made it possible to sense that there is a never-ending source of images and a sense of the self creating them.[35]

It has been difficult to associate the two frameworks of Bachelard and Damasio. But this author was left with the sense that Bachelard travelled well in sensing

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[28] In distinguishing between emotions and feelings the sequence is as follows "From inducer, to automated emotion, to representation of emotional changes, to feeling". Damasio, A. (2000). p. 291.

[29] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 284. "Feelings are largely a reflection of body-state changes.... 'feeling' feelings extends the reach of emotions by facilitating the planning of novel and customized forms of adaptive response." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 285.

[30] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 26.

[31] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 136.

[32] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 31.

[33] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 314.

[34] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xl.

[35] "The mysterious first-person perspective of consciousness consists of newly-minted knowledge, information, if you will, expressed as a feeling." "Presenting the roots of consciousness as feelings allows one to glean an explanation of the sense of self..." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 313.

and articulating the way the mind works – well before neuroscience got close to it in concrete research. He travelled confidently and helpfully in the area still beyond the reach of science. For example, the notion of creativity in a neurological perspective was expressed by Damasio as

> More or less deliberately, more or less automatically [we can mentally review images]...the ability to transform and combine images of actions and scenarios is the wellspring of creativity[36]

Bachelard was more exacting than this. The ability to transform or combine images may operate on the surface, in the force of the emotions that toss us around, or deeply in the material realm in the space between the image and the reality – in our body. The ability to transform and combine images operates on various levels and uses 'axes' of the imagining powers of the mind. One looks out to the surface of the world – observing forms and imagining ready-formed flowers. The other plumbs the depths of being to the primitive and the eternal – the internal milieu of seeds.[37] In this view, the wellspring of creativity is in materialization of being - in depth.

Both perspectives established imagination as primal. The mind works in images and its source is in the body. Burkert associated the biology of homeostasis and human anxiety with religious impulse, and that religious expression across all cultures is as fundamental to human beings as sleeping and eating.[38] The human psyche is sensitive. Scapegoating is attributed to the limited tolerance of humans to hold hurtful responsibility, or the shock of destabilising change, or of complex problems with no obvious cause. One can approach the sensitive human psyche through its images. It is how the mind works. Its ability to narrate an autobiographical story from these images is a unique feature of human consciousness. Bachelard allows one to explore levels or clusters of images in creative expression and to see in the clustering of images associated with the pharmakos an active sign of where to place imaginative effort and to seek depth.

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[36] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 24.
[37] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 1.
[38] Burkert, W. (1998). pp. 3-4.

Watkins encourages one to dialogue with these images, to suspend assumptions about them and not to regard the gap between the image and what it was modelled after as pathological.[39] In this view, images of the natural or social world written or spoken are not exact internal representations of the external world, but symbolise something else, such as emotions and experiences. Achieving a satisfying fit between the symbol and the symbolised is a measure of development.[40] She included Hillman's idea of personifying as a process underlying thinking, and Jung's idea of archetypes as inherited forms through which one experiences. Thus the mind has an active role in actively constructing "what is done with what is seen"[41]and enabling added complexity which increases the "power, autonomy and differentiation of the imaginal as symbolic."[42]

Extending this view to existential ideas, she also drew on the work of Corbin who studied the imaginative processes of Avicenna and Ibn 'Arabi, the great Arab metaphysical thinkers. He saw symbol as not artificially constructed, but as an announcement of something which cannot be expressed otherwise. The imaginal manifests the truer nature of the real.[43] When the experience of the imaginal is engaged, "there can develop a metaphorical way of thinking, a reflection between mundane and imaginal realities that enriches them both."[44] The self then, develops through the experience of being in dialogue with imaginal others.[45]

The journey the thesis takes in exploring the terrain under the symbol of the pharmakos takes its images as metaphorical and expressive of emotion of a unique experience both in an inner sense, and culturally between people, and the

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[39] Watkins, M. (2000). pp. 60-61.
[40] "To achieve this fit, all manner of 'distortions' of natural or social reality may be called for, and their achievement must be seen as a sign of development." Watkins, M. (2000). pp. 61-62.
[41] Watkins, M. (2000). p. 71. quoting Abrams.
[42] Watkins, M. (2000). pp. 70, 72.
[43] "'it is the unique expression of the thing symbolized.'" Watkins, M. (2000). pp. 76,77. quoting Corbin.
[44] Watkins, M. (2000). p. 79.
[45] Watkins, M. (2000). "...the self develops through both the experience of being in dialogue with imaginal others who are felt as autonomous, and the experience of even the 'I' as being in flux between various characterizations." Watkins, M. (2000). p. 90.

world. Understanding meanings will require work to explore the fit of the symbol to the symbolised, and the metaphor to experience. It is in the experiencing, then and now, that images in ritual and myth are created. They are autonomous. In the descent on this journey, one may be able to hear Apollo draw back his bow and play his music, and watch Demeter more intimately take care of the dead and of fertility.

Hence following Bachelard's view the scapegoat may be thought of as indicating an aspect of a powerful phenomenon that is unsatisfying if left only understood on the surface. This author's view is that one can adopt an intention to pause in a gap between the mind and the body – to gaze at the display of the body even as the mind is in display to it. One can hold in mind that buried memories are reconstructed in many ways and pause to look for the highly-charged emotion of threat in them. Developing the capacity for dialogue with these images and the capacity to penetrate to their material core – to see the closest correspondence between the object and the body's reaction and interaction with it - extends consciousness and allows a capacity to gaze on the body with its hidden wisdom, embodied not only in innate homeostatic but also the risks it takes in mating.

> I found the narration by Bachelard, Damasio and Watkins of inner processes was gripping. The different rules and exacting processes of the imagination they each displayed brought real life to the imagination of the pharmakos. In addressing the scapegoat aspect it enabled me to recognise the imagination of Rene Girard on the scapegoat aspect of the pharmakos as an exciting phenomenological investigation. He seemed to take the dynamic force of the scapegoat's life in culture seriously as a profound expression of human experience. But it seems to me that culture has stopped imagining the scapegoat. Something is dead, static, unborn or in grief. It is as if culture is reminiscing on a state of dead life, to use Bachelard's term. In this sense it is sterile.

A Second Pharmakos Ritual

Emotions of the mythic and cultural pharmakos experience speak. These emotions accompany images of purging, banishing and decontaminating. Sensations of purifying and calming result. Overtime the ritual is repeated cyclically. People prepare and strategise for its repeat.

A long time ago, before there were cities the ritual of the pharmakos existed. People, frightened by things beyond their control, called for the pharmakos ceremony. This is already an old ceremony by the time Greek writing began.

Let me introduce you to the pharmakos – the *lowest of the low* – the *most ignoble one* selected for the ritual on the instruction of the leader of the town, when the sense of impending doom became too great

Imagine that we are in Athens in the 5th century BC. A drought has caused the failure of the crops for the fifth year in a row, and an epidemic has killed huge numbers already, and is still raging out of control. The city is heavy with gloom. The inhabitants are terror-stricken. The Archon of the city – the Lord Mayor – calls for the pharmakos – and the ritual that must be enacted now to purify the city.

One is selected. Today it is a woman.

This woman was minding her own business down by the market. She had just arrived from another town. She was dressed in rags. Rumours spread about her deliberately infecting the children.

She is brought to the centre of the city.

She is dressed in white freshly spun cloth.

She is fed special food prepared at public expense – barley cakes and barley broth, cheese and figs.

The flute begins to play. The beating begins. She is beaten seven times on her belly and genitals with leeks and wild fig branches – the purging plants.

The crowd encircles the pharmakos

They encircle her with branches.

The beat is transferred to the crowd.

They so want fertility and prosperity to return

They want the gods of disaster to stay away

They are terror- stricken – life has never been so precious and death is close.

Their hearts are beating faster and faster.

They follow the pharmakos as she passes every dwelling in the town– past every hovel – past every grand building.

The music plays.

People heap upon her the cause of the trouble, their sense of gloom, the pollution they feel - the literal contagion.

A climax comes – the moment when the transfer is complete.

Perhaps a frenzy erupts…

or perhaps it becomes quiet…

The expelling of the pharmakos is a solemn act. She is led outside the walls of the town.

A pyre is made.

She and the contamination are burned. In some places they throw her off a cliff. In others she is banished under a hail of stones to remote areas never to return.

This then is the pharmakos ritual – a ceremony eventually done on a regular basis to purify the city.

It is a very conscious act to send something away which will never come back.

What is happening in the town after this?

Calm has returned – the feeling of gloom has gone.

Relief is palpable – a wonderful feeling of freedom – like the payment of a debt that has hung over our heads for a long time.

People skip and laugh.

They are relieved they were not chosen

They begin to plan how they can stay safely part of the norm of the city – invisible – so they will not be chosen next time.

A sense of security and well-being descends – the unknown is being taken care of. "It won't happen."

Relief again that only one had to go, and the whole community did not erupt into chaotic and random mass bloodshed.

The philosophers reason that the person was a medicine which worked to physically cleanse the community – the offsourings were burnt and washed away.

Some, however, feel real hate for the pharmakos – she was the embodiment of evil – the source of the community's problem. "Good riddance – their kind needs eternal vigilance – they weaken the community."

A blood lust stays with some - alive and energetic – they are analyzing the influence of *these people*- they deserve this treatment – they have too much secret power in this place "I hate them – So many of them now."

The blood lust gang quietly kick and punch a few of *them*- to keep the sense of life in the gang – to keep their outrage fresh.

Others feel a sense of love – how wonderful is the pharmakos to save the community – like a feeling of being in love – they begin to fancy themselves as the victim saving the town next time.

Others feel it was just and right. The moral duty has been done – you have to take hard decisions sometimes. The source of this contagion in the city is decadent and it must be dealt with ethically – next time we shall use a criminal for the task – someone already condemned to death.

Others with a hard glint in their eyes, think that it is quite justified to use *the lowest of the low*- it is clear that they deserve it- they have lost the right to be human – their culture is weak, depraved – animal.

Others see that the pharmakos was so infected and tabooed that life was a practical impossibility – an infected horror.

The educated speak among themselves. They do not believe this – but know that the kindest thing is to put an end to a life worse than death.

The town gradually returns to normal. Building and trading, harvesting, preparing for winter. They watch one another carefully, make alliances, they plan in their own minds their 'commonsense' for making this ceremony better next time – a better selection – better music – a better beating – a better burning.

As the terror moves further and further away they invent, change and re-establish a stable community life … until a new infection…

CHAPTER 6

THE SCAPEGOAT

The journey goes deep into the scapegoat terrain. The scapegoat is the preferred and living metaphor of the pharmakos and quite familiar in everyday life. It has a vice-like hold in Western society. Girard opened up a hidden gap in this metaphor to imagine into its origins and to describe its capacity for re-forming within culture in the face of threat. When potentially disintegrating forces of aggression and violence are precipitated, the scapegoat resolves these in paradoxical ways. It both sustains and determines cultural reactions to tragedy and crisis. It works by concealing its force and its source, thus reforming and reinforcing itself.

The aim of this chapter is to enter into the troubling character of the scapegoat. It shows how Rene Girard has penetrated the scapegoat as a mechanism of culture. His imagination and cross-disciplinary experience reached into cultural texts and brought to light forces lying hidden in the scapegoat phenomenon. Girard provided a *way through* to get to another aspect of the pharmakos - but which is even more hidden within the troubling but ubiquitous scapegoat force.

Girard's work has been chosen as a foundation for the exploration of the scapegoat because it provided a unique psychological perspective on its inner workings. There are three aspects important for the thesis. Firstly, the chapter will show how the scapegoat mechanism founds culture and religion. Secondly, it will show how cultural texts, including myths, can scapegoat of themselves. Thirdly, it shows the subtle distinction between the scapegoat and the pharmakos.

The Force of a Scapegoat Imagination

Girard's dynamic mind was capable of imagining into the invisible source of energy, the force, of the scapegoat effect in culture. Girard always sensed a real happening, a real event, which has sparked an almost genetic mechanism in

human community. His intention always stayed with the dynamic aspect of the phenomenon and its remarkable effect in reconciling the apparently irreconcilable.

The manner of Girard's phenomenology is different from that of the classical scholars or Bachelard. He has transformed the data of everyday experience of the scapegoat. He has *gone through*, to use Polkinghorne's term, the surface descriptions of the emotions, reactions, counter reactions and the human suffering evoked in various authors' accounts in his sources, getting deeper into the experience itself, to try to find what is essential to the psychological dynamic operating in the phenomenon.[1] Girard has done this in a profound way by focusing on the myths and stories that both reflect human experience and influence or guide the formation of Western culture. Thus Girard's work provided a very different psychological aspect to that of the classical scholars.

Girard showed that man has struggled for centuries with the form and force of the scapegoat. The force is complex, disturbing and has been concealed slowly but surely over time, leaving only fleeting glimpses.

> In reading Girard I felt his descriptions of the scapegoat had a power – a quality- that touched a deep and unendingly confusing experience within me. This quality seemed akin to Bachelard's description as "being able to touch the soul." [2] In Girard's hands, the scapegoat appears in the minute spaces between desire and fear as they escalate together, and life as one knows it is about to disappear. Girard felt this. He was taken by it.

He recognized its profound influence in human life - in Western culture mainly, but he extended it to all human cultures. He went to the core of its force and he read human nature there: mankind establishes communities through difference and structure. Crisis wipes them away. Ritual murder, sacrifice and collective persecution restore them.

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[1] Polkinghorne, D. (1989). p. 55.
[2] Bachelard G. (1983). p. 12.

About Rene Girard

Born in 1923, Rene Girard was originally trained in France as a specialist in mediaeval studies. He moved to the US in 1947 and gained a PhD in history. He taught courses in French at the same university. Some of the assigned literary texts he had never read. He became fascinated with these and applied his now considerable interdisciplinary ability to them, including his early work and interest in "cultural modes, fashions, and opinions, all of which express and revolve around mimetic desire, the core of his thought."[3]

> Reading Girard was not easy. On first encounter, he produced a feeling of incredulity and confusion. It seemed that he made a statement and a case out of nothing. He was able to take a myth or a story and simply retell it, taking away its charm and hence its ability to distract attention. At first, it seemed that he had no depth to his argument – until suddenly, he speaks into the heart of the pattern he was uncovering. He began to make another scenario come alive in the myth – one that had been covered, or totally absent, or reformed. Then suddenly I was taken by him: the blood rushes; my eyes want to read faster. I felt I was being told a secret – one that I realized I already knew. He tipped me unexpectedly into the shoes of the victim and then into the shoes of the persecutor – all recognizable experiences.

At times he railed against the way this dynamic has been interpreted in human experience, but he was sympathetic to the scapegoat as a powerful mechanism that has allowed man to live in groups and develop in the face of crisis and tragedy. His has been a sobering and confronting message. Collective murder was the basis of religion which was the basis of all culture whose task, in turn, it has been to hide the violence. Initially, it hid collective violence and persecution, and then by degrees individual violence and persecution.

Going further into his interest in mimetic desire, Girard studied primitive religions to examine the mimetic concept more closely. He found that mimesis usually led to collective violence against a single victim.[4] He then allowed the pharmakos to take hold of his thinking. It led him to the Greek writers of tragedy in whom he found a power that occupied his thinking for a long time,

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[3] Girard, R. (1996). p. 1.
[4] Girard, R. (1996). p. 3.

especially the *Bacchae* of Euripides and the Oedipus cycle of Sophocles. His conviction was that they brilliantly exposed the mimetic violence in society.[5] He was fascinated by Freud's work, especially his insights in *Totem and Taboo*, "although Freud turned violent origins into a once-and-for-all-myth rather than understanding the scapegoat mechanism as a constant factor in human culture and human relations."[6]

Derrida's thinking on the pharmakos in his paper *Plato's Pharmacy* influenced him profoundly.

> Girard would develop the pharmakos or scapegoat aspect of Derrida's analysis of writing/poison, placing it within history and actual social existence rather than restricting it to language and intertextuality like Derrida. [7]

The impact of Girard's contribution to the thesis has revolved around his main theories – those of mimetic violence, stereotypes of persecution and the scapegoat mechanism - which are set out in the following sections.

Mimetic Violence and the Scapegoat Effect

Girard viewed mimetic violence as the force behind the scapegoat. From his study of primitive religions in ethnological literature he imagined behind the ways humans learn to desire and to achieve, or appropriate, the object of their desire. In simple terms it may be summarized as follows. People copy a model – one another. Individuals imitate or mimic the action of their models. Inevitably the individuals come to desire and "to reach for" the same objects as their models. The emotion and the force of the imitation reciprocate. As the intensity

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[5] Girard, R. (1996). p. 3.
[6] Girard, R. (1996). p. 3.
[7] Girard, R. (1996). p. 2. The following is a critical passage from Derrida's paper: "The ceremony of the *pharmakos* is thus played out on the boundary line between inside and outside, which it has as its function ceaselessly to trace and retrace. *Intramuros/extramuros.* The origin of difference and division, the *pharmakos* represents evil both interjected and projected. Beneficial insofar as he cures – and for that, venerated and cared for – harmful insofar as he incarnates the powers of evil – and for that, feared and treated with caution. Alarming and calming. Sacred and accursed. The conjunction, the *coincidentia oppositorum*, ceaselessly undoes itself in the passage to decision or crisis....These exclusions took place at critical moments (drought, plague, famine). *Decision* was then repeated. But the mastery of the critical instance requires that surprise be prepared for: by rules, by law, by the regularity of repetition, by fixing the date. This ritual practice, which took place in Abdera, in Thrace, in Marseilles, etc., was reproduced *every year* in Athens." Derrida, J. (1981). p. 133.

rises, the energy of the exchange becomes an end in itself. The original object is forgotten and the exchange is now competitive and increasingly violent.[8]

> Violence is generated by this process; or rather violence is the process itself when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they all desire through physical or other means. Under the influence of the judicial viewpoint and of our own psychological impulses, we always look for some original violence or at least for well-defined acts of violence that would distinguish the culprit from the innocent and, as a result, we substitute discontinuities and differences for the continuities and reciprocities of the mimetic escalation.[9]

Violence itself, in his view, is not the source of the problem. Violence is a by-product of mimicry.[10] His theory of conflict was based on this dynamic of "appropriative mimicry," going beyond those based on scarcity or capacity for aggression:

> ...if it is correctly conceived and formulated it throws a great deal of light on much of human culture, beginning with religious institutions. Religious prohibitions make a good deal of sense when interpreted as efforts to prevent mimetic rivalry from spreading throughout human communities.[11]

In his view, the model and the imitator become intense obstacles for each other. Mimicry is infectious and paradoxically also becomes the means of resolution.

Two important paragraphs from Girard are needed to get a feel for his thinking and images.

> At this paroxystic level of mimetic rivalry, the element of mimicry is still around, more intense than ever. It has to focus on the only entities left in the picture, which are the antagonists themselves. This means that the selection of an antagonist depends on the mimetic factor rather than on previous developments. Transfers of antagonism must take place, therefore, for purely mimetic reasons. Mimetic attraction is bound to increase with the number of those who converge on one and the same antagonist. Sooner or later a snowball effect must occur that involves the entire group minus, of course the one individual, or the few against whom all hostility focuses and who become the 'scapegoats,'

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[8] Girard proposed this concept after he realized that the ethnological literature on imitation never included acquisition and appropriation as modes of behaviour likely to be imitated. Girard, R. (1996). pp. 12-13.
[9] Girard, R. (1996). p. 9.
[10] Girard, R. (1996). pp. 12-13.
[11] Girard, R. (1996). p. 10.

> in a sense analogous to but more extreme than our everyday sense of the word 'scapegoat.' Whereas mimetic appropriation is inevitably divisive, causing the contestants to fight over an object they can not all appropriate together, mimetic antagonism is ultimately unitive, or rather reunitive since, it provides the antagonists with an object they can really share, in the sense that they can all rush against that victim in order to destroy it or drive it away.
>
> If I am right, the contradiction between prohibitions and rituals is only apparent. The purpose of both is to spare the community another mimetic perturbation. In normal circumstances, this purpose is well served by the prohibitions. In abnormal circumstances, when a new crisis seems pending, the prohibitions are of no avail anymore. Once the contagion of mimetic violence is reintroduced into the community, it cannot be contained. The community, then, changes its tactic entirely. Instead of trying to roll back mimetic violence it tries to get rid of it by encouraging it and by bringing it to a climax that triggers the happy solution of ritual sacrifice with the help of a substitute victim. There is no difference of purpose between prohibitions and rituals.[12]

Rene Girard thus uncovered the dynamic of the scapegoat in culture. When crisis confronts communities, the usual structures breakdown. To take an example from present times - in a serious bushfire, work stops, people change roles, normal support structures disappear and relationships change. Girard's way of describing this is that *difference* disappears. "Culture is somehow eclipsed as it becomes less differentiated."[13] The experience of the eclipse of culture is so disconcerting that looking into the causes and their diversity seems impossible.

> The main context for the interpretation of the pharmakos has been the threat or reality of major catastrophe. The phenomenon, in its scapegoat aspect, is triggered when something goes wrong. The reality of life is that there is always something going wrong and the smallest change in a stressed system can produce reactions equal to major changes in stable systems. As well as fear of the consequences of a specific acute event such as the crops failing or an epidemic, threat can trigger a more general existential fear. For example, in a middle class suburb of an Australian city, I have heard long-standing inhabitants of Anglo-Celtic background express the fear that their heritage is being taken away from them as people in great numbers from very different ethnic origins move in. The change disturbs the original inhabitants profoundly enough to produce a sense that

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[12] Girard, R. (1996). pp. 12-13.
[13] Girard, R. (1986). p. 14.

> their heritage is being stolen. It is as if their cultural heritage rests so fragilely within that it could actually be stolen.

Girard came to understand the mechanism of mimetic rivalry, its crisis in violence and its resolution by killing or banishing a victim, as the scapegoat effect.

> By a scapegoat effect I mean that strange process through which two or more people are reconciled at the expense of a third party who appears guilty or responsible for whatever ails, disturbs, or frightens the scapegoaters. They feel relieved of their tensions and they coalesce into a more harmonious group. They now have a single purpose, which is to prevent the scapegoat from harming them, by expelling and destroying him.[14]

The scapegoat in reality does not cure floods, droughts and epidemics. Girard's view was that the main effect of a crisis is how it affects human relations. Once reciprocal exchanges within the community begin to deteriorate, they become increasingly violent, creating their own nourishment. The scapegoat becomes efficacious once the immediate crisis disappears, or begins to disappear.

> ... the first scapegoat to appear will bring an end to the crisis by eliminating all the interpersonal repercussions in the concentration of all evildoing in the person of one victim.[15]

The great fears of death, injury or major disruption, the breakdown of structure and the blurring of differences "make men feel powerless."[16] As the classical accounts of the pharmakos relate, the atmosphere is dense and gloomy. Girard's insights point to a force charged enough in this atmosphere to conduct the fear of non-survival as a fizzing current of hostility and rivalry. This, if allowed to run, will erupt in chaotic bloodshed and the community will destroy itself. Man, instead, has learnt to discharge this hostility, against one or a small number. Thus Girard distinguished between the scapegoat as *ritual*, as recounted in the Bible in Leviticus Chapter 16, and the scapegoat as an *effect* or *mechanism*. The scapegoat mechanism can be thought of in a Damasio kind-of-way as being activated in times of stress by the fear, accompanying images arising from

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[14] Girard, R. (1996). pp. 11-12.
[15] Girard, R. (1986). p. 43.
[16] Girard, R. (1986). p. 14.

memory, of a type of violence that threatened to escalate out of control and result in mass destruction of a community. Girard proposed the conditions by which culture recognizes these moments and activates its dynamic imagination as scapegoat. The scapegoat is a metaphor for this aspect of life. Dynamic imagination, of a Bachelard kind, dreams the scapegoat as an image of complex, hurtful, human encounters with the world.

The stereotypes of persecution

The scapegoat effect has depended, in Girard's view, on persecution. He articulated four stereotypes of persecution based on his examination of many myths and literary texts. His main ideas are sketched out below.

First stereotype: Social or cultural crisis

Social or cultural crisis produces a generalized loss of difference (owing to the mimetic rivalry). The tempo of social exchanges quickens and negative exchanges increase.[17] The crisis is real.[18] There are acts of violence which are real. Collective persecutions are acts of violence committed directly by a mob of murderers. Collective resonances of persecution are acts of violence, such as witch-hunts, legal in form but stimulated by extremes of public opinion.

> The persecutions...generally take place in times of crisis, which weaken normal institutions and favor *mob* formation. Such spontaneous gatherings of people can exert a decisive influence on institutions that have been so weakened, and even replace them entirely.[19]

Second stereotype: Crimes that eliminate differences

The mechanism for beginning the discharge is the accusation of a crime. The crime is one so serious to social stability, so outrageous, that it stirs the imagination and its lightning fast assumptions into an instantaneous agreement by the mob, which can be thought of as the majority whose norms and structures are breaking down.

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[17] Girard, R. (1986). p. 13.
[18] Girard, R. (1986). p. 24.
[19] Girard, R. (1986). p. 24.

For example, crimes have been incest, regicide, and the poisoning of rivers to cause the plague, and so on. These are taboo crimes.

> Certain accusations are so characteristic of collective persecution that their very mention makes modern observers suspect violence in the air. They look everywhere for other likely indications – other stereotypes of persecution – to confirm their suspicion. At first sight the accusations seem fairly diverse but their unity is easy to find. First there are violent crimes which choose as object those people whom it is most criminal to attack, either in the absolute sense or in reference to the individual committing the act: a king, a father, the symbol of supreme authority, and in biblical and modern societies the weakest and most defenseless, especially young children. Then there are sexual crimes; rape, incest, bestiality. The ones most frequently invoked transgress the taboos that are considered the strictest in the society in question. Finally there are religious crimes, such as profanation of the host. Here, too, it is the strictest taboos that are transgressed....
>
> Ultimately, the persecutors always convince themselves that a small number of people, or even a single individual, despite his relative weakness, is extremely harmful to the whole of society. The stereotypical accusation justifies and facilitates this belief by ostensibly acting the role of mediator. It bridges the gap between the insignificance of the individual and the enormity of the social body. If the wrongdoers, even the diabolical ones, are to succeed in destroying the community's distinctions, they must either attack the community directly, by striking at its heart or head, or else they must begin the destruction of difference within their own sphere by committing contagious crimes such as parricide and incest.[20]

Third stereotype: The wearing of a sign attracts the accusation

There is a sign worn by those accused which directs the accusation to them. Something marks them out as victims. These are the foreigner, the poor, ethnic and religious minorities, and so on. They are marginal, outsiders; ones who are a bit different but not sufficiently different. Their crime is felt, believed, experienced, imagined as the cause of the breakdown of the community. They are actually guilty in the eyes of the crowd –They are murdered, massacred, stoned, banished, tried and burnt by whatever legal or cultural process is

[20] "All these crimes seem to be fundamental. They attack the very foundation of cultural order, the family and hierarchical differences without which there would be no social order. In the sphere of individual action they correspond to the global consequences of an epidemic of the plague or of any comparable disaster. It is not enough for the social bond to be loosened; it must be totally destroyed." Girard, R. (1986). p. 15.

required. The identified authors of these crimes possess the marks that suggest a victim.[21]

> Ethnic and religious minorities tend to polarize the majorities against themselves. In this we see one of the criteria by which victims are selected, which, though relative to the individual society, is transcultural in principle. There are very few societies that do not subject their minorities, all the poorly integrated or merely distinct groups, to certain forms of discrimination and even persecution....There are therefore universal signs for the selection of victims....[22]

> In addition to cultural and religious there are purely physical criteria. Sickness, madness, genetic deformities, accidental injuries, and even disabilities in general tend to polarize persecutors.[23]

The abnormality may also be social. It is easy to see the risk of persecution for those "at the bottom of the social ladder."[24] It is less obvious to see the abnormality at the other extreme. The marked scapegoat can also be a marginal insider close to the power and wealth structures of the community, such as the king, the wealthy and the powerful.

