

**A CLINICAL CASE STUDY OF SOME
ASPECTS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
FATHER IN THE PROCESS OF
SEPARATION-INDIVIDUATION**

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ABSTRACT

In this study, recent psychodynamic literature on some aspects of the significance of the father in psychological development, is reviewed. Psychoanalytic and analytical perspectives on the father are considered, with particular reference to the father's role in preoedipal development of the daughter. This is seen to be crucial for the facilitation of differentiation, as well as for psychosexual development and the formation of gender identity. The clinical case study method is employed to illustrate the impact of the father on a depressed woman's struggle towards separation-individuation. Therapy and dream material, taken from thirty sessions of psychodynamic psychotherapy, which occurred over a period of nine months, are analysed and discussed in relation to the various theoretical positions outlined in the literature. It is concluded that for this patient, the persecutory nature of the negative paternal introject contributes significantly to the patient's inability to resist the regressive pull of symbiosis. In addition, the mother's passivity and dependence, as well as the patient's physical disability, are regarded as exacerbating factors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Recent psychodynamic literature has noted the relative neglect of work on the role of the father in psychological development. Traditionally, the emphasis in psychoanalytic literature has been on the infant's relationship with the mother, and the quality of care and nurturance provided by her. There is generally little focus on the role of the father until the time of Oedipal development. However, despite this lack of emphasis, there has recently been considerable interest and concern about the way the father may contribute to preoedipal development. Burlingham (1973, p. 24) regarded the father as "instrumental in helping to bring about the progress toward individuation", while Wieland (1991) stressed the relationship with the father in the development of a woman's sexuality and sexual identity. Samuels (1988a) commented on a recent shift in focus from "the tyrannical, castrating Oedipal father" to the "positive ...facilitating...father who aids imagination, creativity and psychic health" (p. 416), and plays a crucial role in the formation of gender identity.

The aim of this case study is firstly, to attempt to provide a brief, theoretical overview of recent contributions to the field. These will include psychoanalytic as well as analytical perspectives on the role of the father. The significance of the father in preoedipal development will be considered, and his role in the separation-individuation process and in psychosexual development, particularly of the daughter, will be explored.

Secondly, the study will attempt to illustrate the impact of the father on a woman's psychological development through the use of case material. A woman's struggle towards separation-individuation will be traced, with particular reference to dream material. The question of whether the father is significant in the separation-individuation process will be raised, and his impact on the development of masculinity/femininity and gender identity will be considered theoretically, and then illustrated in terms of this particular case example.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

A psychological case study usually provides a selective account of a particular aspect of a person's life, which is reconstructed and interpreted in such a way that "it reveals facts and relationships which make the case explicable, and at the same time, adds to the 'case-law' in that general area of interest" (Bromley, 1986, p. 3). It is an idiographic approach, in which a detailed analysis of an individual case aims at deepening our understanding of a particular area of interest, which is then applicable to further study in related fields. This differs from a nomothetic approach, in which individual differences in a large sample of subjects are identified in order to isolate common factors in particular groups. The case study method of research establishes external validity by means of analytic generalisation, rather than statistical inference. Thus,

"[i]t is not assumed that a case being studied is typical or representative, but that the key aspects of theory implicit or explicit in the presentation of the case material will be of value in conceptualising other cases" (Edwards, 1989, p. 7).

Edwards (1989) described several different types of case studies, each with a different purpose. The first four types fall on a continuum as follows:

Exploratory-descriptive case studies provide a detailed account of an area not previously explored in depth, while *descriptive-dialogic* case studies, which are located within an existing theoretical framework, informally test specific theories or debate previously articulated controversial issues. *Theoretical-heuristic* case studies test existing theory in a more rigorous manner, and rely on careful selection of cases for this purpose, while *crucial or test* case studies verify or falsify particular theoretical propositions within a well established theory.

Two further categories are *illustrative/didactic* case studies, which illustrate specific theoretical principles and provide "evidence for the generality and validity of case law" (Edwards, 1989, p. 7), and *working* case studies, which draw on existing theory to solve practical problems, without aiming to contribute further to the theory.

The present case study contains aspects of both the descriptive-dialogic and the illustrative/didactic approaches. Therapy and dream material will be used to illustrate particular theoretical positions relating to the role of the father, and the psychological

manifestations of his influence on the patient's life, as revealed throughout the course of psychotherapy, will be explored.

For the purposes of confidentiality, the identifying data of the patient have been disguised. Detailed notes were taken after each of the thirty psychotherapy sessions and discussed in weekly supervision, and where possible, the patient provided the therapist with written copies of her dreams.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to contextualise the analysis of the case material, a brief review of some of the relevant literature outlining various theoretical positions in the field, is presented. The following questions about the role of the father in psychological development will be considered:

- * In what ways may the father be significant in preoedipal development?
- * Does the father facilitate the process of differentiation from the mother, and if so, how?
- * How is the oedipal role of the father conceptualised by different theoretical positions (in particular Jungian vs Psychoanalytic)
- * What part does the father play in the development of gender identity and psychosexuality?
- * How is the father involved in the development of masculine and feminine aspects of the psyche?
- * How do these masculine and feminine aspects (and their association with the father) affect subsequent relationships (both internal object relationships and external relationships)?

2.1 RECENT PSYCHOANALYTIC CONTRIBUTIONS ON THE FATHER

Several writers in the late 1970s and early 1980s have referred to the notable neglect of the father in psychological literature, and particularly of the father's facilitative role in preoedipal development.

In 1973, Burlingham suggested that this neglect "not only does an injustice to his role but actually distorts in some manner the fate of the infant-mother relationship" (p. 24), further asserting the belief that the child's relationship with the father "is instrumental in helping to bring about the progress towards individuation" (ibid.).

Burlingham traced the different roles of the father found in Freud's writings, which generally relate to later childhood, especially the phallic-oedipal stage of development. Quoting extracts from Freud's work, she identified the father in terms of the following roles: the father as an early object of love, admiration and identification; as giving bodily care; as a powerful or omnipotent godlike being; as a comforting protector; and as a punishing figure, a threatening castrator and inhibiting authority.

Noting the poor documentation of fathers' fantasies about their children, and drawing on analytic treatments, as well as on a series of direct observations of infants and fathers, Burlingham observed that infants' contact with fathers is "more active, exciting, stimulating, and occasionally also arouses discomfort and anxiety" (p. 45). She perceived the infants' response to maternal care as passive, in contrast with the active reactions provoked by paternal care, critically adding that this generalisation may be based on the stereotype of feminine mothers and masculine fathers. Burlingham also noted the differential responses of fathers to sons and daughters, suggesting that they respond to sons "as replicas of themselves", that is, potentially reflecting an ego ideal, and to daughters "in more complex ways, influenced by their attitude to femininity in their early object relationships and the feminine part of their own natures" (p. 37).

Abelin (1975) also noted that a positive role of the father in a child's early years had not been widely considered, and cited the works of Loewald (1951), Greenacre (1957; 1966) and Mahler (1966; Mahler & Gosliner, 1955) in this regard (p. 293). He described a new realisation of the important role of the father in the practicing subphase of the separation-individuation process, as well as in the rapprochement subphase where "his role may be crucial in the disentanglement of the ego from the regressive pull back to symbiosis" (ibid.). He elaborated on his concept of '*early triangulation*', which describes the necessity for the toddler "to apprehend and internalize the *relationship between* his two most cathected objects, father and mother" (ibid.), and provided evidence from infant observations of the establishment of a "specific relationship with the father as a different person" at the age of 4 months 3 weeks (pp. 296-297). In agreement with Burlingham (1973), Abelin also observed an energising impact of the father, and emphasised the child's awareness of the parents' relationship with each other, which is as important as his/her relationship with each of them separately.

In 1977, at the 66th Annual Meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association, the role of the father in preoedipal years was discussed by a panel, comprising S. Kramer, E. Abelin, R. Stoller, J. Glenn and J. Kleeman (reported by R. Prall, 1978). An historical review of the role of the father in child development was presented by the chairperson, who stressed that the preoedipal father had not appeared much in psychoanalytic literature until recently. Earlier works by T. Benedek, D. Burlingham, P. Greenacre, R. Greenson, H. Loewald and M. Mahler were noted, drawing largely on adult and child analyses and early childhood observations.

Abelin, in his paper entitled "The Role of the Father in Core Gender Identity and in Psychosexual Development", based on infant and early childhood observations under Mahler's direction, proposed that the toddler in the practicing subphase attaches in a specific way to the father, who remains "uncontaminated by the severe ambivalence that affects the maternal image" (Prall, 1978, p. 146). He stressed the father's crucial role in assisting with the resolution of that ambivalence, postulating an "*early triangulation* in which the toddler identifies with the rival father's wish for mother" (ibid., p. 145). He also emphasised the importance of both the "nurturing and masculine aspects" of the father (ibid., p. 152).

R. Stoller, in his paper, "Fathers of 'Sex Change' Children", outlined four main functions of the preoedipal father, namely to support the mother, to modify behaviour by reward and punishment, to provide a model for identification for boys, in particular, but not exclusively, and to become a love object, especially, but not exclusively, for girls (Prall, 1978, p. 155). He also stressed the father's role in protecting a child (especially a son) from a mother who may wish to prolong the symbiosis.

Concluding comments by Kramer stressed the importance of the father in the preoedipal years, particularly "as an object of identification, as part of the ego ideal, and as a precursor to the later developing superego" (ibid., p. 160). The crucial role of the father in assisting with the transition from dyadic to triadic object relations was noted, as was his significance in the development of health and pathological sexual identity (ibid., p. 161).

