

# **DREAMS, DESIRE AND ADDICTION:**

## **AN ARCHETYPAL ANALYSIS**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Masters of Social Science in  
the Department of Religious Studies and  
the University of Cape Town.

April 1998

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis suggests that dream analysis is a crucial theoretical tool, not simply to assist the individuation process, but also to gain understanding of the severing of body from soul that is so linked to addiction. Thus the thesis proposes that dream analysis is a key means to access one's spirituality, not simply a psychoanalytic technique. It draws on a range of disciplines and discourses, located in a Jungian and ecofeminist framework, to suggest that a growing crisis of ill health - at both individual and ecological levels - is attributable, in essence, to a loss of soul. It focuses on addiction as a reflection of this loss, attempting to show that the relentless craving of the addict is best understood as spiritual hunger. The deep desire which underlies this hunger is expressed in multiple ways in our dreams. A major aspect of the thesis is an attempt to explicate the nature of the loss, and of the hunger which points to it. I suggest that both have their roots in the patriarchal conquest and denigration of women and the feminine, which may be seen inscribed on the ravaged bodies of women and Mother Earth.

The first four chapters lay the groundwork for the case study of a woman whose experience illustrates much of the complexity of this theoretical discussion. The value of dream analysis as a theoretical tool which actively assists the individuation process is presented in Chapter 1 within a multi-disciplinary framework. In Chapter 2, the focus details and analyses the Jungian model and approach to dream interpretation in preparation for the concluding case study. Parallels between relevant aspects of the Buddhist

and Hindu traditions and Jungian models are also explored. Chapter 3 examines archetypal patterns of addiction seeking to understand the dynamic of wounded desire and displaced spiritual hunger. Postmodern links are made. Chapter 4 suggests that the devaluation and violation of the female body has its roots in the elevation of the patriarchal sky god of the Abrahamic tradition. The need for a rigorous application of a hermeneutic of suspicion towards androcentric constructions of meaning is highlighted and related to the vulnerabilities females experience in relation to embodiment. Foreshadowing key issues of the case study and linked clearly to the thematic of addiction, the impact of sexual abuse on the child's experience of embodiment becomes a theoretical focus. The case study conducted with a 31-year-old bulimic after her release from hospital, attempts to demonstrate the practical relevance of these ideas. A series of dreams recorded by her are analysed thematically and interpreted to support the claim that dreams offer a window on the transformative process of soul recovery.

Thus major theoretical issues explored include the nature of the feminine, various notions of "soul", themes of embodiment in relation to the disembodiment characteristic of the addict, the contemporary relevance of the archetypal imagery contained in myth and folk tales, and convergences between Jungian, ecofeminist, New Age, Eastern and postmodern discourses. Dream work, I suggest, opens the way to healing and empowerment.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For Caro, who took me into the heart of the matter and taught me so much there.

Alex, you have my eternal gratitude for your commitment to your own psychological growth and process, and for your enthusiasm to work with me in the exploration of the deeper dimensions that we have both found so meaningful.

Thank-you my son, Adam, for your age-old, four year-old wisdom and your beautiful, powerful spirit. You have challenged me tremendously in the writing of this.

I am also deeply indebted to my supervisor, David Chidester, and my analytical supervisor, Renee Ramsden. Thank you, David, for your skill, insight, sensitivity, patience and good humour. Renee, you played an absolutely crucial role for both Alex and I. Thank you for your own deep commitment to the craft.

Thank you my dear friends and gifted editors, Shauna Westcott and Mary Armour, for your strength and generosity throughout some dark and desperate times. I shall always cherish you both for the being the sources of wisdom, clarity and depth that made all the difference.

To another dear friend, Annie Leatt, thanks so much for your invaluable assistance with the computer in the race for deadline, and for our more leisurely discussions around Bynum, Foucault and bulimia.

Thank you, also, to a long-lost friend, Jeremy Burnham, for introducing me to the New Age healing ethos of our time.

And finally, thank you Sia, for our dialogue that clarified and shifted so much in the direction of healing at a most difficult and crucial time.

## INTRODUCTION

There are many kinds of power, used and unused, acknowledged or otherwise. The erotic is a resource within each of us that lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane, firmly rooted in the power of our unexpressed or unrecognised feeling. In order to perpetuate itself, every oppression must corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change. For women, this has meant a suppression of the erotic as a considered source of power and information within our lives (Lorde 1989: 208)

If "the erotic" is read here to mean the instinctual, creative, spiritual life, then this thesis seeks to demonstrate the value of clear engagement with the depths of one's dream life as a vital facet of this domain. Consider that erotic comes from the Greek word *eros*, the personification of love in all its aspects; born of Chaos, it epitomises creative power and harmony. My premise, then is that our dream-life is a vital and valuable part of this creative flow. In our age, however, the rational ethos of technological, post-modernist, post-industrial socio-cultural constellation, which has been produced by centuries of patriarchal domination, seems to have created an enormously displaced hunger. This hunger has been variously identified (Woolger 1983, Moore 1992, Woodman 1993) as a craving for the soul-life. This displaced spiritual craving appears to be ritualised in the rampant addictions that ultimately devastate so many modern lives.

A key principle that gives form to my critical feminist hermeneutic of healing is the growing understanding that our wounds are the source of our power. Healing the fragmentation and divisions of our death-loving society requires a radical transformation in both our understanding of the world, and our motivations for action in it.

This thesis values and demonstrates the eclectic approach offered by multi-disciplinary discourse, although the keynote throughout is feminist. The nature of the feminist Eros forms a leitmotif of the thesis, which aims to build an understanding of the value of, and need for, more "heart" and the soul work best enabled by dream analysis. The thesis examines the difficulties women experience in relation to their embodiment and explores why. In this regard, ecofeminist critique raises questions about the symbolism paralleling personal and global issues. This in turn raises questions about displaced desires - addiction and starvation, the language of the body and the symbolic language of dream. Thus the ecofeminist lens focuses on the links that can be made between the denigration of both women and nature within the dominant patriarchal ideology, and the real-life problems experienced by women on earth today which reflect this deep background. Aspects of the conceptual framework of the New Age healing field are brought into relief in this endeavour, which concludes with a case study intended to demonstrate the practical application of this theory.

Chapter 1 proposes that dream analysis is valuable not only as a route to individuation but also as a tool for psychic survival in our highly stressed times. A distinction is made between the theoretical perspectives of so-called hard and soft thinking. The assumption of many Westerners that waking reality is a fail-safe position is contested. Furthermore, it is argued that the art of dream analysis is structured around the ability to circle, spiral and layer, rather than deployment of a linear approach. The theoretical perspectives utilised are primarily Jungian and ecofeminist, although these are clearly situated within the broader debates raised by multi-disciplinary discourse on the role of dreams within the psychology of religion.

Chapter 2 focuses on the methods of dream interpretation developed by Carl Gustav Jung using the differences between the Jungian and the Freudian approach as a starting-point. It attempts to outline a comprehensive model of Jungian dream analysis for interpretive purposes. Key techniques, such as identification of the dramatic structure of dreams and the phenomenon of compensation, are detailed, as is the skill of amplifying free association. The feminist Jungian debate around gender and soul and the place of the anima and animus in psychotherapy are examined. This chapter therefore delineates the technical infrastructure, which will be brought to bear on the case study in Chapter 5. It concludes with an examination of parallels between Buddhist tantric practices and the Jungian analytical process. Other similarities and differences between Hindu, Buddhist and Jungian perspectives are noted.

Chapter 3 employs Jungian methods to examine the archetypal patterns which can be seen to form the underbelly of addictive behaviours. It explores the figure of Dracula as a mythic theme and symbol for our time, germane to the drivenness of the eating-disordered, alcoholic, drugging, work-addicted or sex-addicted person. This chapter aims to illuminate the nature of displaced desire and foreshadows an understanding of incest in connection with demon lover and father fixations in the case study of Chapter 5. Issues relating to a gendered study of cultural embodiment have become a significant field of discourse in religious studies over the past decade. Historian Caroline Walker Bynum has charted the territory in her exploration of the gendered meaning and function of the nature of ascetism in the high Middle Ages and how it relates to the question of the social, religious and psychological structures of women's lives.

Chapter 4 focuses on how the violation of the feminine principle in patriarchal times has impacted on our experience of embodiment and the feminist Eros. The ecofeminist and Jungian feminist theoretical focus aims to lift out the symbolic links for examination, looking particularly at the damage done by the sexual violation of children, since this is critical to the case study. From a Jungian perspective, the wounded desire and displaced hunger which drives addictions are based in the negative mother complex. The New Age view of the body as a vital diagnostic tool for disorders of the psyche is also applied to this issue.

The fifth and last chapter comprises a case study focused on the dream life of a

talented 31-year-old woman, Alexandra, who is single and without dependents. For the past five years, Alex has binged and purged almost daily. Indeed, the longest binge-free period she has experienced in this period has been 10 days. Her ritualistic pattern used to be catalysed by feelings of anger directed particularly towards her mother, but this seems to have shifted recently to difficulties related to her sister. The shift fits coherently with conscious changes she has made in her understanding of her relationship with her mother and realisations about her sister with which she has been forced recently to come to terms. The past pattern has been that Alex feels she will lose control if such painful feelings are let out: she becomes filled with an acute sense of despondency which precipitates a compulsion to shut down her anger by bingeing. Sweet substances like chocolate and biscuits comfort her, making her feel secure. Later she has an increasing sense of dysphoria and induces vomiting by putting her finger down her throat. Guilt and remorse follow.

Alex and I met at G22, the psychotherapeutic milieu at Groote Schuur Hospital, where I worked as an advanced psychiatry nursing student. In our conversations it emerged that she was fascinated by her dreams and eager to focus on her dream life and the wisdom it might offer. I therefore engaged and paid for my own supervision in order to facilitate such a process responsibly. The supervisor of my thesis also played a clarifying role. Alex found the process extremely valuable and illuminating, as did I. It is hoped that the reader of this thesis will reach a similar conclusion.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE DREAM MOVEMENT

### Introduction

Individuals in diverse cultures have long looked to dreams as a source of spiritual insight and divine revelation (Jung, Collected Works, hereafter referred to as CW; Fromm 1951; Eliade 1964; O'Flaherty 1984; Bulkeley 1993). Reflection on and interpretation of dreams is one of humanity's oldest hermeneutical endeavours, predating by far the advent of psychoanalysis and all other modern psychological theories. The connection between religious perspectives on dreams and the insights of modern psychology has long interested psychologists of religion, for dreams offer uniquely fertile material for comparing religious and psychological understandings of human experience. Certainly, dreams have proven to be invaluable therapeutic aids to psychological healing and the growth of individuals, as this thesis seeks to demonstrate.

The discovery of rapid eye movement (REM) sleep in 1953 catalysed a second, post-Freudian revolution in the science of dreams. A serious interest in Jungian psychology began to take hold in the modern West and this interlinked with a broad-based popular movement that was stimulated by Perls's Gestalt therapy techniques (1969) and pioneered further by Ann Faraday, Patricia Garfield, John Sanford, Montague Ullman and others.

Maguire (1989: 22) notes that this renewed interest in the therapeutic use of dreams arose as a "hybrid product of self-help, alternative health therapy, consciousness-raising, and human potential movements", while Shafton (1996) observes that the contemporary approach to the therapeutic use of dreams emphasises the practical applications of dream work, lucidity, spirituality in both religious and non-religious senses, creativity and psychic events, as well as the healing and insight of conventional therapy. Through its encouragement of forms of deprofessionalised dreamwork, the contemporary dream movement emphasises that dreams belong to dreamers in their everyday lives and do not, in most circumstances, require interpretation by professionals in clinical scenarios (Hillman 1988). Simultaneously, theoreticians, clinicians and experimenters have contributed to and have also been influenced by these developments.

### **Framework and theoretical issues**

The methodological tools utilised in this thesis are primarily Jungian and ecofeminist, although parallels are drawn with New Age, Eastern and postmodern thinking. Such an interdisciplinary focus not only serves the aim of socio-cultural relevance, but also reflects the fact that the academic field of dream studies arose in the latter half of the twentieth century, as an outgrowth of research in diverse academic disciplines, including neurophysiology, psychology, anthropology, literary criticism and religious studies. As Kelly Bulkeley (1996: 237) points out, however, this academic work has been nourished by a surprisingly high level of focused

interest in dreams among the general public. It is particularly noteworthy that in the West, long given to a rationalist bias, large numbers of people are focusing on dreaming as a distinct kind of experience, applying diverse research methods to examine dreaming, and seeking dream answers to a broad spectrum of practical and theoretical questions.

Through the centuries of patriarchal domination body and mind were split asunder, in the quest for progress and civilisation. Chodorow (1984: 39) discusses the patriarchal perception of the instinctive body as a threat, representing the "lower", animal aspects of human nature. As the body's vitality was suppressed, so too was the receptive, feminine principle. As objectivity, differentiation and clarity were prized and pursued, so subjectivity, empathy and wholistic encounter were sacrificed. Both the feminine and the body were defined as "other" and relegated to the underworld where, despised and rejected, they have become increasingly destructive in the darkness of unconscious possession and projection.

According to Chodorow (1984: 39), Jung himself emphasised that the Christian Holy Trinity represents the one-sided values of Western culture, qualities that are masculine, disembodied, rational. Qualities related to the feminine have been devalued, and the experience of the body denied and repressed. This thesis shares Chodorow's view (1984: 40) that the development of the women's movement and the renaissance of attention to the life of our bodies and of Mother Earth reveal the

socio-cultural beginnings of psychological awareness of the personal, cultural and collective shadow. In Aion, Jung opines that the coming Aquarian Age will require us to relate not only to new aspects of ourselves and each other, but to a new God-image - a mandala of opposites that includes feminine and masculine, body and spirit, good and evil.

This thesis centres around three key concepts: dreams, the body and the soul. At a collective level, the key diagnosis of the ills of the modern West is loss of soul, and it is loss of soul that is behind all the deritualised interaction with each other and our environment that is such a core part of deterioration in both individuals and the world around them. Relying primarily on Jungian and ecofeminist arguments, this thesis seeks to provide imaginative and spiritual resources for the use of dreams as a means to access soul and reunite it with body. It therefore examines how an understanding of dreams can contribute to significant improvement in both individual lives and society at large. Can dreams be used as a vehicle for generating and nurturing dialogue toward more effective "treatment" for addictions? Can dreams be utilised in the solution of such social problems as ethnic and racial strife, environmental degradation, sexual and substance abuse, violent crime and the suffering lives of underprivileged children? What other insights do dreams offer into the causes of the social ills of the modern West? What time-frame do they serve? What healing opportunities do they suggest? In particular, what can be learnt at the interfaces between the realms of dream, desire and addiction? How are eating

disorders forms of addiction? Can dream work form a constructive route to self-awareness and healing?

The thesis aims to build theoretical insights into dreams which are then grounded in the practical example of the case study which concludes the thesis. A theoretical tension needs to be raised at the outset. A major methodological / theoretical stumbling-block for a work of this nature is the assumption Westerners tend to make that waking reality is a fail-safe position. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (1984: 9) distinguishes two major Western approaches to the problem of reality: "Most people think that reality is physical, public, external, and somehow 'hard', and they think that what is not real is mental, private, internal, and somehow 'soft'." "Hard" thinkers define themselves within a context of scientific research and rational planning and see dream studies, with their focus on the "inner world" and subjective personal concerns, as far removed from the practical, day-to-day concerns of waking life. As Schroeder (1996: 37) observes, the very nature of dreams makes it unlikely that they would be considered relevant to natural resource management and other environmentally related professions, for example. Jung (1964: 52) himself noted that dreams manifest the subliminal "fringe of consciousness" in which logical relationship and clarity of definition is lacking. Dreams often seem to "evade definite information or omit the decisive point". Clearly, the unpredictable and irrational qualities of dreams seem totally contrary to the kind of logic, precision and objectivity that is required by science.

It is therefore interesting that "irrational" processes such as imagination and intuition have often played a crucial role in the creation of new scientific theories. Schroeder (1996: 37) cites the famous example of the chemist Kekule's dream, which led him to his theory of the ring structure of the benzene molecule. This is one of numerous examples attesting to the fact that the process by which the end result of a scientific investigation is reached often draws on and benefits from intuition, feelings and other irrational mental processes. As Michel (1973: 14-15) puts it:

From the human point of view there appear to be two forms of truth, poetic and scientific, and the two cannot always be made strictly compatible. Scientific facts emerge in the first instance as revelations from the unconscious mind. Where these revelations can be shown to accord with what has already been established, they are accepted. Where they stand alone, they tend to be dismissed as fantasies ... .

O'Flaherty (1984: 311) explores a list of associations with the "hard" / "soft" divide to emphasise how arbitrary such categories actually are:

<b>Hard</b>		<b>Soft</b>
real	vs.	illusory
historical		mythical
true		false

public	private
outside	inside
Western	Eastern
scientific	religious
awake	asleep
present	past / future (memory/prediction)
permanent	transient
sane	insane
male	female

She suggests that "hard" thinkers believe that one should always define what one thinks and that one should always continue to think it; "soft" thinkers believe that one can play it by ear and shift one's definitions as one's understanding grows. Further, "hard" thinkers believe that one cannot entertain two contradictory ideas at once; "soft" thinkers believe that one can. As she points out, however, "hard" and "soft" are ridiculously crude terms for dealing with the complexities of ontology. More importantly, perhaps, the assumption implicit in the hard view, that reality can be pinned down, is seriously questionable (1984: 9-10). Decades ago, the "very hard" discipline of quantum physics pointed to the fact that not even matter - at least at the quantum level - can be pinned down.

The following characteristics of dreams enumerated by Bulkeley (1996: 237-8)

suggest that the "softer" approach facilitates the development of a better honed theoretical instrument:

- Dreaming exposes both the finitude and infinitude of human existence; it reveals our embeddedness in the trivial, essential details of our daily lives and it uncovers our freedom to imagine, to create, to transcend ourselves and our waking world.
- Dreaming, in a ruthlessly accurate way, points back to the past and forward to the future; dreaming dislodges memories of long-forgotten childhood experiences and offers visions of new possibilities lying ahead of us.
- Dreaming is both rational and irrational; dreams portray perfectly reasonable, "lifelike" situations and utterly illogical, bizarre, otherworldly happenings.
- Dreaming refers to both individual experience and to social reality; it draws upon the personal life concerns of the dreamer and upon the customs, common beliefs and language that characterise the social world in which the dreamer lives.
- Dreaming shows both the evil and good within us; in dreams we find our most violent, destructive urges and our most noble ideals.
- Dreaming concerns both mind and body; it is rooted in physiological and

psychological processes in the mental world of thoughts and beliefs and in the physical world of urges, instincts and bodily processes.

### **Nature within, nature without**

In a film made in the Umfolozi Game Reserve entitled Hlonipa - Journey into the Wilderness, Jungian analyst Margaret Johnson comments:

But to experience what goes on inside oneself is not something that is valued greatly in our society; to sit quietly and to experience yourself in your inner musing. People turn on the television set. That seems to me ... a way of destroying your own inner wildness and natural resources. Or to rush off to a movie, or, getting to rush hour traffic, turn on the radio. Anything to shut out the inner wilderness. So we are doing it constantly to our inner selves. And it seems to me that's where the sense of sacred really is needed.

Similarly, Peter Ammann (1995: 1-2), in a lecture entitled "Nature Within - Nature Without: A Jungian Perspective of Nature", notes that human beings began about 2 500 years ago to establish star maps, to help navigate the oceans. Birds, who for millennia have flown in a seasonal rhythm across continents, already had this knowledge. Scientific research reveals that during these long journeys, birds orientate themselves largely according to the stellar constellations. It seems that they somehow carry the star map inside themselves and, therefore, by relating the

outer stars to the inner stars, have instinctively been able to find their way during their remarkable migrations.

In a sense this thesis explores the star maps of our inner psychic territory, in the hope of illuminating routes through some of the dark and difficult areas.

### **The addictive modern West**

Western culture is a highly addictive one. The nature of addiction is multi-faceted, including food, sex, romance, shopping, power, control, television, substances, sleep, gambling, destructive relationships, negative thinking. From a Jungian perspective, the drive to addictive escapes arises from the terror that we are unlovable, which produces self-destructive behaviour and, at a macro level, global self-destruction. In The Fisher King and the Handless Maiden (1993), Johnson identifies the problem as a wounding of our ability to "feel", to express our feelings or to give value to our experience of life. He observes that it is extremely dangerous when a wound is so common in a culture that scarcely anyone knows that there is a problem. Although many feel a general dissatisfaction with our way of life, few know where to look for its origins. We will see how the language of the body and the symbolic language of dreams can be utilised as a potent diagnostic tool.

The ecofeminist theoretical frame operates from the premise that, like a hologram in which any single part contains a picture of the whole, the universe, although manifest

in an infinite number of forms, is nevertheless contained holographically in any particle. Thus the paralytic denial experienced by the individual addict is also a microcosm of the denial experienced by our addictive age. What is being denied, in the end, is that elusive concept, "soul".

Perhaps the most well-known contemporary advocate of "soul" is Thomas Moore. In Care of the Soul (1992: xiv ) he examines the symptoms of distress which appear with increasing frequency in modern psychological practice and notes:

All of these symptoms reflect a loss of soul and let us know what the soul craves. We yearn for entertainment, power, intimacy, sexual fulfilment and material things, and we think we can find these things if we discover the right relationship or job, the right church or therapy. But without soul whatever we find will be unsatisfying, for what we truly long for is the soul in each of these areas.

Moore (1992: 204) refers to a client who dreamt that her oesophagus was made of plastic and wasn't long enough to reach her stomach. He sees this image as a perfect description of one of the main problems of our modern age: our means of connecting to our inner world do not reach deep enough. Moore identifies the oesophagus as an excellent image of one of the soul's chief functions: to transfer material from the outer world into the interior. For the dreamer, however, not only is

the oesophagus too short but it is also made of an unnatural substance, plastic, one that may be read as representing the artificiality of our age.

It is in this context that writers such as King (1996: 227) note that attention to the psyche is a growth industry in the United States today. Torrey (1992) estimated that there were approximately 200 000 mainstream therapists in the country, a twenty-two-fold increase over the number in 1945, when the population was half its present size. In addition, numerous iridologists, numerologists, massage therapists, aura readers, rebirthing experts and so on have swollen the ranks of those offering care to the growing numbers of unhappy Americans. There is ample evidence that this trend has proliferated throughout the First World. For, as Norman Brown (1994) puts it in Life Against Death: "the aim of psychoanalysis - still unfulfilled and still only half-conscious - is to return our souls to our bodies, to return ourselves to ourselves, and thus to have overcome the human state of self-alienation" (cited in Matthews 1997: 11).

### **Balance**

According to the Chinese tradition of the Tao, maintaining balance in the outer world requires that there also be balance within the human psyche. Vice-President of the United States Al Gore (1992: 12) presents essentially the same view in Earth in the Balance, portraying the global environmental crisis as "an outer manifestation of an inner crisis that is, for lack of a better word, spiritual". He sees the human psyche as

consisting of two impulses: one that tries to conserve and protect the world, and another that seeks to manipulate and physically transform it. He argues that the manipulative impulse is dominant in Western culture, an imbalance responsible for creating increasing ecological mayhem. Ecofeminist thought extends this exploration of imbalance to include the global devaluation of women as a mirror or analogy of the heartless Western manipulation of Mother Earth.

An aspect of the patriarchal imbalance in relation to men and women - and one of critical importance to both loss of soul and the related disconnection of soul and body - is the equation of male with culture and the mind, and female with nature and the flesh. Simone de Beauvoir (1952: 239) was an early explorer of the absurdity and danger of this notion:

But to say that Woman is Flesh, to say that Flesh is Night and Death, or that it is the splendour of the Cosmos, is to abandon terrestrial truth and soar into an empty sky. For man also is flesh for woman; and woman is not merely a carnal object; and the flesh is clothed in special significance for each person and in each experience. And likewise it is quite true that woman - like man - is a being rooted in nature; her animality is more manifest; but in her as in him the given traits are taken on through the fact of existence, she belongs also to the human realm. To assimilate her to Nature is simply to act from prejudice.

An important figure among the many feminist scholars who have subsequently developed this line of thought is Dorothy Dinnerstein, author of The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise (1976). She argues that:

The relation between our sexual arrangements and our unresolved carnal ambivalence begins with this fact: when the child first discovers the mystical joys and the humiliating constraints of carnality, it makes this discovery in contact with a woman. The mix of feelings toward the body that forms at this early stage, under female auspices, merges with our later acquired knowledge of the body's transience (1976: 130).

In other words, it is because women mother that they have come to be equated with the body and mortality. The patriarchal hatred of the body thus becomes hatred of women and one of the results is "the self-contemptuous human impulse toward worship of dead automatic things and disrespect for what lives" (Dinnerstein 1976: 218).

Clearly, balance is a metaphor that is meaningful in many areas of our public and personal lives, pertaining to a complex range of practical, social, emotional, ethical and spiritual issues. It is at the heart of the yin/yang *coniunctio* and, indeed, the key to the spiritual disciplines of both East and West. The Buddhist notion of "the Middle Way" and Christian counsel against excess point equally to the central importance of

balance. The imbalances perpetuated by patriarchal thinking within social, and consequently psychological, structures are therefore an important focus of this thesis.

### **Why dream analysis?**

Jungian psychologists see dreams as performing a compensatory or balancing role in the psyche. That is, dreams help restore and maintain psychological balance by complementing and compensating for distortions in the ego's waking view of reality. They offer "a counterpoint (often a more inclusive viewpoint) to the attitude of the dominant ego-identity" (Hall 1983: 37).

This compensatory role of dreams is usually considered within the framework of the psychological development of the individual. Equally important, however, is the role dreams may play in compensating for distortions and imbalances in our collective, cultural views of the world. Bulkeley (1991a, 1991b)) points out that Western culture is unique in restricting dreams to a strictly personal context and that indigenous cultures almost universally look to dreams for guidance in the affairs of the larger community. Dreams point beyond the "dualistic categories and structures of our daily lives to show us that we are all members of a web of being that extends to the whole of the Cosmos" (Bulkeley 1991b: 161). Dream studies should therefore be included as one component of environmental education programmes, since they could help to bring about the transformation of consciousness which many believe is necessary if

the human species is to survive the current escalating environmental crisis. Conversely, Schroeder (1996) suggests that work with dreams in therapy and other "personal growth" contexts could benefit by drawing upon the scientific study of nature for amplifications of dream images and the connection of individual dreams with the larger world of nature and society.

### **Addictions as an aspect of imbalance**

Marion Woodman suggests (1985: 99) that we are self-destructing personally and globally because we have not engaged constructively with the feminine aspect of the Divine. Addicts manifest an extreme form of this self-destructiveness but, as we shall see, they/we are also potential catalysts for the rebirth of the feminine (Woodman 1985: 138). Indeed, there are many signs that the repression of the feminine principle, and the concomitant contempt for nature and the physical body which has characterised patriarchal systems world-wide and over millennia, is finally yielding to feminist insight and discourse. Particularly in the First World, the rhetoric of exploitation is giving way to such concepts as the strategic handling of non-renewable resources and sustainable economy, and in many countries there is evidence of raised ecological consciousness, at least in regard to the world around us. But there is also nature within, the realm of the soul, and this inner wilderness is also threatened by an attitude which tends to exploit, to colonise and ultimately to destroy (Ammann 1995).

In a sense, this thesis is a quest for the soul, an attempt to chart the inner wilderness. A Jungian and ecofeminist framework provides the basis for the exploration which moves on to utilise multi-disciplinary perspectives. In Chapter 2, Eastern, Classical and Tibetan Buddhist systems are contrasted with Jungian understandings of dreams.

### **Embodiment and the feminist Eros**

In her presidential address to the American Academy of Religion's annual meeting in 1985, Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty noted that the concurrent use of the head and heart seemed to violate many of the unspoken canons of scholarship, "particularly the rather nervous scholarship of those of us who study religion" (1986: 232). Her view, however, is that the head and the heart can and should nourish rather than sabotage each other. The need, as Rita Nakashima Brock (1988: xv) puts it, is to "turn patriarchy inside out, to reveal its ravaged, faint, fearful, broken heart, and to illuminate the power that heals heart. It is a power that allows the touching of heart to heart, a healing and touching that guide us toward a greater experience of the sacred in life".

As a metaphor for the human Self and our capacity for intimacy, "heart" involves the union of body, spirit, reason and passion through heart knowledge, the deepest and fullest knowing (Brock 1988: xiv). On the mental and emotional levels, the realm of heart teaches us the importance of forgiveness, self-acceptance and a non-

judgmental attitude towards ourselves and others. On the spiritual level, the heart chakra is associated with the understanding that we are all One (Pawlik & Chase 1988: 66-7). Part of the challenge of being conscious in the modern world is understanding that profound recognition of our primal interrelatedness is the key to finding grace and to healing the wounds to our deepest selves and our society (Brock 1988: 8).

These concepts are explored more deeply in Chapter 4, which includes an examination of the themes of embodiment and the feminist Eros. According to Trask (1986: 92-3), the feminist Eros integrates logos and Eros and "encompasses the 'life force', the unique human energy that springs from the desire for existence with meaning, for a consciousness informed by feeling, for experience that integrates the sensual and the rational, the spiritual and the political".

The affirmation of body, mind and spirit as integral to human well-being has become common-sense in most cultures of alternative healing and other "New Age" discourses. It is not insignificant that the "New Age" followed the resurgence of feminist consciousness in the 1960s, and Brock (1988: 22) is among those who argue that the feminist emphasis on connectedness, wholeness and affirmation of women's bodies and life cycle was an essential precursor to the broader quest for spiritual depth, relationship and power.

## **Ecofeminism**

The primary aim of ecofeminism is non-violent, radical change both within ourselves and in the world around us, through the transformation of power. The ecofeminist notion of transformed power refers not only to power as the discovery of our own innate strength, but also to the paradoxical relational base of personal power. As Rita Nakashima Brock (1988: 34) puts it, the route to self-acceptance and self-awareness is via sustaining, nurturing relationships that co-create us. Thus, ecofeminists aim to move from the collective vision of power as a commodity owned by individuals towards an understanding of it as the bonds which create and nourish, and are recreated and nourished by, our relational selves.

Starhawk (1989: 174) argues that while ecofeminism is a movement with an implicit and sometimes explicit spiritual base, the term "spiritual" can be misleading because the earth-based, body-embracing spirituality of ecofeminism is radically unlike the patriarchal frameworks that divide spirit from, and exalt it above, "matter". Spretnak points out that the Greek concept of *pneuma* referred to both breath and spirit or soul, while the English "spirit" derives from the Latin word "to breathe" (1989: 127).

Poet Susan Griffin makes the same point in more lyrical vein:

I know I am made from this earth, as my mother's hands were made from this earth ... this paper, these hands, this tongue speaking, all that I know speaks to me through this earth and I long to tell you, you who are earth too, and listen as we speak to each other of what we know; the light is in us (1978: 226-7).

This wholistic quality of the ecofeminist vision of the sacred has proved dramatically empowering for many women previously left unfulfilled and/or alienated by patriarchal approaches. The integration of theory and action in reciprocal relation as a primary motif in the feminist movement restores for many a profound sense of personal integrity. The simultaneous paradigm shift in the imaging of the sacred has proved revolutionary. Subservient, self-punitive approaches to the Divine are replaced by authentic celebration of both the life process and the challenges posed by one's part in it.

Common to Jungians, New Agers and ecofeminists, if in varying degree, is the understanding that all life forms are part of one another and of our universal environment. One of the necessary implications of this concept is that healing one's personal consciousness is a contribution to the healing of the planet as a whole. Ecofeminist analysis goes further, however, in offering a comprehensive analysis of oppression, confirming the critical relation between individual and context, and drawing on interdisciplinary studies to demonstrate this.

In this regard it is noteworthy that ecofeminism sees racism as an aspect of the exploitative way of being in the world which characterises patriarchy. If the subjugation of woman was the original sin of a system driven by lust for "power over", then colonisation and the oppression of "the other" were the inevitable sequels. Ecofeminist analysis therefore offers a useful lens for viewing the lack of racial diversity in the dream professions and at dreamwork venues exposed by Shafton (1996: 74). Ironically, Shafton has found that blacks tend to pay more attention to

their dreams than whites do in the United States. Moreover, blacks tend to interpret dreams in terms of social milieu and spiritual reality or "field", while whites incline to an intrapsychic reading. However, many professionals emphasise that blacks, pressed by "reality" concerns, consider dreamwork within the contemporary dream movement a luxury they can't afford, if they are even aware of it. Dream groups, together with other growth modalities, are viewed as (and distanced as) white, middle-class pursuits (1996: 75).