> Extreme characteristics ultimately attract collective destruction at sometime or other, extremes not just of wealth or poverty, but also of success and failure, beauty and ugliness, vice and virtue, the ability to please and to displease. The weakness of women, children and old people, as well as the strength of the most powerful, becomes weakness in the face of the crowd. Crowds commonly turn on those who originally held exceptional power over them.[25]

As the scapegoat is driven out, the *difference* in culture returns, the structures are re-established, even new ones created...the pushing out of the *different* who is the cause of the loss of difference (by its presence within the boundaries of the community), creates difference again between the community as a whole

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[21] Girard, R. (1986). p. 24.
[22] Girard, R. (1986). p. 17.
[23] Girard, R. (1986). p. 18.
[24] Girard, R. (1986). p. 18.
[25] Girard, R. (1986). p. 19.

and the *outside*. "Despite what is said around us persecutors are never obsessed by difference but rather by its unutterable contrary, the lack of difference."[26]

Fourth stereotype: Violence itself

Persecution is accompanied by violence, but Girard showed that in many myths and cultural texts the violence was not always visible. In his observation though, texts of persecution usually contain two or more stereotypes. At least, when two or more are present, Girard became suspicious.

> The import of the operation is to lay the responsibility for the crisis on the victims and to exert an influence on it by destroying these victims or at least by banishing them from the community they 'pollute.'[27]

Texts of persecution: creative work of writers relating to their historical circumstances

Girard, like Bachelard, was interested in creativity. His main concern was the creative work of writers in relation to their historical circumstances and the manner in which this contributes to the hidden force of a scapegoat mechanism in culture.[28] For example, he opened his study of the scapegoat with a description of a mediaeval poem by Guillaume de Marchaut, called *Judgement of the King of Navarre*. Guillaume began his poem by describing how he closeted himself in his house in terror to await death or an end to "a confusing series of catastrophic events."[29] Girard pondered his description. While some of the events seemed totally improbable, others were only partially so and Girard was intrigued by the impression he was left with that "something must actually have happened."[30]

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[26] The context of Girard's idea of difference is important here. "Even in the most closed cultures men believe they are free and open to the universal; their differential character makes the narrowest cultural fields seem inexhaustible from within. Anything that compromises this illusion terrifies us and stirs up the immemorial tendency to persecution. This tendency always takes the same direction, it is embodied by the same stereotypes and always responds to the same threat." Girard, R. (1986). p. 22.

[27] Girard, R. (1986). p. 24.

[28] Girard, R. (1986). p. 1.

[29] Girard, R. (1986). p. 1.

[30] Girard, R. (1986). p. 1.

> There are signs in the sky. People are knocked down by a rain of stones. Entire cities are destroyed by lightning. Men die in great numbers in the city where Guillaume lives (he doesn't tell us its name). Some of these deaths are the result of the wickedness of the Jews and their Christian accomplices. How did these people cause such huge losses among the local population? They poisoned the rivers that provided the drinking water. Heaven-sent justice righted these wrongs by making the evildoers known to the population, who massacred them all. People continued to die in ever greater numbers, however, until one day in spring when Guillaume heard music in the street and men and women laughing. All was over, and courtly poetry could begin again.[31]

Girard firmly rejected the notion that texts such as these require a healthy scepticism for critical insight. In order to get a feeling for his way of thinking, it is worth following him in detail in relation to this example.

> After some moments' reflection even contemporary readers will find some real events among the unlikely occurrences of the story. They will not believe in the signs in the sky or in the accusations against the Jews, but neither will they treat all the unlikely themes in the same way, or put them on the same level. Guillaume did not invent a single thing. He is credulous, admittedly, and he reflects the hysteria of public opinion. The innumerable deaths he tallys are nonetheless real, caused presumably by the famous Black Death, which ravaged the north of France between 1349 and 1350. Similarly, the massacre of the Jews was real. In the eyes of the massacrers the deed was justified by the rumors of poisoning in circulation everywhere. The universal fear of disease gives sufficient weight to the rumors to unleash the massacres described.[32]

Girard respected the framework for historical knowledge, but he questioned the reliability of documents in relation to persecution. In this case, he considered the documents that give an already recognized body of knowledge in relation to the anti-Semitic persecution during the plague to be no more reliable than Guillaume's text. These arouse certain expectations in the reader. Guillaume's text was responding to these expectations. Readers may confirm the perspective from their immediate contact with the text or from their individual experience. This may seem a form of evidence. Speaking of Guillaume he concluded

> The text we are reading has its roots in a real persecution described from the perspective of the persecutors. The perspective is inevitably deceptive since the persecutors are

[31] Girard, R. (1986). p. 1.
[32] Girard, R. (1986). p. 2.

> convinced that their violence is justified; they consider themselves judges, and therefore they must have guilty victims, yet their perspective is to some degree reliable, for the certainty of being right encourages them to hide nothing of their massacres. [33]

Girard referred to such texts as texts of persecution. In this case he claimed it is legitimate to disregard the general rule that a text is only worth as much as its least reliable feature.

> If the text describes circumstances favourable to persecution, if it presents us with victims of the type that persecutors usually choose, and if, in addition, it represents these victims as guilty of the type of crimes which persecutors normally attribute to their victims, then it is very likely that the persecution is real.[34]

Beginning to understand the perspective of the persecutors, strengthens the value of the text only in relation to the "violence it echoes."[35]

> The more unlikely the accusations in this genre of text the more they strengthen the probability of the massacres: they confirm for us the psychosocial context within which the massacres must have taken place. Conversely, if the theme of massacres is placed alongside the theme of an epidemic it provides the historical context within which even the most precise scholar could take this account of poisoning seriously.[36]

Girard believed the way to demystify persecution texts was to take them as real.

> For the social historian reliable testimony, rather than the testimony of someone who shares Gillaume de Marchaut's illusions, will never be as valuable as the unreliable testimony of persecutors, or their accomplices, which reveals more because of its unconscious nature. The conclusive document belongs to persecutors who are too naïve to cover the traces of their crimes, in contrast to modern persecutors who are too cautious to leave behind documents that might be used against them.
>
> I call those persecutors naïve who are still convinced that they are right and who are not so mistrustful as to cover up or censor the fundamental characteristics of their persecution. Such characteristics are either clearly apparent in the text and are directly revealing or they remain hidden and reveal indirectly. They are all strong stereotypes and the combination of

[33] Girard, R. (1986). p. 6.
[34] Girard, R. (1986). pp. 6-7.
[35] Girard, R. (1986). p. 7.
[36] Girard, R. (1986). p. 7.

> both types, one obvious and one hidden, provides us with information about the nature of these texts.[37]

Religion is born of scapegoating

The power of the victim in Girard's system is immense. The pattern of mimetic rivalry and its crisis in violence is resolved by killing or banishing a victim. Girard proposed that religion was invented to immortalize the scapegoat.[38]

> Beyond a certain threshold of belief, the effect of the scapegoat is to reverse the relationships between persecutors and their victims, thereby producing the sacred, the founding ancestors and the divinities. The victim, in reality passive, becomes the only effective and omnipotent cause in the face of a group that believes itself to be entirely passive.....People in groups are subject to sudden variations in their relationships, for better or worse. If they attribute a complete cycle of variations to the collective victim who facilitates the return to normal, they will inevitably deduce from this double transference belief in a transcendental power that is both double and will bring them alternatively both loss and health, punishment and recompense. This force is manifest through the acts of violence of which it is the victim but is also, more importantly, the mysterious instigator.[39]

In trouble, real or imagined, communities go through this process. Girard thus contributed an understanding of the scapegoat as the converging of many people against one to calm the community.[40] He pointed out that the reconciliatory power is hard to understand because it is paradoxical and because in modern Western life, the reconciliatory ritual is weakened or degraded.[41] Primitive society and the intensity that operated in this process are no longer understood.

Girard saw the reconciliation thus: prohibition is what the victim tells you, as a member of the community, not to do – only a victim can do this as the victim is supernatural; a ritual is what you must do because the victim did it to save the

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[37] Girard, R. (1986). p. 8.
[38] It is not the purpose of the thesis to develop the religious aspect of the pharmakos as a primary theme but to make come alive Girard's concern with the dynamic of human relations as the real issue in the scapegoating process and his radical idea that religion is a force developed by man to resolve conflictual mimesis.
[39] Girard, R. (1986). p. 44.
[40] Girard, R. (1987b).
[41] Girard, R. (1987a). pp. 37-38, and (1987b).

community.[42] The paradox, a contradiction, between the prohibition and the ritual is what produces a religious attitude in humans and their institutions.[43]

> If this victim can extend his benefits beyond death to those who have killed him, he must either be resuscitated or was not truly dead. The causality of the scapegoat is imposed with such force that even death cannot prevent it. In order not to renounce the victim's causality, he is brought back to life and immortalized, temporarily, and what we call the transcendent and supernatural are invented for that purpose.[44]

The scapegoat mechanism resolved this intense contradiction. Its brilliance turned on loving one's enemy. Girard noted the degradation of the phenomenon in modern society which no longer reveres its enemies.

Myth itself is a scapegoating mechanism

Girard believed that myth plays a role in eliminating violence from culture's memory.[45] He warned that texts and myths can scapegoat of themselves and culture covers over the traces. Girard went deeply into the mechanism by which texts and myths scapegoat of themselves. He burrowed into myths and texts to find the places where things have been removed or changed. He looked for absences and remodelling. He had the capacity to feel the force, hidden in the original experience, that the text was still communicating. He traced the subtle change and covering over of the mechanism of the collective persecution – first, by removing reference to collective violence, replacing it with individual violence, and then, by degrees removing reference to that.[46] Culture hides the

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[42] Girard, R (1987b).
[43] Girard R. (1987a). p. 21.
[44] Girard, R. (1986). p. 44. Girard was aware that not all rituals fit this explanation exactly but his work examined deviations in detail and eventually brought them back to a common denominator of sacrificial immolation.
[45] "The evolution of mythology is governed by the determination to eliminate any representation of violence."
Girard, R. (1986). p. 76.
[46] Girard, R. (1986). p. 76. Note that he gives an example of Plato's unconscious desire to eliminate traces of violence from the Republic using as example Plato's treatment of Kronos – and Plato's strong insistence that knowledge of the violence in the myth should only be given in a mystery which requires sacrifice not of a pig but of 'some victim such as few could afford'. He says "Clearly, it is not collective murder that shocks Plato, since it has disappeared, but the individual violence that has taken its place." Girard, R. (1986). p. 76.

founding murder and eliminates its violence from memory.[47] The persecution was effective but a deliberate distortion is built into its telling.[48]

Girard studied myths such as Oedipus, Teotihuacan, Baldr, Zeus and the Curetes. The hero of a myth was usually a stranger from outside – considered useless – an uninvited guest. He committed a dreadful act, of which he is unaware, and was punished. This process made a law which did not exist before. The hero broke a law that did not exist until he broke it. He founded it – he is the origin.[49] Girard retold the myth of Oedipus, placing it closer to the telling of an historical event, thereby removing its charm and revealing the pattern beneath.

> If my readers are not convinced I shall convince them now by a very simple example, I am going to draw a rough sketch of the story of Oedipus; I shall remove his Greek clothing and substitute Western garb. In so doing, the myth will descend several steps on the social ladder. I will give no details of the place or the precise date of the event. The reader's good will will provide the rest. My tale falls naturally into some part of the Christian world between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; that is all that is needed to release, like a spring, the operation that no one has thought of applying to myth, as long as we have been calling it precisely that, a myth.
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> "Harvests are bad, the cows give birth to dead calves; no one is on good terms with anyone else. It is as if a spell had been cast on the village. Clearly, it is the cripple who is the cause. He arrived one fine morning, no one knows from where, and made himself at home. He even took the liberty of marrying the most obvious heiress in the village and had two children by her. All sorts of things seemed to take place in their house. The stranger was suspected of having killed his wife's former husband, a sort of local potentate, who disappeared under mysterious circumstances and was rather too quickly replaced by the newcomer. One day the fellows in the village had had enough; they took their pitchforks and forced the disturbing character to clear out."
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> Everyone will instinctively give the explanation I have mentioned. Everyone understands that the victim most certainly did not do what he was accused of but that everything about

[47] Girard, R. (1986). p. 91.
[48] "We can trace in myths a system of representation of persecutions similar to our own but complicated by the effectiveness of the process of persecution. We are not willing to recognize that effectiveness because it scandalizes us on the levels of both morality and intelligence. We are able to recognize the first evil transfiguration of the victim, which seems normal, but we cannot recognize the second beneficent transfiguration; it is inconceivable that it can unite with the first without destroying it, at least initially." Girard, R. (1986). p. 44.
[49] Girard, R. (1987b).

> him marked him as an outlet for the annoyance and irritation of his fellow citizens. Everyone will understand easily the relationship between the likely and unlikely elements in this little story. No one will suggest that it is an innocent fable; no one will see it as a casual work of poetic imagination or of a wish to portray "the fundamental mechanisms of man's thought."[50]

Girard's passion for sniffing out what is absent from a text (something critical to its structure but now invisible) makes him a lively critic of the classical phenomenologists and some of his contemporary scholars. These included Frazer and the Cambridge ritualist school (which included Harrison). It included his French structuralist colleagues such as Vernant (who was a major interpreter of the Oedipus myth as scapegoat). He saw his colleagues as stuck in reflecting onto the historical, archaeological, mythological or folkloric material they were researching, the familiar form of the scapegoat in history and their own cultures. They were satisfied to find a theme, and in his view, nothing more.

> By inventing scapegoat rites, because he, too, did not understand the origin of all the rites in the *mechanism* of the scapegoat, Frazer has annoyingly short-circuited the opposition between them and structure, typical of the science of his time.
>
> ...Frazer turned straight to Leviticus for a Hebrew rite to head the list of a whole non-existent category of ritual without ever questioning the connection between religion in general and the type of phenomenon alluded to when we say that an individual or a minority group acts as 'scapegoat' for the majority. He did not understand that there was something essential in this phenomenon for the understanding of the scapegoat; he did not see that it extended into our own time. He only saw an ignorant superstition that religious disbelief and positivism have served to remove.[51]

He argued almost with a sense of outrage that we are too prone to continue Frazer's tradition.[52] However he acknowledged that the work of hiding the scapegoat effect was three quarters done by culture by the time Frazer came along. He dismissed the uncovering of the scapegoat rite by Harrison and the Cambridge scholars:

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[50] Girard, R. (1986). p. 29.
[51] Girard, R. (1986). p. 120.
[52] Girard, R. (1986). pp. 120-121.

> The concept of a structural principle that is *absent* from the text it structures would have seemed epistemologically incomprehensible to them. It is the same for most scholars, and I am not even sure that I can make myself understood, despite my reference in the interpretation of Guillaume de Machaut, accepted unhesitatingly by everyone, to a scapegoat *that cannot be found in the text.* [53] (Original italics)

He sensed, however, that Sophocles also tried to reveal the mechanism in his works but was impeded by his historical circumstances.[54] Girard saw the Gospels as the beginning of making the scapegoat effect visible in culture. He gave many examples of stories that consistently reveal the mechanism rather than continue to hide it or enact it as a reconciliatory process. [55]

Girard's work is a reminder that one's relation to myth is not a simple business. Ritual, myths and foundational cultural stories have been seen as reference points, psychologically important in making sense of complex and disturbing phenomena in life.[56] In their telling and retelling, they are handed down through years, or centuries, of human experience and contain many complex, paradoxical elements. Girard's work breaks down the idea of myth as a utopian, mystical guide to culture. As such an external reference point to guide action in moments of tension, it is unreliable. Girard's work provides a warning that, embedded in many myths, is a mechanism in human relations that plays out

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[53] Girard, R. (1986). p. 121.

[54] "Certainly, Sophocles suspects something, but he never goes as far in revealing the structural principle of the scapegoat as the Gospels or even the Prophets. Greek culture forbids it. The myth does not burst apart in his hands and show its inner workings. The trap closes on Oedipus, and the interpreters are caught in the same trap, including Jean-Pierre Vernant, who sees only theme and never states the real problem, the representation of the myth as a whole and the system of persecution which has been shaken by the tragedy but not really subverted or made to appear false as in the Gospels." Girard, R. (1986). p. 122.

[55] One example is the debate that Caiaphas has with the chief priests and Pharisees that eventually decides that Jesus should be put to death. The debate is indecisive – reflecting the crisis it endeavors to decide – they will be invaded by the Romans if they let Jesus keep working his signs. Caiaphas interrupts them saying that it is better for one man to die for the people, than for the whole nation to be destroyed. Girard interpreted this as intending to limit violence or to avoid an even greater violence and in this way was good politics. Caiaphas's statement reassures his listeners and mobilizes them into action – it "triggers to a certain extent the scapegoat it defines."
"For the statement to have such an effect it has to be understood in a superficial and mythic way. The political reason defined above remains mythic because it is based on what is still hidden in the political interpretation within the 'victimage' mechanism, the same thing that controls the council of Caiaphas as it controls our world. The scapegoat effect is clearly very weakened just as it is weakened in modern history. That is why the political reason is always contested by its victims and denounced as *persecution* even by those who would unwittingly resort to it should they find themselves in a position similar to Caiaphas's." Girard, R. (1986). pp. 112-113.

[56] Hillman, J. (1972). pp. 8-9.

when disturbance reaches a certain point and that a crucial part of this mechanism is hidden in telling the stories down through the generations.

Hillman proposed a helpful but confronting view of myth:

> myth is describing fundamental subjective processes in which changes are embedded.[57]
>
> Before applications of mythical meaning [of natural science, metaphysics, psychopathology or religion], there is the myth itself and its naked effect within the human soul, which, in the first place, created the myth, and, in the second place, perpetuated it with embellishments; and the soul still re-dreams these themes in its fantasy, behaviour and thought structures.[58]

It seems as if the soul leaves out bits, or shield itself from bits hurtful to the psyche in a similar way in which Damasio described the neurological mechanisms in the processes of *the human mind in the human body* as preferentially focusing on the external environment for survival. Hillman's psychological approach to myth, discussed in Chapter 3, speaks of unwrapping the soul and leading it out into mythical significance - but also myth must be led back to the soul with all its bizarre fantasy and suffering.[59] Girard's work provides such a possibility.

The business of soul-making is unsentimental yet the psyche seems to shield itself from hurtful business. Left as a literary, religious or metaphysical artifice, the scapegoat may be reconciliatory but it seems increasingly sterile in an evolutionary and cultural sense, requiring further mimetic repetition for stability in an environment that changes constantly and markedly. Finding an opening in this terrain and exploring a means of crossing between here and other aspects of the phenomenon seems difficult but worth the effort.

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[57] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 47.
[58] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 9.
[59] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 9.

There is distinction between the pharmakos and the scapegoat

Girard opened up the possibility of a fundamental difference between the pharmakos and the scapegoat. It rests on what the crowd believes. The scapegoat effect only worked if the crowd believed the scapegoat guilty.

> Scapegoat effects are not limited to mobs, but they are most conspicuously effective in the case of mobs. The destruction of the victim can make a mob more furious, but it can also bring back tranquility....The mob appears insincere and hypocritical. In reality, the mob really believes. If we understand this, we also understand that a scapegoat effect is real; it is an unconscious phenomenon....[60]

The mob believes the scapegoat is guilty but the community knew the pharmakos was innocent.[61] Moulinier, a classical scholar, reviewed the original fragments relating to the pharmakos from Greek and Latin.

> The pharmakos is not a demon [the demon of the plague had taken the form of an old man in Ephesus who was stoned]. But the 'sophiste' has understood well that it is not a scapegoat either on whom infuses, like the Jew, the sins of the people. In order to avoid the plague, if no enquiry reveals a culprit, a guilty one, it is necessary then to find one: this will be this abominable individual, this 'souillure', ... this poison which contaminates the city.[62]

The gradual change in public consciousness seems important. The pharmakos is turned from a known innocent to being believed guilty of something that threatens the community's very survival, or that threatens the social and religious structures that protect communal survival. Suspicion is a powerful element of infection.

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[60] Girard R. (1996). pp. 11-12.

[61] "What no one ever recognizes is that Oedipus could not be both incestuous son and parricide and at the same time *pharmakos*. When we speak of *pharmakos* we mean an innocent victim in the contaminated Judaic and Christian sense. This is still not the same as the ethnocentric sense since for Jews and Christians to speak of the *pharmakos* or scapegoat as innocent is a *truth* we can only deny at the expense of the demystification of Guillaume de Marchaut and the denial of magical thought. Either Oedipus is a scapegoat and not guilty of parricide and incest, or he is guilty and is not, at least for the Greeks, the innocent scapegoat the Jean-Pierre Vernant modestly calls *pharmakos*." (Original italics). Girard, R. (1986). pp. 122-123.

[62] Moulinier, L. (1975). p. 99. This author's translation from his French

Descending into the material

Girard's tussle with the pharmakos is exciting. The scapegoat is predominantly a tale about the community or the crowd and not about the person of the pharmakos or the scapegoat. Girard provided another angle to view the images of pollution and purification from the historical perspective. Life is not a certain and comfortable affair. Human relations deteriorate under crisis, or threat of it. Within the continuous source of images within, there is a living, recurring narrative of pollution or contagion. In the presence of real threat externally, the cause of which is unknown or hard to pinpoint, the community members are sufficiently distressed by the situation and the anticipation of worse to come, to *know* there is a cause and that *someone* is very harmful to the society. There is someone who has not only destabilized the societal bond but who will clearly not rest until it is completely destroyed. This calls for extreme preventive action and the community unites in their certainty of what the crime is. Thus suspicion and distress, both inner and outer, combine and infect in a mixing and jostling crowd. The narratives told to one another, and within, are believed and past history drawn on to corroborate the certainty of the guilt of those that have been identified.

Girard sensed a real event behind the blood sacrifice which is serving as the model for the ritual. He regarded the force of the scapegoat to be so strong in the human spirit that he named it as the source of religion and culture itself, and that the source of the contagious mechanism by which society can wipe itself out must be hidden. It would not be efficacious if it did not remain hidden.[63] The hidden and refilling source of the scapegoat energy is a factor of imagination in culture and the individual, as much as it is the biological response to real threat. The scapegoat mechanism works to reconcile the community but is also illusory. Culture seems to have stopped imagining the

[63] "Human beings do not understand the mechanism responsible for their reconciliation; the secret of its effectiveness eludes them which is why they attempt to reproduce the entire event as exactly as possible." Girard, R. (1987a). p. 28.

scapegoat. Girard noted that everyone knows what scapegoating is, but not when one does it.[64] Something seems to be in grief or static.

What brought real life to the scapegoat for this author was that Girard dared to imagine into the traces of what has disappeared. He smelled out something that was there but no longer is. It has been left out, covered over, hidden away. He never found the material, missing element but he had a nose for where it had been and how culture has covered it over. His imagination then is of the echo, of the hole, the impression of a hole, a slight depression, as it were, in the cultural landscape, somewhere where the surface sense of joy was troubled. He ferreted out the unstable stability that can trouble this sense of joy so profoundly. From Girard's work, the author has concluded that culture has been built on a kind of quicksand. Culture's stability required addictive repetition of expulsion in order to establish community. Community has come to know itself by whom it excludes in times of crisis – in its resolution of crisis. There seemed to be nothing of real substance in the trigger to scapegoating, that selects its victim, but real bones exist from victims, ancient and modern.

Girard's final image at the end of his major book, which brought all his work together, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, was that of a valley of death, full of dry bones. In his way he expressed something of Bachelard's conviction of life lying under surface images that easily entertain without active engagement. He said of the Judaeo-Christian scriptures that they were revolutionary because they first began to reveal the scapegoat mechanism for what is was.

> I never imagined that those texts were there for the purpose of passive enjoyment, in the same way as we look at a beautiful landscape. I always cherished the hope that meaning and life were one. Present-day thought is leading us in the direction of the valley of death and its is cataloguing the dry bones one by one. All of us are in this valley but it is up to us to resuscitate meaning by relating all the texts to one another without exception, rather than stopping at just a few of them. All issues of 'psychological health' seem to me to take second place to a much greater issue – that of meaning which is being lost or threatened on

[64] Girard, R. (1986). p. 41.

> all sides but simply awaits the breath of the Spirit to be reborn. Now all that is needed is this breath to recreate stage by stage Ezekiel's experience in the valley of the dead.[65]

Girard's impulse here is profound – to find an image to set his spirit and culture free - putting flesh back on the bones. This is taken as an invitation to the material imagination. The pharmakos journey follows the goat out of scapegoat territory through the valley of bones to more fertile country. In putting flesh back on the bones, a lot more texts have been related to one another – botanical, animal husbandry, veterinary, poetry, history and so on. The thesis takes the innocence of the goat seriously, akin to believing a text of persecution to demystify it. Descending into the image of the goat to look for signs of life involves gazing rapturously on the body, not just displaying to it with the mind. One can also dare to gaze on one's own 10 billion cells dividing, metabolising, dying, copying, mutating, killing…Between the metaphor and reality is where material imagination plays.

[65] Girard, R. (1987a). pp. 446-447. Ezekiel's experience was hearing a voice that urged him to blow breath and spirit back into the bones.

CHAPTER 7

THE GOAT

From the scapegoat terrain, a gap can be glimpsed through which the goat moves to fertile, nourishing country. A descent into the material being of the goat deforms the image of the scapegoat and breaks its stranglehold. The goat is a more extraordinary 'burden carrier' than cultures' enduring metaphor of the scapegoat. Descending into a substantial imagination of the goat brings images of independence and curious intelligence - an adept in crisis as an individual and in the herd. It is a paradox that one of our oldest companions attracts persistent negative images of the devil and stupidity. The goat sublimes weeds and rubbish to milk and lustre.

The aim of this chapter is to take the goat out of the scapegoat. The goat is one of man's oldest companions. The predominant images that survive in culture are negative in their associations. These images, quickly triggered and inattentively continued, are the scapegoat, cloven-hoofed Pan, the devil and the stupid goat as creator of environmental damage. Other images of the goat lying deep in personal and cultural memory were accessed through reverie.

There were a number of factors in formulating the aim of taking the goat out of the scapegoat. Firstly, the visual image of the goat, which arose in an inner reverie on the scapegoat, was taken seriously, including the images that arose in reading more widely on the goat. Secondly, the innocence of the goat, along with the innocence of the pharmakos, was taken seriously, and with this, the desire to know where it went, and what happened inside its being, on the journey. Thirdly, sharper attention was paid to the texts telling of the goat (following Girard's warning about texts of persecution) and Todres' advice to listen carefully to how authors are searching within to express their experience of the goat.

The chapter covers the orientation needed for innocence in reverie, the origin of the scapegoat metaphor, and the character of the goat, including its feeding and roaming habits. The chapter explores the space between humans and goats where negative perceptions live, to find what is disturbing and inspiring about goats.

A biochemical perspective begins to emerge at this point in the thesis. The aim is to engage in material imagination right to the biochemical level, to find a new crossing between the familiar and the unfamiliar in the symbol of the pharmakos.

The mood of the thesis changes here to include an active dialogue between texts and the author's imagination of the pharmakos in its aspects as goat and fig. The style incorporates the voice of reverie and the directness of present tense in the narrative of the thesis.

Meditation on matter requires innocence

There is a persistent mismatch between the scapegoat metaphor and the reality of the goat. The scapegoat metaphor can decompose only if one is prepared to orient the mind away from the seductive, rich images of the scapegoat cycle, to fresh air. De-forming the scapegoat metaphor requires the innocence of the pharmakos.

Meditating on the material being of the goat as an ancient element in human existence may induce our fundamental subjective state to be curious about images of adventurous adaptation. There is not only "nightmare before tragedy"[1] in the fright and hostility of the scapegoat, but also heart-racing impulsion to meet and mate with strangeness.

[1] Bachelard G. (1987). Extract from *L'Air et les songes.* p.14. This quote was referred to in Chapter 5.

For Bachelard, meditation on matter opens the imagination.[2] One needs a double orientation – objective understanding and subjective response. Innocence allows one to be open to both.[3] The basic relationship between subject and object is provoked. [4] It allows one to find a root image.