In a seminal article by Ross in 1979, the father as "a forgotten parent in the psychoanalytic and psychological literature" (p. 317) was further highlighted. Attention was drawn to the recent, increasing appreciation of the father's active and positive role in child development, as well as "the influence of his own paternal needs

and strivings *vis-a-vis* his sons and daughters" (ibid.). Discussing Freud's relationship with his father, Ross suggested that although Freud proposed a prohibitive father in his theories, in relation to his own father, he attempted to "endow the man with powers greater than those he possessed and to make of him a worthy opponent and model" (p. 318). Ross thus reinterpreted, in part, Oedipus's "search for the truth buried in the past...as his quest to rediscover the father" (p.320). He drew an analogy from Freud's assertion that patriarchy gave way to matriarchy, before resuming its powerful position, in describing the shift in psychoanalysis from Freud's oedipal father, to the preoedipal mother involved in the separation-individuation process. However, the growing awareness of the father now moves him beyond an inhibitory or secondary role, to one of primary significance in "offer[ing] ways out of a child's arresting entanglement with the mother" (p. 321). He suggested that during preoedipal development, the father may be seen "as the first representation of masculinity and, more fundamentally, as the first significant other, apart from siblings perhaps, outside of the orbit of mother and child" (ibid). Thus, like Abelin (1975), Ross stressed the father's role as "a purveyor of triangulation" (ibid.), later seen in the Oedipus complex, and recognised this as being crucial to the consolidation of gender identity and object choice.

Ross contextualised his work by referring to some earlier psychoanalytic contributions on the father, viz. by Loewald (1951) and Greenacre (1966). Loewald (1951) proposed two possible pairs of relationships with parents. In relation to the mother, there may be "a positive libidinal relationship" (Loewald, 1951, p. 16 cited in Ross, 1979, p. 322), emerging from the primary narcissistic position, as well as "a defensive, negative dread of the womb" (ibid.), that is, a regressive move towards symbiosis; and in relation to the father, "a positive, 'exquisitely masculine' identification with him, which lends powerful support against the danger of the womb, and a defensive relationship concerning the paternal castration threat" (ibid.). Both positive and negative relationships thus facilitate a boy's differentiation from the mother. Ross noted the absence of attention to the significance of the father in a girl's early identity formation (p. 322), a criticism also directed at Greenacre (1966), who failed to distinguish between the different experiences boys and girls may have with their fathers, whom she nevertheless regarded as significant in the first two years of life.

M. Leonard's (1966) contribution was significant in that she gave specific attention to the father-daughter relationship, drawn from psychotherapy with adolescent girls. She categorised the fathers in terms of absent, non-participating, possessive, seductive and identified, emphasising the impact of these attitudes on the libidinal development of the daughters. She suggested that a "desexualised object-relationship to her father" (p.

332) is necessary for the acceptance of "the feminine role without guilt or anxiety" (ibid.) in subsequent relationships, the achievement of which is influenced by the kind of "counter-oedipal relationship" (ibid., p. 333) provided by the father.

Ross (1979) criticised these and other earlier works for their lack of context and neglect of the "maternal orbit" (p. 324). He called for further elucidation on the impact of the developing father-child relationship throughout childhood, on gender identity, generative development, and self and object differentiation, stressing the need for consideration of differences in father-daughter and father-son relationships. He also regarded the *dyad* of father and child as worthy of more attention, as are the father's particular internal dynamics, which will determine "the resonances between a father's and child's dynamic representational worlds" (p. 325).

Layland (1981/1985), turned to Winnicott's concept of the "good-enough" mother for his definition of the *loving father*,

"who can accept that it is the baby's right to bring him all its needs, wishes, fantasies or feelings, but does not expect the baby to deal with his own mainly unconscious needs, wishes, fantasies or feelings that are inappropriate to that relationship" (p. 156).

He suggested that for circumstantial or dynamic reasons, the infant may experience the mother as absent in early life, and may turn to the father for care and help. He regarded the father's response as "crucial to the child's future sexual development and identity" (pp. 166-167), and disagreed with Burlingham's contention that the father becomes a mother-substitute when the mother is unable to provide adequate care, suggesting that this denies the father a role in his own right. Instead, Layland stressed the child's capacity to experience the father as different from the mother (p. 167), and referred to the works of Greenacre (1966), Abelin (1975) and Mahler et al (1975) in this regard. Layland warned that unresolved psychological problems in the father may interfere with his capacity to be a loving father, who is "neither seduced nor frightened by the infant's needs and wishes" (p. 168), thereby affecting his ability to respond appropriately.

2.2 SOME JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE FATHER

Samuels (1985d, p. 162) suggested that there has been a similar neglect of the role of the father in early development in contemporary, developmental analytical psychology, as there has been in psychoanalysis, where the post-Freudian emphasis has been increasingly on the mother.

Whilst in the 1970s comments were made on the absence of the father in the literature (for example, Burlingham, 1973; Von der Heydt, 1973 in Samuels, 1985d, p. 163), since the 1980s there have been increasing contributions on various aspects of the father.

A similar concern to that of Layland (1981/1985), is expressed by Kay (1981/1985), who illustrated with case examples the results of introjection of paternal psychopathology. He referred to Jung's contention that "children are driven unconsciously in a direction that is intended to compensate for everything that was unfulfilled in the lives of their parents" (CW 17, para. 328 in Layland, 1981/1985, p. 49), citing a case where the child felt compelled to fulfil the needs of the father, resulting in an inability to differentiate.

Beebe (1984) presented the experience of the father in a slightly different way. He focussed on the son's potential for internalising the father's anima as an inner experience, which usually requires a choice which contradicts the tendency of the father's anima. A decision of this nature is "decisive for the individuation of a man ...[as] the anima becomes his own, free of his father's influence" (p. 280).

Seligman (1982/1985) emphasised the *missing father*, who is emotionally unavailable to both mother and child. She described a possible unconscious collusion between mother and child, which perpetuates the interdependent dyad, thereby "postponing the more difficult and conflict-ridden subsequent phase of the triad, the phase of sharing and conflict" (p. 72). Seligman referred to patients in such a predicament as *half-alive*, describing them as being "in a state of permanent twilight of non-differentiation, inexorably trapped" (p. 71). Her contention was that the emergence from this state requires the participation of the father, whose absence leaves the child "neither in, nor out, but wedged, so to speak, half-way, half-alive, half-born" (p. 81). Thus, the father was seen to play "a specific and essential role as the mediator of the difficult transition from the womb to the world" (ibid). There tends, however, to be a reluctance to relinquish the enmeshed, dyadic relationship which is deceptively safe on the one hand,

but a form of imprisonment, "a kind of death within life" (p. 77) on the other. The unconscious needs of both mother and child result in "sensations of being trapped and crippled, necessitating the erection of increasingly rigid and impenetrable defence systems which serve to camouflage weakness, dependence and helplessness" (p. 82). This was related to a common perception of the father as either weak and useless or as violent and dangerous. "[B]ecause of this unconscious imprisonment in an infantile state... these people fear, and consequently avoid, a new and different relationship" (ibid.), and will thus seek a state of fusion in the therapeutic situation. Seligman concluded that it is

"a symbolic...reinstatement of the 'absent' parent...[that enables] a reconciliation of the inner parents to take place, which then frees the previously 'paralysed' individual to discover his own identity, liberating his hitherto atrophied resources" (1982/1985, p. 93).

The neglect of the father as a facilitating figure was further noted by Carvalho (1982). He proposed that narcissistic damage can occur from the absence of an effective father whose role at a preoedipal stage he regarded as crucial. Carvalho stressed that the internal father arises from an interaction of the "innate unconscious phantasy or of archetypal activity" (p. 343) with the external object, which is confirmed, modified or amplified by the former, and referred to the works of Seligman in connection with possible reasons for the absence of fathers. He suggested that the father's absence or ineffectuality negatively affects the mother-infant dyad, thereby "distorting the mother as an object for external representation" (p. 344) and preventing a satisfactory emergence from the state of primary identification. It further hinders the process of the separation and differentiation through a "failure of triangulation" (ibid.) which prevents the infant from perceiving the mother and father as separate and differentiated from each other. This causes confusion of gender and generation, again distorting potential objects of identification and introjection. It also places the onus of differentiation on the infant, who may perceive this as potentially mutilating of him/herself as well as of the mother (ibid., p. 347). Lastly, he regarded the father as symbolic "not only [of] the capacity for differentiation but also [of] the capacity for agency and for manipulating the external environment" (ibid.).

Carvalho noted differences in male and female responses to what he called *paternal deprivation*, and drew on Freud's notion of the relinquishment by the child of the contrasexual parent, part of whom has been internalised (p. 353). He stated that men can persist in identification with an idealised mother-anima, while for women, the

internalisation of the father is made dangerous "by the projected drives for mutilating differentiation" (ibid.). Identification with the mother is also complicated as the girl then "becomes herself the object of the attack that she has in phantasy used her father to epitomise" (ibid.). He suggested that women who are denied the possibility of identification with a "'being experience' or the 'eros principle'" (ibid., p. 354) constantly attempt to ward off "the dangers of 'connectedness' in order to attain the differentiatedness of 'logos' by 'doing'" (ibid.). This results in an identification with a persecutory animus, which is projected into relationships with men, who may be experienced as sadistic. However, if the early experience of 'being' with the mother has been adequate enough to allow identification, "the girl feels that the differentiatedness that her father represents is safe enough to internalise as a capacity for her critical faculties and for differentiation" (ibid.). Carvalho concluded that paternal deprivation leads men to feel "trapped and enmeshed in the world of the great mother" (ibid.), where fusion and 'togetherness' are idealised, while women, also "trapped in a 'twilight world' of fused objects and projective processes" (ibid.), tend to mobilise their rage, resulting in an identification with the "phantasied aggressor" (ibid., p. 355). While this may lead to professional success, relationships are impaired, as

"this principle of logos is predicated on spuriously differentiated internal objects which are persecuting, and upon processes of projective identification, while connectedness through the maternal principle is repudiated" (Carvalho, 1982, p. 355).

Samuels (1982/1985b) also noted the father's role in facilitating differentiation when he wrote of the infant's discovery of the father as different from the mother (p. 113). He stressed the implicit element of conflict in differentiation, suggesting that with sufficient ego strength, this can be transformed into "conjunction" (p. 117). It is the perception of 'twoness', both in relation to the mother and baby, as well as the parents, that initiates both the conflict and transformation thereof. The recognition of the separateness of these relationships (mother-baby and mother-father) is aided by the presence of the father, whose image is always there as an archetypal potential requiring mediation by external reality (p. 122). Thus, the image of the parents is regarded as the earliest "*coniunctio*" (that is, union of opposites) of masculinity and femininity (p. 116), and therefore as a symbol of life.