"White" psychology has been justly criticised for its "colour-blindness". However, Shafton (1996: 76) discusses the existence of currents of social activism in Euro-American dream psychology, notably in the tradition of "culturalism". Alfred Adler (1958), one of the original "big three" of depth psychology, urged us to reject many of the values of Western culture. Erich Fromm (1955: 11) initiated a "critical evaluation of the effects of Western culture [on] mental health and sanity". The "neoculturalist" Montague Ullman (1973, 1988) drew on Fromm's social ideas and Adler's advocacy of community outreach for his analysis of "social myths". A leading advocate of dream groups, Ullman points to the "emotional fall-out from the social arrangements and institutions around us" (1988), to "embedded kinds of ignorance" and "power deprivation" (Ullmann & Zimmerman 1979: 184). These all involve "social myths" embedded in the "social unconscious" and appearing "inevitably" in dreams, where they are accessible to dreamwork (Ullman 1973). "To the extent that those involved in dreamwork remain impervious to the deceptions and imperfections of the social order, the work itself will collude with the dreamer's waking collusion with that order"

(Ullman 1992).

Shafton (1996: 77) concludes, however, that activism is not a concern of contemporary white dream culture and that even exceptions like Ullman analysed most dreams not for social (much less racial) but for personal psychological content. Complicating this contextual insensitivity is what Shafton (1996: 79) reports to be a prevailing view in black families themselves, holding blacks to be inferior, if not from genetic, then from societal causes (Banks 1980; Thomas & Sillen 1991). True, black families have "real and definite problems associated with racism and oppression" (Nobles 1978). But often supposed "deficits" may actually refer to features of the African family, adapted to an alien setting (Jackson 1980). Features reported from both Africa and North America include: horizontal kinship ties (partly replacing the nuclear family); "kin-like" relations (informal adoption, care for the unrelated elderly); "interchangeable" roles (children taking adult responsibilities, genders exchanging earning and nurturing); and the prominence of the mother-child bond (Nobles 1974). In this regard it is noteworthy that, while the white single-parent home has been legitimised, the black parallel is held to be pathological (White 1984).

Shafton (1996: 80) clarifies that such issues elucidate the reluctance of blacks to bring their most intimate concerns into white settings where most dreamwork is done. Although the average African-American may not be aware of these anthropological perspectives, they are sensitive to the disharmony between prevailing attitudes to black life and their own, and are alienated from white approaches to mental health by a "history of misdiagnoses and stereotypes" (White 1984; see also Gross *et al.*

1969).

These are among the reasons why Bulkeley (1996: 238) argues that it is vital to appreciate the historical and social context in which the field of dream studies has emerged. A salient feature of modern Western society he highlights is Descartes' philosophical split between the rational individual and the rest of existence. Indeed, many other fundamental conceptual divisions have become defining features of modern Western society. One of the most important of these splits was the division of humans from nature, from the natural environment. Descartes' philosophy helped to destroy the traditional knowledge that humans are integrally *connected* to nature, that we *participate* in nature, that nature is itself a *subject*. The philosophical freedom that Descartes offered was, with regard to nature, taken as the freedom to manipulate, exploit and plunder. Nature was increasingly seen as nothing more than inert matter, a source of raw material to serve human purposes and satisfy human desires (Bulkeley 1996: 240).

### **So what is the "New Age"?**

The New Age is a term employed to describe a growing sense of unity of purpose between many different groups and individuals around the planet. There is no formal creed or structure, since the New Age encompasses multiple life-styles and disciplines, but there are common links to four primary themes.

The first common theme is the premise that each individual is profoundly and

personally responsible for her/his own circumstances, and therefore aspects of life such as accidents and victimhood are seen to be misnamed and misunderstood. The latter point finds its echo in Jung's theory of synchronicity, while the former has direct links with the ecofeminist call for action.

Wholism is another key New Age theme which interfaces with Jung's theory of synchronicity. It refers to the concept that everything is interwoven, there are no coincidences, and therefore, by working with an awareness of this connectedness, we enhance the healing or growth that is in process. As will be seen, this is a crucial component of the ecofeminist theoretical framework too.

Thirdly, life is perceived to be a growth process, constantly urging us towards greater aliveness. New Age healers argue that most people misread the signals and struggle in the opposite direction, but if they develop the inner sensitivity and courage to understand and flow with the current of life, then they will manifest a reality that is more coherent with their soul purpose.

Fourthly, the New Age is characterised by an emphasis on the power of love - not the possessive neediness of soaps and songs but the unconditional gift which empowers giver and receiver alike.

These themes contain sub-themes common to much New Age thinking. Firstly,

attempts are made to replace hierarchical authority structures with communication systems that empower individuals and groups to access their own authority while developing awareness of the whole picture. Next, it is argued that we cannot claim the power of personal responsibility while blaming anyone else, past or present, for what has happened to us. Therefore forgiveness is seen to be an essential healing dynamic for any disease. There is also an imperative towards accepting all people, paths and circumstances in life, since an attitude of openness and gratitude is seen as enabling identification of the healing message, rather than one of judgement or resistance of the messenger. Meditation is understood to be a crucial discipline, in order to experience the true healing flow of one's life. Many forms of meditation are practised, both individually and in groups. This mirrors the ecofeminist call for relatedness as a forum for healing the ills of our time.

Another point of convergence between New Agers and ecofeminists is broad support for the Gaia hypothesis (Lovelock 1979), namely that the planet is alive and that just as humans are on a healing journey, so too is the planet. It is crucial therefore to discern and work with planetary processes rather than desperately trying to apply technological fixes. In a study entitled Worldviews in Transition: An Investigation into the New Age Movement in South Africa, Steyn (1994: 186) points out that although some participants understood God to be an androgynous being, "an energy which combines both male and female in itself", all participants used exclusively male-oriented language when referring to God. She notes that despite the New Age

emphasis on the female principle, the non-inclusive language fails to reflect this transformation (1994: 160). The significance of language will be examined further in Chapter 4.

Viewed from an evolutionary perspective, the New Age is an outgrowth of the human potential movement of the 1960s and 1970s and the arrival in the West of the Eastern disciplines of yoga, meditation and martial arts. Some New Agers go so far as to argue that the process has been accelerated by a strong recent initiative from extra-terrestrials - guides, angels, channelled teachings, UFOS.

Thus we see that the New Age comprises a multi-faceted attempt to heal the ills of the West that are both individual and cultural, and the dream movement is a vital part of this. New Age healing techniques include naturopathy, homeopathy, acupuncture, shiatsu, aromatherapy, Swedish massage, dreamwork, yoga and other meditational practices. Indeed, a strength of the New Age is that it has turned to other cultures in a quest for healing the loss of soul that plagues individuals of the modern era.

In many cultures, the work of assisting individuals to heal themselves was performed by a shaman, who was often known as "the Wounded Healer". Shamans were humanity's first doctors, psychiatric healers and priests, as the oldest records of human existence attest (Matthews 1997: 3). Shamanism works directly in the realm of the soul, and thus offers a particularly potent method for treating the woundedness

of the West.

A teacher of Celtic Shamanism throughout Europe and the United States, Matthews notes that in recent times shamanism has become almost as widespread a practice as it was long ago; teachers and practitioners have emerged throughout the West and have begun to instruct people in the techniques of the inner journey and cooperation with the spirits of that realm. Concurrently, they have begun to re-educate people in the mysteries of the land, which itself contains potential for healing.

Discussing the healing power of shamanistic techniques, Matthews (1997: 5) notes the urgent contemporary need for stories that prompt one to question one's present state of being, to identify and acknowledge diverse wounds, and to actively seek healing for them through the image of the story. The language of myth and folk/fairy tale is arguably the language of the soul, and also the language of symbol and dream. It is here that Matthews urges us to look, again and again, for the images and signs of woundedness and for the hope of a cure.

An aspect of woundedness we all experience derives from our failure to interact with our environment, our assumption of complete authority over it, and more broadly in our profound dislocation from the cosmos in which we live. Older cultures recognised this to be a primary source of sickness, both of the soul and the body. As Matthews (1997: 8) asks, if we become out of phase with the universe of which we

are an integral part, how can we be either whole or healthy?

A "mythic" story from the Sufi tradition elucidates the matter. Jeremy Taylor (1996: 140-1) points out that although it is seemingly about a distant, non-technological world of donkeys, camels and rural villages where everyone knows everyone else, it is also an ironic and accurate commentary on the contemporary Western psycho-spiritual dilemma:

It seemed that the incomparable Mullah Nasrudin had lost his precious gold ring. He wandered through the streets of his village staring at the ground, searching for his lost treasure. His friends and neighbours noticed his concentrated efforts, and soon they all became involved in the search.

Finally one of them thought to ask Nasrudin, "Where do you last recall having seen the ring on your finger?"

Nasrudin casually responded that the last time he could remember actually having the ring on his finger was a while ago, when he was shovelling dung in the course of cleaning the stable behind his house.

"Oh!" said his friend, "then we should concentrate our search there, don't you think?"

"Oh, no!" says Nasrudin, "the light's much better for looking out here!"

Taylor (1996: 141-2) observes that, read symbolically, the Mullah Nasrudin is an

archetypal trickster/fool, representing human consciousness itself, who chooses to search for the archetypal "lost treasure", the "gold ring" which symbolises depth of commitment to and relationship with something larger than oneself, in the comparatively clean and well-lit public street, rather than in the odorous darkness of his own stable. A vital symbolic theme of this story is that we humans are predisposed to shy away from the work of looking at the dark, nasty (emotional/unconscious) aspects of our individual and collective problems, preferring to engage in repetitive intellectual examinations of the external technical detail "where the light is better" - where consciousness has less difficulty "seeing", but where the lost treasure will not be found.

Indeed, the lost treasure of the soul can be found only by entering the "unfamiliar land" within, as Woolger (1983: 108) puts it in "The Holy Grail: Healing the Sexual Wound in the Western Psyche":

... we must first go within, into that unfamiliar land that we can reach in fantasy, dream, and meditation. And our first awareness will be of dead areas and of the ailing, suffering Grail Hero within. Of head and heart out of harmony with each other ... a sense of sorrow, of loss, of guilt, of need for penitence. Only if we can go beyond fear and strife ... within, and are ready to redeem all the lost gentleness and kindness that are the distressed damsels and loathly brides to be married in us all, only then can we find the Grail.

### Jungian theory

Always a controversial figure, Carl Jung has been appreciated by many as one of the greatest explorers of the human psyche. He was the first to establish the existence of the most meaningful of all paradoxes, namely, that conscious and unconscious exist in a profound state of interdependence with each other, the health of one being impossible without the health of the other. But the consciousness to which Jung referred was not the merely intellectual and rational style of mind exalted by the logical positivists of our day; rather it was the abiding and deepest dream of the unconscious. In his introduction to Jung and Tarot: An Archetypal journey, Van der Post (Nichols 1984: xiv) discusses how as far back as we can trace the history of the human spirit in myth and legend, it incessantly strives to achieve greater awareness, including all sorts of non-rational forms of perception and knowing.

In the Jungian view, the unconscious produces symbols as a tree produces fruit; if a person has the sense to pick and eat this "fruit", s/he can be nourished. If s/he fails to recognise their meaning, however, the fruit will fall and rot and s/he will starve. In other words, the transforming symbol must be consciously recognised if it is to be effective. Only then can the combined energy of consciousness and unconsciousness be activated, making possible a fundamental change of attitude. If these transforming symbols arising from the depths of the psyche can be discovered and realised, the individual is able to find a creative middle way between the

opposites. Jung identified this lived integration of consciousness and unconsciousness as the process of individuation. Individuation requires a receptivity to the archetypal, for this is what suffuses life with meaning. To put it differently, individuation requires a willingness on the part of the ego or consciousness to encounter and seek to establish a relationship with the shadow and other archetypes.

Jung believed that ultimate and universal spiritual realities stand behind the symbols and images of myths and dreams, although he confined himself in his work to what he described as "the objective psyche". His genius is perhaps most evident in his theoretical formulation of such concepts as the collective versus the personal unconscious, the archetypes and the individuation process. However, Jung came under fire from the "hard" thinkers of the scientific world for incorporating metaphysical concepts such as synchronicity, the collective unconscious and archetypes into his theory. He was equally criticised by the religious establishment, which regarded his far-ranging, comparative and syncretic explorations of the spiritual as subversive. Jung himself was of the view, however, that the problem of each one of his patients finally boiled down to a loss of religious meaning or soul, and he insisted that the crucial feature of any religion is its mythology, the provision of myths to live by, the provision of a medium with which to make meaning of life.

### **Dreaming within a socio-political paradigm**

The political is another level at which sensitivity to mythic themes in everyday reality

is valuable. A convincing argument is offered by Johanna King (1996: 229) in her discussion of Charlotte Beradt's The Third Reich of Dreams, which contains dozens of dreams of people living in Germany between 1933 and 1939 - dreams that directly addressed the rising political power of Nazism. Beradt (1968: 7) identifies these dream accounts as "parable[s] par excellence on how submissive subjects of totalitarian rule were produced" in Germany. The dreams lucidly and dramatically record the dreamers' psychological and physical relationships to the rapidly changing socio-political milieu, and expose an astute awareness apparently absent from waking life. The following is an example (Beradt 1968: 229):

I was sitting in a box at the opera, dressed in a new gown, and with my hair beautifully done. It was a huge opera house with many, many tiers, and I was enjoying considerable attention. They were presenting my favourite opera, The Magic Flute. When it came to the line, "that is the devil certainly", a squad of policemen came stomping in and marched directly up to me. A machine had registered the fact that I had thought of Hitler on hearing the word "devil". I imploringly searched the festive crowd for some sign of help, but they all just sat there staring straight ahead, silent and expressionless, not one showing even pity. The old gentleman in an adjoining box looked kind and distinguished but when I tried to catch his eye he spat at me.

This dream occurred in 1933, early in the Hitler era, and affords an unnerving

glimpse of life ahead (King 1996: 229-30). The dream ego is already aware that beauty and wealth will not protect her from the tyranny of fascism, and of the extreme cost of drawing attention to herself and any personal resistance. She envisions a spectrum of positions that members of the society, and perhaps she herself, might take in an attempt to cope: the expressionless passivity of the crowd; the hostile rejecting stance of the old gentleman; the active identification of the policemen with the military-political machine. She does not explore in the dream the possibilities for active resistance, as do some of Beradt's other dreamers. King argues that the feelings and options for action (and failure to act) so coherently reviewed in the dream make sense in relation to the dreamer's psychological and physical embeddedness in the socio-political context of her time, rather than as intrapsychic elements to be "worked on". She maintains that to focus in an unbalanced way on the intrapsychic would produce a sense of paralysis and capitulation on the part of the dreamer, which would leave little scope for the social action so desperately needed then and there.

In the face of this kind of evidence, Calvin Hall (1966) is somewhat sweeping in asserting that: "Dreams contain few ideas of a political or economic nature. They have little or nothing to say about current events in the world of affairs ...". The stance adopted in this thesis is Bulkeley's (1996), namely, that at particular times dreams do relate, clearly and directly, to the political affairs of the community. Indeed, Bulkeley (1996: 189) warns that regarding dreams as purely related to the

personal life concerns of the dreamer, and dismissively interpreting away political images in dreams as nothing more than "symbols" of those personal concerns, may be exacerbating the artificial and dangerous separation of public from private life in First World society. The need, then, is to "look to our dreams with an eye for their political relevance (in addition to their psychological relevance) in order to develop a better understanding of the intimate relationship between the personal and the political realms of our lives" (Bulkeley 1996: 190).

Taylor (1996: 140) is another powerful advocate of the potential of myth and dream to address the psycho-spiritual imbalances of our age. He argues that the stunning short-term economic and political success of our narrowly focused, conscious, abstract, linear, time-limited, technological thinking has caused a secondary effect of distracting us from our deeper, so-called irrational, unconscious, psycho-spiritual experience. In conquering the material world, we have become alienated from two of the oldest, most important and reliable sources of balance, sanity, and evolving self-awareness - myth and dream. He emphasises that "myth" is simply a name for somebody else's religion:

Dream and myth always address the deeper realities of our lives below the surface of appearance. Appearances can be measured; it is the immeasurability of the patterns of meaning that lie beyond appearances, beyond the ability to be objective and stand separate and quantify, that has

tended to make myth and dream seem so foreign and irrelevant to the lives of people in postmodern industrial societies (1996: 140).

This thesis examines how myths live vividly in our conceptual systems, fantasies and symptoms. Indeed, the links between psychology and mythology surface strikingly in the term *depth psychology* proposed earlier this century by Bleuler, the Zurich psychiatrist, as the appropriate name for the new science of psychoanalysis. Paradoxically, this "new" field was actually ancient, for, as Hillman (1979: 24-5) points out, in the choice of this term, and its acceptance, an ancient image connecting depth and psychology appears again.

### **Myth and folk / fairy tales**

Marie-Louise von Franz (1993: 1) observes that fairy-tales reveal the creative fantasies of the rural, less-educated sectors of the population. Since they are worked out in a non-literary form within collective groups, they contain purely archetypal material unobscured by personal problems. Others argue that fairy tales are much closer to the personal story, containing essential truths which have been extracted from many stories and moulded in retelling over generations, thereby becoming more and more collective. Von Franz insists that the relegation of fairy tales to the nursery is a relatively recent development; until roughly the seventeenth century, fairy tales were adult fare.

Moore (1992: 220) defines myth as "a sacred story set in a time and place outside history, describing in fictional form the fundamental truths of nature and human life ... Myth reaches beyond the personal to express an imagery reflective of archetypal issues that shape every human life". He goes on to elaborate on the relevance of myth to our personal lives as follows (1992: 223-4):

Mythology is an aid to seeing our myths, but each of us has our own special demons and divine figures, our own other-world landscapes and struggles. Jung advised us to turn to traditional mythology in order to amplify, to see more clearly and hear more sharply the themes that are special to us .... the important thing is to realise that, although life seems to be a matter of literal causes and effects, in fact we are living out deep stories, often unconsciously ... Soul work involves an effort toward increasing awareness of these myths that form the foundation of our lives, for if we become familiar with the characters and themes that are central to our myths, we can be free from their compulsions and the blindness that comes upon us when we are caught up in them. Again, we can see the importance of imaginal practices such as journals, dream work, poetry, painting, and therapy aimed at exploring images in dream and life. These methods keep us actively engaged in the mythologies that are the stuff of our own lives.

In other words, interdependence of conscious and unconscious facets of our lives

becomes meaningful if we engage with the voices and images of our own inner process. The process of individuation is a journey to self-knowledge, a quest for wholeness. This quest is both enabled by and also consists of an ongoing process of dialogue between ego and archetype, an interactive experience with an inner reality that is felt but rarely understood. Contextualising one's personal individuation process within the broader realm and rhythms of human history produces uniquely insightful perspectives.

From a Jungian perspective, dreams provide a route to valid sources of inner knowledge, access to the deep, healing wisdom of the psyche. In exploring the images that appear in dreams and symptoms, we attempt to illumine another dimension of reality. According to Woodman (1992: 351), the deeper we move into that reality, the more we appreciate the dynamic interchange among the energies. Thus Jungian theory holds that, in the nightly occurrence of dreaming, the human psyche provides a forum for the interplay of the ego, personal complexes and archetypes of the collective unconscious, for dreams reflect the process of the ego's confrontation with the unconscious. Dream images capture the movement of the psyche and, when contemplated, continue to exert a transformational energy. If ignored, however, they repeat or stop and we start to regress. Addictive behaviour and symptoms manifest. Staying with the dream image and the process of reflecting on it is essential, although where it is leading we cannot know (Woodman 1992: 352).

Jung's own advice is " to treat every dream as though it were a totally unknown object. Look at it from all sides, take it in your hand, carry it about with you, let your imagination play around with it" ( CW, 10, para. 320). In a similar vein he warns: "Every interpretation is an hypothesis, an attempt to read an unknown text" (CW, 16, para. 322). If there is a final goal for the Jungian process of dream work and dialogue between the conscious and the unconscious, it is encounter with the Self, the elusive core and deepest realm of the psyche, even, according to some readings, the Divine within. The Jungian understanding of the Self can be linked conceptually to the feminist notion of power-from-within, conceived in opposition to the patriarchal inclination to "power over" others and things. Power-from-within can be seen to refer to the inherent ability each life has to become what, at a soul level, it was meant to be.

The historian Michel Foucault (1926 - 1984) is considered the postmodern theorist most directly concerned with problems of power and legitimation. Essentially, Foucault says power isn't what some possess and others don't, but a tactical and resourceful narrative. We live power rather than have power - it exists in the texture of our lives (Appignanesi 1995: 87). The textural notion of power is a key theme of this thesis. In Anatomy of the Spirit (1996), Carolyn Myss, an internationally acclaimed medical intuitive, insists that consciousness is a magnet; that what goes on behind the eyes is infinitely more real than what goes on in front of them. Therefore, it is important to take responsibility for dialogue with the inner world, using

dream work to start to explore one's psychic territory.

Taylor (1996: 144) asserts that a healthy and appropriate balance of authority and autonomy is restored when the dreamer is encouraged to take primary responsibility for the assessment and interpretation of her/his own dreams. When dreamers feel completely free, and are encouraged to explore the multiple meanings of their own dreams, especially in on-going, participatory, egalitarian dream groups, then their decision-making and creative powers are enhanced, and their social bonds of intimate relationship, responsibility and mutual support are strengthened and deepened. The continuing proliferation of such "leaderless" and "lay-led" groups is one of the most interesting and potentially important contemporary developments in dream-related studies.

However, in the contemporary context of ecological crisis, mass poverty, oppression and abuse of women, children, homosexuals and so forth, it may not be enough to simply engage with one's own psyche. From within the Jungian establishment itself, James Hillman (Hillman & Ventura, 1992: 3) has become vehement:

We've had a hundred years of psychoanalysis, and people are getting more and more sensitive, and the world is getting worse and worse ... We're working on our relationships constantly, and our feelings and reflections, but look what's left out of that ... What's left out is a deteriorating world.

Similarly, King (1996: 227) is concerned that righteous anger about conditions in the world may be read in therapy as intrapsychic fear and anxiety, thus depriving the world of the energy needed to effect changes. Interestingly, Hillman is particularly critical of "inner child" work, since "the child archetype is by nature apolitical and disempowered ... This is a disaster for our political world, for our democracy. Democracy depends on intensely active citizens, not children ... we're disempowering ourselves through therapy" (1992: 6). Hillman envisages a redefinition of the Self as an interiorisation of community.

### **The psychology of religion**

Bulkeley (1993: 349) examines the place of dream study in the psychology of religion, drawing on the work of three leading contemporary dream researchers: Harvard Medical School neurophysiologist J. Allan Hobson, Stanford University sleep laboratory psychologist Stephen LaBerge, and anthropologist Barbara Tedlock. She argues that recent dream research can make vital contributions to current discussion in the field of psychology of religion about such issues as interdisciplinary inquiry, hermeneutics, the cross-cultural study of religious experience, the cultural and religious context of modern psychology, and the practical concerns of pastoral counsellors.

Hobson (1988) developed an "activation-synthesis" model to explain the process of dreaming as follows: during REM sleep, the brain becomes very active and this

random neural activity is then synthesised by higher mental functions, giving the internally generated signals meaning, resulting in a dream. In the synthesis phase of this process, the mind adds meaning to the random neurological activity, creating meaning where there was none.

Hobson's theory targets Freud oppositionally, since Freud argued that dreams arise out of the force of repressed infantile wishes demanding expression. Hobson's view is that the distortion of dreams, which Freud claimed was the result of a psychic censor, is actually a consequence of the mind's brave but fallible attempts to synthesise intrinsically random data. Yet, Hobson insists that dreams are meaningful: "the dream as reported is the transparent and directly legible product of an unusual mode of information processing" (1988: 217). Hobson's accord with Jung's understanding of the dream, if not complete, is nevertheless clear.

Bulkeley (1993: 352) teases out the relevance of Hobson's dream theory for the study of religion by focusing on its neurophysiological account for two key characteristics of religiously meaningful dreams. Firstly, Hobson explains the occurrence of traditional religious symbols and themes in dreams on the basis that the mind is compelled at times, to call forth its "deepest myths" in the process of dream formation. Secondly, the activation-synthesis model suggests that novel, unorthodox religious imagery is the product of the mind's inherent powers of creativity, which are called upon to meet the challenge posed by the sudden influx of random neural data during REM sleep. Thus, Hobson's activation-synthesis theory

provides neurophysiological support for the proposition that dreams can have a religious dimension.

In 1988, Stephen LaBerge published Lucid Dreaming, a work that has had a dramatic impact on contemporary dream research. Lucid dreaming involves the achievement, within the dreaming state, of a degree of consciousness that one is dreaming. A primary interest of LaBerge has been the exploration of the religious significance of his dream research, by relating the experience of lucid dreaming to the experiences of practitioners of Tibetan Buddhist dream yoga. In Tibetan Buddhist traditions, various yogic techniques are employed to cultivate conscious awareness within the dream state, that is, to have lucid dreams. The goal of these techniques is to discover that the dream state is illusory, a creation of the dreamer's own mind. Tibetan Buddhists hold this discovery to be an important step on the path to Enlightenment, the ultimate insight that the world itself and all its phenomena are creations of the mind. LaBerge believes that lucid dreaming can provide the same insights to modern Westerners (Bulkeley 1993: 353). Bulkeley argues that LaBerge's dream research has the following significant implications for the psychology of religion:

- it confirms what Hobson has demonstrated, namely that natural scientific research can make valuable contributions to religious studies;
- it raises vital issues in regard to the nature of consciousness, the epistemology of mysticism and the evolution of spiritual awareness, issues

which all relate directly to the psychology of religion;

- it raises the crucial question of the cultural role of psychology in the modern West. LaBerge believes that modern psychology can be a means to religious experience. More specifically, he believes that his psychological research on lucid dreaming can teach twentieth century Westerners how to have the same kinds of transcendental religious experiences as did eighth century Tibetan Buddhists.

Bulkeley (1993: 354) argues that LaBerge fails to appreciate how the radically different cultural contexts of Tibetan Buddhists and modern Westerners must profoundly influence the experience of lucid dreaming, and its religious, psychological and moral implications. However, he acknowledges that La Berge's work does highlight the religious dimensions of the discipline of psychology in modern Western culture, an area of growing interest in the psychology of religion. We shall explore this further in the following chapter.

Barbara Tedlock, editor of the 1987 anthology Dreaming: Anthropological and Psychological Interpretations, is a major force in the current renaissance of anthropological research on dreams, and a proponent of the view that dream reports and interpretations are inseparable from the cultural contexts in which they occur. To understand how individuals experience, share, interpret, and act upon their dreams requires a full understanding of their culture: their language, social institutions and

the philosophical, psychological and religious beliefs that shape their world (Bulkeley 1993: 354).

Bulkeley (1993: 355) argues that Tedlock's work contributes significantly to our understanding of the religious dimensions of dreams, and that her greatest insight is that dream experiences can both reflect and transform religious world-views. In the first place, Tedlock demonstrates that responsible study of a culture's dream beliefs and practices will reveal the fundamental religious conceptions of that culture. Secondly, she shows that studying people's dream experiences can afford insights into how alterations, innovations and transformations occur in their religion. Dreams not only *reflect* religious conceptions, they often also help to change those conceptions, providing new imagery and insights that can stimulate both conceptual shifts and new religious movements (a view that, as we have seen, Hobson's neurophysiological theory also supports). In essence, then, Tedlock provides new anthropological evidence to support E. B. Tylor's well-known theory that dreams are a vital source in the origin of religious ideas and motivations.

The importance of dream study in the psychology of religion can be summarised under five major themes. Firstly, current dream studies are characterised by a remarkably high degree of interdisciplinary research, including sociologists, literary critics, cognitive psychologists, philosophers, healers, theologians and post-Freudian and post-Jungian depth psychologists. Bulkeley suggests that psychologists of

religion could benefit significantly by participating more actively in this lively dialogue: substantively, by learning more about a long-venerated source of religious experience; and, methodologically, by enhancing the skills of practical integration of the findings of these diverse disciplines.

Secondly, dreams provide an excellent source for exploring questions of language meaning and interpretation. Dream interpretation is one of history's oldest hermeneutic arts, and yet it has been relatively neglected by contemporary interpretation theory. Bulkeley identifies Paul Ricoeur (1967, 1970) as one of the few hermeneutic philosophers who have recognised that dreams emerge from a unique intersection of the physiological, the psychological, the cultural and the spiritual realms of human existence. Thus he recognised that dreams pose challenging hermeneutic questions.

Thirdly, dream study holds great promise for the cross-cultural examination of religious experience. Bulkeley argues that Tedlock and other anthropologists have broken new ground in guiding the psychology of religion away from the reductionist excesses of the past towards a more fruitful engagement in cross-cultural study.

Fourthly, dream research offers a valuable perspective on the cultural and religious context of modern psychology. The psychology of religion has increasingly sought greater awareness about the place of psychology in modern Western culture. It has increasingly asked questions about what psychology is and is not, and which

functions of traditional religion psychology can serve. The study of dreams can tremendously enrich our reflections on these questions. It is a striking, yet insufficiently studied fact that in other cultures dreams have been of interest primarily to religious thinkers and specialists (that is, mystics, shamans and theologians). In modern Western culture, however, dreams have been of interest primarily to depth psychologists. This is clearly a potentially fruitful field of inquiry in regard to the relationship between religion, psychology and the question of cultural context.

Finally, contemporary advances in dream study provide valuable insights for pastoral and other counsellors. Recent dream research strongly supports the idea that dreams can be genuinely religious phenomena. In other words, dreams often speak directly to our deepest spiritual concerns; they can reveal with remarkable clarity the distinctive qualities of our religious world-view (Hobson's "deepest myths"), and they can offer up novel and powerfully creative solutions to our most pressing spiritual troubles (Bulkeley 1993: 357).

The potential of dream analysis will be further examined in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO: APPROACHES TO DREAM INTERPRETATION

The dream is a little hidden door in the innermost and most secret recesses of the soul, opening into that cosmic night which was psyche long before there was any ego-consciousness, and which will remain psyche no matter how far our ego-consciousness extends (Jung, CW 10, para. 304).

Most contemporary theories of dream interpretation are historically rooted in or are in general agreement with one of the following schools: Freudian, Jungian, Existentialist or Gestalt. Although historical, anthropological and Biblical sources suggest that humanity has always been concerned with the significance of dreams, Freud was the first theorist to develop a scientific method for dream interpretation. Despite the ridicule of the majority of his colleagues, he courageously opened the way to a psychological understanding of dreams. Mattoon (1978: 5) suggests that Freud's theory is better known than Jung's because it appears easier to understand and also because Jung's writings on dreams are dispersed among his many works with little systematisation.

Jung's theory of dream interpretation diverged from Freud's from 1909 onwards for a number reasons. For Freud the personal unconscious is the whole unconscious. It is the repository of "preconscious" thoughts or memories that are close to awareness or forgotten, and also of more repressed instincts and conflicts which have never

reached conscious awareness. The unconscious is amoral but its sexual wishes conflict with the morality of the ego and emerge disguised in imagery in order to evade preconscious censorship.

Within this Freudian model, the dream served to release tension through hallucinatory "wish fulfilment", which gratifies forbidden wishes. Freud was adamant that the main function of dreams was to disguise the repressed material and keep it from conscious awareness. Therefore an expert was required to understand the hidden meanings and images.

In 1909, while they were both lecturing in the United States, Freud and Jung had been analysing each other's dreams. On the return voyage, Jung had a dream about a house which produced a turning-point in their relationship:

The uppermost floor was inhabited and this he understood to represent his conscious mind. Descending the stairs to an uninhabited ground floor with mediaeval furnishings and a brick floor; he explored every room. He felt this symbolised the first level of the unconscious. The deeper he went, the darker and more alien the scene became. He found a heavy door which led down to a cellar from Roman times. His interest grew intense as he looked at the stone slabs on the floor, and in the dust were scattered bones, broken pottery, and two skulls that were very old (Jung 1963: 158-161).

Freud focused on the skulls, seeing them as death wishes Jung had toward people in his personal life. Jung felt a far more profound interpretation to be valid and was no longer prepared to defer to Freud. Jung later wrote that the dream "represented a kind of structural diagram of the human psyche; it postulated something of an altogether impersonal nature underlying that psyche ... It was my first inkling of a collective *a priori* beneath the personal psyche".

Jung devoted the next 50 years to studying archaeology, philosophy, mythology, religion, art and alchemy, since he found these areas fertile ground for exploring universal patterns and themes fundamental to the psyche, so as to understand the meaning of the symbols that he found in dreams. Signell (1991: 27) points out that Jung was an extremely conscientious researcher, analysing 67 000 dreams before attempting to theorise about them for his series of books.

Jung did not approach the reported dream as the facade of the latent, hidden dream. Nor did he understand dream images to be inferior forms of thinking that could be made clear and logical in waking life. He insisted that dreams were symbolic and here he used *symbol* in its authentic sense of that which indicates what is not yet fully known. Hall (1977: 121) points out that for Freud the images in a dream were what Jung would call *signs*: things that stood for each other in a fixed way (snake = penis, etc.), although Freud used the term *symbol* to indicate these relationships.