> Should you wish to feel the marvelous tales of the Phoenix resonate within, you must discover the root image of the bird of fire in yourself, in memory or in your fondest dreams…
>
> What distinguishes phenomenological examination in this regard is belief, however slight, in the unbelievable images dug out of the dim past by archeological investigations. With luck it is possible to hold onto this phenomenological nuance, summoning it back before each new image. If one learns too much, however, return to what Mallarme terms "deep-running waters of innocence..." becomes more difficult. In such a case the phenomenologist is obliged to transform the innocence of traditional images into personal innocence. For it is with innocence that fantastic images must be approached. Phenomenologists are lucky in their method, which permits them the simplicity of first impressions in their encounters with fantastic imagery. Phenomenological investigation alone enjoys the privilege of distinguishing what is natural from what has been fabricated, images that have been experienced from those that have been faked. The contrivances of human intelligence can thus be set aside. There is an underlying innocence at the core of this procedure. One discovers the Phoenix to be a natural image of the experience of fire and an advertisement for the Poetics of fire at one and the same time.[5]

As discussed in Chapter 4, Bachelard put limits on reverie. This author took this as advice to stay with the image as far as possible: neither to lift off into the ether nor to reduce it to organic or literal explanation.[6] In the material imagination of the goat and the fig, the author has pushed Bachelard's limit of depth in terms of organic detail. In relation to the goat, the intention has been not to find a biological explanation, but to find a root image, which resonates

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[2] "Meditated upon from the perspective of its depth, matter is the very principle that can dissociate itself from forms. It is not the simple absence of formal activity. It remains itself despite all distortion and division. Moreover, matter may be given value in two ways: by deepening or by elevating. Deepening makes it seem unfathomable like a mystery. Elevation makes it appear to be an inexhaustible force, like a miracle. In both cases, meditation on matter cultivates an *open imagination.*" Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 2.
[3] "Erudition and unschooled impressions must go hand in hand." Bachelard, G. (1990). p. 37.
[4] "Sometimes, even when I touch things, I still dream of an element." Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xlvi.
[5] Bachelard, G. (1990). pp. 36-38.
[6] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xliv.

with human experience, within the biological makeup of the goat. Taking Bachelard's warnings seriously, the work explored the material elements of the pharmakos with freedom and sensitivity.

The importance of material imagination is

> this amazing need for *penetration* which, going beyond the attractions of the imagination of forms, thinks matter, dreams in it, lies in it, in other words, materializes the imaginary.[7]

This author felt the call of the fig and the goat strongly in a reverie on the pharmakos. They became the elements through which to dream the life and the contradictions of the pharmakos. In this chapter, the reverie follows an intuition that we know much more of the goat and ourselves than the scapegoat seems to indicate. So to the matter of the goat...

Origins of the goat and the scapegoat metaphor

The goat is one of man's oldest companions in evolutionary terms, being probably the oldest domesticated companion.[8] At one ancient archaeological site, there was evidence that wild goats were undergoing the early stages of domestication in early Neolithic times (9500-8000BC).[9] Both wild and domesticated goats have been intimate companions of humans. We have known them as they have known us.

How did the goat come to attract the metaphor scapegoat? In the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus, there is a ritual of atonement for sins in which a goat and a lamb were sacrificed and a second goat was taken away to the desert carrying the community's load of sin.

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[7] Gaudin, C. In Bachelard, G. (1987). p. xlvi.
[8] French, M. (1970). p. 1.
[9] Goat remains at an early Neolithic site, Abu Gosh in Israel, (9500-8000BC) were of wild species and 2000 years later , the remains at the same site were predominantly those of domestic goats. Kahila Bar-Gal, G., Khalaily, H., Mader, O., Ducos, P. & Kolska Horwitz, L. (2002). p. 9.

In the early 1500s William Tyndale made the first translation of the Bible into English.[10] It was Tyndale who coined the word *scapegoat* to describe the function of the goat in the Leviticus ritual. Tyndale was trying to pin down a word in English to express the meaning in the original Hebrew but for which there is no equivalent. [11] He used *scape*, an old form of the word *escape*, which dated back to the thirteenth century. He intended to convey the "supposed literal meaning of the Hebrew word Azazel thus rendering it the 'goote on which the lotte fell to scape.'"[12] The word quickly appeared in French, Spanish and Italian.[13]

To this author, it was as if the word on its first appearance was snatched up within culture to express, in language, a force and form already deeply familiar in experience – the scapegoat effect that Girard described and of which he asserted that everyone knows the meaning.[14] The image seems to have become an instantly successful metaphor for a powerful, complex experience, which everyone seems to know already. The metaphor is successful in crossing between the image in the mind, and a sense of physical threat in the body.

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[10] Tyndale, a scholar and first generation potestant, had a gift for language. Consequently, his literary influence was subtle but profound. As a biblical translator, he first put into English the ideas, and in many cases the verbal rhythms, of the Greek and Hebrew originals. He had a feeling for the task, the rhythm, and direct and simple expression. Paradoxically, alongside his scholarship and his mission that ordinary people (the ploughman, the shepherd and everyman outside the closed circle of the scholars and the priests) should know the scriptures directly, his beliefs and life's work of translating the Bible in English brought him into conflict with the church and a direct and fatal experience of the scapegoat. As his mind tussled with the literal meaning of the Hebrew, his body was living in the direct force of the scapegoat effect. It is said of his translations that they have had an enduring effect on the understanding of the essential Christian text. They have shaped the religious language, and even the very phrasing of religious thought, of Christian believers and nonbelievers alike for more than four hundred years…He established a standard of verbal expression against which others would be measured. Day, J.T. (1993). p. 310, pp. 297-298.

[11] Tyndale's version of Leviticus, chapter 16, verse 10 is as follows:
"But the goat on which the lot fell to be scapegoat, shall be presented alone before the Lord, to make atonement with him and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness"
and verse 21-22:
"And Aaron shall lay his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat and shall send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities upon him to a solitary land; and he shall let the goat go into the wilderness." Quoted by Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 6-7.

[12] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 8. Quoting the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology.*

[13] Tyndale's translation led in turn to the Vulgate version of the Bible, which was in turn translated into other languages. Hence the Vulgate version of *scapegoat* was *caper emissarius* and hence the French *bouc emissaire*. Douglas, T. (1995). p. 8. The Italian is *capro espiatorio*.

[14] Girard, R. (1986). p. 41.

The Leviticus ritual was based on an old Jewish legend. The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, 1966, states the correct interpretation of scapegoat probably is *goat for Azazel*. Ginzberg, in his *Legends of the Jews,* associated Azazel with one of the fallen angels. [15] Sensuality and violence have characterised stories concerned with Azazel.[16]

Theodor Gaster, a linguist and historian who researched the myths and fables of the ancient world, especially those of the early Hittites, Canaanites and Hebrews, confirmed that the goat was said to be consigned to Azazel, but that the meaning of the word *Azazel* is unknown.

> According to some Jewish authorities, it is the name of a rock off which the animal was hurled; according to others, it is the name of a demon who was believed to inhabit the wilderness. The ancient versions however, tried to explain the word from the Hebrew *el ozel*, the goat which departs, and from this interpretation comes the conventional *scapegoat*, i.e., escape-goat.[17]

The *goat which departs* is a wonderful image with which to descend into the movement and material being of the goat through reverie. Some comments made below by goat owners, vets and breeders provide a direct, fresh account of their experience of goats in contrast to images locked in myth and memory.[18] The voice of reverie, written in italics, is interspersed in the narrative for the remainder of the thesis.

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[15] Ginzberg, L. (1946-47). pp. 170-171.

[16] "An old legend says the angels opposed the creation of man. Uzza and Azazel during the sinful generation of the flood called attention to the fact that their opposition to man's creation was justified. The angels descended on earth in order to prove that they were far superior to man." Talmudic sources assert that: "These angels were fastened to the 'mountains of darkness' by chains, and they teach witchcraft to those who seek them."One legend has it that:

"Azazel was originally an angel, and once on the day of Atonement he accused Israel before God, saying: 'Why hast Thou mercy on them when they provoke Thee? Thou shoulds't rather destroy them.' And God replied: 'If thou woulds't be among them (men), thou woulds't also sin.' Azazel then requested to be tested. When, with God's permission, he descended on earth, the evil inclination overcame him and he fell victim to Na'amah, a very beautiful woman. Thereupon God said: 'Since he sinned and cannot return to heaven, he should remain in the desert until the end of time, so that he should close the mouths of the accusers: for they will be warned by his fate, and will be silent.' On the Day of Atonement, therefore, the scapegoat is sent to the desert, the dwelling place of Azazel, in order to remind the accusers of his fate."

Ginzberg, L. (1946-47). pp. 170-171.

[17] Gaster, T.H. (1968). p. 20 including Footnote 1.

[18] The aim is to bring freshness to images of the goat based on observations of people living and working in an ongoing relation with goats, including the author, who sees goats everyday.

The goat which departs: giving substance to the image

The goat which departed from the Jewish ceremony recounted in Leviticus was probably bored. A highly intelligent animal, it has not been its character to stay in a place that is too confined, without sufficient food or interest. A goat likes to know what is going on. Hence it usually goes to the top of a hill to investigate who might be there and what they might be doing. It is easily stressed - being sensitive to touch and smell - and it has exceptionally good eyesight. It goes round corners faster than straight ahead – hoping to escape - and with good reason. If man was loading up the goat with sins, anxieties and contagion, the goat would be off, relying on its fleet of foot.

Goats have eyes which people classify as evil because they are different. The eyes have a beautiful pearly-clear look to them, cut by a dark horizontal stripe. The eyeball is so round and open that when the sun comes behind it, it is as though one can see forever.

> They have very good vision and can see behind their back. They can see out of the corners of their eyes and also have some binocular vision.[19]

Goats could see what people were loading onto them in the ritual.

> They are very sensitive to various sounds and …they have a great range of snorts, foot stamps and bleats which they use in communication. The alarm calls are highly developed. A doe can give a call to a young kid only a week old and the kid will drop into the undergrowth. Using a different call – a sort of muted vibrato sound – she can call the kid out of hiding.[20]

With their sensitive hearing and effective means of communicating alarm, they heard all that was going on. They did not want to get caught up in the ritual doings.

> Goats rely more on smell and odour than on vision and they rely a lot on their fleetness of foot to escape from a predator.[21]

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[19] Blackshaw, J. (1987). p. 57.
[20] Blackshaw, J. (1987). p. 57.
[21] Blackshaw, J. (1987). p. 57.

imparting its fleetness, suppleness and beauty to the human foot, it is as if we can imbibe the essence of the goat through our feet – to move as the goat moves – to move with our own burden.

The surviving metaphors about the goat, which are negative, obscure other cultural memories and experiences of the goat. Goats carry other loads such as milk. Milk goats have experienced a pharmakos ritual over thousands of years.

> Some breeds [of the Syrian or Near Eastern group], such as the Red Damascus, are kept for their milking qualities and the nannies are driven around the streets to deliver milk to the town dwellers, who milk the goats into their own containers. The udders are commonly supported by a cloth tied over the animal's back to keep them clean and prevent them from dragging in the dust or mud.[41]

Here is a similar custom to the pharmakos. The goat knows the experience of being led around the town. Instead of taking away contagion, it took away hunger. Its milk was nourishing and transportable.[42] The milk was used to make cheese and hence, dried, is easily transportable and storable. Man takes care of the goat while the goat takes care of man. In this goat pharmakos ritual, the feelings of value are associated with cleanliness, protection, feeding and nutrition.

If utility is a depth of connection with the goat, then the utility of goats to man is at both extremes of agricultural conditions: in primitive or nomadic conditions "these active, robust, intelligent and industrious animals find their own feed and survive because of their adaptive efficiency" in hard conditions; in intensive agriculture, when given regular and balanced food, they are valuable, economic producers.[43]

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[41] French, M. (1970). p. 13.
[42] Goats' milk has a low fat content and is more digestible than cows' milk. It also causes fewer asthmatic, eczema and other allergic reactions in susceptible people. Thear, K. (1988). p. 9. Miners and railway gangs in Australia took goats with them to harsh and isolated country to provide milk French. M. (1970). p. 14. They were put onto Great Keppel Island in early Australia to provide milk and meat in case of shipwreck. Ian Cathles. Personal communication, 2003.
[43] French, M. (1970). p. 98.

Beyond its usefulness, the goat image is constantly lurking as a feeling of adventurous adaptation. So why banish it?

Between the metaphor and reality: Goat and man meet

The accusing perceptions and images of the goat are that it degrades the environment, is unable to judge what is good for it to eat, and like Pan, is devilish. Perhaps in opening innocently to the goat one can pause to observe and discern the dynamic flow of images within the mind. The images are ill-fitting and the feelings do not reflect a close contact with the goat's innate character. The de-forming of the scapegoat metaphor is continued by looking more closely into the space where humans and goats meet.

One persistent perception of goats is that they are responsible for environmental degradation. M.H. French, Chief of the Animal Production and Dairy Service of the Food and Agricultural Organization in the 1970s, has defended the goat passionately against claims of environmental degradation and a demand for their elimination or reduction in numbers in the last fifty years.[44]

French's writing is diagnostic, in the manner of Girard, in revealing persecution texts and in the process has shifted some of the human prejudice in this closer to home. Several extracts from his writings are needed to reveal the phenomenon.

> ... the goat has been so widely, so long and so strongly condemned by agriculturalists and foresters for the damage it is thought to have caused, that many who have no first-hand knowledge of this valuable animal join wholeheartedly in the common condemnation. It is therefore not surprising that many believe the goat to be so incapable of value to the human community that they openly advocate its elimination.... Rarely do goat-elimination protagonists pause to consider the validity of the arguments employed to support this thesis and such blind acceptance helps to spread the philosophy to neighbouring countries, where an entirely different set of circumstances may pertain.[45]
>
> However, in only a few localities is the goat appreciated for its intrinsic qualities and for the value of its milk and meat to poor families, who cannot afford cows or buffalo. It

[44] French, M. (1970). p. 47.
[45] French, M. (1970). pp. 85-86.

> shows a persistent ability to grow and multiply in regions where the environmental conditions are certainly too restrictive for larger animals. It is found in areas where the sustained economical productivity of larger livestock is jeopardized by the unreliability of the rainfall or where dry-season fodder scarcities impose recurring periods of subsistence.[46]
>
> ... the abolition of the goat is advocated in these areas where nutritional levels are low, distances to organized markets are appreciable, and transport problems are magnified by the lack of roads or by the bad state of those that do exist.[47]
>
> ...the goat continues as a producer of meat and milk long after the cow and the sheep have been forced to abandon the poorer areas at the higher latitudes. This ... factor is often responsible for goats being found on abandoned lands and mountain grazings which have been ruined by over exploitation. Man of course, is responsible for encouraging or permitting such over grazing but he adroitly passes the blame to the goat. Quite frequently, the over grazing damage was actually caused by mixed herds of cattle, sheep and goats, but because goats can persist, often at low productive levels, after cattle and sheep have ceased to gain a livelihood, they have been able to bear the brunt of the responsibility for the damage for which careless agriculturalists and herdsman are in fact to blame![48]

There is a crisis (food shortage), accusation of a crime (a foundation crime – destruction of a food habitat), attraction of the accusation by a sign (the goat is present and it is a goat) and violence.

Our language is scattered with words derived from the goat. They are usually pejorative. The etymology of the word *tragedy* is a case in point.

Renos Papadopoulos, a psychologist working with survivors from Bosnia and Kosovo, has advocated a deeper understanding of the multifaceted complexities of destructiveness and violence, which he calls "tragic facets of our human condition."[49] He traced the original meaning of the word *tragedy* and connected it to the goat. He then played with the metaphor as follows:

> It is well known that 'tragedy' comes from *'tragos'* (goat) as it was connected with the rituals performed by men dressed as goats in ancient Greek ceremonies. However, it may

[46] French, M. (1970). p. 60.
[47] French, M. (1970). pp. 80-81.
[48] French, M. (1970). p. 9
[49] Papadopoulos, R. (1998). pp. 460–461.

> be less known that '*tragos*' is an onomatopoetic word which comes from '*trogo*' (to eat) and '*traganizo*' (to crunch). Thus, goats with their voracious appetite crunch anything in sight regardless of whether it is good or bad for them. Indeed there is something tragic in this potential self-destructiveness involved in the goat munching away at everything indiscriminately. Equally, impulsiveness and lack of discrimination are key characteristics of destructiveness. [50]

His general argument is compelling – that as we emphasize the tragic aspect of destructiveness, we bypass the really impossible questions as to whether "it is inevitable or not, innate or reactive, personal or collective."[51] These questions are fundamental to future human experience, and he warned that healers can contribute to the trauma by being unaware of their assumptions about atrocity and trauma. But in entering into the metaphor of the goat, he gave it superficial treatment from the goat's point of view. What Papadopoulos described may fit human experience in the meeting space of the metaphor, but has very little to do with the goat. As seen above, goats discriminate in quite a complex manner – they know what is good and bad for them. What passes for impulsiveness, is curiosity, independence and survival.

Here is a paradox: why demonise, banish, eliminate or ill-treat the goat? It seems that the goat as a metaphor pops into human consciousness in times of distress, fragility and violence. Feelings are acted out.

This phenomenon of violence against the goat may be associated with the imagined power of their eyes that seem to look deeply into one. Perhaps one can act cruelly against the goat and the scapegoat, if one is challenged by the freedom in those eyes. Something of man's cruelty to the goat and the scapegoat is captured in imaginative descriptions by K.S. Maniam, a contemporary Malaysian writer, in his novel In A Far Country. *Maniam portrayed the cultural origins and differences among Malaysians and the struggle to live out this identity, yet become a multicultural Malaysian in a country that is not the*

[50] Papadopoulos, R. (1998). p. 461.
[51] Papadopoulos, R. (1998). p. 461.

source of one's roots.[52] *He used the goat, Mani, as a symbol of this. The drama was played out fully in the action of the villagers and the slaughterers of Mani who was slaughtered at the annual Deepavali festival. His eyes and haughty self-determination enrage.*

> Why has Mani been selected, besides his trifling destructive acts, from all the other goats bred for the customary festival sacrifices? Why be singled out for this special rite? His eyes, I think, are the cause. They are not quite animal not quite human. They are neither quite smoky or quite dark. They have an indeterminate quality.[53]

Maniam burrows behind the light in the eyes.

> The light is using Mani's eyes as a medium to reveal itself.[54] ... It is the light of pure being.... For it is the light of intelligence, not the darkness of the limited mind. For it is the vitality that keeps discovery; not the lack of stamina that keeps a man enslaved to a family, a culture and a country. It is the light of total responsibility to life.[55]

Sensing this brings a cruel rage to the slaughter of Mani. It is hard to be looked at in open curiosity with this vitality. There are two accounts of Mani's slaughter. In one, the slaughterer, before killing Mani, gratuitously and cruelly skins the goat's genitals, cutting them off in a rage when the animal showed no reaction. In the other, the slaughterer, with wanton viciousness, saws his blade against the neck bones of the goat's throat. In triumph the slaughterer holds up the severed head.

> Mani's eyes had not closed and I thought they looked in the direction of his body. Could there be communication between the dead mind and the dead body? We almost jumped out of our skins when Mani's body stood up and tottered, shakily, towards the slaughterer...[and] turned and trailing blood like splotches of vengeance, hobbled towards the jungle fringe. Midway it steadied itself and now that it was just a body, all the muscles strained and stood out so that we got the impression that Mani in death, grew in stature. The body circled – the children screamed again – and came towards us. The raw flesh at

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[52] The novel delves into modern Malaysian culture and the forces within the society that create a norm – a multicultural norm. Maniam imagined a system of culture as a machine which finally catches up with those who think differently, to let them know it is watching and able to diagnose the exact part of them that is useless. It can find the source of one's non-conformity. Maniam, K.S. (1993). p. 158.
[53] Maniam, K.S. (1993). p. 148.
[54] Maniam, K.S. (1993). p. 152.
[55] Maniam, K.S. (1993). p. 153.

the neck looked like an eye in the severed throat and Mani cried blood as he took off into last spasmodic gallop around.

"Close the eyes! Close the eyes!

Some elderly man seized the head and massaged the eye-lids shut. Almost immediately Mani's body whirled, leapt and fell to the ground beside the slaughtering block.[56]

Maniam exemplifies the emergence of a consciousness of the space between the metaphor of the goat, the scapegoat and reality. He can feel how the goat changes us in our meeting, and attracts a lightning fast action in response to strong feelings, as the images from memory of loss of independence, and the burden of bloodshed and vengeance, block out the deeper reflection of what lies behind in the eyes of the goat. In times of crisis, or when sterility has felt like a crisis, it is as if thwarted fertility, thwarted escape, thwarted departure, must find expression, and so are acted cruelly on the goat. Somehow the goat has attracted an accusation. Here is a clue perhaps to the deeper significance of the pharmakos. The pharmakos is free, vital, and no longer worked on by the prevailing conditions and moods of the community. That vitality is confronting.

A Hungarian poet and composer has picked up this hint in his lyric poem *Thisness: A Duo-drama cycle*.[57]

Is this the end of your speech, foreigner?
How strangely you speak.

I hate you for it.
I hate you, pharmakos.

I fear you, pharmakos,
Wizard and poisoner.

You stir up my life,
Sacred and accursed soul.

You must be exorcised!

And what's the worst,
You dweller upon the boundary line,

[56] Maniam, K.S. (1993). pp. 17-18.
[57] Anhalt, Istvan, (1985). pp 4-5 of 7 pages.

You bring what I've come to need.

I hate you the more for it.

The disturbing life force of Pan

The Great God Pan was the God of all nature in Greek mythology. In departing from the scapegoat terrain the goat brings Pan back close to life. The disturbing side of life is associated with Pan. In Hillman's view, Pan arrives as a personified image. It personifies in our awareness "behaviour at its most nature-bound...behaviour transcendent to the human yoke of purposes, wholly impersonal, objective, ruthless."[58] As homeostasis must drive survival, gazing on the goat reminds us that the body has other urgent functions that risk its safety: namely, fertility and generativity. Pan's "is a spirit that can arise from most anywhere, the product of many archetypal movements or by spontaneous generation."[59]

Pan's is a fertile, independent, self-actualizing force, an imaginal force. Although Hillman, like Bachelard, warns against looking into this force too "literalistically in the manner of natural science or meta-biology,"[60] it is worth pushing a little closer to a meta-biology of this force with material imagination, to release more life in the space between the goat and the metaphor of the scapegoat. Hillman saw in the announcement of the death of Pan[61] that "nature was no longer an independent living force of generativity."[62] Man's mind distanced itself from this force - but only in mind. The real material reflection of life in the goat continued, but with a covering over its generative force. Maniam had his slaughterer rip this covering off, and thereby urgently bring the image back into culture.

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[58] "[it] is beyond the control of the willing subject and his ego psychology..." Hillman, J. (1972). p. 21.
[59] Hillman, J.. (1972). p 20.
[60] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 27.
[61] Robert Palmer recounts Plutach's tale of the announcement of the death of Pan in his Introduction to Walter Otto's *Dionysos*. He attributes it roughly to the first century when Pan was replaced by the Christian God. Palmer, R. In Otto, W. (1965). p. ix.
[62] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 24.

Panic sets in! Hillman argued that panic has a protective function "even if in its blindness the outcome can be mass-death."[63] However, goats do not panic. Sheep and cattle do. They will kill or injure themselves in a headlong rush in contagious fear. A goat is always re-assessing its situation. It doesn't panic – it moves to a place it can defend. It faces danger, not runs blindly from it. It is an observer. One can see it thinking and watching what is going on. In this sense it is free. We know ourselves, and our losses in this sense, through gazing at the goat. It is a model for travelling in unknown territory. Pan is an observer.

> Pan the observer is shown to us most strikingly in those images of him with his hand raised to his forehead, gazing into the distance: on guard, watching. Within the physical intensity of Pan there is a physical attentiveness, a goat's consciousness.... Its reflection is in connection with the herd, the awareness identical with the physical signals of nature 'in here.' The reflection is in the erection, *in* the fear, an awareness that is nature bound.... Pan reflects altogether in the body, the body as instrument, as when we dance....This is a consciousness moving warily where we don't know which way to take, no trail, our judging only by means of the senses, never losing touch with the flock of wayward complexes, the small fears and the small excitations.[64]

The goatherd has intimate knowledge of this travel in goats. But it seems along the way that the images of the goatherd have become pejorative along with the goat. Thus the goatherd belongs in the chthonic world. As such he is part of the community of characters who live close to their animals out on the fringes of settled village life. They know the characters of their animals, the pattern of their movements in the landscape and their own feelings toward them. These shepherds would recognise one other. They have all faced Pan, the great mythic personification of nature. They see life as it is. They are close to the unrefined force of *life as it is*. "When we panic we can never know whether it may not be the first movement of nature that will yield, if we can hear the echo of reflection, a new insight into nature."[65] Somehow, though, Pan became the goat-footed Devil.

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[63] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 21.
[64] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 52.
[65] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 22.

Hillman helps here to make the link at this level to the fertile, inquisitive, independent and sensual nature of the goat, and thereby to orient ourselves from the goat to man's imagination of the goat.[66] Pan thankfully is not dead, as once proclaimed.

> "Pan is still alive, although we experience him only through psychopathological disturbances, other modes having been lost to our culture."[67]

Pan is associated with rape, masturbation, panic, and nightmare. Literalness is the trigger to psychopathology which, Hillman believed, would be lessened if we took the fantasy in these compulsions seriously – "when we restore the metaphorical appreciation of what is going on."[68] To work with and to listen to the imaginal voices produced by these instincts is a powerful soul-maker, in his view.

However, this realm is not a nice one. It is not the realm of love and Eros. It is not the realm of easy-flowing relationship. It is a generative force that must find expression. Pan is life as it is and Pan is fear.

> Fear, like love, can become a call to consciousness; one meets the unconscious, the unknown, the numinous and uncontrollable by keeping in touch with fear, which elevates the blind instinctual panic of the sheep into the knowing, cunning, fearful awe of the shepherd.[69]

Where fear and sexuality meet, self-generation and the contagious fear of mass death or tragedy are closely felt. The shepherd though, has learnt from the goat. The goat heeds instinct, but not blindly.

> Rape, panic and nightmare belong where anxiety and sexuality are taken concretely so that the psyche has already become a victim, caught, oppressed, its freedom lost. The horror has already begun. [70]

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[66] "It is as if human existence, even at this basic level, is a metaphor. If psychological behaviour is metaphorical, then we must turn to the dominant metaphors of the psyche to understand its behaviour. Therefore, we may learn as much about the psychology of instinct by occupation with its archetypal images as by physiological, animal and experimental research." Hillman, J. (1972). pp. 27-28.
[67] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 18.
[68] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 41.
[69] Hillman, J. (1972). pp. 32-33.
[70] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 45.

However, Hillman warned that if the reflective consciousness of man – the mind's display to the body - is in danger of being overwhelmed by the very physical world that it reflects, then reflective consciousness turns away to protect the spirit from breaking. This protective function is strong and complements the protective function of homeostasis. But, tentatively at first, reflective consciousness can extend, and regularly revisit, its metaphors to penetrate into their origin – to gaze again on the image seen at its moment of turning away. Eventually the mind must gaze on the horror and material genius of the body anew.

> Pan is not 'represented' by a goat, nor is the goat 'holy' to Pan; rather Pan *is* the goat-God, and this configuration of animal- nature distinguishes nature by personifying it as something hairy, phallic, roaming and goatish.[71]

Taking the goat in Pan seriously is to bring back its life force to the body. It is a generative and not necessarily a nice force. It is troubling. Beating this force to liberate it is one way of relating to it. But it may also be possible to liberate the generative goat in Pan by adopting its poise to pause in the face of distress and it courage look curiously and carefully around the empty space where stories begin to be told. The goat at a deeper level is an image in our psyche of a dialectic between generativity and the discerning and breaking down of the psychological fear of tragedy or loss of freedom.

Descending into the skin of the goat

Taking the hairiness of the roaming goat seriously produces a root image, which marks out a place for pausing. This is an aspect of the goat that is needed before a full view of the last terrain to be explored in the thesis is revealed. Hidden within its skin, within the hair follicle, is a remarkable movement of life and death.