L. Leonard (1982), in her book entitled The Wounded Woman: Healing the Father-Daughter Relationship, illustrated ways in which women are affected when their fathers have been psychologically damaged. She suggested that the father's wounds are

reflected in aspects of the daughter's life, and described two common patterns of functioning that may emerge in women as a result. The "eternal girl" (*puella aeterna*) (ibid., p. 15) remains a dependent daughter in whom "the masculine side...is split into two opposites: weak young boy and perverted, sadistic old man" (Leonard, 1982, p. 17), while the "armoured Amazon" (ibid., p. 15), through ego-identification with the masculine or fathering functions, develops a masculine identity which becomes "a protective shell...against the pain of abandonment or rejection" (ibid., p. 17). Leonard regarded a "disturbed relation between the masculine and feminine principles" (ibid., p. 25) as fundamental in the father-daughter wound, and illustrated this with examples of the different ways in which the 'eternal girl' and the 'armoured Amazon' manifest.

She concluded that the

"[r]edemption of the father invariably seems to require facing monstrous rage and aggression, both one's own and that which the father was unable to integrate" (ibid., p. 152),

and stressed that redeeming the father not only involves "reshaping the masculine within" (ibid., p. 160), but also requires the discovery and integration of the "feminine spirit" (ibid., p. 167) within oneself.

The influence of the father on the daughter was also considered by Shorter (1983/1985), who observed an exaggerated position held by the father in the psychic lives of anorexic women. She described the aspirations of these women as having a "masculine character" (1983/1985, p. 177), suggesting that an unconscious incestuous link with the father, as well as a psychological bonding to the father image, "compels them to adopt a sacrificial attitude of spirit, a purity of body, and an abstinence from involvement with intercourse and childbearing" (ibid, p. 178). Linked to the masculine principle in this way, these women dwell in a "state of possession in which the animus has usurped control of the personality" (ibid, p. 179).

Samuels (1988a, p. 418) proposed that the relationship with the father emerges out of the interplay of two other relationships, namely that between mother and father, and between mother and infant; hence it is a "created relationship" (ibid., p. 419) with particular psychological and cultural significance, which arise out of its "biological weakness" (ibid.). Stressing the connection between two- and three-person functioning, he stated that

"the child's recognition of and relation to the father and her/his discovery of the relation between father and mother make it impossible for her/him to continue to maintain the illusion of a fusionary or symbiotic relation to the mother" (ibid., p.423).

Samuels referred to "the father as gender" (ibid., p. 418), defining gender as "the psychological and cultural analogue of biological sex" (ibid.). He argued that the relationship between father and child is "signified in a different way [to that between mother and child] and acknowledged in a different way because it is constructed in a different way" (ibid., p. 418)). He suggested that "[w]e don't know the father is the father until we can apply the psychological idea and image of father" (ibid.). Furthermore, if we see the father as a "cultural phenomenon", (ibid., p. 419), it challenges the idea that motherhood is 'natural' for women; hence "[our culture] cannot afford to look too closely at the father lest he give the game away" (ibid.).

Explaining his lack of distinction between the literal and metaphorical father, Samuels noted that these are linked by the notion of the archetypes, and defined the archetypal father in terms of "whatever it is about the image of the father that is archetypal" (ibid., p. 420). He therefore located the archetypal dimension not in the father, but in those archetypal images within the child's perception of the father (ibid.).

He developed his argument further (Samuels, 1988b) by considering the role of the father in the formation of gender identity, and by elaborating on his notion of "gender certainty" (1988a, p. 423), a "kind of ossification around gender" (ibid.) that develops from paternal deficits. With reference to women, he noticed how the father, whose differences from the daughter are overt, affects "the degree of success she has in coping with the eventual discovery of the covert differences from the mother" (1988b, p. 67). This is achieved through an "optimal erotic relation between father and daughter" (ibid., p. 70), in which the daughter's erotic viability is affirmed, and their mutual longings renounced. He suggested that this "erotic playback" (ibid.) from the father facilitates a young woman's "apperception of herself as a sexual creature" (ibid., p. 72), enabling her to "break out of the bondage of the metaphorical equation: woman = mother" (ibid.), and to discover "a variety of psychological pathways...and meanings inherent in the ideogram 'woman'" (ibid., p. 72).

Samuels described the father's relation to the son in terms of turning the "incestuous libido away from sexual expression with the mother...into new directions so that a spiritual enhancement may ensue" (ibid., pp. 72-73). This involves the discovery of a

purposeful goal for aggression (ibid., p. 74), whereby the heroic process, rather than achievement, is emphasised. Thus, the father assists in

"contextualis[ing] heroic endeavour as something other than the slaying of the dragon-mother...[which] can lead to a metaphorical slaying of the whole creative unconscious" (Samuels, 1988b, p. 74).

Samuels concluded with a note that the father's erotic connection is also required by the son, as is his transformation of aggression by the daughter, and cautioned that to ignore this, means further "ensnare[ment] by the delusion of gender certainty" (ibid., p. 75).

The significance of the father-daughter relationship was more recently explored in depth by Wieland (1991), who examined the impact of the father's unconscious masculine identity on the daughter's developing femininity. Wieland referred to Freud's (1932) paper, Femininity, suggesting that when femininity is defined as a *problem*, one loses sight of the complementarity between masculinity and femininity, and thus of the role of the father in feminine development (1991, p. 131). Wieland proposed that while a "woman's basic ego structure...develops in relation to the mother,...her sexual identity and her sexuality...develop in relation to the father" (ibid., p. 132).

Wieland noted that identification is assumed by theories which emphasise the mother-daughter dyad, and suggested that this process, as well as the development of sexual identity, is not possible without the real or phantasied presence of a third person, namely the father, "from whom the self together with its identificatory figure will differentiate" (ibid.).

Although Wieland referred to the father as the "complementary opposite" (ibid., p. 132) of the daughter, so defined because he denotes the contrasexual for the girl, she stressed that this is different to Jung's view of opposites and does not imply an archetypal view of masculinity and femininity. Instead, she is concerned with the ways in which the developing girl and boy discover the *meaning* of sex difference and position themselves on the "masculine/feminine axis" (ibid., p. 133).

With reference to traditional psychoanalytic conceptions about the idealisation of the father, Wieland drew on Melanie Klein's understanding of the relationship between idealisation and persecutory anxiety to argue that "the idealisation of the father by the

daughter is a defence against the father as persecutor" (ibid.), which she related more specifically, to a fear of the father's unconscious.

Wieland illustrated her argument with the fairy tale of *Bluebeard*, whose "monstrous and beastly" (ibid., p. 134) nature is used as a metaphor for "women's and men's most horrific phantasies about masculinity" (ibid.). The forbidden room containing Bluebeard's dead, previous wives who disobeyed his orders not to enter it, was interpreted as

"man's split off and denied femininity"...[as well as his] "infantile yearning for the perfect woman..., the mother he can trust and dominate at the same time" (Wieland, 1991, p. 134.).

Tracing the development of masculinity, Wieland asserted that the response to the omnipotent mother, whom the boy tries to dominate with his penis, is central to the emergence of masculine identity (ibid., p. 135). Primitive masculinity is therefore characterised by the

"sexual domination of woman-mother in an attempt to ensure she will always be available so that the man can go on denying his vulnerability" (ibid., pp. 135-136).

The boy's earlier identification with the mother, whose femininity becomes associated with castration and inferiority, is another reason for the boy's overvaluation of his penis, which therefore "signifies the strength of his resistance to be drawn into the vortex of regression that would lead to his original identification with mother and to his original femininity" (ibid.). Wieland stressed the implications of this denial of femininity within masculine identity for all relationships between men and women, including the father-daughter relationship.

Homer's tale of *The Odyssey* was used to portray the establishment of masculinity through the struggle against women, which inevitably involves "the humanisation of masculinity through woman" (ibid., p. 136). Thus while masculine development involves "a [primitive] phase of aggressive, rapacious masculinity that corresponds to the boy's revolt against the mother's power and his phantasied victory over her" (ibid., p. 137), this is later repressed by means of "the internalisation of the idealised father and his law...[which] make omnipotence untenable" (ibid.).

Wieland suggested that the effect of the father's phantasies about masculinity and femininity on the daughter has been avoided partly because of the split between the idealised father and primitive masculinity, which men are assumed to lose once they become fathers (ibid., p. 138). She illustrated this split in the fairy tale of *The Beauty and the Beast*, in which the Beast "is not just a phantasy in Beauty's mind, as Bettelheim suggests, but a real split within the father" (ibid). Wieland noted that the split is healed when both idealisation and persecution lessen, depicted in the fairy tale by the father becoming ill and the Beast almost dying of a broken heart when Beauty leaves him to return to her ailing father. Beauty's awareness of the Beast's vulnerability facilitates his transformation into a man, whom she can then love. This motif, found in many myths and fairy tales, is what Jung referred to in his assertion that "the function of Eros [is] to unite what Logos has sundered" (CW 10, para. 275 in Samuels, 1985b, p. 22).

Referring to Samuel's (1988) contribution on the father, Wieland suggested that if the relationship with the father is "optimally erotic" (see Samuels, 1988b), then the developing girl may work through the paradox created by the father-daughter relationship, namely the persecutory anxiety triggered by this relationship and the alleviation thereof offered by reality testing. In the absence of an 'optimally erotic' relationship, either due to an abusive or an absent father, there may be a confusion of phantasy and reality, creating a potential threat of "the transformation of father into beast" (Wieland, 1991, p. 140). Wieland suggested further that in the absence of the father, the daughter's phantasy of masculinity is derived mainly from the mother's unconscious, and may involve "the most pernicious of the beast/tyrant phantasy completely unmitigated by reality testing" (ibid., p. 142).

A deeper level of analysis was proposed, namely that "below the beast lie castration and femininity and man's dread of it" (ibid., p. 140). Thus, an unconscious equation emerges between femininity and submission, based on the girl's perception of primitive unconscious masculinity, and often resulting in an identification with the father, as a defence against this dreaded femininity. Gender identity is therefore powerfully influenced by phantasies about masculinity and femininity, held by "all the actors in the family drama both as individuals and as members of a culture" (ibid.).