Unlike Freud's concept of the id, Jung's personal unconscious was value-neutral and heuristic, and comprised of:

all those contents that became unconscious because they lost their intensity and were forgotten or because consciousness was withdrawn (repression) and secondly of contents, some of them sense-impressions, which never had sufficient intensity to reach consciousness, but have somehow entered the psyche (Jung, CW 8: 321).

Contradicting Freud's theory that the dream functions to preserve sleep, Jung assigned a psychological function to dreaming. Jung came to believe that the function of dreams was not to obscure but to bring unconscious contents to awareness, a view that is commonplace these days.

Jung agrees with Freud that past, individual experiences may be repressed and form part of the personal unconscious. However, his major departure from Freud was his discovery of contents in the psyche beyond the personal unconscious, namely the archetypes. Thus he theorised that the conscious attitude of the dreamer exists in dynamic relationship to the constellated form of the unconscious. Further, the latter contains material that has not originated from personal experience, but rather from "ancestral" experiences. To take this argument further, dreams are the language of the unconscious and their images express the archaic potentialities in the collective

unconscious, the archetypal images. In order to open the healing channels from the collective unconscious, conflicts in the personal unconscious must be made conscious, otherwise the way to equilibrium between consciousness and the collective unconscious is distorted.

For Jung, the collective unconscious is the universal, collective matrix out of which we all live. It manifests in instinctual actions and their accompanying emotions, and also in recurrent themes, images and motifs. According to Jung, symbols and images appear in dreams because they are the natural language of the unconscious, containing content that compensates for whatever one-sidedness the conscious mind happens to have. Jung and his followers hypothesise that the unconscious seems to select what messages a person *needs* to hear (Signell 1991: 26).

In Man and His Symbols, Jung (1972: 29) discusses how his analytical techniques for interpreting dreams with analysands developed away from classical Freudian techniques:

While "free" association lures one away from that material in a kind of zigzag line, the method I evolved is more like a circumambulation whose centre is the dream picture. I work all around the dream picture and disregard every attempt that the dreamer makes to break away from it. Time and time again I have had to repeat the words: "Let's get back to your dream. What does the DREAM

say?".

### **Working with the dream: an examination of Jungian techniques**

Useful insights into the procedure for analysis, and the degree of skill required, are afforded by Jung's (1985: 9) discussion of a dream presented to him by a man of whose intimate life he was ignorant. The dream went as follows:

I found myself in a little room, seated at a table beside Pope Pius X, whose features were far more handsome than they are in reality, which surprised me. I saw on one side of our room a great apartment with a table sumptuously laid, and a crowd of ladies in evening-dress. Suddenly I felt a need to urinate, and I went out. On my return the need was repeated; I went out again, and this happened several times. Finally I woke up wanting to urinate, and I went out.

The dreamer explained the dream to himself as caused by irritation of the bladder, a common assumption for dreams of this kind. Jung comments:

He argued vigorously against the existence of any components of great individual significance in this dream. It is true that the facade of the dream was not very transparent, and I could not know what was hidden behind it. My first deduction was that the dreamer had a strong resistance because he put so much energy into protesting that the dream was meaningless. In consequence, I did not venture to put the indiscreet question: Why did you compare yourself

to the Pope? I only asked him what ideas he associated with "Pope".

The dreamer, who was 31 years old and unmarried, came up with "The Pope lives royally" (a well-known students' song). His association with being seated beside the Pope was: "Just the same way I was seated at the side of a Sheikh of a Muslim sect, whose guest I was in Arabia. The Sheikh is a sort of Pope." Noting that the Pope is a celibate, the Muslim a polygamist, Jung's thought was that the idea behind the dream seemed clear: "I am a celibate like the Pope, but I would like to have many wives like the Muslim." He kept silent about these conjectures, however (1985: 10). The dreamer identified "the room and the apartment with the table laid" as "apartments in my cousin's house, where I was present at a large dinner-party he gave a fortnight ago". As for "the ladies in evening dress", the dreamer noted: "At this dinner there were also ladies, my cousin's daughters, girls of marriageable age." Jung comments:

Here he stopped: he had no further associations. The appearance of this phenomenon, known as mental inhibition, always justifies the conclusion that one has hit on an association which arouses strong resistance. I asked: "And these young women?"

"Oh, nothing; recently one of them was at F. She stayed with us for some time. When she went away I went to the station with her, along with my sister."

Another inhibition: I helped him out by asking: "What happened then?"

"Oh! I was just thinking ( this thought had evidently been repressed by the

ensor) that I had said something to my sister that made us laugh, but I have completely forgotten what it was. "In spite of his sincere efforts to remember, it was at first impossible for him to recall what this was. Here we have a very common instance of forgetfulness caused by inhibition. All at once he remembered: "On the way to the station we met a gentleman who greeted us and whom I seemed to recognise. Later, I asked my sister, Was that the gentleman who is interested in the cousin's daughter?"

Jung adds that she is now engaged to this gentleman and that the cousin's family was very wealthy and that the dreamer was interested too, but was too late. Jung elicited further associations as follows:

*the dinner at the cousin's house:* "I shall shortly have to go to the weddings of two friends of mine";

*the Pope's features:* "the nose was exceedingly well-formed and slightly pointed";

*Who has a nose like that?* "A young woman I'm taking a great interest in just now.

"*Was there anything else noteworthy about the Pope's face?*" "Yes, his mouth. It was a very shapely mouth. (Laughing.) Another young woman, who also attracts me, has a mouth like that."

Jung comments (1985: 11) that this material is sufficient to elucidate a large part of the dream. He identifies the "Pope" as a good example of what Freud would call a

condensation. In the first place, he symbolises the dreamer (celibate life); secondly, he is a transformation of the polygamous sheikh; finally, as the person seated beside the dreamer during a dinner, he represents two women who interest the dreamer.

Jung asks how this material is associated with the need to urinate, and seeks the answer by means of the following formulation:

"You were taking part in a marriage ceremony and in the presence of a young lady when you felt you wanted to pass water?"

"True, that did happen to me once. It was very unpleasant. I had been invited to the marriage of a relative, when I was about eleven. In the church I was sitting next to a girl of my own age. The ceremony went on rather a long time, and I began to want to urinate. But I restrained myself until it was too late. I wetted my trousers."

Jung's conclusion is that the association of marriage with the desire to urinate dates from that event. Thus, an underlying complex is indicated by the dream, but significant skill is required to elicit this deeper meaning. In this regard it is important to bear in mind Jung's warning: "The art of interpreting dreams cannot be learnt from books. Methods and rules are good only when we can get along without them" (CW 10: para 325).

At the same time "methods and rules" are clearly critical for those attempting to learn

the art of dream interpretation. Mattoon (1978) and Whitmont and Perera (1989) offer useful systematisations of Jungian methodology which have much in common, while differing in emphasis. Mattoon (1978: 48-9) notes that many dream texts have so few of the necessary elements that they must be considered fragments, more like snapshots than motion pictures, and we will see this in the case study in Chapter 5. However, she enumerates the components of the Jungian approach to dream interpretation which it is necessary to bear in mind.

Firstly, it is important to see the dream text in terms of structure and to examine it for completeness. Next, one needs to be aware of the dream context, the situational material in which the dream is embedded. The context is composed of amplifications of the dream images, which may include personal associations, information from the dreamer's environment and/or archetypal parallels. Further, one needs to consider themes interconnecting the amplifications, as well as the immediate and long-term conscious situation of the dreamer and the dream series in which the dream occurs.

Mattoon (1978: 48-9) emphasises how vital it is to practise auto-critique, the appropriate attitude with which to approach dream interpretation. Firstly, one should assume nothing regarding the meaning of the dream or of specific images.

Secondly, from a Jungian perspective the dream is not a disguise but a set of psychic facts and one needs to keep in mind an awareness of the personality characteristics of the dreamer and the interpreter.

Next it is important to consider whether the dream images can be characterised as objective or subjective. This also relates to the dream's compensatory function. To gain an accurate understanding of this, one needs to start by identifying the problem or complex with which the dream is concerned. Then one ascertains the relevant conscious situation of the dreamer and considers whether the dream images and psychic development of the dreamer require a reductive or constructive characterisation. The last dimension of this theme is to decide whether the dream is non-compensatory: prospective, traumatic, telepathic, or prophetic.

During this process one will need to hypothesise interpretations by translating the dream language in relation to the relevant conscious situation of the dreamer, testing them against the facts and modifying where necessary. Most importantly, one needs to verify the interpretation with the dreamer her/himself, as s/he is the ultimate authority on what interpretation feels meaningful and valuable.

Whitmont and Perera (1989: 4) offer a useful summary of the dimensions of a dream that should be explored when attempting to understand it. They are as follows:

1. the symbolic and allegoric/metaphoric language of dream images;
2. dream imagery related to personal associative material, rational and collective explanatory material, and mythological amplificatory material;
3. various relations between the dream and the dreamer's conscious positions;

4. the dream's dramatic structure;
5. the dream's depictions of the links between personal experience and healing archetypal image(s);
6. body imagery in dreams; and
7. dream images of analyst and analysis as material revealing the transferential and countertransferential relationship.

### **The dramatic structure of dreams**

A dream is a theatre in which the dreamer is himself the scene, the player, the prompter, the producer, the author, the public, and the critic  
(Jung, CW, 8, para. 509).

Whitmont and Perera (1989: 67) note that the motif of the theatre is an archetypal reflection of the psyche's mythopoetic activity, which equates dramatic performance with existence. Unsurprisingly, therefore, dreams have a story-like nature, characterised by Jung as "drama taking place on one's own interior stage" (Let -1: 355, in Mattoon 1978:53).

Dreams are often structured like dramas, having a theme enacted in a specific scenario with dramatic action that begins with setting the theme (exposition). The expositional detail, often omitted or forgotten by the dreamer (and then needing to be

imaged afresh), can provide a key to the whole dream. The peripeteia or development reveals the start of movement out of the fixation: the dynamics, trends and inherent possibilities, likely to become evident in relation to the issue to which the exposition / setting has pointed. Next is the crisis, the high point of the drama where the tension of challenging dynamics reaches the point of culmination. Finally, the lysis - or its opposite, catastrophe - may indicate the way in which the crisis could be resolved. The next dream furthers this process. Whitmont and Perera (1989: 67) maintain therefore, that essential to the art of dream work is the ability to get a sense of the dream as a dramatic presentation, to grasp accurately its dramatic structure.

Whitmont and Perera (1989: 67) observe that when attempting to understand the psychological meaning of the dream's message, it is valuable to start with a feel for the overview of the dream within its series. This tends to provide a grasp of the theme(s) or particular complex(es) in the dreamer's psychology on which the dreams shed light. Another important focus is on how the dream displays in dramatic form the interplay of energies as they are constellated. Such a perspective is further elucidated by the main routes of the dream action in the interpreter's mind, noting the "cast" of characters and images, and the quality and impetus of the action. It is for these reasons that the dreams of the case study in Chapter 5 are organised thematically rather than chronologically.

Whitmont and Perera (1989: 68) comment:

Often, the major content of the dream drama may include images posed as protagonist and antagonist - juxtapositions of alternative tendencies, emotions, styles, motives, and perspectives. These portray oppositional factors within the dreamer's psychology that need to be seen, consciously related to and, perhaps, brought into balance. Such polarisations are often the basic determinants of the dream meaning. They may appear as separate from the dream-ego, or the dream-ego may identify with one side and need to become conscious of the other. Or the oppositions may be posited as problems to be met appropriately. This may be by combat, yielding, befriending, avoiding, etc., whatever the overall dream story implies for the purpose of establishing or ending a relationship between the dream-ego and those factors or figures.

Jung concurred with Freud's view that dreams often give expression to the unconscious contents that are causal factors in neurosis, by giving an accurate picture of the subjective state which the conscious mind denies or recognises only grudgingly. Jung regarded dreams as valuable diagnostic and prognostic tools. The causalistic (Freudian) approach asks the question "Why?" and concentrates entirely upon seeking reasons which are to be dredged up from the past (eg. traumatic childhood events). This may take several years and, during this time, issues of immediate importance in the current daily life of the analysand tend to recede into the

background. Jung asks, "What for?" thus highlighting the compensatory and purposive function of dreams.

### **Compensation**

Movement toward greater unification and wholeness, which seems to be the intent of dreams, is part of the individuation process. Hall (1977: 125) emphasises that this is quite different from the regressive pull backward to the sense of unity of consciousness which exists prior to the development of the ego. Rather, the movement toward wholeness (always a direction, never an achieved goal) is one in which conflicting forces are increasingly tolerated as an essential part of the struggle towards greater consciousness.

Compensation naturally aims at establishing psychological balance and appears as a self-regulatory function of the psyche (CW 8: 288-9). According to Hall (1977: 125), this self-regulation does not imply teleology (CW 7: 294), but it does emphasise that a point of view of finality may be valid. It is important to note that Jung rejected both an absolute belief in causality and an absolute belief in teleology. While Freud emphasised only the causal viewpoint, Jung attempted to comprehend the ends, aims and purposes of the dream. Thus, from Jung's perspective, we see the unconscious as a creative force that can offer solutions to problems. Moreover, the unconscious contains a moral component and can take account of moral conflict, whereas for Freud the unconscious is amoral and consists primarily of sexual wishes.

Jung borrowed the term *enantiodromia* from the philosophy of Heraclitus and used it to designate the tendency of any extreme position to turn into its opposite, exposing the concealed link between a pair of opposites. Enantiodromia is visible in the compensatory nature of dreams. If the conscious position is excessively distorted in one direction, the unconscious may express in dreams an equally exaggerated but opposite tendency.

A good clinical example of this is provided by Hall's (1977: 186-7) discussion of dreams in depression. It is well-established that depression interferes with sleep because of the accompanying insomnia and early awakening. Although awake more often during the night, depressed patients appear to have a normal ratio between dream time and the amount of time spent in sleep (Murray 1965). Hartmann (1973) suggested that depression is characterised by a need for more dream time. An increase in dreaming has been reported to coincide with clinical improvement in depression (Baer *et al* 1967). Baer and associates (1967) also found that depressed patients had few dreams relating to loss of self-esteem, and many had pleasant dreams in contrast to their waking experiences of depression.

### **Amplification**

In the Jungian method of dream analysis, the amplification of dream images is similar to free association but, as noted earlier, Jung preferred to conceptualise the process

as circumambulation of the image. He believed that the images themselves hold a great richness of meaning, carrying critical messages from another world - both our own personal inner world, or the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious, and the universal realm of symbols and myths that we share from the cultural heritage of humankind. Since dreams come from the unconscious, they share the symbolic language of myth, art, folklore and religious ritual, arising out of the imagination which speaks to us across cultures and time. Consequently, a form of amplification important to dream analysis is finding the universal mythic themes that parallel the images found in dreams.

Consideration of dreams as a series is another source of amplification. Jung understood that like nature, our psyche is a continuum. This perception he relates to the importance of analysing a dream series as opposed to isolated dreams, since one has more evidence to recognise the important content and basic themes.

Jung compared this serial approach to the process employed by philologists in interpreting unknown languages, since they also seek parallels, for instance, parallel text passages, parallel applications. Similarly, different dreams offer brief glimpses or exposures of the contents of the unconscious and it is necessary to read these film sequences together in order to achieve an idea of the whole dramatic statement.

Unlike Freud, Jung did not see dream symbolism (manifest content) as a distorted disguise for the latent content (wish). Jung maintained that the dream content says

exactly what the unconscious means about a situation. Therefore Jung saw his method of dream interpretation as a strictly empirical one, which starts with the dream data and does not impose an *a priori* interpretation derived from a preconceived and dogmatic theory about the nature of dreams.

However, Jung's claim to strict empiricism has been challenged on other grounds. Contemporary theorists have critiqued the Jungian approach not for any preconceptions about the nature of dreams, as in the case of Freud, but rather for its blindness to critical issues surfaced in the discourses of feminism, political activism, postmodernism and cultural studies. Bulkeley (1996) is among those who have critiqued what they see as an overemphasis on the intra-personal. In "Political Dreaming: Dreams of the 1992 Presidential Election", Bulkeley (1996) concludes that while the dreams he gathered definitely related to the dreamers' personal lives and their inner worlds, they just as certainly related to the dreamers' political lives and to the outer world.

... dreams are not simply using political images to 'symbolise' personal meanings. A Freudian interpreter might argue that a 'manifest' dream about Bill Clinton is only masking a 'latent' content having to do with the dreamer's relationship with his or her father. Similarly, a Jungian interpreter might claim that a nightmare of Ross Perot is only symbolically expressing the dreamer's unconscious fears of the 'Ross Perot-like' parts of him or herself. I am emphatically opposed to such reductionistic, one-dimensional views." (1996:

188)

Equally importantly, feminist scholars in particular have pointed to the danger of reliance on both material and processes in which patriarchal prejudices and deformities are embedded. Signell (1991: 15) notes, for example, that much of the mythology and folklore to which one might turn for amplification of dream imagery reflects the psychology and politics of the dominant patriarchal ideology. Rupprecht (1996: 123) warns of the patriarchal power relations embedded in the practice of psychotherapy itself:

The very systems of psychiatry and psychology, which almost alone among professions throughout this century in the United States have made dreams a central feature of their theory and practice, also took control of the meaning of dreaming. Power-brokering within these systems which offered dream interpretation and application made them very specialised and expensive.

Rupprecht (1996: 123) argues as pertinently that the process of determining dream meaning is infested with gender, race, class and cultural biases, thus serving as an instrument of social control. She claims that the restricted interpretive paradigms which have gained professional sanction function as traps for the imagination, enforcing dominant attitudes and behaviours, many of which are products of the patriarchal order. Dream content dealing with issues such as sexual orientation, which can be threatening to the social values or self-perceptions of the dreamer or

From a feminist perspective, the most blatant flaw in Jung's conceptual system is his unconscious androcentrism, which necessarily skews the model for women. An appropriate and necessary feminist response to this bias is the application of a hermeneutic of suspicion. The task is to analyse the influence of the patriarchal context and its inherent misogyny on the dialectical relationship between the individual as social construct and the individual as innate psyche.

Among, the more obvious targets for feminist attack is Jung's view that "Eros", a quality of relatedness, characterises women's "diffuse" consciousness, while the capacity for analytical thought, "Logos", is an inherent characteristic of "focused" male consciousness.

In men, Eros, the function of relationships, is usually less developed than Logos. In women, on the other hand, Eros is an expression of their true nature, while their Logos is often only a regrettable accident (Jung, CW 9 (2): 29).

Jung's anima-animus model, is never clearly defined and is often used with differing connotations. Goldenberg (1976: 446) wryly refers to this as "a slippery quality common to most Jungian concepts that serves to insulate them from much questioning".

Critique of Jung's and post-Jungians' blindness to the social origins of gender differences forms the basis of Demaris Wehr's analysis. She suggests that an archetypal model of the psyche is valuable only if accurately contextualised and hence deontologised (1988: 36).

Wehr (1988: 114) argues that Jung's anima theory intersects with sexism in its deepest form, exposing men's unconscious desire to escape their own embodiment and passions (1988: 114). The patristic teaching of concupiscence as the essence of sin and its related view of the body as the instrument of sin seems to be deeply rooted within the deformed sexuality of the patriarchal mind-set. It is dependent upon, and mutually reinforcing of, the monotheistic understanding of the Divine as an immaculate external male force. The importance, both symbolic and material, of our bodies as vehicles for, and channels of, life's energy has been perverted by this tradition. A feminist Jungian perspective thus perceives men's fear of embodiment, dependency, vulnerability and emotionality to have been projected on to the feminine and women, thereby damaging the inner psychic world of both women and men, and simultaneously distorting reality.

As the soul-image of men's imaginations, the anima is often projected on to women. Wehr (1988: 38) insists that men must disentangle themselves from the anima in order to relate to real women and to allow real women the space to be themselves.

She suggests that using a feminist consciousness as a critical lens with the Jungian system provides a valuable description of patriarchal culture as experienced inwardly, and as reflected by the psyche in dreams, fantasies and moods. The stereotypes constructed by the patriarchal mind-set can then begin to be distinguished from images and forms that may be part of the innate psyche.

Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson (in Nicholson 1990: 19) point to feminism and postmodernism as two of the most important political-cultural currents of the 1980s. While acknowledging the uneasy distance between these two discourses, they insist that it is worthwhile to explore how they intersect and interrelate since both offer profound critical perspectives on the institution of philosophy and on the relation of philosophy to the larger culture. Patricia Waugh (1992: 342) notes that postmodernism and feminism have had little to say about each other until recently. Yet, an increasingly self-conscious perspectivism has arisen in much current feminist theory through the recognition of a fundamental dilemma in the articulation of a feminist epistemology: that women seek equality for and valorisation of a gendered identity which has been constructed through the same cultural institutions and discourses which feminists have been challenging and dismantling. Since there is no simple legitimisation in throwing off a "false consciousness" and revealing a "true female identity", some feminists theorists have felt obliged to develop a self-reflexive questioning of their own legitimating procedures.

The resulting discourses can be seen as both a reflection of and a contribution to that "crisis of legitimation" which has been seen by its various theorists as a

characteristic of postmodern culture. Waugh (1992: 342) suggests that the slogan "let us wage war on totality" may be seen as the postmodern equivalent of the earlier feminist assertion that "the personal is political", noting that the former implies a hostile attitude toward the ideals of collectivism and community implicit in early feminist discourse.

In The Lenses of Gender, Sandra Bem identifies biological essentialism, gender polarisation and androcentrism as root causes of many contemporary social conflicts and ills. Bem alludes to but does not develop the theory that as long as the basis for people's behaviour is unconscious, they cannot be changed by cognitively steered social programmes, by campaigns of rational persuasion, or even by legislation or coercion from schools, social agencies, churches, and other governing institutions (Rupprecht 1996: 125).

Ultimately gender depolarisation would require even more than the social revolution involved in rearranging social institutions and reframing cultural discourses. Gender depolarisation would also require a psychological revolution in our most personal sense of who we are as males and females, a profound alteration in our feelings about the meaning of our biological sex and its relation to our psyche and our sexuality (Bem 1993: 139).

While Bem offers no guidance about the psychological revolution she advocates,

Rupprecht (1996: 126) furnishes evidence that the dream can be a very effective instrument of revolution. However, she insists on the need to generate a new discourse if we are to avoid the replication in dreamwork of all the currently limiting and problematic attitudes and assumptions of patriarchally constructed consciousness:

To fully valorise dreaming will force us to venture outside the usual modalities through which we structure our world: chronological time, dualism, causality, and linearity. For dreams, though they are certainly shaped in part by contemporary social conditions, are not rigidly time or culture-bound; they operate within different paradigms which require a similarly unshackled discourse which we have yet to generate. None of our current terms - isomorphism, interdependence, symbiosis, complementarity, reciprocity - comes close to depicting the subtle dynamism of the mental-physical, conscious-unconscious, individual-social continuum. But there are at least two concepts, rising out of dreamwork, which begin to translate that complex dynamism into new, more comprehensible forms: Jung's synchronicity and Mindell's dreambody (Rupprecht, 1996: 127).

Jung's belief that the feminine as it appeared in works by men was a replica of the feminine in actual women meant that he never considered the masculine bias of the mythological and religious material which he utilised to substantiate his theory of

archetypes. This is perhaps most evident in his conflation of the "anima", the "contrasexual other" in the male psyche, with "the feminine principle", which he used to refer to both an archetype and women's conscious way of being in the world. Furthermore, as Wehr (1988: 106) points out, Jung's blindness to the influence of the patriarchal context on men's anima images and women's sense of self, seriously diminishes the value of his analysis. She cites the following passage, which is part of Jung's description of the anima, to highlight her point:

Finally it should be remarked that emptiness is a great feminine secret. It is something absolutely alien to man; the chasm, the unplumbed depths, the yin. The pitifulness of this vacuous nonentity goes to this heart (I speak here as a man), and one is tempted to say that this constitutes the whole mystery of women (CW 9 (1): 98).

As Goldenberg (1979: 59) elucidates, Jung's formulation of the anima / animus model reinforces stereotyped notions of what masculine and feminine are by mystifying categories which, to a considerable extent, are simply social constructs.

Polly Young-Eisendrath (1992: 151) defines anima and animus as gendered complexes of not-I, emotionally charged collections of images, thoughts, habits and actions of contrasexuality that define and limit self. Contrasexual complexes are uniquely meaningful because all known cultures divide people into two genders

which are inscribed differently, especially with regard to status, authority and power:

I would like to restrict the use of anima and animus to a gendered psychology in which the anima is a product of the imaginal and relational life of male people, and the animus, a product of female people. Without this restriction, I believe we are confronted with a plethora of definitions that confusedly overlap with other concepts such as soul, spirit, animation, enthusiasm, transcendence, symbolic bridging to the unconscious, and many other highly significant psychological concepts whose meaning may be arbitrarily skewed by association with them and leads to certain designations within any discourse. These designations are likely to turn principally on the significance of gender. Designating anima as soul, referring to the soul as female, and then assuming that men and women both have anima/soul experiences creates, in my view, a condition that psychoanalyst Lacan calls "mystification". Mystification is any effort to deny or cover over the difficulty of absolute division between the sexes (Young-Eisendrath 1992: 152).

Young-Eisendrath (1992: 153) explores how anima images and symbols for woman which have been generated by men have become images and symbols used by women to represent their own sexuality and experiences. These images of negative and positive power often confuse women who may consequently exclude themselves from both legitimate and other power. Further, women across the world live in societies that marginalise them and assume their inferiority. Young-Eisendrath

insists that without a gendered concept of anima, we tend to deny or mystify the power differences between men and women and to forget the centrality of "man-made" language in constituting all that women are supposed to be. Additionally, a gendered concept of anima problematises male fantasies and fears of women by reading them as products of a complex psychology, rather than as facts of biology or child-rearing practices.

The danger of an attitude that is doctrinaire or unconscious of assumptions is usefully highlighted by Patricia Berry in "An Approach to the Dream" (1974: 58-9). She applies a range of interpretive perspectives employed by various Jungian analysts to the same dream, showing how individual biases, approaches and assumptions result in different interpretations. The dream is as follows:

I was lying on a bed in a room, alone apparently, but with the feeling of turmoil around me. A middle-aged woman enters and hands me a key. Later a man enters, helps me out of bed and leads me upstairs to an unknown room.

The various interpretations offered are outlined below.

1. *Ego-active analyst*: The whole dream is characterised by your ego passivity. You are reclining, a rather unconscious position, which makes for the feeling of unconscious turmoil. Without effort of your own, you take what is handed to you.

You are therefore led away by the animus, up into yet another area of passive fantasy.

2. *Animus-development analyst*: When you confront your turmoil, it becomes the middle-aged woman, your fear of growing old and unfruitful. But in that older woman you find the creative key which then becomes the unknown animus. Creative work can now take place.

3. *Feminine earth-mother analyst*: You were lying passive, naturally, in touch with your real feelings (depressive position). Now you can receive gifts from the feminine, the positive mother. Unfortunately, as soon as the animus appears, you lose this connection by following him up into the intellect.

4. *Relationship-feeling analyst*: You're alone in a room, isolated and cut off from your marriage, relationships, children. You don't express feeling for or make any real contact with the other figures in the dream. Therefore you are led into the upper regions with only your animus as companion, alone and remote, the princess in the tower.

5. *Introvert analyst*: There you are, at last, alone with yourself, in the vessel. You now receive inner help. Your inner femininity gives you the key, the key being seclusion and facing the internal turmoil hitherto denied by your extroverted defences

and acting out. This leads you to the next step, the animus figure who helps you out of bed and leads you to another level.

6. *Process-oriented analyst:* It's not so much the content of the dream that is important as the way you have introduced it into our session (that you told it to me in such an aggressive voice, that you waited until the end of the hour, that you handed it to me neatly typed and then leaned back passively waiting for an interpretation).

7. *Transference-oriented analyst:* You're in a half-conscious sexual position, in which the turmoil represents your unrecognised erotic projections. You fantasise various solutions: (a) the phallic mother, or (b) the man leading you upstairs to an unknown climax. One of these (depending upon sex) refers to your projection of me as your saviour.

This exercise dramatically illustrates the meaninglessness of a formulaic approach to dreamwork and serves to underline the need to undertake the process of interpretation with an attitude of self-criticism and due regard for all the factors outlined in this chapter. In Chapter 5 I hope to demonstrate that revolutionary potential of dreamwork lies in a critical alliance between analyst and dreamer, so that the dreamer's history and process contextualise and amplify the images offered by the dream. The crux of the matter is whether the dreamer finds the interpretation helpful and illuminating. The closer the analyst is to understanding the intricacies of

the dreamer's life, the more accurate the insights offered are likely to be.

### **Parallels between Eastern and Jungian approaches**

There are striking parallels between the Jungian system of working with the psyche and the Tibetan Buddhist tantric method of meditating using visualisation, mantra and chanting. Much of the inspiration for this section was provided by a lecture on "Archetypes and Tantra" given in Cape Town by Rob Nairn in 1994. Originally a professor of criminology, Nairn underwent a four-year retreat at the Samye Ling Buddhist Centre in Scotland, following a protracted period of Jungian analysis. A key feature of both Jungian and tantric systems is the awareness that the rational mind is limited to the known, and that it is necessary to explore energies that are not at the level of conscious awareness.

Jung's discovery of hidden forces within the psyche which work very powerfully within the mind but are not under its conscious control parallels tantric practice. In fact, one might venture to suggest that towards the end of his life, Jung had reached the point where tantra begins. As Nairn discussed, Jung himself indicated at that time that his recent contact with Zen Buddhism was causing him to radically rework everything he had formulated to date.

Although both are elusive concepts, Jung's understanding of archetypes accurately parallels the definition of deity used in the tantric system. Characteristics shared by archetypes and tantric deities are as follows:

- they are inherited parts of the psyche;
- they are structuring patterns of psychological performance and are somehow linked to instinct;
- certain energies can collect around archetypes / tantric deities and grow and be moulded according to the impulse of the archetype / deity;
- they are hypothetical entities, irrepresentable in themselves, evident only through their manifestations;
- as primordial images in the unconscious, their main features are the fact that they are numinous, unconscious and autonomous.

Another important parallel between the Jungian and tantric systems is their agreement on the mandala as the crucial context within which individuation occurs. For Jung, the essential mandala is the circle with four cardinal points which one enters and then moves around, encountering and integrating the different energies. At its simplest, tantric practice involves entering the mandala through the east and moving round it, systematically visualising the deities who are stationed at the four cardinal points.

Nairn argues that mandala is the nature of the human psyche, the mystical structure of the human mind, and that is why Jung and the alchemists came upon it and also why all the tantric systems essentially work with it. In other words, when mandala arises, it is a spontaneous manifestation of the deepest wisdom principle of the

human mind, rather than a principle which has been theoretically formulated.

The importance accorded to conscious pursuit of one's individuation process is another point of convergence between the Jungian and tantric approaches. A degree of personality integration is regarded as necessary before embarking on tantric practices in order to sustain the discipline and meet the stress encountered when one enters into the deeper processes of psychological experience, where symbols mediate between consciousness and unconsciousness. Tantric practice is basically a formula, stated within a mandala, for establishing a relationship between consciousness and this deepest principle. Similarly, a Jungian analysis also requires a level of personality integration.

Nairn asserts that tantra transcends the Jungian system because it offers a carefully structured formula whose outcome is totally predictable, since a specific tantric deity or archetype is invoked. The process of Jungian analysis, on the other hand, is more in the nature of a net thrown into the depths of the self. Neither analyst nor analysand can predict what will be encountered. Like the tantric practitioner, however, the Jungian analyst knows that the enterprise is fraught with danger, since the archetypes are extremely powerful. The unwary explorer can become identified with them, suffering inflation or the psychotic experience of being overwhelmed.

Wayman (1967: 11) observes that the Tibetan Buddhist use of repeated incantation to evoke a deity implies that the bulk of lamaist iconography - the peaceful and

wrathful deities - amount to a set of controlled dreams. He asserts that the production of an artificial dream state is a major strategy addressed by the Buddhist tantras and, indeed, in certain traditions is called "purifying or exerting the dream".

### **Relevant aspects of the Hindu and Buddhist traditions**

O'Flaherty (1984) observes that diverse Indian approaches to questions relating to reality are woven in and out of a tradition spanning 3 000 years, reaching a climax in the masterpiece of Indian philosophical narrative, the *Yogavasistha*.

Four states of being are identified in the *Upanishads* (c. 700 BC) : waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep, all of which are natural states, and the supernatural, transcendent fourth state, identity with Godhead. These four states of being implicitly suggest a technique of realisation, a way to approach enlightenment: if one can comprehend that one is actually dreaming when one thinks that one is awake, one can begin to move toward the true awakening that is enlightenment - the fourth stage (O'Flaherty 1984: 17).

In a crucial sense, this is the inverse of Tibetan dream yoga, where dreamless sleep is understood to afford a glimpse of *Brahman*, the divine mind that does not create, while dreaming sleep opens a window on the god who creates by dreaming the world into existence.