The mohair goat, for example, makes its mohair fibre in a remarkable way. This story uses descriptions of physiological processes that descend into biochemical

[71] Hillman, J. (1972). p. 22.

and physiological reality that will push Bachelard's limit and Hillman's distinction about meta-biology to the full. But the gap between the goat and our cultural association of the goat, between the social rituals that lay burdens of contamination onto its head and body, and the concrete ways that the dominant public dynamic of scapegoating plays out in human relations, require the most material ways possible to point out the mismatch in this association.

It is the base of the hair follicle that most captures the imagination. Distributed amongst the cells between the skin layers, are the follicles which produce the mohair. The base of the follicle appears amongst the skin cells as an opening. When drawn it resembles a hole. It is called the bulb. This opening or hole is not empty but full of extremely active generating cells – cells generating protein that is the beginning of what will become the most lustrous fibre in the world.[72]

The active protein cells are supplied by blood vessels that go to some trouble in their bending and branching to keep this area serviced.[73] Immediately above the base of the bulb, the new cells travel up the follicle and begin to differentiate – to elongate. About a third of the way up the cells die, and they prepare themselves for keratinisation.[74]

This process of dying and transformation into beauty is measured and rhythmical and its micro structure deeply interconnected. The skin protects the dying, transforming follicle mechanism deeply situated in the dermal layer. Blood supply is carefully and extensively worked right into the follicle bulb.

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[72] "The follicle bulb is one of the most actively dividing tissues in the whole animal "Maddocks, I.G. and Jackson, N. (1988). p. 12.

[73] "Fibre growth results from cell division in the germinal layer of the follicle bulb. Blood supply to the skin and follicle is at three levels with cell division supplied from blood vessels in the papilla, keratinization from the mid-dermal vessels and, the surface areas for the sub-epidermal network." Stapleton, D.L. (1985). p. 138.

[74] "a process not unlike the vulcanization of rubber. Metabolism ceases. Keratinisation involves the formation of bonds between sulphur atoms to form ...di-sulphide bonds. These ... are responsible for the fibrous structure of the material." The chemistry of the mohair fibre is that of long chains of amino acids forming fibrous proteins. The structure of a single fibre is one of successively smaller units of cortical sells, fibrils, microfibrils, protofribrils and protein molecules in the form of three alpha helices. The structure of the protein molecule involves both the order in which the amino acids occur and the bonds formed between and within the helix. These bonds include peptide bonds between amino acids, acid-base bonds and hydrogen bonds. The latter two occur between side chain units and while they are relatively weak, they are responsible for the elastic and dyeing properties of the fibre. Stapleton, D.L. (1985). p. 122.

> [The] immediate blood supply to single follicles [shows] a network of capillary vessels surrounding the lower third of the follicle and entering the papilla of the follicle bulb. There is considerable variation between follicle, the larger follicles having a more elaborate network ... around the follicle and a more extensive papillary network.[75]

When the blood supply is increased, the fibre grows faster.[76] The nutrients from the weeds and herbage are delivered here for manufacture of a lustrous miracle.

> Cell division results in material which makes up both the inner root sheath and the fibre, with as much as 75% of the material in the sheath. This sheath grows with the fibre and is the first material to become keratinized and so forms a hard layer around the fibre and has the effect of forming an extrusion nozzle so aiding the formation of a solid fibre. [77]

The rest of the follicle then is occupied by the emerging dead, lustrous warming, protecting fibre. Each primary follicle has an erector muscle which changes the angle of its direction to the skin surface. These little muscles can contract the fibre down closer to the skin. Blood vessels keep the surface of the skin functioning and protected.

It is very hard to pollute the goat's hair...

> The smooth surface of the mohair...not only imparts the high lustre characteristic, but also lowers the felting capacity [compared to wool] and reduces the problem of shrinkage associated with fibres moving over one another...The low cuticular scale profile also means that abrasion is minimised in mohair fabric and dirt tends to shed from the material.[78]

and very easy to turn it into vibrant colour.

> Dye Affinity is one of the major properties of mohair and results partly from the actual affinity of the protein for dye molecules and partly from the high lustre imparted by the low cuticular scale profile (ie. the fibres have a sooth surface that reflects light clearly).[79]

What man sees reflected is the lustre of this generating, dying protein made from weeds, thistles and other trees and plants browsed by the goat. The root

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[75] Maddocks, I.G. and Jackson, N. (1988). p. 56.
[76] Maddocks, I.G. and Jackson, N. (1988). p. 55.
[77] Stapleton, D.L. (1985). p. 138.
[78] Stapleton, D.L. (1985). p. 125.
[79] Stapleton, D.L. (1985). p. 123.

image of the goat is breakdown of rubbish to lustre. This is the system that man has imagined as carrying away the pollution. It is a system of genius! Under the predominating image, interpretation and force of the scapegoat, material imagination of the goat is still possible and deeply affecting.

The reflection can be seen in the pearly lustrous fibre even in the paddock, with the ringlets glowing like the moon in the full sun, even with the dust and dirt of the paddock blowing over them. The cells are never destroyed or consumed in the process. They just take the nutrients and build the protein cells.

The deforming of the scapegoat image is completed and its elements have been built into something of beauty, stamina and utility. Within the space between the goat and a truly listening and watching companion are alert hearts moving, adapting, breaking down what is around and building it up into a protection that shines, dyes brilliantly, will cover others and allows survival and exploration of the wild, the margins, the liminal and the exterior. The goat is not a scape animal. That is what is seen by scape-man. The goat is an ever-young face covered in ringlets, gazing with open curiosity, ready for a laugh and to make a laughable situation, and when there is something possibly threatening around, withdrawing to an independent place from which to gaze, and to understand what is happening. Something is always going wrong in life. The goat's reaction is decisive and forceful. The violence is of life itself fully felt. In this author's view, we know this because we know the goat in ourselves. When it departs we know what it does, but forget. We remember the scapegoat, which plugs and inhibits our fertility. In the space between the metaphor and reality, man and goat have met. Man mistook the presence of the goat in marginal areas for the cause of the marginality.

CHAPTER 8

THE FIG

The country in which the goat arrives has many hidden features. The goat is naturally connected with the fig in the cheese eaten by the pharmakos and in the name given to the fertilisation of figs. The forgotten origin of the pharmakos ceremony is the caprification of figs. Penetration into the symbol and material being of the fig and its association with humans for thousands of years reveals a hidden fertile core of the pharmakos phenomenon. Communion between man and the fig brings the body, sensation, instinct and the experience of generation into strong emotion. The metaphor of the fig brings with it a preparation for a vibrant meeting and a piercing mating with difference.

The aim of the chapter is to explore the potency of the pharmakos phenomenon through reverie on the potency of the fig. It covers the history of the fig in horticulture, and in ancient festivals, myth and religion. W.R. Paton, a classical scholar referred to in Chapter 2, provided an emotive description of the fig in his account of the pharmakos phenomenon. This opened a pathway into an engagement with the biology of the fig's fertilisation and its inner biochemical secrets.

The innocence of the pharmakos is again taken seriously as are the elements of its ritual: the beating of the pharmakos with fig branches; the bedecking of the pharmakos with figs; and the ritual food. The intent of the reverie on the fig seeks the place between figs and humans where the imaginary materializes. The quality of innocence is both elusive and fundamental to the reverie. Firstly, having consciousness means that humans know about risk, danger and pain; and when pleasure is missing or unattainable. Damasio spoke of this as a high price.

> ...the cost of a better existence...is the loss of innocence about that existence.[1]

[1] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 316.

Yet innocence has to be re-found to approach the reverie on the fig, as Bachelard advocated in relation to unusual primal images. The fig has been treated as an unusual primal image: its outer form is usual - its inner nature unusual. The gap between human experience and the fig evokes images of fertility and a knowing meeting and mating with strangeness - with the substance of life always living close to death, always preparing the inner substance of seeds.

> In the depths of matter there grows an obscure vegetation: black flowers bloom in matter's darkness. They already possess a velvety touch, a formula for perfume.[2]

The sexuality of the fig is associated with images of unseen blushing, hidden separations, suspended transitions and ingenious crossings of difficult terrain. This is the new place of crossing in the symbol or metaphor of the pharmakos where the goat and fig meet to guard the entrance to the underworld, and the mind slows its narrative to gaze on the genius of the body. The root image of the fig is found in the material imagination of enzymes within the fig and the human body. An orientation to discern, create and experiment in the face of crisis and change – a poetic of the pharmakos - is sensed here.[3]

Enfolded and hidden in the pharmakos is the fig

Figs are fascinating. To explain a fig, one has to make visible what is enfolded and hidden. The fig is an element of the ancient layer of the pharmakos phenomenon in the human psyche. It is as though it shares close confidences with primal human feelings.[4]

> My fascination with figs began with an emotion evoked by the image of the pharmakos being beaten with fig branches. I felt as if I was *being taken in a strange way*. My heart beat faster. I felt pierced through by a strange alert wakefulness – a rising up off the bed – a clarity in which everything around blurs except for the word I had read which opened the

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[2] Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 2.
[3] There are several voices in this chapter. The voice of reverie on the fig is in italics. Personal reflections and quotes from other authors' engagements with the fig are in indented block text. The narrative of the thesis remains in regular typeface.
[4] "Each [element] is profoundly and materially a *system of poetic fidelity*. In exalting them, we may think that we are being faithful to a favorite image; in reality, we are being faithful to a primitive human feeling, to an elemental organic reality, a fundamental oneiric temperament." Bachelard, G. (1983). p. 5.

door to this sense I was experiencing. I was truly awake – both body and soul. My eye focused like a laser beam on the word *pharmakos* and began to penetrate into the world opened up in that moment. My body was ready to enter there. The adrenaline rush took me forward as though to fight but I was alive and going forward to a meeting. I was not fighting or fleeing a threat. This *waking up* continued as I read in more detail of the beating of the pharmakos with fig branches.

The fig suffers from negative associations much in the same manner as the goat. The fig leaf is a coverer of shame. It is associated with the pharmakos-like origin myth of Adam and Eve. Some accounts have it that the fruit eaten in the garden of Eden was actually the fig.[5] *The fig tree was in the garden. What does this mean? The territory to explore now becomes the garden, the fig leaf, its fruit and the fig tree where the images and emotions of the pharmakos symbol composed within the fig are revealed.*

Refreshing figs

The pharmakos ritual was enacted at the Thargelia, which was the festival of the first fruits, held in early summer.[6] Frazer and Harrison both stressed in their accounts of the pharmakos ritual, that the beating of the pharmakos was of paramount importance. The genitalia were beaten seven times. Frazer proposed this ritual as a shadow of earlier fertility rites: the vegetation spirit was being banished as its powers are fading in order that it re-emerge fully potent the next spring; Pan is beaten by hunters returning from any unsuccessful hunt; beating the god would have revived its failing powers.[7]

Knowing now something more of the goat, one might expect that if a goatish spirit is beaten, it will roam. Where did the vegetation spirit, Pan, and the pharmakos go? What source refills potency?

The pharmakos rite exists in one of the most widely known origin stories - that of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden. The fig leaf is an important image in this tradition. Banishment from Paradise was associated with the covering of

[5] Waynesword.palomar.edu/pljune99.htm
[6] Discussed in Chapter 2.
[7] Frazer, J.G. (1922). p. 256.

the genitals by fig leaves. This was said to symbolise shame, always to be visited on humans as an accompaniment to knowledge. This might be regarded as part of Damasio's high price *of human knowing. Yet why should this be so? The goat has demonstrated that departure is not always a thing of punishment. Why stay in a garden? Perhaps the source of refilled potency was not within the Garden of Eden. The domestic nature of a garden may have been a seduction in itself. Fruits are easy to find there and a variety of fruits conveniently arranged there. Is there a form of sterility in a garden?*

Perhaps as Adam and Eve left the garden they embraced the fig leaf in an impulsion of a very different kind - to draw something into their very generative nature.

> I was struck by this thought whilst gazing at an image of Adam in a twelfth century statue found in Notre Dame in the fourteenth century. Adam is holding against his groin a still-growing fig leaf attached to its branch. It appears to me as though he is embracing the fig not in shame but with a confidence and hopefulness. The Eve was too damaged to restore, it was said. So it is not possible to see how the artist imagined her walking beside Adam with a similar outlook on the banishment.

They came into the world we are in, out of the garden - out of a perfect sleepy world into banishment - to find the source of potency. This world of banishment is our world, here and now, in life as it is, not in an hereafter or ideal place outside us but in us, beside us, under us, close to us. What might Adam and Eve have been imbibing in the presence of the fig?

Carl Jung developed a theory of archetypes to deal with questions like these.[8] In his view, there are general structural elements of the human psyche which contain images, beyond experiences of an individual. They are not and have not been conscious. The images closest to these are found in mythological images. This structure he called the collective unconscious and he believed the images

[8] Jung described the mind as containing, among other elements "fantasy pictures of an impersonal nature which cannot be reduced to experiences in the individual's past, and these cannot be explained as something individually acquired. These fantasy pictures undoubtedly have their closest analogies in mythological types. We must, therefore, assume that they correspond to certain *collective* (and not personal) structural elements of the human psyche in general and, like the morphological elements of the human body, are inherited." Palmer, R. In Otto, W. (1965). p. xv. Quoting C.G. Jung and C. Kerenyi, *Essays on a Science of Mythology*.

were inherited in some way, as physical elements of the human body are inherited genetically. What was striking about Jung's idea was that the soul is an inner experience. Jung delved into the inner experience, finding a meeting point within, with images long held in the collective experience of humans.

On the other hand, Walter Otto's approach to the realm of the primaeval preserved the reality of a meeting with an external numinous experience that does not arise from within but evokes great emotion in the moment of meeting. He was always concerned with the imminence of the deity – not its *why* so much as the *whence* and the *how* of its appearance.[9] For Otto, the term *cultus* captured the phenomenon of human correspondence with the deity. *Cultus* as a totality belongs to the "monumental creations of the human spirit."[10] Otto's feeling about the ancient pharmakos ritual dismisses utilitarian views.

> The horrifying pomp of this tragedy, however, demands, as its counterpart, something portentous – a sinister, lofty greatness to whose presence the community responded with such terrible seriousness. There is no name we can give to this dark Being whose giant shadow fell over the habitations of mankind. His myth was the cult practices themselves which created for the destroyer his image in a gruesome drama. But this image would never have been created if he had not been overwhelmingly revealed from a position of immediate imminence. That which appears to our dull, our unimaginative minds as menace and poison of a material nature endowed the great generations of antiquity with a wealth of forms not because they thought about these matters even more superficially and mechanistically than we ourselves do, but rather because this image reared itself up before them as a colossal form which was not to be avoided, and forced them to express their emotion creatively in an awful monumental act.[11]

These experiences are greater than Damasio can account for by consciousness alone - solving the mystery of consciousness is not the same as solving all the

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[9] Palmer, R. In Otto. W. (1965). p. xvii.

[10] It is "one of the great languages with which mankind speaks to the Almighty, speaking to Him for no other reason than that it must." "Every manifestation unlocks the soul of man, and this immediately results in creative activity. Man must give awe to the feeling that has seized him." The language of cultus "testifies that the Almighty is so near that man had to offer his own being as the form in which this proximity could be expressed – an expression that the other languages were called upon to create, from greater distance, through the media of stone, colour, tones and words." Otto, W. (1965). pp. 18-19.

[11] He used the pharmakos ritual as the example by which to articulate his disagreement and passionate feelings about the interpretations of Nilsson, Frazer and Harrison. Otto, W. (1965). p. 40.

mysteries of the mind. [12] The ideas of these scholars open more widely the gap between the fig and humans, to include the possibility of inner and outer experiences which are exquisite, terrifying and mysterious.

The fig tree is an ancient companion of human beings

The fig tree is one of the oldest trees known to man. It belongs to the Moraceae family which consists of about 60 genera and 1000 species.[13] The fig has been found widely spread on the Aegean, Mediterranean and Black Sea coasts, in Marmara and Southeast Anatolia and in the valleys of central Anatolia in Turkey. The Ficus carica L. species has carried most of the important fruiting characteristics among thousands of Ficus species in the tropical and subtropical countries.[14] Ficus carica was native to the Fertile Crescent and first cultivated there.[15] Fruit cultivation seems to have started about 4000BC.[16]

> Plant remains retrieved from archeological excavations indicate that the olive, grape vine, fig, date palm, pomegranate and sycamore fig were the first fruit trees cultivated in the Old World.[17]

Horticulture seems to have started much later in the history of food production than did grain agriculture. By the Bronze Age olives, grapes and figs were important additions to cereals in the eastern Mediterranean. Prior to this time, one assumes that man would have used the wild trees. He would have come and gone between them and his usual places of living, perhaps even lived near these. Diamond observed that if man planted the wild trees in a domestic place, one had to wait for these new trees to become productive. It took at least three years

[12] "Consciousness is an indispensable ingredient of the creative human mind, but it is not all of human mind, and, as I see it, it is not the summit of mental complexity, either. The biological tricks that cause consciousness have powerful consequences, but I see consciousness as an intermediary rather than as the culmination of biological development. Ethics and the law, science and technology, the work of the muses and the milk of human kindness, those are my chosen summits for biology." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 28.
[13] "Important genera are *Ficus* (700 species), *Morus* (mulberry), and *Artocarpus* (breadfruit)." Trease, G. & Evans, W. (1966). p. 367.
[14] Kaynak, L, Gozlekci, S and Ersoy, N. (1998). p. 277.
[15] Aksoy, U. (1998). pp. 25 – 26.
[16] Diamond, J. (1998). p. 124.
[17] Zohary, D. and Hopf, M. (1988). p. 129.

and perhaps a decade to reach full production.[18] The implication follows that man had to have become settled for horticulture to fully develop.

Fig pips - probably charred remains from the actual time they were consumed - have been found in several east Mediterranean Neolithic sites dating from BC 7800.[19] There was a tantalizing report that figs were consumed even earlier than these dates, by the Natufian, hunters and gatherers that occupied Assyria and Mesopotamia. One excavation in Syria on the Euphrates showed evidence that they lived at the site for the major part of the year except when journeying to hunt for gazelle.[20] When they dated the charcoal found on this site – it spanned the years 11,000 to 9,500 BC – well into Upper Palaeolithic times.

> The food residue revealed that the Natufians used sickles of carved deer antler studded with flakes of flint to harvest the natural stands of native wheat and rye. They reaped wild barley, lentil, and vetch, and the fruit of the hackberry, plum, pear, and fig tree, as well as the caper bush.[21]

This was in the period of warming after the Ice Age which included a brief shift back to near-glacial conditions from 10,500 to 9,400BC. During this refreezing, their diet changed drastically and abruptly. The fruit trees of the neighbouring forest retreated beyond the gathering range of the villagers. The dying of the woodland became apparent in the evidence of a sharply increased diet of cereals, grains, and grasses which eventually also disappeared as the climate changed.[22]

So it is clear that figs are one of man's oldest companions from Palaeolithic times and perhaps even since Homo sapiens evolved. Figs came and went in their own way with the climate. They survived. But the fig's disappearance was

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[18] Diamond, J. (1998). p. 124.
[19] "such as early Neolithic (7800 – 6600 BC) Tell Aswad, Syria, PPNA (c. 7000 BC) Jericho, ceramic Neolitihic, Dhali Aridhi, Cyprus, and Neolithic Sesklo in Greece. Fig pips are also recorded from Bronze Age in Vallegio, north Italy. It is impossible to distinguish between pips of wild and cultivated figs; and the excavated material can be interpreted as either." The authors assumed the pips were from the wild, as they found it difficult to assume that fig was domesticated earlier than its two horticultural companions – the olive and grape vine. Zohary, D. and Hopf, M. (1988). p. 144.
[20] Ryan, W. and Pitman, W. (1998). pp. 172- 173.
[21] Ryan, W. and Pitman, W. (1998). p. 173.
[22] Ryan, W. and Pitman, W. (1998). pp. 173-174.

part of a slowly developing catastrophe for the Natufians. The pharmakos of the ritual might have gone seeking the fig to invite it back.

The fig, the grape, sycamore fig and pomegranate were easily invited into human cultivation because they could be multiplied simply by taking cuttings. Zohary and Hopf explained that this has prevented genetic segregation and it *fixed* the desired types of tree – those with large, sweet and prolific fruit. This has meant, though, that these fruit trees in the five or six millennia since their cultivation have undergone very few sexual cycles. This shift to vegetative propagation eventually resulted in serious limitations on fruiting. The act of artificial fertilisation became crucial to the continued availability of efficient food production– and hence to the continued life of the settled community. In the case of the fig, this was resolved partly by unconscious selection that resulted in fruit that matures without fertilization and partly through the introduction of artificial fertilisation.[23]

It is as if humans have had to sterilise the fig to get it to serve us – to feed us – and to stay in close proximity. There is a form of sterility in a garden.

According to Zohary and Hopf, the cultivated fig tree was not so far removed in form, in climatic requirements or in tight genetic interconnectedness, from wild and weedy forms found widely spread across the Mediterranean basin. These wild or spontaneous figs are regarded as the wild progenitor of the cultivated fig tree. The wild forms

> occupy rock crevices, gorges, stream sides, and similar primary habitats. The Levant and the Aegean areas are quite rich in such wild forms. They are often complemented by a wide range of feral types occupying secondary, man-made habitats such as edges of plantations, terrace walls in cultivation, ruins, collapsed cisterns, cave entrances, etc. Frequently these ' weedy' types seem to be derived from seed produced by local cultivated clones which were pollinated by the adjacent wild-growing caprifigs.[24]

The weedy figs have broken out of cultivation by man, left the orchard and the garden to occupy the no-man's-land between cultivation and the wild. They will

[23] Zohary, D. and Hopf, M. (1988). p. 130.
[24] Zohary, D. and Hopf, M. (1988). p. 143.

not be held in a garden. They escape to fertilise themselves and explore the grey and abandoned areas. Is there perhaps a feral fig man in the ritual of the pharmakos?

The common *Ficus carica* has mythical significance. Hades, the god of the underworld, abducted Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, from a place called Nysa, in the region of Caria.[25] The most common fig cultivated today – *Ficus carica* came from this region.[26] After taking Persephone on a tour of the world, Hades took her back into his subterranean world

> by the river at Kephisos near Eleusis. It was called Erineos after a wild fig tree (*erineos)* which stood nearby. In general there was a close tie between the wild fig tree and the subterranean Dionysos: his mask was cut from its wood in Naxos. To this day the Greeks have a superstitious fear of sleeping under a fig tree. A wild fig tree designated the entrance to the underworld in places other than Eleusis.[27]

Ancient reverence for the fig surrounded a belief that "a priestess could tame and lead to the sacrificial altar any bull, no matter how wild, simply by tying a branch of the wild fig about his neck."[28]

> In Latium, female slaves were, on July 7, given special liberties. They dressed as free women, feasted under wild fig trees, beat each other with fig-tree rods, and made offerings of the milky fig juice to Juno Caprotina, goddess of the wild fig tree.[29]

An ancient legend had it that, close to the beginning of time, Ge and her son Sykeus were pursued by Zeus in the war of the Titans. She, in order to save her son as he was struck by Zeus' lightning, took him into her castle and metamorphosed him into a fig tree – or said in another way – "caused a fig tree to spring up in which he could live again."[30]

> The fig fruit is mentioned as a sacred fruit in all of the holy books. In the Bible, it is generally referred to as a tree in the Garden of Eden. It is a traditional food in the Jewish

[25] "There is a city in Asia Minor by the name of Nysa - a later Greek colony formed in Caria of three smaller cities." Kerenyi, C. (1967). p 34.
[26] "The name *carica* comes from Caria in Asia Minor where in ancient times there were grown excellent dried figs corresponding to Smyrna figs of the present day." Condit, I. (1947). p. 18.
[27] Kerenyi, C. (1967). pp. 35-36.
[28] Condit, I. (1947). p. 1.
[29] Condit, I. (1947). p. 2.
[30] Condit, I. (1947). p. 1.

> Passover celebration. In the Koran, Mohammed mentions that if he has to make a choice it would be the fig tree that would be brought to Heaven. Siddharta Gautama received the revelation that formed the basis of Buddhism while sitting under a fig tree. In all the great cultures and religions, the fig tree is used as a symbol.[31]

The fig has long witnessed human society and vice versa. Living again, sustenance and fertility are strong in the stories of meetings between man and the fig. What about the fig leaf then? The leaf creates the axil – the position of the potential fertility and generativity – and it arises from scarring.

> The majority of *Ficus* species produce their syconia in the axils of leaves of the current season or in the axils of leaf scars of the previous season's growth.[32]

The surface of the fig leaf may be smooth or hairy. Hairs are especially present on the lower side. There are special structures in the leaf for secreting water.

> The scabrid condition of some fig leaves is so pronounced that they are actually used as substitutes for sandpaper.[33]

One botanist described his pleasure in looking at the scurf on some leaf species:

> I find pleasure in looking at the under surface of leaves through a pocket lens- a tessellated pavement, it seems, of warm brown blocks outlined in green.[34]

Perhaps it is not so difficult to envisage Adam embracing the fig leaf, to feel the rough strength of its embrace, imbibing its liquid and the assurance of its generative nature.

Figs associate the pharmakos with fertility

Why was the pharmakos bedecked with figs in particular? They were hung around the neck – black figs for men and white figs for women. The pharmakoi were beaten with fig branches and squills and burnt on a pyre of their wood.

Although the fragmentary sources of the ritual came from its enactment in cities (Athens and Marseilles in particular), Martin Nilsson firmly established the

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[31] Alsoy, U. (1998). p. 2.
[32] Condit, I. (1969). p. 9.
[33] Condit, I. (1969). p. 31.
[34] Condit, I. (1969). p. 31.

ritual as an agrarian custom.[35] The Thargelia was an Attic name for a festival of first fruits held a little before harvest time. The loaf, baked from new corn, was called a *thargelos*. It was also said that *thargela* were

> fruits of all kinds which were cooked together and carried around as offerings of first fruits to the gods.[36]

The Greeks themselves believed that the aim of the offering of the first fruits was the promotion of fertility.[37] Nilsson also connected the festival of fruit gathering and the Thargelia with Dionysos, whose gift to mankind was the fig,[38]and the May bough or *eiresione*.[39] The merry rural festivals of Dionysos were full of jokes and songs by those carrying the phalli.[40] The bucholiasts, in ancient Sicilian customs, went around with a sack of fruit of all kinds and a skin of wine, which they strewed on peoples' doorsteps, singing

> "Take the good luck, take the health-bread which we bring from the goddess."[41]

It was W.R. Paton, a classical scholar interested in the derivation of Greek words, who gave a signpost, in his paper of 1907 to the meaning of the figs in the actions of the ritual. He argued that the practice of caprification was the real significance of the pharmakos beating and he took a firmer line on the pharmakos as fertility rite.[42] Paton thought the significance of the figs in the ceremony came from an ancient practice of Greek farmers in which the black wild figs were hung over the branches of the white domestic figs.[43] This was to cross-fertilise the fig, and is called *caprification*. His classical sources confirmed that it was commonly performed in ancient Greece and apparently in

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[35] Nilsson, M. (1940). pp. 22–41.
[36] Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 29.
[37] Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 29.
[38] Names associated with Dionysos as fig are from Laconia and Naxos. Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 35.
[39] The *eiresione* is described "in a popular song as a branch with leaves hung with figs, loaves, and cups of honey, wine,and oil." Boys who carried the *eiresione* on Samos sang the following song: "We come…to the house of a rich man. Let the doors be opened, for Wealth enters, and with him Joy and Peace. Let the jars always be filled and let a high cap rise in the kneading dough. Let the son of the house marry and the daughter weave a precious web." Nilsson, M. (1940). pp. 36-37.
[40] They are lost by the time of Plutarch "who complains that these simple and merry festivals have been ousted by the luxurious life of his times." Nilsson, M. (1940). p 36.
[41] Nilsson, M. (1940). p. 30. The goddess who came to be associated with this old practice was Artemis.
[42] In postscript, both Frazer and Harrison agreed with him (in later editions of their books), but did not elaborate. This line seems to have been abandoned.
[43] Paton, W.R. (1907). pp. 51 – 57.