2.3 AN ARCHETYPAL PERSPECTIVE

Central to an Analytical understanding of the role of the father is the archetypal dimension, which predisposes the subjective experience of external reality in a patterned way. There is thus an interaction of the personal father with the archetypal father, the experience of whom is mediated and "humanised" by the former (Samuels, 1985c, p. 24). The internal father therefore emerges from the introjected qualities of the actual father and the unconscious aspects of the archetypal father (ibid.).

Inherent in this perspective are Jung's concepts of the fundamental contrasexual archetypes, *anima* and *animus*, the former being associated with Eros, symbolic of connectedness, relatedness and harmony and the latter with Logos, symbolic of rationality, logic, the intellect, 'the word' (Samuels, ibid., pp. 21-22). Thus, the archetypal feminine is usually associated with the unconscious, and has been characterised by Neumann (1955) as "self-contained, material, enclosing, and static" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 189), while the archetypal masculine is regarded as a mental principle, associated with intrusive, active and generative behaviours that stimulate "the development of consciousness out of primal undifferentiation and unity with the mother" (ibid.). The masculine principle is therefore associated with those aspects of psychic functioning attributed to the ego (ibid.). The elements of intellect and will, through the imposition of order, are considered responsible for creating a universe out of chaos:

"the word or order (*Logos*) generates the transformation and differentiation of the world, the first movement out of the self-contained slumber of the feminine" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 190).

Thus,

"[i]n his archetypal relevance the father embodies for the daughter not only the first heterosexual love object; he also represents the larger world ruled by instinct and spirit; he represents authority and law; the realm of ideas, the domain of religious and spiritual values " (Allenby, 1955/1985, p. 137).

The "spirit aspect" of the animus is also depicted in myth as the wind or breath, "which animates through inspiration" (Neumann, 1954, cited in Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 190.). Greenfield (1983/1985) noted that the archetypal masculine is expressed in myth through various male figures, representative of the ego at different stages of

development (ibid., p. 191). These heroes are often in a state of mobility, reflecting the dynamic and active mode of the masculine. Thus, the animus initiates "intrusive and generative" (ibid., p. 190) behaviours which are often reflected in sexuality:

"[I]n its positive form the masculine is that which impregnates and creates, and in its negative form that which rapes and destroys" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 190).

Jung described this quality of the animus in terms of

"a creative and procreative being...in the sense that he brings forth something we might call the *Logos spermaticos*, the spermatic word" (CW7, para. 551 cited in Greenfield, 1983, pp. 190-191).

Greenfield noted that the animus or male archetype has a unifying function, in that it is the shared principle underlying the various mythological figures, with their different developmental characteristics. The ego is depicted in its early stages of development by the boy, Don Juan and the trickster (which Greenfield regarded as an early incarnation of the father), while subsequent stages are personified by the hero, the father and the wise old man (Greenfield, 1983, p. 191)).

Greenfield regarded the father and the trickster as most clearly depicting the opposing aspects of the masculine, attributing the "word" component of Jung's description of the animus to the father, and the "spermatic" component to the trickster. Thus, while "the father is the lawgiver, and stands for order or even repression, the trickster is the lawbreaker who represents the expression of instinctual desires" (ibid., p. 192).

The father therefore symbolises the protective quality of the masculine, in which the potential to be restrictive and overwhelmingly powerful is contained, while the trickster, through his youthful expressiveness, embodies the potential for liberation, as well as the possibility of deception, seduction or robbery (ibid.). Because this figure represents the undeveloped ego and instinctual, unsublimated desire, he is seen to lack conscious awareness and self-control, and therefore is often portrayed as an animal.

"[Through] his sexual appeal, the trickster lures the woman away from the dominance of the father and puts her in a position where she is forced to be autonomous and rely on her own strength, or develop strengths if she did not have them" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 197).

In contrast to the unrepressed trickster, the father represents a more mature stage of development and is frequently depicted by sky or light imagery. He may retain trickster-traits, for example, Zeus, a 'Father Sky' who had affairs with mortal women and was tricked by his wife Hera and by other gods (ibid.). Greenfield regarded the father as "the most powerful incarnation of the archetypal masculine" (ibid., p. 202), as he is "the primal seed that fertilizes Mother Earth and causes her unity to differentiate and bring forth the manifold forms of life" (ibid.). She suggested that because the father lacks the physical connection shared by mother and infant, he is the first person the child loves in a spiritual or mental way (ibid.).

Greenfield noted that when women attempt to rebel against the dominance of the authoritarian father in myths, they tend to be punished, often by rape, while men are castrated or "struck down by arrows and thunderbolts" (ibid., p. 205). The woman's dilemma is therefore portrayed as a choice between the protective (yet frequently dominating) father, and the romantic trickster, who offers sexuality and freedom. Greenfield suggested that this conflict may change "when women are able to associate themselves with men who are peers rather than protectors or seducers" (ibid., p. 209).

The cycle of development concludes with the wise old man, who acts on the world largely through his influence on others, and whose

"proximity to death and the uroboros enriches his wisdom both by giving him an outsider's detachment and by allowing him to be a more androgynous figure than the other incarnations of the masculine" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 207).

Greenfield's conceptualisation of a "path of development of the archetype" (ibid.) to some extent parallels Neumann's (1954) use of the hero as a metaphor for the development of ego-consciousness, which is seen to pass through stages of development associated with particular archetypes and complexes (Samuels, 1985d, p. 70). Beginning with the *uroboric phase*, a state of infantile omnipotence characterised by lack of differentiation, the ego then moves through the *matriarchal phase*, dominated by the Great Mother, whose power initially renders the ego passive. To differentiate from the mother-infant dyad, the ego makes use of aggressive fantasy, which enables a growing awareness of the separation between infant and mother, and then mother and father, to develop. This process involves a series of heroic acts on the part of the ego-consciousness, and thus the metaphor of the hero on a quest involving difficulties and challenges, develops.

Samuels (1985d, p. 71) highlights three psychological tasks which Neumann (1954) envisaged as facing the ego/hero: firstly, the separation from the mother and her environment, often symbolised by the slaying of the dragon-monster; secondly, the identification and discrimination of the masculine and feminine aspects of the self, which require integration; and thirdly, a search for

"values and modes of psychological functioning to offset and balance the over-directed and exaggeratedly conscious manner he has had to develop to break out of the embrace of the Great Mother" (Samuels, 1985d, p. 71).

These compensatory values and ways of being are often symbolised by a feminine figure such as a princess and by treasure, and in his search for the feminine-treasure, the hero invariably encounters helpful figures along the journey. This process inevitably leads to

"a temporary loss of depth (of soul) and to espousal of conflict and struggle. The soul-maiden redresses the balance in her marriage with the hero" (Samuels, 1985d, p. 71).

Neumann's third stage is the *patriarchal phase*, in which the hero does battle with the old order, often the king. This is the struggle between the generations, between the old and the new. It is the "*deliberate exposure*" (ibid., p. 72) of the ego to the above dangers, as well as to "the 'feminine' aspect of the victim-treasure" (ibid.), that strengthens and transforms the consciousness, rendering it capable of "breaking away from the despotic rule of the unconscious" (Neumann, 1954, p. 127 cited in Samuels, 1985d, p. 72).

2.4 OEDIPUS AND INCEST: FREUDIAN AND JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVES

Samuels (1988a, p. 417) proposed that the father and incest are "irremediably linked", and noted that the debate around incest was the area of greatest disagreement between Freud and Jung. While Freud favoured a more literal, instinctual and causative interpretation of incest, Jung understood it in metaphorical and psychological terms.

Freud's emphasis on the father particularly concerned the phallic-oedipal stage of psychosexual development, during which the resolution of the Oedipus Complex is regarded as the primary task of the 3-5 year old child. For the little boy, this is achieved through the impact of castration anxiety, which enables him to replace his erotic attachment to the mother with an identification with the father, whose power and authority are then introjected, to form the superego. Freud's formulation of the dissolution of the girl's Oedipus Complex was less clear and more controversial. The Complex is seen to be ushered in by the discovery of the anatomical differences between the sexes, formulated by Freud as the 'fact' of castration, which is experienced as a "narcissistic wound" (Freud, 1925/1977, p. 337.). This results in hostility towards the mother, whom the little girl regards as responsible for this 'lack', and in penis envy, reformulated by Mitchell (1974, p. 105) in terms of envy of phallic power. Thus, the girl turns to the father, whom she hopes will provide her with a penis or a baby. A re-identification with the mother takes place when the girl is frustrated and disappointed by the father, whose love she seeks. Under the threat of the loss of love (of both father and mother), she must "renounce her father in order to reattach her libido to a suitable, nonincestuous love object" (Meissner, 1980, p. 670).

For Jung (CW5), incest was conceptualised symbolically in terms of

"both the need to move on from the mother, father and family circle (the incest taboo) and, *at the same time*, the opposite, the need to regress (the incest impulse)" (Samuels, 1985d, pp. 166-167).

Rather than being a desire for actual intercourse with a parent, the unconscious aim of incest fantasy is therefore "a symbolic expression of a longing for the rebirth of oneself through contact with the 'parental soil'" (Samuels, 1988a, p. 417). Samuels argued that the personality is enhanced or enriched through close contact with someone who is psychologically more developed than oneself, and pointed out that the notion of inner growth emerging from very close relationships with people outside, "who have qualities ...not yet manifested" (ibid.) in oneself, is central to a psychodynamic and object relations perspective. He therefore linked the psychological function of incestuous sexuality with the facilitation of "the closeness of love" (ibid.), stressing that if it is acted out, the consequences can be tragically destructive. Referring to Searles's (1959) conception of oedipal resolution, Samuels noted that a "mutual renunciation" (1985d, p. 168) is necessary, in which the child feels the loved parent's acknowledgement and love, yet regret at the unrealisability of the oedipal desires, thereby preventing oedipal injury.