Indian dream theory both blurs the line between dreaming and waking and underlines the importance of dreaming as a form of mediator between the two extremes of wakefulness and dreamless sleep. O'Flaherty (1984: 18) opines that the *Upanishadic* fourth state is the whole point of the analysis and the end stage to which the other three point. Some Indian philosophers therefore regard dreaming as more "real" than waking, and it is this liminal nature of dreams that is the key to the material power they have in later Indian texts. Wayman (1967: 10) notes that certain of the later *Upanishads* took a metaphysical and mystically physiological rather than philosophical turn, producing the special viewpoints of the tantra. Thus the four states are associated with four places in the body: the waking state with the navel; the dream state with the neck; dreamless sleep with the heart; and the fourth state of enlightenment with the head.

Many of the *Upanishadic* concepts persist in contemporary Indian medicine as practised by Ayurvedic physicians or *vaids*:

The *vaids* maintain that the widely held belief that we are in the waking state ("consciousness") during the daytime is delusionary. In fact, even while awake, dreaming is the predominant psychic activity. Here they seem to be preempting Jung's important insight that we continually dream but that consciousness while waking makes such a noise that we do not "hear" the dream (Kakar 1982: 246).

Buddhists in other than tantric schools have also given much attention to the interpretation of dreams as well as to the problem of the relationship between dreaming and waking. Both the *Sarvastivadins*, Buddhist realists whose name reflects their doctrine that "everything exists", and the more traditional *Theravadins* dealt with the issue of the reality or non-reality of dreams in depth (O'Flaherty 1984: 35).

An understanding of dreams as projections runs as a major thread through Eastern thought (O'Flaherty 1984: 16), and this would appear to intersect vitally with certain understandings of the Jungian system of interpretation. The verb *srj*, used to express projection, means literally to "emit", and it frequently occurs in accounts of the process of creation in which the Creator emits the entire universe in the way a spider emits a web. So the dreamer also spins the dream:

A man has two conditions: in this world and the world beyond. But there is also a twilight juncture: the condition of sleep (or dream, *svapna*). In this twilight juncture one sees both of the other conditions, this world and the other world ... When someone falls asleep, he takes the stuff of the entire world and he himself takes it apart, and he himself builds it up, and by his own bright light he dreams ... There are no ponds, lotus pools, or flowing streams there, but he emits ponds, lotus pools, and flowing streams. For he is the Maker

(Brhadaranyaka U 4.3.9 - 10).

O'Flaherty (1984: 16) notes that this text has not reached the extreme idealism of later schools, such as Mahayana Buddhism, which suggest that all perception is the result of projection. Significantly, however, the same verb is used, here and throughout Indian literature, to denote perception of both the outer and inner worlds: one sees the world just as one sees a dream. Furthermore, the same verb (*srj*) is used to express the concept of seminal emission (making people), creation (making worlds), speaking (making words), imagining (making ideas), and dreaming (making images).

Interesting echoes of these ideas may be discerned in the musings of Marie-Louise von Franz (1990: 18) in relation to a dream Jung (1963: 355) had after a severe illness in 1944, in which he is walking through a hilly, sunny landscape when he comes to a small wayside chapel:

The door was ajar and I went in. To my surprise there was no image of the Virgin on the altar, and no crucifix either, but only a wonderful flower arrangement. But then I saw on the floor in front of the altar, facing me, sat a yogi - in lotus posture, in deep meditation. When I looked at him more closely, I realised that he had my face. I started in profound fright, and awoke with the thought: "Aha, so he is the one who is meditating me. He has a dream and I am it." I knew that when he awakened, I would no longer be.

Von Franz observes a paradox in the lifelong quest for our deepest being, urged upon us by the Self, for which we search, in turn. Jung himself comments as follows (1963: 355):

My Self retires into meditation and meditates my earthly form. To put it another way: it assumed human shape in order to enter three-dimensional existence, as if someone were putting on a diver's suit in order to dive into the sea. When it renounces existence in the hereafter, the Self assumes a religious posture, as the chapel in the dream shows. In earthly form it can pass through the experiences of the three-dimensional world, and by greater awareness take a further step toward realization.

Hall (1977: 141) asserts that perhaps the most remarkable achievement of analytical psychology is its appreciation of the relativity of the ego. More intensively than any other mental health physician, Jung examined the vicissitudes and alterations experienced by the ego, describing them from a neutral standpoint (in the language of the complex theory) and in more experiential and existential terms ( in the language of shadow, persona, anima, animus, and Self).

Some of the most helpful of Jung's writings on the relativity of the ego are found in his autobiographical Memories, Dreams and Reflections (1963). Hall (1977: 141)

identifies that this dream and two others provide examples of the manner in which this insight was presented to Jung himself. One is Jung's childhood dream of the underground phallus where he vividly describes sitting on "his" rock, wondering "Am I the one who is sitting on the stone or am I the stone on which *he* is sitting?". The other is a dream that occurred toward the closing years of his life, after he had written on flying saucers (CW 10), startled Jung into wakefulness with the realisation that the saucer might be "projecting" him, turning upside down his notion that flying saucers could themselves be projections of the dynamic centre of the unconscious, experienced by the ego in the imagery of the Self (Jung 1963: 323).

The tendency of the dream, writes Jung:

is to effect a reversal of the relationship between ego-consciousness and the unconscious, and to represent the unconscious as the generator of the empirical personality. This reversal suggests that in the opinion of the "Other side", our unconscious existence is the real one and our conscious world a kind of illusion, an apparent reality constructed for a specific purpose ... Unconscious wholeness therefore seems to me the true *spiritus rector* of all biological and psychic events, of total consciousness. Attainment of consciousness is culture in the broadest sense.

Jung notes (1989: 324-5)s that the "Oriental" attributes divine significance to the Self,

and adds that, according to the ancient Christian view, self-knowledge was the road to knowledge of God. For Jung (1978, quoted by Ramsden 1997: 35) quotes Mechtilde as saying that "the innermost core of the soul is the sweetest thing". Jung's perspective is that the "sweetest thing" corresponds to the Self, which is indistinguishable from the God-image. Coming at the issue from another angle, Meister Eckhart asserts that "God is born from the soul".

Shadow is a crucial part of the soul, and it is to the realm of shadow that we turn in the next chapter, which examines addictions, the domain of the demon lover.

### **CHAPTER THREE: ADDICTIONS AS DISPLACED SPIRITUAL HUNGER**

From a Jungian perspective, addiction is the negative side of creativity, since the creative energy is going in the wrong direction. Thus it is the analytical task to discover where it should be going and how to redirect it. Discussing a workshop she attended by Marion Woodman on "Addictions and Sacred Emptiness", Abramovitz (1992: 57-8), notes Woodman's emphasis that it is vital to relate to the archetype and not identify with it. In the addictive ritual the addict is swallowed by the archetype. But if the archetypal energy can be accessed and related to properly, then the creative potential may be released.

Most survivors of abuse and neglect reach adulthood burdened by repressed emotion and shame. As Sanford (1991: 68) discusses, once their psychic resources are exhausted by the energy required to repress this material, they turn to the outside for help. The coping mechanism often becomes a regular dose of alcohol, food, drugs, sex, work, romance, shopping, others' approval, gambling or television. This serves to distract them from their internal reality, and in this state they are usually as distanced from their feelings as they are from their physical bodies. In this ungrounded state the individual is particularly vulnerable to the lure of the demon lover.

### Dracula as Demon Lover

Dracula as Demon Lover is an archetypal symbol of addiction. Preceded by legend, it first appeared in print as a novel by Bram Stoker in 1887. Many adaptations and elaborations now exist, particularly on screen, and as Linda Schierse Leonard (1986: 77) points out, the popularity of this story in our culture and century suggests that it expresses an archetypal message for our time. As Leonard (1986:88) puts it:

The story of Dracula tells a mythic truth. Its characters are symbols of human experience; its actions are our actions. We have within ourselves all these figures, struggling with the forces of good and evil, the ultimate conflict of opposites at war in human existence. As such, Dracula, the Demon Lover in the psyche, is the epitome of the ultimate obstacle on the way to the wedding.

Addiction is a powerful demonic force which masters the addict. It possesses an incredible fascination, a lure which addicts cannot escape on their own once they have been "bitten" and surrender their will. As the current international data on mental health services for addiction reveals, the recovery rate for those who fall under the spell of this "vampire" and subsequently become active members of the highly stigmatised Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) is a mere two per cent. Members of these organisations are required to admit their powerlessness over the addicting substance and ask for the help of a Higher Power. This process is the work of the first three steps of the twelve-step programme which

is the lynch-pin of both AA and NA.

Leonard (1986: 107) argues that we all have to wage a battle against the Demon Lover, whether it takes the form of an addiction or another. She argues that while many "inhabitants" of the psyche can be loved and transformed, Dracula must be destroyed if healing is to occur.

One of the forms of the embrace of the Demon Lover is a negative self-image, morbid self-doubt which results in the refusal of love. Smith (1993: 157-62) notes that "sin" is traditionally associated with disobedience and prideful self-love, and this belief has kept many silenced in their own victimisation, since they believe that their suffering is necessary and righteous. The argument of this thesis however, is that the "sin" behind addiction is not self-love but rather a lack of care for self. The first step towards healing therefore is the turning of attention and consciousness to the needs of the deeper self.

The key facilitator in the Dracula story, and in the symbolic interplay which it represents, is Professor Van Helsing. As the hero he is a man of faith and wisdom, who has an open mind, true and kind heart, self-command and singleness of purpose. He also has knowledge of metaphysics, medical science, philosophy, mythology, literature and ancient lore, and knows that the greatest strength of the vampire is that people will not believe in him. It is Van Helsing who can distinguish

between the person of Lucy and the evil force which has possessed her. Moreover, he knows and uses the power of symbols such as the crucifix and the holy host, before which Dracula has no power. Van Helsing is, in other words, a symbol of the healing power of dialogue between conscious and unconscious, drawing on both rationally acquired knowledge and reverence for the mystery of the Divine in facing the demon.

Leonard, herself a recovered alcoholic, argues that AA and NA are effective in combating addiction because, like Van Helsing, who uses all the help he can summon, they muster the combined power of millions of addicts who are recovering, who are slaying their dragons, and who, by virtue of their own spiritual progress and the love and communal compassion they extend to all addicts still under the spell, provide an example for hope of recovery, although a two per cent success rate for complete recovery is a slim inspiration.

Leonard suggests that the central character in the Dracula story is in fact Mina (1986: 93). A person of integrity, she is that within us that gives birth through the difficult work of love, who symbolises the human potential for creativity, the one who must say no to Dracula whenever he tries to possess us. In the original story, Mina carried the secret for her fiancé, but it was the men who did all the caring for her and Lucy and the chasing and killing of Dracula. In the recent movie version, Mina plays a much more active role in her salvation and is the one who ultimately slays Dracula. If

we look at the deeper symbolism of this version of the story, we see how a transformation of her negative animus is accomplished. Dracula has carried for her a love that was born in hate, centuries earlier. He has also carried her rage, and has acted it out. In the final event, she murders him as an act of love, transforming him from a blood sucker to a spiritual being, releasing him from the realm of the undead.

The character who gives Dracula access to what he craves is Renfield, the lunatic who lives numerically and quantitatively, eats living things. Renfield symbolises the wounded desire in ourselves that sets up such craving, whether for power, money, drugs, sex, alcohol, work - whatever addiction we have that invites the demon in to possess the soul. The crucial concept of wounded desire is at the core of a fairy tale entitled "The Red Shoes".

### **Damaged instincts and the demonic**

Estes (1993: 214-55) looks at the demonic force behind addiction in her version of the story variously known as "The Devil's Dancing Shoes", "The Red Hot Shoes of the Devil" and "The Red Shoes". A precis follows:

Long ago there was an orphan who had no shoes. Over time she found cloth scraps and made herself a crude pair of red shoes that she loved because they made her feel rich in her own resourcefulness. One day as she was foraging for food, a gilded carriage stopped beside her and the old woman inside told her she would like to take

her home and treat her as her own little daughter. The child complied and soon found herself shiny clean and dressed in the finest white and black garments. When she asked after her own clothes, the old woman said the clothes were so filthy and the shoes so ridiculous that she'd burnt them.

The little girl was heart-broken, for those humble red shoes made by her own hand had made her deeply happy. As she learnt to obey all the old woman's rules, a secret fire was ignited in her heart and she yearned constantly for her old red shoes.

Since the child was old enough to be confirmed on the Day of The Innocents, the old woman took her to an old crippled shoemaker to have a special pair of shoes made for the occasion. In the shoemaker's cabinet she spied a pair of red shoes made of the finest red leather which practically glowed. Despite the fact that red shoes were scandalous for church, the girl, who chose only with her hungry heart, picked the red shoes. The old lady's eyesight was so impaired that she was unaware of the colour and so paid for them. The old shoemaker winked at the child as he wrapped up the shoes.

At church the members of the congregation were speechless over the shoes that shone like polished apples on the child's feet. Everyone stared; even the icons and the statues stared disapprovingly at her shoes. But she loved the shoes all the more.

After discovering the colour of the shoes, the old lady forbade her to wear them again, but the following Sunday the child couldn't help but choose the red shoes over the black. At the church entrance was an old soldier with his arm in a sling. He bowed and asked if he could brush the dust from the little girl's shoes. Doing so, he tapped the soles of her shoes to a rhythm that made her feet itch. "Remember to stay for the dance," he smiled, and winked at her.

Again her bright shoes met with disparaging looks but they gave her so much pleasure she didn't care. As they left the church, the injured soldier cried out, "What beautiful dancing shoes!" The child started to dance right then and there; down the lane and across the field the shoes danced the child, they danced her into the dark and gloomy forest. She hopped on one foot and then the other trying to take off the shoes but to no avail.

So along the rivers, through the valleys and over the highest hills she danced. In the sunlight, in the snow and in the rain, she danced. She danced through the darkest night and through sunrise and she was still dancing at twilight as well. But it was terrible dancing, and there was no rest for her.

In utter exhaustion and horror, she arrived in a forest where lived the town's executioner. And it is said the axe on the wall began to tremble as soon as it sensed her approaching.

"Help me, please!" she implored the executioner as she danced by his door. "Please cut off my shoes to free me from this horrid fate." But although the executioner cut off the straps he was unable to get the shoes off her feet. And so she pleaded with him that her life was worth nothing and that he should cut off her feet, which he did. The red shoes with the feet in them kept on dancing until they were out of sight. Now the unfortunate child was crippled, and had to make her own way in the world as a servant to others. She never again wished for red shoes.

This gruesome conclusion is typical of the ending of fairy tales in which the spiritual protagonist cannot complete an attempted transformation. Such brutal episodes are evident world-wide in folklore and myths, communicating an imperative psychic truth. Estes (1993: 219) suggests that the psychological truth of "The Red Shoes" is that a woman without connection to the inner wilderness, the instinctual life, starves and becomes obsessed with "feel betters", "leave me alones" and "love me - please". In other words, it is a famine of the soul that underlies the choices that will cause her to dance madly out of control, to lose her footing and ultimately, perhaps, her feet / standpoint.

Unpacking the symbolism of the story, Estes (1993: 221-55) starts with the child's handmade red shoes which can be seen to symbolise the creative spirit and represent a significant step toward integration of her resourceful feminine nature in everyday life. Symbolically, shoes can be interpreted as a psychological metaphor;

they protect and defend the part of our body that grounds us. At an archetypal level, feet represent freedom and mobility so that to have shoes to protect the feet refers to having the convictions of one's beliefs and the wherewithal to act on them.

According to Estes (1993: 224), the carriage in archetypal symbolism can be understood as a literal image for the central mood of the psyche that transports us from one place, thought or endeavour to another. The fact that in this story the carriage is gilded is reminiscent of the gilded cage, which dazzles with its offer of comfort and security but is in reality a trap. In fairy tale and dream interpretation, the owner of the "conveyor of attitudes", the gilded carriage, is understood as the main value pressing down upon and directing the psyche. Here the negative, constricting values of the old woman forewarn that vibrant, vital aspects of the psyche are about to be sacrificed to a lifeless value system. Estes (1993: 229) observes:

To be in the state of ... a starved soul, is to be made relentlessly hungry. Then a woman burns with a hunger for anything that will make her feel alive again. A woman who has been captured knows no better, and will take something, anything, that seems similar to the original treasure, good or not. A woman who is starved for her real soul-life may look "cleaned up and combed" on the outside, but on the inside she is filled with dozens of pleading hands and empty mouths.

Instinct is a difficult thing to define. Psychologically, Jung speculated that the instincts arise from the psychoid unconscious, that layer of the psyche where biology and spirit might touch. Estes (1993: 232) suggests that the creative instinct is as much the lyrical language of the Self as is the symbology of dreams. When the old woman sees the child's creative work as refuse rather than riches, she severs, the child from her creative spirit, from the life of her soul.

At the shoemaker's, a famished hunger for the soul-life rushes to the surface of the psyche, and it grabs what it can, knowing it will be repressed again soon. This dangerous psychological sneaking happens when a woman suppresses large parts of Self into the shadows of the psyche. From the perspective of analytical psychology, the repression of both positive and negative instincts, feelings and urges into the unconscious causes them to inhabit a shadow realm.

We can presume that the child's first step to entrapment, entering the gilded cage, resulted from ignorance and inexperience of life, as did her letting go of her own handiwork. Paradoxically, although her impulse toward new life is right and proper, her craving for the shoes like burnished plums is an attempt to sneak a counterfeit soul-life that cannot work. In the story the little girl sneaks the shoes past the old woman with failing eye-sight, a detail which confirms that the brittle, perfectionistic value system represented by the crone is devoid of the ability to see clearly, to be alert to what is going on. This inability to notice the personal distress of the Self is

typical of the injured psyche and of the culture too. Estes (1993: 239) observes that sneaking is helpful for a captured woman only if she sneaks the right thing, only if that thing leads to her liberation.

The shoemaker foreshadows the destructive old soldier, for the natural predator within the psyche is a shapechanger, a force that is able to disguise itself, just as traps are disguised to lure the unwary. Estes (1993: 240) argues that he is in cohorts with the soldier, who is the devil in disguise. The devil, soldier, hunchback, shoemaker and others were images used in bygone times to portray the negative forces in both the world at large and human natures.

In essence, "The Red Shoes" teaches us that the wilderness of the individual psyche, the well-spring of creative energy, must be properly protected - by unequivocally valuing it ourselves, by speaking out in its interest, by refusing to submit to either the deadening collective or the seductive blandishments which lead to psychic unhealth. The wild needs a guardian at the gate, if it is not to be misused.

### **Archetypal patterns in addiction**

James Hillman (1976: 60), a leader in the field of archetypal psychology, sums up the purpose of studying the archetypal in order to understand the human: "The deeper a psychology can go with its understanding, i.e., into universal inner meanings expressed by the archetypal speech of mythical 'tellings', the more scientifically

accurate it is, on the one hand, and the more soul it has, on the other." In this instance, Hillman seems to be referring to the depth dimension of archetypal or depth psychology. In *Archetypal Psychology* Hillman (1988: 20) writes: "The primary metaphor of psychology must be soul". Brun (1993: 5) suggests that soul as metaphor describes how the soul acts, transposing meaning and releasing interior, buried significance. The relationship of the soul to death is a primary theme in archetypal psychology. Hillman argues that Western culture has lost its relationship with death and the underworld, and he maintains that we need to re-imagine and re-animate the cultural psyche to which archetypal psychology aspires. Brun (1993: 5) points to Nyborg's concern that knowledge of the soul of nature has been forgotten, and that this has influenced our whole attitude to life: "Man no longer has a religious connection with nature, which results in barren intellectualism" (Nyborg 1962: 129, quoted in Brun 1993).

Attempting to explain what analytical psychology means by archetype, Neumann (1974) observes that it is crucial to separate its emotional-dynamic components, its symbolism, the material thing with which it can be compared, and its structure. Working with myths and folk tales directly involves working with symbols, which, being related to the unconscious, are derived from archaic modes of functioning.

So, for example, if we look at the archetypal theme of human experience of rejection, we see a commonality emerging across cultures over time. In Food and

Transformation: Imagery and Symbolism of Eating, Jackson (1996: 86) has this to say:

Just who is invited to the table is a thorny question. We prefer to ask only those we feel comfortable with, but those excluded can take offence and cause trouble. At the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, honoured by the presence of the twelve Olympians, Eris (Strife) was understandably left out. She gate-crashed the party anyway and stirred up competitiveness between Hera, Athene and Aphrodite, which led to the Trojan war. At the birth feast of the princess in "Sleeping Beauty", only twelve wise women were summoned. The thirteenth arrived uninvited and delivered her curse. The awkward element we ban from consciousness has a way of popping up at an inconvenient moment. Better to give it a seat at the party where we can keep an eye on it.

Rilke (1992: 77) is expressing the same insight:

How should we be able to forget those ancient myths that are at the beginning of all peoples, the myths about dragons that at the last moment turn into princesses; perhaps all the dragons of our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us once beautiful and brave. Perhaps everything terrible is in its deepest being something helpless that wants help from us.

O'Flaherty (1984: 302) points to the enduring relevance of the archetypal figure in her observations on the reality of created characters. Hamlet, for example, has continued to exert an influence on European thinking after the death of Shakespeare. In a crucial sense, the reality of such characters stems from the fact that they are both found and made. In this regard, Herodotus remarked about the Greek gods:

Whence each of these gods came into existence, or whether they were for ever, and what kind of shape they were, was not known until the day before yesterday, if I may use the expression: for I believe that Homer and Hesiod were four hundred years before my time - and no more than that. It is they who created for the Greeks their theogony, it is they who gave to the gods the names derived from their ancestors and divided among them their honours, their arts, and their shapes (Herodotus, History 2.53; translated by David Grene).

### **Archetypal patterns underlying alcoholism: a paradigm**

Bauer's (1982: 52-69) study of the archetypal patterns in alcoholism, which can be extended to other substance addictions, focuses on Dionysos and Apollo as contending opposites. Dionysos is Apollo's half-brother. Through his mortal mother Semele and his father Zeus, who gave birth to him from his thigh after Semele was consumed by the blaze of her lover's overwhelming divinity, Dionysos belongs to both heaven and earth. However, some sources say that he was also an "outsider",

a stranger to Greece and originating in the east, from Phrygia or Thrace (Bauer 1982: 53).

Otto (1965: 15) argues that Dionysos existed long before the crystallisation of the story which had him entering Greece from outside. However, Otto concedes that figuratively Dionysos is an outsider, raised to Olympus only late in his career around the 5th century BC, but always remaining antithetical, a stranger to the norms of the official, structured Olympian cult.

Apollo was only an infant when he killed the dragon Delphyne (whose name derives from "womb") in order to make the oracular Delphic cave his own. Psychologically, this symbolises the victory of solar consciousness over the undifferentiated, devouring feminine, and of patriarchy over the old order.

The darker side of Apollo is also evident in the fact that he sent his sister Artemis to slay his unfaithful mortal lover Koronis, let pestilence devastate the land of her family, and ravished women who rejected him (Bauer 1982: 52).

"In my oracles I shall reveal to men the inexorable will of Zeus " (Kerenyi 1974: 134). So Apollo declared at his birth, revealing himself to be a spokesman of the patriarchal order from the distant and detached heights of Olympus. Positive, from the point of view of the development of consciousness and freedom from the irrationality of the instincts and the suffocating power of the primal feminine, he is

nevertheless destructive in his one-sided masculine values that scorn mere matter and can scorch to death the new life and imaginative stirrings that need darkness and moisture for growth. Here we see how significant the everlasting tightrope between the opposites is: the disastrous patriarchal project also has its necessity for the growth of consciousness.

Unlike Apollo, the baby Dionysos was not fed on ambrosia and nectar, but suckled by nurses in the wild. Some records claim that his wet nurse was Hipta, the Anatolian great goddess who was also the chief divinity of the legendary Amazons. Thus Dionysos, in his origins, is not a representative of the patriarchal order like his half-brother but rather a god of the pre-patriarchal order, suckled and attended by women, accompanied by women in his wanderings and even to his death, danced awake once again by women who usher in the cyclical rebirth of the god who must die in order to be reborn.

Bauer (1982: 54) notes that Dionysos is described by many names, attributes and appearances and seems to embody all the paradoxical forces and forms of life and death on earth. Kerényi (1974: 272) observes that he is referred to as Loosener, Deliverer, God of Many Joys, Delight of Mortals, Benefactor, Bestial and Wild One, Eater of Raw Flesh, Render, Merciless, Savage Destructor. Indeed, not only is Dionysos a god of women, but he himself is called "Feminine One" and is said to be bisexual, thus reflecting also in gender his pervasive duality.

It is noteworthy that, despite his patriarchal one-sidedness, Apollo insisted on reverence for other deities and that he acknowledged Dionysos as his brother. That the two gods, the one terrestrial, the other celestial, could and did coexist side by side is confirmed in the archaeological findings at Delphi, the place of Apollo's temple and his oracle. Within this sanctuary it seems that there was also a grove of Dionysos as god of woods and the wild (Bauer 1982: 55). Thus forest and temple, nature and civilisation, intertwined, reveal symbolically how inseparable the two really are. Moreover, Apollo shared the Delphic festival year with Dionysos, and the pediments upon which his temple rests are inscribed on one side with Dionysos and the Thyriads, a group of his women followers, and on the other Apollo with the Muses (Bauer 1982: 55).

Bauer (1982: 55-6) notes that this coexistence of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, in however distorted a form, is still present in the psychic reality of contemporary society, reminding us that no one-sided point of view, however progressive, suffices to explain or contain all. In studies of alcoholism, the descriptions and particularly the values of experts and non-experts alike are Apollonian ones; Dionysos appears mainly as the illness, the problem, as "inferior, weak, crazy, sick". Bauer suggests that perhaps in alcoholism more than in other areas of our culture, the archetypes are set at odds with each other, fixed in irreconcilable opposition - sobriety versus intoxication - rather than integrated in a complementary relationship. This is evident both in the manner in which alcoholism is described, in terms of formulae and

models, and in the actual content of the words used. Thus the reasons given for drinking - to ease tension, fatigue, boredom; to dull the pain of duty or personal relationships, to quell anxiety and so on - all describe an escape from constricting Apollonian standards. They describe Dionysos as the Loosener, the Ecstatic and Untamed, one who brings relief as his father Zeus decreed he would when he told Semele that she was blessed, "for you will give birth to intense joy for gods and men, for you have conceived a son who brings forgetfulness to the sorrows of mortals" (Otto 1965: 95).

It is significant that the discovery of wine gave rise to the cult of drama. The theatre of Dionysos in Athens was rebuilt in stone c. 342-326 to replace the earlier wooden one where the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes were first performed. Thus we see the duality of the intoxicant itself, it not only soothes and calms but also can release creative energies and open up new paths to the Self. Crucially, however, Dionysian miracles belong to the god, not mortals, and the wrong attitude, whether in the form of identification with the god or unconsciousness of his presence, may cause Dionysos to unleash his darker side, becoming a god of madness and destruction, one form of which may be alcoholism (Bauer 1982: 57).

The crucial issue, then, is one of balance. Excessive use of Dionysian energies becomes abusive, and then the God has you for breakfast! Many case studies illustrate that intoxication is not only ecstasy, that possession by the god can be a

horrendous experience. These accounts always demonstrate the influence of Apollonian values that both precede and follow the descent into alcoholism. When too dominant, these values provoke their opposite, whereas balance between the Apollonian and Dionysian produces a healing process (Bauer 1982: 60).

Discussing the incest wounds of a case study, Schwartz-Salant (1989: 148) observes that the patient's Oedipal victory over her mother was a pyrrhic victory that left her totally vulnerable to psychic and emotional flooding by the energies that the mother and the incest taboo normally check. These intense energies are sexual, chthonic, violent and archetypal energies often associated with Dionysos. A wholesome relationship to this archetype, by contrast, can lead to healing and renewal of the personality. In antiquity, the mystery cults used these energies in this way.

Bauer (1982: 58) notes in regard to female alcoholics that their attitude towards alcohol is one of devotion to the bottle, and thus symbolically to Dionysos. Bauer argues that a woman who is focused on alcohol, buying it, hiding it, finding excuses to drink it and having to find excuses after she drinks it, is acting like a *maenad*, one of the female followers of Dionysos. Protectors, adorers, muses, they nursed him at birth, followed him into the wild and awoke him from his sleep-death when he vanished into the underworld. They became responsible for organising and performing the cult practices and ecstatic dances in service of the god, and his passion became their own. The *bacchantes* and *maenads*, following Dionysos as the

Great Loosener, could partake in his liberating powers (Otto 1965: 171).

To understand the woman alcoholic, therefore, Bauer (1982: 60) suggests that one should begin by referring back to the original myth of Dionysos which, as Otto (1965: 173) relates:

tells again and again how his fury ripped [women] loose from their peaceful domesticity, from the humdrum orderly activities of their daily lives, for the purposes of making them dancers in the wilderness and the loneliness of the mountains where they find him and rage through his revel rout ....

Bauer notes that contemporary alcoholics have predecessors not only in the *maenads, thyriads and bacchantes*, but also in the royal daughters of Proteus and Minyos, who were driven mad when they attempted to resist Dionysos in fidelity to their Hera personas. Otto (1965: 172-3) argues that Hera, Queen of Heaven, more than any other deity, detests the wild actions of the god and his female followers because they make a mockery of her whole realm, the established bonds of marital duty and domestic rites.

Bauer (1982: 59-60) comments that the image of a woman leaving the role assigned to her by an Olympian interpretation of woman's place is therefore an archetypal one, and of particular relevance today when paradigms for feminine being and behaviour

have been reduced to three out of six Olympian goddesses. One might add, of course, that even six goddesses can embody only a restricted range of models for the feminine, illustrating again the degree to which patriarchy has caged and denied the feminine energies and modes of being.

Bauer (1982: 64-5) argues that in Alcoholics Anonymous, unlike society at large, Apollo and Dionysos become reconciled. She suggests that the group offers a Dionysian context for expression of feelings and for security and containment in the Great Mother who lies behind this god, while the AA programme integrates the Apollonian aspect. The new member feels accepted while learning that alcoholism is a threefold illness, she works the Twelve Steps, living one day at a time, she copes with problems that overwhelmed her before. Thus the positive aspects of the Apollonian, such as clarity, conscious striving and spiritual values, counterbalance the more emotional Dionysian ones.

Aesklepios, the god of healing, is another archetypal figure relevant to the modern crisis of soul loss. He was the son of Apollo and a mortal woman, Koronis, whose name means both "Dark One" and, in the form of Aigla, "Luminous One". Aesklepios therefore continues the principle of balance between light and dark, celestial and terrestrial. Reared in a valley under the tutelage of the half-horse, half-god Chiron, he learned the secrets of nature and how to harness energy to fulfil his role as healer. The primary aspect of Aesklepios refers to the process of light coming from

darkness.

The sick flocked to Aesklepios's temple in Epidaurus where, directed by his priests, they withdrew into the *incubatorium* to be alone, "to surrender to the process at work within". In principle, the cure was realised when the god appeared to them in a dream (Kerenyi 1959: 17).

Kerenyi (1959: 22) describes a statue of Aesklepios thus:

The eyes seem to look upwards and into the distance without definite aim. This, combined with the vivid movement, gives us an impression of a great inner emotion, one might almost say of suffering. This god does not stand before us in Olympian calm. He is assailed as it were by the suffering of men which it is his vocation to assuage.

Clearly there are differences between AA and the Epidaurian cult, but the similarities worth noticing are that AA provides a *temenos*, albeit a collective one, a protected place for the alcoholic to come and find healing - just as the temple at Epidaurus offered refuge from political and other sources of conflict. AA is also a sort of borderline territory, a mid-zone, and many alcoholics verbalise this by saying that AA is a "bridge to life" (Bauer 1982: 71).

Bauer (1982: 116) notes in regard to women alcoholics that they are first and foremost daughters of the father. Athena is a father's daughter par excellence. Sprung from the head of Zeus, "fully armed, with a mighty shout," she disowns any relationship to a maternal source and refuses marriage as well, reserving herself exclusively for her father. On Olympus, she stands second to Zeus, before even Apollo, his favourite son. If Apollo is the spokesman, Athena is Zeus's agent. All her functions concern the establishment and maintenance of Father Right. The question is why such women, secure in their father's preference and in their role of creating and maintaining his order, succumb to alcoholism. Bauer (1972: 117) suggests that the answer lies in the fact that their fathers are not very satisfactory Zeus figures. Real women, born with Athenian temperaments into less-than-Olympian circumstances, are obliged to put all their energy into defending and maintaining the collective masculine, more or less unmediated by the actual father.

The strong but unsupported Athenian temperament is obliged to disguise itself in a Hera persona and Apollonian animus because, in the modern world, Athena is not a valued model of the feminine. Growing up in an emotionally difficult and unsupportive environment drives such a woman to hang on to patriarchal values that are too general to be related to her own life; thus she is open to shadow attacks from the Dionysian energy she has repressed or held at bay.