Palestine. He located the practice in the month of June, the name of the month itself being derived from the Greek word for *caprificus*.[44]

An Athenian legend credits Demeter with the gift of the fig:

> this she did as a reward to King Phytalus for receiving her into his house. Later a fig tree stood by the grave of Phytalus on the Sacred Way from Athens to Eleusis, and the whole place, a suburb of Athens, was called "Holy Fig Tree."[45]

The fig was a presence in cult observance in these times. Reinach, a classical scholar contemporary with Paton and Harrison, thought that in the cult of the Phytalides the priest would have been called the *sycophant*.[46] He and Paton conjectured that there were, at some time, rival and perhaps older mysteries to those of Eleusis in which the celebrant, the *sycophant,* exhibited a fig.[47] It was described by the devotees in terms Paton translated as *pudendum muliebre* – female genitalia – which was a meaning still surviving in his time in Turkey in 1907.[48]

In Paton's account, the fig has a place of honour among fruits of the earth and was a gift of Demeter, as was corn "and the procession to Eleusis passed and paused at a holy fig-tree."[49] The Athenians honoured the fig with a name that

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[44] By comparison, the name for the month of May, in which the corn harvest occurred, was derived from the Greek for corn. This placed it even more securely than Nilsson's deductions as an important place in "the hierarchy of agricultural operations in Greece and the fig districts of Asia-Minor." Paton, W.R. (1907). p. 51.

[45] Condit, I (1947). p. 1.

[46] The word *sycophant* means literally to show the fig but only vague explanations remain of its origin. It is said that during a dearth of figs in Attica, figs were stolen from trees sacred to the gods; later, certain persons revealed the figs and accused the robbers; hence the name "sycophant." Coleridge used it in its original form to mean " a wretch who flatters the prevailing party by informing against his neighbours under the pretense that they are exporters of figs or fancies" and apparently 'Solon allowed only olive oil to be sold abroad; therefore one cannot ignore those who say that the one who showed up or pointed out such exporters was called a sycophant.' Condit, I. (1947). pp. 4-5.

[47] "At the close of the Eleusinian mysteries the priest probably denounced the impure and the guilty or incited the crowd to denounce them. Hence the name "sycophant", religious denunciator who presided at the mysteries of the fig, was retained in popular language, where it designated an accuser who made his accusation publicly. The cult of the fig degenerated in early times so that the sycophant once respected and feared, came to be a cheap charlatan; thus the modern use of the word." Condit, I. (1947). p. 1. quoting Reinach (also cited by Paton).

[48] Paton, W.R. (1907). p. 52. *Figa* in Italian is a slang term for womens' genitalia. An Italian fig, though, is a poisoned fig – meant to invisibly carry death to an adversary - according to the Oxford Shorter English Dictionary.

[49] Paton, W.R. (1907). p. 52.

indicated it was the first cultivated plant, and in the *eiresione* song it is mentioned first in the list of cereal fruits.[50]

Paton wrote of the pharmakos ritual as a symbol of the process of human fertilization. What Paton actually said of the ritual is reproduced at length to appreciate the images of the ritual as fertile in association, sitting alongside those of pollution, already established.

> The wild fig, although this is not a physiological fact, was regarded as the male tree, the cultivated fig as the female, and the act of caprification, therefore, as the sexual union or marriage of the two....
>
> The ceremony of the *Pharmakoi* was performed in Thargelion, that is about a month before the operation of caprification and at the season when male figs, which mature before the female, are developing. The rite is as follows. Two victims, either a man and a woman, or two men, one of whom represents a woman, are led out of the town wearing necklaces of dried figs, and as is evident from the manner in which they were subsequently treated, *nothing else*. This suggests at once the method in which the caprification is carried out, the male figs being strung on rushes and these strings thrown on the female trees. Helladius, to whom we owe this statement, tells us that the male *Pharmakoi* wore black figs, the female white.... The victims were given cheese and barley-cake to eat. As regards the former, it is highly probable that it was cheese coagulated by the use of the juice of the unripe fig in place of rennet, the primitive way of making cheese alluded to by Homer.[51]

Paton researched the Greek name given to the cheese. He found that it was related to a word given to the pharmakoi which meant "eater of fig-juice cheese."[52] Paton also interpreted the beating "on the parts of generation" as promoting fertility.

> If there was not (and we have no complete accounts) as in other agricultural rites, a mock marriage of the *Pharmakoi*, they must at least have been regarded as man and wife, and the design of the rite was, if I am not mistaken, to make the subsequent marriage of the male

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[50] Paton, W.R. (1907). p. 52.
[51] Paton, W.R. (1907). pp. 52-53. Kate Llewellyn a modern Australian poet was captured by this :
"the white sap
from the stem
turns milk sour
and that you see
is how Adam and Eve
...made junket" Llewellyn, K. (1990). p. 14.
[52] Paton, W.R. (1907). pp. 52-53.

> and female fig-trees a success – to render the male figs more fertilising, the female trees more receptive of fertilisation.[53]

Paton pointed out how easy it is to view the ritual of such a ceremony as cathartic. The leading out becomes a driving out; the scourging is regarded as punitive; the beating with bulbous plants, such as squills, associates their common use with the magic cleansing of evil; the casting of the ashes to the winds is seen as riddance.

Before this thesis passes through the gap opened by Paton into the fertility of the fig more substantially, his comments on the ritual in relation to Adam and Eve are worthy of attention.

> Is not the story of Adam and Eve, condemned to *immediate* death (for that is the sentence '*on the day* ye eat of it ye shall die') and driven out of Paradise *naked but with aprons of fig-leaves over their parts of generation*, a trace of existence among the Jews of a fig-ceremony analogous to that of the *Pharmakoi*?
>
> ...The whole story of the Fall is...evidently not a story concerning the first parents of mankind....This was a Folk-tale (probably moralising) incorporating several elements of primitive superstition and ritual, not *per se* connected. One was the role of the snake, another the eating a tabooed fruit and the consequent penalty of instant death....The third was a ceremony similar to that of the *Pharmakoi*. In the original story the delinquents were duly burnt. All that survives of this *denoument* is 1. The angel's flaming sword; 2. The teaching of the Christian Church that all Adam and Eve's B.C. descendants were and are burnt in Hell, and 3. (the most serious) the horrible burnings of the Inquisition.[54]

Here, as substantial criticism, are images of the bite in which the negative preoccupation with the pharmakos ritual has held culture. The literal human practices in the recent two thousand years or so, are starkly accusing in Paton's words. The negative and sterilising covering of the ritual, in its scapegoat aspect and its retelling as myth, has been penetrated. There is an opportunity to revisit the ritual with another intention: to appreciate and feel the connection with the fig as an age-old companion in reality and myth; and how its remarkable biology materialises in human psychological experience.

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[53] Paton, W.R. (1907), pp. 52-53.
[54] Paton, W.R. (1907). pp. 55-56.

Images within fertile figs

Caprification is an important secret in the remarkable process of fertilization in figs. Farmers for centuries have had to bring the wild fig to the domestic fig – or it would not produce fruit. The fig buds aborted without the wild male. The fruit, as seen above, *magically* over the thousands of years of domestication, managed to produce fruit virgin-like – without fertilization. This is called parthenocarpy. But one can't dry parthenocarpic fruit as successfully as the cross-fertilised varieties and, although the *virgin birth* genotypes are today commercially preferred and selected for home plantings, the cultivator nursery must maintain a wild caprifig to produce new stock. Hidden away from the sight and understanding of many who now love figs, is the pollinating, revitalising source of potency.

The definition of the word *caprification* leaves tantalizing questions in its derivation.[55] Where does the word come from? *Ficus* is known as a species of Moracea trees. But *capri* – why is this in the word? It is implied in the horticultural sense that it signifies *wild.* The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* gives the derivation as *caper + ficus* and the meaning as the wild fig tree or the fruit of this tree, a wild fig. *Caper* is given as a he-goat or billy goat. *Ficus* is a loan word in Latin from an unknown language. It is *sukon* in Greek and has a Boetian equivalent. [56]

Caprificus *is then literally a goat-fig. The goat and the fig are naturally connected in the ritual cheese, probably made with goats' milk, and the name* caprifig. *A psychological link between* capri *and* ficus *lives in Pan who lives in*

> ..dells, grottos, water, woods and wilds – never villages, never the tilled and walled settlements of the civilized; cavern sanctuaries, not constructed temples.[57]

Pan as a caprifig, a feral fig man, embodies the fig in the wild and the unknown.

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[55] The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary: Caprification: n E17 [L caprification(n-), f. caprificat – pa. ppl stem of caprificare, f. caprificus wild fig tree} 1 A process of ripening figs by means of punctures produced on the fruit by the action of insects or artificially. E17. 2 Artificial fertilization. M19

[56] Glare, P.G.W. (Ed.). (1982). pp. 272, 269 and 696 respectively.

[57] Hillman, J. (1972). p 20.

What is known in modern agricultural practice about caprification that will throw light on the space between the wild and the domestic, and between the reality of the fig and human experience of the fig?

The mating process within the fig occurs across immense gaps with significant pausing and phases out of synchronisation. It cooperates with another life form, the wasp, in this process. Figs produce two well-separated crops.

> The fig species is funtionally dioecious. The male fig or caprifig ensures pollen production but also the survival of the mutalistic pollinating wasp, *Blastophaga psenes L.* The wasp only breeds in male figs. In southern France [for example], the female trees or domestic figs produce figs which are pollinated in July and ripen in autumn (undelayed edible figs). Some terminal fig buds do not develop during the summer and only start development the next spring. On some genotypes these figs manage to reach receptivity in May, but they cannot be pollinated because male figs produce no pollen at that period. These figs may however develop parthenocarpically on appropriate genotypes and give ripe figs in July. They constitute the first crop. Hence there is a gap between the ripening of the first and second crop.[58]

Here is an intriguing and important gap. A dormancy is built into the fig's fertility – an overwintering pausing – a hibernation of the forming fruit and of the larvae of the wasp within. The larvae will become the grown wasp covered with pollen and will pierce and pollinate the female fruit.

> On caprifigs, the fig buds appear progressively at each node along the current years' shoot growth. The first ones to develop become receptive at the beginning of August and will harbor the over-wintering wasp larvae (mamme). The fig buds of the upper part of the years growth will overwinter as buds and only become receptive the following year in May (profichi). On a caprifig branch, in September/October, one can observe mamme scars, where mamme have aborted, and profichi buds.[59]

The two genders of the fig are in separated locations. The relationship of the male and female figs and the wasp in this fertilizing process is reminiscent of an image of a gap between the physiological structures in the brain involved in human consciousness described by Damasio.

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[58] Khadari, S., Lauri, P.E., Kjellberg,F., Villemur,P. (1998). p. 103.
[59] Khadari et al. (1998). p. 104.

In evolutionary terms, the anatomical structures responsible for homeostasis are the most ancient in the nervous system.[60] *This ancient machinery of consciousness, the coordinating centre of automatic homeostasis, is separated from but closely situated in the human brain to the more recently evolved coordinating centre of all mind images and emotions. The processes of core consciousness, the self in the act of knowing, involve activity in both these areas, but it is not known how they interrelate. Somehow the elements of these processes meet across this gap, just as the wasp carries the mating elements of the fig between each fruit, whilst conducting its own business.*

It made sense to Damasio that these areas should be anatomically contiguous and interrelated – though precisely how is not known – and he proposed that they are also responsible for the construction of core consciousness.[61] The difference, as Damasio might see it, between figs and human organisms is that in processing objects, humans have emotion and know they are having it. Further attention can be enhanced and focused, or not, under the direction of that emotion.[62]

If humans have the means of growing a fertile conscious psychology, and it seems that we can,[63] *then it can be influenced by images of the remarkable micro-level functioning of the fig. Material imagination takes us close to the ancient structures and memories of fertility. Perhaps the memory of our transition states in the development of elemental new functions remains within us, but deeply buried. It sends neural patterns and emotion, though, to remind*

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[60] "The neural pattern which underlies core consciousness for an object – the sense of self in the act of knowing a particular thing – is…a large-scale neural pattern involving activity in two interrelated sets of structures: the set whose cross- regional activity generates proto-self and second-order maps [the accounts of the organism-object relationship], and the set whose cross-regional activity generates the representation of the object. There is a remarkable overlap of biological functions within the structures which support the proto-self and the second-order mappings. Taken individually, these structures are involved in most of the following five functions: (1) regulating homeostasis and signaling body structure and state, including the processing of signals related to pain, pleasure and drives; (2) participating in the processes of emotion and feeling; (3) participating in the processes of attention; (4) participating in the processes of wakefulness and sleep; (5) participating in the learning process." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 272.

[61] Damasio, A. (2000). p. 273.

[62] "since it provides an automated signal about the organism's past experience with given objects and this provides a basis for assigning or withholding attention" to that object . Damasio, A. (2000). p. 273.

[63] These feats of core consciousness, "modest in comparison to the astounding feature of extended consciousness…that allowed memory" enabled humans to establish an autobiographical record, a broad record of other facts and bestowed "the holding power of working memory." Damasio, A. (2000). p. 276.

us that we are always in such a transition state. So in material imagination of the fig, we can process the fig and we know that we are having emotion whilst doing so and direct attention to the gap and the fertility in its remarkable biology. We can attend to a gap in the structures of the human mind and imagine it as an opportunity to be fertile of oneself in the gap.

This system is full of trust and experimentation. The wasp is flying wherever it can to find an ostiole, an opening.

Stimulating the ovaries of consciousness

Knowledge of the secret hidden business of fertility in figs was gradually forgotten in the last 2000 years it would seem, although it was known and recorded in Ancient Greece. In the early 1900s, an American horticulturalist rediscovered caprification whilst researching figs to begin an industry in the US. He went to Turkey and worked with fig cultivators to learn these practices. His description exhibits his enthusiasm and passion for rediscovering the secrets of the fig in the New World, and for confronting the ignorance and certainty of his fellow horticulturalists.

> This is the important function in connection with the production of the Smyrna Fig, as it is now generally conceded that no Smyrna Fig can be produced except by caprification. Not over five years ago, it was derided by horticulturalists, and the inclination to ridicule the whole subject was general. That caprification was known and practised for several thousand years is evidenced by the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus, the latter for the first time having noted that all sorts of figs do not require caprification. To all outward appearances, the fig tree, unlike other trees, develops fruit without producing flowers. These appearances are misleading, however, for on cutting the fig open, it will be found that it contains a large quantity of inconspicuous flowers, closely grouped around the rind, which is really the receptacle for them.[64]

[64] Roeding, G.C. (1903). p. 72.

Female flowers must be pollinated to form and perfect the fruit in the Smyrna fig, the variety considered to produce excellent fruit and used to produce dried figs for food, pharmaceutical and other uses.[65]

Within this process, hidden and enfolded, is a real secret of figs. The syconium is what is unique to the fig species. The syconium is the folding of a membrane into itself - like the lyre turned into itself from Apollo's bow.[66] *It is called a cymose influorescence. The term* cymose influorescence *is an intriguing and poetic phrase.*[67]

> the fruit is produced by the union of the cymose inflorescence to form a hollow, fleshy axis bearing the flowers on its inner surface. The young fruit is rich in latex but when mature no latex is found and the fleshy axis contains much sugar.[68]

A modern botanist was moved by the wonder of the fig (*Ficus pumila)* as he examined its interior:

> "While you have it open, notice the remarkable flowers, myriads of them rosily lining the baglike body we call a 'fig'; flowers that are born(e) literally to blush unseen."[69]

As was another:

> The fig is made by the widening of the influorescence stalk and the arching-over and contraction of the edge until a cup or vase is formed, with a narrow mouth, like a hollow pear, and the flowers line the inside of the vase. A fig is thus a head of flowers turned outside-in; it is not a flower itself, but a cluster of flowers within a vase."[70]

This beautiful image is evocative of the uterus and the process of preparation for ovulation and implantation – always getting ready – but there is a narrow time frame in which the readiness is ripe for fertilization.[71]

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[65] Roeding, G.C. (1903). p. 72.
[66] This description was given in Chapter 2. Apollo shoots the arrows of plague and heals plagues while playing his stringed lyre-like instrument. Heraclitus 'articulated the unity of the bow and lyre as a fitting together turned back on itself.'
[67] It is an in-flowering in the unopened head of a plant with single flowers developing first followed by flowers from other secondary structures developing later. Shorter Oxford English Dictionary.
[68] Trease G.E. and Evans, W.C. (1966). p. 367.
[69] Condit, I. (1969). p. 1.
[70] Condit, I. (1969). pp. 4-5, quoting Corner.
[71] I saw once a great image on a rural property of a ripe fig glistening in the light on a summer night, pierced by the beak of a bird. It was open – opened - and the juices slowly dripping – if only at that moment there had been another open fig to drip into.

There are even more mysteries, hidden internal gaps and differences retained in the flowers of figs.

> There are four distinct kinds of flowers found in figs, namely, male, female, gall and mule flowers. Male flowers are found only in the Capri Fig, and are particularly abundant in the Profichi or Spring crop. Female flowers are found in the Smyrna, or edible figs, and in a limited number in the Mammoni, or Summer crop of Capri figs. Gall flowers are found only in the Capri Fig, and are present in all the crops, Profichi, Mammoni, late Mammoni and Mamme. It is in these flowers that the Blastophaga develops and propagates its species. Mule flowers, or rather mal-formed female flowers, are found in the Adriatic type of figs, and are present in the Breba, or first crop of Smyrna Figs.[72]

The possibility in the psychological rhythm of humans and the biological rhythm of figs is intriguing: male and female trees (for all practical purposes); male and female flowers; gall flowers and mule flowers (fertile and non fertile flowers). These elements of fertility are out of rhythm with each other. There are gaps of time and space.

Associating the images of our psyche and the fig's fertility facilitates an attitude of opening, mating and courage to consider preparing the complex resource of consciousness for facing a meeting in the manner that a fig does. The transfer requires a wasp, an insect, another species – a third party – to ensure its cross fertilization. The fig has gone to a great deal of trouble to nurture this creature. The male wasps never leave the mamme fig. They are born, oviposit and die within the gall fig – or profichi. They are never seen, unless one gazes into the profichi, just as the processes of homeostasis are never seen, unless one has the orientation or imagination to gaze in one's proto-self. The fig meets strangeness and embraces it into the core of its generativity. The wild and the unknown are always present.

The female wasps climb out of their larval protection and climb around the inside of the fig which is full of mature male flowers with pollen on their stamens. Covered with this, they pierce through the covering – the clothes of the fig. They emerge into the world and take flight with their amber-coloured wings

[72] Roeding, G.C. (1903). p. 72.

and their load of sticky pollen. Their shape is out of shape with the pollen. Their own form is hard to see when one looks at a photograph. They fly to find a fig they can enter – one that is mature enough. They break through the scale covering up its ostiole and enter the umbilicus and ostiole - the entrance and exit of the fertility chamber – the vagina of the fig.[73] *They find one of two possibilities. They may find a mamme fig on the male tree which has gall flowers ready to receive the wasp egg and which will then close itself tight and grow to nurture these larvae and overwinter them. A pregnancy on a male tree! They may fly to a female tree - figs with only female flowers. The stamens are too long to allow the wasp to oviposit for its own reproduction but they thirstily adsorb the male pollen from the wasp as it crawls through the syconium searching for a place to lay its eggs.*

Why do some mamme abort? Ovaries develop when a pollinator arrives – a preparation for a meeting is stimulated and made with care. [74] *An idea, difference, strangeness can in this way stimulate a core fertility in consciousness which is as powerful as the trigger to its banishment, or its abortion, as an irritant threat. This orientation to fertility permeates our cohabitation with the fig.*

Looked at from a distance, none of the micro movements of ovary development is seen. One sees the boundary of the fig and its stability in form, taste and reappearance each year. But inside that boundary, a rich interaction of differences make up the life of the fig, its survival and evolution. It is in the micro that an image useful to the psyche in the response to history and destabilizing change can be found. And in the micro is found the very body processes that create our own surviving stability. Stability is only gained with

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[73] "[There are]...the two parts of the orifice, the umbilicus referring to the outer opening visible at the surface, and the ostiole to that part lined with scales leading to the interior." Condit, I. (1969). p. 5.

[74] "Observations inside the mamme figs allowed us to determine different stages of development. The fig is abortive when the ovary development is not initiated. It becomes externally yellowish and tends to abscise. When the female flowers are pollinated to receive a pollinator egg, development of the ovaries is initiated. During the development the ovaries progressively shift from whitish (beginning of development) to brownish (late in development) and finally blackish (last stage of development). At maturity, the fig enlarges and the ostiole opens up. The amber coloured, apterous male *Blastophaga* can often be observed within the ripe fig. From the brownish stage onward, seeds can readily be recognized. They are often present and some mamme contain only seeds." Khadari et al. (1998). p. 105.

the effort of embracing the swings of life and death change, and the cooperation of different elements of life.

Damasio makes an analogy for this process within the human organism:

> If you were to look closely inside the boundary, life consists of one big change after another, an agitated sea with one high swelling wave following another. But if you look from a distance, the changes smooth out, like when a choppy ocean becomes a glassy surface seen from a plane high in the sky. And if you remove yourself even farther and look simultaneously at the whole cell and at its environment, you will see that against the upheavals of the surroundings, life inside the cell is now largely stability and sameness.[75]

Culture might work similarly. Yamaguchi captured something of this in his study of Japanese culture in the mythology and practices of the wandering musicians in Japan referred to in Chapter 7.[76] *The community's stimuli for change, the musicians, oviposit and then are banished. They wander and the fertile seed they left grows change in the community which could not incorporate them directly in its substance. This mating with strangeness profits from, even creates, a gap between the stages of development, of reflection and imagination within the life of the musicians and within community life. But its life is dependent on the cross-fertilisation. Thus, in seeking a poetics of Girard's scapegoat, Yamaguchi called the scapegoat's death, its most brilliant moment.*

In the drama of the meeting of the pollens, many wasps never find a place to reproduce themselves. They may find a fig and enter it before it is mature. Even if mature, it dies trying to find a flower to oviposit.[77]

Hidden entrances to the underworld

The chthonic world was the home of the festival of the pharmakos ritual. The fig is at home in this world. The hidden, dark nature of fig fertility also characterises the fig tree's roots. The fig tree has a habit of searching for water

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[75] Damasio, A. (2000). pp. 137-138.
[76] Yamaguchi, M. (1987). pp. 179 –191.
[77] "once having entered a fig, the wasp-pollinator never leaves it and soon dies." Condit, I. (1969). p. 2.

and dark places to put its roots into. It seems to thrive on searching out tiny cracks and entrances where none seem to exist. It seems to pour itself into rocks and caves and over fences and uneven landscape searching out nutrients as one has to do in a crisis or where one cannot make head or tail of a complex situation. It seems fitting that the fig tree is seen to guard the entrance to the underworld and that there are older associations with Eleusis lying in its roots.[78] *In the underworld many secrets of fertility are alive. To glimpse them one must enter.*

It was near Eleusis that Hades took Persephone back into the earth. The fig hovers around Eleusis and its enactment of the mysteries of life, its loss and re-creation. On the first day of the Mysteries, during the festival of Eleusis, the procession carrying sacred phallic objects stops by the sacred fig tree, where the objects are moved from one basket into a smaller one and then returned. It is said that this commemorates the underworld marriage at the place where the chariot entered the earth.

It appears that when Persephone was abducted by Hades and taken into the underworld, a shepherd was watching, and it is he who shepherds visitors through the entrance. Kerenyi left some clues to the significance of the shepherd the guard to the underworld. The shepherd was Euboleus.[79] He was guarding his animals when "the earth was cleft asunder and the path to the underworld opened,"[80] and Hades emerged to abduct Persephone. It was he who later showed Demeter the way into the underworld in her search for her daughter. Kerenyi showed that Euboleus, "radiant but disclosing a strange inner darkness,"[81] is the double and servant to Hades. He is the agent of, porter to and embodies other aspects of Hades. There was a scene unearthed in a temple of Persephone which showed

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[78] As established earlier by Reinach and Paton.
[79] One of the sons of Dysaules and Baubo, "a crude primordial man and his uncouth wife." Kerenyi, C. (1967). p. 171.
[80] Kerenyi, C. (1967). p. 171.
[81] Kerenyi, C. (1967). p. 172.

> ...a strange and puzzling variation of the abduction of Persephone, which no mythological tradition seems to account for. The bearded god of the underworld is already present, but the Divine Maiden is carried away, for his benefit, by another, younger god, who lifts her into the chariot and drives her to the marriage.[82]

This, as Kerenyi saw it, is the secret service of Euboleus – a secret of good counsel (the meaning of his name) for the perfection of the world – to be the conduit to the edge of the underworld. The service is performed in order that men might die more confidently after having lived better and that "men should *know* about the happy marriage of the ravished Maiden." This was the knowledge transmitted to the participants in the Eleusinian Mysteries – "a vision of the innermost 'divine maiden' of men and women."[83]

The significance of the fertilising in this story, from the point of view of the pharmakos phenomenon, is not only the marriage of Persephone – a flowering in dark matter like the fig and borne by the waspish Euboleus to the fertile chamber. It is also that Demeter had to let go of her daughter. Part of fertility is losing the orientation to ownership of one's child, one's idea, one's analysis and so on. In this view, the most fertile moment occurs when Demeter accepts that she cannot control the mating of her genetic offspring – her genetic offscouring. The seed is broadcast, given, allowed to mate with whatever it will, even an underworld monster. This is the significance of the story, from a pharmakos perspective, not the creating of crops after Persephone was restored to her. She can now create because she is fertile in her loss. *In this mindset, one feels the horror of change over which one has no control, but feels in those moments the experimentations of life that may become new species in form and force long hence. One's fertile elements might mate with anything.*

By creating an image of the gap in the brain between the ancient triggers of homeostasis and the complex processes of extended consciousness, one can imagine into this gap to break down literal images of owning any other person, heritage or culture. Fertility then would be dissolving the literalising of

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[82] Kerenyi, C. (1967). p. 173.
[83] Kerenyi, C. (1967). p. 174.

emotions and convictions felt in the images which arise, when one is in the grip of the scapegoat aspect of the pharmakos.

The machines of life in the inner world

The cellular level of the fig is a good place to return to draw this story to a close. An enzyme called ficin is produced in the fig. It is a powerful dissolver of tissue.[84] *It was the ficin in fig juice which curdled goats' milk to make cheese – the ritual cheese of the pharmakos. Perhaps in the house of Phytalus, Demeter felt the enzyme of the fig begin to work on the dead tissue of her grief for Persephone. In the underworld, the flesh of Inana, the Queen of Heaven in Sumerian myth, is dissolving as she hangs on meathooks in the cavern of her sister, Erishkegal, Queen of the Underworld.*[85] *Perhaps also the fig tree oozes ficin through its deep root structure into the cavern to assist with the decay. Inana is dissolving into her elemental parts which may meet anew to create anything. Much modern imagery senses the substance of the fig. In Arnold Zables' short story, a woman dying in hospital wants to go home to die so she can watch the fig tree in her garden from her bed, and be buried under it.*[86]

In *The World beyond the fig*, M.C. Cronin writes about dying in the fig, buried in the sugar flesh and ends with the words

> that woman did whisper just before
> dying in that soft dark heart, her
> mouth and fingers full of its stickiness;
> *children, my daughters at least,*
> *who will leave here, take the*
> *spores of the tree with you.*
> *A place to be born as well as a place to die.*[87]

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[84] Ficin was used in dentistry to dissolve necrotic tissue. Trease, G. E. and Evans, W. C. (1966). p. 220. It was also used to treat burned human skin. An ideal enzyme was considered one that would remove the dead tissue in 48 hours to allow skin grafts. Ficin literally dissolved away the damaged skin within three to five days. It worked best on the most severe burns. Enzyme aids healing. (1957). p. 39.
[85] Wolkstein, D. (1983). pp. 60-67.
[86] Zable, Arnold. (2004). pp. 49-67.
[87] Cronin, M.T.C. (1998). pp. 11-12.