Thus, symbolic incest, which is expressed in phantasy and prohibited by the incest taboo, was regarded by Jung as a "genuine instinct" (Samuels, 1985d, p. 167), rather than as a perversion, and may be regarded as symbolic, because

"it unites several pairs of opposites: regression/ progression, endogamy/exogamy, instinctuality/ spirituality, father-son hostility/ father-son alliance or mother-daughter hostility/alliance" (Samuels, 1985d, p. 167).

Finally, understood in these terms, incest is considered to fulfil an important psychological function, essential for healthy psychosexual development.

CHAPTER 3

THE CASE STUDY

3.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For the purposes of confidentiality, the patient shall be referred to by a pseudonym, Mary, and certain details of her history will be altered and omitted.

3.1.1 RELEVANT DETAILS OF PRESENTING PROBLEM AND HISTORY

Mary was a quadraplegic, single woman in her mid-thirties, who contracted polio at the age of two years. A member of a very large family, she lived with her parents and two younger sisters, had a Std 5 education and received a disability grant. Mary was referred for psychotherapy by an Occupational Therapist from a Psychiatric Out-Patient Department, where she attended a weekly group for 6 weeks. This followed a consultation for depression with her General Practitioner, who prescribed anti-depressant medication for one month. Mary had sought help as she was feeling that her life was "going no-where" and that she wanted to give up.

In our initial interview, Mary reported feeling trapped at home, where she felt burdened by family problems: her father was "very strict" and mother was "soft" and turned to Mary with her problems. Things had deteriorated since her father's stroke 2 years ago, after which he had decided to work from home. She had no privacy at home, constantly having to account for herself to her parents, and was prevented by her father from having male friends to visit.

Mary described feeling depressed with loss of energy and motivation. She reported suicidal ideation during the previous year, loss of weight and the use of Syndol for insomnia. Mary presented as a neatly dressed, young-looking woman who made good eye contact and spoke articulately, tending to give an overinclusive account of her home situation. Her depression, which she described in terms of feeling "stuck" and "lost", was evident, although masked by a manic defence.

Mary described her father, a semi-retired artisan in his 60s, as a very strict, moody and prejudiced man who had been a "Casanova" in his youth. His family background was wealthier than his wife's, and his father had been an alcoholic. Mary's mother (aged 60), a housewife with very little education, was described as soft, passive and full of complaints. She came from a poor and difficult family background: her mother had been blind and her father alcoholic.

Mary's parents married when her mother became pregnant at the age of 19 years, and Mary regarded the marriage as an escape for her mother from her difficult home circumstances. According to Mary, her mother felt inadequate, and her freedom had always been severely restricted by Mary's father, to whom her mother related in a servile manner. Although her father had a violent temper, no incidents of physical violence on her mother or the family were reported. Mary felt that both parents treated her like a child. Her relationship with her father was extremely poor, while that with her mother was characterised by mutual dependence and guilt on the part of Mary, whenever she asserted her own needs.

Mary was one of several siblings, who had secretarial, trade and professional qualifications. Of the siblings at home, Mary had a close relationship with her youngest sister, and an ambivalent one with the other, whom Mary reported used to be her father's favourite. Those who had moved out of the home were married, and had sporadic contact with the family. According to Mary, they avoided visiting because of their difficult father.

Mary described conflict and financial difficulty during her childhood, although the latter was kept hidden by her father. She had clear memories of her father's violent outbursts during which he threw the furniture around.

Mary had a normal birth at home, and normal development until the age of two years, when she contracted polio, which affected her arms and legs. Much of her childhood was spent in hospital, where she had numerous operations and spent months rehabilitating. This disrupted her schooling, and at 17 years, Mary completed Std 5, but was unable to continue with high school because the building was inaccessible. She tried unsuccessfully to learn to type, and later taught herself to paint and play the piano. Subsequent attempts to study further and gain employment were prevented by her father, whom Mary believed feared the loss of her disability grant.

Mary expressed inexperience, confusion and anxiety about sexuality. One recent experience of sexual contact (without intercourse) with a man, left her feeling "robbed" and afraid of being physically and emotionally hurt. She claimed that her father prevented her from making male friends.

In addition to the medical history associated with her physical disability, Mary complained of frequent headaches, and the occurrence of benign breast lumps some years ago, after her family attempted to leave her father. Apart from the recent anti-depressant medication and the history of alcoholism in her grandparents mentioned above, no further psychiatric history was reported in Mary or her family.

When describing her personality, Mary spoke of her difficulty showing her feelings, saying that she "hate[d] exposing herself to people". She hated people to come close to her (physically and emotionally) and withdrew when angry. She also described sometimes feeling "grown up and organised, talkative and happy", while at home she felt "like a little girl, confused and sad". She often felt "cold and dead", as if she had no emotions.

Mary felt her problems were caused by her home situation and largely attributed these to her father. She expressed confusion and ambivalence about the future, saying that while she wanted to move away from home, she didn't want to be disconnected from her family.

3.1.2 PSYCHOTHERAPY CONTEXT

Mary was diagnosed as suffering from Dysthymia on Axis I (DSM III-R), and with strong Dependent traits on Axis II. After some initial ambivalence about committing herself to psychotherapy, Mary agreed in the third session to contract for weekly sessions for approximately eleven months, a time limit determined by the length of the internship during which the treatment occurred.

The psychotherapy which was undertaken was psychodynamic in nature, and focussed primarily on issues related to the process of separation-individuation, and in particular on the patient's struggle to separate from her parents. After seven months (twenty-five sessions) the patient requested to meet fortnightly, initially with the intention of continuing for the time contracted, but ending prematurely two months later. Thirty sessions of psychotherapy therefore took place over nine months, and as mentioned

previously, detailed notes were made after each session and discussed in weekly supervision.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF CASE MATERIAL: TOWARDS A PSYCHODYNAMIC UNDERSTANDING

An attempt at formulating this case psychodynamically will follow, drawing on relevant details from the patient's history and on case material from the psychotherapy. A few major themes have been selected, in order to illustrate both the focus of the psychotherapy, as well as the theoretical positions outlined in Chapter 2. Whilst the presentation of these themes creates an appearance of discreteness, it must be remembered that they constantly interact with each other in an overdetermined and interdependent manner. The brevity of this work makes it difficult to portray in any real depth either the complexity of Mary's dynamics or their connection to the father; thus, the analysis of the dreams and therapy material is selective and in no way complete. It is hoped, however, that what follows will convey enough to illustrate some aspects of Mary's intrapsychic life and the impact of the father on her psychological development.

Please note: Where dreams are reported in the third person, they were *told* to the therapist during the sessions; those in the first person were *written* down by the patient and copies were given to the therapist.

3.2.1 SENSE OF SELF

Central to an understanding of this patient's struggle towards separation-individuation is the quality of her sense of self. When considering the circumstances into which Mary was born, it is relevant to note that her parents had married because of an unplanned pregnancy when Mary's mother was 19 years old. Mary's father provided her mother with the possibility of financial security and an escape from her very difficult home circumstances, characterised by poverty and the burden of a blind mother, alcoholic father and large family whom Mary's mother had taken care of for several years. It is possible that her mother's own emotional needs may not have been met in childhood, given the above circumstances and her passive and dependent personality, the significance of which will be discussed later. These factors may have hindered her mother's capacity to provide Mary, during infancy and early childhood, with adequate

emotional nurturance within a holding environment, thereby hindering the establishment of a secure, internal sense of self.

During the first three sessions of psychotherapy, Mary frequently referred to a feeling of being lost and afraid. She said she hated exposing herself to people because *then they can take everything away and you can die*. There was a sense of injured narcissism, suggested by several references to not being appreciated or supported by her family and others, despite the practical assistance given by them in her daily routine. The most striking aspect of her descriptions of herself, reminiscent of Seligman's (1982/1985) "half-alive" patients, was her sense of feeling dead and numb. Mary presented her predicament of entrapment within an intolerable situation in terms of not feeling ready to leave her family, yet hating the tension at home; wanting to leave home, but fearing disconnection from her family.

Her sense of despair was reflected in the first dream, reported in session 3 and described as a recurring dream:

She is in a corridor, a hospital corridor and she hates hospitals (she doesn't know why), and she's trying to find a way out. It smells terrible, all eerie like a graveyard. There are doors on either side of the corridor and she tries one, but there's nothing there. She tries another one, but there's nothing there either. She keeps trying the doors and then opens one into a room with lots of tables. On the table there are dead corpses and it smells awful. She always wakes up in a sweat.

On questioning, she added that she was not in a wheelchair in the dream:

She was moving, but slowly. She can't get away fast enough. It's as if there's a part of herself that's restricting her and she hates that.

An understanding that her sense of being restricted related to the psychological, as well as the physical level, was entirely new to Mary, and seemed to affirm the value of an exploration of her inner world.

Mary described feeling like two different people. When she was out (that is, away from her family) she was talkative, organised and happy, but at home she felt like a little girl: sad, confused and scared. This depicts an internal split which will be discussed further in relation to the split between the feminine and masculine aspects of

her psyche. She expressed a desire for integration in terms of "wanting to be one person", saying that she felt no peace, not even in sleep. She frequently had bad dreams which she said were "eerie and frightening, like horror movies".

Mary's internal life was characterised by a sense of deprivation and insecurity. She spoke of feeling "gripped by fear", and her world was experienced as threatening and precarious. This was reflected in the third dream, presented in session 5:

She was in a car on an incline and suddenly the car started moving. Because it was going up she thought it would stop soon, but suddenly she was in her chair and she went over the cliff and it was far down. It was terrible; she didn't expect to be alive but she was. It was so terrible...she was so hurt but she was alive.

A similar image appeared in dream 10 (session 13), where she had gone on a club outing, feeling contented and happy:

...Then we reached our destination. The area was all sort of rock-like - certainly not accessible for wheelchairs. I remember being parked on one of these rocks. I wondered why they had brought us here and was too scared to make a move in case my chair rolled.

Here, her associations related to feelings of helplessness; no-one was there to catch her. It was significant that this dream occurred the session before the therapist was due to go on leave for a week, which clearly heightened Mary's anxiety and sense of insecurity.