There is another archetypal dimension to addiction that needs be considered, the

fact that a parallel process occurs in the psyche of the addict and the creative person (Leonard 1990: xvi). Both sink into the unfamiliar underworld of the unconscious and are fascinated by what they find there. Both encounter pain, suffering, death. However, while the addict is dragged down, often without choice, and held hostage by the addiction, the creative person chooses to descend into that unknown realm and more frequently has the means to ascend again. For Leonard (1990: 10 - 11), who speaks from both her professional experience as a Jungian analyst and her personal experience as an alcoholic writer, the means to ascend from the unconscious is engagement with the Creative Daimon. While this necessitates living in the tension of the opposites, it also means being guided by the wholeness of the psyche, leading to a renewed relationship with the Self and the cosmos.

### **Archetypal patterns relating to the sacredness of the feminine**

In a lecture entitled, "Journeying into Creativity", Estes retells the ancient story of the Eleusinian mysteries to illustrate that creativity can be enriched by being blocked, at least initially. Demeter, the earth goddess, is rich, bountiful and full of potential. Persephone, her daughter, symbolises that which is without direction, that which plays within us. One day as Persephone is idling in the fields, the earth cracks open, and Hades, god of the underworld, abducts her in his chariot and vanishes with her into the earth. When Demeter discovers that her daughter is lost, she is grief-stricken and loses her fertility. As a result, all the flora and fauna die and the earth becomes a barren place, reflecting Demeter's devastated inner psychic terrain.

Bloody and bruised from her grieving and her vain search for Persephone, Demeter comes upon Baubo, goddess of female obscenity, who dances a lewd dance and cracks jokes. Demeter begins to laugh and this restores her energy.

Lo and behold, another goddess appears, Hekate, watcher of the cross-roads, mediator between the living and the dead, the underworld and the topside world, the rational and the irrational. "Who do you think took your daughter?" Hekate asks, and it is the first time that Demeter considers that question. Hekate suggests that they visit Helios, the sun, because he sees everything, and, indeed, Helios informs on Hades.

According to Estes's version of the myth, the people of Greece appeal to Zeus to restore Persephone to Demeter because the barren earth is causing starvation. It turns out that Zeus had conspired with Hades, giving him permission to steal Persephone. He reconsiders and calls Hades up, obliging him to return Persephone to her mother. But, as in the tale of "Beauty and the Beast", Hades doesn't want to because he has made Persephone his bride and she is a marvellously warm creature of instincts and imagination. So they strike a deal: if Persephone eats in the underworld she must return. Hades puts a pomegranate in her mouth and she accidentally swallows six seeds and so is obliged to return to the underworld for six months each year. This story has been told pastorally to explain the seasons.

Estes's essential point here is that creativity is cyclical. It cannot be paradisaical and

flow continuously. The nature of the process includes loss and restoration. Thus Estes draws a striking parallel between Hades's rape of Persephone and the loss of an inspirational flow in the work of a creative person. She argues that what is lost must be sought in the unconscious, just as Demeter had to go underground to negotiate for the return of her daughter. Understanding Hades to be the inner critic, and therefore linked to the negative mother and/or father complexes, elucidates the parallels that operate between the creative and addictive blockages.

The psychological mystery of Eleusis remains relevant to the soul today (Hillman 1979: 48). The Persephone experience grips us in sudden depressions, overwhelming us with misery and a numbing sort of cold. Thus we become drawn downward out of life by a force we cannot see, from which we would flee, distractedly thrashing about for naturalistic explanations and comforts for what is happening so darkly. We feel invaded from below, assaulted, and we think of death. Crucially, however, it is only in consequence of the abduction into the underworld that one is able to experience one's habitual modes of consciousness as defences against initiation into a less literal and more psychic sense of reality. This new sense is at one and the same time an emptying and an enriching (Hillman 1979: 214).

It is worth noting, in regard to the loss of soul that characterises modernity, that the Greek mysteries were not the exclusive preserve of initiates but were accessible, to some degree, to popular comprehension. Story, drama, grove and temple offered

space for reflection on timeless verities supplanted in our age by the siren call of the twilight whisky bottle, other anaesthetics and the soap opera. It is in this context that the Jungian and the New Age project of enlarging access to mythology must be understood.

### **Technologies of the Self and the question of cultural embodiment**

In The Uses of Pleasure, Michel Foucault (1985) developed the theory of "technologies of the Self". Essentially this refers to what people do to construct themselves internally and socially. Foucault did not explicitly address the issue of addiction in relation to the technologies of the Self, perhaps because he would not see the illness dimension as relevant. In fact, certain discourses, notably feminist and postmodern critiques, seeking to repudiate simplistic notions of voluntariness and involuntariness and dichotomised normal/deviant, healthy/sick stereotypes of the medicalised ideology of disease models, challenge the pathologising language that is part of the thematic of addiction (Kosofsky-Sedgwick 1994). For Foucault, an addiction is simply an extreme technology of the Self, a destructive rather than a creative process.

But there is a level at which Foucault's theory is helpful in dissecting the thematic of addiction. His notion that power manifests at a micro-sociological level links clearly with our Jungian ecofeminist theme. For Foucault, the Self is, in fact, power-in-relation, with power seen as a constructive process. However, when utilising this

perspective as a lens for gender analysis one sees that power is anchored in the surplus-repression of the sexual understructure - the pervasive institution of mothering, mandatory heterosexuality and asymmetrical gender relations skewed in the favour of men. Trask (1986: 147) comments that this power causes crude repression of the sexual instincts, which rebound as aggression and conquest; the continued political and social dominance of men; and the subordinate position of women which is frequently sustained by pervasive violence. Yet Foucault ignores such aspects of power that differentially affect women. Referring to Discipline and Punish, Bartky (1990: 65) muses:

Where [in Foucault's work] is the account of the disciplinary practices that engender the "docile bodies" of women, bodies more docile than the bodies of men? Women, like men, are subject to many of the same disciplinary practices Foucault describes. But he is blind to those disciplines that produce a modality of embodiment that is peculiarly feminine.

Bartky (1990: 66-71) puts forward her own analysis of the social practices that affect women differentially, concentrating on three social practices that aim to discipline the female body: constant dieting directed at keeping the body thin; constriction of gestures and limitation of mobility which prevent the body from taking up too much space; and ornamentation which makes the body a pleasant sight. All these practices have their roots in particular cultural definitions of femininity. Allen (1996:

274) comments that Bartky's analysis of such practices and of the understanding of femininity they exemplify is an overt continuation and appropriation of Foucault's account of disciplinary practices.

Further, as Allen (1996: 274-5) points out, Bartky highlights a crucial feature of these social practices and the cultural concept of femininity in which they are located. Referring to Foucault's discussion of the Panopticon - which functions by convincing prisoners that they may be under surveillance, thereby inducing them to monitor themselves constantly, Bartky argues that women are similarly compelled to discipline ourselves, through internalisation of practices and understandings of femininity that reinforce the power relations that oppress us. Allen insists that an account of this internalisation by the dominated of mechanisms of domination is vital for a feminist theory of power.

In Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory, Haunani-Kay Trask (1986: 165) concludes:

Like feminist love, feminist power has meant a reclaiming of woman's body from the ideology and institution of patriarchy. In asserting their claims to control and enjoy their bodies, feminists have had to fight an internal struggle against a colonising ideology which has defined women in physical terms for the benefit of men. The struggle is akin to the Black struggle for identity in this one

respect: both women and Blacks are subjugated by a dominant ideology which, once internalised, becomes the voice of authority.

Part of the feminist enterprise has been an attempt to re-evaluate the body beyond essentialist, universalist, biologically determinist presuppositions (Grosz 1992: 39). Strongly influenced by psychoanalytical theory, feminists such as Irigaray and Gallop conceptualise corporeality differently, although both insist on two autonomous, sexually specific models of the body. Gallop (1988) sees the female body as a site of resistance, a form of opposition to patriarchal domination, but therein silenced and refused representation. Irigaray (1985), on the other hand, sees the female (and male) body as a site for the inscription of social significances, so that the body is "spoken through", formulated by diverse forces of social representation, rather than silenced.

In Turner's materialist critique, a power claimed over a body is a power asserted within a social realm (Reineke 1990: 248-9). A threat issued against the social body is registered by a human body. Turner's organic metaphor for society as an organism bounded by an outer membrane links conceptually with Foucault's claim that institutions embed political legitimations and cultural meanings on individual bodies that line the outer membrane of the social body. Power relations have a direct grip on any body situated out there, "they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (Foucault 1977: 25).

In Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo, Mary Douglas (1985: 248) argues that symbolic systems forge power relations between the social body and its individual members, varying with cultural attitudes toward body orifices and their waste. To which body margins and concomitant waste a culture will attribute power and danger depends on the nature of the social situation that the body is mirroring, although similar symbolic themes are discernible.

In her study of medieval ascetic mystics, Caroline Bynum notes how the body can be presented as a metaphor for food. She also examines how food as a resource reflected at a micro-level the larger social processes of order and disorder. It was the basic resource over which women had the most control. Women manipulated and controlled their environment through food-related behaviour, for food contextualised and shaped their responsibilities and privileges within their world (Bynum 1987: 208). In Foucault's terms, they devised disciplinary measures around food as tools for the construction of a particular kind of self. Bynum emphasises that close examination of the function and meaning of eating and not-eating, "is ultimately to confront both the question and the nature of ascetism and the question of the basic structures - psychological, social and religious - of women's lives in the later Middle Ages".

Rejecting pathologising approaches, Bynum (1987: 208) concludes that "the extreme ascetism and literalism of women's spirituality were not, at the deepest level,

masochism or dualism but, rather, efforts to gain power and give meaning".

Evaluating dualism and misogyny in the intellectual traditions of mediaeval thought, Bynum (1992: 200-2) notes that mediaeval thinkers associated the body with women and expected women's physical and physiological processes to be more primary to their existence than those of men. Significantly, however, they also associated the body with God, through the doctrine of the Incarnation, and shunned marked soul/body dichotomies more than did patristic or early modern theologians. Thus, Bynum (1987: 204) concludes, the bodily experience of both sexes was imbued with deep spiritual significance, and cautions that the impact of medieval perceptions of woman and of the body were far more complex than scholars have realised:

we find that neither medieval gender contrasts nor medieval notions of soul and body were as dichotomous as we have been led to think by projecting modern contrasts back onto them. Thus, I would like to argue that we must consider not just the dichotomy but also the mixing or fusing of the genders implicit in medieval assumptions (1992: 204-5).

In a comment which sums up much of the relevance of these themes in the contemporary setting, Jackson (1996: 115) notes:

There are many layers to women's concern with their body image which can be

a major factor in a problematical relationship to food. Among them are the ancient interaction between men's sexual response to visual cues and the high value women place on relationships; the contemporary emphasis on superficial appearance as opposed to substance; women's search for a new inner image; and the tendency of the body image to stand in for self-image where the latter is negative or inadequate.

In the following chapter, we will examine the nature of embodiment and desire from an ecofeminist perspective before focusing on specific issues relating to the embodiment of desire in survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

## CHAPTER FOUR: BODY AND SOUL

Important themes emerge when we excavate history using a hermeneutical lens that seeks to discover women's experience as distinct from the male frame of reference which both names and negates it. Amongst Jungians, ecofeminists, New Agers and others, a new mythology has arisen pertaining to the return of the Divine Feminine, who was revered for millennia, long before the advent of patriarchy and patriarchal religions. Those alive to her presence stress the need to integrate this archetype into our modern frame of reference. We could hypothesise that our collective unconscious, anaesthetised for centuries by patriarchal domination, is reawakening to the intrinsic value, majesty and danger of the feminine principle.

Jackson (1996: 116) suggests that eating disorders, like many other distressing addictive symptoms, represent the psyche's need to be recognised, revered and loved in its variety and wholeness. The more the body is abused and manipulated through deprivation, bingeing and purging, or other addictive behaviour, the deeper the feelings of floundering and loss of control. When the attention focuses on the inner reality, however desolate, unworthy or terrifying this may feel at the outset, the unseen body of the psyche begins to be nourished, and the possibility of a new, co-operative relationship with the physical body can manifest.

## **The impact of patriarchy on the experience of embodiment and the feminist**

### **Eros**

Spretnak (1982: xii) observes that humanity's earliest artefacts, the multiple female figurines from the Upper Paleolithic period, evidence the awe our ancestors felt for women and their mysteries. The elemental power of the female seems to have been the focus of such cultures, which developed spiritual practices and sacred myths based on a macrocosmic application of the mysteries they observed at hand. Rich (1982: 33) argues that the images of the prepatriarchal goddess cults informed women that power, awesomeness and centrality were theirs by nature, not by privilege or miracle; the female was primary. The male appears in earliest art, if at all, in the aspect of a child, often tiny and helpless, carried horizontally in the arms, seated in the lap of the Goddess, or suckling at her breast.

Under the patriarchal system, men who had perhaps felt more of a part of the fundamental life processes, became outsiders witnessing the powerful flow of nature in its procreative cycles. Spretnak (1982: xii) suggests that their response to this alienation and separation is at the root of misogyny. She argues that the objective of patriarchy was and is to prevent women from achieving, or even acknowledging, our potential: that we are powerful in both body and mind.

Such theorists are criticised for escaping into anachronistic, separatist spiritual practices that are accountable neither to their social context nor to the socio-political

realities of the "Third World" (Ackermann 1992). Further, the theoretical gamut of the feminist excavation of a matriarchate, and the responses produced, are seen to centre repetitively around issues of power relations. The approaches are seen to border on the concrete, implying or demanding absolutes, or simply trivialising, interpreting matriarchy as patriarchy with an "m". The main reformist critique of proponents of the matriarchy is its idealisation as a golden age. Yet, ironically, the very pulse and many of the themes of this spirituality present themselves in ecofeminist theory. Here, grounded empirically in the global crisis of our times, they are recognised to be ideologically sound.

Kane (1989: 43) discusses the female's change of status among the Israelites, claiming that it was against the Moon Mother who had been worshipped in Sinai before Jehovah that Judaic monotheism fought its fiercest struggle. The Feminine was more reviled in Judea than she ever was in Greece as evidenced symbolically by the fact that the serpent, which used to be connected conceptually with mystery and numinous energy, became Eve's tempter. Eve slid from innocence to being a mere woman, marked by sexual self-consciousness and bodily shame. Kane points out that like Medusa, she became lost in matter. There is little recognition that Eve's rebellion could be read as a spur to spiritual progress.

Joseph Campbell sees a historical rejection of the Mother Goddess implicit in the Genesis account of "the Fall". It seems that when the Hebrews came into Canaan

the principle divinity of the people they subjugated was the Goddess, associated with the serpent. The Bible observes that "until those days the people of Israel had burned incense to the serpent" (2 Kings 18.4). Campbell (1988: 45-6) notes that the snake can be seen to symbolise immortal energy and consciousness engaged in the field of time, constantly throwing off death and being reborn. Clearly, the change from polytheism to monotheism was to have far-reaching implications. According to Campbell, the polytheistic approach sees each image of God/dess as a metaphor or mask. It would appear that the significant propensity to fundamentalism within monotheistic faiths relates to the tendency to become ideologically bound by, and essentially trapped within, their metaphors.

Certainly polytheism directly threatened the religious and social organisation of Israel, and the Serpent personified the threat in the Genesis story. As Condren (1989: 15) points out, although death took on a tragic aspect in earlier stories, it was nevertheless integrated into the natural cycle of things. The Abrahamic tradition, which has gathered tremendous momentum and force within human consciousness over the past three and a half thousand years, constructs death as a punishment for sin, a sin caused by woman, the "Mother of All the Living".

Under Yawhism, humanity became responsible for almost all evil in the world. By contrast, polytheistic god/desses embodied both good and evil, thereby symbolising the essential ambiguity and tragedy of human existence. In the matrix of traditional

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are able to scrutinise every aspect of power relationships (Brock 1988:35). Rich (1980: 37) offers an indication of the difficulty of this project:

In rereading Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own (1929) ... I was astonished at the sense of effort, of pains taken, of dogged tentativeness, in the tone of that essay. And I recognised that tone. I had heard it often enough, in myself and in other women. It is the tone of a woman almost in touch with her anger, who is determined not to appear angry, who is willing herself to be calm, detached, even charming in a room full of men where things have been said which are attacks on her very integrity (Rich 1980: 37).

The realisation that the absence of respect for women's lives is written into the heart of male theological doctrine, into the structure of the patriarchal family, and into the very language of patriarchal ethics seems to be proving slow to take hold within human awareness. The most plausible explanation for this is that language teaches us below the level of consciousness and intentionality, our sense of power-in-relation. Harrison (1985: 24) analyses how appropriation of language either reproduces or reshapes social relations. The task is to challenge previously unquestioned patterns of domination that are so deeply embedded within linguistic cultural expression. She argues, therefore, that a working assumption of a feminist ethic must be the critical assessment of all language for its moral effects in order to eliminate those patterns which reinforce unjust social relations.

In Man-Made Language, Dale Spender demonstrates the potency of sexist language as a tool of patriarchal ideology. "Intentionally or otherwise, men have formulated a semantic rule positing themselves as the norm, and classifying the world from that reference point, constructing a symbolic system representing patriarchal order" (1980: 58). It is therefore highly significant that certain contemporary linguistic philosophers believe that language shapes our consciousness more than it expresses it (Ackermann 1992).

Indeed, the relationship between thought and language has become a critical issue within both feminist and psychological theory. It demands an analysis of the interplay between individual and social consciousness, and the effect of the social context, including the culturally pervasive theological anthropologies and ideologies, on individual development as mediated through language itself.

Vygotsky, a post-revolutionary Russian psychologist, worked extensively on the relationship between thought and language within personality development and argued that words are not only central to the development of thought, but also shape the growth of consciousness (1962: 153). "Thought not only finds expression in words, it comes into existence through them" (1962: 125); the child's mastery of sentence structure creates the infra-structure of her/his thought. "Thought is determined by language, by the linguistic tools of thought and by the socio-cultural experience of the child" Vygotsky concludes (1962: 51).

Building on the historical materialist psycho-linguistic analysis exemplified by Vygotsky, feminist theologians have increasingly examined the role language plays in organising, and to a large extent formulating, spiritual experiences, knowledge, expectations and inner states. Perhaps pre-eminent in this regard, and controversial not the least for that reason, is Mary Daly, whose ground-breaking Beyond God the Father (1973) unleashed a storm in theological circles:

Women have had the power of naming stolen from us. We have not been free to use our own power to name ourselves, the world, or God. The old naming was not the product of dialogue - a fact inadvertently admitted in the Genesis story of Adam's naming the animals and the woman ... To exist humanly is to name the self, the world, and God. The "method" of the evolving spiritual consciousness of women is nothing less than beginning to speak humanly - a reclaiming of the right to name. The liberation of language is rooted in the liberation of ourselves (Daly 1973: 8).

Informed by the sociology of knowledge which emphasises how humans evolve through "ongoing conversation" between themselves and significant others in their society, Demaris Wehr (1988: 16-7) fleshes out the profound implications of androcentrism perpetuated universally by the use of male generic language. A perniciously oppressive power relation, androcentrism drowns the voices and perceptions of women in its continual influx of male perceptions on the world. Wehr

emphasises how this conveys the message of women's inferiority to them on a far subtler, deeper level than negative treatment or belittlement could.

The use of male generic language perpetuates the habit of androcentrism. Once women are defined and treated as object and not subject, as not normative, and not fully adult, the definition itself alienates women from a sense of authenticity and subjecthood. Definitions and categories exert great suggestive power since they tell us what is in the nature of things ... This is why liberationist groups have focused on the importance of experience. By relying on their own experience, and not on what someone from the ruling group tells them their experience is (or should be), "minorities" have come increasingly to trust themselves and, as a result, to be able to challenge prevailing social definitions (Wehr 1988: 16-7).

It is in the context of this critical understanding that the thesis argues for a therapeutic approach based on the insight that a valuable source of empowerment in the alienated modern age is to expand one's understanding of and engagement with one's personal experience, both internal and external, and to develop a language that harmonises with and facilitates active involvement with one's dream life. Thus the realm of the inner life comes into clearer relief, and the healing quest for soul may begin.

Through its misogynistic language, law, theology, anthropology and ethics, patriarchy has consistently equated the very nature of women with contemptible inadequacy. Consequently, most people think in dualistic constructs which align women and feminine aspects of nature with the "negative" half of all pairs. As Phyllis Chesler so artfully exposed in Women and Madness (1972), most twentieth-century women who are psychiatrically labelled, privately treated, and publicly hospitalised are not mad. They may be profoundly unhappy, self-destructive, economically powerless, and frigid - and so they remain the women they have been conditioned to be.

Jackson (1996: 116) provides another variation on this theme, arguing that new developments in feminine consciousness have been struggling to surface for a long time, and that eating problems have replaced hysteria as a medicalised expression of women's malaise and need for transformation. While this is a collective problem, insight and awareness can essentially only be realised through the attempts of individuals to bring these psychic forces to consciousness. She points out that a few centuries ago in various cultures, the young woman who rejected the option of marriage, or in whom the spiritual dimension took precedence, had a socially acceptable alternative in celibate religious orders. From a metaphorical perspective, today's non-menstruating anorexic, who typically avoids sex as well as food, and the obese woman with her defensive, protective layer of fat, may be seeking that alternative in the body.

### **The impact of child sexual abuse on the experience of embodiment**

The great majority of us are required to live a life of constant, systematic duplicity. Your health is bound to be affected if, day after day, you say the opposite of what you feel, if you grovel before what you dislike and rejoice at what brings you nothing but misfortune. Our nervous system isn't just a fiction, it's part of our physical body, and our soul exists in space and is inside us, like the teeth in our mouth. It can't be violated forever with impunity Pasternak Dr Zhivago (1959).

Therapists have likened the body to a museum which contains many artefacts from childhood. A key premise of the New Age healing ethos is that trauma is stored in the physical tissue until the day it is expressed and resolved. Most body and movement therapies are based on the assumption that the body has a long memory. The child who has been sexually abused learns that her body is not her own, that other people's wishes for her body are more important than her own. Thus she is denied the opportunity of learning about and being in her body in a pleasurable and safe manner. Indeed, as we shall see in our case study, the alienation from the body is often profound, because it has caused or is seen as having caused so much trauma that the result is a split-off body complex. This thesis seeks to show that alienation from the body leads to an alienation from the Self and that the language of both is communicated symbolically through the dream.

Greene (1984: 11-2) discusses how Jung was led by a dream in later life to an in-depth exploration of alchemy and its links to the psychic process of individuation. Ultimately, he found concealed in the ambiguous language of the alchemical tradition the essence of his own personal myth. He identified strongly with the phases of psychic and spiritual transformation which he saw mirrored in the alchemists' apparent concern with the transformation of material substances. Yet the material, the realm of embodiment, was not scorned by Jung, who nurtured and explored his rootedness in the physical world even when he was most abstract and intuitive in his theoretical formulations. He loved to play with water and earth, for example, and he personally carved and laid the stone of his beloved Bollingen, which Greene sees as "truly the incarnation of his own soul".

For Jung, body and psyche, spirit and matter, the concrete and the intangible were not split or disconnected but interfused with each other. Greene (1984: 12) points out that although he uses the term "body" in the Collected Works, it is often in the sense of a mystical or subtle body or as a metaphor for something else, for example, the undifferentiated material one brings to analysis. In "The Tavistock Lectures," Jung (1950: 23) speaks of body as shadow:

The body is a most doubtful friend because it produces things we do not like: there are too many things about the body which cannot be mentioned. The body is very often the personification of this shadow of the ego. Sometimes it

forms the skeleton in the cupboard, and everybody naturally wants to get rid of such a thing.

Pertinently, Jung lived at what one may hope is the approaching end of more than 4 000 years of patriarchal culture which , as we have seen, elevates spirit and denigrates the body, as dark, evil and "other". Although Jung was writing before the emergence of the feminist and certainly the New Age insight into the need for the body to be reclaimed and integrated alongside psyche in the therapeutic process, he is prophetic (1933: 253):

The body lays claim to equal recognition; like the psyche it also exerts fascination. If we are still caught by the old idea of an antithesis between mind and matter, the present state of affairs means an unbelievable contradiction; it may even divide us against ourselves. But if we can reconcile ourselves to the mysterious truth that the spirit is the living body seen from within, and the body the outer manifestation of the living spirit - the two being really one - then we can understand why the striving to transcend the present level of consciousness through acceptance of the unconscious must give the body its due.

Jung concluded that the various bodily symptoms were messages from the psyche itself and could therefore be given a symbolic meaning, the key to which was most immediately accessible in dream images. For Jung the dream functioned as an

intermediary between the physiological and the psychic, yoking them together, just as projections pointing outwards to objects were linked to symbols pointing inwards to Self. Thus healing power resided in a conscious awareness of the symbolic nature of the dream, which provided the psychic meaning of those body symptoms by which the spirit struggled to communicate its condition and its needs. Clearly therefore, the individuation process can also be observed in the body. Woodman (1980: 60) concluded in relation to her work with eating-disordered patients that obesity had to be understood in terms of its symbolic meaning ... understanding lies in the approach to treatment and the possibility of healing.

Elaborating on this insight, Woodman (1989: 61) notes:

Jung recognised that the power of the complex could have pathological results in the body ... Repeatedly he emphasised that it was not the intellect but the emotions that were the chief factor in determining these associations, and that "all affective processes are more or less clearly connected with physical manifestations" (CW 2: par. 1080). Jung defined a "complex" as a collection of imaginings, which, in consequence of (its) autonomy, is relatively independent of the central control of consciousness, and at any moment liable to bend or cross the intentions of the individual (CW 2: par. 1352).

It was Freud's investigations, however, that led the furthest of all into the invisible

reality of many women's lives, as Herman (1992: 18) highlights. Profoundly offending patriarchal sensibilities, Freud's discovery of childhood sexual exploitation at the roots of hysteria transgressed the boundaries of social credibility and rendered him ostracised within his profession. The publication of The Aetiology of Hysteria in 1896, was met with an ubiquitous, stony silence. Herman records (1992: 18) how he wrote to Fliess shortly afterward, " I am as isolated as you could wish me to be: the word has been given out to abandon me, and a void is forming around me."

Freud's subsequent recasting of actual sexual trauma in terms of Oedipal fantasy has become vilified and scandalised where it is not buried. Yet one is inclined to agree with Herman (1992: 18), "No matter how cogent his arguments or how valid his observations, Freud's discovery could not gain acceptance in the absence of a political and social context that would support the investigation of hysteria, wherever it might lead." Such a context had never existed in Vienna and was fast disappearing in France. Significantly, Freud's rival Janet, who did not abandon his own traumatic theory of hysteria and who never retreated from his hysterical patients, lived to see his works forgotten and his ideas neglected.

It has been largely as a result of the feminist enterprise of deconstruction of patriarchal frameworks that these ideas have gained current credence. Moreover, the New Age recognition of the importance of wholism has emphasised the feminist insight into the centrality of the body as the site of both oppression and hidden

wisdom. As Nadeau (1996: 58) concludes:

The body is much more than a tool which we must periodically wake up, energise or refuel in the educational process. Rather, it holds some of the keys to both analysis of present circumstances and identification of the future direction women can take to meet their needs and regain control of their daily lives.

In other words, becoming conscious of one's bodily and subjective states not only plugs one in to a source of readily available and renewable energy, but also offers an accessible focus for demystifying the political context which constructs individual experience. Nadeau thus argues for an understanding of what she calls "the political economy of the body", proposing this as a feminist theoretical tool for finding concrete starting-points for women to develop a gender analysis of global restructuring (1996: 58).

Abramovitz (1992: 57) notes that, in addition, the body often carries the psychotic corner, and consequently body work has to be handled with great sensitivity:

Often in the process of analysis the person becomes ill ... The body is suddenly faced with the pain of a lifetime that has been hiding in the cells, and bringing that to consciousness is agonising. Because the soul is huddled in the body, in

hiding, it is experienced as emptiness. But this is a sacred emptiness, because this is where the abandoned soul is. So until we learn to value the betrayed feminine parts, the intuitive, the irrational, the spontaneous, we will continue to betray the soul. And we will experience the sense of guilt so often found in the psyches of addicts, where they know they will be punished but they don't know what the crime was.

Estes (1993: 200) discusses the instinctive psyche's view of the body as an information network, a messenger with multiple communication systems in the physical, intuitive and emotional realms. Conversely, in the imaginal realm, the body is a potent vehicle, a spirit who accompanies us, a prayer of life in its own right. She points out that in fairy tales, represented by magical objects that have superhuman abilities and qualities, the body is represented as having two pairs of ears, one for hearing the mundane world, the other for hearing the soul; two pairs of eyes, one for normal vision, the other for far-seeing; two forms of strength, the power of physical stamina and the indomitable vitality of the soul.

Narrowing the focus for such insights, Kane (1989: 152) observes that healing in incest survivors is often heralded by the beginning of regular menstruation, and that a few have remarked that they bleed less at menstruation. One patient explained that, now she was ready to express her anger, she no longer needed to bleed so much from her womb. In Kane's view (1989: 152), it is this part of her body that holds

the hurt done to her.

### **Overcoming the trauma of childhood sexual abuse**

Child sexual abuse emerged as a major theme in the case study discussed in Chapter 5. When examining the parallel between bulimia and the molestation, Alex provides clear examples of the theoretical links practitioners make:

When sexual arousal takes place, after a point it is like a roller-coaster downhill. It cannot be stopped until it reaches the end. Although initially I really was forced, and all the way through was held down and forced, I felt guilty that my body found even a crumb of arousal and response to the stimulation. Enormous guilt and self-disgust and total feeling of being out of control.

Similarly, with the bulimia once I've started eating and even if I have just a taste of a "forbidden" food, I feel "out of control" and feel like I'll just have to let go and let it happen. A tremendous sense of panic, false joy (if I'm in company), a sense of urgency and then total passivity to the inevitable binge - right until it has reached its end (like the roller-coaster).

Importantly, it's strange that I use the word roller-coaster but it's very relevant: all happening far too fast, many different disordered out of control feelings all rushing up at once. Inability to rationalise them and honestly just no time to.

There's nothing I can do, I'm on it, strapped in, and it's roaring so fast, and I can't get off. I want to because I feel uncomfortable with all those feelings ...

Obviously when the roller-coaster ride is finished, after physically recovering from the shock and numbness and forgetting about it and secretly vowing never, ever to get involved in that again (as with sex, with bingeing).

Ferenczi was Freud's closest analytic colleague for over 20 years, and in his last paper, "Confusion of Tongues", he "explained that the child's desire for tenderness can be exploited by an adult's need for sexual gratification at any price; if this abuse occurs, the child becomes paralysed by fear" (Kane 1989: 23). For Ferenczi it is clear that such seduction is hatred, not love, and that the love/hate split is still foreign to the child's consciousness. The child brings to bear in the traumatic situation a "pathogenic defence mechanism" which Ferenczi was the first to name - "identification with the aggressor". The aggressor disappears as external reality and becomes intrapsychic. We will see this clearly articulated by Alex in the following chapter.

The intrapsychic phenomenon can be shaped into positive or negative hallucinations and through the accompanying trance-like state the child maintains her pre-incestuous trust at the expense of trust in her own senses, so losing her hold on reality. Moreover, the victimised child takes on the victimiser's guilt, since no one

else in the family will and so the child is "already split - innocent and guilty at the same time" (Kane 1989: 23) Furthermore, the adult frequently becomes harsh after his abuse of the child, plagued by remorse and anger which is projected on to the child - who becomes even more confused. Not infrequently, the aggressor becomes overly moralistic or religious after the event. According to Ferenczi, the child's relationship with another trusted person, such as the mother, is generally "not intimate enough to provide help". The child becomes mechanically obedient (or deviant) without understanding why.

A crucial understanding was unearthed by Jung in his discovery that loss of imagination and denial of the feeling function are the true result of abandonment of the incest taboo. Over and above the obvious emotional and physical pathologies of incest, the victim's imagination suffers, since it too is rooted in the body. This loss of connection with both body and imagination produces unrelatedness, tragically leaving the victim open to further exploitation. Kane (1989: 25) argues that the gateway to healing is the awakening of the heart which allows the release of images previously lost to consciousness. "Working with the hurt, repressed feminine, it becomes essential to distinguish *fantastica* from true imagination, a distinction that Jung also found in the alchemical text *Rosarium Philosophorum* (1550):

... And take care that thy door be well and firmly closed so that he who is within cannot escape, and - God willing - thou wilt reach the goal. Nature performeth

her operations gradually, and indeed I would have thee do the same: let thy imagination be guided wholly by nature. And observe according to nature, through whom the substances regenerate themselves in the bowels of the earth. *And imagine this with true and not with fantastic imagination* (CW XII, par. 218, emphasis added).

From a Jungian perspective, imagination is the authentic power of the soul to create images, whereas fantasy is insubstantial, deformed, often ridiculous. Jung (CW XII: 219) describes imagination as the :

active evocation of (inner) images *secundum naturam*, an authentic feat of thought or ideation, which does not spin aimless and groundless fantasies into the blue - does not, that is to say, just play with its objects, but tries to grasp the inner facts and portray them in images true to their nature.