There is a clue here to our own substance – to a gap in our own substance. The enzymes within the human body work to break down material, in the manner of ficin, and to build up new mating elements.

Enzymes have been called the machines of life.[88] One of the most beautiful descriptions, still, of the delicacy of their operation was written half a century before sophisticated molecular research revealed their chemical nature.

> 'To split complex molecules, chemists have to employ powerful reagents, such as acids, alkalis, etc. They smash, as it were, the clockwork and then pick out the undamaged particles. Just as the watchmaker employs for each screw a suitable tool or a specially made pliers, so nature has constructed delicate instruments for this purpose. Enzymes are such tools for the chemical breaking down or building up of molecules.'[89]

Modern biochemical techniques have imaged the workings of enzymes.[90] The internal folding of the long structures of their DNA makes and preserves gaps. Substances enter these gaps and the enzyme itself bends and changes the conformation of the gap to accommodate their entrance. The enzyme shifts to open its active area, called its *specificity pocket*,[91] to more closely fit the substrate - the visitor. The enzyme bends to meet part of itself and to meet the visitor. They each move a little to better fit this active site – called its *anion or oxyanion hole*.[92] There is a slow transforming, or dismuting, to something else. The oxyanion hole is a hidden site of energy – formed by the proximity of certain chemical groups. The force in this proximity begins the movement. The sharing and exchange of electrons causes the shearing and change in the substrate. It is changed by its encounter with the enzyme. The enzyme bends and caresses itself to restore its original shape.

This thesis claims that is possible, and congruent with the workings of our own organism, to pay attention to an image of consciously entering an inner gap to

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[88] Breslow, R. (1986). The title of his book is *The machines of life*.
[89] Trease, G. E. and Evans, W. C. (1966). p. 214. quoting Bechold.
[90] The example of serine proteases is used. Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999).
[91] Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999). p. 311.
[92] Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999). p. 314.

pause and begin to break apart the old scapegoat associations in images and automatic triggers to action. For it is how the machines of life work within us. In a psychological manner, it provides a powerful image to consider how consciousness might be extended, folded and bent to the discernment of scapegoating impulses from stored personal and cultural memory. This is an optimistic psychological analogy, but a grounded optimism.

Enzymes are renowned, almost defined, for their capacity to hold the transition state – where something is not yet something else – and to accomplish this gently and easily. And the images in the description of the enzymes called serine proteases also provide a metaphor for protection from self-digestion whilst engaged in active breakdown. The transition state dialogue between the substrate and the enzyme is substantial. It has a shape, and this shape is mimicked by a substance which occupies the space and acts as an inhibitor. Protection from self-digestion is accomplished by the inhibitor.

> This interaction prevents any trypsin [a serine protease] that is prematurely activated in the pancreas from digesting that organ.[93]

Inhibitors are common in nature providing protective and regulatory functions. The inhibitor is more rigid than the substrate. It does not bend.[94]

But these too can be broken down when the time is right. Once an enzyme begins to activate itself through altering the shape of its inhibitor, there are processes to continue this activation. Thus might the scapegoat act as a plug to protect the sensitivity of the developing and extending consciousness of the human psyche. But a personal and cultural urge for fertility might activate a discerning enzyme in the scapegoat plug to bend and de-form itself.[95]

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[93] Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999). p. 315.

[94] "The proteolytic reaction cannot proceed past this point because of the rigidity of the complex and because it is so tightly sealed that the leaving group cannot leave and water cannot enter the reaction site." Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999). p. 316.

[95] "Without ... conformational change, the enzyme cannot properly bind its substrate to stabilize that tetrahedral intermediate because its specificity pocket and oxyanion hole are improperly formed. This provides further structural evidence favoring the role of transition state binding in the catalytic mechanism of serine proteases." Voet, D., Voet, J. and Pratt, C. (1999). p. 318.

The seeds of pharmakos awareness

The making of the cheese from fig juice, its ritual consumption by the pharmakos, and the beating with fig branches activates the inner enzymes of pharmakos awareness. It is possible to think this way about the fig because our consciousness is changed in interacting with an object. It is a way of mapping the relationship of the fig and human organisms.[96]

It is as if the fig has been experienced as the inside-out of the spirit of human generativity. The words used for aspects of its biology are similar to that of human biology, and the invisible in human biology is visible in the fig. The image of an unseen blushing in the very source of generativity is a wonderful description of the nature of soul business possible between humans and within humans. This is an image clustering with those of a light in the eye, a still point, an inner glow or radiance – the ineffable written about by so many poets - the meeting of the inner and outer in the moving across membranes and holding a transitional state for a while – blushing awhile. The unseen blushing contains the myriad of seeds of life.[97]

> [In Hawaii], all the fruit produced by a single crop of one tree *F. macrophylla* in 1922, [produced] 224 pounds of dry seeds. Half an ounce of these seeds produced 915 seedlings. It was then estimated that if all the seeds had been properly planted, the seedlings from one crop would have been sufficiently numerous to reforest all the watershed of the Hawaiian Islands.[98]

The blowing out of seed – the casting of seed to the environment with a courage and certainty to be open to fertilization - brings no guarantee or control of what will develop or die out. The capacity to reproduce is protected, but the orientation to cross-fertilisation actively sought. Psychically then, the

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[96] "The fact that you had interacted with an object in order to create images of it makes the thought of *acting on* the object easier to conceive. We should note that having all these images is not enough for consciousness to occur. Consciousness occurs when we know, and we can only know when we map the relationship of object and organism. Only then can we possibly discover that all of the reactive changes [emotional and motor reaction] are taking place in our own organisms and are caused by the object." Damasio, A. (2000). pp. 148-149.

[97] "Various reports have been made of the numbers of seeds found in fig syconia. In F. carica... [three] mature Adriatic figs contained, by actual count, 4,800 fertile seeds, an average of 1,600 for each fig....In 1942, the fertile seeds washed from 30 pounds of dried Calimyrna figs weighed 1,096 grams; there were approximately 1,000 seeds to a gram...." Condit, I. (1969). p. 8.

[98] Condit, I. (1969). p. 8.

pharmakos ceremony evokes images of people dealing with the sensitivity of the human spirit to the trauma of catastrophe. The emotion, pondered by Walter Otto, of being pierced by a momentary encounter with the colossal numinous and one's loss of control in that moment of catastrophe is experienced in the moment of the ritual. What was expressed from within may have been the blowing out of seed as if the danger of sterility in the human body and spirit was sensed. These are the mysteries and the possibilities in the development of human experience and, like the fig, there are abundant mysteries when objective enquiry reaches its limit and new metaphors spring up.

> "It is difficult to understand how many hundreds, even thousands, of seeds can be set in one receptacle by ordinary pollination."[99]

Who knows what secrets the wasps may still retain – and what secrets the fig? As the black flowers in matter's darkness, they can refit the symbol to the symbolised. They already possess a power to take us through the disabling images of destruction to the mutating images of ingenious life.

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[99] Condit, I. (1969). p. 8, quoting Corner.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

The pharmakos returns to a meeting with the community. While there are many tales to tell, there is something in the tilt of the head and the light in the eyes that tells of the experience. The pharmakos as symbol has re-emerged more vital and potent. In moments of threat our human fragility is close to our awareness. These moments may come at any time and in any circumstance. They may accompany joy or sadness, pleasure or horror. They can occur in the crises lurking under stable everyday life and in the unstabilising crises of extreme tragedy. The pharmakos is a conduit to the edge of that fragility and a means of turning to look curiously at the tales of one's mind. These are moments when we fall into ourselves and the life within seems touchable. The pharmakoi fell into themselves in the face of crisis, difference and destablilising change. With the pharmakos, one can move freely close to these states to prepare for and bend towards a meeting with unrecognised life.

The story of the pharmakos journey in this thesis comes to a close. Lively descriptions of inner and outer engagements with the pharmakos have been gathered and created from different perspectives. In the journey of the thesis rich, complex and contradictory dimensions in the pharmakos as symbol have been discovered.

The engagement with the pharmakos has been conducted with a phenomenological sensitivity throughout its inner and outer phases. Insights into the inner process of engagement were gained through trusting an urge to listen to and follow images in the mind and their senses in the body. A series of visual images produced early in the engagement, provided clues to the terrain of the pharmakos. These communicated a sense of the intense inner conversations between painful and exciting disturbances triggered in the mind and body by the pharmakos. It was possible to pause and gaze at images that arose and their movement. This provided a filter through which to view an engagement with the pharmakos by the four scholars, Harrison, Nilsson, Frazer and Girard, and the engagement with the goat and the fig by farmers, scientists, novelists and

poets. It provided confidence in the process of reverie which imaginatively transformed descriptions of experience of the goat and the fig to explore hidden aspects of the pharmakos.

The historical pharmakos is alive as symbol and image of pollution and its purification. The historical descriptions stress a utilitarian view of the experience of threatening change, perhaps as catastrophe through epidemic, or the gradual build up of anxiety during the yearly life of the community and a sense of its threat to an otherwise invigorating potency needed for life. The image of the pharmakos as a purging medicine, made by the community itself for its own treatment, or a sponge to be discarded with its load of absorbed dirt, are powerful descriptions of a psychic and homeostatic need to limit exposure to threat, and to heal or cure its damage. The transfer occurs across spaces between the community and its pharmakos. Something felt as physical, infectious and malignant to potent energy is being shifted. Something gloomy and indistinct from the chthonic world where death, trouble and evil spirits reside is moving. One is left with a feeling that the historical pharmakos is undertaking an encounter which the community cannot bear in any other way. However, the innocence of the pharmakos is consciously known and so all are intensely involved. Otto felt that as a cultic expression, it is a monumental human creation in the moment of feeling the intensity of the numinous.

Pessimism pervades the engagement with the scapegoat, the almost universal description and meaning given to the pharmakos. The scapegoat metaphor is a psychologically and literally effective means of evoking and orchestrating the complex means of establishing stability and community, and ensuring the ongoing ability to experience a source of potency and identity. Connection to this source is hidden in the acting out of the scapegoat mechanism. The scapegoating community never quite gets beyond the scarring of violent mimicry and persecution to the inner source of disturbance, and it hides the founding acts of violence against the scapegoat in its stories. Suspicion reigns and its infection always protects the community because the suspicion is always eventually formulated as a threat to the foundations of society itself.

In Girard's descriptions of the scapegoat, the community, as a crowd, really believes the scapegoat guilty of the cause of its trouble. In this sense, the scapegoat aspect of the pharmakos distinguishes itself from its aspect as vehicle of purification. As homeostasis acts to protect the body against physical threat, so does the community act to exclude a threat to its existence. Thus its stability and identity depend on repeated acts of the scapegoat mechanism whenever disturbance threatens to deteriorate into chaotic breakdown of the community. This stability is built essentially on quicksand.

The substance in the scapegoat metaphor – beyond its representation of a complex force – is unsatisfying. So too are representations of the experience as pollution and purification. These feel too thin in their ability to evoke the richness, complexity and contradictory nature of the inner engagement with the pharmakos phenomenon, and the author's experiences in health and medicine which created the conditions for this engagement. The metaphor loses its vividness on exploration. The phenomenological tradition of Gaston Bachelard allowed the images produced in inner reverie to be taken seriously, and Antonio Damasio's description of the neurology of consciousness allowed a comforting, but far from literal, link to real biology. Hence the images were approached as if to find the moments or places where the imaginary materializes, and one might gaze on and discern what occurs. In this way reverie plunged one into the hidden depths where the pharmakos phenomenon lives in us, appears as images, feelings and moods, and speaks to us. They trigger other images and associations in thought, memory and experience.

The images of the goat and the fig lurked as ways to find the something *more* sensed in the engagement with the pharmakos. They linked the well-known aspects of the pharmakos as scapegoat, purifier and refresher of potency to its lesser known aspects. These lesser known aspects also reside in the disturbing terrain of human experience. Threat to life, the direct expression of life, and generation of life each disturb. Attending to the generation of new life in the direct threat of its loss or maiming is especially disturbing – whether real or imagined.

The mismatch in the scapegoat metaphor between the nature of the goat and troubling human experiences in times of instability indicates the power of the metaphor to capture some of the complex forces playing themselves out in society, but misses others. The goat roams among dangers and disturbances, observing what is happening and curious and adept in finding places where it can observe safely before deciding on a course of action. The goat's diet of thorns, prickles, and briars are like the emotional food of suspicion, which emerges with past memories of catastrophe and an urge to avoid its repeat. The goat's biology chews and rechews this resistant fibrous material and breaks it down into its elements. It actively and preferentially transports these to a generative place where special cells grow and a beautiful protein is minutely and intricately constructed, and then let die to become a protective covering of lustre, lightness and warmth. Under the scapegoat, this other narrative is possible somewhere in our consciousness, borne in our long association with the goat.

Figs bring reminders of the disturbing experience of fertility and the effort needed to generate new life. Pierced and scarred, the fig patiently and elaborately prepares mating elements, including those of a foreign life form, and incubates and holds them in readiness because the synchronisation is out of phase. This is hidden in the fig and hidden in our narratives of consciousness. Its symbolism is almost obscured, just leaving glimpses of its power in marking the entrance to the underworld, its leading out of the pharmakos, and its coming together with the goat in its name, the ritual cheese of the pharmakos and the mythical characters travelling under its roots into the underworld and back again.

This moving in and out is a sign of the symbolism of the pharmakos that was sought in this new terrain. This dynamic movement is what is held symbolically in the pharmakos and is congruent with biochemical and neurological images of how the mind and body work. It richly expresses the inexpressible: the entanglement and disentanglement of urges to purify and prevent trouble; and urges to risk everything in a mating and explosive creativity.

The goat and the fig are images carrying a structure of fertility being experienced in the underlying consciousness of the pharmakos. This fertility operates between us as powerfully as the trigger to literal rejection or eradication of a threat. The underworld of the fig is a powerful psychological trigger to contact the fertile mechanisms lying within our biology. Under the homeostatic urge to preserve life is the urge to mate with foreign elements – with difference – just as the fig trusts the wasp to carry its genetic material from a wild tree to a domestic tree.

The pharmakos turns within as it is pushed to the edge by circumstances. While undertaking the journey in a publicly visible, tangible manner, the pharmakos is in the process of falling into itself, to its place of sifting and sorting where it bends, folds and listens to its elements within. The polluting business arrives from many sources and in many guises. The internal dialogue meets and de-forms the narratives they tell. In the meeting the energy is moved – transported. New elements are created. Some provide a light and warm streetwise protection. Others sit waiting for an encounter – an unpredictable and unfamiliar encounter. The goat and the fig work together to observe, assess, prepare and experiment in the face of difficulty.

A continual movement to breakdown and build up is present in the pharmakos phenomenon. As the fig and caprifig link fertile elements of difference with the movement of a wasp (and the building of a place for its growth and reproduction within its own being), as the fig and the goat meet in the cheese eaten by the pharmakos (and in the micro have bitten into each other – the fig's enzyme met the goat's milk, changed it and was changed in the process), so the living pharmakos, as symbol, wasp, conduit or porter pauses to meet, bend and listen to its narratives of catastrophe. There is freedom in the face of danger, as the goat symbolises, and something needs to be done, as the fig symbolises. The pharmakos is that which moves to be curious and to be fertile in the face of difference, conflict or destabilising change. It is that which makes fertile elements from breaking down sterile ones and reaches for a mating connection with and between oneself and others. The pharmakos can hold this transition state and the rich dialogue of emotion, feelings and voices it arouses.

Suspending assumptions in meeting inner or outer voices of difference is not just a nice aphorism which is easily accomplished. It takes work, emotion and disturbance to hold such a transition state – to open one's pockets to roaming elements. The engagement with the pharmakos enabled this author to make sense of the experiences in facilitating processes in the worlds of health and medicines where the past was felt to be looking over one's shoulder, where suspicion, demonisation and blame were always lurking and able to freeze fresh and creative dialogue and actions. One needs to prepare to meet these energies and to be able to stare at what constitutes the danger, the accusation and the emotion.

New metaphors, as Lakoff and Johnson propose, can create realities as one begins to understand one's experience and act in terms of them. New metaphors of the pharmakos are of fertile awakening and preparation for the scarring of meeting and being pierced by difference and suffering in the world. Attending to the pharmakos symbol in ones' inner processes and in outer engagement with the world in the demanding situation of health, medicines, its personal and global crises and consequences, enables the falling into oneself to contact the place of breaking down and building up. It enables one in the public world, to create an environment for encountering difference and change. Leadership may be the capacity to hold a transition state, in an inner and outer sense, so that the pores for cross-fertilisation may open and the over-wintering larvae of new ideas and new encounters may be held ready in receptive, nurturing spaces even as they pierce on awakening. Innocence, freedom and a curious streetwise eye in the face of difficulty are also what the pharmakos brings.

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APPENDIX 1

Visual Image-making of the pharmakos

This appendix sets out in point form some steps in the process of self-reflection through visual image-making.

The rhythm of image-making

- Drawing, sculpture, movement and dramatic presentation in rhythm with reading, produced images which were revisited systematically and intensely, to produce an image of the pharmakos once the story had been discovered well into the emotional engagement. Conscious engagement with the pharmakos then produced a series of images of it.

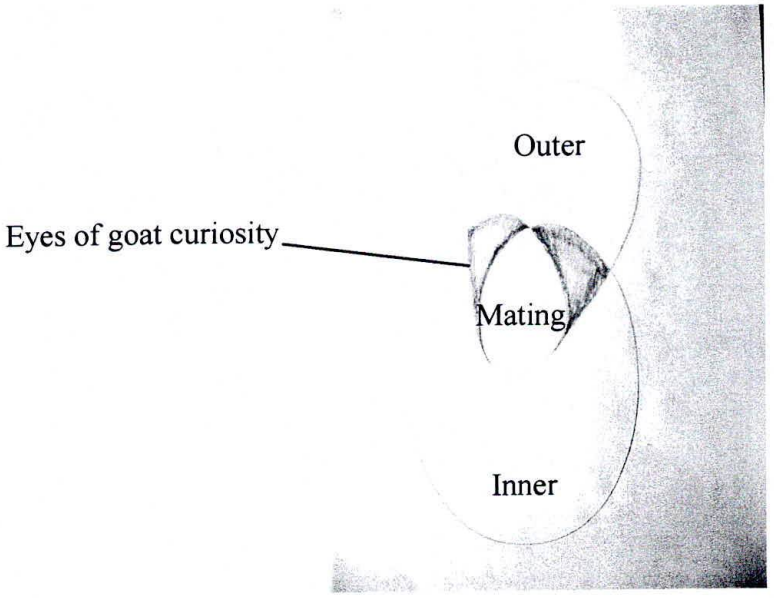
- In rhythm with intellectual enquiry of an historical nature, the image of the pharmakos underwent exploration as the remover of pollution and the scapegoat.

- In rhythm with further reading through psychological, biochemical and neurological perspectives, the image became active in breaking down and building up, and the image of the fig and the goat became important after the sexual or active mating aspect of the image emerged.

- There is a series of drawings of the pharmakos that track this development. A selection of these images is presented in this appendix. They represent key points of transition in its development.

- The basic shape came from a continuous movement intrinsic in the way I painted earlier images, and developed from them before I had heard of the pharmakos story. This shape was named *pharmakos* the instant I read the story by Walter Otto. These influences came together within a reasonably close time.

The pharmakos image



- The image had internal movement (break down and build up).
- It was open to take in the past to work, move and change elements carrying "blackness," "pollution," "difficulty," to elements of rich communication and connection.
- It had the capacity to move these elements to the outside and open them to an unknown response or "mating."
- It had "eyes" and a covering over a "place of mating" which, when lifted off was organically sexual and had and "attitude" of active seeking of fertile meeting.

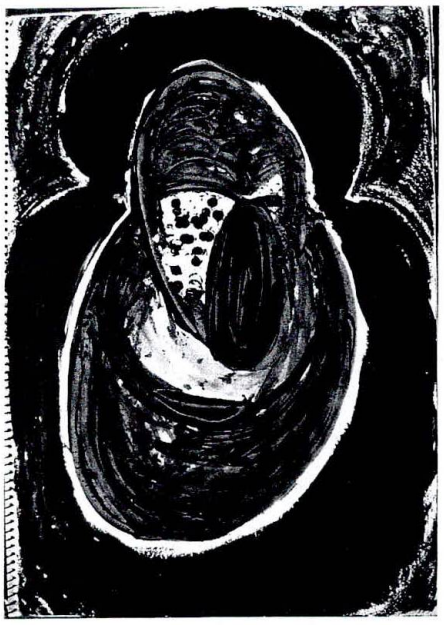


Fig. 23. Living pharmakos. (Mar 02)

Fig 24. Ouroboros gives birth in the shadow of the pharmakos. (Mar 02)

Fig. 25. Being pierced. (Mar 02)

Fig. 26. You can see a goat thinking. (Sep 03)

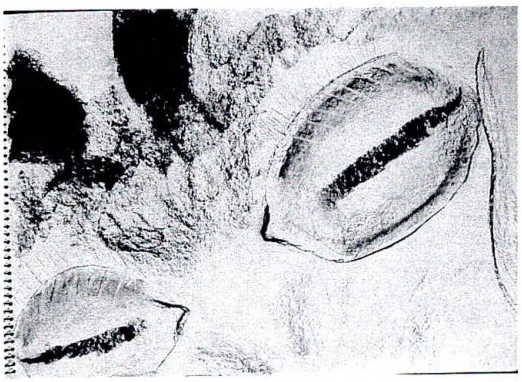


Fig 27. The eyes see forever. (July 03)

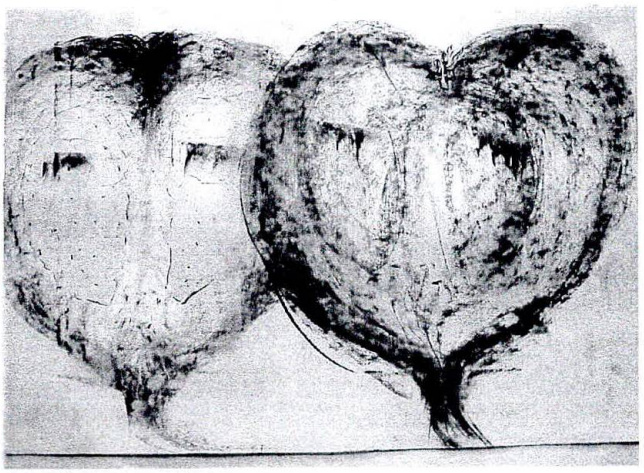


Fig. 28. The goat in the fig. (Oct 03

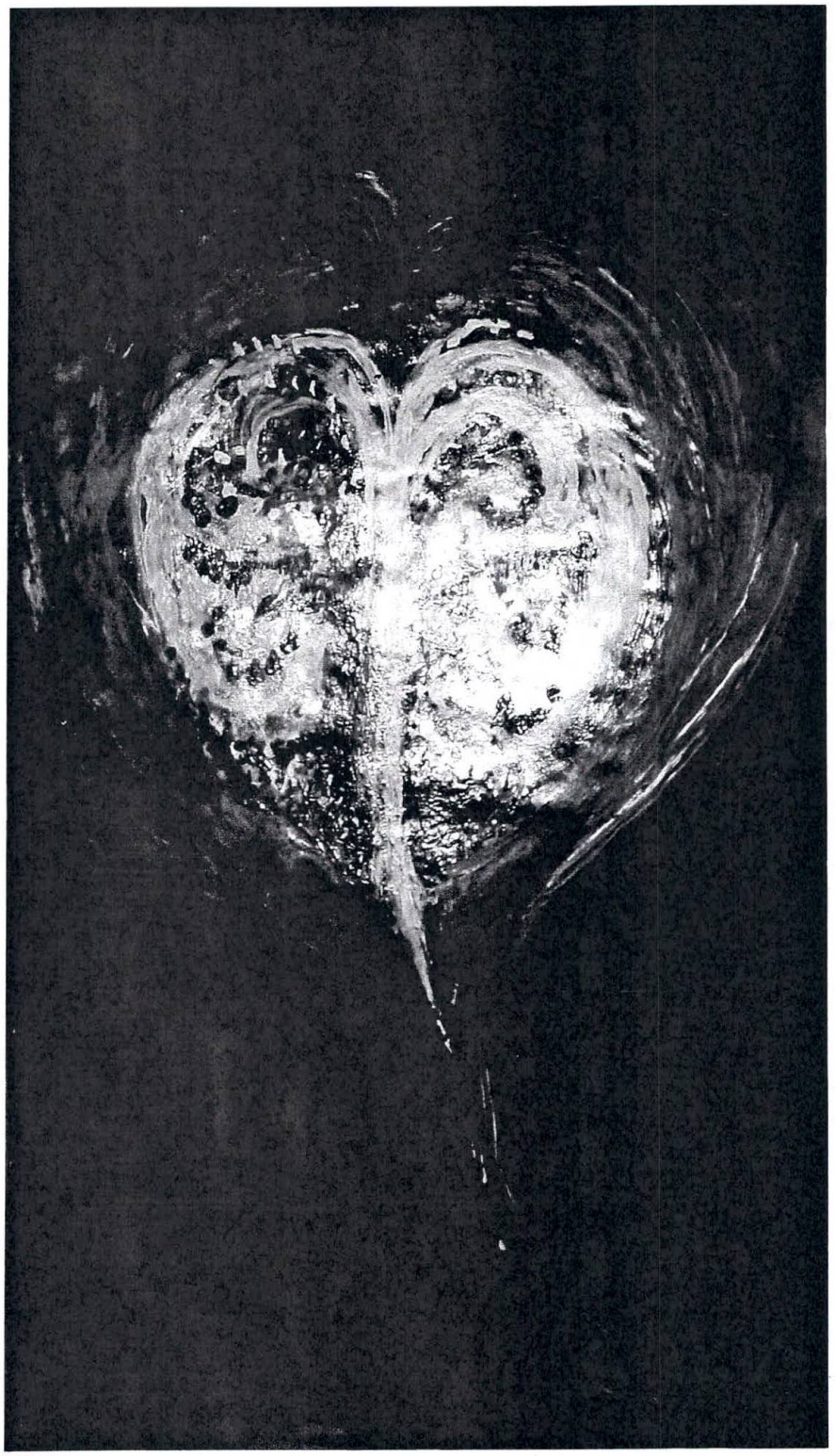


Fig. 29. The goat in the fig. (Dec 03)

Fig. 30. Fertility within. (Dec 03)

APPENDIX 2

The Scapegoat in Modern Life: Reforming and Reinforcing a Vicious Cycle?

Scapegoating has been described from many perspectives. Each has important insights to offer. The author was struck by the sense that this dynamic is very familiar in many guises in everyday life. This Appendix provides a cameo of the life of the scapegoat in society in present times.

Sociology of scapegoating

Sociological approaches have been used to describe and analyse how groups can recognise that scapegoating is taking place within their process. One feature is that groups often cannot diagnose the real cause of the problem even when they consciously try. Tom Douglas [1] reviewed and narrated his research and experience of scapegoating. His study compared the changes in modern social processes with ancient rituals, including the pharmakos, which he saw as propitiation and sacrificial processes. The process today is vastly more complex, in his view. His analysis of the Handsworth riots in London in 1985 reads like a modern version of the Diplopia recounted in Chapter 2.[2] West Indians blamed the police, whom they saw as insensitive, and high unemployment. Indians blamed the West Indians whom they saw as jealous of the standard of living and wealth that Indians worked hard for. Police blamed greed, criminality and hooliganism - the behaviours they faced at the outbreak of the riots. Local politicians blamed government cuts and the methods of policing. National politicians of the Left blamed government policies, such as cuts in services, unemployment and care. Politicians of the Right blamed the thuggery of minorities – they saw the nature of ethnic communities as expressed in endemic natural conflict and greed (looting). Others blamed copycat behaviour from films, as young people in the area were bored.

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[1] Tom Douglas is social worker and consultant in groupwork and teacher at the University of Keele in the UK, He has published several works on groupwork practice and theory such as *Groups: Understanding people gathered together, A Theory of groupwork practice* and *Scapegoats: Transferring Blame.*

[2] In the Dipolia, the guilt for killing the sacrificial ox is passed from one to the other and eventually onto a thing.