3.2.2 THE PASSIVE MOTHER

Throughout the course of psychotherapy, references were made to a mother who was experienced by Mary as inadequate and extremely dependent. She was presented as the passive victim of the father's domination, a woman who had not herself managed to differentiate or gain any independence. Mary frequently spoke with frustration and resentment of her mother's willing submission to and acceptance of her life under her husband's rule.

Mary's sense of self was thus further affected by the introjection of the passive mother, with whom she identified very strongly. They were enmeshed in a mutually dependent

relationship, in which the challenge of differentiation was too threatening for each of them. As Mary's mother's emotional needs may not have been met by her husband, (the reasons for which will become apparent), she may have turned to her children for emotional support. This, as well as her own lack of differentiation, may have resulted in an over-involved or symbiotic early relationship with Mary, which would have been reinforced when Mary became disabled from polio at the age of two years. It appears that this led to a continued infantilisation of Mary, thereby providing her mother with a sense of meaning and purpose, and further fulfilling their mutual dependency needs.

Mary believed that if her mother were to leave her father, she too would then be free. They were thus both held captive by her father. Any acknowledgement of anger towards her mother filled Mary with enormous guilt, as did any thoughts of the possibility of separation and independence. She felt that her mother would "fall apart" if she did not have Mary to look after: she saw herself as providing her mother with a reason to live, a perception which was both burdensome, yet safe. She believed that if she were to say that she wanted to move into a flat, her mother "would probably die" and her father "would have a fit". In her family, *"there is no acceptance of happiness, only death. You have to feel guilty if you're happy, but if I were to get sick and die, they'd bury me and accept it"*.

3.2.3 THE EXPERIENCE OF PARALYSIS

Mary became physically disabled at the age of two years, a critical age at which she would have been negotiating her separation, both emotionally and physically, from her parents (mother in particular). The traumatic loss of mobility at that age, as well as the implications thereof for her life as a whole, are major factors predisposing Mary to depression and dependency. The numerous hospitalisations and operations throughout her childhood would have presented Mary with multiple losses from a very early age, and may have intensified any over-protectiveness from her parents. The loss of control from the effects of the polio, as well as the disruption of her schooling, may have undermined Mary's sense of autonomy and mastery, reinforcing the internalisation of an inadequate, passive sense of self. Thus, her task of achieving psychological and physical independence was seriously hindered by the physical constraints to which she has had to adjust.

Mary's experience of paralysis and stagnation in her life was a pervasive theme throughout the therapy. In the first session she expressed the belief that while the

Mary's experience of paralysis and stagnation in her life was a pervasive theme throughout the therapy. In the first session she expressed the belief that while the therapist's life had probably changed in the last 15 years, hers had remained the same. She spoke of feeling "stuck", and frequently expressed intense feelings of envy of others whom she believed were able to move beyond this sense of entrapment. There was a hopelessness and despair about her, as well as a sense of defeat. The first dream (reported above), in which the only door providing an escape route opens into a room of rotting corpses, clearly reflects how overwhelming her sense of physical and psychological paralysis was.

Dream 8 in session 8 described a family outing in which a potentially positive experience turned bad:

They'd been out in the day and were getting into the car. At home they have a big family car but in the dream the car was suddenly a beetle. Her sister lifted her to put her in and carried her so low and said it was the only way to get inside. But the car got so small that eventually it was a toy car. Then all of a sudden there were these people with dogs on chains; but they were pottery dogs and she didn't know why but they were so scary. Her sister said she was silly to be scared because they were just clay dogs, but they were so ugly. And the people were like robots, giving out orders Mary and the others just had to obey. She said it was terrible, so platonic, (which she explained by saying they were just objects); there was no feeling and the surroundings looked like a desert - not really a desert, but it was very barren, like there'd been a famine. She was the only one who had feelings; everything was barren and dead.

Exploration of this dream highlighted Mary's sense of there being no way out (represented by the car getting smaller and smaller); *it was too late and they'd have to stay in this world.* She associated this world and the people in the dream with a quality of unreality which she often felt in her life. At home, it was only their stray dog, whom her father treated with fondness, who had the freedom to move in or out as he wished. The others were "tied by chains", trapped in a barren desert.

The experience of paralysis may further be understood in terms of the static element of the feminine principle, as elucidated by Neumann (1955 in Greenfield, 1983/1985) in Chapter 2. As discussed above, the identification with her mother resulted in the internalisation of a passive feminine introject, characterised by weakness and dependency. Thus, the unconscious equation between femininity and submission, as

described by Wieland (1991, p.140) appears to have emerged, with insufficient mediation of this aspect of the archetypal feminine by the external mother or father.

The regressive lure of the unconscious world, dominated by the passive aspect of the feminine principle, posed a constant threat to Mary. She frequently felt consumed by tiredness and expressed a desire to retreat to sleep, where she could "lie in the dark in peace". Her wish was "to lie cuddled up in bed, with the blankets over her and a bottle at her feet and the lights off so that it's dark." Only lying in the dark, that is, "in the self-contained slumber of the feminine" (Greenfield, 1983/1985, p. 190), did she feel warm, safe and secure.

In session 11, Mary presented dream 9:

We were told to evacuate our home. I can't remember if the other members of my family were with us. All I can remember is [my sister] was with me. Everyone went into this big shaft-like lift. It looked like a huge metal room - cold and dirty. (It felt very uncomfortable and claustrophobic.) As we descended, I noticed by the ridges on the metal wall that we were going below the surface of the earth. I mentioned this to [my sister] (who didn't seem concerned, as usual) and she told me that we are supposed to go down so far below. I asked whether she cared and she just shrugged. I, on the other hand, became very scared. After we had reached our destination (a huge, metal warehouse) we just browsed around not knowing what to do. It appeared to be afternoon or some kind of intermission when we were told to go out into a court yard. Outside at last, I thought. Then it suddenly struck me that we were below the earth. It seemed unnatural that the sun actually shone as normal. This I mentioned to [my sister] who told me that what I saw wasn't real. She explained that it was a huge dome-like roof especially designed to create the look and the feeling of the real thing; (it was make-believe sky). I became even more scared. I realised that we have been put away - far away from everyone and everything. I felt trapped - trapped for good.

Here, the regression into the unconscious is symbolically depicted by a descent into the (Mother) earth. The reference to the intermission suggests a liminal position between a state of consciousness and the unconscious, the twilight zone of 'half-aliveness' in which the apparent safety of fusion is potentially life-threatening. The final realisation of banishment is symbolised in the image of the sun shining in a "make-believe sky". This may be understood as symbolising the father, who holds the potential to extricate

Mary from the enmeshment with the mother/unconscious, but by whom she feels ultimately betrayed. Thus, she feels "trapped for good".

3.2.4 THE TYRANNICAL FATHER

As discussed in Chapter 2, the seductive power of regression to the twilight state of non-differentiation is such that it requires the active and nurturing presence of the father to facilitate the movement out of the symbiotic dyad.

Mary's father was depicted as the tyrant of the home, feared and despised by her. His reported aggressive and violent outbursts during her childhood may have contributed to her sense of insecurity, exacerbating the experience of not being adequately contained by either parent. Thus, while the role model provided by her mother contributed to the internalisation of a passive and dependent maternal/ feminine introject, the identification with her father resulted in the introjection of a negative, persecutory masculine principle (animus). It is the experience of the persecutory father, both internally represented and externally perceived, that dominated Mary's psychological struggle for independence. The intensity of the negative animus suggests that Mary's perceptions and memories of her father may be substantially influenced by her unconscious feelings towards him, particularly rage and a sense of betrayal, the reasons for which will emerge later.

Mary presented her father as the repressive lawgiver, whose wrath she feared. In the second session she emphasised that if anyone opposed him, he said they could leave. The threat of banishment was thus ever-present, as were the experiences of fear and intense persecutory anxiety in relation to him.

In the second session, Mary described a dream in which she was half-awake (dream 4):

...Suddenly there was a wind which came into her room and started blowing, lifting her duvet - it was all spooky and scary and she tried to call out to her sister and heard herself making these noises. She awoke and knew it had been a dream and felt terrible.

Here, the "spirit aspect" of the animus is depicted, and while this may allude to that dimension of the archetypal father that embodies "the realm of ideas, the domain of religious and spiritual values" (Allenby, 1955/1985, p. 137), it may also reflect a more

archaic image of the father, terrifying in its formlessness and lack of differentiation. This regressive image returned in the final dream described in session 25, near the end of the psychotherapy. Mary reported that she often had this type of dream, which further indicates the intensity of her regressive potential and the extent to which the father-image remained undifferentiated:

She was lying in bed, having nightmares of a force-like thing coming to her; an invisible presence. Her head was zinging and she couldn't breathe. It was like a force squeezing her. She said, "get away", and then questioned it: "What do you want?" She thought of saying the 'Our Father' - then thought, "Oh damn, it doesn't work!" She called mom, and heard her push the chair away. She asked if it was her. She felt on the bed in the dark. She woke up terrified.

In dream 28 above, Mary's experience of being defeated by the negative animus is evident; not even God or the archetypal father can be invoked. The sense of being destroyed by a murderous masculine figure emerged early in the therapy, illustrated in dream 5, presented in session 6:

She was at a gathering with a friend. The friend looked very beautiful and she suddenly saw her outside talking to a man. Mary was watching through the window and she must have turned away because when she looked again the friend was lying on the ground and the man was crushing her head, standing on her head. It looked terrible.

Another aspect of the archetypal masculine which pervaded Mary's experience of her father, was the intrusive quality which Neumann (1955) outlined (cited in Greenfield, 1983/1985, p.189). Whilst the positive aspect of this quality concerns the facilitation of the separation-individuation process, the negative involves the potential for invasive impingement of a persecutory nature. It was this dimension of the masculine, so often associated with sexuality, that characterised Mary's experience of both the father introject and her external father. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this becomes particularly significant in the psychosexual development of women, where the father embodies the first contrasexual figure who has the potential to provide a heterosexual relationship. As Samuels (1985; 1988) noted, the literal enactment of such incestuous sexuality has tragic consequences; similarly, the phantasied enactment of incestuous desire may be intensely anxiety-provoking on an intrapsychic level.