Kane (1989: 25) observes that sexually abused women have surrendered to the realm of fantasy, abandoned themselves to the unconscious, primarily because their bodies, and hence their vitally important childhood and adolescent egos, have been stolen away from them. Robbed of imagination, in addition, they have been robbed of soul. Kane highlights that the seriousness of this dilemma is extremely difficult to appreciate in a society that does not value imagination, and where the distinction between fantasy and imagination is rarely articulated.

Kane (1989: 7) comments on the incestuous nature of the archetypal patriarchal families embodied in Greek mythology. These are not sacred marriages of feminine and masculine, or of culture and nature. Rather they are based on the rape of the feminine, decimation of mother wisdom and invasion of the mother-daughter bond.

In the same vein, Susan Griffin, author of Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature, outlines the disastrous consequences of the separation of culture and nature, mind and body, and the concomitant identification of the male with mind and culture, and the female with nature and the body. The exaltation of the male pole of this duality necessarily constructs the female as the enemy:

Perhaps here is the clue to why daughters who face the same human condition, and must have the same desire to master nature, move toward self-punishment and self-diminishment rather than to dominance and sadism. For the daughter is taught by culture to identify the "dark and inaccessible" within herself. She herself is culture's lost self; she is the power that is both denied and feared. Hers is the nature that must inevitably imperil not only those around her, but even herself (Griffin 1981: 148).

Thus, to state the issue in bold terms, childhood sexual abuse takes place in a context that, on an all but explicit level, constructs rape as the normative sexual experience. One must recall in this regard that it was only very recently that rape in

marriage became a criminal offence. Moreover, it is woman herself who is culpable in her assigned role of chthonic temptress, corrupter of the lofty male spirit. Overlain with such injurious motifs, the more primitive bodily wounding of the sexually abused girl child necessarily presents peculiar difficulties and opaqueness during adult attempts at healing.

In "Abuser and Abused: Perverse Solutions Following Childhood Abuse", Jane Milton (1994: 251) observes:

A woman who has been sexually abused in childhood as distinct from one who has been subject to some other kinds of violence, will have experienced various sorts of intimate bodily invasion, that are beyond, and importantly distinct from, those experienced in the service of feeding and care in infancy ... The mental representation of the body is likely to be affected in serious ways. What can result in a sense, in severe cases a delusion, that the insides of the body, particularly the womb, have become dirty and diseased.

Milton (1994: 251) points out that in early infancy the self is primarily a body-self and that the infant has no frame for sorting out emotionally or factually what the differences are between the places food, urine and faeces go. Sexual abuse, particularly if it occurs early, can inhibit the emotional resolution of such issues, and will feed into, concretise and prevent the modification of, primitive phantasy about the

body orifices and spaces.

Milton concludes that there is a crucial connection between eating disorders and sexual abuse, over and above the undeniable links to a disturbed relationship to the feeding mother. The quality of the body contact within the primal relationship significantly determines whether the child will have an essentially positive attitude toward herself and others. Self-mutilating or abusing attacks in such patients may serve the double purpose of producing further addictive, perverse excitement, and also a punitive assault on the "bad" internal organs which have become contaminated by identification with the intrusive, excited organs of the abuser.

Referring to Welldon's (1988) contestation of the pervasive belief that frank perversions are less common in women, Milton (1994: 244-5) argues that for women, more than for men, the whole body is involved in sexual functioning. Women therefore have great scope for perverse functioning, including in their relationship to their wombs and their children. The expression of perverse attitudes, in syndromes of self-injury and in eating disorders occurs much more frequently in women than in men, and the severity of such disorders often fluctuates with the menstrual cycle.

### **The negative mother complex**

"The dark core," Virginia Woolf named it, writing of her mother. The dark core.

It is beyond personality; beyond who loves or hates us.

We begin out of the void, out of darkness and emptiness. It is part of the cycle understood by the old pagan religions, that materialism denies. Out of death, rebirth; out of nothing, something.

The void is the creatrix, the matrix. It is not mere hollowness and anarchy. But in women it has been identified with lovelessness, barrenness, sterility. We have been urged to fill our "emptiness" with children. We are not supposed to go down into the darkness of the core.

Yet, if we can risk it, the something born of that nothing is the beginning of our truth (Rich 1980: 191).

The symbol of the source of all being as mother resonates deeply with our panhuman experience of this primal bond. In contradistinction to the prevailing separatist, authoritarian notions of a "Father God", many contemporary feminists perceive the symbol of the Goddess to be an essential affirmation of the authenticity of female power as beneficent and independent.

Published first in 1955, The Great Mother is a classic early Jungian text in which analytical psychologist Erich Neumann attempts a structural analysis of the "inner

growth and dynamic" of the archetype, and its manifestations in the myths, symbols and art of human history. Neumann (1963: xlii) prioritised the depth psychology of the feminine within his own work because "the peril of present-day mankind springs in large part from the one-sidedly patriarchal development of the male intellectual consciousness, which is no longer kept in balance by the matriarchal world of the psyche". However, Downing (1987: 8) points out that Neumann's analysis is severely limited by the fact that it is written from the perspective of the son's image of the mother, and therefore has more relevance to an understanding of male psychology and the male's initiation into patriarchal consciousness, than to the inner dynamics of the female psyche.

Ontologisation of archetypes is clearly exhibited in the paradigm Neumann uses in his mandala of the female principle, which involves four manifestations of the archetypes as an inner psychic image:

1. the Good Mother (connected to childbearing, vegetation mysteries and rebirth);
2. the Terrible Mother (associated with disease, death, dismemberment and extinction);
3. the Positive Transformation Goddess (linked to vision, wisdom, ecstasy, and inspiration mysteries); and
4. the Negative Transformation Goddess (related to deprivation, intoxication, insanity and impotence).

Neumann identifies the primary symbol of the elemental mother as the vessel which represents her own body. Depending on whether the personification is positive or negative, it may appear as cave, coffin, grail or cauldron. In her positive elementary aspect she conceives and nourishes a child, and then births and rears it. She frequently appears mythologically as the sorrowing mother who, deprived of her child, achieves phenomenal feats in order to be reunited with it. This myth had such a powerful hold on the Greek imagination that it became the basis for the Eleusinian mysteries. Similarly, Egyptians cherished the Isiac mysteries surrounding Isis, Osiris, and Horus (Engelsman 1979: 21).

The devouring, destructive power of the mother is personified as Gorgon, Hecate, Kali or Medea who appear terrifying in their mercilessness. Importantly, this aspect is also shadow: enraged Demeter, capricious Isis, destructive Lilith.

The transformative mode has its roots in the bodily transformations which occur within women during menstruation, pregnancy and lactation. Neumann terms these the blood and milk mysteries, connected to the hidden and magical powers of women.

Despite the comprehensive quality of his work, Neumann's reduction of the feminine to two axes, the maternal and the transformative, each with a creative and destructive side, sets up a rigid opposition which polarises the positive and negative aspects.

This theory is clearly too tidy to reflect the complexity of feminine endeavour and experience.

In an article entitled, "Visual Images by Women: A Test Case for the Theory of Archetypes", Estella Lauter (1985) explores how the image of the mother looks to women themselves. In asking how the ideal of female nurturance is treated in works by women, she restores the image to an historical context that has been largely ignored. Ultimately she argues, that it is the reification of Renaissance, Romantic and Victorian ideologies, rather than the archetype of the mother, that we need to contest (1985: 60). In the images of the mother created by twentieth-century women artists, Lauter identifies both strength and vulnerability. Behind the many strengths portrayed, she points to the "binding" forces shared: the internal wound, the vulnerability to violence, the machine, the mask, the stereotype, the straitjacket, the inability to act directly (1985: 61).

It seems that, particularly in addicts, the most devastating wound is the absence of the mother. In an essay entitled "The Roots of Addiction", Julian David (1997: 11) notes that primal damage is caused by "the state of unwantedness". Alone in nature human children physically survive the absence of good mothering. But they survive as deeply traumatised people characterised by fragile boundaries and borderline personalities.

Renee van Veelen (1992: 47), a Jungian analyst, points to the often unappreciated heart of this condition - an absence of self-love. The daughters of disembodied and dispirited mothers do not receive the love and affirmation of themselves and their feminine bodies which they require to become confident women. As the subject of our case study notes: "I really struggle being a woman. It's easier to remain a child. I reject the female role models in my family."

Van Veelen (1992: 47) explains that the desolation caused by severe lack of love becomes a searing hunger that no human being can bear. Doing the best they can, they sever themselves from their bodies and feelings, withdraw into the realm of theory and intellect and so become prey to the negative animus. However, they are driven unconsciously by their hunger and become addicts - to food, substances such as drugs and alcohol, shopping, work, sex, success, external perfection, relationships:

But whatever love they receive in this way, it is never enough. It is never enough because it does not begin to touch the gaping hole at the centre of their psyches, their phenomenal hunger for the love of their lost mother. They turn ever more frenziedly to their chosen addiction, which serves a dual purpose: as it gets them some love, so it gives vent to their secret self-hatred, their secret drive for self-destruction. If such a woman can turn towards this hunger, suffer it consciously rather than flee it through pointless and destructive addictions,

she may find that her hunger will lead her back to the severed root of her connection to the archetypal Great Mother, whose healing and nourishment is endless.

Van Veelen construes this process as a dark and traumatic initiation into the mystery of the feminine, one requiring many sacrifices. For the animus-ridden woman the most difficult sacrifice to make is the hope of being loved sufficiently by someone in the outer world. Normal human loving cannot assuage the deep hunger of a woman with this degree of emotional deprivation. She has to turn within, to the healing powers of her own psyche. As the subject of our case study remarks, "I actually find it very difficult to believe that I am loved. I doubt people's 'love' for me."

Kane (1989: 154) makes the same point:

For the suffering soul of incest to heal, she must be joined with the Great Mother, in those deep dark places of silent and excruciating transformation. The woman on her underworld healing journey must meet the wise woman who teaches her to listen to her own heart and to connect with the centre point of Self - her inner priceless pearl.

It is a tragic fact that the meaning of this form of human suffering is frequently missed in contemporary treatment centres, where an emphasis on cognitive-behavioural and other empirical approaches all too often results in loss of the depth dimension, the

profoundly symbolic avenues available for exploration. The defences of the patient are systematically and subtly removed and the negative mother complex responsible for the problem is re-constellated within the hospital setting and team itself. Here is another example, if peculiarly tragic and ironic, of the outer mirroring the inner. The treatment team, limited in vision and "heart", fails to contain the deepest of the patient's desperation, much of which, in eating disorders particularly, is often related to experiences of childhood sexual abuse, as we shall see.

### **Eating disorders and the negative mother complex**

A secure sense of being contained by caring people is the basis of personality formation. When this is shattered, the person so traumatised loses her sense of herself. Another way of putting this simple but critical truth is to say that the growing child's positive sense of self is dependent on the caregiver's wise use of power. As Herman observes (1992: 52-3), sexual abuse violates personal autonomy at the level of basic bodily integrity. The body is invaded, hurt, defiled.

Woodman (1985: 119) argues that in most eating disorders the body is ill with the poison of the negative mother complex. The way out of this is to confront the complex. The negative mother complex constellates a fear of the psyche as well as a morbid fascination, which takes the form of an addiction which both soothes and feeds a bottomless pit of anxiety. "In the absence of the nourishing mother, whether personal or archetypal, people try to concretise her in things, as if to make present

what they know is absent" (Woodman 1993:44).

Extending the insight from the individual to the collective level, Jackson (1996: 114) wonders whether "the obsessive pursuit of slimness in our society is part of an expression of our revulsion at the grossness and psychic inflation of our materialistic age". Certainly one may read the modern consumerist frenzy in the First World as an analogy of the bulimic binge, the consequence of a macro negative mother complex reflecting the lack of attention to the soul's life in our time. Jackson (1996: 114) comments:

The extreme abstention demonstrated by sufferers of anorexia nervosa recreates or parodies the world-denying asceticism which in the past has been practised for spiritual development. Plato has located in the stomach region that part of the soul which related to the appetitive or desirous nature, seen as a beast of necessity, a beast to be fed in order that nobler aspects of human nature could function. Sometimes a secret longing for a more spiritualised life lurks in the flight from body weight and the instinctual demands of the gut.

### **Descent and transformation**

The patriarchal ego of both men and women, to earn its instinct-disciplining, striving, progressive, and heroic stance, has fled from the goddess, or tried to

slay her, or at least dismember and thus depotentiate her. But it is toward her, and especially toward her culturally repressed aspects - those chthonic chaotic, ineluctable depths - that the new individuating, yin-yang balanced ego must return to find its matrix and the flexible strength to be both active and vulnerable, assertive and empathic (Perera 1985: 139).

Perera notes that dream images of the abysmal goddess are common during phases of analysis where the conscious ideal is about to undergo mortification and be radically transformed. One woman dreamt the following:

I am on a subway platform, trying to scrape up a package of hamburger meat that has fallen and spilled. Nearby looms a giant, black-robed, cold, sadistic woman who watches. She is like a queen cobra. She has the amoral face of darkness. She can do anything; she's not interested in life or being nice. She's objective, efficient, of this solid earth and as ruthless as it takes (1985: 152).

This dream presaged a depression in which the patient's grandiose ego-ideal was ground down and she was forced to accept the positive shadow's previously feared, calm strength. She made significant changes in her life and later dreamed that the dark woman had moved into her housekeeper's room, replacing a nice, homely, ineffective woman (1985: 153).

Perera discusses how this underworld aspect of the feminine emerges in analysis when animus-identified puella women descend into what the idealistic animus has labelled evil, sick, ugly or loathsome. The introversion or regression is often so slow and deep that it may turn into a profound deathlike depression, which can be terrifying if there is no orientation to its archetypal meanings and pattern.

In fact many myths exist about the descent of and to the goddess, including the stories of the Japanese Izanami, the Greek Persephone-Kore, the Roman Psyche, and the fairy-tale heroines who go to Baba Yaga, Mother Hulda, or the gingerbread house witch (Perera 1985: 137).

The oldest known statement of this motif, was inscribed on clay tablets in Sumeria in the third millennium BCE. However, Perera is among those who believe that the myth is much older, dating from preliterate times. Usually known as "The Descent of Inanna". For Inanna/Ishtar forms a multi-faceted symbol, a wholeness pattern, of the feminine which extends beyond the merely maternal. Sumerian mythology was populated by great sea and earth mothers, but Inanna was hailed as Queen of Heaven and Earth. She was also goddess of war, order, sexual love and fertility, healing, emotions and song. She was, in short, the Great Goddess.

As this thesis has tried to show, the loss of this wholistic feminine archetype under patriarchy is perhaps the single most critical factor in the pathologies of our time, both individual and collective. As Perera (1995: 148) notes, "the joy of the feminine

into and return from the abyss of the dark goddess. Inanna shows the way and she is the first to sacrifice herself in the pursuit of wisdom and atonement. She descends, submits and dies. Perera (1985: 142) suggests that this openness to being acted upon is the essence of creative human experience of the transpersonal.

David (1997: 15) expresses the same essential idea in his reply to the question of how addictive problems can be addressed: "There is no human fate that cannot be faced. There is no human fate that is not better faced. Jung called it the unconditional acceptance of one's own fate, which includes, above all, who one is and what has shaped one."

From a Jungian perspective, connecting to these levels of consciousness entails a sacrifice of the upperworld aspects of the Self to and for the sake of the dark, different, or altered-state aspects. It means sacrifice to and for the repressed, undifferentiated ground of being in the hope of re-emergence with a deeper, more resonant awareness. From this perspective, the story of Inanna's descent is the revelation of an initiation ritual, and it is directly relevant to the crisis of the feminine today.

Thirdly, the myth delineates a pattern of psychological health for the feminine, in women and men, providing a model of the incarnation-ascension rhythm of the healthy soul, and also of a process which promotes healing (Perera 1985: 143).

Inanna's descent reveals the purpose of retrieving repressed values and of uniting above and below, conscious and unconscious, in a new pattern.

It is absolutely critical for the healing of the wounded feminine that the voluntary death embodied in the myth of Inanna's descent is distinguished from an imposed death experience. Confusion in this regard is both reflected by and may be ascribed to, in part at least, the later Greek myth of Persephone / Kore. Persephone does not voluntarily descend to the underworld; she is abducted and raped by Hades. Arguably a patriarchal deformation of the Inanna motif, the Persephone story constructs rape as not only normative but also as essential to feminine development: to become an adult woman, the daughter must be seized from play with her friends and from the care of the mother and subjected to the violence of rape. What is more, Persephone herself is held responsible - significantly, through her eating of a few pomegranate seeds - for the fact that for half of the rest of her life she is compelled to live with her rapist.

Support for this admittedly controversial reading may be discerned in the clinical experience of practitioners working with victims of sexual abuse. Kane (1989: 33) notes, for example,

I have come to realise that the sexual assault is an imposed death experience for the victim. That is, the victim experiences her life as having been taken by

somebody else. Paradoxically, until the victim is strengthened through a fully conscious *psychic* death-experience, she is never free to enter a relationship - either with an inner or outer male (animus) figure.

Kane notes that the subversion of an experience that should be willing and conscious is at the root of much of the masochistic behaviour of victims. The victim knows the need for a conscious experience of death but if the descent is to be healing, it must be activated and supported by Self - not by the memory of coerced death.

In a sense, only the individual can really see his or her own voluntary death process. The therapist can at best intuit the process and support it. But the inner witness needs to have come of age. The inner child of the abused adult needs releasing into life, love, spontaneous playfulness and centred discipline in order to grow up sufficiently to become that adult witness of conscious disintegration. (Kane (1989: 34).

In a crucial admonition to practitioners, Kane (1989: 35) adds:

The abused woman's desperate flight into the world of the patriarchal ego could be nothing but exacerbated by a therapist unable to willingly join with the woman in death, without considering this a female seduction. In reality, the woman needs her therapist to help her descend into her own body and to let her

old self die.

The end goal of this arduous experience, the archetypal heroine's journey, is not the slaying of the hideous dragon / snake / Gorgon invented by patriarchy. It is a connection with the true and intimate feminine in whatever form she may disclose herself. Then it may be possible to withdraw from the compulsive mothering and / or compulsive shadow-sexuality of the prostitute which so often characterise survivors of abuse. Therapist and patient may then witness the emergence of the energy of the sacred harlot, what Kane (1989: 151) calls "the archetype of profound heart consciousness so deeply repressed in our society".

### **Wounded desire - displaced spiritual hunger**

In "The Roots of Addiction", Julian David (1997: 10 -11) documents the results of psychological experiments conducted on heroin addicts in Germany in the 1960s. Sensory deprivation was utilised and those subjected to it regressed very rapidly. It is likely that this was influenced by the fact that addicts are already in a state of regression, a state which is sometimes described as borderline. As David (1997: 10) outlines, the borderline state is one where the ego has weak boundaries and easily merges with objects in both the outer and inner world. Regression refers to going backwards or inwards and, if one goes far enough in that direction, one arrives at the primal situation with the mother. Psychiatric case studies prove again and again that the quality of this relationship is crucial to the healthy development of the child's

personality, and we shall revisit this theme in the next chapter.

A statistically significant proportion of the subjects of the German study reported the identical fantasy. They were in a dark place and under attack from something like a book. It subsequently emerged, through systematic research, that all these individuals had been the object of an attempted abortion. They were seriously unwanted, in other words, and David insists, as noted earlier, that it is this state of unwantedness that was responsible for the damage to the personality and the ensuing addiction.

Woodman (1985: 117) suggests that the abandoned one at the heart of addiction is the soul of the potentially conscious woman who needs to feed herself with creative imagination. Developing this theme years later, Woodman (1993: 46-7) notes that it is important to recognise that on some level, in some peculiar way, we're all in the same mess, whether we're alcoholic, children of alcoholics, anorexic, workaholic, or drug or money addicted. Supporting the diagnosis of global spiritual hunger made in this thesis, Woodman insists that addicts are trying to run away from God as fast as possible but, paradoxically, we are running straight into her arms. The soul is trying to lead us into the presence of the divine and our task is to seek to understand the symbolism inherent in the substance or behaviour to which we are addicted.

A luminous example of wounded desire transformed was Bertha Pappenheim, better-

known perhaps as Breuer's patient Anna O, who was the only one of the early investigators who carried the exploration of hysteria to its logical conclusion (Herman 1992: 19). After terminating therapy with Breuer, Papperheim remained ill for some years. Thereafter the mute hysteric who had invented the "talking cure" found her voice and sanity in the women's liberation movement. Disguised by a pseudonym, Paul Berthold, she translated into German Mary Wollstonecraft's classic treatise, A Vindication of the Rights of Women, and authored a play, Women's Rights. Using her own name, Pappenheim subsequently became a prominent feminist social worker, organiser and intellectual. During a lengthy, fruitful career she founded a feminist organisation for Jewish women, directed an orphanage for girls, and travelled throughout Europe and the Middle East to campaign against the sexual exploitation of children and women. Herman (1992: 19) quotes a colleague:

... A volcano lived in this woman ... her fight against the abuse of women and children was almost a physically felt pain for her." At her death, the philosopher Martin Buber commemorated her: "I not only admired her but loved her, and will love her until the day I die. There are people of spirit and there are people of passion, both less common than one might think. Rarer still are the people of spirit and passion. But rarest of all is a passionate spirit.

### **Embodiment, ecofeminism and the feminist Eros**

The early feminist insight that the personal is political can be seen as a contemporary

restatement of the ancient occult proverb attributed to Hermes Trismagistus: "As above, so below". Be that as it may, it is now surely beyond argument that the feminist critique of power relations continues to be pertinent to problems escalating most obviously on the ecological level. For example, feminists point out to ecologists that overpopulation is a product of social structures that deny women both power over their own bodies and options for their lives other than breeding (Starhawk 1989: 181).

In "The Origin of the Family" published in Toward an Anthropology of Women (1975), Kathleen Gough identifies eight characteristics of male power within patriarchal social history. Rich (1981: 10-12) elaborates, detailing the extent of power which men have appropriated over women. Ecofeminists extend this type of radical analysis to patriarchal domination and exploitation of nature. A summary of Rich's (1981) analysis follows, a shocking catalogue of the consequences of the destruction of the feminist Eros.

1. The denial of women's sexuality: by means of clitoridectomy, infibulation; chastity belts; psychoanalytic denial of the clitoris; closing of archives and destruction of documents relating to lesbian existence; punishment, including death, for adultery and lesbian sexuality.
2. The forcing of male sexuality upon them: the socialisation of women to feel that

male sexual "drive" amounts to a right; rape, including marital rape; wife beating; incest; child marriage; pornographic depictions of women responding pleasurably to sexual violence and humiliation.

3. The exploitation of women's labour and control of their produce: the role of marriage and motherhood as unpaid production; male control of contraception, abortion and the malpractice of male obstetrics; enforced sterilisation; pimping; the horizontal segregation of women in paid employment; the decoy of the upwardly mobile token woman.
4. The control or theft of their children: the use of mother to genitally mutilate, or bind the daughter's feet (or mind) for marriage; female infanticide; the seizure of the children of lesbian mothers by the courts.
5. Physical confinement and prevention of movement: *haute couture*; "feminine" dress codes; foot-binding; the veil; sexual harassment on the streets; rape as terrorism; horizontal segregation of women in employment; prescriptions for "full-time" mothering; enforced economic dependence of wives.
6. Using women as objects in male transactions: lobola; arranged marriages; the use of women as entertainers to facilitate male deals viz. wife-hostess, cocktail waitresses required to dress for male titillation, call girls, "bunnies",

*kisaeng* prostitutes, *geisha*, secretaries.

7. Cramping their creativeness: definition of male pursuits as more valuable than female within any culture so that cultural values become the embodiment of male subjectivity; witch persecutions as pogrom against independent, unassimilated women; restriction of female self-fulfilment to marriage and motherhood; the social and economic disruption of women's creative aspirations; erasure of female traditions.
  
8. Withholding from them large areas of society's knowledge and cultural attainments: the "Great Silence" regarding women and particularly lesbian existence in history and culture; non-education of females; male social/professional bonding against women in the professions.

It is in this truly diabolical context, in which the doom inherent in the patriarchal project is ever more vividly inscribed on both the body of woman and the body of the world itself, that the quest for a feminist Eros emerged as crucial. Haunani-Kay Trask (1986) provides a useful summary of notions of Eros and power in feminist theory, surveying writers such as Rich and Daly, who implicitly use a concept of Eros in their work, and those such as Griffin and Lorde who explicitly identify the erotic as a form of power. Brock (1988: 112) argues that Eros as power has a sacred dimension which leads to an understanding of incarnate Spirit.

Trask (1986: 110) singles out Daly for her stunningly original contribution to the quest for a feminist Eros, commending her attempt in Gyn/Ecology to construct a new symbolic for women, complete with its own unique analysis, feminist language and metaphor. Daly gives the name of Gyn/Ecology to the feminist Eros of generative love and power, defining it as the "reclaiming of life-loving energy".

Championing this concept of a feminist Eros, Carter Heyward (1988: 2) locates the meaning of justice within the realm of radical relationality. She observes that "'justice' is 'right relation' and 'right relation' is 'mutual relation' in which all persons are more fully empowered to experience themselves and one another as intrinsically precious, valuable, good, irreplaceable earth-creatures, sources and resources of joy and love in relation to one another".

Alice Walker adds a powerfully lyrical dimension to this idea in her classic, The Colour Purple, where Shug describes her vision of God to Celie in these words:

God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God. But only them that search for it inside find it ... My first step from the old white man was trees. Then air. Then birds. Then other people. But one day when I was sitting quiet and feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being part of everything, not separate at all (1983: 167).

The feminist Eros is thus grounded in the relational lives of women and in a critical, self-aware consciousness that unites the psychological and political spheres of life, combining love and power. Crucially, this is not "power over", but what Starhawk (1989) identifies as personal power or "power from within". Erotic power, in short, is the power of primal interrelatedness (Brock 1985: 26). Conversely, erotic power denied and crushed produces dominance and control.

Supporting the feminist emphasis on relationality, Susan Griffin (1981) describes Eros as the basic yearning for others and for discovery of our deepest selves. Our hearts seek the intimate relationships towards which Eros draws us; the domination and consequent isolation which are the negation of Eros are not of the heart's seeking. Similarly, in Audre Lorde's analysis, the erotic facilitates the surfacing and connecting of our deepest needs while it also provides a basis for sharing with others. In this way, the erotic is a response to alienation, to the patriarchal separation of mind and body, "life" and "work," love and power. Knowledge of our erotic selves is therefore empowering since, "Connected to our erotic life force, we are in a position of strength. We can rebuild relationships and whole societies because we have rebuilt ourselves, returned to an inner source of strength" (Trask 1986: 161).

### Quest for the soul

The tools of the human potential aspect of the New Age movement range from the techniques of traditional psychotherapy through various forms of body work to the esoteric techniques of the wisdom traditions and mystery schools. A significant feature of New Age culture is thus an intertwining of psychotherapeutic, somatic and spiritual approaches.

The wholistic New Age model of health has reintroduced study of the relationship between body, mind and spirit or soul. It recognises the influence of psychological, emotional and spiritual factors, thus redefining the nature of the healing process. Myss (1991: 81) asserts that studies in this area clearly indicate that any healing process must be extended to include attention to the inner life of the human being. In other words, attempts at healing must take account of the soul.

Pre-eminent among contemporary Jungian expounders of soul is James Hillman, also known as the founder of archetypal psychology. He notes that Heraclitus (Frg. x) provides the first record connecting the concepts psyche, logos, and *bathun* ("depth"): "You could not find the ends of the soul though you travelled every way, so deep is its logos", and reports Snell's vital insight: "In Heraclitus the image of depth is designed to throw light on the outstanding trait of the soul and its realm: that it has its own dimension, that it is not extended in space" (Hillman 1979: 25). Hillman comments that from Heraclitus onwards, depth became the quality, direction and

dimension of the psyche. Indeed, the term depth psychology says quite clearly: to study soul, we must go deep, and when we go deep, soul becomes involved. The logos of the soul, psychology, implies the act of travelling the soul's endless labyrinth.

According to Aristotle, Heraclitus took soul as his first principle, which qualifies him as the first depth psychologist in our tradition. Clearly, Heraclitus's statement about the depth of the soul also intimates that visibilities are never enough for the soul because it desires to go beyond, to go ever inward and deeper. This, he says (Frg. 54 in Hillman 1979: 26), is because "Invisible connection is stronger than visible". In other words, to arrive at an understanding of anything, we must go into its darkness. Why? Because "the real constitution of each thing is accustomed to hide itself" (Heraclitus Frg.123). Hillman (1979: 26) concludes that since what is hidden is the true nature of all things, including nature itself, then only the way of the soul can lead us to true (deep) insight. Significantly for our purposes, therefore, soul may be understood as involving a process of penetrating or exploring depths, a process which, in a sense, creates soul as it proceeds.

Coming at the issue from another angle, Hillman defines soul as an unknown component that makes meaning possible. Soul gives life and death meaning and purpose, the purpose of life being the recovery of the perspective of soul. Soul "works" through the metaphor of deepening, deepening events into experiences; and

it has a special relationship with the underworld and death. Soul is communicated in love; is at the heart of religious concern; and is the imagination possible in our natures - the ability to experience through reflective speculation, dream image and fantasy. The language of soul is image. Soul is the middle ground between body and spirit/mind.

Bleakley (1989:10) sees soul, which in Greek is *psyche* and in Latin *anima*, as the proper subject of the study of psychology. Soul itself is the medium through which we are able to reflect on our existence, although much of contemporary psychology would diminish soul to "mind" - or the physiology of the brain. Bleakley adds that "soul is that which is in motion", motion which may be ordered or chaotic. He cites the view of Proclus that the soul often shows through number, rhythm and periodicity: the soul "must move in periods", and "what moves perpetually will return to its starting-point, so as to constitute a period". Noting Proclus's assertion that "every soul is indestructible and imperishable", and the Platonic view that soul is the unknown factor which makes memory possible, Bleakley concludes that psychology is properly the giving of meaning and speech to soul.

Kakar (1983: 181) expresses surprise at how few Western psychologists believe in the psyche as a condition of human existence. He refers to a traditionally Indian, South Asian / Eastern perspective on the phenomenon of the occult which, assuming the existence of the psyche and psychic reality, is more able to accept psychic

products, including the mind-created goddesses and gods.

As Jung (1977: xxxiv) notes in his "Psychological Commentary" which introduces Evan-Wentz's version of The Tibetan Book of the Dead :

"Psychic reality" is a controversial concept, like "psyche" or "mind". By the latter terms some understand consciousness and its contents, others allow the existence of "dark" or "subconscious" representations. Some include instincts in the psychic realm, others exclude them. The vast majority consider the psyche to be a result of bio-chemical processes in the brain cells. A few conjecture that it is the psyche that makes the cortical cells function. Some identify "life" with psyche. But only an insignificant minority regard the psychic phenomenon as a category of existence per se and draws the necessary conclusions.

It is, in my view, a tragedy of almost incalculable dimension that the perception of the psyche and psychic events as "a result of biochemical processes in the brain cells" retains hegemony in the Western medical and particularly the psychiatric establishment. The consequence is that literally millions of people now depend on chemical "fixes" to insulate them from the suffering that should be construed as a cry of the soul. Those who combine such psychiatric prescriptions with engagement in a therapeutic process which admits the soul may arrive at the meaning of their pain,

and so heal. For the rest, perpetual numbing seems to be the best they can hope for.

Turning to the issue of embodiment of soul, Rupprecht (1996: 128) describes how Mindell's concept of the "dreambody" functions to dissolve boundaries imposed between inner and outer worlds, expressing eloquently what the term psychophysical really entails. Like synchronicities, dreambody communication occurs continuously. It "hovers between body sensation and mythical visualisation" (Mindell 1982: 8).

The "dreambody" is defined as a "multi-channelled sender asking you to receive its message in many ways and noticing how its information appears over and over again in dreams and symptoms" (Mindell 1982: 8). It is the term for the total, multi-channelled personality and thus makes no distinctions or value judgements between signals from the body and from the mind: symptoms and symbols are both crucial components of the dreambody's language, which includes the organic and inorganic. Mindell (1982: 3) insists that it is not only the mind that dreams and individuates, seeking growth; the body also wants to become all that it can be .

This individual mind/body/dream complex is located within the universal, using an ecofeminist lens. Mindell (1985: 71) says, "Your dreambody is yours, yet it is not yours. It's a collective phenomenon, belonging to nature and the world around you".

The "dreambody" idea is obviously related to the far older notion of the "subtle body". In his discussion of "The Subtle Body and Imaginal Experiences in the Interactive Field", Schwartz-Salant (1989: 132) states that the subtle body is akin to what was known in Newton's day as the aether, a concept not discarded until the advent of Einsteinian thinking. It is the archetypal forerunner of the field concept in physics and of the interactive field concept in psychotherapy.

Introducing The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition, Mead (1919) comments: "The notion that the physical body of man [sic] is as it were the exteriorization of an invisible subtle embodiment of the life of the mind is a very ancient belief."