> In the widest sense in this scenario all these claims could be true, or at least partially so. Acceptance of any one over the others without real evidence would tend to indicate prejudice and bias.[3]

Douglas noted that it is extremely difficult to find whether an accusation has a firm basis in evidence or belief. In his view, a scapegoat is, by definition, innocent.

> ...there should be clear evidence that the allegations of responsibility and of causation are untrue, or at least partially so. This, in effect, means that any rational and real involvement in causing difficulties and problems is sufficient to dismiss any accusation of scapegoating.[4]

Douglas seeks evidence not only of provocation, but also of belief.

> Many people have been blamed for economic disaster and killed, when in fact the basic reason for being chosen by their killers was that they were different, disliked and their persecutors could find no logical reason for their [own] diminished state that they were able to accept. This factor is well illustrated in multi-racial societies by the discriminatory choice of victims, apparently based solely on the prejudice and ignorance surrounding racial difference.[5]

Scapegoating seems to be a circular dynamic. Human beings are not good at predicting consequences and cease to expect random events. When in fact they do occur, they involve an element of surprise and the long term consequences are impossible to calculate.

> The element of surprise, when it occurs, occasions a defensive response frequently manifesting itself in the form of a displacement of responsibility, a scapegoating process or sometimes by an appeal to the logic of explanation or by a profession of ignorance.[6]

In the modern phenomenon of scapegoating, ancient concerns with divine perceptions are replaced with attempts to understand the process, especially in human terms of motivation, attitudes, background and personality. What individuals and the community show as their opinion is more important than divine judgement.[7] Modern concern is also with the provocation of scapegoating and the characteristics and personalities of the victims. Modern

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[3] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 54-56.
[4] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 54-56.
[5] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 54-56.
[6] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 68-69.
[7] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 49.

dynamics also reveal a process designed to ensure the preservation of an individual rather than the whole community. As stress and change speed up, this process gets stronger and more widespread in a society where power is diffuse.

The process is best seen in families and small groups where it helps form the group's identity in a diffuse modern society. Scapegoating within families is a "process which stops the problems within families splitting it apart."[8] Douglas reviewed studies in families which showed that there were usually longstanding tensions between the parents concerning their marriage, and these fears were usually masked and evaded.

> These sources of conflict and tension could not be contained without some discharge. The families tended to internalise the standards of the communities in which they lived and were thus unable to find any legitimate basis for scapegoating and blaming anyone outside the family; they were therefore obliged to choose a member of the family.[9]

The process usually worked, and scapegoating situations therefore became basic structures of the family.

> The long-term nature of the process is dictated by the fact that the process actually works, and this must cause concern because (a) the question of ultimate cost has to be addressed and (b) if any attempt at intervention is contemplated, it is not just the process that has to be replaced but also its success in relieving the tension.[10]

Scapegoating as social behaviour maintains a group.[11] It does this by choosing one of its members as scapegoat who is different.[12] Sometimes this person was doing something members of the group would have liked to have done themselves

> but which they were forbidden to indulge in by virtue of external or internal prohibition.[13]

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[8] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 70.
[9] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 72.
[10] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 74.
[11] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 80.
[12] "All smallish groups have, as a natural feature, the high degree of visibility of their members as that any differences are immediately noticeable, and thus factors such as low status and deviant behaviour are attention-drawing when the group is looking for someone to blame. The industrial group showed that difference does not necessarily have to be something worse that what is considered to be 'normal,' but could be something better – in this case, a higher standard of work performance." Douglas, T. (1995). p. 81.
[13] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 81.

It is at its most effective when the process also meets the scapegoat's needs, but this is also most devastating.

> Perhaps the victim, if given a choice, would not have chosen to gain some relief of his or her needs in exactly this way, but it is most likely that he or she had discovered in the past no other successful gambit.[14]

The scapegoat can give vicarious pleasure to scapegoaters

> one of the driving forces behind the compulsion to perform was the fact that the members derived pleasure from seeing someone do something they wanted to do but could not.[15]

There are several other features of the scapegoating process: there are boundaries around groups which limit the number available to be scapegoated; it happens when there is no other less dangerous option for the group; and seems to respond to a fundamental urge "to escape from the pressures of being held responsible for bad feelings and events."[16]

Douglas viewed the basic urge of humans to avoid hurtful responsibility as the main driving force of scapegoating.[17] He diagnosed two forms today. The first is the public scapegoating process, which he calls the *rational/deflective* form and the true descendant of the ancient ritual. The second operates within small groups and families, which he calls the *irrational/transferring* form. The purpose is to purify or cleanse people, consciously or unconsciously, of the burden of guilt, hurtful responsibility or intolerable stress.

> The modern public scapegoater pursues a rational cause to deflect imminent punishment, opprobrium, personality assassination onto others. His or her main purpose is to survive; the technique is conscious; the cost, if the ploy is successful, is mainly borne by someone or something other than the focal individual. The outcome is that this individual is absolved of responsibility and, like the ancients is free to pursue his or her course.
>
> On the other hand, the irrational/transferring form of scapegoating with which most people who work in groups are much more familiar, may appear only to have the essential and basic motivation in common with ancient ritual. Most of the process is neither conscious nor deliberate; it does not seek therefore to deflect opprobrium but to relieve intolerable tension; it is relatively inexplicable as far as the scapegoaters are concerned, but it does

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[14] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 81.
[15] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 83.
[16] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 82.
[17] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 201.

> have the effect of clearing them and those who support them to move forward if only in a transient and temporary fashion.
>
> However, such an irrational process can have other things in common with the ancient ritual apart from the ubiquitous motivation: first, there is a need for repetition and, second, it is usually a communal or group activity with a communal or group goal as its desired outcome.[18]

Its repetitive nature may almost be thought of as an addiction. In reviewing strategies for managing scapegoating, Douglas' reflections show the limited options that seem to exist.

> The basis of any successful management of the scapegoating process is founded upon two basic ideas. First, that the form and nature of the process is accurately assessed and second, that the main thrust of management founded upon this assessment is to maximize benefits from a situation already existing and to limit the possible damage.[19]
>
> If the process of the attack becomes too intense then more drastic measures for the limitation of damage may need to be taken, bearing in mind that the scapegoating process is already in operation and there may be a fine balance between damage to the group if it is stopped before its cathartic effect is complete and damage to the victim if it continues. This kind of decision cannot be made on any kind of theoretical basis and has to relate to specific and individual situations and assessments.
>
> Progressive reductions in the intensity of the process can be engineered by:
>
> - deflection, which amounts to creating a different problem to divert pressure from the scapegoat;
>
> - using the power and influence of the group leader role to diminish the intensity of the interaction which may well result in the transfer of group hostility from the scapegoat to the leader;
>
> - removing the victim from the group either permanently or temporarily.[20]

Thus, in everyday life, the scapegoat complex has a hold. Costs must be less than benefits - balancing the potential benefit of the progress a group can make when its tensions are relieved by scapegoating, versus the cost to the person or group being scapegoated. Douglas' account of victims shows that the grip of the scapegoat in human experience has resulted in personalities who attract, provoke and even prefer the scapegoat role.

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[18] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 201-202.
[19] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 156.
[20] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 162.

Douglas holds little real hope for resolution, although he gives a couple of examples of successful resolution in groups. His underlying experience comes through in some of his reflections on this. He feels that it is much harder to know how to carry out a strategy in the reality of the group dynamic, than to develop a strategy. For example, to lead the group through a process of recognizing that scapegoating is happening is relatively easy – but to work with them to find the cause of the problem the group is facing, that has led them to resort to scapegoating is much harder. Most situations arise because the cause is unknown and unknowable. Adapting to change, fear of failing, the process of developing new skills and new capacity for action are usually hard for people to pinpoint within themselves, and to discuss openly in a group. Not being able to identify the cause of the problem is almost a universal criterion of the conditions of scapegoating. The situations in which the cost to the scapegoat is particularly high is within families. Here, personalities and ways of coping are formed that become ways of life and ways of knowing one's identity.[21] Scapegoating then

> ...is one of the most universally found forms of group event and, because of this, tends to be accepted as inevitable, including what ever the consequences of the process may be. Indeed most of us accept it as part of everyday experience.
>
> Such is the ubiquitous nature of the scapegoating process.
>
> The current rational approach to social problems, while proving very effective in some areas, has been woefully inadequate in others. In essence, it has been least successful in those areas of human existence which are inhabited by fear. Although people will offer reasonable explanations for certain kinds of behaviour, the explanations that are offered in many cases are of the nature of good or bad fortune, or of a belief in the ability of remote astral bodies to influence human behaviour, or of the need to hedge one's bets with lucky charms, talismanic objects, etc., all of which would seem to demonstrate that, reasonable or not, the modern man is still a creature who implicitly believes in mystical forces of some kind, but who may find it very difficult to admit to these beliefs in the face of the very strong current trends of rational explanation.[22]

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[21] Douglas, T. (1995). pp. 95-105.
[22] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 190.

Douglas' conclusion is that the human behaviour pattern of scapegoating comes from an enduring human motivation to avoid the hurtful consequences of certain kinds of behaviour. The belief system of the society shapes the manner in which the process occurs and largely rests on whom or what is seen as the society's supervising agent. In ancient days it was the god, and today it is predominantly seen as the society itself.[23] The gods now reside within society.

> The process of scapegoating, however described, will continue to be used as long as human beings are frustrated and brought to a state of tension either by factors they see all too clearly or by factors that have no discernible source.[24]

Scapegoating resolves core disturbances in groups.

Groups develop processes and a culture of scapegoating to deal with situations which trouble their core. Ann Daniel, a sociologist, analysed several case in the professions of law and medicine which she claimed occupy a particular territory in this regard.[25] She based her analysis on the work of Rene Girard. She was captured by the notion that the scapegoat can never come back. She reviewed two cases in medicine in Australia, involving the profession's self-regulatory mechanism which monitors professional conduct and standards. Most cases revealed clear grounds of fraud, laziness, vanity, etc., but there were two she diagnosed as cases of scapegoating.

The issues raised by the persons under investigation were those the professions found difficult to deal with, and in both cases there was a blurring of important boundaries.[26] For example one doctor, a psychiatrist, was accused of sexual misconduct – an area very difficult for the profession and one it had been

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[23] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 200.
[24] Douglas, T. (1995). p. 200.
[25] "Professions are tribes whose people are banded together by common interests and are given to specific ways of thinking and acting. They generate a sense of affinity and belonging among their members whose common interests and expectations result in shared values and norms. Their work lies in carefully marked fields where only they, the certified ones, can operate. Over many years each of today's professions has developed its science, practised its art, and so generated renown in its special area. Its members are honoured for what they alone are allowed to know and perform. That good fame brings respect and trust. For professions reputation is one source of authority. From it flows a cultural authority which encompasses the concession of trust implicit in practitioners' licence to practise. Law and medicine, in particular, emphasise the vocational aspect, enacting rituals, adopting specific language and symbols, wearing the robes of their calling, taking the requisite vows or oaths on entry. This begins a 'deep and lifelong commitment' where 'it takes a rite of passage to get him in; another to read him out.'" Daniel, A. (1998). pp. 25-26 (quoting Hughes).
[26] The accusations seemed to fit the crimes described as producing a 'loss of difference' as described by Rene Girard. See Chapter 6.

widely criticised for not acting on. She was seen to have blurred the edges of the profession and the practice of professional distance. The other concerned William McBride – accused of falsifying scientific results to find positive evidence of harm by a drug to the foetus. His concern for the babies overtook his objective application of the rules of science. He operated in the confused area between science and obstetrics – between evidence, observation and care. McBride's emotions for the unborn child won over his scientific method.

Yet, before their trials, both these doctors were regarded as competent practitioners, and innovative, and this may have been a sign they carried, marking them as different. They were both deregistered and never re-registered. Their transgressions might be seen as cases of the victim originating the law that did not exist before they broke it. In the case of the psychiatrist, in breaking it, she founded the law - in this case, a code of ethics promulgated clearly and publicly the year after her case. In this way she is already immortalised, only she is not revered by her profession as Girard would have anticipated in ancient times. McBride may have been further along the sanctification path. Summing up his decision in McBride's appeal against ejection from medical practice, the judge said

> It must be said bluntly that Dr McBride's contributions to humanity stands higher than that of any other person involved in these proceedings.
>
> Enough is enough. This man, to whom the world and unnumbered babies born without deformity, and their families, owe a considerable debt, has had the error of his found misconduct adequately brought home to him. He should be allowed, for his remaining days of practice, to return to his professional activities.[27]

He has never been re-registered, leading to Daniel's conviction that the scapegoat can never come back.

Psychological Identification with the Scapegoat

As understanding and techniques of psychology develop, the manner in which people develop personal strategies and their own personality structures to deal with scapegoating, have been described. Scapegoating has an individual

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[27] Daniel, A. (1998). pp. 156-157. Quoting judgement of Kirby.

personality and is played out from the moment one enters the world. Douglas noted above that some victims know how to be scapegoated, and receive the desired attention and power it gives. Hence they tend to play the victim role and even provoke the playing out of the mechanism.

Sylvia Brinton Perera, a Jungian analyst, has investigated this aspect more deeply. She used the Hebrew ritual in Leviticus 16 of the Old Testament as a structure to understand the archetypal psychology operating in the phenomenon. She showed how *scapegoat-identified* people feel that the evil of the world is their particular fault.

> We do not often consciously confess our faults and wayward impulses over the scapegoat's head in order to atone with the spiritual dimension as did the ancient Hebrews. We do not often enough even see that they are part of our psychological make-up. But we are acutely aware of their belonging to others, the scapegoats. We see the shadow clearly in projection. And the scapegoater feels a relief in being lighter, without the burden of carrying what is unacceptable to his or her ego ideal, without shadow. Those who are identified with the scapegoat, on the other hand, are identified with the unacceptable shadow qualities. They feel inferior, rejected and guilty. They feel responsible for more than their personal share of shadow. But both scapegoater and scapegoat feel in control of the mix of goodness and malevolence that belongs to reality itself.[28]

She saw two factors which have distorted the archetypal structure of the Hebrew ritual: loss of conscious connection to the sacral matrix from which healing and life-renewal flow,[29]and a radical change in the image and idea of Azazel, the original goat god of pre-Hebraic herdsmen, which has debased and split off the libido dedicated to him.[30]

> Both these factors together have broken up the unitary, transpersonally based structure of the archetypal field.[31]

Within the family, scapegoat-identified individuals are those who

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[28] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 9.
[29] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 18.
[30] She sees this as "split off from consciousness, not simply suppressed." Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 18.
[31] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 18.

> habitually caught the bad conscience, perceived the denied shadow and felt responsible for it. They became hypersensitive to ethical and emotional issues and accepted the role of tending, by empathy and nurturant caretaking, the shadow qualities in others.[32]
>
> ...the individual comes into therapy with a self-description of feeling like a criminal, invalid, pariah, leper or freak. Basic is the sense of isolation and guilt – a terrible foretaste of individuality from the position of the rejected and exiled one.[33]

Deep within families such dynamics happen....shadows, unspoken fear, desires and the relieving of these tensions near to home, onto children, occur in unspoken unrecognised ways. Healing is slow...

> When in the modern age individuals are deeply identified with the role of the scapegoat, they suffer the symptoms discussed above – they endure negative inflation, exile and splitting. They are cut off from an adequate relation to the outer world and to their own inner depths. But even after they are able to disidentify from the burden of the complex, they have a special relation to the archetype. 'The complex becomes a focus of life,' (quoting Jung) for their personalities have been built within its pattern. Thus they are 'called' to carry the complex consciously. These individuals are left with a need to discover and relate consciously to its specific meaning in their lives. In this search and service is their healing.[34]

...and returns evil to the transpersonal. The *parts* of the psyche/ego heal or sit acceptingly together and develop, but bring with them keen understandings of shadow and suffering which expand the experience of *godhead.*

> Many such persons come to recognize that the dark side of the godhead is a palpable force – one that merits the respect of conscious confrontation.[35]
>
> Such perception is hardwon. It is what the patriarchs of religions shield humankind from knowingly when they circumscribe reality and the godhead with the ideals of virtue. Paradoxically, it is also those very virtues, and their companion vices, which create scapegoating and through it the potential development of the consciousness and conscience capable of relating to the reality behind what is called virtue and vice. And the shields themselves are valuable, for only the strong, disciplined and devoted can bear to penetrate to such paradoxical and painful awareness of the multivalent wholeness of life. Those who suffer the scapegoat complex are among those called to such a view, which is acquired both through, and in order to find, the healing of the complex.[36]

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[32] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 33.
[33] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 33.
[34] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 98.
[35] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 110.
[36] Perera, S.B. (1986). p. 110.

The scapegoat is acted out.

The scapegoat force explodes from time to time into large scale acted-out horror. In modern times the horror of holocaust, genocide and destructive violence has ripped apart communities and nations such as Nazi Germany, Bosnia, Rwanda or Kosovo. The purpose of raising these events is not to analyse them, but to emphasise that the scapegoat dynamic can become so virulent in its movement, that it results in terrible human suffering inflicted by other humans. It is concrete and literal in its playing out. Modern times do not mean that human beings have solved the dynamic of the scapegoat and violence, which escalates to chaotic bloodletting levels, in spite of reflections that attempt to understand it. There is a risk in attempting to understand a phenomenon so circular or repetitive in nature that it may merely provide more conditions for the forms to be changed, innovated, disguised, and for the tactics of community, and membership of community, to become more subtle in the signs people give as to how they are part of the norm and not to be selected.

The pictures of Jews in concentration camps are imprinted on one's mind now through TV, publications and museums. The force of the scapegoat is manifest here and literalised. The Sinti and Roma, who are of gypsy origin and live in Germany and Austria, are people whose situation has not had such visibility. The destructiveness of the scapegoat force can be seen in these examples. During World War 2, the persecution of the Sinti and the Roma in Germany and Austria reached genocide scale – and it continued long after the war. The form and the force of scapegoating reforms and reinforces itself in many ways. Tebutt et al. studied the image of the Sinti and Roma in novels, fairy tales, children's literature and school texts. They showed the stereotype that language, cliché and images set up and continue in common cultural stories and media reporting. They compared words in common use with actual behaviour patterns of people of Sinti and Roma origins, and showed the mismatch in reality.

> The verb zigeunern (there is no exact English equivalent, lit. to Gypsy) is defined in the dictionary as 'to wander from place to place in a restless way' and is often used to mean 'to deceive.'[37]

[37] Tebbutt, S. (1998). p. xi.

Sinti themselves have been in Germany a long time, but have been continually under assault by the mainstream view that they are seeking asylum. Visual images reinforce the linguistic clichés in media headlines such as "Everyone hates the Gypsies."[38] Wilhelm Solms shows that the Jews and the gypsies suffer from extremely negative attitudes by the majority.

> they were seen by the majority population not as human beings but as non-human creatures.[39]

Most people can only imagine what it is like to have these forces acted out against them personally at this extreme level of intensity. An authentic case is the basis for Anja Tuckerman's story *Muscha,* about an adopted boy in the Nazi period. The boy relates his bewilderment at his increasing rejection and physical maltreatment by other children around him. His foster parents cannot save him from the racial researchers[40] who track him down to sterilise him. He hides in a garden shed and it is only after the war that he finds out that he is a Sinto, and that the annihilation of his ethnic group had been decided. In assessing the importance of the novel and its ability to relate a true story and avoid the cultural myths and stereotypes, Krausnick says of this story

> The question of why it happened is not distorted or restricted by Gypsy myths or exotic cliches. Despite concrete reference to the Nazi genocide, the person who is subject to racial hatred could come from Ghana, Vietnam or Turkey and this is what makes the novel so topical.
>
> The historical background is seen chronologically as part of a dynamic process. The growing threat to the victim is easy to comprehend, but so too is the increasing dehumanisation of society, and the danger of become (sic) embroiled as spectator, participant or perpetrator.[41]

The acting out of prejudice continued long after the war. Sinti survivors of concentration camps took a long time before they could write about their experiences. There are now some accounts which set out quite straightforwardly

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[38] Tebbutt, S. (1998). p. xi.
[39] Solms, W. (1998). p 91.
[40] The Nuremberg Race Laws in 1935 also affected Sinti and Roma. They were locked up in labour camps and concentration camps from 1937 to 1944. In July 1941 the directive was made to include the *Gypsies* in the 'Final Solution" to the Jewish question. Solms, W. (1998). p. 105.
[41] Krausnick,M. (1998). pp. 127-128.

personal stories of what happened. The fundamental recurring nature of the scapegoating phenomenon and a hope for an end to its acting out are expressed by a Romani writer, Karl Stojka who, like others, stresses that above all else, the Roma are human beings with emotions like everyone else.

> I am not angry with the Germans, because it was not one particular nation or another which robbed me of my childhood and my health, it was human beings who did that to me, and if there is something I can't understand, then it is how human being can inflict something like that on other people. If I hear on the radio today that there are more outbreaks of violence against Gypsies in countries like Romania, Poland, Slovakia, it makes me very sad, because I can see that it is starting all over again.[42]

The political and personal struggle for human rights, and to find an accepted place, is the response of the Sinti and the Roma.

Healing the results of atrocities.

People have tried to understand and heal the effects. Renos Papadopoulous has looked closely into the human aftermath of these situations. What struck this author about his work is an implicit warning: if one wants to act as therapist, one's own desire to be a voyeur in this process must be curbed. One's hope is raised that a way out of violence will come from human rights or some other movement, and it feels familiar to hope that somehow things will be better if we can explain their cause. Papadopoulous has worked with people suffering in political contexts – for example, refugees from Kosovo. He has reflected on trauma, and how, culturally, Western society and the caring professions as a community tend to regard trauma as a discrete event occurring at a discrete point in time, which divides life into *before* and *after*. There is a confusion of trauma as an *event* and the *experience* of trauma.

> Trauma has become a commodity which is traded most widely. In short, the more we fail to account for, grasp and respond to human suffering, the more we tend to use the word trauma. As we become insensitive to human tragedies, so our need to see trauma everywhere tends to increase.[43]

[42] Tebbutt, S. (1998). p. 140 quoting Stojka, K and Pohana, R.
[43] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 5 (of emailed manuscript).

Often, professionals claim to be unable to help because they "did not know what happened to" the refugee.

> They assume that there are certain tangible traumatic events .... which were solely responsible for the refugees current difficulties and they seem to harbour a determination to track down these events.[44]

There most probably was a phase of particular devastating events, such as enemy forces storming into a home and committing atrocities.

> However not all refugees experience such raw violence. Often people hear of the incoming forces and they flee. In one way, this can be disappointing, as crude as this may sound, to some of the younger therapists or students. In expecting to work with traumatized people, they cannot accept that perhaps the majority of refugees have not actually been traumatized by this type of 'raw-violence' devastating events. In other words there is a certain romantic notion of human pain that leads some workers to exaggerate or distort the situation in a search for the concrete 'source' of suffering.[45]

Trauma is a series of traumatic time sequences perhaps only one of which contained 'devastating events.' There are other phases, for example, there is a survival phase in which refugees find themselves in camps:

> There they wait (having survived and feeling safe from violence) feeling disempowered, helpless and disoriented. They sit around doing nothing, waiting for their fate to be decided by warlords, politicians or international organizations.[46]

This can take months or years, and can be just as traumatic as a fixed event, but is less visible and hence ignored – not only by donors and helping organizations, but also by the refugees themselves. Once people arrive in a new place, there is further trauma in adjustment and acculturation in beginning a new life. Contact with the helping professions at this stage seems to worsen the trauma.[47] Papadopoulos stresses the importance of developing a "storied" community, to counteract disorientation and the pain of traumatic phases, without negating or ignoring them, and creating a sense of substantial new security. This basic human capacity works to enable people who have been through traumatic times to readjust, create and continue life.

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[44] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 7 (of emailed manuscript).
[45] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 7 (of emailed manuscript).
[46] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 8 (of emailed manuscript).
[47] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 8 (of emailed manuscript).

> It is well known that a community will create its own tales, but true also that the opposite occurs: Stories create communities around them and, in turn, have a powerful impact in maintaining these communities. In other words, the survival tale of people's suffering can draw others to identify with it. Stories of resilience based on traditional values, historic circumstances, religious convictions, ideological beliefs, political positions etc., can be most helpful in providing a solid and secure new context which can counteract all feelings of being a helpless victim.[48]

There is an interesting twist to Girard's stereotype of the victim wearing a sign to attract the accusation which directs the scapegoating force. Papadopoulos identifies how this can be a means of helping people out of the suffering phase.

> a group, united as a 'storied community,' can heal together not only with professional help, but by reconstruction of the community through a sense of belonging. A simple example of this can be found in the comparison between events as they occur on the individual level, and their meaning on the collective, communal level....a man trying to rationalize the fact that his neighbour of 25 years turned against him, killed his wife, raped his children and sent half of his family to a concentration camp would fail, because it is humanly impossible to understand such evil on a personal level. On the other hand, if the man had taken in the situation from a collective point of view, realizing perhaps that he was a member of one ethnic group and his neighbour of another ethnic group, the events would begin to acquire some tolerable and comprehensible meaning for him.[49]

Papadopoulos urges counsellors to realise that their task is complex, and may be more effective if the process assists people elicit the meaning they give to their experience of all of the phases of trauma.

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[48] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 9 (of emailed manuscript).
[49] Papadopoulos, R. (2001). p. 10 (of emailed manuscript).

APPENDIX 1

Visual Image-making of the pharmakos

This appendix sets out in point form some steps in the process of self-reflection through visual image-making.

The rhythm of image-making

- Drawing, sculpture, movement and dramatic presentation in rhythm with reading, produced images which were revisited systematically and intensely, to produce an image of the pharmakos once the story had been discovered well into the emotional engagement. Conscious engagement with the pharmakos then produced a series of images of it.

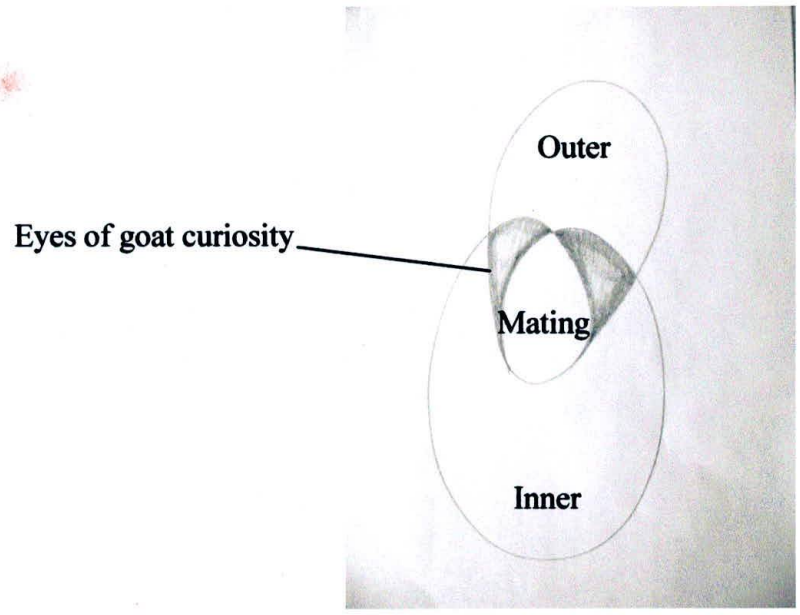
- In rhythm with intellectual enquiry of an historical nature, the image of the pharmakos underwent exploration as the remover of pollution and the scapegoat.

- In rhythm with further reading through psychological, biochemical and neurological perspectives, the image became active in breaking down and building up, and the image of the fig and the goat became important after the sexual or active mating aspect of the image emerged.

- There is a series of drawings of the pharmakos that track this development. A selection of these images is presented in this appendix. They represent key points of transition in its development.