Images of violent attack and rape recurred in many of the dreams presented. In session 7, dream 7 was as follows:

Mary and her mother got home to find a man and woman in the house. She was afraid the man would rape her and then she may have rather had a sexual relationship because he was going to give her hell (physical pain). She woke up so afraid that she couldn't move. She would feel robbed of something she valued.

Reference is made here to Mary's anxieties about the pain of sexuality, both at a physical and emotional level. Earlier in the therapy she had stated that her father did not want her to bring male friends home, as they would "just break her heart". Her dilemma about relationships was often expressed in relation to the child-adult split mentioned above, where the embarrassment about her inexperience and uncertainty in this area left her feeling like a flustered teenager. The one sexual encounter she had had left her feeling like she had been robbed (in spite of her willing participation). It was as if her father's watchful, disapproving eye was ever-present: even if she watched a romantic encounter on television, her enjoyment was overshadowed by her awareness of her father's discomfort with sex, which left her feeling guilty and dirty.

Her dislike of physical contact was also inextricably linked to her physical disability, which necessitated being held and lifted by others throughout her life, which she associated with being cared for like a child. This perpetuated a dependency and reliance on others, further reinforcing her experience of not being adult. It was with much distress and pain that Mary spoke in session 19 about how she hated being disabled. She wished that the quality of care she received for the helpless part of herself could be there for the adult part, and she expressed considerable sadness and rage at the fact that her father had "treated her as if she were not disabled" when she grew up, thereby fostering the illusion of "normality".

Mary's anxieties about intimacy were thus closely connected with her feelings about her father, whom she feared would "get into her mind and control it". Several references were made to the fear of invasive penetration by her father, mostly articulated in terms of entering her mind and controlling it. This became symbolically depicted through the imagery of spiders, which Mary first mentioned in session 8, after exploring dream 8 (discussed above), which contained the image of the dogs on chains. She spoke of feeling tied to her home, and recounted the experience of when the family tried unsuccessfully to leave her father four years ago. She described how *even then*,

she remembered seeing her father in her mind. She was sitting in her chair and he was like a spider in the corner of the ceiling. And she was too scared to go near the spider.

It is interesting that Mary's associations with spiders, which are conventionally regarded as a symbol for the mother, related to her father. While this image may depict her father's anima (as evidenced in dream 17, to be discussed presently), it may also represent her mother's negative animus, which may be conflated with the persecutory father. The reference to the regressive quality of the undifferentiated father-image, as reflected in dreams 4 and 28 above, further suggests this conflation of the father with the mother's animus, given that the symbiotic state of non-differentiation is developmentally associated with the mother.

The spider imagery first emerged in her dreams in session 14, appearing in dream 13 as follows:

I went into my mom's room. For some reason I wanted to look outside but just as I wanted to pass the bed, I saw a long web. I wanted to wipe it away when I took a closer look. There were lots of tiny spiders which were sort of lime in colour and in the centre was a huge black and lime spider. I called [my sister] to come and take a look. Suddenly, I wasn't in my wheelchair. I was sitting on the floor against the wall. [My sister] saw the web but couldn't find the spiders. I tried to explain where they were but as she moved the wheelchair to take a closer look, the wheelchair went into the web and the spiders crawled under the bed. I remembered feeling very scared. Usually, I only feel safe and happy when we've killed a spider - I am petrified of them. Incidentally, the room had an old, musty odour, like it had been empty for some time.

Of significance in relation to the discussion above, is the location of the dream in the *mother's* room. Mary's associations with spiders were that they were scary and can get lost in your clothes. She liked to be able to see them, just as she liked to know where her father was when she was at home with him. This may be understood in terms of a fear of merging, which again relates to both mother and father. The web was seen to be something blocking her way, reflecting her sense of being trapped. She associated the huge spider directly with her father, saying that she was afraid of him and felt threatened when left alone with him in the house, as he was a threat. When he came into her bedroom at night to check the window, she was scared he'd come near her and thought she would die if he touched her. *At least her sisters could run away.*

She elaborated on her fears, which became more explicitly sexual, when she spoke of how she hated the way her father looked at her. He made her feel like a slut, especially when she was going out and made herself look pretty. He treated her like she wanted to be bait, like a prostitute. The anxiety associated with this accusation of rampant sexuality (with its possibility of incestuous desire and/or abuse), was defended against through a displacement upwards, expressed in terms of not wanting her father to get inside her mind, which was why she tried to keep it blank. She tried to empty her mind and push her thoughts and feelings away, so that her father could not get to them and hurt her. The conflict that this defence created was expressed as her dislike of being cold and hard, the price she felt she had to pay for maintaining her guard against her potential attacker.

Dream 15, discussed in session 15, contained images of terrorists, which she associated with her father, who would also "look wild... when he [got] mad":

I was in a huge factory of some sort. There were many people but I didn't know anyone. I don't know what I was doing there. Something terrible was going to happen. No-one said anything in particular but everyone were (sic) talking. Suddenly, everyone started running and still no-one said what was happening. I had the feeling that there was a bomb in the place. I felt very uneasy. Before I knew what was happening, I realised that my mom and I were in a big, black van, speeding. It seemed that we were running away from something. Then another car came alongside and a couple of men started shooting at us. They shouted something which sounded like: "We're going to get you out, no matter how far you run".

In this dream, Mary was very scared of the men, who carried long guns, a phallic symbol attached to the threatening animus figures. The black van was understood in terms of the dark side of her life, those things that never happen or go wrong. The reference to the presence of a bomb, and the experience of waiting for something explosive to happen frequently appeared in the therapy. The atmosphere at home was likened to the tension before a storm, or waiting for a bubble to burst, and these were invariably associated with the expectation of some violent action by her father. Here, she and her mother are once again united as victims of the persecutory, masculine attack, again suggesting that the mother's negative animus may be significant.

The spiders reappeared in session 17, when dream 17 was presented:

I was in my bedroom. For some reason I looked out of the window and saw three huge, black spiders sitting outside against the top of the window. As one tried to crawl through a hole in the window I called [my sister] but she wasn't interested. I became so scared that I then called [my other sister] who stuffed the hole with newspaper. However, when she was done the newspaper had formed some kind of lock.

Mary associated the three spiders with her father, mother and the "other" sister in the dream. The lock was understood to be something that kept her and/or them outside. Here, the spiders symbolically represent a feminine principle, and perhaps refer more specifically to her father's anima and unconscious, which contributed to her entrapment. This is reminiscent of Wieland's (1991, p. 133) contention that the "split off and denied femininity" of the father is inextricably linked to the 'beastly' notion of primitive masculinity, which, giving rise to persecutory anxiety in the daughter, may affect her relationships with all men, including her father. In Mary's case, the phantasy of primitive masculinity was clearly reinforced by the external father, whose abhorrence of femininity was vividly portrayed in session 26, when Mary recounted that when an older sister had previously left home, her father had said that he wished he had killed them all at birth, and cursed whatever they did. This echoes the myth of Cronus, who, fearing dethronement by one of his sons, "swallowed the children whom Rhea bore him" (Graves, 1955, p. 39).

In contrast to the image of the lock, which is associated with entrapment, is that of the key, which emerged in dream 16, session 16. This was the first symbolic depiction of the positive aspect of the archetypal masculine, namely that which initiates and generates action and the development of consciousness.

I was in the gym at the sports club with some of the club members and a friend of mine, H (who doesn't belong to our sports club). H came to me and I asked her something. I can't remember what it was but it sort of felt like I was asking for advice. She pointed towards a little cubicle. As I came towards it I saw D sitting facing it. Incidentally, he is someone I met last year. H's crazy about him and I'm not but he was keen on getting to know me, but I am just not interested. He keeps asking H about me.

Anyway, his face had a blank expression, almost like he was in a trance. I didn't bother to talk to him. I just went into the cubicle. There was a red curtain

hanging in front of the opening. I went inside and there was a little table against the wall. There wasn't anything on it but hanging against the wall was a brightly coloured article. I got the feeling that it was a key although it didn't look like it. It was bright red, silver and gold in colour. Next to it hung a big calender. I can't remember doing anything but I suddenly got a feeling that I had found an answer. The feeling I had was one of great relief - of being comforted - I was so happy.

Mary experienced considerable relief and comfort from this dream, which she felt provided an answer, despite her inability to elaborate on the dream images. The alchemical quality to certain of the images (for example, the red, silver and gold), suggests that her relief may have been associated with some transformative process occurring at an unconscious level. When the interpretation was suggested that the key to her happiness might lie in the masculine part of herself, that is, a more forceful energy than that with which she usually identified, she accepted this with interest, before quickly adding that she did not want to hurt her family and would rather give them happiness than herself.

Her reluctance to access the positive animus may be understood partly in relation to the overwhelming impact of the negative animus within her psyche, but also in relation to certain life events which may have reinforced the notion that differentiation and a movement towards greater consciousness were dangerous. There was already a suggestion of this perception evident in dream 3 above, in which movement resulted in a life-threatening fall over the precipitous cliff.

Shortly after the family's unsuccessful attempt to leave the father a few years previously, Mary developed breast lumps which, although benign, confronted her with the possibility of death. Having first lost the opportunity of escape from the tyranny of her father, due to her mother's wish to return home, Mary now felt that "everything was going wrong". When her father subsequently had a stroke and decided to work from home, "that was the end". The breast lumps, as well as her father, were experienced as too big to fight, and Mary decided to give up. She had no energy and decided to shut off her feelings and not show her emotions, in an attempt to protect herself. Instead, she now *keeps them inside and just dies*.

These experiences may have reinforced an association between attempts at independence and separation, and the threat of persecution and ultimately death, thereby intensifying, in a manner described by Seligman (1982/1985, p. 82),

"the erection of increasingly rigid and impenetrable defence systems which serve to camouflage weakness, dependence and helplessness".