Jung reviews the value of the subtle-body concept in Psychology and Alchemy (1953, par. 394ff.) but he develops the concept more fully in his unpublished Seminars on Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra. Jung argues that projections from the psyche are transmitted through the medium of the subtle body (1934-1939, Vol. 3, p.139) and manifested in psychic and physical transmissions from one person to another (1934-1939, Vol. 10, p.144). In essence, however the subtle body appears to refer to the unconscious as it is experienced in the body:

It is marvellous to encounter [the subtle body concept] in a text which naively comes from the wholeness of man ... Zarathustra is one of those books that is

written with blood, and anything written with blood contains the notion of the subtle body, the equivalent of the somatic unconscious" (1934-1939, Vol. 3, pp. 151-2).

Schwartz-Salant (1989: 138) notes that the professional pressure Jung was under to be scientific caused him to underplay the subtle-body concept in his Collected Works. Jung details its significance in alchemy and the process reveals a great deal, not least the significant fact that the process of *imaginatio* is conceived of as "half-spiritual, half-physical". In Psychology and Religion, Jung (1937: par.13) writes:

Our usual materialistic conception of the psyche is, I am afraid, not particularly helpful in cases of neurosis, if only the soul were endowed with a subtle body, then one could at least say that this breath or vapour-body was suffering from a real though somewhat ethereal cancer, in the same way that the gross material body can succumb to a cancerous disease" (1937, par. 13).

He adds later (1937: par. 36) : "I have often felt tempted to advise my patients to think of the psyche as a subtle body in which subtle tumours can grow".

### **Embodiment and the nature of desire**

Body awareness has become a vital focus in Marion Woodman's analytic practice because of her experience with women and men who, despite sincere commitment to

a process of engagement with their dreams, are still unable to trust the process. She sees their souls as dislocated in bodies so wounded that the ego's willingness in itself is simply not enough. (1991: 130-1) She argues that the faster the ego advances, the more terrorised the body becomes. The task then is to create a way of returning to the point of the wounding to reconnect with the abandoned child. The body, like the child, tells the truth - through movement or lack thereof.

Woodman (1991: 131) asserts that a trained observer can discern whether the soul resides in the body, or whether the body image is so intolerable that the flesh is barely inhabited. Invoking Hillman's observation that "the image by which the flesh lives is the ultimate ruling necessity", she concludes that what is at stake is the integration of body, spirit and soul.

The psyche is enacted through the medium of the body, which William Blake described as "that portion of the Soul discerned by the five Senses". Woodman explicitly assumes that the soul is much more than the bodily "portion" of itself, nor is it limited to manifesting in the physical body since it manifests also in the infinite "body" of the imagination, a body that includes the entire visionary world of the arts - poetry, dance, music, painting, architecture, sculpture, and so on. That the soul may act in yet another world, of which the arts are an expression, a zone of immortality, is one of the oldest speculations of humankind.

**CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY**

The Ancestors, I ask them,

What came first?

The hurt or the hurter? The bowman or the quarry?

Who hunts who

Down what chasms of time?

How do we heal

The ancient hurts

That make us wasteland?

How do we raise up the children of the lesser dead?

Caitlin Matthews, Where does the Wasteland Start?

Athlete swimmers coming out of the sea. Coldish, greyish evening. They almost slide out of water on to the ground but one slightly stumbles. They don't stop. They come straight to this huge caravan-like structure. They each get into their compartments. Inside each compartment is a small bed-like structure which is extremely narrow and made of a thin slate of wood.

There is this woman - a sort of mother "trainer". She smiles gently but weirdly and puts oxygen masks on some of them while they are lying down or they would just slip into death. Some of them she slightly massages their legs.

None of them says a word. They're too tired and perhaps have gone too far exertion wise - but it's like they're so used to this - they think it's quite normal - even if they don't - they seem surrendered to it.

Why do they go to sleep in these beds? Still wet and still in their costume - where is their comfort? Their humanness? Have they become almost adapted to the sea? Have their bodies so adapted to it? In the morning a man comes in but he seems to come in and sort of just check that all is well. Sort of quietly smiles.

One "lady" in the morning is not there - there was just an empty bowl of "food" or medicine-like food. But she was gone - we all knew that she hadn't made it through the night and the kindly trainer had taken her body out whilst everyone was sleeping. It's like this swimming thing had become such an obsession that they'd all become sort of dehumanised. No one ever said a word, they were just programmed for what they had to do.

There is a very otherworldly, timeless feel to this dream: creatures coming out of the depths, sliding as if on their bellies on to cold grey shores of evening. The dream offers a very ambivalent image of emerging from the ocean, not revitalised or transformed, but sliding or stumbling, not pausing for a moment but moving like automatons. It is an undifferentiated sexless group that emerges from the depths. These crowds or groups of almost anonymous people recur in later dreams. The atmosphere of the dream is claustrophobic, overpowering.

This dream cameo expresses themes key to the life of our case study, Alexandra. There is the otherworldliness of dehumanised creatures. Their vulnerability is produced by their drivenness. We see the sado-masochistic interplay of victim and victimiser which feeds off low self-esteem as well as the punitive rage directed at the body.

The athlete swimmers go to a makeshift kind of caravan structure. Caravans are trailers, portable, a cheaper version of hotels, impermanent, taken on family holidays. They are not usually homes. Inside, the swimmers get into narrow beds, in separate compartments, coffins which present an image of institutionalisation: being hospitalised, lack of private space. The theme of public spaces which exclude private space, particularly bedrooms, will also come up later. One is also reminded of school dormitories, asexual, cramped, rigid.

Then the mother trainer smiles gently but weirdly. Valerie Sinason's article "Smiling, swallowing, sickening, stupefying: the effect of sexual abuse on the child" (1988) notes that smiling is perhaps the first psychic organiser, establishing the beginning of the ego. The second is stranger recognition and the third is the ability to say "no". Smiling back at the mother's smile, or smiling in the hope of being smiled at, or being smiled at with an expression that is not really a smile but a threat or concealed anger begins a process that leaves a child vulnerable to incest. People are smiling but there is something wrong. Children have to accommodate and even return that false

smile because they have to collude with the family lie. Many incest survivors have a preoccupation with masks (even oxygen masks?) and clown's faces, hidden expressions, the stranger behind the smile, the relative who smiles but intends harm. The scary smile has to be taken in because there is no other smile. Hence the mistrust of the "sort of mother 'trainer'" who is not a real mother but a stranger with a weird smile. "Weird" is a word used very often by Alex for experiences that are puzzling, uncomfortable, frightening or revolting.

The "sort of mother", like a nurse in a hospital ward, places oxygen masks on their faces because they cannot breathe for themselves, are unable to sustain themselves. They are passive, helpless, near death, only half-alive, neither alive nor dead. She gives them an artificial, provisional way to breathe - to go on living. The masks over their faces are depersonalising, smothering, but the paradox is that the masks give oxygen. Their faces are hidden by the masks, their expressions unreadable.

She also slightly massages their legs, a tentative comfort. They have been training to the point of exhaustion, their muscles ache, they are near to slipping into death. They are in danger of dying but she has saved them. Alex associated the mother "trainer" with the female facilitator of the eating disorders group she was attending at the time: "She was loving the girls in the dream. It was almost like she was at peace with the fact that she couldn't do anything more." At the objective level, the facilitator would have been carrying certain of Alex's projections. However, at the subjective

level, the "trainer" represents a mothering aspect of her own mother complex.

None of them says a word. This is a world of secrets and silence, a home where the unspoken is so great that silence seems the only possibility. The "swimmers" think it's quite normal, and even if they don't, they seem surrendered to it. Again, there is the passivity and quiescence. Later there will be a dream in which it seems that the hidden woman must give up/give in and surrender to the wild man. Silence and surrender are the key notes. The bride in the tomb, Sleeping Beauty who cannot wake for a hundred years in the castle surrounded by forest and imposing briar hedges, Snow White lying in a living death in a glass coffin with a piece of poisoned apple concealed in her mouth. These are the unconscious echoes, the myths of peasant Europe, the terrifying secrets of girls' lives. This is a place where silence and near-death (pretending to be asleep, longing to fall unconscious, oblivion, the death wish, all the woundings linked to addiction) seem more natural than speech.

At some level we all share this cultural legacy, even when the specifics have been forgotten or corrupted. Persephone is abducted to a dark kingdom where she must not eat or there is no hope of escape - but she does, and must return. Medea murders her children. Eurydice is allowed to follow Orpheus out of the underworld on condition that she does not look back - but she cannot resist a glance and must return to death. Inanna-Ishtar, the Sumerian goddess of heaven and earth, journeys into the underworld to Ereshkigal, her dark "sister". Blind Oedipus does not

recognise his mother and sleeps with her. Electra sees in her father only the forbidden lover. Narcissus starves and dwindles as he stares at his reflection in a pool. Mad Ophelia drowns. The Lady of Shalott takes the forbidden look at the world and floats downstream as she dies.

A man comes in and "sort of quietly smiles" but does nothing. Smiles as if to himself? Is this the false smile that is not communication? In the morning someone has gone, has not made it through the night; another dispersed fragment of self is lost. And only the swimming matters, the mindless activity, the drivenness, the distraction that prevents one from being able to stop and feel, the activity that numbs the pain of feeling. This is the displaced hunger, the wounded desire examined earlier in relation to other addictions. In Chapter 3, for instance, the story of the red shoes illustrated the demonic compulsion which devours an "orphan" precisely at the place where her desire has been wounded.

The dream image of an empty bowl of food or medicine-food seems to reveal that the dreamer's relationship to food as a vital source of nourishment has been corrupted by the negative mother complex. Has the food been eaten or has the bowl always been empty? Was the food not real enough to sustain life? Was food not what was needed? The empty bowl may be a begging bowl.

All in the dream remain strangers to one another, no connection has taken place. A

lady is missing. The trainer/guardians say nothing. Their smiles cannot be read, they are inscrutable. It is eerie and intriguing. Reading/listening to these dreams is like watching someone begin to create a language for herself, a powerful almost inchoate symbolism.

At an objective level, this dream mirrors "reality" since it speaks about the eating disorders unit group which Alex was attending at the time of the dream. She was extremely concerned about one of the young women in the group, who subsequently did drop out. From a subjective perspective, however, an interpretation must consider what the figures and images in the dream reflect about aspects of Alex's psyche. The young woman who leaves provides a very good image of how a complex can grip, sap and devour the energy of the ego. The swimmers have become so drained by their compulsion that they cannot function in the world anymore. On the other hand, the young woman who dies in the dream also provides an image of the necessity for a complex to self-destruct, sometimes since its existence does the psyche a disservice. In this sense, the image could be understood positively: that the silent disappearance of the woman may signal a liberating, transformative event.

Symbolically speaking, the sea can be seen as the collective unconscious, the great archetypal world. The sea is imaged as great mother, source of all life, in many myths of cosmic origins. Stassinopoulos' analysis of Artemis (1983: 73) draws

attention to the impersonality of nature, the archetypal great mother is totally impersonal. In nature's darkness there is no compassion, no allowance for intention, no hesitation or second thoughts. She does not attack or nourish personally. It is a wildness that covers great riches but in which savagery cannot be evaded.

The fact that the dream ego has distance from the strange swimmers is a very positive sign, since it indicates that it is not identified with them:

"They're too tired and perhaps they have gone too far exertion-wise" and, "Where is ... their humanness? Have they become almost adapted to the sea?"

Thinking, while doing creative collage work, of the advantages of her eating disorder, Alex noted that it fills the holes in her life and her heart, covering the bitterness with sweetness, even if only for a moment. Her eating disorder, she realised, provides her with oblivion, safety, no identity, a mask, a hiding place, an absconding from life and responsibility, freedom from the pressure to succeed. Here we see writ large the loss of the orphan's handmade shoes, the loss of the feral woman.

Collages are constructed from fragments and so they have enormous symbolic power for people who are trying to piece their lives together. Papering over cracks, lacunae, abysses can be a kind of mask-making. Torn scraps of paper are cryptic, ephemeral, incomplete - but the pieces sit up and talk.

### **Origins of the case study**

Alex and I met at G22, the psychotherapeutic milieu at Groote Schuur Hospital, where I worked as an advanced psychiatry nursing student. G22 forms part of this large teaching hospital and is under threat of closure. The current economic constraints facing South Africa are resulting in a shift away from the tertiary health level to one of primary prevention. Staff receiving training are encouraged to pursue opportunities for providing care at the community level.

Initially I interfaced with Alex in my participant observer capacity as a student and during our conversations it emerged that she was fascinated by her dreams. I was keen to work on a case study of a food-addicted woman to complete the thesis and asked the consultant psychiatrist if this would be possible. He suggested that I contact Alex after she was discharged and take care of her follow-up.

### **Alex's History**

Alexandra is the oldest of three sisters. Her mother had chosen to abort a male foetus prior to her birth. Her pregnancy with Alex was unplanned and experienced as a burden to both parents. Alex was 10 days overdue and was delivered by caesarean section after a long labour. She was breast-fed for a few months and described as a good baby.

In childhood she was extremely fearful of her own and any other shadow and any

other, of sand, dwarfs, beach-buggies, people being angry with her, of men with beards and the dark. Both parents worked hard at a successful business they ran together, so Alex was looked after primarily by the housekeeper and her grandmother, who lived next door. Her father was absent throughout much of her childhood, and both parents also went away on long holidays without their children. For example, they went to Italy, her father's birthplace, when Alex was four years old. It was at this time that her maternal uncle and next-door neighbour started to sexually abuse Alex and her two year-old sister.

The memory of this abuse only surfaced once Alex started psychotherapy in her middle to late twenties, well over a decade since the onset of bulimic traits. The resurfacing of the traumatic memories precipitated panic attacks, which she had not experienced previously. She still struggles at times to contain her anxiety, and is thankful when she has only two panic attacks in a week.

Alex recalls vaginal and very painful anal penetration, as well as having to perform fellatio. She also describes feeling helpless outside the door of the room where her younger sister was being abused. She could hear that it was different somehow, that the abuser was also physically assaulting her little sister. Alex vividly remembers feeling terrified and powerless to help her sister to stop what was happening. Thus a profound sense of inadequacy compounded her tremendous emotional confusion and suffering.

Alex's mother dismissed her tentative broaching of the subject with: "Don't be RIDICULOUS!" These words have rung in Alex's mind ever since. MacCarthy (1988: 114) documents the damage to the developing psyche of this type of response. Such a belittling, trivialising, dismissive put-down can be expected from women who, in effect, have been disembodied. They are often reluctant to give substance or body to the felt, embodied experience of others. Alex's mother treats what Alex says as insubstantial, and here lies a source of the eating disorder: if Alex has less body, she may have more of mother.

It was at this stage that Alex developed her little male friend, Blinks, who lived in the garage. She now feels the name she gave him is highly significant, allowing her to enter a world where eyes were shut regularly and involuntarily - to prevent sight (insight). Blindness and insight, are recurring themes for Alex, echoed in the automated presence and passivity of the dream swimmers. Blinking is a very jittery way of seeing the world: now you see it, now you don't. We blink back tears of distress. Perhaps Blinks can weep for Alex. Blinking is to both see and not-see. It is a reflex gesture in pain or when startled. Blinks flinches for Alex, is shocked by what he glimpses. A blinking child is a nervous, vulnerable child unable to keep her eyes fully open in the face of the unspeakable.

But perhaps Blinks also stays awake so that Alex can close her eyes and sleep knowing that Blinks is watching out for her. Hypervigilance is a key preoccupation of

sexually abused children. They dare not sleep or take their eyes off what is happening because they never know what might happen next. Seeing is crucially bound up with remembering and it is important to recall that the urgent need to forget is matched by the need to remember. "If I don't look I won't know what happened and I can forget" contends with "If I don't look I will forget and I must remember in order to save myself". Blinks holds these contradictions for Alex. Note the relevance of the term "blinker" here: horses are blinkered to prevent them seeing anything that might frighten them, blinkered for a tunnel vision which excludes any peripheral sideways view.

Significantly, Alex has virtually no recall of her primary school years. Her school memories begin at the age of 11 when she was excelling at music, singing in particular, and her family moved to Johannesburg because her father was travelling extensively. She has expressed the belief that this was the first time she ever felt sad. Significantly too, her younger sister attempted suicide more than once as a child, and her family, including her parents and son, are fearful of the violence of her temper to this day.

### **Child sexual abuse and damage to the instincts**

The damage done to Alex's psyche by sexual abuse is revealed by the disturbed instincts symbolised in the following dream:

I dreamt that my cat, Tommy [male], who only has three legs, was pregnant. Rudy, the dog, had apparently made him pregnant and Tommy hadn't really known what was going on. Tommy's pregnancy wasn't in the tummy. He carried his pregnancy on his back, above and along his spine. There were lumps on his spine and those were the kittens he was "pregnant" with. I felt sick, shocked and without words to see this. The vet said he'd have to operate. It was totally abnormal and I felt really sick and disturbed to see my Tommy like that. I was horrified.

This dream clearly depicts severely damaged instincts. In nature, a dog and a cat would never mate; in nature, a male cat could never be pregnant; in nature, pregnancies are always carried in *utero*, not along the spine. The dream vividly mirrors the bestial reality of this little girl's horrifyingly premature introduction to the instinctual life of sexuality. It reveals her disgust and shame for the body aroused by her uncle when she a very little girl, when she, like Tommy, "hadn't really known what was going on".

A sense of betrayal by her own body caused her to turn on herself, as many girl survivors of sexual abuse do. A crucial part of this damaged relation between the body and self is that natural bodily needs are perceived as enemies - so the healthy need for food and sex becomes perverted.

The girl/woman takes on all the guilt of her own abuse (and in so doing identifies) with enormous power - a little girl can do this to a grown man - and so she represses her knowledge, her intelligence, her gifts, in order to appear innocent. Her sense of survival depends on it. The girl/woman herself is lost in the split between the mother and the whore, ever more open to exploitation. Her very hurt innocence draws the plundering patriarchal soul towards her (Kane 1989: 153).

But deeper even than the hurt of this sexual wounding would have been Alex's searing sense of abandonment by her parents, who were neither there to protect her nor able to respond appropriately or sensitively to the severity of her trauma. The fact that her parents did not notice her distress in the first place, reveals how insubstantial and inadequately the parent-child relationships were, as the following dream confirms:

I needed to make some coffee for myself, and went downstairs only to find that my Nescafe jar was the tiniest one, and it only had a few crumbs in. I looked at my mother's jar and it was huge and full but she would not let me have any of it. I felt angry and desperate.

Alex undertakes the descent down the stairs into the kitchen, like one of the three bears in the Goldilocks story. Her coffee jar is the tiniest one, with only a few crumbs

in, not enough to assuage her addictive longing for a stimulant, caffeine. Her mother has the largest and fullest jar but will not give her any. What her mother has to offer is not nutritional or healthy or nurturing, but ... she will not share - and it feels as if it would be better than nothing.

The dream offers a perfect image of addiction. Alex's immediate and emphatic association to coffee is that she needs it. The child perceives that the mother has what she needs but will not give it. This produces an intolerable sense of deprivation in the child. It is not allowed to have what it needs, and therefore is always craving and hungering for that particular thing which it perceives the mother to have. Thus we see it is also an image of starvation. Coffee is a stimulant, not a food.

Alex's rage at her mother is very evident here, a rage fuelled by her sense of victimisation. If she could detach herself from the complex, however, she would see that it is her mother's jar that is actually empty, and this is why she is not getting what she needs. Her mother simply does not have it to give.

It is quite understandable that Alex feels hard done by and yet it is this sense of victimisation that counterproductively continues to constellate a victimised experience of life in general. Jungian analysis works with the understanding that the outer world can be symbolically read to mirror the inner world. When Alex can truly appreciate her own worth, her craving for her mother's love - her deeply wounded

desire - will no longer make her feel so "angry and desperate". The fusion of wounded desire with the negative mother complex will begin to be undone.

Soon after discussing this dream in some detail, Alex had the following dream:

I am making coffee and go to the fridge to get the milk but then I see it has soured. As I look at it I can see it curdling.

Alex associated breastmilk and therefore "mother" to the milk. She sees it has soured. The breast/mother is sour and no sweetness can be found in it. The milk is undrinkable and it curdles even as she watches - it is getting worse and worse.

Also, curdled milk looks like semen. Many survivors of forced fellatio have persisting associations between milk, cream, sourness, smelly, gushing or dribbling or rancid, curdling semen. Alex goes to the breast and can find only semen. Issues of swallowing, gagging, revulsion, vomiting, a crammed feeling, choking are all connected with this kind of abuse. Anything slimy, glutinous, rotting, sticky is felt to bring on flashbacks to the imposed fellatio. Curdled milk has gone bad - rotting - is poison. Think of Snow White biting into the poisoned side of the apple given to her by her stepmother - she falls into a coma like death. Violation is death for those forced to swallow toxic repugnant substances.

The souring and curdling process that she was witness to in the dream precipitated another discussion between Alex and I. She said that, as she looks more clearly, she can see that her mother has "a can of worms" to deal with herself, and that she is therefore not in a position of strength and should not be looked to unrealistically for reliable support and modelling.

Yet the craving for the perfection one did not have is a very powerful human drive. The following dream, which occurred directly after Alex had watched a TV programme about children caught in the middle of their parents' divorce and the traumatic consequences, provides a classic example of compensation:

I was at a house, my Mom's house. I felt at home there, but it wasn't the same one she has now. My sisters were there and my Dad, sitting comfortably on the couch. Everyone was relaxed and happy. Then I saw that on the top shelf of the TV room. All the things had been taken off and I said, "Are you moving Mom?" She replied that she and my father were going to maybe give it a try at getting back together. I said, "Yes, I witness with that Dad". I was totally shocked but really glad for them. I said that 's what psychologists are for, to help them face reality and work through disagreements. My mother said she didn't want to look pretty at her wedding, just have a veil. The next thing, I lent her a veil I had and she borrowed this and that and we were all going with whilst they got married. Very casual.

Thus we see that Alex's traumatic memories overlay a deep desire for inner union and integration of the fragmented family. Note the key to this provisional reunion lies on the top shelf, almost out of sight. It is of interest that the mother does not want to look pretty, but rather "just have a veil". The initiated daughter lends the mother blindness, blinkered vision, a place to hide, invisibility. Brides wear veils but so do nuns renouncing their lives in the secular world. Mourners wear veils. There is a sacrifice at the altar.

Behind the veil we see, but not clearly. We can only be seen dimly. Alex's mother did not want to appear sexually attractive or pretty at her wedding. She wanted to be hidden. And the violated daughter lends (not gives) her the veil she herself has worn, a chilling image. The daughter will take back that protective, ominous veil. There is some ritual shared by mother and daughter, an exchange of roles. A veil is also a shroud, just as marriage can be - often is - a form of female sacrifice, giving oneself up to a living death, neither dead nor alive.

There are, of course, other readings. At some level the dream may be referring to a shift in a more mature aspect of herself, one that can see the pretty persona as the trap it has been. The dream may also speak of reconciliation with the mother, acceptance of the mother. Importantly, it may offer an indication of acceptance of the necessity of the dark inner journey to the Great Mother, into the heart of darkness, into the embrace of psychic death.

### **The house of incest**

Core to the experience of the incest violation is the sense that there is nowhere else to go. This is particularly true of the small child. There is only home, the site of the violation, and the inner homelessness is absolute. Nowhere is safe. In Alex's imagery, there is a recurring sense of houses (trucks, caravans, hotel rooms) as portable, make-shift, impermanent. There is a sense of carrying and being carried along, weighed down, freighted with burdens, going nowhere but never staying in one place.

Thus under the theme of the house of incest, one is speaking of an internalised self-understanding, an intrapsychic space, that is both coercively restricted and empty, desolate, unpopulated and unbounded. In Alex's dreams there are bedrooms everywhere, and interlocking themes of eavesdropping and secrecy.

Impersonality is another feature of that internalised house: everybody and nobody lives there. It is crowded as a railway station, with interchangeable anonymous people all around. It is also Bluebeard's castle, full of locked rooms with people hiding, full of hollow echoing spaces. In most houses where incest takes place there is a paradox. Rules are very rigid, a great deal takes place in private, it is dangerous to walk into rooms without knocking, there are forbidden places. At the same time, there is no privacy. Anyone can come into the bathroom or toilet, one is forced into bedrooms, horrible things take place in secret or in full view of everyone, even

strangers. Incest is an open secret. Much of the incest literature suggests that abused children come to understand their homes as theatres - with horror movies behind the stage curtain, or as toyshops, where the toys stand in mute witness to what is happening. Home is a little chamber of horror.

Perhaps this is the story-behind-the-story in regard to the domestic pets that surface frequently in Alex's dreams, and the fact that during her in-patient treatment she held a teddy bear as much as she could. Knowing her history we can deduce that as a child she feared for her pets as harmless, cuddly creatures, identified with them on a mythic level perhaps, confided in them. It is also probable, however, that pets came to hold, and to be used to act out, the abuse lodged in Alex's fantasies.

The next dream offers the image of a fridge as metaphor for the house of incest, both breast and tomb. One is reminded of the bare pantry of old Mother Hubbard, the impoverished woodcutter's cottage from which Hansel and Gretel are taken by their parents to die, the old women who lived in a shoe. The sense of place is radically foregrounded for abused children and symbolically may re-member itself around caves, forests, mountains, fields, the ocean, as well as streets, hotels, castles, staircases, hallways, bedrooms. All these symbolic spaces also represent journeys, searches, quests, in an archetypal sense.

Me and my sister walked into a deserted house. A few weeks ago it had been

ransacked and the inhabitants obviously had to flee. We opened the fridge and there was no food inside it, but it was on. There was just this bundle - like a miniature sleeping-bag with a zip. I was about to close the fridge again, but then I heard a buzzing soft noise. I unzipped the "sleeping bag" and inside it, very tightly wrapped, was a mother kitty with nine or 11 little kittens suckling from her and all purring, even though the fridge was freezing cold and normally the cats would have died. I remember waking up and being deeply touched at the immeasurable sacrifice the mother cat had made. The only safe place was the fridge, as cold and cramped and dangerous as it was. So while all the "war" was happening in the house, the mother cat got in there and had her babies and lay still for weeks, wrapped in the blanket, not moving, so her newborns could grow and drink and be warm.

I remember feeling sad for her, but great love and admiration too. When we let out the kittens, they were running all around the house, purring and playing. I remember feeling panicky for the mother, as she had no way of controlling their movements anymore and they were all over the place. I felt shocked and amazed that amidst the death there had grown new life.

The two sisters enter a deserted, ransacked house. The inhabitants have left. Why do they go into an abandoned place? Because there is nowhere else. In the fridge, connected but empty of food, they find a sleeping-bag containing a mother cat with

little kittens suckling - a heart-breaking image. The only safe place for the mother to protect her new born is a freezer, an icy tomb. One may read Alex herself as the mother who is keeping all her dissociative selves together, somehow nurturing them but also feeling afraid that they will run out of control. It is a fragile enterprise. There is so little warmth, such danger of death. Yet the sisters liberate the menaced newborn to play in the ransacked house. Amidst devastation, the new is born and may thrive.

The dream presents a poignant image of Alex's emotional isolation, neglect and abandonment in the image of life developing in a ransacked, deserted house and, furthermore, within an empty fridge. The psyche appears barren of internal resources and supports, except for her sister and the phenomenal mother cat.

Alex associated the "war" responsible for the ransacked house with her parents' divorce which she described as "hideous". The marriage had deteriorated fairly rapidly from the onset of her adolescence. The family moved to Johannesburg where she attended specialist art and ballet school. Although Alex had previously excelled at school and also in music, her performance deteriorated as she felt insecure and that her parents were not interested. At this time her father was travelling excessively and her mother was having an affair. She became her father's confidante and loyal ally which exacerbated an already conflictual relationship with her mother.

Increasingly she resorted to food as an escape. She would binge on sweet things as they comforted her, the sweetness making her feel secure.

Alex associated the fridge to her mother, who has been so cold and immobilised as to be unable to provide emotional sustenance. Estes (1993: 184) explains that in archetypal psychology to be cold, frozen, is to be without feelings. While it is a self-protective mechanism, it is tough for the soul/psyche, which does not respond to iciness, but rather to warmth. An icy attitude extinguishes a woman's creative fire. To be frozen is to be immobilised, near lifeless. Yet it is also to be preserved. Thus at one level the fridge is breast: cold, white and unyielding. Why a fridge and not a pantry? Perhaps because it is a tomb - cold as the grave. A coffin. It is empty. Mother's resources are exhausted. She has nothing to give.

The zip on the sleeping bag may be read symbolically as a sexual image. Perhaps this represents her perceived need to keep zipped up in order to let her vulnerable vitality develop. The dream can be seen to indicate that this has led to healing despite the dangers posed by the fridge. In a sense the dream may be pointing to the fact that she can't escape her mother, and that at the same time healing centers around overcoming the debilitating aspects of that relationship.

In contrast to the dream of her own cat, Tommy, which portrayed severely damaged instincts, this later dream indicates a nascent - and indeed miraculous - vitality in

Alex's instinctual life. The little kittens are alive, and playful, despite conditions that spelt almost certain death. But her dream ego panics for the mother, fearing the kittens may get "out of her control, that she may not be able to keep hold of them, they may get lost". Perhaps underlying this is her fear that they might be abused like she was. Alex associated this feeling of panic to her fear of her sensuality, sexuality, womanhood. Her current distaste for and fear of sexual intimacy with men has replaced the behaviour of her early twenties when she was the envy of many women because she knew exactly how to get what she thought she wanted. Significantly, her affairs were inevitably with married men who could not begin to meet the depth of her emotional needs. Men, like the absent father of her childhood, who were inaccessible to her. Now she fears the power of her sexuality, and how vulnerable it makes her. For her, the dream points to how her fear of being unable to control it.

This association is highly significant for if we look into the archetypal dimensions of this dream in a search for the numinous, some fascinating themes and detail emerge. The cat is a deeply feminine symbol. Barbara Walker (1983: 148) records that the Teutonic Mother Freya rode in a cat-driven chariot. Artemis-Diana was often seen in cat form, and was linked with the Egyptian cat-goddess Bast. The willow sacred to Hecate, the wild and elusive medial woman, became a pussy-willow that bore "catkins" in the spring. The Hindu goddess Durga rode into battle on a lion. According to Walker (1983: 148) reverence for cats began in Egypt, where the first

domesticated cats descended from a wild ancestor, *felis libyca*. Plutarch said the cat was carved on Isis's holy sistrum and represented the moon, while Bast, the Cat/Mother of the city of Bubastis, was the benevolent aspect of Hathor, the Lioness. Festivals of Bast were celebrated with music, dancing, jokes and sexual rites. Her shadow side was Hathor as the leonine Sphinx, Sekhmet, tearer and devourer of men.

Thus, we may read in this dream the fragile beginning of a reconnection with the instinctual and archetypal feminine. It is a quest which centres around woundedness, the site where the feminine has been pressed down and abused. The dream ego's attitude is vital to such a quest and it is significant that we see the birth of real concern for her own instinctual feminine. The more seriously she takes it on, the more it will grow and react. Alex's response was as follows:

I'm really wanting to love and accept my womanhood, because I know it is a gift from God. But I don't want to be like the women in my family because I see how they have twisted and perverted it. Shame is the thing I most struggle with in regard to being a woman and having a man desire me physically. I need to know his desire for me is pure in order for me to accept his attention.

What is "womanhood" a code name for? It is clear that Alex locates the value of her "womanhood" in an external source - it is "a gift from God" - and this creates a major

double-bind in terms of the attitude of patriarchal religion towards not only sin and sexuality, but woman herself. The patriarchal god is no friend to woman, as we have seen, and certainly does not countenance unfettered desire in the female. Here lie the roots of the flawed binary opposition between shame/violation and purity, which results in the perverted image of sexual loving as rape.

Yet, a vital core of healing in Alex's process is the relationship in prayer which she has established with Jesus and which she now experiences as a constant source of nourishment. Her early environment was influenced by her father's emphasis on the values of the Christian tradition. In her teenage years however, her disillusionment left her with no inspiration for faith. It was only after flirtation with the occult that scared her in her twenties that she had a conversion experience which changed her attitude dramatically. She realised that she had projected a lot of her rage onto God, and she explained to Jesus her need to be honest with him, even angry if necessary, and this has made all the difference. She is emphatic, that Jesus is a precious source of nourishment, hope and healing in her life, and that attention to her spiritual life will remain a priority.

Thus we see that her prayer life is her creative life. In a paradoxical sense perhaps it can be seen to form the flipside to her bulimia. The two are extremes of one axis: devotion to life itself, and the battering and destruction of the vehicle for life itself. In her search for insight that will bring release from bulimia, Alex diarised the following:

Underlying feelings of self-hatred, anger at having been physically responsive to the abuse, out of control of my response. My body was physically aroused during the abuse and it is this that freaks me, made me feel uncontrollably guilty ... made me feel that I was just as much a partaker in the abuse as the abuser ... made me feel sinful and bad inside and thus ashamed. Made me feel out of control of my own responses to the attack.