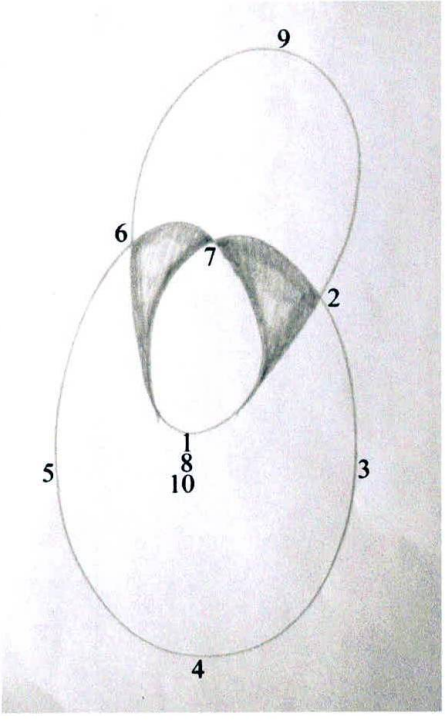
- The basic shape came from a continuous movement intrinsic in the way I painted earlier images, and developed from them before I had heard of the pharmakos story. This shape was named *pharmakos* the instant I read the story by Walter Otto. These influences came together within a reasonably close time.

The pharmakos image



- The image had internal movement (break down and build up).
- It was open to take in the past to work, move and change elements carrying "blackness," "pollution," "difficulty," to elements of rich communication and connection.
- It had the capacity to move these elements to the outside and open them to an unknown response or "mating."
- It had "eyes" and a covering over a "place of mating" which, when lifted off was organically sexual and had and "attitude" of active seeking of fertile meeting.

The movement in creating the image



1. Place of starting: both meaning "having the image" and where the drawing of the image begins.

2. Direction of drawing and understanding: engagement with historical images of pollution and scapegoating.

3. Direction of drawing and descent into scapegoat aspect. The idea of breaking down something in other early images came together with Girard's description of an ancient mechanism to resolve infectious mimicry and violence.

4. Direction of drawing: the liberation or departure of the goat becomes important and the liberations of curiosity and facing danger.

5. Direction of drawing: the idea of building up from broken down elements: the fleece of the goat and its milk.

6. The liberation of the troubling nature of the urge to life (life force, libido) and courage in the face of what is not nice about it, but not a pathological not-niceness – something which is a part of life *as it is* in changing, mating…..The fig images are strong here.

7. The direction of drawing: the inner nature of the fig is strong here .

8. The direction of drawing: the inner recesses hidden from sight.

9. The direction of drawing: a reaching out, but also awareness moving outside and shared with the unknown.

10. Direction of drawing: a movement back to inner awareness and mating.

The pencil is never lifted in this image-making, and one can keep redrawing in the same way without lifting the pencil, and a dynamic character with volume, shade and light and a "disturbing" attitude results.

This character, in paint, strongly coloured, created a shadow on the page facing it. The imprint I turned into an ouroboros that instead of eating its tail is holding its baby and gazing wondrously at it.

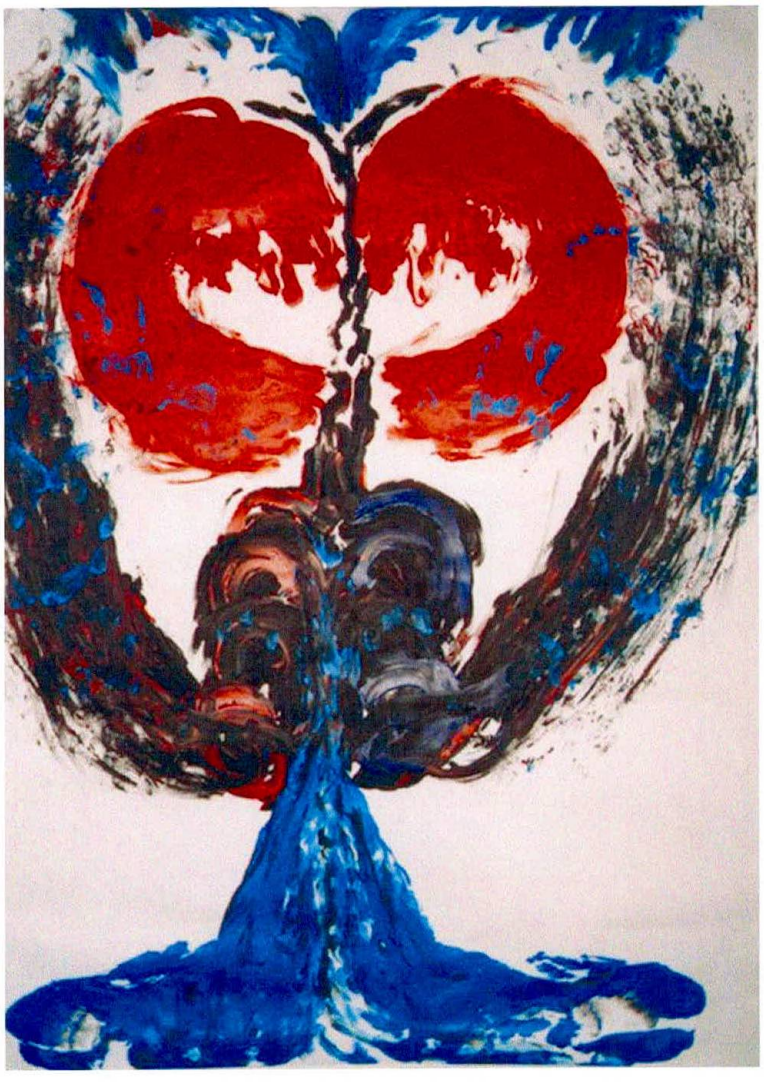


Fig. 1. Place of starting: Descending into a gap in the terrain. (March 98)

Fig. 4. Working the past in the mind's body. (Aug. 98)

Fig. 2. A disturbing presence (July 98)

Fig. 3. Prayer of the heart (March 99)

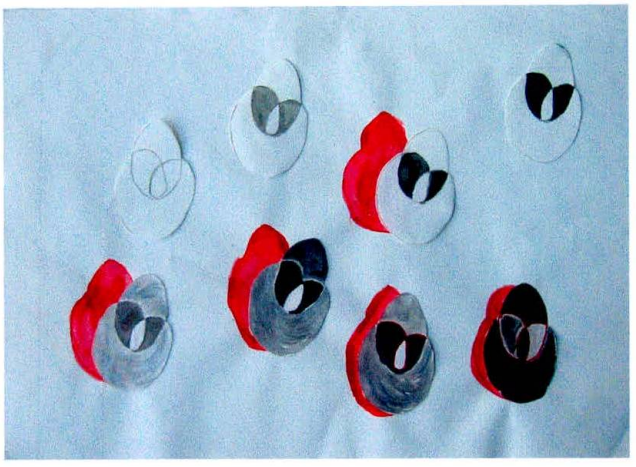


Fig. 5. An image of the pharmakos emerges. (Jan 98)

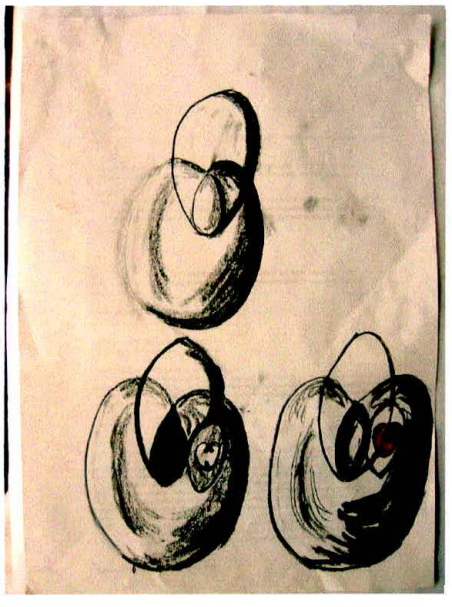


Fig. 6. What happens in the heart of the pharmakos? (Jan 99)

Figs. 7 & 8. Bearing away contagion.

Sculpture in hessian, clay, charcoal, acrylic paint and glue. (Feb 99)

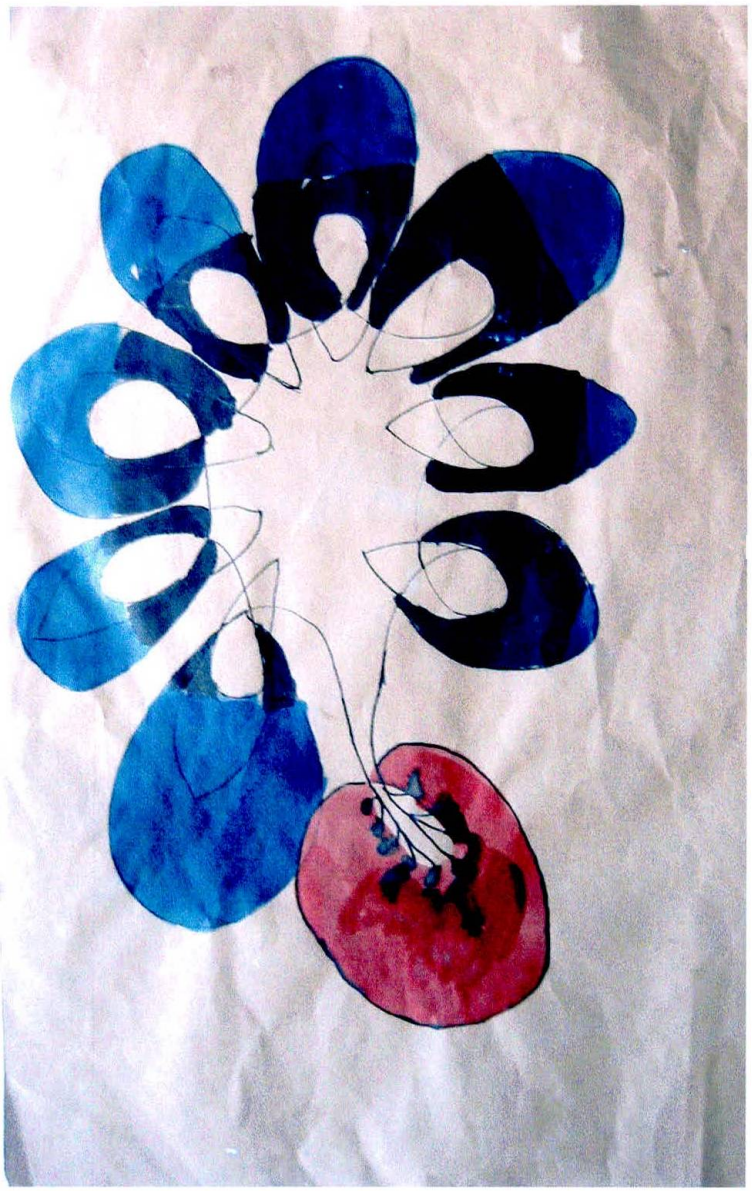


Fig. 9. The community heals, as one heart turns black. (Aug 99)

Fig. 10. Mating elements. (Aug 01)

Fig. 11. The scapegoat regurgitates the pharmakos. (Sept 01)

Fig. 12. Generation is not passive: Piercing. Mating. Digesting. (Aug 01)

Fig. 13. Cracking the load of the pharmakos. (Aug 01)

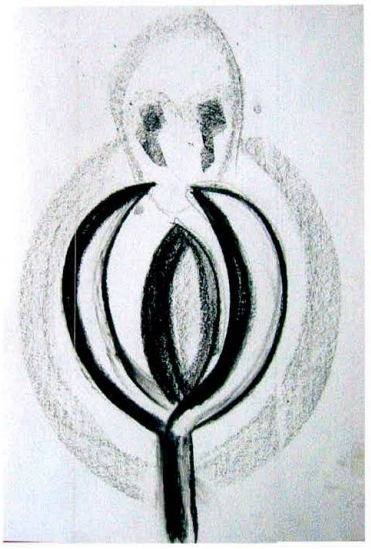
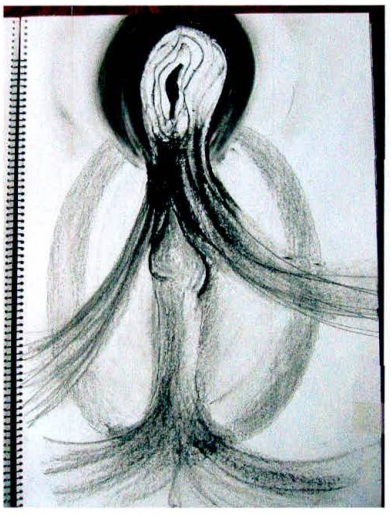
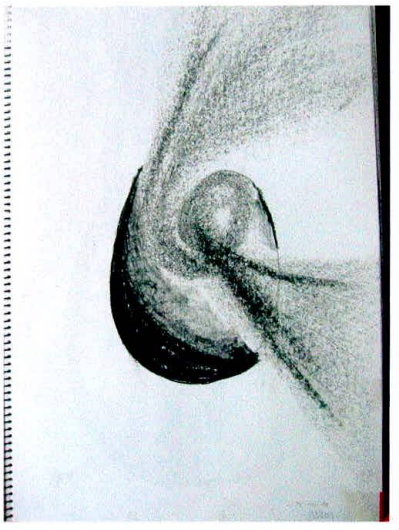


Fig. 14. Turning in to face one's limit. (Oct 01)

Fig. 15. Invisible guests. (Nov 01)





Figs. 16 & 17. Slipping across membranes. (Dec 01)

Fig. 18. The pharmakos comes to life and watches. (Sept 01)

Fig. 19. Discharge. (Sept 01)

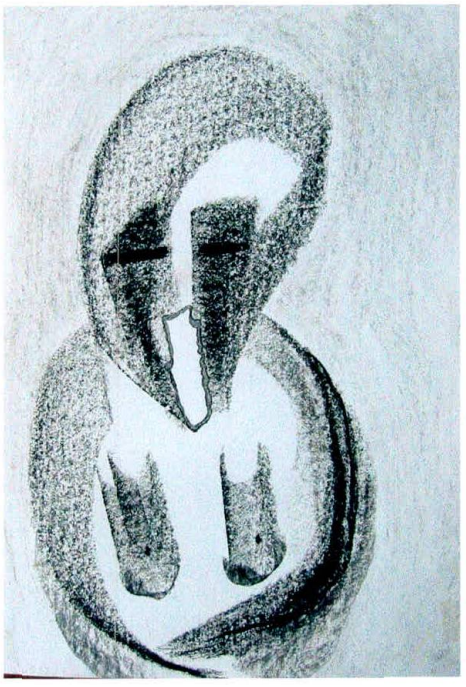


Fig. 20. Emotion: breaking down elements of distress. (Jan 02)

Fig. 21. Emotion: growing new elements from the broken down elements of distress. (Nov 01)

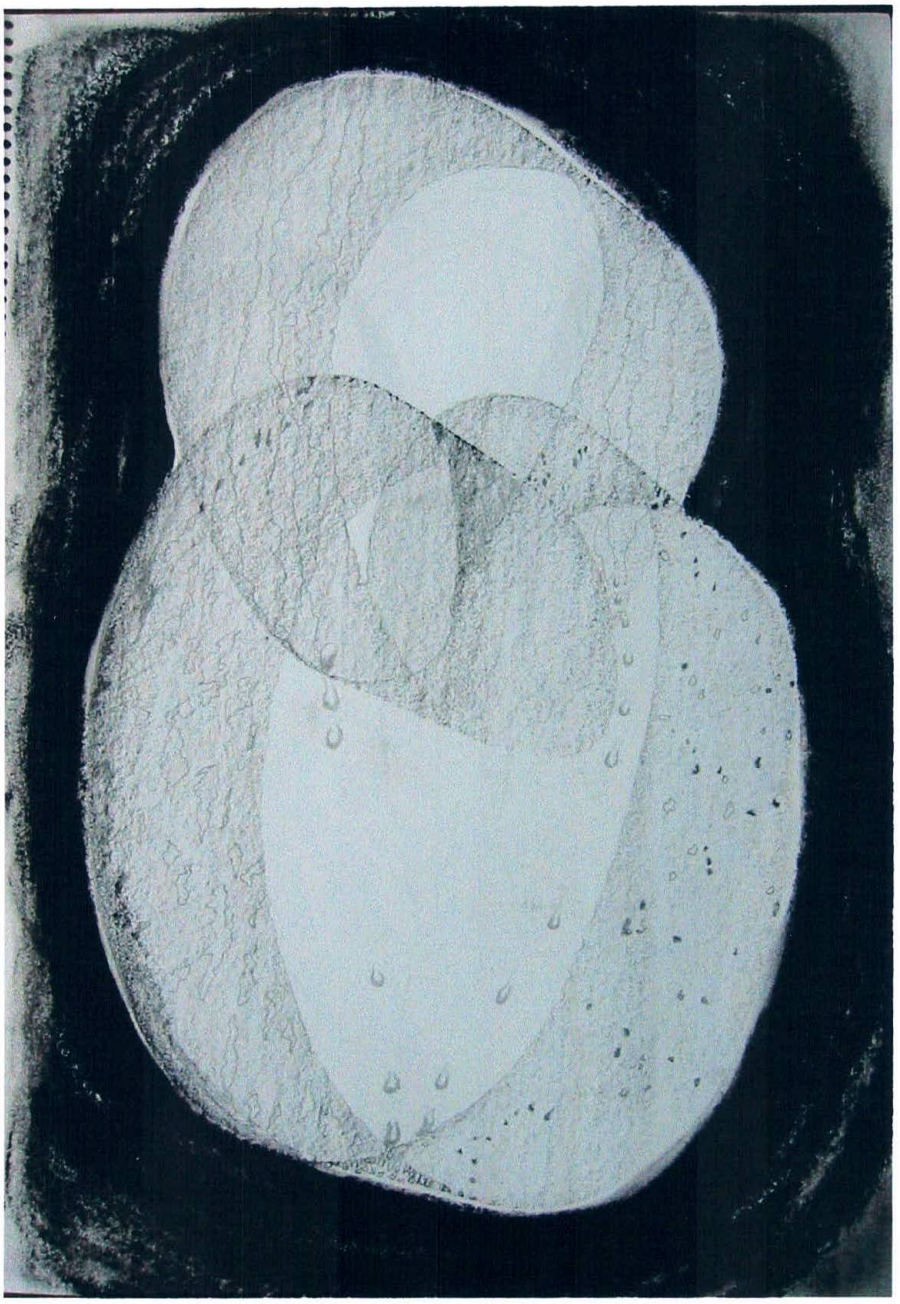


Fig. 22. Working inside to break down and build up. (Jan 02)

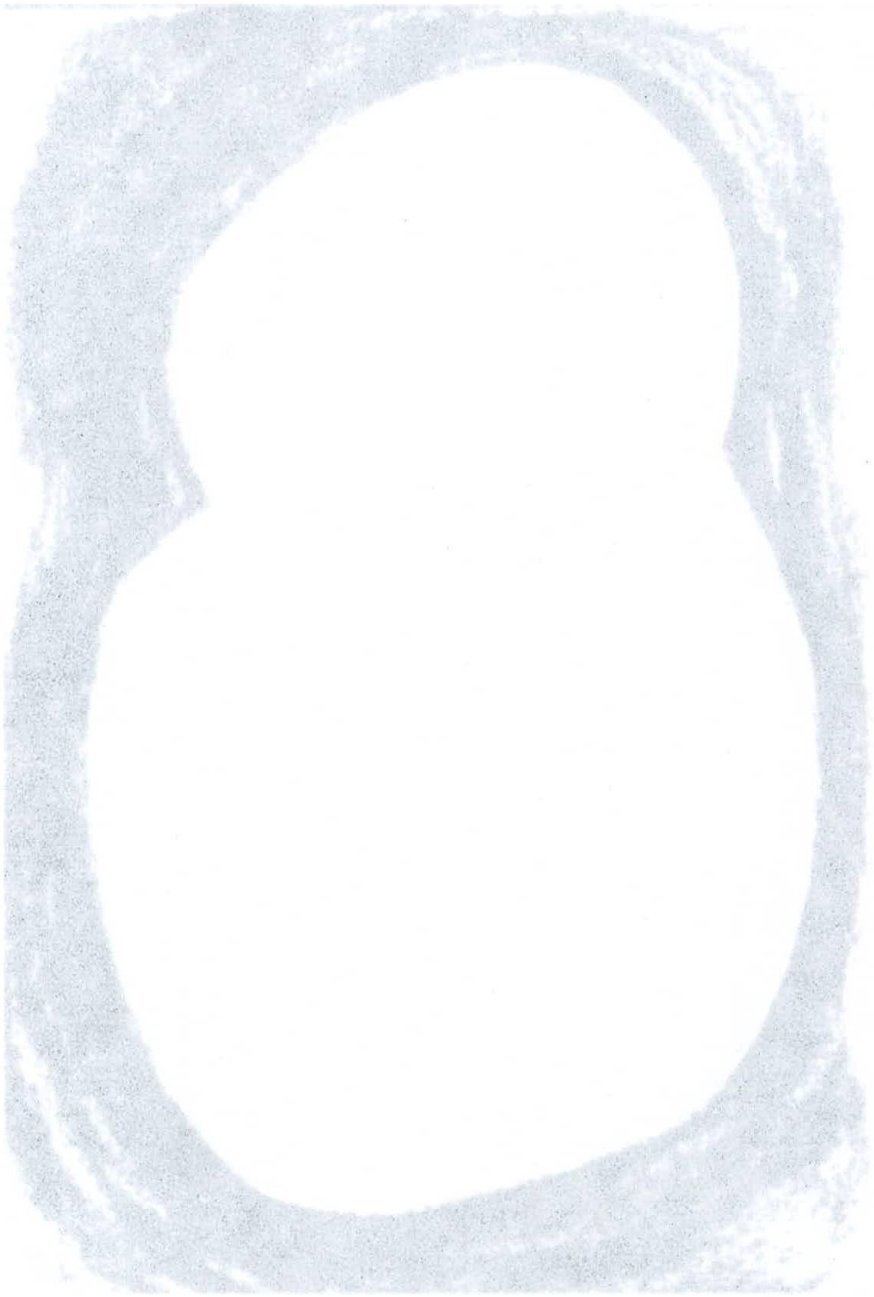


Fig. 23. Living pharmakos (Mar 02)

Fig 24. Ouroboros gives birth in the shadow of the pharmakos. (Mar 02)

Fig. 25. Being pierced. (Mar 02)

Fig. 26. You can see a goat thinking. (Sep 03)

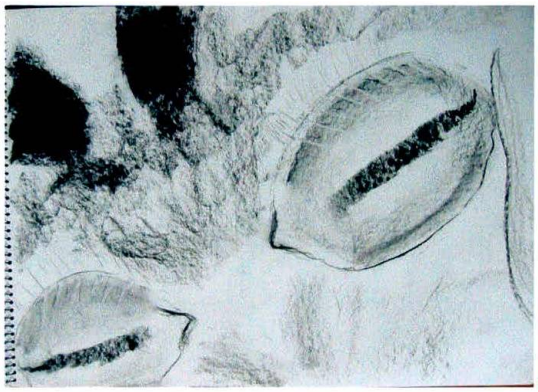


Fig 27. The eyes see forever. (July 03)

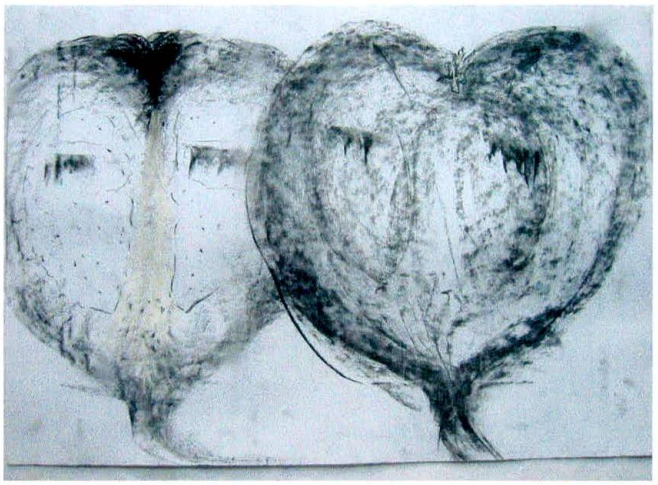


Fig. 28. The goat in the fig. (Oct 03

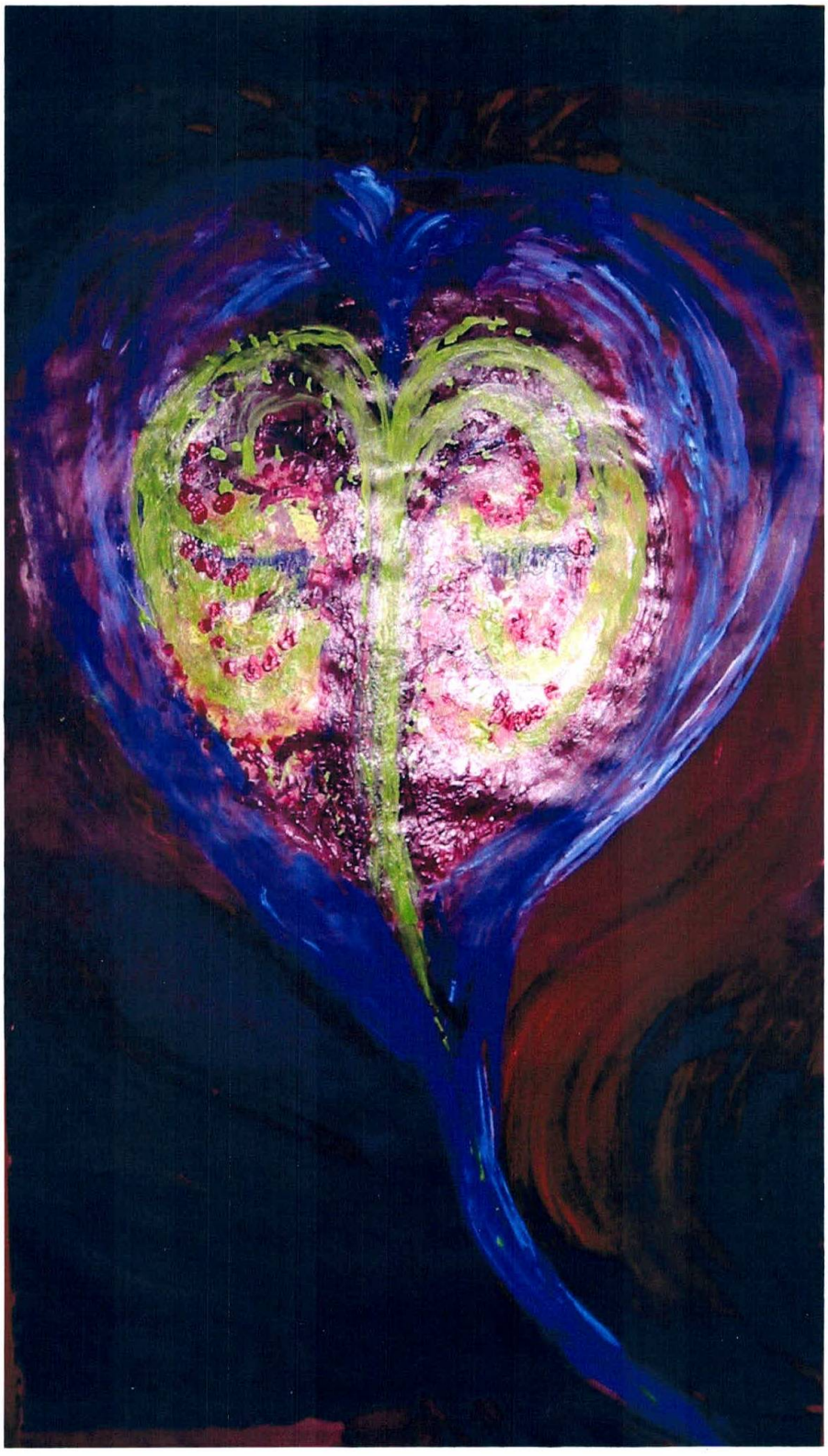


Fig. 29. The goat in the fig. (Dec 03)

Fig. 30. Fertility within. (Dec 03)

. Working inside to break down and build up. (Jan 02)