A consequence of this mobilisation of defences is illustrated in dream 21, presented in session 21:

I was walking on the stoep of a building which reminded me of the school I went to. I wore my calipers and was scared to walk but I had to because the entrance was around the corner. I was alone except for a guy leaning against one of the pillars. I was so scared, he kept looking in my direction. He came over and asked if he could walk with me. I wanted to say no, but I was so scared of falling that I allowed him to come along. When he put his arm around me it felt so comfortable and yet I felt that it was too personal. I blanked the thoughts and feelings and felt alright (sic). When we got into the building it was an empty warehouse. The windows were broken and the place appeared deserted for a long time. Suddenly there were shots and when I looked outside a group of men were shooting at us. Bullets flew all over the place; lots of them hit me and I felt the pain but I didn't die.

A potentially supportive animus figure is rejected because of the fear of intimacy, which gives rise to persecutory anxiety in the form of a masculine attack, potentially life-threatening, but not fatal. Internally, an association appears to have developed between the relinquishment of defences, thereby allowing experiences of intimacy and liberation, and punishment via an attack by the archetypal masculine, which ultimately brings the threat of banishment and death.

Dream 22, also discussed in session 21, reflected some awareness of the consequences of her defensive retreat, as well as her longing for intimacy:

I was in a building which reminded me of our club because there were (sic) a big hall and a little one. I heard laughter. It was my mom and dad in the little hall. I was in the big hall and someone was with me but I don't know who it was. I asked this person what is happening and she said that they were watching something on television. Incidentally, I held a beautiful doll. I kept turning it around and just couldn't stop admiring it. It had long brown hair and had a beautifully curved figure. It had a long white dress on.

I told this person that I wanted to watch the show also and she turned on the television. There were (sic) a woman and a man making love. Well, not actually making love, just sort of trying.

The woman appeared young. She was pretty but was sort of fat - figureless it appeared. She wore a white dress and laid (sic) on a bed and had a blank expression. The man was kissing all over her body. It sort of looked like he was trying to get her to respond. I got the feeling that she wanted to but didn't know how. I felt sorry for her. I looked down at the doll still in my hands and thought to myself that she was like a doll - no feeling nor emotion. Like an empty shell. I looked at the screen again and said to myself that I could tell her what to do - I could tell her how to respond. But would she take my advice, I ask myself? I wondered then how long it would be before he gets tired and gives up on her.

Mary clearly identified with the woman and the doll in the dream: *no feeling nor emotion. Like an empty shell.* On an intrapsychic level, the dream may reflect the split between the feminine and masculine aspects of the psyche, with the passive feminine still in a dominant position. A parallel may be seen with the child-adult split, where adulthood involves sexuality and generative behaviour (conventionally associated with masculinity). In Mary's case, this connection was evident in her numerous descriptions of sometimes feeling like an adult or like a child, each with their characteristic associations.

The second last dream, which Mary described in session 25, depicted her current dilemma most vividly:

She was in a shack at a camp. Her dad was around her. She was all cramped up. The feeling was like she feels at home - tense, tired and hopeless. She was temporarily living there. It was a junkyard, not a camp, with scrap lying about. Seemed like she'd been there for days and months. She felt tired, like giving up. There were some people in charge, and other people. Those in charge were 'bandidos', bandits. There was a gruesome leader, weird looking, who acted stern and rough. He was keeping everyone prisoners there. They said they were moving camp and were going to terminate them. Dad disappeared. Her friend, H was there - in one of the other shacks.

One of the committee members (an okay guy) said they'd given them two alternatives. "You girls are free to go". Mary was so scared: "everyone else were men" (sic). She asked, "What do they want - money? I'll give everything I

own." "The main man wants sex with you, a good couple of times, and then he'll let you go".

Mary felt he was going to use her and ... good for nothing, so throw her away. Felt he was going to beat her up. The most painful part of the sex bit was that she was going to have the pain alone, without loving her; use her...physical and emotional pain (emotional because of what she'd be afterwards). He said, "Let him have his fill; I'll block my mind." Mary was torn between leaving the camp and staying there and being a nothing, feeling nothing. It was so terrible that she woke up.

Here, Mary is faced with a choice which is similar to those facing the hero on his/her quest for consciousness and psychological liberation. There is a sacrifice to be made for her freedom, but that sacrifice involves some pain and loss. Sex in the dream was associated with being an adult, while leaving the prison meant relinquishing certain aspects of the child, with her enmeshed connections to the mother. The terror of the choice involved a fear of abandonment and banishment into a state of isolation, as well as the ultimate possibility of death if she chose to remain. This dilemma reflected the essence of Mary's intrapsychic conflict, which she externalised in relation to leaving her home and her family, and particularly, leaving the symbiosis with her mother and the tyranny of her father.

The sexual dimension to the above conflict encapsulates both psychoanalytic and Jungian perceptions of the significance of incest: the reference to the "main man" wanting sex with her may be interpreted in Oedipal terms, as well as in terms of the symbolic potential of incest as outlined by Samuels (1985d, pp. 166-167) in Chapter 2. Not having had an "optimal erotic relation" (Samuels, 1988b, p. 70) with her father, Mary's psychosexual development remained conflictual and unresolved.

3.2.5 THE CHOICE OF TERMINATION

In session 24, Mary described the occurrence of stomach pains which felt "like knives". These were discussed in the context of her anger at her father, whom she believed wanted to "own them all". The interpretation of the pain as internal knives of anger was accepted, and the way in which she tried to avenge her father through her passivity, for example, not continuing with her studies, because she felt this would

make her a more valuable asset to him, was acknowledged, as was her (projective) identification with her mother's passivity.

Two weeks later, Mary's dilemma intensified when her younger sister threatened to move out of home. Suddenly, Mary felt "as if her whole world was falling apart", and asked the therapist for advice about what she should do. Her ambivalence towards the psychotherapy was expressed in relation to her conflict about pretending to be happy, and the thought of the therapist who "came into her head...as if to say she must live for herself". She described two internal voices, one which tells her to cover up her feelings and pretend to be happy and another which asks about her feelings and her life. She expressed anger at God, for testing her to the limit, and described her pain in terms of feeling dead and raw inside. She didn't know whether to cover the wound or let it heal at its own pace.

The following session, Mary said she felt stronger and wanted to stop coming to therapy. She no longer saw the therapist as providing the light (an image which had emerged in session 13 before a break, where she had likened the therapist to a window that reminded her that there was hope). She felt she was now "digging her own way". The focus of the session soon returned to her ambivalence about thinking of herself or giving up in compliant resignation, and it was decided to meet fortnightly for the remaining available weeks. In session 28, Mary spoke again of shutting out her feelings, and referred to being called an "ice maiden" by a friend. Her frustration with the therapist was expressed in terms of not receiving the advice she wanted, and her anger at the therapeutic process, which she felt had been a waste of time, revolved around the way it reminded her of the pain, which she could no longer bear to feel. She expressed a fear of being totally destroyed by the pain and referred to the future as being completely uncertain.

At the penultimate session, Mary announced that she was giving her mother the "silent treatment" and was keeping herself hard, so that she would not get hurt. This clear transference message to the therapist-mother was followed by her desperate realisation that while she felt numb and dead, she had lost the pain, as well as the joy and sense of aliveness. It was with resignation that she decided that this was the only way she could cope, and at the end of that session, asked the therapist for a referral for anti-depressant medication. The psychotherapy was terminated prematurely when Mary arrived at session 30, having made the decision that this was our last session.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 suggested that the father plays a crucial, preoedipal role in facilitating the emergence from a symbiotic state of fusion to one of differentiation. The father's role as "purveyor of triangulation" (Ross, 1979, p. 321) was acknowledged by several authors, many of whom stressed the necessity of the father's active and nurturing participation in assisting with the emergence "from the womb to the world" (Seligman, 1982/1985, p. 81), and thus with the negotiation of dyadic to triadic object relations. In addition to preventing a regression to a state of non-differentiation, the father's significance as the first representative of masculinity, was noted. This was seen to influence psychosexual development and the formation of gender identity, particularly in the case of women, whose relationships with their fathers provide a prototype for subsequent heterosexual relationships.

The father's own psychopathology, and in particular, his attitudes and phantasies concerning masculinity and femininity, were considered important in terms of the quality of the paternal introject, the nature of which is both archetypally determined and mediated by external reality. The absence of a "loving father" (Layland, 1981) was seen to increase the risk of entrapment within a "'twilight world' of fused objects and projective processes" (Carvalho, 1982, p. 354), resulting in a failure of triangulation, a perpetuation of non-differentiation and potential distortion in the areas of psychosexual development and object relations.

Future studies in this field will need to consider the implications of these views for single-parent and gay/lesbian families, in which the "father" may neither necessarily be present nor male.

The case which has been presented is an example of a father-daughter relationship in which the negative paternal introject was insufficiently mediated by a good external object. In the absence of an "optimal erotic relation" (Samuels, 1988b, p. 70) with the father, and in the context of a physical disability which exacerbated a symbiotic relationship with a passive, dependent mother, the scene was set for "the transformation of father into beast" (Wieland, 1991, p. 140). The father's own, unresolved issues with his anima, as well as the mother's lack of differentiation and unintegrated negative

animus, resulted in an unmitigated internal experience of the negative masculine, thereby contributing to the internalisation of a persecutory animus and a passive, feminine identity.

The intensity of the persecutory anxiety in the patient was such that, without the support and facilitation from a positive father figure, and in the absence of parental mitigation of the negative animus, there was insufficient ego strength or determination to resist the regressive lure of symbiosis, with its promise of safety, yet threat of death. The despair within this experience of entrapment was further exacerbated by the physical disability, which externally manifested and reflected an inner experience of paralysis, thereby reinforcing all "sensations of being trapped and crippled" (Seligman, 1982/1985, p. 82).

In order for the separation-individuation process to proceed, Mary needed to confront her rage at her father, whose betrayal may have been experienced as abandonment at a preoedipal level, and as rejection in an oedipal context. Thus, she needed to find the courage to face the Beast, thereby transforming her persecutory, internal father-animus, and potentially mobilising the positive aspects of the archetypal masculine and feminine. Without an integration of the feminine and masculine aspects of her psyche, and an acknowledgement of the internalised rage at her predicament, Mary remained trapped in a state of living death, characterised by submission both to the passive feminine, symbolised by her dependent mother, and the persecutory masculine, embodied in her tyrannical father, the introjects of whom continued to dominate her internal world.

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