Psychoanalytically speaking, Alex's bulimia forms a defence against discovering the true nature of the pain, rage and confusion that relates, in the first place, to the sexual abuse she suffered as a little girl, and her experience of her body as disobedient in pleasure. As Sanford (1991: 71) observes, what drives the eating disorder is the attempt to flee from feelings about having been abused, from normal reactions to an abnormal situation, one experienced as life threatening - as indeed, it often is. Like other survivors, Alex is trapped in the mistaken belief that to experience those feelings now would be similarly life-threatening, causing an emotional breakdown akin to death.

But, the breakdown has already happened; it occurred when her feelings became frozen or pre-empted by shame. Winnicott (1974: 104) refers to this as the "death that happened but was not experienced". Only when a survivor of abuse has people to stand by her who believe her and are able to tolerate listening to her experience, and, secondly, only once she has become equipped with the insight and power she

did not and could not have as a child, can she look "death" squarely in the face. As Sanford (1991: 71) puts it, such a "thawing out" is a second chance, an emotional reincarnation, and this may be heralded by the dream images of pregnancy and new life.

But deeper even than the terrifying feeling of betrayal by her body in the face of trauma, are feelings associated with the huge betrayal of Alex's trust involved in her parent's failure to protect her. If her parents had been capable of genuine care for her, her trauma could never have gone undiagnosed and consequently untreated for so long. Such failure in parenting, juxtaposed with the trauma of the sexual abuse, renders its survivors seriously compromised in making a transition to adulthood. The body frequently becomes a primary site of ego control. Thus we see that beneath the bulimia, depression and poor-relationship-syndrome suffered by Alex is the double trauma of childhood sexual abuse and parental abandonment.

Symbolically speaking, nourishing food is the positive mother. Healthy food is an obvious way to nurture the body. Numbed by the extremity of her emotional deprivation, which is imaged by the ice-cold fridge in her dream, Alex concretises the love she craves from her mother in food. She can't have love from her mother, so she turns to food in a repetitive and unconsciously driven ritual which dooms her over and over again to experiencing what should be nourishing as toxic.

It was night time. My family and I were outside in the street and there were a lot of other people hanging about, maybe in another country. I looked up to the hill in the distance with lots of houses on it. All of a sudden I could see this one house really close up, as if my eye had the ability to "zoom in" and I could see it as if I was right in front of it - when I was actually miles away.

Then some guy asked me if I wanted to go to the "bar" for a drink but I didn't really want to. It was like an old house with tables and I specifically remember the old white lace curtains. I looked out of the window and found four and a half kittens, abandoned! One was so tiny, totally miniature. It died (ran away). It was the size of a thumb. The other four I washed and dried and decided to take them home with me because they were abandoned.

The context of the dream is night, mysterious and dark, the realm of the instinctual feminine. Incest in any shape or form is also dark and shadowy, secret and demonic - without feeling. The dream ego is in a crowded public space, perhaps linking to issues around how to negotiate private/public, sacred/profane and violated/pure spaces. The zoom lens can be seen to represent a phenomenon very common in people who have been abused in some way as children, including emotionally. Such people have a highly developed sense of intuition; they are hyper-alert to where the next attack will come from, and this is a major element of the dream. Thus the dream moves to the "zoom lens" of the eye suddenly able to get up close. Cinematic, but a

brilliant way of indicating revelation, insight, seeing what is going on. And what does she see? Old white lace curtains - the veil, the semi-transparent membrane through which things may be glimpsed by the spy in the house of incest. Simultaneously, lace curtains are used to keep out prying eyes, like the veil. Incest survivors often lack the boundaries of others. They have a heightened osmotic awareness of the emotional states of others, an almost preternatural ability to "read" others, guess at their needs and hidden motives. They may fear the same capacity in others, the fluid or semi-permeable boundaries, the flickering antennae that translate at times into what some people call psychic understanding.

The evidence seems to suggest that when incest survivors attempt to embody desire there is a tendency to become dissociated from the body and move into the head and intuition. From a clinical perspective, Kane (1989: 24) records her impression that the more severely abused the woman, the more highly intuitive she becomes, and the more fantastic her visions and symbols. It would seem that non-genitally abused women may have a high intuitive score on the Gray-Wheelwright Personality Type Test based on Jung's theory of typology, but they seem not to be given over to the fantastic visions evident in those who have been genitally abused. Kane notes that this sheds light on survivors' difficulties with reality orientation and the often bizarre symbols and images with which therapeutic work starts. She suggests that the wound in the victim's "ego body" is so deep and profound that the unconscious flows through. Further, overly developed intuition is ungrounded because it lacks the

balance of sensation and the mediation of the thinking and feeling functions. It is for this reason that the survivor has no way to mediate or value her outpourings.

The second part of the dream can be seen as commenting on where Alex needed to focus at the time of the dream. She cannot take on a relationship with a man while her feminine, symbolised by the kittens, is still so young and vulnerable. She has another task to accomplish first. Her dream ego takes up the challenge of rescuing and caring for the abandoned kittens. Note that one was miniature and died or ran away, indicating the continuing precariousness of her situation. The first thing she does is cleanse the kittens and this may mirror her own compulsion to shower at least two or three times a day.

Kane (1989: 103) notes that reconnecting with feminine sexuality and finding the roots of grace and creativity is vital if a woman is to maintain a relationship with the potent masculine. As we have seen, one of the major wounds inflicted by incest inflicts is that it blocks the ego's connection to the psyche. A movement towards repairing the bond is often represented in dreams as a man in dreams wanting to unite with a woman.

There was this wild man, and he was trying to get this woman in the house. The people in the house, sort of relatives, and myself, we were all trying to hide this woman. Everyone was panicky. We didn't know what to do. It almost felt like

she had to surrender, like none of us could see any other way out of it. He wanted that woman and he wasn't going to give up but I woke up because it was so scary and hopeless.

The wild man hunts down the hidden woman in the house. Can the house keep a secret? Is it time to come out of hiding, perhaps? Does healing lie in surrender to the wild man with his untamed energies and sexual vitalities? Is this a house that has nothing more to conceal? Perhaps the others cannot hide the woman because she needs to be found. Is she like the Celtic mythological characters who shed the forms of swans, does, seals, stepping back into their human identities because the masks no longer work? The crowd around her are ineffectual in one sense, they cannot keep her hidden, but in another sense they are witnesses in the tradition of the Greek chorus, looking on inevitability. Onlookers, the hiding woman, the wild man, the house itself, all can be read as Alex herself.

At the same time it must be said that dreams of this nature present great difficulty to women, particularly to survivors of abuse, since the "wild man" smacks so powerfully of the rapist, the abuser. It seems a brutal irony that transformative images may be indistinguishable from those that portray the horror of profound violation. The only solution seems to be ongoing application of the hermeneutic of suspicion, which in itself may be understood as giving a particular feminist emphasis to Jung's counsel of

humility towards interpretation of the dream. In this way one may balance the insight that the approach of the Self is invariably experienced as an overthrow by the ego with the awareness that the contents of the unconscious itself are unlikely to be immune to several thousand years of patriarchal deformation. In essence, one must continue the journey into depth. The alchemical project of extracting gold from base metal must embrace development of the ability to distinguish fool's gold from the truly valuable substance.

Alex said that she left the dream situation and woke up because she couldn't bear to be there when it happened. Even once she was awake she was aware that the drama continued. In a sense, this reflects her original experience of sexual abuse: even when the actual abuse was over, it continued to be a reality in her fantasy life and there was no escaping from that. A highly permeable border between conscious and unconscious awareness is a consequence of childhood sexual abuse and the gross distortion of the sense of reality which is part of its poison.

### **Sin and sexuality**

Shaun - vomit everywhere in a big house, commune or hospital. He was talking to my friends downstairs, being a big man and flirting, then vomiting everywhere. He'd eaten some rice stuff. He was looking for me. I was trying to hide from him upstairs.

Everywhere he vomited - up the stairs, in little piles - he covered it tackily with sand. He was coming up the stairs looking for me. I hid behind my bed. The room was a mess and he'd even vomited a bit there.

This dream replays the themes of the house of incest in its sinister sense of exposure and concealment, of no safe place to go because the whole house has been fouled and dirtied, of the violated body as an unsafe dwelling. A dirty, smelly mess, expelled and unwanted, hidden under sand and reminiscent of the lumps on Tommy's spine in the earlier dream. A link to the hidden child in the wrong place. Food has become poison. The rice is chewed and creamy-coloured, appearing like semen. Has Shaun been ejaculating or throwing up?

Associating to what Shaun meant to her, Alex said that he was her "third love" and she thought he was her "soul mate":

I felt totally magnetised by him. I loved his body, big and strong, and his quiet, relaxed way. He wasn't hyped like I was. I think in many ways he reminded me of my Dad, in so much as I couldn't possess him (note the theme of the absent father). I needed Shaun to love me. He was a "free spirit" and made no demands on me whatsoever.

But afterwards this is what I couldn't handle about him. He wouldn't show any feelings of possessiveness, jealousy or wanting me, other than sexually ... when

we saw each other it was always inevitable that he would seduce me - even though he was living with his fiance - no matter how hard I tried to resist, because I wanted more than just his amazing sex and stunning body. I wanted the assurance that I had his heart.

This dream images a crucial dynamic at work in bulimics which manifests dramatically in their personal relationships. Alex's hunger for love is voracious and yet how it comes to her renders her unable to stomach it. Alex's history provides ample evidence to support the psychoanalytical understanding that the basic "holding" by the mother or primary caregiver, which is essential to the child's well-being, was absent or disturbed. A primal terror of being emotionally devoured rather than contained, of being controlled, gobbled and manipulated rather than loved, is set up in the psyche. Intimate relationships reconstellate that primal experience until sufficient consciousness suffuses this complex thereby facilitating healing transformation. Until such time, anything that approaches commitment is experienced as a loss of control, since where there should have been a primal experience of committed love, there was nothing that was supportive, ongoing and gentle.

Alex writes of how food is her polarised desire, how "sweetness" provides escape from her hollow self:

When I get deluded in men and love, I switch off to them and to my sensuality and womanhood and I throw myself into food, sweet foods, rich foods, forbidden foods, high-calorific foods, and I switch off from the "good" foods, the light foods, that make me look good and slim and attractive. Turning to food is my way of running away from facing heartache and difficulties with men. It's a way of trying to drown my disappointment and bitterness and loneliness with sweetness.

I try to fill up all the empty places in my life with food, specifically the emptiness of not being loved tenderly and loving reciprocally, a man. I have a need for love which I don't know how to fill. I have tried to fill it with sex and men but got very hurt, so I turned to food, which seemed safer and less risky. But it is also very sad.

I had a strange dream last night. I think it was about Shaun, although I didn't see his face. He was looking at other women while he was with me. I pretended I didn't really care and kind of left him but I realised that he didn't want me to feel. When I felt jealous, which is natural (since he lived with another woman), he couldn't handle that. I realise that what I swallowed was abnormal. I felt tremendous pain. That hurt.

Continuing the blindness/ insight theme, Alex recognises Shaun although she cannot see his face. Shaun of the averted face is looking at other women although he is supposed to be with her. What is the expression on the face that turns away? - threat? Is it an insincere smile? Obliviousness? Alex swallows her pain but is unable to stomach it.

The rage, guilt and confusion associated with Alex's experience of abuse are still very much with her, because they are unresolved. In this state she creates a series of catastrophic relationships with the world. On 21 November 1996, she wrote about how polluted and defiled her body feels as a result of the abuse, perpetrated on her by uncle. There are striking echoes in her account of the material explored in Chapter 4 in relation to the impact of sexual abuse on the child's experience of embodiment:

I need to get this thing out of me and I don't know how to. I think the binge-vomit cycle is my way of removing these feelings related to sensuality, sexuality, desires, etc. ... that make me feel "attached" to that pig of a man - my mother's brother. I don't want to be like him. I don't want this thing he put in me. It's like torture having this hideous thing living inside of me.

Alex is perpetually aware of the tension of trying to expel this Otherness - the internalised perpetrator. The sense of pollution, dirt and defilement reveals the

shadow of forbidden energies. The betrayal by her parents and the trauma around sexuality originating with the sexual abuse underlie the fact that, despite the investment of an enormous amount of emotional energy, Alex is still striving for psychosexual maturity. She feels totally burdened by discomfort over the way she relates to most men and is often frightened by the power of her sexuality. She is very attracted to strong men with broad shoulders, longing for the protection which she perceives them to offer. However, her pattern has been to hurt or be hurt, to seduce and dump or be seduced and dumped.

Kane (1989: 33) observes that the devil and witch archetypes seem to be constellated in abused women and children, and insists that the therapist must do *inner* battle with them. Psychoanalytically speaking, we are looking at the demonised self within. Kane notes that in her experience an abused woman's "devils" are associated with her outer assailant, whom she has introjected and unconsciously united with herself. Her witch is usually a powerful but desperately lonely soul who resorts to casting spells and making scenes because nobody will take her seriously. Kane emphasises that both archetypes are extremely potent and cannot be integrated through a merely intellectual understanding. She insists that therapy needs to begin by confronting the power issues of the victim, although mindful of the wound.

Last night I dreamt of Shaun. Not that he was constantly wanting sex from me,

like before, but that he actually wanted to try again on an emotional level. He told me that I had pursued him too much and that I always stayed in that "dump", the Holiday Inn, when he preferred to be more out in nature. Now that I had stopped caring, it seemed like he was pursuing me and it felt suspect because he was still married, and hey, he hadn't left his wife before so he wasn't going to leave now. In fact he'd warned her ... of our scene. I was sleeping in my father's bed and my mother and maybe one sister was there too. Shaun and his friend were sleeping on a mattress on the floor. I had to not let my Dad perceive when I was speaking with Shaun, because my Dad didn't approve. He wanted me to be under his total control. What a strange dream, totally weird.

The dream is contextualised within the tension between the sexual and emotional, between a hotel bedroom and the wild. Her dream ego can see that in pursuing Shaun she is pursuing the inaccessible. This dream depicts Alex as trapped in psychological incest with her father which is linked to the sexual abuse by her uncle, who in the child's understanding belongs to the realm of the father. The resultant dynamic is that the men she is sexually involved with are emotionally unavailable to her. Shaun sleeps on the floor next to her father's bed in which she sleeps. This image is pivotal. "I had to not let my Dad perceive when I was speaking with Shaun because my Dad didn't approve." She must not let her father see her speaking with another man, being adult, sexual.

However, we also see the destructive negative mother. The mother, rather than Alex the lover, is helping Claudio in a very intimate situation, and this contamination by the negative mother may be read as sounding the death-knell for the relationship.

I'm afraid to have sex, because I really enjoy it but worse, because I need it. Once I've had it, then I don't want to stop. I'm afraid that my desires are abnormally huge. That's why I suppress them and deny them and try to forget about them and try not to be attracted in case, then, - what if we both are attracted to each other?

The theme of deviance and perversion appears in the enormity of her desire and how overwhelming and engulfing she finds it. Kane (1989:153) comments:

The hurt woman seems to maintain a shell of self-sufficiency. To be truly touched by sexual yearnings would be to rupture this shell. No emotional demands must be made of her; in fact, there have been too many already. She seems to threaten, "how dare you love me," which is really, "I dare you to love me ... you see I am rotten, disgusting, unworthy." To avoid the rupture, she must keep herself on ice.

In the following dream we revisit the house of incest:

A girl I knew was home with me in our new house (we're actually sharing). She said, "What's that noise?" I went into the other room to check and there was my nephew, Michael, who is six, lying at the bottom of his bed crying. He'd had a bad dream and when I came in he stopped crying. He didn't realise that the dream was only a dream and he thought that it had been a real experience.

This dream can be seen as reflecting Alex's original experience of sexual abuse. Michael provides an image of her own inner child, an image of the unresolved trauma of her own sexual abuse. Although real, abuse, both emotional and physical, has an unreal quality linked to how permeable the boundaries between fantasy and reality can subsequently become. In the same way as she helped Michael the dream, Alex needs to help her own wounded child to come to terms with what happened, and find the supports and the strengths that she needs to be able to grow. The last part of the dream reminds her that what she has to wake up to is her own distress, not Michael's. The motif of the dream within a dream may suggest the peculiar elusiveness of the task before her.

It was my birthday and people were bringing cakes. My family were there in the background. Nicki [sister] and I and Kaoli [sister] shared a room. I think we and mother were all planning stuff for some event. Tommy had been put down. He

was sitting on the table, but though he was supposed to be dead, when I stroked him his eyes slightly opened and he slightly purred. I felt disturbed and very upset writing this about him. He hadn't been put down properly and was semi-alive. Though in the dream I tried not to feel disturbed, I feel awful now.

This is one of the most revealing dreams of all. It is Alex's birthday, a ritual celebration of becoming adult, older. Friends are bringing cakes, food. The three sisters share a room, that is, share a memory, an experience. They and their mother are planning an event. Tommy the cat has been put down, a euphemism for being destroyed. But there he is sitting upright on the table, where food is served. His slightly opened eyes remind one of Blinks. He slightly purrs, almost communicating. He has not been killed properly - he can neither die nor return to life. Here is the body in its most poignant form, the living dead. Will no one put the cat out of its misery? Being put down is seen as humane for animals, not as murder. But the cat is neither/nor, just as Alex is in limbo too. Some of this imagery can be connected with the ambiguity of the fridge as both icy white breast and as hollow tomb.

This dream offers a very powerful image of what is happening to Alex's struggle to be a woman. The instinctual feminine represented by "Tommy" is neither dead nor alive. It has been "put down" by the negative mother, the feminine that binds and delibidinises the handmaiden for the patriarchy. Yet it survives as a kind of zombi.

### **Scope for transformation**

Kaoli saying she needed to go to the dentist. My mother saying I must take her, she had things to do, but I was naked in a towel, just about to get into a bath.

Marcello, a friend of mine, and some other people. Lia my old dog.

I got dressed and we went off in this huge truck thing with a lot of space in the back, like a room. Lia came with in her bed and Marcello and everyone came too.

We got to this strange place and Kaoli said that's where it was. This sort of traffic cop lady asked me a whole lot of questions and said I must be very mistaken. Inside the room were people but, according to the woman, they were some weirdo sect. We ended up sort of playing outside, sitting and watching. There was a field (green).

Symbolically speaking, the dentist could be seen to present an image of the analyst, or other members of the medical profession who have expertise to offer. At a crucial level, teeth in dreams can refer to the capacity to engage with life actively and to assimilate what we need. In this way, teeth stand for both aggression and integration, and are therefore an image of ego strength. Teeth may be particularly significant in the dreams of individuals displaying bulimic behaviour, since they are a body part in the front line of the self-destructive impact of this addiction. The acidity caused by vomiting rots the teeth in the advanced stages of the illness. Alex's

willingness to take her sister to the dentist can be read as a positive sign.

Consciously, Alex expresses her struggle to feel part of life and to trust it. We go to a dentist when we need professional attention to take care of our mouths and it is usually extremely unpleasant and often painful. There is a parallel here to the analytical process. In analysis one examines the Self which is inevitably a painful and difficult experience. It requires change which has enormous potential to bring help and healing.

The mothering aspect is very clearly neglectful in this dream and one can see Kaoli, Alex's younger sister, as a less mature aspect of Alex herself. The dream context is framed round a younger part of herself who is in pain, needing help, and asking, essentially, whether Alex is going to take on her own needs and wounds? Or is she going to immerse herself in the waters of forgetfulness as her mother has always done, expecting others to come to her rescue. The dream graphically illustrates the kind of vulnerability that this "victim-like" attitude creates, she is "naked in a towel".

The truck can also be seen as symbolic of the mother complex, since it carries a lot. Alex remembered it being rusted, in other words, in a state of neglect, which confirms the neglectful mother depicted in the complex that contextualises the dream. She saw the "traffic cop lady" as her mother, an austere authority figure interfering with and discrediting her. In this regard it is interesting that the "traffic cop" dismisses the

people, in the place identified as "where it was" by the wounded Kaoli, as "some weirdo sect". Again, one may be seeing the subversive operation of the destructive mother, who acts to block access to inner resources that may be of help. In this context, the dream attitude of "sitting and watching" may indicate a positive and appropriate caution. The green field, verdant, fertile, may be another sign of potential for growth.

A subsequent "dentist" dream lends support to the drift of these interpretations:

I needed to go to the dentist but it was going to be a major mission to get there. My mother scolded me for trying to kill the dentist. Her attitude was that it served me right, that I couldn't delay any longer because I needed to see him. I felt guilty, somehow responsible for that attempt on his life. I was on the verge of setting off, looking down a very long black tar road with no scenery on either side. I knew I had to do it, but I felt such trepidation.

This dream followed long conversations in which I encouraged Alex to find an analyst she could trust as soon as she was settled in her new job and life abroad. However, the process of engaging with the inner world involves a cruel discipline, in order that, as Kane (1989: 16) puts it, "the traumatised soul's jungle of complexity and horror may become exactly the place where individuation may begin and our own myth emerge". Although Alex was initially overtly resistant to my suggestion, this dream

seems to indicate recognition of the need to make amends for her desire to kill the analyst and that it is, in fact, imperative that she start the journey, however terrifying it may seem initially. The "very long black tar road" clearly mirrors the descent theme discussed in Chapter 4. As we shall see, a dream presented in the conclusion reveals how Alex is face to face with the decision as to whether to set out on that long, black road or not.

## CONCLUSION

Your silence today is a pond where drowned things live

I want to see raised dripping and brought into the sun.

It's not my own face I see there, but other faces,

even your face at another age.

Whatever's lost there is needed by both of us -

a watch of old gold, a water-blurred fever chart,

a key ...

Adrienne Rich, "IXth Love Poem" The Dream of a Common Language

This thesis has sought to demonstrate that the realm of our inner psychic life, as communicated through the language of our dreams, is a fertile but commonly neglected resource for healing and self-empowerment. If the question is, "What do we know now that we did not know before?" perhaps the answer is a sense of how constructive it may be to make the effort to give embodiment to the dream itself. Ways of doing this are painting or sculpting aspects of it, carrying it around in one's pocket, as Jung said, to take out now and then and sift through. Active imagination is another valuable method of facilitating discourse with this deep material from the unconscious. Indeed, active imagination is the essence of creativity since it involves the ability to imagine in images, words or sensations.

We have seen that the body has its own wisdom and timing. Learning how to listen to its messages and to attune oneself to its rhythms takes commitment to exploring a radically different mode of awareness from the usual "head-centered" experience of consciousness. Considering the realm of the body and soul, this thesis concludes that staying with the dream and its feelings, embodying them, dancing to their rhythm and spirit at times, is an invaluable psycho-spiritual technique for survival in embodied life. It has aimed to show that becoming consciously present to the realm between the worlds where magic, renewal and healing occur, of which the dreamworld forms a crucial part, involves a process of regeneration that is our birthright. Listening to, and thus developing an awareness of our inner life, in which lies a superior understanding of how to live in harmony, enables us to reclaim wisdom that is our ancestral heritage. "In the global context, our survival depends not only on military balance, but on global co-operation to ensure a sustainable biological environment" (Report of the Brandt Commission, cited in Myers 1985:242).

We who live in the cities amid tar, machinery, noise and pollution easily forget how fundamentally our well-being is linked to the land. Labouring under the patriarchal mind-set of millennia, our normative understanding of the universe is remarkably concrete. The healing power of nature, both internal and external, has been radically undermined by our separation from it: physically, as the earth becomes covered with cities and highways and, ideologically, / theoretically as male-defined and -dominated allopathic medicine continues its long monopoly of the healing field in the

West. Another crucial dimension, it has been argued, is the pervasive socio-cultural devaluation of women as evidenced by United Nations statistics that reveal that women do two-thirds of the world's work for 10 per cent of the world's income, owning less than one per cent of the world's wealth (Spender 1983: 5).

A significant focus of the thesis in relation to the feminine principle has been a search for the meaning of sexual abuse and its effect on the child. It seems clear that children have endured sexual, emotional, mental and physical abuse throughout history. As Sinason (1988: 97) points out, it is a sign of progress that we now find the continuing existence of sexual abuse so disturbing. Current research emphasises what Freud (1896) said nearly 100 years ago, namely, that a child is three times more likely to be abused by a trusted adult than by a stranger (Sinason 1988: 98). Sinason reports that 90 to 98 per cent of abusers are men, many of whom are married with children. They exist in all social classes and usually were abused themselves as children. Importantly, Sinason (1988: 99) stresses that:

the really terrible effects of sexual abuse are not so much on the sane outraged child who has been assaulted once and who has been able to tell and be believed, but on children who have been perniciously, secretly and lovingly corrupted over a long period in their own homes; children who in order to keep any image of a good parent have to smile or become stupid or blind to what's happening.

In the quest for healing from this kind - and, indeed, any kind - of wound, the case study explored in this thesis illustrates that soul-making is essentially a process, a journey of discovery, not a destination. As Kane (1989: 60) puts it:

months ... of work may follow before such dreams can come to life, bringing their images to an everyday reality ... Once the dream has been imbued with meaning, the task is then to live the dream and to actualise the potential of its message. Our task is to carry its images to life. In allowing this process to take place within us, we can slowly build bridges from Self to ego ... Enslavement to oneself keeps us unconsciously trapped in *mater natura* while externally violating her ways. This occurs because we remain narcissistic, devoid of a relationship with our own inner images, and unable to see ourselves as creative and contributing members of an enriched, culturally enlivened kinship network. We remain trapped, always waiting for an external and incestuous fertilisation, always unable to die.

Extracts from a recent letter from Alex, may serve to underline both the questing nature of inner work, and the arduousness of the journey:

I had this strong vision of a cat in a plastic bag and it was suffocating and couldn't breath. I suppose it's sort of like how I feel. Desperate, frustrated. I need (breath), but can't get it. Don't know what to do to get it.

It's my femininity. I need to let it out, I need a man, the man, love, but I just feel trapped. Don't know how to get out of this place (the plastic bag), my psychic space, about myself and my need for my mate.

Like if I didn't breathe soon, I would die.

An incredible image, like a child trapped in a synthetic uterus, suffocating, unable to be born. This seems to be linked to the romantic hope and expectation for an external saviour. This vivid image preceded a session with a Christian psychologist specialising in sexuality. He reassured her that her sexual desire was a completely normal appetite. The night following the therapy session, Alex had this dream:

I looked down at a mushy mess, a mixture of worms, slime, old leaves, bits of paper and strange little creatures. All were in this mess together. Kaoli, my youngest sister, appeared as an eight-year-old, although she is now 25, and helped me by separating and sorting out the mess. I didn't want her to do it, but I simply couldn't do it myself. It was making me feel sick. She seemed okay to do it and although she also found it horrible she kind of laughed to reassure me. She put the worms and mushy, slimy stuff in my bowl with hot water - and then only did I realise that the creatures she had separated out were kittens. Normally kittens evoke wonderful feelings in me. But these were revolting: ugly, grey, with eyes closed - more like a litter of rats. As much as I wanted to be free of them, I couldn't bear to watch them struggling for life while I was killing them.

I realised that they needed their mother and decided that Kaoli must supervise that, as I didn't want to even have to see them. I decided that when they were weaned they could go to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or I'd find other homes for them, as I did feel a responsibility not to abandon them.

My sister then packed some of my stuff: CD holders and little bits of furniture, into another of my big bags and assumed that she could take it. But I was emphatic that she couldn't, that those things were still of use to me. She was disappointed.

This may be read as an extremely positive dream coming a night after she had "received permission" from her therapist to enjoy her sexuality. The worms in the opening image are reminiscent of a graveyard, of the theme of putrefaction which pervades. The slime reminds one of mucous, semen, of her revulsion. The bits of paper may depict fragmentation, the old leaves, nature's propensity to decorate, attempt to beautify. And then we have the strange little creatures that carry such powerful representations for Alex. By dredging up and sifting through her negative emotions around love-making, her psyche is raising her consciousness in relation to this issue. The fact that her dream ego can't cope with it is understandable, given the horrifying introduction she underwent.

However, she does have help from her little sister self. Significantly, Kaoli was not

violated as a child and thus, in a crucial sense, Kaoli presents the figure of the undamaged inner child. She is able to make necessary distinctions, she acts out the need to do so for Alex who is overcome by revulsion and nausea. The fact that the dream ego did not want to abandon the kittens affords a positive prognosis. The sister separates the creatures out from the mess. The latter is placed in bowl with hot water. Echoes of the compulsive need for cleansing and purification emerge here, but deeper than this is the image of the little sister as midwife. Attending births, bowls of hot water are a crucial part of the midwife's equipment. Thus we see that the dream ego can not give birth to itself without the assistance of this sister/midwife self. Paralleling the process, it is only with the expulsion of the afterbirth, the fears of death and putrefaction, that the dream returns to a key theme - the false birth, the birth of deformity.

Alex associates the worms, mush, slime, old leaves and rubbish to her bulimia, the "revolting" kittens to her deformed sexuality, the bag and its contents to the bulimia that she is not ready to let go of yet. At an objective level, Kaoli has sorted out "mess" in which Alex found herself in the past, and has used this role to dominate her. The dream may suggest, in Alex's refusal to hand over everything to her sister, the beginnings of the establishment of a sense of discrimination and boundary. Given Alex's early talent for music, it may be significant that she insists on holding on to the "CD holders".

Alex was admitted to a specialist arts school on entering high school because she had a gift for singing but, feeling supported by her parents and losing her confidence at the age of 14, she became bulimic. Her dream ego knows that she must hang on to the CD holders, to the possibility of reclaiming her own creativity, her own music. As the opening images of the dream underline, however, she must sort properly through the muck, the rage, the painful effects of early damage, she can not be able to work out what is valuable and what not. At this level, the inner child represented by her sister lacks the power to discriminate that Alex herself must forge. The child wants to remove both the muck and the treasure. Something whole in Alex holds on to the container for her gift of singing.

Perhaps the "revolting" kittens could be read as an image of the derogated and repressed state of her own creative soul. The kittens that she can't bear to raise may also represent her resistance to raising her own consciousness around the muck and deformation her sexuality represents for her. Psychodynamically speaking, Alex has to remember in order to forget. She can recover her creativity only from under the muck. From an analytical perspective, Alex's journey into the messy, "revolting" underworld requires the protection and containment of an ongoing therapeutic relationship.

The message of the dream is startling. The route for the song is the route for bulimia. The dream seems quite explicit. If music is to gladden the life of Alex once

again, if throat and mouth are to be the passages for creative breath instead of vomit, she will have to face the process of "separating and sorting out the mess". It is cause for hope that Alex does undertake this process in the dream, albeit through her little sister, and, crucially, that she is seeing a therapist. For transformation of this often terrifying and always arduous nature requires mediation, support, containment. The dream itself fulfills this role. In regard to the image of the empty CD holders as a symbol of creativity almost extinguished, one might recall also the message of "sacred emptiness".

If one reflects that creativity and sexuality are crucially interlinked - sexuality is an adult form of creative play - then one sees how this theme of dream is transformative at another level too. It seems to indicate that if Alex can unlock and revivify her creativity then her sexuality may follow suit with healthier expression.

The road ahead for Alex is long and hard and, much as I would like to satisfy my "thesis writer's need" for tidy and optimistic conclusions, the reality is other. The crucial question remains whether Alex will persevere in taking her self on, working in a therapeutic space with a skilled analyst while also developing her spiritual, creative life. Will she take up singing as a hobby once again and give voice to the precious gift that has been silenced for so long? Will she remain committed to the soul journey of finding and integrating, the metaphors and archetypal constellations that compel her behaviour?

This thesis has attempted to make a case for the value of paying attention to the symbolic meaning of one's inner life. At the same time, operating on the premise that nature within mirrors and is mirrored by nature without, a suggestion implicit in the material explored is the value of attention to the symbolic level of the outer world. The death of Princess Diana and the unprecedented collective response may serve as an example.

An icon of female beauty from her first public appearance as the girl destined for a fairy tale marriage, Diana came to embody the archetype of the suffering feminine principle. She was obsessed with her body and image in a way that multitudes of women can relate to. Like Alex, she was one of untold numbers suffering from the hidden plague of bulimia. Women identify with Diana's private pain, her years of desperation and loneliness, and her increasingly public humiliation. They respected her courage in revealing the double-bind that had made her world sinister and oppressive, a Bluebeard's castle, a golden cage for a princess. This was, after all, the plight of many wives over many centuries.

The global outpouring of grief at her death confirms that her dedication to the heart was inspirational. It is not insignificant, surely, that it was catastrophic damage to her heart that killed her. In the growing body of speculation, both scholarly and popular, on the meaning of her life and death, questions such as these emerge: What can we read into this tragic event and the remarkable grief it unleashed world-wide? Were

we witnessing an opening of the heart chakra of humanity? Was this a numinous message about the dire peril in which the battered feminine barely survives? More prosaically, many have commented on how Diana transformed the monarchy, itself a potent symbol, in a powerful way planting it firmly in the modern age. It is this kind of soulful approach, this circumambulation of the image, both inner and outer, that this thesis has valorised as a way to healing in a bitterly wounded time.

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